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PRIME MINISTER

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AUSTRALIA COUNCIL - COMMUNITY ARTS BOARD

The Prime Minister announced today the Government's intention to establish a Community Arts Board within the Australia Council. The Board will have the same powers and status as other Council Boards, and its creation will bring the number of Council Boards to seven.

The Prime Minister said that in making this change the Government's aim was to achieve a wider participation in the arts in the local community. As well as identifying and promoting local arts potential through its own programmes, the Board will encourage initiatives being taken by local Government and local community groups.

Functioning as a Board, Community Arts will aim to reach those untouched by the major and traditional arts organisations. The programme will extend to outlying country centres and will also include special interest areas such as ethnic groups. There will be some exciting new pilot projects specifically related to young people.

Mr Fraser said that Mr David Hamer's Government Members Arts Committee had strongly recommended the move after discussions with organisations and individuals throughout Australia. The proposal has the strong support of the Australia Council.

The Community Arts Board will consist of a majority of members with special knowledge of the art needs at the community level. Its composition will be announced in the near future.