



PRIME MINISTER

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 416
15 December 1974

NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON REHABILITATION

The Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, said today that a National Advisory Council on Rehabilitation was being established to advise the Government on all aspects of its policies affecting the rehabilitation of the injured and the handicapped. The Chairman will be Mr Justice C.L.D. Meares, of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, and the Chairman of the New South Wales Law Reform Commission.

Mr Whitlam said that the Government had been very fortunate in securing Mr Justice Meares' services. With Sir Owen Woodhouse, he had formed the Committee of Inquiry into Compensation and Rehabilitation in Australia. The Committee's Report was presented earlier this year, and the National Compensation Bill, which was currently before the Parliament, was one substantial result of it.

The Government would be looking to the Council for advice on implementing the rehabilitation aspects of the Woodhouse Report, the Prime Minister added. The Committee of Inquiry said in that section of its Report dealing with rehabilitation that "in the past, the handicapped have been neglected and often isolated. Society has paid far too little attention to their needs". Mr Whitlam said that with the Council's help, the Government would ensure that the handicapped would receive all the assistance and protection which could reasonably be provided, so that they could find a worthwhile place in society.

The Prime Minister said that the Council would be responsible to the Special Minister of State, Mr Bowen. The other members would be announced following discussions with Mr Justice Meares.

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