A GUIDE TO THE 1975 STATE CABINET RECORDS

PREPARED BY: **STATE RECORDS OFFICE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

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INTRODUCTION

State Cabinet records are historically significant papers that record the decisions made by the government of the day. These unique records are the primary source documents for information about the issues raised at Cabinet meetings.

State cabinet records are currently subject to a 30-year embargo from public access. Each year, a new set of Cabinet papers – from 30 years previous – is released from this embargo and may be accessed by the Western Australian community.

The 1975 State Cabinet records are held by the State Records Office of WA, the authority with responsibility for managing, preserving and providing the community with access to the State's archives.

Members of the public may now access the 1975 State Cabinet records at the State Records Office.

The complete set of 1975 State cabinet records that have been released comprise:

- **Cabinet Minutes and Decisions**
- **Cabinet Index**
- **Cabinet Agendas**
- **Cabinet Accounts**
- **Press Statements**
- **Speeches**

Access to these records can be made at the State Records Office Search Room. The State Records Office is situated on the Ground Floor of the Alexander Library Building, James Street Mall, Perth Cultural Centre. The State Records Office Search Room is open Monday – Friday, 9.30am – 4.30pm. For further details about accessing the records, please contact the State Records Office on ph. 9427 3360.

EVENTS AND ISSUES THAT MADE NEWS IN 1975

The following historical summary has been prepared by staff of the State Records Office of Western Australia, with research assistance by politics student, Elizabeth Nadella of Murdoch University.

Internationally, 1975 was the year that Indonesia invaded Timor, and the Americans withdrew from Vietnam. It was International Year of Women, and Olivia Newton-John won a Grammy Award for *I honestly love you*. On the scientific front, a new group of *homo erectus* fossils were discovered in Ethiopia, and the first of the Voyager missions to Mars was launched.

In Australia, Cyclone Tracy brought 1974 to a dramatic close, and set the scene for a tumultuous year to come. Two weeks later a ferry hit the bridge across the Derwent River in Tasmania, killing 12 people. A coalmine explosion in Queensland in September of 1975 killed 13, and the year was brought to a tragic close with an arson attack on the Savoy Hotel in Sydney's King Cross.

The turmoil and devastation were reflected in the political events of the year. Gough Whitlams' Labor government was dismissed in November, 1975 and a caretaker Liberal Government under Malcolm Fraser was established. The Federal Government had introduced Medibank and the Order of Australia, but other projects were vigorously opposed at the Federal and State level. In the middle of the year, on a lighter emotional level, Princess Anne and Captain Mark Phillips arrived for a Royal Tour.

Notable issues raised in the State Cabinet of 1975 included:

- Development of a cross state Cyclone emergency plan, following the devastation of Darwin in December 1974,
- Consideration of the development of a stadium, as well as the purchase of His Majesty's Theatre,
- The metrification of weights and measures, including the change from a pint to a 600ml bottle of milk,
- The shortage of bricklayers,
- The introduction of the Commonwealth's Medibank Scheme,
- Consideration of a cross state challenge to the Commonwealth's proposed
- Interstate Commission, on the basis that it was unconstitutional,

- Funding and approval for the use of the Tronado machine, a controversial microwave technology used in cancer treatments,

- The extension of the Kwinana Freeway,

- Closure of the Perth to Fremantle railway line and the introduction of busways,

- Development of the Eneabba mineral sands deposit, and other resource development proposals,

- The legalisation of prostitution,

- Adoption of foreign born children,

- Appropriate means of interrogating witnesses in rape cases,

- The resignation and appointment of the Governor,

- Permitting the annual PROSH parade to take place after it had been been banned in 1972. The 1975 parade was uneventful from the police perspective, unlike the Union Rally in Forrest Place some months later.

- Preparations and plans for the 1975 sesquicentenary celebrations for the foundation of Western Australia

Royal Commissions were held investigating the following issues in 1975:

- State Government Insurance agency
- The trial of Baymis Ugle
- Police and aboriginal relations in Laverton
- Airline services
- Beef and sheep industry

THE 1975 STATE CABINET MEMBERS

COURT-McPHARLIN MINISTRY (as of 22 May 1974)

Court, The Hon, Sir Charles Walter Michael, O.B.E., M.L.A.
Premier; Treasurer; Minister Co-ordinating Economic and Regional Development

McPharlin, The Hon. Walter Raymond, M.L.A.
Deputy Premier; Minister for Agriculture

O'Neil, The Hon. Desmond Henry, M.L.A.
Minister for Works; Water Supplies; Housing

McNeill, The Hon. Neil, M.L.C.
Minister for Justice; Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

O'Connor, The Hon. Raymond James, M.L.A.
Minister for Transport; Police; Traffic; Traffic Safety

MacKinnon, The Hon. Graham Charles, M.L.C.
Minister for Education; Cultural Affairs; Recreation

Stephens, The Hon. Matthew Ernest, M.L.A.
Chief Secretary; Minister for Conservation and Environment; Fisheries and Fauna

Grayden, The Hon. William Leonard, M.L.A.
Minister for Labour and Industry; Consumer Affairs; Immigration; Tourism

Mensaros, The Hon. Andrew, M.L.A.
Minister for Industrial Development; Mines; Electricity; Fuel and Energy

Rushton, The Hon. Edgar Cyril, M.L.A.
Minister for Local Government; Urban Development and Town Planning

Ridge, The Hon. Keith Alan, M.L.A.
Minister for Lands; Forests; the North-West

Baxter, The Hon. Norman Eric, M.L.C.
Minister for Health; Community Welfare

THE 1975 STATE CABINET MEMBERS

COURT MINISTRY (as of 5 June 1975)
Court, The Hon, Sir Charles Walter Michael, O.B.E., M.L.A.
Premier; Treasurer; Minister Co-ordinating Economic and Regional Development; Federal Affairs

O'Neil, The Hon. Desmond Henry, M.L.A.
Minister for Works; Water Supplies; the North West

McNeill, The Hon. Neil, M.L.C.
Minister for Justice; Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council; Chief Secretary

Old, The Hon. Richard Charles, M.L.A
Minister for Agriculture

O'Connor, The Hon. Raymond James, M.L.A.
Minister for Transport; Police; Traffic

MacKinnon, The Hon. Graham Charles, M.L.C.
Minister for Education; Cultural Affairs; Recreation

Grayden, The Hon. William Leonard, M.L.A.
Minister for Labour and Industry; Consumer Affairs; Immigration

Mensaros, The Hon. Andrew, M.L.A.
Minister for Industrial Development; Mines; Fuel and Energy

Rushton, The Hon. Edgar Cyril, M.L.A.
Minister for Local Government; Urban Development and Town Planning

Ridge, The Hon. Keith Alan, M.L.A.
Minister for Lands; Forests; Tourism

Baxter, The Hon. Norman Eric, M.L.C.
Minister for Health; Community Welfare

Jones, the Hon. Peter Vernon, M.L.A
Minister for Housing; Conservation and the Environment; Fisheries and Wildlife

Medcalf, the Hon. Ian George, M.L.C.
Honorary Minister

THE 1975 STATE CABINET RECORDS

AN OVERVIEW

Unlike the release of Cabinet papers at the Commonwealth level, where more sensitive documents remain embargoed beyond the 30-year period, all of the 1975 State Cabinet records for Western Australia are being released for public access.

The nature of recording Cabinet decisions has changed over the preceding decades. In more recent times, the documentation associated with a Cabinet decision can be extensive and voluminous. In 1975, Cabinet recordkeeping was more succinct and the main set of records is comprised of the Cabinet Minutes and Decisions. During Cabinet meetings, the Premier himself would record a note of the decision and any conditions that may apply to that decision.

Although there is a set of Cabinet Agendas and Cabinet Indexes that are included in the records being released, topics of Cabinet submissions are simply listed chronologically.

To assist in locating information within the Cabinet Minutes, a chronological listing of the issues heard at Cabinet meetings is included as an appendix to this guide.

THE 1975 STATE CABINET RECORDS

A DESCRIPTION

Cabinet Minutes and Decisions

- Cabinet Minutes are the original primary source that document decisions made at Cabinet meetings.
- Cabinet Minutes comprise the names of Ministers for each meeting, copies of cabinet submissions, a record of Cabinet decisions and supporting reports/summaries for submissions (if applicable).

Location: *State Records Office of Western Australia*
Reference: *Accession 1819, files 24/1975 – 443/1975*
Quantity: *10 files, 0.8 linear metres*

Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	*File 24/1975*	*16/12/1974 – 28/01/1975*
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	*File 51/1975*	*04/02/1975 – 17/03/1975*
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	*File 154/1975*	*24/03/1975 – 05/05/1975*
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	*File 202/1975*	*07/05/1975 – 10/06/1975*
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	*File 277/1975*	*17/06//1975 – 17/07/1975*
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	*File 296/1975*	*22/07/1975 – 27/08/1975*
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	*File 309/1975*	*28/08/1975 – 22/09/1975*
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	*File 329/1975*	*30/09/1975 – 27/10/1975*
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	*File 351/1975*	*03/11/1975 – 19/12/1975*
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	*File 443/1975*	*22/12/1975 – 02/02/1975*

Schedule of movements

- Chronological index recording the topic of each submission raised at Cabinet meetings (Tonkin Government only)

Location: *State Records Office of Western Australia*
Reference: *Accession 2839, item131/1974*
Quantity: *1 file, 0.01 linear metres*

Schedule of movements	*File 131/1974*	*11/04/1974 – 14/04/1976*

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Royal Visit 1975 – HRH Princess Anne and Captain Mark Philips

- Details of itineraries and arrangements for various excursions and functions during the Royal Visit.

Location: *State Records Office of Western Australia*
Reference: *Accession 1708, files 607/1974 – 621/1974*
Quantity: *10 files, 0.8 linear metres*

Visit to St John's Ambulance	*File 607/1974*	*17/01//1975 – 06/05/1975*
1. Reception – Royal Visit staff. 2. Presentation – Duke of Edinburgh Gold Awards	*File 608/1974*	*14/04/1975 – 06/05/1975*
Departure for London	*File 609/1974*	*18/04/1975 – 06/05/1975*
Transport	*File 610/1974*	*14/01/1975 – 06/05/1975*
Accommodation	*File 611/1974*	*12/02/1974 – 02/05/1975*
Personnel	*File 612/1974*	*31/01/1975 – 27/03/1975*
Planning conferences	*File 614/1974*	*12/02/1974 - 25/03/1975*
Royal Standards	*File 615/1974*	*06/03/1975 – 24/04/1975*
Ministerial participation/briefing	*File 616/1974*	*05/05/1975 – 06/05/1975*
Speeches	*File 617/1974*	*04/03/1975 – 18/04/1975*
Press	*File 618/1974*	*05/02/1975 – 16/04/1975*
Accounts	*File 619/1974*	*14/01/1975 – 13/06/1975*
Daily briefs and programme distribution	*File 620/1974*	*18/12/1974 – 28/04/1975*
Plans and diagrams	*File 621/1974*	*24/04/1975*