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~~MR. YEEND~~

PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

8 MAY 1979

TASK FORCE ON DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION

The Prime Minister has written to State Premiers seeking their co-operation in a study of the way Government Departments provide information to groups and individuals in the community.

Mr Fraser said he was writing to the Premiers because many of the problems and issues of concern to the Commonwealth Government in this area also confronted State Government departments.

State Governments had adopted a range of different approaches to the question of departmental information. "I am sure that there will be mutual benefit in an exchange of experience and views between the two levels of Government", the Prime Minister said.

Mr Fraser said the Commonwealth study was being undertaken by the Task Force on Departmental Information which was established by the Government last year following the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Australian Government Administration.

Among the issues being considered by the Task Force are the production and distribution of information in both the print and non-print media. The Task Force is examining the adequacy of content and presentation of information produced by departments and questions of expenditure and cost recovery.

The role, operation and staffing of departmental information units and the need for a central professional advice and monitoring service are also being considered.

Some issues of special concern to my Government are the methods adopted by departments to provide information for disadvantaged groups and, at a broader level, the effectiveness of the methods of distribution used. The Task Force is also concerned with departmental efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of their information programs.