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ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR INTER-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS REPEAL
BILL 1986

Date introduced: 19 August 1986
House: House of Representatives
Presented by: Hon. Lionel Bowen, M.P.,
Attorney-General

DIGEST OF BILL

Purpose

To abolish the Advisory Council for Inter-government Relations (the Council).

Background

The Council was established by the Advisory Council for Inter-Government Relations Act 1976 (the Principal Act). The Council was set up with the object of improving inter-government co-operation amongst the Federal, State and Local Governments through research and recommendations made under directions provided by the Premier's Conference. The Council consists of 24 members with a small secretariat located in Hobart. The Council is an advisory body with no executive powers.

In 1985 the Prime Minister noted that the Council had been operating for some eight years and suggested it was time for the Council to be reviewed. As a result a Task Group was established and the Task Group to Review the Advisory Council on Inter-Government Relations reported on 17 January 1986. The Task Group's main functions were to consider whether the Council was fulfilling the purpose for which it was established, whether changes were desirable and what options there were for the future.

The Task Group concluded that the Council had only limited success in its objective of improving inter-government relations, particularly in the area of Commonwealth/State relations. This conclusion was based on the findings that the Council had not developed a reputation for high quality research, it had been remote from the practice of inter-government relations and its recommendations had not attracted the attention of governments or provoked debate amongst decision-makers. These findings, together with the assumption that even after reform of the Council it would be unlikely that the situation would be improved, prompted the Task Group to ultimately recommend that the Council be abolished. This Bill implements the recommendation of the Task Group with a resulting saving to the Commonwealth of approximately \$250 000 annually.

Main Provisions

The Advisory Council for Inter-government Relations Act 1976 and the Advisory Council for Inter-government Relations Amendment Act 1981 will be repealed by clause 3.

Clauses 1, 2 and 8 will come into operation on the day this Bill receives the Royal Assent and the remaining provisions will come into operation on a day fixed by Proclamation (clause 2).

On the commencing day all the assets and liabilities of the Council will be transferred to the Commonwealth (clause 5).

Instruments or documents connected with the operation of this Bill will be exempt from stamp duty and tax (clause 6).

The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet will be able to use unexpended Council money to meet the Council's obligations and expenses incurred as a result of this Bill (clause 7).

The Council will have the power to wind up its own affairs (clause 8).

For further information, if required, contact the Law and Government Group.

19 September 1986

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