



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

4 OCTOBER 1979

Defence Force Assistance to New South Wales and South Australia in combatting Plague Locusts

The Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Malcolm Fraser, today announced that the Commonwealth would be providing Defence Force assistance to the New South Wales and South Australian Governments in combatting the current plague locust infestation in both States.

Mr Fraser said that on the basis of expert advice, three helicopters and their crews would be made immediately available for search and destroy missions against the locusts in New South Wales.

Mr Fraser also said that the South Australian Government would be assisted by the immediate provision of a communications system comprising two mobile base units each with ten back-pack radios, two teams each with ten land rovers, a communications helicopter and the necessary command and support systems.

The Prime Minister said that the Commonwealth was most concerned over the magnitude of the current infestation. He also said that assistance was being provided at the direct request of the Premiers of both States and was in addition to the assistance being given by the Commonwealth through the control activities of the Australian Plague Locust Commission.

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