



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

5 DECEMBER 1989

**JOINT STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE MINISTER
ASSISTING THE PRIME MINISTER ON PUBLIC SERVICE MATTERS,
THE HON PETER MORRIS**

The Federal Government is committed to breaking down all remaining barriers to Equal Employment Opportunity.

All Australians have the right to achieve their full employment potential and, while progress has already been made towards this goal in the Australian Public Service, we must move forward with vigour.

To ensure continued progress, we are pleased to announce a four-part strategy to accelerate the implementation of Equal Employment Opportunity policies and practice in the Public Service into the 1990s.

The strategy comprises -

- . greater accountability to Ministers for EEO action and achievements through regular quarterly reporting by heads of agencies;
- . increased management awareness of EEO, through senior executive and middle management training and other initiatives;
- . a focus on EEO efforts in the regions, that is, in capital cities, regional centres and remote areas; and
- . the development of a strategic plan for EEO achievement in the Australian Public Service for the 1990's.

People should have real employment choices - limited only by their imaginations and capacities, rather than by artificial, attitudinal barriers.

To achieve this, the Government wants to see improved implementation of EEO in the Australian Public Service, and we intend that the impetus for reform should extend well into the next decade.

Ignoring the talents and potential of staff because of biases against certain groups is simply bad management.

Greater equity in staffing also means greater efficiency. The Public Service must always make the best use of the skills and potential of all available and potential employees. EEO ensures that the policy of merit selection for recruitment and promotion is given full effect and that the entire pool of talent in the community is tapped.

Quarterly reporting will mean Ministers and managers have greater awareness of progress on EEO. Managers will also be encouraged to show leadership in developing EEO initiatives.

The focus on regional efforts will ensure Service-wide benefits from this strategy. 72% of all federal public servants are employed in these areas. The profile of EEO in the regions will be raised through training of managers and better co-operative management efforts.

These initiatives will be complemented by the development of a longer term strategy which will ensure that the way is clear for continued and improved EEO achievement over the next decade.

The strategy will involve widespread consultation within the Service, with unions and managers, and with the wider community to establish the best ways to break down remaining barriers to the successful implementation of EEO throughout the Service.