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# PRIME MINISTER

17/94

## STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P.J.KEATING, MP

### MEETING OF EPAC AND THE EMPLOYMENT WHITE PAPER

Today's meeting of the Economic Planning Advisory Council (EPAC) provided timely input to the Government's deliberations on its forthcoming employment White Paper.

The White Paper will be released on 28 April and will incorporate policies to encourage job growth and to address the particular difficulties faced by the long-term unemployed. The White Paper will also address the two related areas of industry policy and regional development.

The Prime Minister will chair a special committee of Cabinet to develop policies and programs for the White Paper. The committee will include the Deputy Prime Minister, Brian Howe, the Treasurer, Ralph Willis, the Minister for Finance, Kim Beazley, the Minister for Industry, Technology and Regional Development, Senator Peter Cook, the Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Simon Crean, the Minister for Social Security, Peter Baldwin, and the Minister for Industrial Relations, Laurie Brereton.

The meeting of EPAC today was devoted to issues central to the White Paper. Discussion focussed on two major reports that were released last December as well as presentations on two studies commissioned by the Government that are in the process of being finalised.

The Report of the Committee on Employment Opportunities, Restoring Full Employment, was introduced by Committee members Professor Bob Gregory and Mary Ann O'Loughlin and the head of the associated task force, Meredith Edwards.

The Chairman of the Task Force on Regional Development, Bill Kelty, introduced the report of his task force.

The issue of regional development is also being addressed in the McKinsey and Co study of Firms' Regional Location Decisions. Michael Rennie and Rob Mallick from McKinseys presented some of their preliminary findings to the meeting.

Timothy Sims presented preliminary results from the L.E.K. Partnership study on Services Exports. This study highlights the fact that in the same way that exports of manufactures have been growing rapidly in recent years, services exports have also demonstrated rapid growth and it identifies some of the driving forces behind that growth.

The Government is pleased to have had this opportunity to discuss these reports with their authors and the representatives of State and local governments, business, trade unions, the rural sector, welfare and other community organisations.

CANBERRA  
4 March 1994