

Diary of Social Legislation and Policy 1985 and 1986

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**1985
and
1986**

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Social
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**A co-operative publishing project of
the National Institute of Economic
and Industry Research, the Australian
Institute of Family Studies and
the Social Welfare Research Centre**

National Institute of
Economic and Industry Research

Australian Institute of
Family Studies

Social Welfare Research Centre

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List of Abbreviations

ABSTUDY	Aboriginal Study Assistance Scheme
ACET	Australian Council for Employment and Training
ACIN	Australian Curriculum Information Network
AFAO	Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations
AIC	Assistance for Isolated Children
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AIMA	Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs
AMA	Australian Medical Association
AMSAD	Australian Medical Society on Alcohol and Drugs
ASEAS	Advanced Secondary Education Assistance Scheme
ATP	Adult Training Program
ATS	Australian Traineeship Scheme
AYS	Australian Youth Service
BLMR	Bureau of Labour Market Research
CAE	College of Advanced Education
CBLMP	Community Based Labour Market Program
CEP	Community Employment Program
CES	Commonwealth Employment Service
COPQ	Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRAFT	Commonwealth Rebate for Apprentice Full-time Training
CRS	Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service
CSHA	Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization
CSL	Commonwealth Serum Laboratories
CTEC	Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission
CTP	Community Training Program
CYSS	Community Youth Support Scheme
DEIR	Department of Employment and Industrial Relations
FIS	Family Income Supplement
FSSS	Family Support Services Scheme
FTA	Formal Training Allowance
HACC	Home and Community Care Program
HLIC	Housing Loans Insurance Corporation
HMO	Health Maintenance Organisation
ITEC	Information Technology Centre
IYSH	International Year of Shelter for the Homeless
LEI	Local Employment Initiative
MAFI	Marginally Adjusted Family Income
NAATI	National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters
NACAIDS	National Advisory Committee on AIDS
NCADA	National Campaign Against Drug Abuse
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NHPP	National Health Promotion Program
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSS	Occupational Share System
PEP	Participation and Equity Program

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NCADA	National Campaign Against Drug Abuse
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NHPP	National Health Promotion Program
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OSS	Occupational Share System
PEP	Participation and Equity Program

SAAP	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
SAS	Secondary Allowance Scheme
SASP	Special Assistance for Students Program
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TEAS	Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme
TPI	Totally and Permanently Incapacitated
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VYP	Volunteer Youth Program
WREIP	Women's Research and Employment Initiatives Program

Introduction

This *Diary* summarises the legislative and administrative changes made in the social policy field during 1985 and 1986 by the Commonwealth government. The *Diary* provides a ready reference for research workers, and can also be used as a succinct and factual account of policy during the years covered. For the first time, education policies are covered by the *Diary*. This issue also sees the separation of community services from social security into a separate new section in line with the division in December 1984 of departmental and ministerial responsibilities.

The *Diary* follows the format of the 'diaries' prepared by Helen Ferber and published in R.B. Scotton and Helen Ferber (eds), *Public Expenditures and Social Policy in Australia* (2 volumes, Melbourne, Longman Cheshire, 1978 and 1980). These 'diaries' covered the years 1972 to 1978. The first *Diary* in the present series covered events for the calendar year 1980, with the events of each year since then being covered by an annual *Diary*, copies of which are available from the sponsoring Institutes and Centre. Events for the calendar year 1979 were recorded in supplements to the first three issues of the present series.

For reference to general economic policy or political events the reader is referred to the 'Diary of Recent Economic Events and Policy Statements' included in each issue of the *Australian Economic Review*, to the Diary of Political Events in each issue of *Australian Quarterly*, and to the 'Broadcasting Chronology' included in *Media Information Australia*. For a longer view of changes in the social security field the reader is referred to *Development in Social Security, A Compendium of Legislative Changes Since 1908* (Department of Social Security, Development Division Research Paper No.20, Canberra, 1983). Readers who wish to verify when Bills were introduced into Parliament, when Statutory Rules notified, Acts assented to, and when commencement of Acts by Proclamation occurred should consult the *Monthly Legislation Summary* issued by the Library of the Attorney-General's Department, Canberra.

This issue was edited by Anthony King of the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research, and Mari Davis of the Australian Institute of Family Studies. Individual contributions from members of these three research institutes which sponsor the *Diary* are gratefully acknowledged.

Don Edgar

Australian Institute of Family Studies

Peter Brain

National Institute of Economic and Industry Research

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Social Welfare Research Centre

Social Security — 1985

Compiled by Anthony King,
National Institute of Economic and Industry
Research

Family Income Supplement

20 February 1985: The Minister for Social Security announced that the level of income at or below which Family Income Supplement (FIS) is payable at the maximum rate would be increased to \$223 a week from 1 May 1985.

20 August 1985: It was announced in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget that the rate of FIS would be increased to \$16 per week from 1 November 1985. The income level at or below which the full rate of FIS is payable would increase to \$229 a week.

Rates of Pensions and Benefits

20 February 1985: The Minister for Social Security announced that pensions and most benefits would increase by 2.6 per cent in May 1985 under the automatic indexation provisions of the Social Security Act. The standard rate of pensions would rise by \$2.40 to \$94.30 a week and the married couple rate would rise by \$4 to \$157.30 a week. Unemployment, Sickness and Special Benefit for married couples, single adults and people with dependants would also rise by 2.6 per cent with an additional \$2 increase in the rate of Unemployment Benefit for single adults without dependants to \$85.20 a week. This additional increase is a further step toward equating the single rate of Unemployment Benefit with the single rate of pension and sickness benefit.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget included provision for a 3.8 per cent increase in automatically-indexed pensions and benefits to take effect from November 1985. The standard rate of pension would rise by \$3.60 to \$97.90 a week and the married rate by \$6 to \$163.30 a week. The Budget also included provision for a restructuring of the benefit rates for singles without dependants from 1 November 1985. Single unemployment and special beneficiaries would receive \$3 a week in addition to indexation to give \$91.45 per week. A new tier of benefit for single unemployment or special beneficiaries aged 18–20 years would be established with a \$3 increase to \$88.20 but with indexation withdrawn from this tier. The rate of benefit for singles aged under 18 would be standardised at \$50 per week; that is, the

rate currently paid only to those in receipt of benefit for at least six months. Also announced in the Budget were a \$2 increase in additional pension or benefit payable for each dependent child to \$16 per week from November, and a \$2 increase to \$12 per week for Mothers/Guardians Allowance from 1 May 1986. With regard to the restructuring of income support for youth, detailed in Budget Paper No.13 *Youth Policies in the 1985–86 Budget*, the Budget also included announcement of changes in Family Allowance (from 1986) and additional pension/benefit (from 1988) entitlements in respect of students, and foreshadowed introduction of the Young Homeless Allowance.

Assets Test on Pensions

11 March 1985: The Minister for Social Security announced, on the basis of return of almost all asset forms, that around 2.4 per cent of pensioners would be affected by the assets test. Of the pensions affected, around 29 000 would be cancelled and 21 000 reduced.

21 March 1985: The assets test came into effect. The asset limits, above which a reduced rate of pension would be paid, were \$70 000 for single homeowners, \$120 000 for single non-home-owners, \$100 000 for couple home-owners and \$150 000 for couple non-home-owners.

26 May 1985: The Minister for Social Security announced a number of administrative changes aimed at alleviating problems identified during the introductory phase of the assets test. The administrative changes would affect five areas: the pension loans' scheme; the transfer of assets; hardship provisions; the speed of reviews; and aged persons' accommodation.

Veterans and their Dependents

15 March 1985: The Minister for Veterans Affairs announced details of the impact of the assets test on service pensioners. About 3.4 per cent of service pensioners would be affected, with 6900 pensions reduced and 6500 cancelled.

14 May 1985: Amendments to the *Repatriation Act* concerning the eligibility conditions for certain Veterans' Affairs pensions and changes to Departmental procedures were foreshadowed by the Treasurer in the May 1985 Statement of Initial Expenditure Savings Measures. The measures, which were estimated to result in budget savings of \$48.3m in 1985–86, included: amendment of the TPI work test for special rate disability pensions; change to the onus and standard of proof for disability pensions; change to dependents' pension entitlement; and a review of service pensions to reduce the incidence of overpayments.

30 May 1985: The draft *Veterans' Entitlements Bill* was tabled in the Senate. Following consultations, a Bill would be introduced into Parliament during the Budget Session. When finalised, the new consolidated legislation would see the total repeal of 84 existing Acts and the partial repeal of four others.

9 July 1985: The final report of a review of the repatriation hospital system (the Brand Report) was released by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. The report recommended increased funding for staff and equipment and eventual incorporation into the State hospital systems.

Commonwealth Government Employees Compensation

1 May 1985: Rates of worker's compensation benefits for Commonwealth employees were increased by 0.6 per cent, reflecting the percentage movement in Average Weekly Earnings in the second half of 1984. **1 November 1985:** Rates of worker's compensation benefits for Commonwealth employees were increased by 2.6 per cent, in line with the percentage movement in Average Weekly Earnings over the first half of 1985.

December 1985: The Minister for Social Security announced that a fundamental review of the compensation system would be undertaken to produce a system which minimises the human and financial costs of work-related illness and injury in the Commonwealth sector.

Method of Social Security Payments

3 May 1985: The Minister for Social Security announced that payments of benefits would be made by direct deposit from 18 June 1985. As was the case with pension payments, exceptions to direct deposit would be granted on grounds including lack of access to banking facilities, illness or infirmity.

Portability of Pensions and Reciprocal Social Security Agreements

8 May 1985: The Minister for Social Security announced that the Government would sign a reciprocal social security agreement with Italy following negotiations which began in June 1983. The agreement would include the notion of proportional portability whereby governments would pay pensions according to the amount of time a person had lived in each country. The agreement with Italy would be the first of a number of proposed reciprocal agreements, with 18 other countries having expressed interest in negotiations.

16 May 1985: The Minister for Social Security announced the membership of a committee established to provide advice on means of consultation

with ethnic communities regarding proposed reciprocal agreements.

Family Allowance

14 May 1985: It was announced in the May 1985 Statement of Initial Expenditure Savings Measures that Family Allowance payments for students aged 18–24 would be withdrawn from November 1985 except in the case of needy families. Needy families, in this instance, would be those: where the Family Allowance claimant was receiving a pension, benefit or allowance which included a component paid for the dependant or was paid entirely because of that dependant, and where the dependant was not receiving a tertiary education allowance; or where the dependant was receiving a payment under the Secondary Allowance Scheme, the Aboriginal Secondary Grants Scheme or the Assistance for Isolated Children Scheme.

20 August 1985: It was announced in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget that Family Allowance would not be paid in respect of students for whom a payment was received under the Secondary Assistance Scheme (SAS) from 1986. The value of Family Allowance would instead be incorporated in an increased rate of SAS.

Social Security Overpayments

14 May 1985: The Treasurer announced in the May 1985 Statement of Initial Expenditure Savings Measures that greater efforts would be concentrated on the detection of fraud and mispayments within the social security system. The adoption of revised procedures was estimated to save \$25m in 1985–86.

11 September 1985: The Minister for Social Security, commenting on the Auditor-General's report to Parliament on the level of social security overpayments in 1984–85, outlined new measures which had recently been introduced to minimise overpayments.

Social Security and Taxation

2 July 1985: The National Taxation Summit was held in Canberra. The White Paper on Tax Reform prepared by the Government prior to the Summit considered the implications for social security of tax reform options.

Carer's Pension

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided for the introduction from November 1985 of a Carer's Pension which would subsume and extend the coverage of the existing Spouse Carer's Pension. Those eligible for the Carer's Pension would be people who provide constant care and

attention to a severely handicapped age or invalid pensioner spouse or near-relative on a long-term basis in the private home.

Handicapped Child's Allowance

20 August 1985: The Commonwealth Budget provided for the payment of Handicapped Child's Allowance for up to 28 days a year where an eligible child is temporarily absent from the family home and in respite care in special accommodation attracting Nursing Home Benefit or Handicapped Children's Benefit. This change would take effect from November 1985.

Income Test on Benefits

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget included provision for the relaxation of the income test on benefits from May 1986. Allowable earnings for beneficiaries would rise by \$10 to \$30 a week. Benefit would be withdrawn at a rate of 50 per cent with other income between \$30 and \$70 per week and at a rate of 100 per cent above \$70.

Multiple Births Payment

20 August 1985: It was announced in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget that the discretionary act of grace payments to parents of quadruplets would be formalised and replaced by a non-means-tested and non-taxable payment from November 1985. Payments would also be extended to parents of triplets. Payments would be \$150 per month for triplets and \$200 per month for quadruplets, in addition to Family Allowance entitlements, and payable until the children reached six years of age.

Rent Assistance

20 August 1985: It was announced in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget that Rent Assistance, up to \$10 per week and subject to the existing rent and income test, would be extended for 1 May 1986 to unemployment and special beneficiaries aged 18 years or over who have been on benefit for 6 months or more, excluding single people aged 18–24 years living at home.

19 September 1985: In a Statement to the House of Representatives on Reform of the Australian Taxation System, the Treasurer announced that the separate income test on Rent Assistance would be removed from November 1986. Rent Assistance supplements to pensioners and beneficiaries would

then be withdrawn under the normal pension/benefit income tests.

11 November 1985: The Minister for Social Security said that his Department would consider extending Rent Assistance to low-income earners in receipt of Family Income Supplement as suggested in a report on homelessness undertaken for the Department of Housing and Construction.

Income Tests on Pensions

19 September 1985: In a Statement to the House of Representatives on Reform of the Australian Taxation System, the Treasurer announced changes to the income test on pensions to take effect from November 1986. The pension free area would be increased by \$10 per week, to \$40 per week for a single pensioner and \$70 per week for a couple, and the income disregard for each child of a pensioner would be increased from \$6 to \$12 per week.

Social Security Information

21 November 1985: The Minister for Social Security launched a social security pamphlet specifically designed for young people which also included information concerning programs administered by the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations and the Department of Education. The pamphlet was a response to a study commissioned by the Department of Social Security which had shown that younger clients of the Department wanted broader advice.

24 November 1985: The Minister for Social Security announced that his Department had adopted a national policy on language services, formally stating its intention to provide services in languages other than English.

Social Security Review

17 December 1985: The Minister for Social Security announced that a comprehensive review of social security would be undertaken. The review would examine three major areas of social security policy: assistance for families with young children; programs for people of working age; and assistance for the aged. The review would be conducted within the Department of Social Security, but would include widespread consultations based on discussion papers to be released as the review proceeds. The Minister also announced the appointment of Associate Professor Bettina Cass of Sydney University as consultant director to the review for a period of two years from February 1986.

Social Security — 1986

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Family Allowance

1 January 1986: Family Allowance ceased to be payable in respect of dependent children receiving Commonwealth education assistance; that is, payment under the Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme, Adult Secondary Education Assistance Scheme, Aboriginal Study Grants Scheme, Post-Graduate Awards Scheme, or Secondary Allowance Scheme.

19 August 1986: It was announced in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget that Family Allowance for 16 and 17 year olds would be subject to an income test from January 1987. Payment would cease where parents' taxable income exceeded \$39 000 per annum in the previous financial year. There would be provisions for cases where parental income had fallen substantially since the previous financial year.

Child Maintenance

30 January 1986: The Minister for Social Security announced that work would be undertaken to develop a strategy for ensuring adequate maintenance for children. He also announced the appointment of Dr Meredith Edwards as a ministerial consultant on the matter and the appointment of a ministerial committee to oversee the Government's approach to child maintenance strategies. Dr Edwards would work with the Social Security Review.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget included an outline of proposed reform to the system of child maintenance. The current system of judicial discretion would be replaced by a legislative formula administered by a child support agency under the control of the Commissioner of Taxation. While details of the formula had not yet been decided, it would be based on the income of the non-custodial parent and the number of children living with the custodial parent. A discussion paper would be published, submissions invited, and introduction of the new arrangements expected early in 1987–88.

8 October 1986: The Minister for Social Security made a ministerial statement in the House of Representatives upon tabling a discussion paper on reform of the child maintenance system. The broad outline of the proposed reform was as announced in

the Budget, though the discussion paper included three examples of a possible maintenance formula and sought public views on a number of aspects. The closing date for submissions would be the end of November. *Child Support: a discussion paper on child maintenance* had been prepared by the Cabinet Subcommittee on Maintenance.

Social Security Overpayments

12 February 1986: The Minister for Social Security launched a strategy to improve the prevention, investigation and recovery of Social Security overpayments. A major element of the strategy would be an amnesty during which current clients could notify the Department of any change in their circumstances which could have reduced their entitlement, without incurring any penalty. The amnesty would run until 31 May.

17 July 1986: The Minister for Social Security reported that adjustments to entitlements stemming from the three-month Social Security amnesty would result in annual savings of \$19.7m.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget included announcement of a number of changes to the administration of Unemployment Benefit, Supporting Parent's Benefit and Widow's Pension Class A designed to reduce the possibility of overpayments.

Handicapped Child's Allowance

2 April 1986: The Minister for Social Security announced initiatives to raise public awareness of the availability of Handicapped Child's Allowance. The initiatives would rely on community organisations, health professionals and word-of-mouth, rather than paid advertising.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget included provision for a \$7 per month increase in Handicapped Child's Allowance to \$92 per month from 1 November 1986.

Young Homeless Allowance

8 April 1986: The Government announced that the Young Homeless Allowance would be introduced on 1 July 1986, rather than the previously announced date of January 1987. Introduction of the Allowance, which allows young unsupported people to be treated as independent when determining income support entitlements, had been foreshadowed in the 1985–86 Budget.

Assets Test on Pensions

10 April 1986: The Minister for Social Security announced the first annual automatic indexation of

limits under the assets test on pensions. The new limits, which would apply from 1 May, were \$75 750 for single homeowners, \$129 750 for single non-homeowners, \$108 000 for married homeowners and \$162 500 for married non-homeowners. The asset limits are increased each May in line with increase in the Consumer Price Index between the two preceding December quarters.

Family Income Supplement

10 April 1986: The Minister for Social Security announced that the level of income at or below which Family Income Supplement (FIS) is payable at the maximum rate would be increased to \$241 per week from 1 May.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget included provision for a \$1 increase in the rate of FIS to \$17 per week from 1 November 1986. The Budget also provided for an increase in the FIS income-test limit to \$248 per week from 15 December 1986.

Rates of Pensions and Benefits

10 April 1986: The Minister for Social Security announced that those pensions and benefits subject to the automatic indexation provisions of the *Social Security Act* would be increased by 4.3 per cent in May. The standard rate of pension and the rate of benefit for single people with dependents would rise by \$4.20 to \$102.10 per week, and the married rate of pension and benefit by \$7 to \$170.30 per week. The rate of benefit for single people over 21 without dependents would increase by \$3.95 to \$95.40 per week. The increases would take effect from 1 May.

19 August 1986: It was announced in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget that the Government would defer for six weeks the indexation adjustments to pensions and benefits which currently occur in May and November of each year. The rates of all indexed pensions and benefits would now be adjusted in December each year by the percentage increase in the CPI over the six months to the preceding June, and in June by the percentage increase in the CPI over the six months to the preceding December 1986. Under the new system, indexed pensions and benefits would be increased by 4.0 per cent in December. The standard rate of pension would increase by \$4.10 to \$106.20 per week and the married rate by \$6.80 to \$177.10 per week. It was also announced in the Budget that the rate of additional pension or benefit for children would rise by \$1 to \$17 per week from 1 November 1986. The increase would not apply to dependent students in receipt of Commonwealth education payments.

Portability of Pensions and Reciprocal Social Security Agreements

23 April 1986: The Reciprocal Social Security Agreement with Italy was signed in Rome by the Australian and Italian Prime Ministers. This was the first agreement signed under the proportional portability arrangements. The administrative arrangements for the Agreement were signed in Melbourne on 6 June 1986 by the Minister for Social Security and the Italian Deputy Foreign Minister, and the Agreement was given effect in Australia with the giving of Royal Assent to the *Social Security Amendment (Reciprocity with Italy) Act 1986* in December 1986. The Agreement would begin operation when the Italian Government had enacted appropriate legislation.

1 July 1986: The *Social Security (Proportional Portability of Pensions) Amendment Act 1986* came into force. The Act provided for the payment of proportional pensions outside Australia enabling the entry of Australia into reciprocal social security agreements with countries with contribution-based systems.

5 October 1986: A revised Social Security Agreement between Australia and New Zealand was signed by the Minister for Social Security and the High Commissioner for New Zealand.

Social Security Information

27 April 1986: The Minister for Social Security announced that regular individual letters would be sent to all pensioners setting out their individual entitlements. The first letters would coincide with the 1 May pension increases, and pensioners would be sent two such letters each year. Similar letters would be sent to beneficiaries and recipients of Family Allowance over the next 12 months.

Veterans and Their Dependents

22 May 1986: The *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* came into force. The Act represents a consolidation and simplification of the *Repatriation Act 1920* and also provides for a number of new benefits. These include the restoration of war widow's pensions and treatment entitlements to war widows who had remarried since 29 May 1984, and the recognition as having been allotted for service of all defence personnel who served in the Vietnam war zone. The Act provides a single legislative basis for the range of services provided by the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

19 August 1986: It was announced in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget that War (Defence) Widow pensioners also in receipt of Age Pension would

have the level of Age Pension frozen at its 1 November 1986 level. From that date, new entrants would receive a maximum of \$60.05 per week from Age Pension in addition to their War (Defence) Widow's Pension. Furthermore, any reduction in pension entitlements as a result of income-testing would be permanent. These measures would also apply to a small number of people with dual entitlements involving other Social Security pensions and benefits.

Inquiry into Social Security Conspiracy Case

10 June 1986: The Minister for Social Security announced that the Government would pay \$10m in compensation to the victims of the alleged Social Security conspiracy case. A Commission of Inquiry had been established in 1984 to advise the Government on appropriate compensation.

Double Orphan's Pension

19 August 1986: An increase in the rate of Double Orphan's Pension, by \$4.30 to \$60 per month from 1 November 1986, was announced in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget.

Income Test on Pensions

19 August 1986: It was announced in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget that the changes to the income test on pensions, announced in September 1985 for introduction in November 1986, would be deferred until July 1987.

Rent Assistance

19 August 1986: It was announced in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget that the rent threshold, above which pensioners and beneficiaries may become entitled to Rent Assistance, would be increased by \$5 to \$15 per week from December 1986. It was also announced that the changes in the income-testing of Rent Assistance, which had been announced in September 1985 for introduction in November 1986, would be deferred until July 1987.

Social Security Review

20 October 1986: The first issues paper prepared by the Social Security Review was released. The paper, *Income Support for Families with Children*, presented the issues involved in reform of the system of family income support. Following an announcement in December 1985, the Social Security Review had been established in February 1986 for a two year term. Fourteen Social Security Review background/discussion papers were also prepared in 1986.

Community Services — 1985

Compiled by Anthony King
National Institute of Economic and Industry Research

Handicapped Persons Welfare Programs

11 January 1985: The Minister for Community Services announced grants totalling \$1.1m for projects to provide new services for disabled people in 1985–86. The grants, under the Handicapped Persons Welfare Program, were the first made from the \$12m allocation for such projects announced in August 1984. A feature of this first group of funded projects was their emphasis on small community-based residential services. Announcements of further project approvals were made throughout the year.

30 May 1985: The Report of the Handicapped Programs Review, entitled *New Directions*, was tabled in the Senate by the Minister for Community Services. A major recommendation in the Report was for replacement of the current *Handicapped Persons Assistance Act 1974* with new disability services legislation. Other recommendations covered the areas of income support, education, transport, information dissemination and access to mainstream services. There was also a recommendation for a greater degree of co-ordination between Commonwealth and State programs. The Government would consider the Report in conjunction with the Disability Advisory Council of Australia and the Office for Disability.

20 August 1985: The introduction of legislation in the 1986 Autumn session of Parliament to establish a new Community Disability Services Program was foreshadowed in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget. The proposed legislation would encompass reforms arising from the Handicapped Programs Review and the new program would rationalise services currently provided under the *Handicapped Persons Assistance Act 1974* and through the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service (CRS). As a first step towards establishment of the new program, the Budget allocated an additional \$5m in 1985–86 for further regionalisation of the CRS and for the establishment of several demonstration projects aimed at assessing the feasibility of selected reforms suggested by the Handicapped Programs Review.

12 December 1985: The Minister for Community

Services announced funding of the first of the demonstration projects designed to explore innovative ways of providing services to disabled people.

Aged and Disabled Persons' Accommodation

25 February 1985: The Minister for Community Services and the Victorian Minister for Health jointly announced the provision of 206 new nursing home beds in areas of highest need in Victoria. These were the first beds approved under new Commonwealth guidelines.

13 May 1985: Grants totalling \$18.5m to voluntary, welfare and local government organizations to provide accommodation for aged or disabled people were announced by the Minister for Community Services.

13 May 1985: The Minister for Community Services announced grants under the Dementia Grants Program totalling \$400 000 to 14 hostels providing special facilities and services for dementia sufferers.

14 May 1985: Changes to conditions for the capital funding of aged and disabled persons accommodation were announced in the May 1985 Statement of Initial Expenditure Savings Measures. The changes were estimated to result in savings to the Government of \$9m in 1985–86.

27 June 1985: The Acting Minister for Community Services announced that new arrangements to assist residents of nursing homes who leave the nursing home temporarily to go into hospital, or for any other reason, would come into effect from 1 July 1985; that is, the date of Proclamation of legislation passed by Parliament in November 1984 to amend the National Health Act. Under the new arrangements for continuation of Commonwealth benefits, residents and proprietors of nursing homes would be required to enter into a common form of agreement on conditions to be met while the resident was temporarily absent. Residents would then be able to leave nursing homes for up to 28 days in each twelve month period without loss of Commonwealth nursing home benefits.

5 August 1985: The Minister for Community Services announced grants totalling \$3.8m to voluntary and welfare organizations caring for aged or disabled people to upgrade facilities in accommodation centres.

20 August 1985: It was announced in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget that hostel care, personal care and respite care subsidies would be paid on a daily basis from 1 January 1986. The subsidy rates from that date would be \$1.80 per day for hostel care, \$7.80 per day for personal care and \$7 per day for respite care. The Budget also included provision for continued funding of the Dementia Grants Program.

9 October 1985: The Minister for Community Services announced increases in the rates of nursing home benefits for residents of non-government homes in most States to take effect from 14 November 1985. The rates of benefit would increase by \$24.15 per week in New South Wales and The Australian Capital Territory, \$32.55 per week in Queensland, \$28 per week in Western Australia and \$43.05 per week in Tasmania. The May 1985 Statement of Initial Expenditure Savings Measures had provided for no increase in the rates of benefit in Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. However, because of cost increases resulting from the introduction of the 38 hour week in South Australia, it had now been decided to increase the rate of benefit in South Australia and the Northern Territory by \$21 per week.

1 November 1985: The Acting Minister for Community Services announced increases in the capital subsidy levels for organizations providing accommodation for aged or disabled people.

25 November 1985: Grants totalling \$25.2m to voluntary, welfare and local government organizations to provide accommodation and other services for aged people were announced by the Minister for Community Services.

19 December 1985: The Minister for Community Services released a report prepared by W. D. Scott and Co. on the cost of providing nursing home and hostel care services. The report had been commissioned in 1984 to assist the review of financial assistance provided by the Commonwealth to nursing homes and hostels for aged and disabled persons.

20 December 1985: The Minister for Community Services announced continued funding of \$3.25m in 1985–86 under the Geriatric Assessment Program for 27 projects currently conducting developmental work on assessment of elderly people.

Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service

9 May 1985: The Minister for Community Services announced that the hostel-type residential facilities of the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service (CRS) would be wound down. The residential facilities at the major CRS treatment centres would be replaced with a more appropriate range of residential options for CRS clients, notably non-institutional community-based accommodation. It was anticipated that alternative accommodation would have been found for all current clients by the end of December 1985 and the residential blocks would be closed from that date. In the meantime, no new clients would be admitted to residential blocks.

7 August 1985: The Minister for Community Services released a report on the Tasmanian operations of the CRS. The report stemmed from a review of

the CRS conducted between October 1983 and April 1984 and was the first to be produced in an Australia-wide series. Major points in the report included the need for further decentralisation of CRS services, the need for work-preparation centres for mildly intellectually disabled people and the desirability of greater client involvement in the development of individual goals and programs.

20 August 1985: Legislation, foreshadowed in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget, to create a new Community Disability Services Program would entail rationalisation of CRS services (see under Handicapped Persons Welfare Programs). As an initial step in establishment of the new program, the Budget included funds for further regionalisation of the CRS.

22 August 1985: The Minister for Community Services provided further details of the proposal to accelerate the development of community-based rehabilitation services through regional units administered by the CRS.

Children's Services

14 May 1985: The Treasurer announced in the May 1985 Statement of Initial Expenditure Savings Measures that the levels of child-care subsidy would be reduced, leading to budgetary savings of \$15m in 1985–86 and \$30m in a full year.

28 May 1985: The Minister for Community Services foreshadowed the introduction of revised child-care subsidy and fees arrangements from 1 January 1986. Changes being considered in the fee structures for centre-based and family day care would be made on the basis of the following principles: the need to maintain acceptable standards and quality of care; the Government's intention to maintain affordable child care for low to moderate income earners, by continuing to provide fee relief, while at the same time ensuring that Commonwealth-funded child care continues to meet the needs of users across the entire income scale; and, while maintaining quality care, to provide incentives for service operators and users to contain costs.

31 May 1985: Implementation plans for the Government's 1984 election promise to develop 20 000 new child-care places over the next three years were outlined by the Acting Minister for Community Services. Nineteen thousand places would be provided for long day care and for occasional care services, with a major focus of the day-care strategy on the development of work-related child care services. Funds originally nominated for the final 1000 new places would be reallocated to services for children for whom day-care services were not appropriate. During 1985–86, activity under the initiative would concentrate on determination of the distribution

strategy for the extra places in consultation with other levels of government, private sector employers and community groups.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget included an allocation of \$107m for the three-year program to provide an additional 20 000 child-care places. The 1985–86 provision was for \$4.9m with \$31.1m planned for 1986–87 and \$71m for 1987–88. The Minister for Community Services provided further details of the implementation plans for the program, including an allocation of 12 000 of the new child-care places for centre-based long day care, 4000 for family day care and 3000 for occasional care services.

7 November 1985: The Minister for Community Services announced new Commonwealth child-care funding arrangements to take effect from April 1986. The changes would mainly affect long day-care centres with the operational assistance for family day-care schemes unaffected. The subsidy paid to centres, currently an average \$30 per week per child, would be reduced with a new formula used to calculate levels of subsidy. The new funding arrangements would provide a subsidy to each centre of \$16 per week for children under three years old and \$11 per week for children over three years old. The current 'fee relief' system would also be amended with a \$2 per week increase in the minimum fee and reduction in the rate of withdrawal of fee relief with increasing family income.

6 December 1985: The Minister for Community Services announced that transitional assistance would be provided in the first year of the new child-care funding arrangements to centres whose fees would otherwise be higher than \$85 per week, or would increase by more than \$25 per week. The Office of Child Care had estimated that 17 per cent of centres would require such assistance, at a cost to the Commonwealth of \$1m.

Respite Care

27 June 1985: When announcing new arrangements to assist residents of nursing homes to leave the nursing home temporarily, the Acting Minister for Community Services noted that the arrangements were also designed to encourage the expansion of short-term respite care facilities. The arrangements, which would come into effect on 1 July 1985, would allow nursing home proprietors to admit people requiring respite care for brief periods while residents were absent.

20 August 1985: It was announced in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget that the respite care subsidy would be paid on a daily basis from 1 January 1986 at the rate of \$7 per day.

Department of Community Services

17 July 1985: The Acting Minister for Community Services announced the appointments of Ms Maree Faulkner, formerly Executive Director of the Home Care Service in New South Wales, as Director of the Office for the Aged, and of Ms Judy Ellis, presently Executive Officer of the Disability Council of New South Wales, as Director of the Office of Disability.

Homeless Persons Assistance

18 July 1985: Completion of a joint Commonwealth-State review of eight homeless persons assistance services in Western Australia was announced. The services had initially been excluded from the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) upon its introduction on 1 January 1985, but would now be included under SAAP from 1 July 1985. Nationally, 67 services operating under the Homeless Persons Assistance Program had been initially excluded from SAAP. Western Australia was the first State to complete the review of previously excluded services.

Home and Community Care

20 August 1985: The 1985-86 Commonwealth Budget foreshadowed the introduction of legislation in the Budget session of Parliament to formally establish the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program. The legislation would be subject to agreement with other States and Territories and would operate retrospectively from 1 July 1985. In addition to maintained real funding for existing HACC activities, the Budget provided \$25m in 1985-86 for expansion of activities with this amount to be matched on a 3:1 basis by the States and Territories. It was planned that \$30m would be made available in 1986-87 for expansion activities on a 2:1 basis, and that expenditure in 1987-88 over-and-above

real base levels of expenditure would be made on a 1:1 basis.

28 August 1985: The Minister for Community Services announced revised funding arrangements for HACC which included a commitment from 1987-88 onwards for a 20 per cent per annum increase in Commonwealth funds, in money terms, provided it was matched by an equivalent percentage increase in the contributions from States and Territories.

19 September 1985: The Minister for Community Services and the South Australian Minister for Health jointly announced the reaching of formal agreement between the Commonwealth and South Australia on the operation of HACC in that State. This was the first such agreement reached following the negotiations between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories since the announcement of HACC in the 1984-85 Commonwealth Budget. Subsequent announcements were made of formal agreements with Tasmania (3 October 1985), Western Australia (18 October 1985), Northern Territory (21 October 1985), and Victoria (11 December 1985).

9 October 1985: The *Home and Community Care Bill 1985* was introduced into Parliament.

Family support Services Scheme

20 August 1985: The 1985-86 Commonwealth Budget included a commitment to extend the funding of the Family Support Services Scheme for a further 12 months to September 1986, and included provision of \$2.5m for the Scheme in 1985-86.

21 August 1985: The Minister for Community Services released a report on the future of family support services in Australia. The report, which had been instigated by the Council of Social Welfare Ministers, proposed guidelines for future Commonwealth and State Government involvement in family services.

Community Services — 1986

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Family Support Services

6 January 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced that the Government would fund the Family Support Services Scheme (FSSS) as a continuing program and would arrange for negotiations with State and Territory governments regarding future cost-sharing arrangements. The Minister also announced that the Government would provide funds for the FSSS, additional to the 1985–86 Budget allocation, to meet the increased costs being faced by services operating under the Scheme.

16 July 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced cost-supplementation for all projects funded under the FSSS to apply from the September quarter at an annual rate of 7.1 per cent.

19 August 1986: The establishment of a new Family Support Program from 1 January 1987 was announced in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget. The base level of funding for the new Program would essentially be the existing level of funding for the FSSS which would be replaced by the new Program. The Commonwealth and the States and Territories would maintain this base level of funding with indexation of the base and expansion of the Program being cost-shared on a dollar for dollar basis.

25 August 1986: The Minister for Community Services provided further details of the proposed Family Support Program.

Children's Services

4 February 1986: The provision of a grant to the Australian Early Childhood Association to provide advice on issues of quality in child-care services was announced by the Minister for Community Services. The Association would prepare an annual report for the Minister and extend its national advisory service.

1 April 1986: The new subsidy and fee-relief arrangements for child-care centres and family day-care schemes, which were announced in November 1985, came into effect.

13 July 1986: The Minister for Community Services released guidelines on private sector co-

operative arrangements under the Children's Services Program for the establishment of child-care centres. The guidelines were designed to assist private sector employers who wished to facilitate access to child care for their employees.

3 August 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced 91 grants, totalling \$1.6m to assist the access of children with special needs to child-care services.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$194.7m for children's services, an increase of \$48.2m on the 1985–86 level, including \$38.8m for the program of expansion of child-care places.

22 August 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced increases in the subsidies paid to child-care centres from \$16 to \$17.20 per week for children under three years old and from \$11 to \$11.80 per week for children three years old and over, and an increase in the operational grant made to family day schemes from \$12 to \$13 per week per child. The increases would take effect from 1 January 1987. The Minister also announced increases in the subsidies for Outside School Hours Care services and in the vacation-care grants to the States.

Home and Community Care

10 February 1986: The Minister for Community Services and the Premier of New South Wales announced that the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments had entered into formal agreement on the operation of the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program. A similar agreement was signed with Queensland on 8 April 1986, while agreements with the other States had been reached in late 1985.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget allocated \$131.9m for HACC, an increase of \$31m over the 1985–86 level to cover the full-year cost of services expanded in 1985–86 and the establishment of new services in 1986–87.

11 November 1986: The Minister for Community Services released a paper on the future priorities of the Commonwealth Government under HACC. The paper had been prepared by the Department of Community Services.

National Advisory Council on Social Welfare

14 February 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced the appointment, under two year terms, of ten new members to the National Advisory Council on Social Welfare. The Council, which provides advice to the Ministers for Community Services and Social Security, would be chaired by Dr Terry Carney. The Minister also announced

that membership of the State and Territory committees on social welfare had been reviewed.

Aged and Disabled Persons' Accommodation

18 February 1986: In a speech to the Australian Masonic Conference of Aged Care, the Minister for Community Services reviewed policy on the provision of accommodation for aged and disabled persons and foreshadowed extensive policy changes to follow tabling and consideration of the report of the Nursing Homes and Hostels Review.

14 March 1986: A report entitled *The Problem of Dementia in Australia*, prepared by Dr A. Henderson and Dr A. Jorm of the Australian National University, was released by the Acting Minister for Community Services. The report, which had been commissioned under the Community Services Research and Development Program, highlighted a need for improved and expanded services for dementia sufferers.

27 March 1986: The Minister for Community Services released the report of a study entitled *Private Hostels for the Aged and Disabled*. The report presented data gathered from a survey of rest homes in South Australia and special accommodation houses in Victoria.

14 April 1986: The Minister for Community Services made a ministerial statement in the Senate upon tabling the report of the Nursing Homes and Hostels Review. The Review had been set up in July 1985 in response to criticisms made in a number of reports; particularly, the Giles Report, the McLeay Report and the Auditor-General's efficiency audit. Major recommendations made by the Review included: the development of assessment teams to provide advice to elderly people; controlled growth of nursing homes and hostels with an emphasis on expanded hostel accommodation; changes in funding arrangements based on a standard of care determined by the Commonwealth; adjustment to hostel subsidies to reflect the increasing role which hostels will take on in caring for elderly people; greater flexibility in program arrangements to cater for special groups; the development of standards of care and quality of life measures; and the strengthening of community care services. The Minister endorsed the general directions and strategy proposed by the Review, though decisions on specific recommendations would be made only after consultation with State governments, industry and voluntary care associations, and other interests.

19 May 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced grants totalling \$4.1m for the upgrading of homes for aged and disabled people.

21 May 1986: Changes to the *National Health Act 1953* and *Nursing Homes Assistance Act 1974* were

gazetted. The changes would temporarily confine the granting of approvals for additional general-purpose nursing home beds to very high priority regions. The restrictions would apply until the Government had reviewed its program for nursing home and hostel beds.

28 May 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced 25 grants, totalling \$400 000, to hostels providing special facilities for people suffering from dementia.

2 July 1986: The Minister for Community Services released the report of a study of hostels for the elderly which had been commissioned by the Government and undertaken by Peat Marwick and Mitchell. The report was entitled *Quality, Staffing and Standards: Commonwealth Subsidised Hostels for Aged Persons*.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget included a number of provisions stemming from consideration of the report of the Nursing Homes and Hostels Review. Subsidies to hostels would be increased from today, and capital funding for residential care for the aged would increase by \$13.5m in 1986–87. An additional \$2m in 1986–87 was allocated for special programs for groups with particular residential needs, including \$0.5m for the expansion of care for dementia sufferers and the remaining \$1.5m for ethnic communities, Aboriginals, and physically and intellectually disabled aged people. Geriatric assessment services would be expanded with estimated expenditure of \$6.2m in 1986–87. It was also announced in the Budget that, in November 1986, the hostel care subsidy would be increased to \$1.95 per day, the personal care subsidy to \$8.40 per day, and the respite care subsidy to \$7.50 per day. The personal care subsidy would receive a further increase to \$11 per day in May 1987.

17 September 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced grants totalling \$40.4m to voluntary, welfare and local government organisations to provide accommodation for aged or disabled people.

25 September 1986: The Minister for Community Services released the report of a study commissioned by the Government to examine staffing and quality of care in non-government nursing homes. The report, *Quality, Staffing and Dependency: Non-government Nursing Homes*, was prepared by the Centre of Applied Business Research at the University of Western Australia.

23 October 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced increases in the rates of nursing home benefits. The weekly rate would increase by \$46.20 in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, \$35.70 in Victoria, \$17.50 in Queensland, \$10.15 in Western Australia, \$21 in South Australia and the Northern Territory, and \$15.40 in Tasmania.

27 October 1986: In an address to a conference organised by the Australian Council on the Ageing, the Minister for Community Services described development by the Government of a strategy for the care of aged people following consideration of the report of the Review of Nursing Homes and Hostels.

16 November 1986: The Ministers for Community Services and Immigration and Ethnic Affairs jointly announced a \$40m package of support for the aged population in Australia who were born in non English-speaking countries. The package included: \$18m over the next three years for more 'ethnic-specific' nursing homes; \$21m over the next four years for hostel facilities specifically for ethnic groups; and \$1.2m for pilot community-based projects in ethnic communities. The measures were based on recommendations made by the Ethnic Aged Working Party in their report *Strategies for Change* which was released today by the Ministers. The Working Party had been set up in November 1985.

Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service

1 April 1986: The Minister for Community Services and the South Australian Minister of Health announced the formation of a joint Commonwealth-State working party on rehabilitation facilities in South Australia.

19 August 1986: It was announced in the 1986-87 Commonwealth Budget that the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service (CRS) would dispose of its large metropolitan centres in 1986-87 and accelerate its program of regionalisation.

22 October 1986: The Minister for Community Services provided further detail on the program of regionalisation of rehabilitation services.

18 November 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced that 20 rehabilitation staff positions would be identified and filled by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff over the coming year in an attempt to provide Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders with more benefit from the CRS.

Department of Community Services Research

22 May 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced grants for four community service

research projects. The projects were 'Development of Models for Needs Based Planning', 'Access to and Delivery of Community Services in Remote Communities', 'Implications of Housing and Accommodation Shortages' and 'The Role of TAFE's in Assisting Disabled People'.

Disabled Persons Welfare Programs

12 June 1986: The Minister for Community Services made a ministerial statement in the Senate outlining new disability services legislation. The legislation would be introduced in the Budget Session of Parliament and would replace the *Handicapped Persons Assistance Act 1974*. The legislation would result in a restructuring of services and methods of funding. An important adjunct to the legislation would be a statement of principles and objectives.

20 June 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced grants totalling \$3.3m for 37 new demonstration projects under the Disability Services Program Demonstration Projects initiative for 1986-87.

19 August 1986: Introduction of a new attendant care service to assist severely physically disabled people currently living in nursing homes to move out into the community was announced in the 1986-87 Commonwealth Budget. With initial funding of \$0.5m in 1986-87, expenditure would increase to \$6.5m by 1988-89.

1 October 1986: The Minister for Community Services announced the contribution of Commonwealth funding to a community housing program whereby the Spastic Centre of New South Wales would assist people with physical disabilities to move out of institutions to more independent lives in the community. This was the first initiative of this type and could become the model for further programs.

12 November 1986: The *Disability Services Bill* and the *Disability Services (Transitional Provisions and Consequential Amendments) Bill* were introduced into Parliament.

Homeless Persons Assistance

19 August 1986: The 1986-87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$50.1m for the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP). Services amounting to \$1.7m would continue to be funded in 1986-87 under the *Homeless Persons Assistance Act 1974* pending their inclusion under SAAP.

Employment, Unemployment and Training — 1985

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OECD Review of Youth Policies and Programs

23 January 1985: A review of youth policies in Australia, undertaken by the OECD, was released by the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Youth Affairs. The Review recommended a number of long-term measures to improve the education participation and employment prospects of young people.

Review of Labour Market Programs

23 January 1985: The report of the Committee of Inquiry into Labour Market Programs (the Kirby Report) was released by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. Major recommendations made in the Report included: establishment of a new system of traineeships for young people which would combine work experience and on-the-job training with formal off-the-job training; a rationalisation of existing adult training programs into a single program, and a doubling of resources available for adult training and retraining over the next three financial years; an integration and rationalisation of existing wage subsidy programs into a new targeted scheme which would make special provision for the disadvantaged; the rationalisation and expansion of existing community-based programs; the development of the Community Youth Support Scheme into a new Australian Youth Service; and establishment of new advisory and administrative arrangements, including a national council for training and unemployment.

27 February 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations made a Ministerial statement on the Kirby Report outlining the Government's proposed response to recommendations in the Report.

26 July 1985: The establishment of a tripartite committee to review advisory and administrative structures relating to Federal employment and training policies was announced by the Minister for

Employment and Industrial Relations. The committee would be chaired by Dr Michael Keating, Secretary of the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations.

Bureau of Labour Market Research

13 February 1985: A grant to the Australian Council of Trade Unions to establish a labour market research unit was announced by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. The grant, funded through the Bureau of Labour Market Research (BLMR), would be \$40 000 each year for three years.

28 February 1985: A BLMR monograph, *Women in the Labour Force: the proceedings of a conference*, was released. Further BLMR monographs released during the year were *Rural Land Sharing Communities: an economic model*, *Labour Market Efficiency in Australia*, and *Structure and Duration of Unemployment in Australia: proceedings of a conference*.

18 March 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations released a BLMR research report entitled *Youth Employment Patterns*. A major policy observation in the report was the need to develop structured training arrangements for youth. Further BLMR research reports released during the year were entitled *The Labour Market for Professional Engineers* and *Who's in the Labour Force: a study of labour force participation in Australia*.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget allocated \$1.8m to the BLMR for continuation of the Australian Longitudinal Survey.

9 September 1985: A second report from the BLMR evaluation of the Wage Pause Program was released. The report was entitled *Public Sector Job Creation: a profile of wage pause program participants*.

Industry Training

13 February 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced funding of \$89 000, through the National Training Council, for a major study of computer-based training in Australia.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided \$12m for industry training services, including \$1.5m for pilot funding of innovative training courses in industry.

Community-based Youth Support Programs

23 February 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Youth Affairs jointly announced that the Government would begin immediate consultations regarding the establishment of an

Australian Youth Service (AYS). This was a response to a major recommendation in the Kirby Report. It was proposed that consideration be given to developing the Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS) into a permanent Australian Youth Service. The consultation team would operate until May.

30 May 1985: The summary report of the Australian Youth Service consultation team was released. While the report identified widespread support for development of an AYS, a major point in the report was the view that any such service should not replace CYSS. The report recommended further development of alternative mechanisms for an AYS, together with a strengthening of CYSS.

28 June 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that 75 CYSS projects would receive a total funding of almost \$500 000 to introduce special programs for disadvantaged groups of young people. These special initiative grants were designed to promote access to CYSS by young unemployed women, ethnic groups and Aborigines.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided for an expansion of CYSS and the establishment of a new community-based Labour Market Program (CBLMP). Funding for CYSS would be increased by \$6m to \$32m in 1985–86, including \$2m to establish new and expanded CYSS projects in Queensland and New South Wales, to remove existing funding inequities, and \$2m on cost-of-living adjustments and the upgrading of projects. Special initiative grants would account for \$700 000. The CBLMP, a single program to support community-based labour market initiatives, would be introduced on 1 January 1986. The CBLMP would incorporate the existing Community Youth Special Projects, the Volunteer Youth Program and the Work Preparation Program and would also provide assistance to other disadvantaged groups not assisted under the current components. Funding in 1985–86 for the CBLMP would be \$12.3m, a 90 per cent increase over 1984–85 funding in this area.

27 August 1985: The report of the Australian Youth Service consultation team was released.

16 September 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that three pilot information technology centres (ITECs) would be established in early 1986 with \$400 000 under the CBLMP. The centres would provide disadvantaged job seekers with access to training in the field of information technology. The announcement was in response to a report commissioned by the National Training Council.

18 September 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced CYSS grant levels for 1985–86. Standard grants would be paid at five levels; \$47 000, \$62 000, \$77 000, \$92 000 and \$107 000.

20 October 1985: Details of CYSS project funding for the period commencing on 1 November 1985 were announced. Seventy-six CYSS projects, almost a quarter of the total, would be upgraded and most others would receive cost-of-living adjustments.

3 December 1985: Details of a scheme, 'Young Australia: Community Service Volunteers', under which public and private organizations would sponsor young volunteers in small working groups, were announced by the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Youth Affairs. The scheme, which was first announced in August as part of Priority One, would provide total grants of \$1m in 1985–86 and aims to provide young people with opportunities to develop self-confidence, obtain new skills and perform useful community service.

Australian Traineeship System

27 February 1985: When tabling the Kirby Report, the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that the Government would initially respond to one of the major recommendations in the Kirby Report by examining the possibility of introducing traineeships for young people in the Commonwealth Public Service.

7 March 1985: Commonwealth and State labour ministers, meeting in Wellington, New Zealand, endorsed the need for experimentation to develop the concept of youth traineeships.

12 April 1985: Agreement in principle on the implementation of youth traineeships, their basic features and the key principles of their operation, was reached with employer and union representatives at a special meeting of the National Labour Consultative Council.

20 August 1985: The introduction of the Australian Traineeship Scheme (ATS) was announced in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget. The ATS would provide school leavers between 16 and 18 years of age with a structured combination of work-based experience and training and formal off-the-job training over at least 12 months. The Federal Government would provide an on-the-job training fee of \$1000 per trainee (\$2000 in the case of disadvantaged trainees) and an off-the-job training fee of \$1700 per trainee to TAFE (or \$2000 to other training organisations). A traineeship contract would formalise conditions between employer and trainee and trainees would receive appropriate accreditation on completion. The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided \$15.7m for the ATS to assist an estimated 10 000 school leavers in 1985–86. The number assisted under the ATS was expected to rise to 75 000 by 1988–89.

25 September 1985: The first agreement between the Federal Government and a State government on implementation of the ATS was announced in the case of Western Australia.

2 October 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced the first private sector recruitment under the ATS.

Employment and Training for Women

11 April 1985: Funding for 12 projects under the Women's Research and Employment Initiatives Program (WREIP) was announced by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. The grants, totalling \$195 000, included funding for two major studies into the use of maternity leave in Australia and the effects of industry policy on women's employment.

30 May 1985: A progress report on the Government's affirmative action pilot program for women was issued by the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women. The report, prepared by the Office of the Status of Women, was based on the first nine months of a pilot program involving 28 large private sector corporations and three higher education institutions.

26 September 1985: The Working Party on Affirmative Action concluded its report to the Government.

30 September 1985: The Prime Minister announced acceptance by the Government of the recommendations of the Working Party on Affirmative Action. The Prime Minister foreshadowed the introduction into Parliament in early 1986 of legislation for affirmative action for women in higher education institutions and in private sector organisations employing more than 100 people. It was expected that higher education institutions would be required to comply from 1987 and private sector organisations from early 1988.

Employment and Training for Aboriginals

2 May 1985: The appointment of four new members to the National Aboriginal Employment Development Committee was announced by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided \$58.5m for the Aboriginal Training Program.

19 September 1985: The Report of the Committee of Review of Aboriginal Employment and Training Programs (the Miller Report) was tabled in Parliament. The Report identified a failure of the National Employment Strategy for Aboriginals (introduced in 1977) to produce significant improvements in the employment status and prospects of Aboriginals. The Report recommended: a much greater concentration by Federal, State and local governments on assisting Aboriginal people to provide for their own livelihoods; restructuring of Aboriginal labour market programs; improved edu-

cation; and more attention to skills training in a wide range of occupations. Other major concerns of the Report were with: local-level control of community economic development by Aboriginal people; affirmative action strategies; and other means of encouraging the private sector to adopt policies to employ more Aboriginal people.

Community Employment Program

15 May 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that the Commonwealth Government would allocate \$290m to the Community Employment Program (CEP) in 1985–86, and made a further commitment of \$140m to the CEP in 1986–87. Despite the \$120m reduction in funding from 1984–85 to 1985–86, the Minister expected a similar number of people to be assisted by the CEP in both years due to the timing of project commencements.

2 July 1985: The results of a survey of the post-program labour market experiences of CEP participants were reported by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. The survey, undertaken by the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations (DEIR), covered 600 former CEP participants.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget included an estimated breakdown of the \$291.4m allocated to the CEP in 1985–86 into \$261m for the States and Territories element, \$29m for the Commonwealth element and \$1.4m under the Department of Territories.

10 December 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that the Government would continue the CEP for a further three years beyond 30 June 1986. The Minister also released a report describing the performance of the CEP. The report, entitled *The Community Employment Program: The Second Year*, was prepared by the DEIR.

Trade Training

18 June 1985: The Acting Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced a 4.1 per cent increase in the subsidy levels paid under the Commonwealth Rebate for Apprentice Full-time Training (CRAFT) Scheme. The new rates would be effective from the beginning of 1985 and reflected wage movements during 1984.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided \$118m for trade training, including \$98m for CRAFT.

20 December 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations released a BLMR report entitled *Commonwealth Assistance for Apprenticeship: Evaluation of the 1984 Additional Employment Incentives*. The report showed that, of the 10 000 apprentices who attracted claims under the Special

Additional Employment Incentive, around 20 per cent were taken on as a direct result of the incentive payment.

Local Employment Initiatives

20 June 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced the establishment of a national advisory group to examine the potential of local employment initiatives as an option for permanent job creation in Australia.

Extent of Employment and Training Programs

30 June 1985: Commonwealth expenditure on employment and training programs in 1984–85 amounted to \$814m including: \$27m for skills training; \$117m for trade training; \$119m for youth training; \$53m for special training; \$35m under the Adult Wage Subsidy Scheme; \$30m for community-based youth support; and \$406m under the CEP.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided \$738m to employment and training programs. The reduction from 1984–85 levels was largely due to the reduction in expenditure on the CEP. Funding for all programs, excluding the CEP, would increase by \$44m over the 1984–85 level. Major features of the Budget were several initiatives in response to recommendations made in the Kirby Report. These included provision for the Australian Traineeship System, an integrated wage subsidy program, and an expanded community-based labour market program.

Self Employment Initiatives

5 July 1985: The first Federal/State schemes under the pilot program of the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme were launched in South Australia and Western Australia. Schemes in other states were announced later in the year.

Adult Training and Retraining

28 March 1985: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and the Minister for Health jointly announced the provision of \$2m under the Skills in Demand Program for two major training programs to encourage qualified nurses to return to the workforce. The programs would operate during 1984–85 and 1985–86 in New South Wales and Western Australia and were expected to involve 900 nurses. Funding for similar programs in other States was announced later in the year.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget allocated \$24.7m to adult training and re-

training including provision for the establishment on 1 January 1986 of an expanded Adult Training Program (ATP). The ATP would incorporate General Training Assistance and Skills-in-Demand.

19 November 1985: An additional \$7.3m in Commonwealth funding for nurse education and retraining over the next two years was jointly announced by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, the Minister for Education and the Minister for Health.

Commonwealth Employment Service

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget included provision of \$2.9m for the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) to improve services provided through the CES for young people. Special centres would be established within a number of CES offices to act as focal points for providing young people with labour market assistance and information.

Priority One

20 August 1985: The Prime Minister announced Priority One, a strategy designed to address the diverse problems confronting young people in a comprehensive and co-ordinated manner. The fundamental goal of the strategy, which would be co-ordinated by the Office of Youth Affairs, would be to increase young people's access to education, training and employment opportunities. The strategy would have three interrelated themes: education, training and employment; income support; and support services directed at the personal needs and problems of young people. The Policy measures included under Priority One were described in 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget paper no.13, *Youth Policies in the 1985–86 Budget*.

Wage Subsidy Programs

20 August 1985: The creation of an integrated wage subsidy program was announced in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget. The program would subsume the Special Youth Employment Training Program, the Adult Wage Subsidy Scheme, and on-the-job components of the Programs for Disabled and Special Needs Job Seekers. Minimum eligibility would be six months unemployment (except for the disabled or others with special needs), with subsidies available for a standard six months period, and the rate of subsidy would reflect age, duration of unemployment and other disadvantages. The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided \$142m for wage subsidy programs, including \$35m for the integrated program which was expected to commence on 1 January 1986.

2 December 1985: Jobstart, the integrated wage subsidy program, began operation. Two classes of subsidy were specified: Jobstart Basic for people who had been unemployed for at least six months in the last nine months; and Jobstart Special for people unemployed for over 12 months in the last 15 months or especially disadvantaged. Within each class of subsidy, the rates of subsidy would increase with age.

Occupational Share System

13 September 1985: The second annual report produced under the Occupational Share System for skilled migration was released. The report summarised recent trends in supply and demand, current labour market conditions and future labour market prospects for 64 occupations in which skill shortages could occur over the next few years.

Formal Training Allowance

19 December 1985: The introduction from 1 January 1986 of a new system of formal training allowances was jointly announced by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Youth Affairs. The new Formal Training Allowance (FTA) would replace two existing allowance structures: Transition Allowance and General Training Assistance. The FTA would involve a single age-related structure and would be payable to eligible participants in formal training programs. FTA would consist of three components: a living component equivalent to the Unemployment Benefit entitlement of the trainee; a training component varying with age; and ancillary allowances. As part of this rationalisation of training allowances, the existing pre-apprenticeship allowance would be abolished.

Employment, Unemployment and Training — 1986

Compiled by Anthony King
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Adult Training and Retraining

1 January 1986: The Adult Training Program (ATP) was introduced. The ATP incorporated the Labour Adjustment Training Arrangements and subsumed the General Training Assistance and Skills in Demand Programs as well as the formal training provisions of the Programs for Disabled and Special Needs Job Seekers. ATP has two components, General Skills Training and National Skills Shortages, and provides assistance mainly through allowances to trainees and course costs to training providers.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$22.9m for adult training and retraining.

Community Based Youth Support Programs

1 January 1986: The Community Training Program (CTP) was introduced. The CTP incorporated Community Youth Special Projects, the Work Preparation Program and the Volunteer Youth Program (VYP).

20 February 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced details of 30 new Community Youth Support Scheme (CYSS) projects which would be established from 1 March in New South Wales and Queensland. The projects would correct inequities in the distribution of CYSS funds between States.

4 June 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that Information Technology Centres would be established under the CTP in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth to provide computer-skills training for disadvantaged unemployed people.

11 June 1986: A proposed initiative for young unemployed people to undertake voluntary community service work was announced by the Prime Minister in an Address to the Nation. The initiative would incorporate the VYP.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$35.3m for the CYSS and \$17.8m for the CTP, including \$3.1m for the establishment of a community work for the unemployed initiative.

7 September 1986: A consultation program was launched by the Federal Government to seek views on development of the Community Volunteer Program announced in the 1986–87 Budget.

4 November 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that 33 CYSS projects would be upgraded to higher grant levels for the 1986–87 funding year which began on 1 November.

Formal Training Allowance

1 January 1986: The Formal Training Allowance (FTA) system, which had been announced in December 1985, was introduced.

6 June 1986: Changes to the FTA were announced by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. The housing-cost assistance component of FTA would be made more readily available to disabled people and Aborigines, and FTA would be extended to cover young people under the age of 16.

Employment and Training for Women

20 January 1986: The Acting Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced details of grants for projects aimed at improving the position of women in the workforce. The grants were provided under the Women's Research and Employment Initiatives Program (WREIP).

25 February 1986: A six-month period of consultation on the National Agenda for Women was launched by the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women. Labour force participation and access to training are two of the main concerns of the National Agenda for Women, which was announced by the Prime Minister in November 1985.

6 April 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations released a study on women and engineering. The study, *Women and Engineering: A Comparative Overview of New Initiatives*, was commissioned by the BLMR. The Minister also mentioned the development within his Department of a National Strategy on Women and the Labour Market and the initiation of a National Working Group on Women in Apprenticeship.

1 June 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced a grant of \$50 000 under the WREIP to the Melbourne-based Labor Resource Centre for a study of part-time work trends in Australia.

2 July 1986: The Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women announced the estab-

lishment of an Interim Affirmative Action Agency in Sydney, pending the passage through Parliament of the Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Bill. The legislation, which will cover all higher education institutions and employers with over 100 staff, provides for an Affirmative Action Agency to advise employers on the development of affirmative action programs, issue guidelines and monitor programs.

14 September 1986: The Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women foreshadowed completion of the National Agenda for Women in early 1987.

1 October 1986: The *Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act 1986* came into operation. The Act required private sector organizations with 100 or more employees and higher education institutions to develop affirmative action programs for women.

17 October 1986: A conference on legislative and award restrictions to women's employment was held.

Australian Traineeship System

6 February 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced the establishment of a National Task Force on the Australian Traineeship System (ATS) to promote, co-ordinate and advise the Government on the development of the ATS. The Task Force would include representatives from the union movement, employers, young people, Federal and State governments and the TAFE system, and was initially appointed for a period of 12 months.

30 June 1986: Some 3700 traineeship positions were created under the ATS during 1985–86, with over 11 000 young people in training at 30 June 1986.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget allocated \$35.5m to the ATS to provide 15 000 traineeships in 1986–87.

Commonwealth Employment Service

6 February 1986: The first of 36 Youth Access Centres to be established in selected Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) offices was opened by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. The Centres are designed to provide comprehensive information, counselling and referral services for young people.

20 May 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that the National and Regional Advisory Committees on the CES would be subsumed by the proposed Australian Council for Employment and Training.

Trade Training

26 March 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced a 6.5 per cent increase in the subsidy levels paid under the Commonwealth Rebate for Apprentice Full-time Training (CRAFT) Scheme. The increase would be effective from the beginning of 1986 and reflected wage movements during 1985.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$123m for trade training, including \$99m for CRAFT.

Community Employment Program

13 May 1986: Assent was given to an Act to amend the Community Employment Act 1983 to extend the Community Employment Program (CEP) until June 1989.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget allocated \$201m to the CEP, a reduction of \$91m on the 1985–86 level of funding. Over the three-year period from 30 June 1986, CEP funding would total \$600m.

Australian Council for Employment and Training

20 May 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that a major new tripartite body, the Australian Council for Employment and Training (ACET), would be established to advise the government on employment and training policy. ACET would be established as an independent advisory body with broad representation from unions, employers, Commonwealth and State governments and other areas. The establishment of ACET was recommended by the tripartite committee set up in July 1985 to review national advisory and administrative structures in the employment and training area. ACET would replace a number of existing advisory bodies including the National Training Council, the National and Regional Advisory Committees on the CES, the National Aboriginal Employment Development Committee and the Advisory Council to the Bureau of Labour Market Research.

14 October 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced the appointment of Mr Jack Wright, former Deputy Premier of South Australia, as chairperson of ACET. ACET would be initially established on an administrative basis from 1 November 1986, and through legislation in early 1987.

Bureau of Labour Market Research

7 January 1986: A BLMR monograph entitled *Rural Labour Markets in Australia* was released. Further BLMR monographs released during the year

were: *Women and Engineering — A Comparative Overview of New Initiatives*; *The First Wave of the Australian Longitudinal Survey: Facts and Figures about Young CES Registrants*; *Professional Incomes*; and, *The Measurement and Implications of Productivity Growth*. BLMR research reports released in 1986 were: *Commonwealth Assistance for Apprenticeship*; *Evaluation of the 1984 Additional Employment Incentives*; *Unemployment and the Labour Market: Anatomy of the Problem*; and *Migrants in the Labour Market*.

20 May 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that the Bureau of Labour Market Research (BLMR) would be abolished upon the establishment of ACET. The functions of BLMR would be absorbed partly by ACET and partly by the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations.

Employment and Training for Aboriginals

20 May 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that the National Aboriginal Employment Development Committee would be subsumed by the proposed ACET.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$71.7m for employment and training assistance for Aboriginals. This included \$2.2m for the establishment of an Enterprise Employment Assistance Program which would provide for payment to Aboriginal community enterprises of wage subsidies equivalent to the appropriate rates of Unemployment Benefit. This program and other measures would form part of a new Aboriginal Employment Development Policy being developed in response to the Miller Report which was released in September 1985. Emphasis under the new Policy would be on enterprise development in rural and remote communities, improved access to employment in urban areas and country towns, and better training and educational opportunities.

Industry Training

20 May 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations announced that the National Training Council would be subsumed by the proposed ACET.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$12.2m for industry training services.

Discrimination in Employment

4 June 1986: The Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on the Status of Women announced that Commonwealth statutory authorities would be required to implement equal employment opportu-

nity programs for women, Aborigines, migrants of non-English speaking backgrounds and people with disabilities. The requirement would expand the provision of equal opportunity programs by major employers.

Extent of Labour Market Programs

19 August 1986: Figures presented in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget showed Commonwealth expenditure on employment and training programs in 1985–86 amounted to \$700m including: \$291m under the CEP; \$115m under Jobstart; \$109m for trade training; \$67m for Aboriginal employment and training; \$32m for CYSS; and \$18m for vocational training for youth. The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$724m for employment and training programs. A major feature of the Budget was a shift in expenditure away from job creation programs, seen in a \$90m reduction in CEP funding, towards training programs, particularly those directed at youth.

Skilled Migration

9 July 1986: The Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs jointly announced occupations listed under the Occupational Share System (OSS) for skilled migration. The 1986–87 schedule included places for 3950 workers in 26 occupations. Under the OSS, shares are allocated only in those occupations where domestic education, training and retraining are unlikely to be able to satisfy Australia's requirements.

21 September 1986: The third annual report of the OSS, *Meeting Australia's Skill Needs*, was released together with three studies of migrants in the workplace. The studies covered surveys of migrants selected under the Employer Nomination Scheme and under the OSS, and of migrants granted Change of Status on occupational grounds.

Local Employment Initiatives

16/17 July 1986: A conference on local employment initiatives (LEIs), sponsored by the Federal Government was held in Canberra. The conference brought together international experts and Australian leaders in the development of LEIs. As a potential new approach to job creation, LEIs are seen as economically viable businesses and activities, offering secure employment, in response to local needs and resources.

Wage Subsidy Programs

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$128m for the Jobstart program.

Education — 1985

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Curriculum Development

10 February 1985: A national workshop in Adelaide on the teaching of reading and writing to primary students marked the beginning of a national inservice program for primary teachers. This initiative will be funded through the Commonwealth Schools Commission and the new national Curriculum Development Centre Council.

6 June 1985: A new curriculum issues and responses project, aimed at increasing public awareness of school curricula, is to be funded by the Curriculum Development Centre and the Participation and Equity Program. The project was announced at the launching of *Democratic Curriculum* by the Minister for Education.

21 August 1985: Details of a study which will look at the needs for mathematical skills in the workforce were announced by the Minister for Education. The study will be funded through the Curriculum Development Centre.

General Student Assistance

22 February 1985: Universities and colleges of advanced education throughout Australia will receive \$3.6m in 1985 under a new Special Assistance for Students Program (SASP), details of which were announced by the Minister for Education. The program will allow universities and colleges to make loans and grants directly to needy students to assist them with accommodation, or for other purposes where the continuation of their studies is at risk. In total, \$10.5m will be provided during the 1985–87 triennium.

14 May 1985: The May 1985 Statement of Initial Expenditure Savings specified changes to some of the eligibility criteria for the general student assistance schemes which would result in Budget savings of \$5.6m in a full year.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget included details of major changes to be made to the general student assistance schemes. The changes were outlined by the Prime Minister in a policy statement on the government's strategy for young people, with details announced by the Minister for Education and given in a special volume of the budget papers — Budget Paper No.13, *Youth*

Policies in the 1985–86 Budget. The changes, would see the replacement of the Secondary Allowances Scheme (SAS), the Adult Secondary Education Assistance Scheme (ASEAS), and the Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme (TEAS) by a single age-related allowance. The allowance would cover all students aged 16 years or over, whether in secondary or tertiary education, and a link would be made between the rates of education allowances and Unemployment Benefit. Other schemes of financial assistance for students, such as those affecting Aboriginal students, migrants and isolated children, will be reviewed individually to assess whether further rationalisation or absorption into the main scheme is warranted. The reorganization of student assistance schemes would be implemented over 1986, 1987 and 1988. The main education allowances for secondary and tertiary students would be brought into line with unemployment benefits during 1987 and 1988, so that the relevant rates for young people would be equal and the full structure will be established by 1989. For 1986, SAS benefits would increase from \$23.05 a week to \$35 a week in 1986, with Family Allowance to be absorbed into the new rate, and maximum benefits for TEAS and ASEAS would be raised from \$44.51 to \$47.50 a week for students living at home and from \$68.67 to \$73.28 a week for those living away from home. The Marginal Adjusted Family Income (MAFI — the combined family income minus certain allowable deductions) would be raised by five percent in 1986 and would be indexed in 1987 and beyond. From 1988 there would be three basic sets of age-related rates of Commonwealth financial support for young people: (i) a common basic rate for 16 and 17 year olds whether in secondary or tertiary education or unemployed. This rate would be fully indexed. A living away from home or independent allowance would continue to be payable to eligible 16 and 17 year old tertiary students; (ii) a common rate for unemployed 18 to 20 year olds and tertiary students aged 18 and over who are independent or who live away from home. In 1988, rates for each group would be increased from their 1987 levels. The 18 to 20 Unemployment Benefit rate would subsequently be fully indexed annually and the tertiary independent/away from home rate would be equated with it; and (iii) a common rate for secondary, aged 18 and over, and for tertiary students who live at home would operate from 1989. Appropriate relativities and the real value for this rate would be maintained by setting it at 63 percent of the independent tertiary and 18 to 20 Unemployment Benefit rate from 1988. To facilitate the amalgamation of the allowances over the next three years, a number of changes would be made to existing conditions: (i) SAS benefits, currently payable only to students in years 11 and 12 of secondary school, would be available from 1987 to all secondary stu-

dents aged 16 and over; (ii) from 1987, secondary education allowance payments (other than those for adult students) would be paid to the person who would otherwise receive Family Allowance (usually that is the mother). That person would have the option of directing the payment to the student or spouse; and (iii) all education allowances (with the exception of SAS in 1986 only) would become taxable in the hands of the recipients. A personal income test for secondary students would apply from 1987. A major difference that would remain between education allowances and the Unemployment Benefit is that the current parental income test on education allowances for dependent students would continue, while there would be no parental income test for recipients of Unemployment Benefit.

16 December 1985: Details of a decision to relax certain rules under TEAS from 1986 to enable students with a substantial physical disability to qualify for benefits under the Scheme were announced by the the Minister for Education. The relaxed workload rules will enable qualifying students to undertake on average, over two successive years, a minimum of 50 percent of the normal full time workload. There will be a minimum workload in any one year of no less than 25 percent. The relaxed progress rules will enable a qualifying student to remain eligible for TEAS if that student successfully completes half or more of the agreed workload in the last year of study. Provided both rules are complied with, a severely disabled student may take up to twice the normal time to complete a course.

Multicultural Education

12 March 1985: The National Advisory and Co-ordinating Committee on Multicultural Education is to undertake a review of existing facilities for information exchange and co-ordination in multicultural education, announced the Minister for Education.

Funding and Policy for Schools

21 March 1985: The Minister for Education released the report of a panel of Commonwealth Schools Commissioners on *Planning and Funding Policies for New Non-Government Schools*.

1 May 1985: The Minister for Education outlined the new basis for making recurrent grants to non-government schools. Non-government schools are now classified on the basis of their income from private sources into twelve funding categories in an approach which is designed to allow for a more equitable distribution of funds on the basis of need.

18 June 1985: The report of the Quality of Education Review Committee was released by the Minister for Education. The Minister announced that the Government has accepted its major recommendations. In making its formal recommendations, the

Committee limited itself to areas of direct Commonwealth action, and laid stress on: the importance of primary education as a foundation for future learning; raising participation in years 11 and 12 by disadvantaged groups; improving representation and attainment of girls in major subject areas; and assisting teachers to bring about the necessary improvements. The Commonwealth would base additional funding agreements with States and non-government school system authorities on these priorities.

16 August 1985: Changes in the functions of the Commonwealth Schools Commission, the Government's primary advisory body on education policy in the school sector, were announced by the Minister for Education. Administration of the Commission's General Recurrent Grants Program and Capital Grants Program will be transferred to the Commonwealth Department of Education. The first phase of the transfer would begin in September. The Language Education Branch of the Department would be transferred to the Commission.

20 August 1985: It was announced in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget that there would be a real increase in general recurrent grants to government schools in 1986 of over \$19m and for non-government schools of over \$10m. Capital expenditure will total \$150.9m for government schools and \$54.4m for non-government schools. Funding levels for all programs administered by the Schools Commission, apart from those reduced in the Treasurer's May statement will be maintained in real terms in 1986. A total of \$1474.7m (estimated December 1984 prices) will be provided in 1986 as the base level for programs administered by the Schools Commission.

15 October 1985: The Commonwealth Schools Commission report for 1986 was tabled in the Senate. The Government has accepted the Commission's recommendations to make the capital grants scheme more flexible, and to give emphasis to the upgrading and refurbishing of facilities in existing schools.

5 November 1985: Appointments to the Non-Government Funding Review Committee were announced by the Minister for Education. The Committee's role is to advise the Minister for Education on appeals by schools against decisions by the Federal Government in relation to (i) applications to relocate, extend or commence operations under the Commonwealth policy in relation to new schools; or (ii) applications to be assigned to a higher funding category under the general recurrent grants program for non-government schools.

9 December 1985: A major report entitled *Quality and Equality* by the Commonwealth Schools Commission on Commonwealth specific purpose programs in education was released by the Minister for Education.

Overseas Students

22 March 1985: Details of new arrangements for overseas students wishing to study in Australia were announced by the Minister for Education. The announcement followed consideration of recommendations on overseas student policy made by the Committee of Review of Private Overseas Student Policy and the Committee to Review the Australian Overseas Aid Program. The Government would continue to set a limit on the overall number of overseas students to be admitted for formal education at secondary and tertiary level with this number not exceeding the number of overseas students in Australia at present. In addition, there would be an upper limit for overseas students at any tertiary institution of 10 percent of the total enrolment, and a limit of 20 percent overseas students in any course. An Overseas Student Office would be established within the Education portfolio to provide improved administration of the overseas student program. Overseas students in normal tertiary courses will continue to pay the Overseas Students Charge. Current charges are \$3350 for postgraduates, \$3100 for undergraduates (high cost), and \$2500 for undergraduates (other). These charges will be increased to 35 percent of the cost of a tertiary place in 1986 and to 45 percent in 1987 and the three levels of the charge would be replaced by two. The charges for 1986 are \$4340 for medicine, veterinary science and dentistry and \$3500 for all other courses, with the charges applying to both postgraduate and undergraduate courses. To provide additional opportunities for study in Australia, beyond those which will be available within the quota of subsidised places, two initiatives are to be supported. Firstly, universities and colleges of advanced education will continue to be able to offer courses developed especially for overseas students. These courses will be different from normal tertiary courses for which institutions receive funding from the Government through the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, and overseas students taking them will pay a fee covering the cost of the course. Secondly, a steering committee will develop guidelines under which institutions are to be allowed to market degree courses to full-fee paying students.

25 June 1985: Further details of the Government's new overseas student policy were announced by the Minister for Education. The 1985 intake level will be maintained, and 3500 new private overseas students would be able to commence studies in Australia in 1986. Of these, 2000 would be admitted to secondary schools, and 1500 to tertiary institutions. An estimated 18 700 overseas students will be in formal secondary and tertiary studies in Australia in 1985. Entry at secondary level would, from 1987, be restricted to students in years 11 and 12, or their

equivalents in TAFE colleges. Proposed establishment of the Australian Council for Overseas Students was also announced.

5 July 1985: Guidelines under which universities and colleges of advanced education could offer full-fee courses for overseas students were released by the Minister for Education. The guidelines had been foreshadowed in March 1985. The Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission would play a co-ordinating role with the Overseas Students Office acting as a clearing house for overseas applicants.

16 September 1985: The restriction on junior secondary entry to Australian schools from 1987 announced earlier in 1985 would not apply to students from Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Island States, announced the Minister for Education.

20 November 1985: The Government will not require existing overseas tertiary students to pay the full cost of the proposed increase to the Overseas Student Charge announced earlier this year. The increase in the Charge for continuing students would be limited to 15 per cent, resulting in levels for 1986 of \$3565 for students of medicine, dentistry and veterinary science and \$2875 for students in other courses.

Women in Education

29 March 1985: The *Affirmative Action Implementation Manual: Higher Education Edition* was launched by the Minister for Education in a speech to the Women in Post-Secondary Education Conference at the NSW Institute of Technology.

8 October 1985: CSIRO launched a national program designed to encourage more girls to consider careers in science.

Distance Education

17 April 1985: The establishment of a Standing Committee on External Studies within the CTEC was announced by the Minister for Education. The key objective of the Committee would be to support the provision of information to potential students on external courses within tertiary education, to encourage the preparation and production of external studies course materials of the best possible quality and at minimal cost, and to investigate the impact of technology on distance education.

14 August 1985: The start of Australia's first public education videotex service, Edutel, was announced by the Minister for Education at the thirteenth world conference of the International Council for Distance Education at La Trobe University in Melbourne. The service will be available anywhere in Australia for the cost of a local telephone call through Telecom's Viatel service.

ACT Education System

30 April 1985: The Minister for Education announced proposals for changes in the governance of ACT government schools and released the report of the working party established to examine the concept of a national institute of tertiary education.

14 May 1985: The May 1985 Statement of Initial Expenditure Savings specified a number of savings to be made in the budget for the ACT education system.

18 June 1985: Changes to the composition of the ACT Schools Authority were announced by the Minister for Education.

19 July 1985: New membership of the restructured ACT Schools Authority was announced by the Minister for Education.

18 October 1985: The membership of the ACT Joint Planning and Co-ordinating Body which has been established to provide advice on the funding of new non-government schools in the ACT, was announced by the Minister for Education.

Funding for Tertiary Institutions

14 May 1985: The May 1985 Statement of Initial Expenditure Savings Measures included the announcement that capital funding for Technical and Further Education (TAFE) would be reduced by \$12m in 1985-86.

28 May 1985: The Minister for Education announced that seven key centres of teaching and research in higher education institutions would share \$3m over the 1985-87 triennium under a special Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC) program.

30 May 1985: The Minister for Education announced continuation of the Government's program of financial assistance to non-government business colleges during 1986. Assistance beyond 1986 would be determined in the light of CTEC reports on participation in tertiary education and the Commonwealth's role in TAFE.

20 August 1985: The 1985-86 Commonwealth Budget provided for an 11 per cent increase in funding for universities and colleges of education in 1985-86, and a 4 per cent decrease in funding for TAFE. The reduced provision for TAFE reflected savings measures announced in the May Statement. It was also announced in the Budget that the intake of students in universities and colleges of advanced education would increase by between 1750 and 2250 in 1986, with a further increase of the same size in 1987.

26 August 1985: The establishment of a committee to assist a review by CTEC of Commonwealth financial assistance to TAFE was announced by the Minister for Education. Completion of the review would

be required by 31 March 1986 in order that the findings could be considered before decisions were made on TAFE funding for 1987.

8 October 1985: The Minister for Education announced details of additional capital expenditure for higher education institutions.

17 October 1985: The establishment of a committee to assist CTEC undertake a Review of Efficiency and Effectiveness in Higher Education was announced by the Minister for Higher Education. The scope of the Review had been announced in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget and included examination of: the utilization of resources and productivity in higher education; the potential for application of new technologies; the capacity of institutions to respond flexibly to the requirements of economic growth and to community needs; and the monitoring of performance and productivity in higher education. The committee would complete its report by April 1986.

Participation and Equity Program

14 May 1985: It was announced in the May 1985 Statement of Initial Expenditure Savings Measures that funds previously allocated for the Participation and Equity Program (PEP) in 1986 would be spread over 1986 and 1987. This would extend the life of the PEP, which had been originally established to operate over the 1984–86 triennium. The level of funding for the PEP would be \$41m in both 1986 and 1987.

Aboriginal Education

9 July 1985: The National Conference on Aborigines and Islanders in Higher Education, held at the James Cook University in Townsville, was addressed by the Minister for Education.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provides \$1m for a pilot program in Aboriginal education to be developed for remote areas. Details of the levels of assistance for Aboriginal students in 1986 were also announced. The living and boarding allowances of the Aboriginal Secondary Assistance Scheme will be increased by 6.7 percent in 1986 to maintain their real value. The Aboriginal Study Assistance Scheme (ABSTUDY), which applies to post-school study, would be reviewed in order to determine whether it should be incorporated in the common age-related scheme to be

introduced in 1987 (see under General Student Assistance). In view of this, the ABSTUDY living allowance would not be increased in 1986, though the allowance for dependent children would increase from \$14 per week to \$16 per week in 1986. A new allocation of special category awards would be made available under ABSTUDY for 1986, primarily for mature-age students wishing to take up studies in teacher training.

20 August 1985: The Report of the Committee of Review of Aboriginal Employment and Training Programs (the Miller Report) was tabled in Parliament. The Report made a number of recommendations on education matters, including revised ABSTUDY allowance rates.

September 1985: The Report of the House of Representatives Select Committee on Aboriginal Education (the Blanchard Report) was tabled. Recommendations in the Report included the transfer of a number of programs from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs to the Department of Education to allow a more comprehensive approach to Aboriginal education.

Export of Education Services

23 September 1985: A number of proposals, decided on by Cabinet, relating to the implementation of a strategy to develop the export of Australian education services, were announced by the Minister for Education and the Minister for Trade. The strategy has been developed in the light of the government's policy on overseas students and it will provide for Australian education services to be marketed through education units established in the major countries sending students to Australia.

International Links

25 September 1985: Australia has ratified the UNESCO Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific. The convention would not oblige Australia to accept qualifications from other countries as equivalent to its own qualifications of the same name, unless they had been assessed as being of equal value by the appropriate authorities in Australia. The convention is a way of enhancing cooperation between academic institutions and professional bodies in the countries of the region.

Education — 1986

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Funding and Policy for Schools

15 January 1986: An extra \$2.2m in Commonwealth General Recurrent Grants in 1986 for Western Australian schools would be provided as a result of a Commonwealth-State resource agreement announced by the Commonwealth Minister for Education and the Western Australia Minister for Education. The resource agreement is one of a series the Commonwealth has been negotiating with State and non-government education authorities over the past twelve months. The agreements are designed to support particular activities with funds allocated according to four basis priorities. These priorities concern: the importance of primary education as a foundation for future learning; the need to raise participation in years 11 and 12 by disadvantaged groups; the importance of expanding representation and attainment of girls in major subject areas; and assistance for teachers to bring about the necessary improvements. A number of later announcements were made concerning resource agreements with other education authorities.

16 January 1986: The Minister for Education announced grants totalling \$2.9m to support the work of agencies providing education, training and related services for disabled children. The grants were made under the Disabled Students component of the Capital Grants Program. For 1986, three distinct elements are identified under the Program: the general capital element and two separate elements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and for disabled students.

24 February 1986: Finalisation of accountability requirements with which non-government schools will be asked to comply in 1986 was announced by the Minister for Education. Non-government schools will report on the types of activities supported with Commonwealth funds and the extent to which they were able to follow Commonwealth objectives.

28 April 1986: The Commonwealth Schools Commission's Education Program VIATEL database was launched at Wanniasa High School, ACT, by the Minister for Education. The Viatel program has been allocated \$20m over three years.

7 May 1986: A ministerial statement was made in the Senate by the Minister for Education on the

conclusion of resource agreements between the Commonwealth, all the States and non-government schools system authorities.

Education and Technology

2 March 1986: The Australian Education Council report *Education and Technology*, was released in Adelaide by the South Australian Minister for Technology and the Minister for Employment and Further Education.

Aboriginal Education

12 March 1986: The Minister for Education made a ministerial statement in the Senate on a report of the National Aboriginal Education Committee on the philosophy/aims and policy guidelines for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

19 August 1986: The provision in the 1986-87 Commonwealth Budget for Aboriginal Education included \$2m for new measures in response to recommendations made in the Miller Report. The measures included: assistance with the provision of special courses for Aboriginal students; an addition to the pilot Remote Areas Program for Aboriginals; and curriculum programs for Aboriginal students. It was announced in the Budget that the Aboriginal Secondary Assistance Scheme and the Aboriginal Study Assistance Scheme would be rationalised from the beginning of 1988 when a new rate structure aligned with the general education allowances would be introduced. Unlike the general allowance structure, however, assistance would continue to be available to eligible students under 16 years old. A number of the separate allowances would be combined into a single allowance with at-home and away-from-home rates. In view of the particular educational disadvantage suffered by Aboriginals, the income test for Aboriginal allowances from 1988 would be more generous than the standard education allowance income test.

Multicultural Education

18 March 1986: Adoption by the Department of Education of a language services policy to provide services to its clients in their own language was announced by the Minister for Education.

13 May 1986: The decision to establish an Asian Studies Council for an initial five-year period was announced by the Minister for Education, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Trade. The Council's role would be to stimulate and promote national awareness of Asia in industry and the community and provide a national perspective on Asian studies requirements in Australian education at all levels.

27 May 1986: A report entitled *National Survey of Language Learning in Australian Schools 1983*, prepared by the Commonwealth Department of Education, was tabled in Parliament by the Minister for Education.

11 September 1986: A major injection of extra funds into programs directed towards migrants and ethnic communities was announced by the Minister for Education. Approximately \$38m will be supplied under resource agreements for 1987.

9 November 1986: The first initiative of the Asian Studies Council would be a course in basic Japanese language, culture, customs and the expectations of Japanese tourists, announced the Minister for Education. The intensive training program of up to three weeks is to be piloted in Queensland in 1987.

Funding for Tertiary Institutions

1 May 1986: The Minister for Education announced a number of grants to universities and colleges of advanced education under a Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC) program designed to increase the participation of under-represented groups in higher education. A number of similar announcements were made later in the year.

11 June 1986: The report of the Review of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) Funding was tabled in Federal Parliament. The review had been undertaken by a committee chaired by the Chairman of CTEC and covered: the role of the Commonwealth in TAFE funding; the capacity of TAFE to provide for the education and training needs associated with economic development; and TAFE's role in providing for disadvantaged groups in society.

19 August 1986: The introduction of a higher education administration charge from 1987 was announced in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget. The charge would be paid by students as a contribution to the administrative costs of institutional budgets. The charge would be set at \$250 per annum in 1987 and would subsequently be indexed each year in line with CTEC cost indices applicable to higher education general salary costs. Certain categories of students, essentially those dependent on low incomes, would either be exempted from the charge or have their student allowances increased to cover the charge. Funding levels announced in the Budget included a 3.9 per cent increase in funds for universities and colleges of advanced education (CAEs) in 1986–87 and a 6.5 per cent increase for TAFE. The allocation for TAFE included a special provision of \$4m associated with the expected demand on TAFE from the Australian Traineeship System. There would be an additional intake of between 2700 and 3300 students in universities and CAEs in 1987.

21 September 1986: The Minister for Education announced that engineering teaching and research in universities and CAEs would be reviewed as part of a CTEC program of major discipline assessments.

24 October 1986: The report of the Review of Efficiency and Effectiveness in Higher Education was released by the Minister for Education.

2 December 1986: The Minister for Education announced that a committee would be established to monitor and review the impact of the higher education administration charge in 1987.

7 December 1986: The Minister for Education announced the Government's support for establishment of a university college in western Sydney to begin taking students in 1990 or 1991.

Women in Education

19 June 1986: *Women's participation in tertiary education: a review of recent Australian research*, a report commissioned by the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission was released.

27 June 1986: State and Commonwealth education ministers have agreed in principle on a national policy on the education of women and girls.

4 July 1986: A report entitled, *Making progress: women in educational management in primary and secondary education in Australia*, was launched by the Minister for Education.

General Student Assistance

1 July 1986: The Young Homeless Allowance began operation. The Allowance, which provides unsupported young people with an independent rate of income support under strict conditions, is partly designed to help young people stay in education if they have no family home or parental support. Introduction of the Allowance had been foreshadowed in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget.

19 August 1986: The rates of student assistance to apply in 1987 were announced in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget. Tertiary students in receipt of Commonwealth education allowances would also receive a special supplementary payment of \$250 in 1987 to cover the tertiary administration charge which is to be levied from 1987. It was also announced in the Budget that, from 1987, pensioners and beneficiaries who are students would no longer be able to receive tertiary education assistance as well as their pension or benefit. Supporting parent beneficiaries, invalid pensioners, Class A Widow's pensioners and carers pensioners beginning study in approved tertiary or adult secondary courses would, however, be eligible for an additional payment of \$15 per week.

23 October 1986: Students will become eligible for Austudy (the new system of age-related student

assistance is to be known as Austudy from January 1987) when they turn 16 even if they are in Year 10 announced the Minister for Education. Under present arrangements students must be in Year 11 to qualify.

23 November 1986: The start of a national publicity campaign for Austudy was announced by the Minister for Education.

30 November 1986: The Commonwealth Government is to provide a further \$4.5m to tertiary institutions for low interest loans and grants to students with financial difficulties announced the Minister for Education. Students having problems paying the \$250 administration charge will be among those eligible to apply for assistance.

14 December 1986: Parents of secondary students who are under 18 years of age and who will not turn 18 in 1987 can now elect to have Austudy student allowance paid to themselves if they prefer announced the Minister for Education.

ACT Education System

20 July 1986: A special working party to inquire into the low numbers of ACT tertiary students taking science and technology courses, was jointly announced by the Minister for Education and the Minister for Territories.

13 August 1986: TAFE in the ACT will be organised as a single multi-campus college following new arrangements foreshadowed by the Minister for Education.

Assistance for Isolated Students

2 August 1986: Changes to the Commonwealth Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme, to take effect from the beginning of 1987 were announced. The Scheme will be changed in 1987 to make it more consistent with Austudy, including relaxation of the income test applied to parents to determine a student's eligibility for assistance, with a guaranteed minimum payment of almost \$1000 per year regardless of family income. The changes follow consideration by the Government of the work of the Halton Task Force on Youth Allowance Administration.

International Links

13 August 1986: The Commonwealth's ratification of the UNESCO convention on the recognition of studies, diplomas and degrees in higher education for the European region, was announced by the Minister for Education.

28 August 1986: An agreement between China and Australia to upgrade education links was signed by the Minister for Education and the Vice-Chairman of the State Education Commission of China. Aus-

tralia will provide a \$1m per year exchange program and China will, in part, provide twenty more university and college places for government sponsored Australian students.

14 December 1986: Details of a \$1m per annum education co-operation program with China were announced by the Minister for Education.

Overseas Students

19 August 1986: Arrangements for overseas student entry in 1987 were announced in the 1986-87 Commonwealth Budget, with further details released by the Minister for Education. The arrangements included a number of changes in the rates and application of the Overseas Students Charge. The Government is committed to a three-part approach to overseas student policy, with provision for fully sponsored students under the aid program, private subsidised students, and full-fee paying students. Intake quotas for subsidised students in 1987 would be maintained at the 1986 level of 3500, but from 1987, postgraduate research students from overseas will not be counted within these overall intake figures. The 10 per cent institution and 20 per cent course quotas will continue to apply. As was foreshadowed in 1985, the Overseas Students Charge for students who commenced their higher education courses in 1986 would move to 45 per cent of full-average-cost from 1987, the same rate as for new students. Students who commenced studies prior to 1986 would pay a 15 per cent increase in 1987, bringing their Charge to the equivalent of 32 per cent of full-average-cost. The Overseas Students Charge would be reduced by \$250 to take account of the administration charge to be levied on all students undertaking higher education courses. From 1987, liability for the Overseas Students Charge would be extended to overseas students at secondary schools and in TAFE colleges. All overseas students at secondary schools will pay a flat rate of \$300 per annum. TAFE overseas students who commence their courses prior to 1 January 1987 will pay 32 per cent of the average Commonwealth contribution to TAFE costs (\$530), and new students will pay 45 per cent (\$740). Students from Papua New Guinea and sovereign states of the South Pacific will continue to have the Charge paid on their behalf by the Australian Development Assistance Bureau. Certain categories of students in higher education previously exempt from the Overseas Students Charge will also now become liable for the Charge.

4 December 1986: The Minister for Education announced the first meeting of the Australian Council on Overseas Students. The council provides overseas students studying in Australia and other interested groups with a direct input into the Commonwealth Government's overseas student policy.

Curriculum Development

20 October 1986: A new computer service which makes information about study methods and materials instantly available to schools was launched in Melbourne by the Commonwealth Minister for Education and the Victorian Education Minister. The service, called the Australian Curriculum Information Network (ACIN), will allow teachers and parents to use computers to access education information and ideas from schools and school systems across Australia.

25 November 1986: The development of an upgraded and nationwide approach to the teaching of science in schools was announced by the Minister for Education. The project, entitled *The Rationale for the Teaching and Learning of Science in Australian Schools*, will be conducted by the Curriculum Development Council.

Export of Education Services

24 October 1986: For the next five years higher education institutions will be permitted to retain a part of the capital component of the full fees they charge overseas students in order to market their education services overseas, announced the Minister for Education. Institutions will retain the full capital element of fees until the end of 1988. The amount to be subsequently retained by institutions will be 75 per cent in 1989 and 50 per cent in 1990. The balance of the capital component in 1989 and 1990 will be applied, through the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, to priority capital projects across the higher education sector.

Professional Development

2 November 1986: A report, prepared by the Commonwealth Schools Commission and the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, entitled *Improving Teacher Education* was released by the Minister for Education.

School Retention Rates

9 December 1986: A report, entitled *Retention and Participation in Australian Schools*, was released by the Commonwealth Education Department. The report shows that school retention rates rose from 36.3 per cent in 1982 to 46.4 per cent in 1985.

Participation and Equity Program

December 1986: A Department of Education report on the operation of the Participation and Equity Program in 1984 was tabled in Parliament.

Family Law — 1985

Compiled by Margaret Harrison
Australian Institute of Family Studies

Administration of Family Law in Australia

February 1985: The Report of the Family Law Council on the *Administration of Family Law in Australia* was forwarded to the Attorney-General and was subsequently published. The report examined issues such as the location and staffing of Family Courts, the availability of waiting space and conference room facilities, and the control of the passage of cases through the Court. It also canvassed the possibility of the conciliation and judicial functions of the Court being separated. In general, the report concluded that the Court was under-resourced, and that a lack of uniform collection of statistics and case management procedures made Court administration and control difficult. The report found that the Court's conciliation and litigation functions were often inconsistent, and that to minimise client confusion the Counselling Section should be divided into two sections, one dealing with conciliation and the other with assessment and reporting. In addition, the policy of decentralisation was supported in the report, as was the establishment of a range of dispute resolution methods. It also recommended an increase in the information supplied about the Court and its procedures and about the *Family Law Act*, so that community perceptions and expectations may be more realistically based. Such information should be available in a variety of languages, and multi-lingual staff should be employed at all levels of the Court.

Reproductive Technology

June 1985: The Asche Report on Reproductive Technology was endorsed by the Family Law Council. It was subsequently published as *Creating Children: A Uniform Approach to the Law and Practice of Reproductive Technology in Australia*. The report made 31 recommendations, including the following: (i) that the principle of the paramountcy of the welfare and interests of the child be incorporated into all Federal, State and Territory legislation governing the operation and administration of reproductive technology programmes; (ii) that there be complete uniformity in law throughout Australia with respect to the status of children born as a result

of the use of donor gametes; (iii) that the proposed National Council on Reproductive Technology consider the most effective means of achieving uniform status of children legislation with a view to making recommendations to the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General as to how uniformity can be achieved; (iv) that counselling be an important part of all infertility and reproductive technology programmes; (v) that surrogacy arrangements be seen as being contrary to the welfare and interests of the child; (vi) that there be a prohibition on the exchange of money for surrogate motherhood services; (vii) that the production of human embryos for the sole purpose of research/experimentation be prohibited; (viii) (by the majority) that the use of 'spare' human embryos for research/experimentation be prohibited.

Matrimonial Property

June 1985: The Australian Law Reform Commission Discussion Paper on Matrimonial Property was released. Major features of this report included its discussion of the social setting of marriage and divorce, the resulting changes to family law, both in Australia and overseas, and the general models of matrimonial property law as they operate in different legal systems. Attempts to grapple with the principle of equality of husband and wife in different jurisdictions were described. The characteristics of a good law of matrimonial property were explained and areas of uncertainty and difficulty identified. The paper tentatively suggested a model for reform of existing law, based on a three-stage process of: (i) identifying the pool of property available for division and dividing it by reference to the spouses' contributions to the marriage partnership on the basis of a presumption of equality; (ii) adjusting the shares by reference to any disparity in the spouses' capacity to achieve a reasonable post separation standard of living due to the functions of child care, income-earning and home management; and (iii) assessing maintenance for a spouse and children in the light of the property order made. The paper invited submissions on all aspects of the reference.

Family Law — 1986

Compiled by Margaret Harrison
Australian Institute of Family Studies

Australian Institute of Family Studies

June 1986: Parliament assented to amendments to the *Family Law Act* relevant to the Australian Institute of Family Studies. Major features of these amendments included the addition of 'Australian' to the Institute's title, the establishment of the Institute as a body corporate, and the inclusion of a provision enabling the Attorney-General to refer to it particular research issues or other relevant matters.

Reference of Powers on Children

July 1986: The Victorian Attorney-General announced that Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia would refer their powers over ex-nuptial children in the areas of custody, access and maintenance to the Commonwealth. In a separate announcement, the Tasmanian Attorney-General announced that Tasmania would also refer its powers. Legislation from each of these referring States was subsequently introduced into their respective Parliaments in September and November 1986.

Child Maintenance

October 1986: the Minister for Social Security tabled a report called *Child Support: a Discussion Paper on Child Maintenance* in Parliament. The paper set out the failings of the current procedures for the assessment and collection of child maintenance, and discussed the future direction of reform. A central proposal was that there be a legislative formula to replace judicial discretion as the method of assessing maintenance obligations. The formula would be administered by a Child Support Agency and would be related to the income of the non-custodial parent, the number of dependent children living with the custodial parent and the existence of children living with the non-custodial parent. The advantages of the formula would be its elimination of the uncertainty and delays associated with judicial assessment, and its provision of a clear statement of parental financial responsibility. On the collection side, the proposal was that, wherever possible, the amount assessed would be withheld automatically from the non-custodial parent's income at source. The paper contained arguments in support of the proposals, identified possible difficulties and objections, and provided some examples of how they would operate in practice. It sought public response on the proposals.

Immigration — 1985

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Migrant Services

16 January 1985: Fifty-three grants, totalling \$4.3m, for migrant welfare services provided by voluntary organisations were announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

10 February 1985: The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs will sign new arrangements in Perth and Darwin for the Adult Migrant Education Program. The new arrangements, which replace those signed in 1951, emphasise the importance of shared responsibility and effective consultations between the Federal and the respective State or Territory governments.

9 March 1985: A major review of the Adult Migrant Education Program will begin on 11 March, announced the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

9 May 1985: Federal grants worth \$111 300 under the Migrant Project Subsidy Scheme were announced. This brings the 1984–85 total approved under the scheme to \$200 000. The grants will enable twenty-seven ethnic and community organisations to develop welfare-related services for non-English speakers.

14 May 1985: The Treasurer, in the May 1985 Statement of Initial Expenditure Savings Measures, announced that surplus migrant centre buildings and associated land would be sold. Proceeds from the sales, together with a reduction in associated costs, would result in Government savings of \$16.6m in 1985–86.

14 June 1985: Grants under the Migrant Workers' Rights Scheme were announced. The grants will provide six trade unions with a total of \$174 000 in 1985–86 to employ project officers specialising in the needs of non-English speaking workers. The grants are for three years and will help migrant workers to understand workers' rights, the role of trade unions and Australia's work practices.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided \$60.5m for post-arrival services excluding migrant accommodation, an increase of \$5.4m from 1984–85. Expenditure on the Adult Migrant Education Program will increase by \$3.7m to \$46m. Expenditure on migrant accommodation will decrease from \$14m to \$10.6m. Maintenance payments for refugee children will increase from \$0.8m in 1984–85 to \$1.09m in 1985–86. An amount of

\$0.25m has been allocated for a review of post-approval services.

21 November 1985: Federal grants worth \$88 503 to enable twenty-seven ethnic and community organisations throughout Australia to meet the welfare needs of people of non-English speaking origins were announced. The grants are made under the migrant project subsidy scheme, which provides once-only subsidies of up to \$10 000 for migrant welfare projects.

24 December 1985: A major review to be undertaken of migrant and multicultural programs and services was announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The review would be conducted in two stages; the first, to report on proposed principles and a strategy to guide government policies and programs over the next decade. The second stage would evaluate a range of key services and programs against the principles established. The first stage would be undertaken by a Committee of Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services, to be chaired by Dr James Jupp of the Australian National University.

26 December 1985: More than sixty new grants for migrant welfare services worth \$2.03m were announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

Translating and Interpreting

1 March 1985: A comprehensive national directory of translators, interpreters and language aids was launched by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The directory, produced by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), has over 4700 entries.

Refugees

14 May 1985: The Treasurer, in the May 1985 Statement of Initial Expenditure Savings Measures, announced that the number of assisted passage places in the Refugee and Special Humanitarian Programs would be reduced by 2000 in 1985–86. The reduction would amount to Government savings of \$3.6m. The Programs included 12 000 assisted passage places in 1984–85 with a decreasing number of 'boat people' and an increased emphasis on family reunion.

3 June 1985: Australia is to cooperate with the Rescue at Sea Resettlement Offers Scheme, a scheme launched by the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, announced the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The scheme is aimed at encouraging rescue at sea of Indochinese refugees.

Human Rights

21 May 1985: A report by the Human Rights Commission on the Migration Act was tabled in Federal

Parliament. The report found Australia's immigration practices to stand up well to international comparison, though considered parts of the Migration Act and associated practices needed change in order to improve the observance of human rights.

Immigration Program

3 June 1985: The 1985–86 immigration program was announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The total number of migrants targetted to settle in Australia in 1985–86, is 84 000. Features of the program include: more emphasis on business migrants and skilled migrants who can ease particular labour shortages (targetted at 18 500 visas); continued commitment to reuniting immediate families and admitting refugees (targetted at 26 000 visas); simpler and faster processing of applications; and easier access for former Australian citizens and residents (targetted at 8000 visas). The policy and procedure changes will take effect on 1 July 1985.

13 June 1985: The release of a survey of the Business Migration Program was announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. Between June and August last year, ninety business migrants had been interviewed in Perth, Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra.

12 July 1985: Details of the occupations for which shares will be available in 1985–86 under the Occupational Share System were announced by the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The 1985–86 schedule has places for 3500 workers in twenty-seven occupations, an increase of 650 over the 2850 workers accepted in 1984–85. Government policy is to allow entry for skilled migrants under two complementary systems: the occupational share system to respond to shortfalls identified through a systematic process of labour market analysis, and the employer nomination system to meet specialised, unforeseen needs of particular employers.

20 August 1985: Fees for some immigration services would be introduced and others increased from 1 October. An application to migrate to Australia will cost \$25 and a further \$75 for those who are finally processed. Refugees will be exempt. Applications for a declaration certificate of citizenship will cost \$30. Registering citizenship by descent will cost \$25.

Economic Impact of Immigration

25 June 1985: The results of a major study of the economic impact of immigration were released. A key finding in the report, *The Economic Effects of Immigration on Australia*, was that an increase in the flow of immigrants would increase Australia's growth rate and would not exacerbate unemployment. The study had been jointly undertaken by

the Committee for Economic Development of Australia and the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (AIMA)

27 June 1985: Membership of the new Council of the AIMA was announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

29 November 1985: Two reports on ageing migrants, prepared by the AIMA were tabled in Parliament by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

Ethnic Media

3 July 1985: The report of a study of the ethnic press in Melbourne was released. The study, which had been commissioned by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, found ethnic newspapers to be the main source of news for the Turkish, Croatian and Serbian communities in Melbourne.

Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications (COPQ)

27 September 1985: The appointment of a new chairman of the COPQ was announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

Illegal Immigrants

17 October 1985: The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs tabled a statement on illegal immigration in Federal Parliament. The statement included the announcement that the Immigration Review Panel would not review decisions refusing illegal immigrants temporary or permanent residence. In future, it would be rare for illegal immigrants to be granted permission to remain in Australia.

13 November 1985: A review of the Auditor-General's Efficiency Audit on control of prohibited immigration by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs was tabled in Federal Parliament. The review had been undertaken by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Expenditure.

Population Trends and Prospects

13 November 1985: A report, *Australia's Population Trends and Prospects 1985*, was tabled in Parliament by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The report, which had been prepared by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, included population projections from 1985 to 2020 and paid special attention to the issues of age structure and ageing.

Immigration — 1986

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Citizenship

18 March 1986: Amendments to the *Australian Citizenship Act* passed by the House of Representatives and administrative arrangements implemented should resolve difficulties and doubts about the citizenship status of Australian Jews in Israel announced the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

18 July 1986: Children born in Australia to visitors and illegal immigrants will not automatically be entitled to Australian citizenship under changes to the *Australian Citizenship Act* passed by Federal Parliament. The legislation makes two other important citizenship changes. It reforms the oath or affirmation made by candidates at the ceremony and it allows people overseas who before 1984 lost Australian citizenship inadvertently, or under some form of pressure, to resume it.

30 October 1986: New Certificates of Australian Citizenship have been bestowed in a special ceremony by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

22 November 1986: Changes to the Australian Citizenship Act relating to the acquisition of citizenship by descent came into force. Prior to 22 November, those born overseas after 26 January 1949 to a parent who was an Australian citizen at the time of the birth were able to be registered (either overseas or in Australia) as an Australian citizen by descent. The only people who can now acquire citizenship in this way are those under eighteen. In addition, people are not now able to acquire Australian citizenship by descent from a parent who acquired citizenship in this way, unless that parent had lived in Australia legally for a total of two years at any time.

Migrant Services

12 February 1986: The report of a committee set up in March 1985 to review the Adult Migrant Education Program was released. Key recommendations in the report, titled *Towards Active Voice*, dealt with improvement in the quality of the Program in the areas of teacher training, materials development, educational counselling, and increasing effectiveness. The report stressed that migrants from non-

English speaking backgrounds must be given an opportunity to become proficient in English.

19 March 1986: A major study of the aged migrant, entitled *Community and Institutional Care for Aged Migrants in Australia*, conducted by the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs was launched.

17 April 1986: A report on the extent to which the services and programs of Commonwealth departments and agencies are responsive to the needs of migrants was tabled in Federal Parliament by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The report, which detailed actions taken by the Hawke Government and made recommendations for further action in some areas, had been prepared by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs.

24 April 1986: Ethnic and community organisations will benefit from thirty-seven federal grants, made under the Migrant Project Subsidy Scheme, worth \$110 907 announced the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

8 July 1986: The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs reaffirmed the Government's commitment to maintain close links with the States on migrant issues. The Minister was commenting on a report released by the Advisory Council for Intergovernmental Relations on intergovernmental aspects in the provision of post-arrival services for migrants.

12 August 1986: The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs announced a new Government strategy for expressing commitment to multiculturalism as a first response to the findings of the Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services (the Jupp Report). Key elements of the new strategy include: recognition of the need to promote and advocate multicultural principles and provide overseas-born residents with equitable access to Federal programs and services; recognition that all Government decisions should take account of the ethnic and cultural diversity of Australian society; review of the composition and functions of present advisory bodies; and establishment of an Office of Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs within the Immigration and Ethnic Affairs portfolio.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$200 000 for special literacy courses for adult migrants studying under the Adult Migrant Education Program. An additional \$200 000 was provided to implement recommendations made in the review of the Program released earlier in the year.

2 November 1986: The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs opened the new Pennington migrant hostel in Adelaide. This is the first migrant hostel to be built with independent living units.

11 November 1986: A second report on migrant and multicultural programs and services was released by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic

Affairs. The report focuses on particular programs and services and follows the Jupp Report on principles and strategies which was released earlier in the year.

16 November 1986: A \$40m package of support for Australia's increasing aged population born in non English-speaking countries was announced by the Federal Government. The measures are based on recommendations of the Ethnic Aged Working Party: *Strategies for Change*, which was released jointly by the Minister for Community Services and the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. Key elements in the package are: \$18m over the next three years for more 'ethnic specific' nursing homes; \$21m extra over the next four years for hostel facilities specifically for ethnic groups; and \$1.2m full-year funding for twelve pilot community based projects to be established over two years in ethnic communities.

Immigration Program

10 April 1986: The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs announced the 1986–87 immigration program. Australia plans to take 95 000 migrants in 1986–87. The expected intake will include 12 000 refugee and special humanitarian program places, 16 000 skilled migrant places, 26 000 reunion of close family member places, 2500 business migration places (there is no ceiling on this category) and 25 000 independent and concessional places. The latter is a new category which is based on the principle of the extended family (Category C) program.

16 April 1986: Migrants would be automatically issued with three-year resident return visas from 1 September 1986, announced the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. It will allow migrants multiple re-entry to Australia during the first years of settlement, unlike the present system which basically requires migrants to stay in Australia for 12 months before they can obtain re-entry permits. The new arrangements are particularly aimed at meeting the needs of business migrants.

9 July 1986: Occupations listed for 1986–87 under the Occupational Share System were announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. The 1986–87 schedule has places for 3950 workers in twenty-six occupations. This is an increase of 450 places over last year's program.

19 August 1986: Details of increases in fees for immigration services, which were announced in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget, were provided by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. These included an increase in the fee for application for migration to Australia from \$25 to \$40 on lodgement, and from \$75 to \$110 on final processing. The Budget also included the announcement that six area offices of the Department of Immigra-

tion and Ethnic Affairs would be closed. The offices affected are those in Newcastle, Wollongong, Albury-Wodonga, Geelong, Rockhampton and Launceston. The Budget provided \$420 000 to promote the Business Migration Program in 1986–87.

21 September 1986: The results of three surveys which examined the performance of government policies in assisting skilled people to settle in Australia were jointly released by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs and the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations. Two of the studies examined the labour market experience of migrants selected under the two skilled categories of the migration program — the Employer Nomination Scheme and the Occupational Share Scheme. The third related to migrants granted Change of Status from temporary to permanent residence on occupational grounds.

18 December 1986: The Federal Government has decided to adopt a migration program target level for 1986–87 of 115 000, the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs announced. This represents an increase of 20 000 over the original 1986–87 planning level. The increase would be drawn from the economic and extended family categories that were bringing to Australia migrants with skills, business expertise and capital.

Adoptions from Overseas

18 April 1986: Wide-ranging principles safeguarding the best interests of children being adopted into Australia from overseas were agreed upon by a conference of Commonwealth and State Ministers of Social Welfare in Adelaide.

Attitude Surveys

13 June 1986: The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs released *The Language Question: the Maintenance of Languages Other than English*; a report commissioned by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The report included the findings of a survey of migrant adults and children undertaken by the Centre for Multicultural Studies at the University of Wollongong.

7 August 1986: A survey of attitudes towards Asian migrants, titled *Migrant Attitudes Survey*, was launched. The study was conducted in selected areas of public and private housing in both Sydney and Adelaide where there were known concentrations of recently arrived Asian and other migrants.

Illegal Immigrants

4 August 1986: The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs commented on the results of a survey of attitudes to illegal immigrants which had been commissioned by his Department. The survey had

asked a number of lawyers representing illegal immigrants, migration agents working on behalf of illegal immigrants, social workers working with illegal immigrants, and employers employing illegal immigrants for their opinions on illegal immigrants and the Department's policy of detection and deportation.

Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (AIMA)

12 August 1986: The Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs announced that the activities of AIMA would be wound down with a repeal of the current legislation at the end of the year. The decision is a consequence of the new strategy on multiculturalism (see under Migrant Services), including the decision to establish an Office of Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs, and considerations of financial constraint.

Population Trends and Prospects

30 September 1986: A report entitled *Greying Australia* was launched at a meeting of the National Population Council in Brisbane. The report examines the economic and social implications of an ageing Australian population. It presents the findings of a study by Dr Hal Kendig and Dr John McCallum of the Australian National University, conducted under the auspices of the Migration Committee of the National Population Council.

23 October 1986: The report entitled *Australia's Population Trends and Prospects 1986* was tabled in Parliament by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

10 November 1986: Publication of *Australia's Changing Population: Trends and Implications*, a report by the National Institute of Labour Studies was announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. The Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs had commissioned the study in 1982 as a comprehensive policy-related analysis of census data.

Refugees

20 November 1986: The Government's decision to stop issuing visitor and other temporary entry visas in South Africa was announced by the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs together with the decision to enhance the Special Humanitarian Program in relation to South Africa. This would focus on victims of apartheid who had suffered politically-motivated persecution.

Housing — 1985

Compiled by Lynn Sitsky,
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Assistance with Home Purchase

13 February 1985: The Minister for Housing and Construction announced an additional \$25m on top of the allocated \$265m for the First Home Owners' Scheme.

16 April 1985: The Minister for Housing and Construction introduced the First Home Owners' Amendment Bill, 1985. The maximum benefit under the Scheme was reduced from \$7000 to \$6000 as from 17 April 1985 (not applicable to those who applied before this time). He announced that by the end of June 1985, 142 000 households will own their own home due to the Scheme at a cost to the Government of \$431m. About 82 000 more households will receive the grant in 1985–86 at a cost of \$290m.

20 May 1985: The First Home Owners' Amendment Act, 1985 came into force.

17 July 1985: The Treasurer and the Minister for Finance announced Budget outcomes for 1984–85 showing outlays on assistance to first home owners were up \$26m.

20 August 1985: The Treasurer in the Budget speech estimated total outlays on housing at \$1397m (an increase of 5.2 per cent on 1984–85). Assistance to first home owners estimated at \$294m (down 3.9 per cent on 1984–85).

Urban Renewal

5 March 1985: The Minister for Housing and Construction handed the New South Wales Minister for Housing a cheque for \$420 000 to continue restoration on Sydney's historic Glebe Estate.

Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and Loan Council Borrowing

12 March 1985: The new Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement providing \$1580m in Federal and State funds for public housing was signed by the Prime Minister. The Federal contribution was \$632m for the current financial year and a minimum of \$510m to be provided to the States for each of the next two financial years. The States can continue to use their Loan Council borrowings for pub-

lic housing at a highly concessional interest rate. Special allocations include (i) \$52m for rental housing for aboriginals; (ii) \$35m for pensioner rental housing; (iii) \$27m over three years for the new Local Government and Community Housing Program; (iv) \$13m for a short-term Crisis Accommodation Program for youth and women's refugees; (v) \$22m for mortgage and rent relief to home buyers and renters experiencing short-term financial difficulty; (vi) a new system of low start loans administered by the States with repayments geared to income can be combined with assistance under the First Home Owners' Scheme; (vii) youth and singles to be eligible for public housing assistance; (viii) rents for public housing tenants to be based on costs instead of market value; (ix) public housing tenants to be able to purchase their home through a rental/purchase program; and (x) fifty per cent increase in Supplementary Assistance to pensioners who rent in the private market.

30 May 1985: The Minister for Housing and Construction announced a record \$1.164 billion of Federal funds were provided to the States for public housing in 1985–86, of which \$654.4m as grants through the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. A continuation of the interest subsidies to the States through nominating arrangements under the Loan Council borrowing program (4.5 per cent repayable over 53 years). The States will be limited to nominating up to thirty per cent of the loan proportion of their Loan Council borrowings for 1985–86, 1986–87 and 1987–88.

17 July 1985: The Treasurer and the Minister for Finance announced Budget outcomes for 1984–85 showing Housing up \$139m or 11.1 per cent, largely reflecting the higher than forecast nomination by the States for public housing assistance within their Loan Council borrowing programs.

20 August 1985: The Treasurer announced in his Budget speech that the States can nominate up to \$492m of Loan Council borrowings for public housing at 4.5 per cent per annum over 53 years.

Local Government and Community Housing Program

12 March 1985: Under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement \$27m are allocated for the Local Government and Community Housing Program over the next three years.

11 April 1985: \$1.145m granted to Queensland under the Program for 13 projects throughout the State to benefit students, pensioners, the disabled and low income earners.

16 April 1985: \$2.475m for New South Wales under the Program.

14 May 1985: \$632 000 to Western Australia under the Program for 6 projects throughout the State.

Western Australia to receive \$2.4m over the next 3 years.

30 May 1985: \$200 000 to Tasmania under the Program.

6 June 1985: \$1.6m to Victoria under the Program to be distributed among 14 Municipal Councils. Victoria to receive \$7.2m over the next 3 years.

Housing Loans Insurance Corporation

27 March 1985: In a speech to the Twenty-first Annual Conference of the Australian Association of Permanent Building Societies the Minister for Housing and Construction foreshadowed changes to the Housing Loans Insurance Corporation to allow it to cover secondary mortgage market securities.

17 April 1985: The Minister for Housing and Construction introduced the Housing Loans Insurance Amendment Bill, 1985. The four major changes were (i) the Housing Loans Insurance Corporation (HLIC) to be able to insure pools of mortgages against loss; (ii) power to enter agency arrangements to offer repayment cover on loans to borrowers; (iii) at Ministerial discretion, the HLIC to have power to insure 'special interest' loans, e.g. remote housing, mobile housing and cooperative housing, with safeguards to ensure that this does not cut across the HLIC's commercial operations; and (iv) the HLIC's scope to extend to all loans backed by mortgages. The Bill also provides for the HLIC to make a new special payment to the Commonwealth to place it on an equal commercial footing with private insurance.

15 June 1985: The Housing Loans Insurance Amendment Act, 1985 came into force.

Research and Planning

12 April 1985: The first meeting of the Australian Housing Council held in Canberra and chaired by the Minister for Housing and Construction. Its role is to provide the Government with a full range of views from industry and finance bodies, State Governments and representatives of housing consumers. **1 May 1985:** The Minister for Housing and Construction announced the 1985–86 research program of the Australian Housing Research Council. There is to be a Federal-State Government study of the special needs of single people in public housing, concentrating on Sydney and Melbourne but applicable to all Australia. The Council's program is also to include an examination of the situation of single parents in public housing and studies into the benefits gained from housing programs, finance of rented housing and to convene a workshop on corporate planning and program evaluation.

2 May 1985: The Minister for Housing and Construction announced plans to revitalise the Federal Government's Experimental Building Station at North Ryde, Sydney which is to be renamed the National Building Technology Centre. Over the next three years this Centre will amalgamate with the Division of Building Research of the CSIRO to form a single building research organisation. The Building Research Review Committee is to be established to achieve this objective.

2 August 1985: A joint statement by the Minister assisting the Treasurer and the Minister for Housing and Construction announced that a national survey of the Australian construction industry is to be undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics to provide an up-to-date picture of the industry for 1984–85.

10 November 1985: The Minister for Housing and Construction announced the release of the report it commissioned from Coopers & Lybrand W.D. Scott entitled *Study into Homelessness and Inadequate Housing*.

Taxation and Housing

2 July 1985: The Minister for Housing and Construction gave a speech to the National Taxation Summit focusing on the capital gains tax and the quarantine of 'negative gearing' in investment in residential dwellings.

17 July 1985: The Treasurer made an announcement on taxation reform removing the income tax advantages associated with negative gearing of rental property investments made after 17 July 1985. Associated with this there is to be a four per cent per annum depreciation provision for investment in new residential buildings (as well as capital extension, alterations and improvements) to apply after 17 July 1985.

20 September 1985: The Minister for Housing and Construction addressed the Construction Industry Council and announced a 15 per cent increase in building activity in 1984–85 with a similar rise expected for 1985–86. He briefed members on the implications for the building industry of the Government's tax reform package.

Housing — 1986

Compiled by Runda Beirouti
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Assistance with Home Purchase

6 February 1986: Grants to first home buyers, have been approved to Tasmania (\$30m) and Western Australia (\$120m).

6 June 1986: The Federal Government intends to introduce legislation in the Budget to terminate the Fraser Government's Home Deposit Assistance Scheme, announced the Minister for Housing and Construction.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$210m for the First Home Owners Scheme for payments to an estimated 41 500 new applicants and continuing assistance to 203 600 home owners.

3 December 1986: A cheque of \$1000m, approved under the First Home Owners Scheme, was presented at the NSW Home Advisory Service.

Crisis Accommodation Program

6 February 1986: The Federal Government has allocated \$1.2m to Western Australia for crisis accommodation, announced the Minister for Housing and Construction and the Western Australian Minister for Housing.

29 May 1986: Federal grants totalling \$1.2m to boost crisis accommodation in South Australia for 1985–86 were announced by the Federal Minister for Housing and Construction and the South Australian Minister for Housing and Construction.

25 November 1986: Grants totalling \$1.27m from the Federal Government for crisis accommodation in 1986–87 were announced by the Federal Minister for Housing and Construction and the Western Australian Minister for Housing.

Housing Loans Insurance Corporation

12 February 1986: The twentieth annual report of the Housing Loans Insurance Corporation was tabled in Parliament by the Minister for Housing and Construction.

30 November 1986: A record operating profit for the HLIC of \$6.8m for 1985–86 was announced by the Minister for Housing and Construction.

Housing Assistance Package

2 April 1986: The Government has decided on a number of actions to ensure that sufficient bank home loan funds will be available to borrowers, announced the Treasurer and the Minister for Housing and Construction. These decisions include: (i) continued protection for borrowers with existing home loans through the 13.5 per cent interest rate ceiling; (ii) the removal of the ceiling on new home loans; (iii) an interest rate subsidy partly paid for by the banks themselves; (iv) a guarantee that Commonwealth funds for public housing in 1986–87 under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement will be maintained at the same real level as 1985–86; (v) a relaxation of the rules governing nominated funds for housing from the states loan programs. Major savings banks have committed themselves to take early steps to lend more for housing and have undertaken to lend at a rate consistent with total savings bank lending of \$6 billion in 1986–87. Agreement has been reached with the four major banks (Commonwealth, Westpac, ANZ and National Australia) to share the cost of providing an interest subsidy equivalent to 1 per cent of these banks' savings investment and statement accounts.

Research and Planning

18 April 1986: Details of a study into rural housing first announced by the Minister for Primary Industry was outlined by the Minister for Housing and Construction.

Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and Loan Council Borrowing

5 June 1986: The 1984–85 annual report of the *Housing Assistance Act 1984* was tabled in Federal Parliament by the Minister for Housing and Construction. It is the first report on the new Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement (CSHA).

22 June 1986: A full scale evaluation of how the CSHA has operated will be conducted, announced the Minister for Housing and Construction.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided details of the 1986–87 limits on the proportion of Loan Council borrowings that the States could devote to public housing. South Australia and Western Australia will be able to continue to nominate 100 per cent of their loan portion for public housing, while the proportion for the other States will be limited to 60 per cent. Determination of these limits was a result of the April Housing Assistance Package and the June 1986 Loan Council meeting. The Budget allocation for payments to the States under the CSHA was \$694m, including: \$37m for pensioner housing; \$58m for rental housing assistance for Aborigines; \$11m for the Local Government and Community Housing Program; \$24m for the Mortgage and Rent Relief Scheme; \$14m for the Crisis Accommodation Program; and \$550m in untied grants.

Local Government and Community Housing Program

6 June 1986: Grants totalling \$2.3m for low cost rental housing in NSW were announced by the Federal Minister for Housing and Construction and the NSW Minister for Housing.

25 November 1986: Grants totalling \$2.92m for 1986–87 from the Federal Government for low cost rental housing in Victoria, were announced by the Federal Minister for Housing and Construction and the Victorian Minister for Housing.

United Nations International Year of Shelter for the Homeless

9 June 1986: The Federal Government has approved more than \$750 000 for thirty-five housing studies and evaluation projects as its first stage contribution to the 1987 United Nations' International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (IYSH). Details of the projects were announced by the Minister for Housing and Construction and the Chairman of the National Committee of Non-Government Organisations for the IYSH.

Health — 1985

Compiled by Runda Beirouti
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Research

Hospital Funding

25 February 1985: The Minister for Health endorsed a clinical committee recommendation that a pilot national liver transplant unit be established.

2 April 1985: A \$150m capital funding program over three years to upgrade equipment and facilities in Australian teaching hospitals was a key element of the NSW doctors' dispute settlement package announced by the Prime Minister and the Premier of NSW.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget included provision of \$964m for payments to the States and Territories of Medicare Compensation Grants for public hospitals, and \$135m for bed-day subsidies to private hospitals. The Budget also provided \$50m for the first instalment of the three-year funding program for teaching hospitals, the Teaching Hospitals Capital Program. Allocations of the \$50m to each State and Territory were also announced.

20 August 1985: A Commonwealth contribution of \$0.7m toward establishment of the National Liver Transplant Unit at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney was announced in the 1985–86 Budget. The Unit was expected to be established by the end of 1985.

Reciprocal Health Care Agreements

25 February 1985: A second round of negotiations concerning a proposed reciprocal health care agreement between Australia and Italy was held. The agreement will be based on the provision of emergency hospital and medical services for short-term Italian visitors to Australia, and for Australian visitors to Italy.

3 June 1985: Discussions on the opening of negotiations for a reciprocal health care agreement between Ireland and Australia were held between the Minister for Health and the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs.

20 August 1985: The Government allocated \$600 000 in the 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget as a first step towards the introduction of reciprocal health care agreements with seven overseas countries.

Health Promotion

5 March 1985: The formation of a Better Health Commission to identify and promote preventive health strategies throughout Australia was announced by the Minister for Health. The term of the Commission would be 12 months. It was later announced that the Commission's term would be extended to 30 June 1986 and that the Commission would produce two reports: the first on major preventable health problems and the second on national health goals.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided \$1.5m for health promotion, including funding for the Better Health Commission and the National Health Promotion Program (NHPP). Under the NHPP, funds would continue to be directed toward projects for the aged and unemployed youth.

Use of Research Animals: Code of Practice

16 April 1985: A new code of practice for the care and use of animals for experimental purposes was issued by the Federal Government. The new code was developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council, with assistance from CSIRO and the Australian Agricultural Council. The guidelines contained in the code emphasise considerate treatment and the ethical responsibilities of investigators and institutions using animals in experiments.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

13 March 1985: The Minister for Health announced that AIDS screening tests were expected to become available for distribution throughout Australia from 27 March.

13 May 1985: The AIDS Task Force recommended that the Queensland Government's proposal that past recipients of blood transfusions should be screened for antibodies to the AIDS virus should not be adopted as a national strategy.

23 May 1985: The Minister for Health made a Ministerial Statement in the House of Representatives on the health problems presented by AIDS and on the measures being taken by Commonwealth and State governments to deal with the disease.

21 June 1985: The Minister for Health announced ACT legislation which will protect the Red Cross blood transfusion service at the Woden Valley Hospital against law suits arising from the transmission of AIDS through blood supplies. The Blood Donation (AIDS) Ordinance would come into effect on 1 July 1985.

6 August 1985: The Minister for Health announced a grant of \$277 500 to Western Australia for initiatives to assist in the campaign against AIDS. Similar grants to the other States and Territories were announced later in the year.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided \$8.4m to combat AIDS, an increase of \$3.3m over the 1984–85 provision.

15 November 1985: The First National Aids Conference was opened by the Minister for Health. The Conference, held in Melbourne over two days, brought together speakers from Australia and overseas.

Drug Abuse

2 April 1985: A special Premiers Conference on Drugs was held at Parliament House, Canberra. The State Governments, the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth agreed to mount a National Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NCADA). The Commonwealth Government proposed a contribution of \$20m a year over the following three years for new projects in the fields of education, treatment, rehabilitation and research. A number of announcements were subsequently made of funding for projects under the NCADA.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided \$2m to establish a National Drug Education Program and \$20m for the NCADA. The National Drug Education Program would support State, Northern Territory and national programs of education to reduce the abuse of drugs, and would commence in November 1985. Of the \$20m provided for the NCADA, \$12m (\$9m for treatment and rehabilitation and \$3m for education programs) is being matched by the States. The remaining \$8m is to be spent on national initiatives — \$3m on research and development of an effective database to enable future planning and evaluation of the demands and results of the campaign, and \$5m on an education program. Approximately \$4m of the education funds is to be spent on a national media campaign aimed at informing the community of the dangers of drug abuse, and seeking community support to combat the problem.

Medicare and Health Insurance

2 April 1985: The Prime Minister and the New South Wales Premier jointly announced a package of measures to settle the New South Wales doctors' dispute. The main elements of the package were: i) significant increases in remuneration for doctors treating Medicare patients in public hospitals, and the option of modified fee-for-service payment to doctors working in major country and metropolitan district hospitals; ii) repeal of provisions of Section 17 of the *Health Insurance Act*; iii) a \$150m program

of Commonwealth capital funding to upgrade equipment and facilities in Australian teaching hospitals over three years; iv) automatic classification of privately-insured patients entering public hospitals as 'private patients' unless they opt to be treated as Medicare patients; v) expansion of the basic hospital table to include day-care benefits, benefits for the implantation of surgical devices, and the difference between the Medicare benefit and the schedule fee for medical services provided in hospitals; vi) an expansion of the range of private insurance tables which can be offered; and vii) support for the principle of community rating by providing that all insurers who offer health insurance must do so under the conditions of the *National Health Act*. Implementation of the Package was conditional upon the New South Wales Branch of the Australian Medical Association (AMA) proceeding to arbitration on the level of the hourly sessional rate.

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget provided \$70m for the measures announced in regard to the New South Wales doctors' dispute, including \$50m for the Teaching Hospitals Capital Program. Those measures requiring amendments to the Medicare legislation would take effect from 1 September 1985.

November 1985: The first report of the Committee of Review of the Medicare Benefits Schedule (the Layton Committee) was tabled. The report included 67 recommendations for changes to the Medicare Benefits Schedule.

Tobacco Products and Smoking

16 May 1985: A new system of four rotational health warnings for cigarettes and other tobacco products will commence on 1 July 1986.

5 June 1985: A book entitled *Become a Non-Smoker* was launched in Sydney by the Minister for Health.

30 October 1985: Recommendations of the Australian Health Minister's Sub-Committee on tobacco product health warnings, were released by the Minister for Health.

Medical Fees and Benefits

20 May 1985: Increases in the medical benefits schedule, to apply from 1 July 1985 to 30 April 1986, were handed down in the report of the 1985 Medical Fees Inquiry by the Deputy President of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission. Schedule fees, on which Medicare benefits are based, would be increased by 3.7 per cent from 1 July 1985.

14 August 1985: The 1985 Optometrical Consultation Fees Inquiry determined that those optometrical consultation fees, on which Medicare benefits are based, would increase by 4.3 per cent from 23 September 1985.

20 August 1985: The Government allocated \$15.5m in the 1985–86 Budget for the Isolated Patients' Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme.

Medical Fraud and Overservicing

20 May 1985: Functions of the Surveillance and Investigation Division of the Department of Health were transferred to the Health Insurance Commission.

September 1985: The Joint Parliamentary Committee of Public Accounts reported on the pathology industry. The Committee, which had been enquiring into medical fraud and overservicing since 1982, identified a number of aspects of concern in the growth of the pathology industry.

ACT Health Authority

24 May 1985: A proposal for restructuring the ACT Health Authority was released by the Minister for Health. The objective of the restructuring would be to ensure a structure more representative of the users and providers of health services. Suggestions and comments on this proposed structure were invited. The target date of implementation of the new structure was 1 September 1985.

30 September 1985: As part of the restructured ACT Health Authority, the establishment of a patient advocacy and complaints unit was announced by the Minister for Health.

Health Research

24 May 1985: A national dietary survey of Australian school children, a major Government initiative for International Youth Year to be conducted in conjunction with the 1985 Australian Health and Fitness Survey, was announced by the Minister for Health.

20 August 1985: The Federal Government allocated \$50.8m to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) in the 1985–86 Budget. Other Budget commitments took the Government's total support for programs related to health research in 1985–86 to an estimated \$70.7m.

23 October 1985: Establishment of an independent inquiry into research and teaching of public health and tropical health in Australia was announced by the Minister for Health.

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

June 1985: The Pharmaceutical Benefits Remuneration Tribunal granted increases in pharmaceutical prices of 17 cents for ready-prepared benefits and 24 cents for extemporaneous benefits, to take effect from 1 July 1985.

1 July 1985: The general patient contribution for pharmaceutical benefits was increased by \$1 to \$5. The concessional contribution remained at \$2 per prescription and pensioners continued to receive items free.

19 November 1985: The Minister for Health announced a number of changes to current prescribing restrictions, which would assist the chronically ill and other patients by reducing the frequency with which they needed to consult their doctors when on continuous medication. From 1 December 1985, the life of prescriptions would be increased from the present maximum of six months to twelve months, 48 drugs used in the treatment of chronic conditions would have the number of allowable repeats increased, and changes would be made to the restriction status of a number of drugs.

Australia Card

2 July 1985: The Minister for Health presented a detailed proposal for a national identification system, entitled the Australia Card, to the National Taxation Summit. The Government proposed that the Australia Card should be administered by the Health Insurance Commission because of its experience with Medicare. The Government subsequently established a Joint Select Committee to develop the Australia Card proposal, and the Committee began its deliberations in December 1985.

Professional Education and Training

29 July 1985: The Minister for Health announced the establishment of two major new bodies to advise on nursing issues. The first of these, the National Nursing Consultative Committee, would report to the Minister on nursing matters with national implications. The second, the Commonwealth-State Advisory Committee on Nursing Issues, would provide advice to all health ministers on a wide range of matters.

20 August 1985: The Government allocated \$1.7m in the 1985–86 Budget to assist the States in the transfer of basic nurse education to colleges of advanced education.

19 November 1985: Nurse education and retraining would receive a further \$7.3m from the Federal Government over the next two years, jointly announced the Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations, the Minister for Education and the Minister for Health. The new grants were in addition to the \$3.3m already committed for nurse retraining and the \$1.7m for the transfer of basic nurse education from hospitals to CAEs.

Commonwealth Serum Laboratories

20 August 1985: A \$13m upgrading of blood plasma fractionation facilities at the Commonwealth

Serum Laboratories in Melbourne is to begin this year. The Federal Government allocated \$5.6m in the 1985–86 Budget for the project with further commitments of \$4.3m in 1986–87 and \$3.6m in 1987–88.

11 October 1985: Federal Cabinet has approved significant changes to the structure and operations of the CSL. Legislation introduced into Parliament would place the laboratories on an equal footing with its multinational competitors. CSL would be able to form a company, buy or sell shares in a company and enter into partnerships or other profit-sharing arrangements.

Community Health

20 August 1985: The 1985–86 Commonwealth Budget allocated \$40.9m for community health programs. This included \$8.1m for Health Program Grants, mainly to State family planning associations, \$11.8m to organisations under the National Community Health Program, and \$21m to the States and Northern Territory under the Medicare arrangements for new or expanded community health services.

7 November 1985: A grant of \$7.6m to the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners to enable the College to continue its family medicine program during 1985–86 under the National Community Health Program, was announced by the Minister for Health.

Health — 1986

Compiled by Runda Beirouti
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Research

Reciprocal Health Care Agreements

9 January 1986: A reciprocal health care agreement was signed by the Minister for Health and the Italian Health Minister. Under the agreement, short-term visitors from Italy to Australia and from Australia to Italy will be eligible for access to the host country's health care system for medical conditions which require immediate treatment. The agreement will come into effect upon its ratification by the Italian Parliament.

21 March 1986: A reciprocal health care agreement, signed by the Minister for Health and the United Kingdom Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, will become effective from 1 July 1986.

2 April 1986: A reciprocal health care agreement, signed by the Minister for Health and the New Zealand Minister for Health and Local Government, will become effective from 1 July 1986.

28 August 1986: People visiting Australia specifically for medical or hospital treatment would be ineligible for Medicare cover, announced the Minister for Health.

Health Research

26 January 1986: A bicentennial package involving major initiatives for education and research into public health and tropical health in Australia was recommended in a report released by the Minister for Health. The report, commissioned by the Minister in October 1985, was undertaken by an independent review team headed by Dr Kerr White.

19 August 1986: The Federal Government allocated \$59m in the 1986–87 Budget to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). It was also announced in the Budget that \$26m had been committed over the next three years for a program aimed at switching the emphasis on provision of health services away from curative medicine and towards prevention and public health. The program would involve: rationalisation and decentralisation of public health teaching and research facilities; funding of programs throughout Australia; strengthening of the Australian Institute of Health; and creation of a Public Health Research and Development Committee within the NHMRC. The program stemmed from recommendations made by the Kerr White Review in January 1986.

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)

6 February 1986: A major restructuring of the National Advisory Committee on AIDS (NACAIDS) was announced by the Minister for Health. NACAIDS would have its role expanded with three subcommittees appointed to concentrate on: communication and education; social and legal matters; and health service aspects.

17 February 1986: The establishment of a Parliamentary Liaison Group on AIDS was announced. The Liaison Group would formalise communication between the Federal Parliament, medical experts and concerned groups.

19 February 1986: A grant of \$40 700 for the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO), the umbrella body for community-based AIDS organisations, was announced by the Minister for Health. The AFAO had been formed in recognition of the need for the eight individual State-Territory AIDS organisations to work effectively together in the fight against the disease.

26 June 1986: A 16-page booklet called *AIDS: Health Report to the Nation* was launched in Sydney by the Minister for Health.

19 August 1986: The Federal Government allocated \$9.7m in the 1986-87 Budget to combat the spread of AIDS, including \$2m for a national AIDS education program.

31 October 1986: The Second National Conference on AIDS was held in Sydney from 31 October to 1 November 1986.

Community Participation in Health Planning

6 February 1986: Reforms to provide greater community and consumer influence in health planning in Australia were recommended in a report, titled *The Review of Community Participation in the Commonwealth Department of Health*, released by the Minister for Health.

17 October 1986: The establishment of a national Health Forum to improve information flow between government and the community was announced by the Minister for Health.

10 December 1986: The first general committee meeting of the Health Forum was held in Sydney.

Medical Fraud and Overservicing

23 February 1986: Significant reforms to the penalty and disqualification provisions of the *Health Insurance Act* for doctors who commit medifraud would come into force on 24 February 1986, announced the Minister for Health. Current legislation provided for no distinction between the penalties applying

to practitioners found guilty of medifraud regardless of whether the offence was intentional or the result of reckless or gross careless conduct. Disqualification from participation in Medicare applied automatically for three years where two or more offences were proven. The new arrangements will allow for a range of options when an offence is proven, from decisions to take no action, to counselling of the practitioner, reprimands, or partial or full disqualification for up to five years. The changes had been agreed in consultation with the Australian Medical Association, Australian Dental Association and Australian Optometrical Association.

6 May 1986: The Government's response to the Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee of Public Accounts on Pathology Fraud and Overservicing was announced by the Minister for Health. Schedule fees and benefits for eighteen highly-automated or large-volume pathology tests which are highly profitable are to be reduced by 25 per cent from 1 August 1986.

Medical Fees and Benefits

7 March 1986: Establishment of the 1986 Medical Fees Inquiry was announced by the Minister for Health. The Inquiry was subsequently abandoned following the decision by the Australian Medical Association not to participate. Matters which would have been dealt with by the Inquiry were determined otherwise and announced by the Minister for Health on 6 May in a statement on reform of the Medicare Benefit Schedule (see under Medicare and Health Insurance).

19 August 1986: It was announced in the 1986-87 Commonwealth Budget that the Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme would be abolished from 1 January 1987. The Scheme would be replaced by direct funding to the States and Territories who would assume responsibility for providing the required assistance. For the first six months of 1987, \$10.9m would be provided to the States and Territories for this function.

24 October 1986: The Minister for Health announced a 6.9 per cent increase in optometrical consultation fees, on which Medicare benefits are based, to apply from 1 November 1986.

Drug Abuse

6 April 1986: A national media campaign against drug abuse, The Drug Offensive, was launched with a national television report by the Prime Minister, the State Premiers and the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory. Subsequent media initiatives under The Drug Offensive included distribution to all Australian households of a booklet describing the drugs problem and advising on sources of assistance and further information.

27 July 1986: A report on the results of a national survey of community attitudes to drugs, undertaken as part of the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NCADA), was released by the Minister for Health. The survey findings were used in the design of the public information campaign, The Drug Offensive. The survey had been conducted among 2800 people throughout Australia in November and December 1985.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget allocated \$21.4m for the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse, of which \$12.8m will match the contributions made by the States and Territories for more than 120 cost-shared projects. The balance of the Commonwealth's contribution (\$8.6m) will be spent on national initiatives. A further \$2.2m allocation was made towards Commonwealth, State and Territory projects under the National Drug Education Program.

1 October 1986: The Drug Offensive ethnic information kit, translated into eight non-English languages, was launched by the Minister for Health and the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

Medicare and Health Insurance

6 May 1986: A package of measures to reform the Medicare Benefits Schedule from 1 August 1986, was announced by the Minister for Health. The main elements of the new Medicare benefits package are: (i) introduction of uniform schedule fees and benefits for all States at the level of the highest current rate (generally the NSW rate) at a cost of \$95m in 1986–87 (\$112m in a full year); (ii) an increase of 6 per cent in schedule fees and benefits for all attendance services from 1 August 1986. The measure will correct what has been the undervaluation of consultations and attendances provided by General Practitioners and specialists, compared to fees for procedural items, such as surgery, and diagnostic items, such as pathology and radiology at a cost of \$68m in 1986–87 (\$80m in a full year); and (iii) implementation of agreed recommendations of the Committee of Review of the Medicare Benefits Schedule, which reported in November last year, at a cost of \$6m in a full year.

1 July 1986: The Minister for Health announced a deferral until 1 November 1986 of the introduction of uniform Medicare Schedule fees throughout Australia and the 6 per cent increase in schedule fees and benefits for attendance services. The changes had previously been announced to apply from 1 August 1986.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget included announcement of: an increase in the Medicare levy from 1 per cent of taxable income to 1.25 per cent from 1 December 1986; increases in the low-income thresholds for exemption from the

Medicare levy; and an increase from \$10 to \$20 in the maximum patient contribution to the Schedule fee from 1 November 1986. The Budget also announced a reduction from \$5m to \$1m in the Commonwealth's contribution to the Health Benefits Reinsurance Trust Fund.

25 August 1986: A discussion paper on Health Maintenance Organisations (HMOs), titled *Health Maintenance Organisations: A Development Program Under Medicare*, was released by the Minister for Health. A HMO is an organisation that accepts contractual responsibility to provide a range of health care services to a voluntarily enrolled population in exchange for a predetermined advance payment by government, individuals, or by third parties. The amount of payment for each member is not affected by the frequency, extent, or kind of health services they require. If HMOs were to be introduced, they would be required to develop within the Medicare framework.

13 November 1986: The second report of the Committee of Review of the Medicare Benefits Schedule (the Layton Committee) was tabled in Federal Parliament. The report considered options for public funding of paramedical services and, having concluded that extension of the Medicare Benefits Schedule to cover paramedical services was not the appropriate means of funding, the Committee recommended alternative approaches.

Australia Card

8 May 1986: The Joint Select Committee working on the Australia Card proposal reported to Parliament. A majority of the Committee recommended use of an upgraded tax file number, instead of an Australia card, for purposes proposed by the Australian Taxation Office, Department of Social Security and Department of Veterans' Affairs.

5 June 1986: The Minister for Health advised Parliament that the Government would proceed with the Australia Card proposal, having rejected the majority recommendation of the Joint Select Committee.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$35.5m for the initial stages of introduction of the Australia Card program. The allocation would: enable the Health Insurance Commission to embark on substantial preparation of the program (\$10.6m); provide for the establishment of a national, centralised registry of births, deaths, and marriages (\$23.4m); and establish an independent watch-dog body, the Data Protection Agency (\$1.5m).

22 October 1986: The *Australia Card Bill 1986* was introduced in the House of Representatives. The Bill was twice rejected by the Senate. The Health Insurance Commission ceased working on the Australia Card proposal in December 1986.

Quarantine Legislation

8 May 1986: Proposed new legislation to replace the *Quarantine Act 1908* was announced by the Minister for Primary Industry and the Minister for Health. The legislation would deal separately with agricultural quarantine and human quarantine, reflecting the present division of ministerial responsibilities.

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

13 May 1986: The report of the inquiry into the pharmaceutical products industry, undertaken by the Industries Assistance Commission, included a number of recommendations relating to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS). The recommendations included deregulation of the industry, alteration to the method of drug subsidy by the Government, and change to current assistance levels for the provision of pharmaceutical benefits.

19 August 1986: New arrangements for the PBS were announced in the 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget. The general and concessional patient contributions for prescriptions would be increased to \$10 and \$2.50 respectively. However, a Safety Net Scheme would be introduced for patients (individuals or families) whereby, if they used 25 prescriptions in a calendar year, their contributions for further prescriptions in that calendar year would be zero. Pensioners and their dependents who received free prescriptions under the previous arrangements would continue to receive them free. The changes would come into effect on 1 November 1986 and were estimated to result in cost-savings to the Government of \$67m in a full year.

Community Health

29 May 1986: The Australian Community Health Association was awarded a grant of \$68 000 under the National Community Health Program to investigate existing community health services and identify areas of need. The project is intended to assist the Government develop a comprehensive community health policy.

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$43.6m for community health programs: \$21.1m for Health Program Grants, including \$7.9m for family planning services; \$11.8m for the National Community Health Program; and \$21m to the States and Northern Territory under

the Medicare arrangements for new or expanded community health services.

Health Promotion

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$2.5m for the National Health Promotion Program and the Better Health Commission.

10 October 1986: The Minister for Health made a Ministerial Statement in the House of Representatives when he tabled the first volume of the final report of the Better Health Commission entitled *Looking Forward to Better Health*. The second and third volumes of the report were tabled on 13 November 1986.

Hospital Funding

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget provided \$1006m for Medicare Compensation Grants to the States and Territories for public hospitals, and \$49m for the second year of the Teaching Hospitals Capital Program. It was also announced in the Budget that the bed-day subsidies paid to private hospitals would be abolished from 1 October 1986.

Professional Education and Training

19 August 1986: The 1986–87 Commonwealth Budget allocated \$7.7m to help States and Territories transfer nurse education to colleges of advanced education.

Tobacco Products and Smoking

12 November 1986: A revised Voluntary Code for CPM (Tar), Nicotine and Carbon Monoxide Labelling on Cigarette Packaging, was announced by the Minister for Health. As well as including carbon monoxide levels the revised code lowers the maximum yields permitted for tar and nicotine in cigarettes. The new upper limits will take effect from 1 July 1987 for local brands, and from 1 September 1987 for imported brands, to coincide with the introduction of the new rotational health warnings.

1 December 1986: All Department of Health office-space was declared 'smoke-free' following recommendations from the National Health and Medical Research Council regarding the dangers of passive smoking.

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Diary of Social Legislation and Policy

This is the sixth in a series of annual publications. From the 1984 issue, the Diary has been produced by the Australian Institute of Family Studies in co-operation with the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research, Melbourne, and the Social Welfare Research Centre, University of New South Wales.

The Diary summarises the legislative and administrative changes made by the Commonwealth government in the areas of social security and community services, employment and training, education, family law, immigration, housing and health during 1985 and 1986.

Other Diaries in this ongoing series are for the years 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, and 1984.

The series follows the format of earlier diaries within the books titled *Public expenditure and social policy in Australia* (Vols I and II) prepared by Helen Ferber of the Institute of Economic and Social Research, which cover the years 1972 to 1978. Since there is a year's gap between the end of the Public expenditures volumes and the beginning of the present series, each of the first three issues summarises one aspect of social policy for the year 1979. The 1980 Diary covers immigration; that for 1981 covers social security and welfare; and the 1982 issue covers health.

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The *Diary of Social Legislation and Policy* summarises the legislative and administrative changes made by the Commonwealth government in social security and community services, employment and training, education, family law, immigration, housing and health.

The *Diary*, produced since 1980 as part of a continuing series, is compiled as a co-operative venture by three research institutions whose work encompasses the areas of policy concern.

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