



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

12 December 1985

On 2 December the Minister for Territories announced the Government's intention to combine within a single Commonwealth portfolio most ACT administrative functions.

The Government has today made a series of administrative arrangements changes which transfer a number of territorial matters to the Territories portfolio.

The principal functions which have been transferred with effect from today are those relating to territorial health services and the ACT education system with the exception of post-secondary education. Certain other territorial functions which were previously the responsibility of the Minister for Housing and Construction, Local Government and Administrative Services, Primary Industry, and the Attorney-General have also been transferred.

In relation to the transfer of the ACT health system, I have asked the Minister for Health, the Hon. Neil Blewett, to remain closely involved in the restructuring of the ACT Health Authority which has been carried out under his direction during this year. Dr Blewett's personal attention to ACT health matters contributed greatly to the resolution of the recent dispute with the nurses at Canberra hospitals.

The opportunity has also been taken to transfer from the Minister for Territories two national functions. These are the Canberra National Memorials Committee and the National Botanic Gardens which will now be the responsibility of the Minister for Arts, Heritage and Environment.

In addition, to assist in the integration of total ACT finances and the determination of priorities the Minister for Territories will be responsible for providing a co-ordinated overview of ACT activities and budgetary processes. These will be separately reported on an annual basis from 1986/87.

The Government sees these changes as being a significant step towards the establishment of the ACT Council, which is to operate from 1 January 1987.

To achieve a smooth and speedy implementation of the administrative re-organisation, I have asked Senator Walsh, as Minister Assisting me for Public Service Matters, to oversee the changes and ensure that consequential questions of finance, staffing and location of staff are resolved without delay.

A list of the changes is attached.

FUNCTIONS TO BE TRANSFERRED TO THE INTEGRATED
TERRITORIES DEPARTMENT

From the Attorney-General

- . Legal policy responsibility for matters transferred from the Attorney-General and legislative drafting associated with functions to be transferred to the ACT Council

From the Minister for Education

- . Territorial education system excluding post secondary education.

From the Minister for Health

- . Territorial health system.

From the Minister for Housing and Construction

- . Operations, repairs and maintenance and design and construction associated with functions to be transferred to the ACT Council, including water and sewerage services

From the Minister for Local Government and
Administrative Services

- . Accommodation, cleaning, surveying and mapping and vehicle operations for functions to be transferred to the ACT Council

From the Minister for Primary Industry

- . Administration of the Stock Diseases Ordinance 1933

STATUTORY AUTHORITIES TO BE INCLUDED IN THE TERRITORIES
PORTFOLIO

From the Attorney-General

- . Legal Aid Commission
- . Parole Board
- . Public Trustee

From the Minister for Education

- . ACT Schools Authority

From the Minister for Health

- . ACT Health Authority and associated bodies
 - . Chiropractic Board
 - . Dental Board
 - . Drugs Advisory Committee
 - . Medical Board
 - . Mental Health Advisory Council
 - . Nurses Board
 - . Optometrists Board
 - . Pharmacy Board
 - . Physiotherapists Board
 - . Radiation Council
 - . Veterinary Surgeons Board

TRANSFERS FROM THE TERRITORIES PORTFOLIO

To Arts, Heritage and Environment

- . National Botanic Gardens
- . Canberra National Memorials Committee