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ACTING **PRIME MINISTER**

FOR MEDIA

20 DECEMBER 1985

The Government has granted an extension of time for the Royal Commission headed by Mr Justice Stewart to present its report relating to unlawful telephone interceptions.

Mr Justice Stewart was due to report not later than 31 December 1985. He is now to furnish his report by not later than 30 April 1986.

The extension reflects advice from Mr Justice Stewart that his work under the relevant terms of reference is well advanced but that some additional time is required to hear further evidence if necessary and complete the drafting of his report.

As well, the Victorian Government issued in June of this year letters patent requiring Mr Justice Stewart to inquire into involvement by Victorian police officers in alleged telephone interceptions. This has created an additional dimension to Mr Justice Stewart's work.

The Governments of New South Wales and Victoria have also agreed to a corresponding extension of the reporting date for the Royal Commission under the commissions which they have issued.