



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

TUESDAY, 15 DECEMBER 1981

STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER - DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The Federal Executive Council has today approved the appointment of Mr M. H. Codd as Secretary to the Department of Industrial Relations. The appointment will date from 1 February 1982. Until then, Mr Codd will be Acting Secretary to the Department.

Mr Codd was formerly Under Secretary of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and has served in a variety of capacities in that Department for the past 12 years.

The Administrative Arrangements Order is to be amended to define more clearly the role of the Department of Industrial Relations in promoting better industrial relations and in the co-ordination of policies on wages and labour costs and in relation to disputes involving Commonwealth employees.

The Government believes that sound industrial relations policies in all sectors of industry and employment are central to national growth and prosperity. Immediate steps are to be taken to transfer the Central Office of the Department of Industrial Relations to Canberra in recognition of the Department's importance as a source of policy advice in an area of significant Government interest. This re-location will enable enhanced communication and interchange between the Department of Industrial Relations and the Government and other elements of Commonwealth administration.

The Department of Industrial Relations will retain a significant presence in Melbourne to ensure maintenance of close liaison between the Department and representative employee and employer bodies located in Melbourne.

Transfer of the Central Office of the Department of Industrial Relations to Canberra will be accompanied by strengthening of the Department's capacity to advise and assist the Government in presenting its view at arbitration hearings of major national importance. The Government will also be looking to the Department for advice on ways to improve industrial relations practices and institutions, and on wages and labour costs and the co-ordination of Government industrial relations policies. The Department will give greater emphasis to its industrial relations research functions, including arrangements for consultation with employer and employee bodies and machinery for dealing with industrial disputes.