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PRIME MINISTER

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PUBLIC SERVICE TRANSFERS TO CANBERRA

The Commonwealth Government has approved the transfer to Canberra of some 440 Public Service and Defence Service positions in 1977 and 1978. The transfers will continue the consolidation in Canberra of the policy advising elements of Commonwealth Government departments currently located in Melbourne. A small number of other positions will be transferred from Sydney and Adelaide in the interests of increased administrative efficiency. Apart from an overall increase in the efficiency of government administration the transfers will also lead to reduced government expenditure on travel and communication costs in the longer term.

The transfers of staff to Canberra will help ease growth pressures in the capital cities, especially in the central business district of Melbourne, and at the same time provide a stimulus to the construction and service industries in Canberra. The transfers underline the strength of the Commonwealth Government's commitment to Canberra as the Seat of Government.

In accordance with the commitment previously given to staff organisations, the Public Servants affected will receive at least 12 months notice of transfer.

The main departments and authorities affected are:

Department of Transport - 106 policy positions currently located in Melbourne

Department of Construction - 30 policy positions from Melbourne and the Overseas Works Branch (35 positions) from Sydney

Department of National Resources - 39 policy positions and four positions in the Bureau of Mineral Resources, all currently in Melbourne.

Department of Defence - 209: 164 Service and 45 civilian positions concerned with health services, quality assurance, Service recruiting, and transport, and Army material.

Some small elements of other departments will also transfer, mainly for reasons of administrative efficiency.

The transfer of other policy groups is still under consideration.
