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PRESS STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER FOR NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

MR PAUL KEATING, M.P.

Canberra
4 November 1975

BURDEKIN BASIN INVESTIGATIONS

The Minister for Northern Australia, Mr Paul Keating, said today that investigations into the potential for development in the Burdekin Basin region of north Queensland were nearing completion.

"The program of investigations, now in its third year, is under the supervision of the joint Federal/State Burdekin Projects Committee".

"Particular attention had been paid to an assessment of potential future commitments of the water resources of the Basin for industrial, urban, irrigation and power purposes, and for flood mitigation. The development potential of the large coal reserves in the Burdekin Basin is also receiving considerable attention".

"These investigations have involved engineering and hydrological studies, while soil surveys and field trials have been undertaken for an assessment of the potential of unproven soils in the lower Burdekin for intensive agricultural development. The environmental consequences of further industrial development in the Basin are also under study. Consultants have been engaged where necessary, particularly with regard to industrial processing investigations".

Mr Keating said that the Burdekin Basin, an area of 130,000 square kilometers, was well provided with infrastructure facilities and these would contribute significantly to future large-scale development in the region.

The Burdekin Project Steering Committee met in Brisbane on 3 November to discuss progress of the program of investigations and other requirements for a report to be completed next year.