



# PRIME MINISTER

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## MEAT INSPECTION SERVICES

The Prime Minister has written to the State Premiers seeking their co-operation to rationalise Commonwealth and State meat inspection services. He has also asked the Premiers to minimise inspection fees imposed by State Government bodies on meat entering metropolitan markets.

Previous negotiations with the States extending over many years have failed to reach agreement. Existing arrangements involve separate administrative organisations which lead to some unnecessary costs.

It is common practice for State Governments to impose an additional inspection levy on meat sold within metropolitan areas.

The Prime Minister said as this was a State Government responsibility he had asked the Premiers to see if these additional charges could be minimised.

It was important to explore avenues to reduce costs and improve returns to producers in the depressed beef industry. Such an initiative had already been taken with the Prices Justification Tribunal inquiry to examine beef marketing and processing margins.

The Prime Minister is hopeful that with the co-operation of the States it will be possible to rationalise meat inspection services and keep charges to a minimum.