



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

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INQUIRY INTO ELECTRICITY AND THE SHARING OF POWER RESOURCES IN S.E. AUSTRALIA

The Prime Minister announced today that Sir David Zeidler, who has recently retired as Chairman and Managing Director of ICI Australia Ltd. had accepted an appointment as Chairman of the Committee of Inquiry into Electricity Generation and the Sharing of Power Resources in South-East Australia.

The Committee of Inquiry will also comprise representatives of the Commonwealth and each of the participating States of New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria.

The Inquiry's main function is to examine the feasibility of a strongly integrated electricity supply grid in South-East Australia and the requirement location and type of new power stations to supply such an interconnected system. The terms of reference of the Inquiry are attached.

The Inquiry, which is to be based in Melbourne, is expected to take at least one year to complete its final report to the participating Governments.

The Prime Minister considered it timely that in view of the uncertain world energy situation and the increasing overseas interest in establishing energy intensive mineral processing industries in Australia utilising our competitively priced coal-based electricity, the Commonwealth should co-operate with the four States in an examination of electricity supply from a national view point. It is a concrete example of the Government's concern to ensure that Australia's domestic economy and future commercial opportunities would not be limited through any lack of adequate electricity supply facilities.

The Prime Minister expressed particular satisfaction that Sir David had been prepared to accept the appointment as Chairman. Sir David is a prominent and respected figure in Australian Industry, and has had a long and distinguished career. He is particularly well-qualified to undertake this difficult but most important task at this critical period when the supply of energy in its many forms has become a crucial global as well as a national issue.

INQUIRY INTO ELECTRICITY GENERATION AND THE
SHARING OF POWER RESOURCES IN SOUTH-EAST AUSTRALIA

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Whereas the Governments of New South Wales, Victoria and the Commonwealth developed, in co-operation, arrangements for the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electricity Scheme, the Commonwealth Government and the Governments of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania have agreed that a Committee of Inquiry should be appointed:

- (1) to inquire into the feasibility of establishing a strongly integrated South-East Australia Electricity power grid through further co-operative governmental arrangements;
- (2) to examine the provision of increased capacity for the exchange of power across State borders to ensure continuity of power supplies and optimum use of fuel resources; and
- (3) to examine the need for possible location and type of new power stations to support the establishment of the proposed grid.

In carrying out its functions the Committee should have regard to:

- (a) all alternative sources of primary energy for electricity generation; and
- (b) the technical feasibility, the economics and the social and environmental impacts of the possible alternatives.