



PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS

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SECOND DERWENT BRIDGE IN HOBART

The Prime Minister today expressed surprise at the claims made by the Premier of Tasmania and Senator Wriedt that the Commonwealth Government was attempting to modify its commitment to the Second Hobart Bridge.

Mr Fraser said: "I cannot see any foundation whatever for either Mr Lowe's or Senator Wriedt's suggestion. Twice in the past year or so I have made unequivocal public statements reaffirming the commitment of the Commonwealth Government to the construction of the proposed Second Hobart Bridge. If it is necessary, let me say again that the Commonwealth Government will provide funds for the construction of the bridge.

"The Commonwealth and Tasmanian Governments appointed a Joint Committee of experts to design the proposed bridge and to advise on a number of related matters. The Commonwealth Government has paid all the costs incurred by that Committee.

"The Committee has almost completed its work and is in the final stages of preparing its report to both Governments. One of the important matters which the Government has asked the Committee to advise it on is the date construction of the bridge should begin.

"I do not believe it would be appropriate for the Commonwealth Government to make unilateral statements on the matters it has referred to the Committee until after it has received the Committee's report and discussed the Committee's recommendations with the Tasmanian Government."
