



THE ACTING PRIME MINISTER

MEDIA RELEASE

STATEMENT ON THREDBO TRAGEDY

The removal late last night of three bodies from the site of the Thredbo landslide marks the end of a tragic and extraordinary week for Thredbo and Australians.

While emergency services continue to work on the site, all those people listed as missing in this natural disaster have been accounted for.

It is a week that has been marked by great shock and sadness, enormous and unstinting effort by emergency services personnel involved, gut-wrenching frustration and tension, and of course the great joy generated by the miraculous recovery of Stuart Diver.

All those involved, and the nation, have run the gamut of emotions in the past seven days.

It is now time to offer sympathy and prayers to those who have lost family members, to give thanks that one life could be saved and that loss of life was not greater - and to offer our deepest appreciation to the hundreds of professionals and volunteers who attended the disaster.

A Coroners' Inquest must now ensue before the families involved and the village of Thredbo can properly begin to recover from this tragedy. I am sure all Australians will give the families, and the village, continuing support in this period.

I would only add that, while most media representatives conducted themselves properly during this period, I believe it is appropriate that concerns over media behaviour raised by Thredbo residents be addressed, through the Australian Press Council.

7 August, 1997