



PRIME MINISTER

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JOINT COMMONWEALTH/STATE REVIEW OF THE ORD RIVER IRRIGATION AREA

The Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, and the Premier of Western Australia, Sir Charles Court, today announced further details of the joint Commonwealth/State review which is to be established to report to both Governments on the future development of the Ord River Irrigation Area.

Following discussions between the Prime Minister and the Premier, agreement has been reached on the composition of the body to undertake the review and the terms of reference for the study.

The review body is to be comprised of five members, including an independent chairman, two officers of the Commonwealth Government and two State Government officers.

The Chairman will be Sir Norman Young who is Chairman of Elder Smith Goldsborough Mort Ltd., Australia's largest pastoral house.

The Prime Minister and Premier said that the terms of reference stressed the need to look at the medium to long term and involved an assessment of the total benefits and costs to the nation of various development strategies for the area.

An assessment would also be made of the desirable future direction of research and the possible roles of the Commonwealth and State Governments.

The review will involve extensive discussions in the region and with other interested parties. Submissions will be invited.

The body will commence its task early in the new year and it is expected that the review will be completed within six months of its establishment.

The full terms of reference for the review are attached.

REVIEW OF THE FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE
ORD RIVER IRRIGATION AREA (ORIA)

THE REVIEW IS TO -

1. Assess and report on the total benefits and costs to the nation of:
 - (i) Development in the ORIA to date; and
 - (ii) Further potential development having regard to future world needs for food, fibre and energy in the medium and longer term.

2. Include consideration of the following matters:
 - (i) Technical, economic and environmental research to date;
 - (ii) Commercial prospects for commodities which may be produced in the region;
 - (iii) Infrastructure requirements and costs;
 - (iv) Where relevant, the impact of development on:
 - activities adjacent to the area
 - the Aboriginal Community
 - the environment;
 - (v) Special disabilities in the region;
 - (vi) Possible future directions of research, including the involvement of C.S.I.R.O.; and
 - (vii) The future implementation of the Western Australian Agreement (Ord River Irrigation) Act 1968.

3. Report also on possible roles of the Commonwealth and Western Australian Governments in any future development.