



**PRIME MINISTER**

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WHITE CANE SAFETY DAY

"In the hustle and bustle of daily life, and especially in fast moving cities, it was all too easy to overlook the difficulties faced by blind and visually handicapped people in maintaining their independence of movement", the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Malcolm Fraser, said today.

The Prime Minister said that he had much pleasure in supporting efforts by the Australian Federation of Blind Citizens to have a particular day each year recognised throughout Australia as "White Cane Safety Day". October 15 had been suggested as an appropriate day and was already recognised in many overseas countries and some States as White Cane Safety Day.

Formal recognition of a White Cane Safety Day will provide an opportunity for all Australians, especially motorists, to give special consideration to the blind and visually handicapped as they move about our busy streets.

"The white cane is recognised internationally as a sign of the determination of the blind and visually handicapped people to live useful and productive lives in our modern societies", the Prime Minister said.

The cane would be most useful in drawing to attention the fact that blind and visually handicapped people were making their own way. Courtesy demanded that the white cane should be recognised as the symbol of a need to take particular account of the requirements of people who were maintaining their independence despite disability.

Mr. Fraser said he hoped there could be a combined effort by all those concerned with the needs of blind and visually handicapped people to use the White Cane Safety Day as a focus for increasing public awareness of the mobility requirements of these people.

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