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PRIME MINISTER

PORT ARTHUR ASSISTANCE

I was pleased to inform the Tasmanian Premier, Mr Rundle, today of the Commonwealth's offer of additional funds to assist the Tasmanian community recover from the tragic events at Port Arthur on April 28, including \$2.5 million for the reconstruction of the Broad Arrow Cafe.

These announcements come after discussions and submissions both from Mr Rundle and my Tasmanian colleagues in the Government.

The full array of Commonwealth counselling services have already been made available for the wounded, families of victims, local residents, employees of the Port Arthur Historic Site Authority and others closely involved.

The Federal Government is to provide an additional \$2.5 million for the reconstruction of the Visitor Centre and Restaurant including access and parking. This will allow the Broad Arrow Cafe to be replaced by an enhanced facility and should help the Port Arthur complex recover its attraction as a tourist destination as quickly as possible.

The Commonwealth will also be providing a further \$416 000 for counselling services in Tasmania.

This support comes on top of the \$200 000 donation made to the appeal opened by Tasmanian television stations.

In addition to the Government's move to tougher national gun laws in cooperation with the States, I am hopeful that the Commonwealth's further assistance will help to heal the physical, emotional and social wounds of the people of Tasmania resulting from the Port Arthur massacre.

12 June 1996