

Mr Spind



PRIME MINISTER

APRIL 6, 1976

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

ROYAL VISIT

I wish to inform the House that the dates for The Queen's visit to Australia and New Zealand next year will be released from Buckingham Palace today.

Her Majesty plans to visit a number of Commonwealth countries in 1977 as part of celebrations to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of her reign.

I was pleased to confirm to the Palace in December last, after the Government had been elected to office, the invitation which had been extended at an earlier date by the former Prime Minister.

The visit to Australia will be planned to begin with an arrival in Canberra on Monday 7 March and overall it is likely to last between two and three weeks. During that time Her Majesty who will be accompanied by The Duke of Edinburgh, hopes to visit each State Capital.

The sequence has yet to be decided and precise dates have yet to be settled.

This news will be received with a great deal of pleasure. Everyone of The Queen's subjects in Australia will be delighted to know that Her Majesty and His Royal Highness are able to come again and spend time with us. They will receive a very warm welcome.

The primary purpose of the visit will be to celebrate the silver jubilee of Her Majesty's accession to the Throne and the Australian people will be pleased to know that The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh will be able to visit each State - even though their time in each will be limited.

In March 1974, Her Majesty was to have visited South Australia and Western Australia and was greatly disappointed when her constitutional duties in Britain brought about their cancellation. For next year's visit The Queen has asked that her itinerary include added time in both South Australia and Western Australia as they have not been visited by her since 1963.

The Royal Yacht BRITANNIA is expected to be in Australian waters at the time of The Queen's visit and will be used as Her Majesty's home wherever possible. It will also be a means of transport and of rest between engagements, as well as being available for hospitality purposes.
