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PRIME MINISTER

For Media

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Tasmanian Women's Information Service

The Federal Government will establish a Women's Information Service in Tasmania next year.

The Service will have a dual function: to provide women with information about Federal Government policies, programs and services and to give the Government feedback about what women in Tasmania want.

The Women's Information Service of Tasmania is being established in response to the clear need for such a service, shown by the response from Tasmanian women to the Federal Government's Women's Telephone Information Service. This Service operated in Hobart for eight months earlier this year under the Community Employment Program.

Tasmania is the only State where women do not have an accessible information service or consultative body which responds to the views and needs of women.

Despite specific assurances from the Premier, Mr Robin Gray, to set up three regional women's advisory councils throughout the State, he has failed to make good his promises. He has also abolished the State's only women's advisory position, leaving women in Tasmania with less access to Government than women in any other Australian State. The lack of action from the Tasmanian Government has meant that women in Tasmania have often felt isolated and powerless to make their needs known at a level where help can be effectively provided.

The Women's Information Service is expected to open in mid 1985. It will be located in Hobart. A van will be provided for staff members to travel regularly to Launceston and other regions so women throughout Tasmania can have access to the Service.

The Women's Information Service will be one of two 'outposts' of the Office of the Status of Women within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. The other service, established in April this year, is in Brisbane.
