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CHAPTER 13

SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE SERVICES

This chapter describes social welfare services provided by the Commonwealth Government (through the Departments of Social Security and Aboriginal Affairs), the State Governments and voluntary welfare organisations. Details of services administered by the Commonwealth Departments of Health and Veterans' Affairs are given in the Public Health and Repatriation chapters respectively. For information on the many important welfare services provided by the State and local governments, especially in the fields of child and Aboriginal welfare, reference should be made to the State Year Books and annual statistical bulletins and the annual reports of the State departments concerned. Details on pension and superannuation schemes for government and semi-government employees, mine workers, parliamentarians, and employees of private business are included in the chapter Private Finance.

Further information on subjects dealt with in this chapter is included in the annual bulletins *Australian National Accounts* (7.1); *Public Authority Finance: Federal Authorities* (5.12); *Public Authority Finance: State and Local Government Authorities* (5.43); *Public Authority Finance: State Governments; Social Services* (5.37); *Public Authority Finance: Outlay on Aboriginal Affairs by Federal Authorities* (5.42) *Social Indicators* (13.16). Current and summarised information on Commonwealth Government social services is contained in the *Monthly Review of Business Statistics* (1.4).

Commonwealth Government expenditure on social security services

This section deals with various government payments for the relief of the aged, indigent, infirm, widowed, orphaned and unemployed, assistance to families, etc. For summary statements of cash payments to persons made by public authorities under various functional heads, see *Public Authority Finance* and other annual bulletins mentioned above.

AUTHORITIES OF THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT, SOCIAL SECURITY CASH BENEFITS TO PERSONS, 1974-75 (\$'000)

	N.S.W. (a)	Vic.	Qld	S.A. (a)	W.A.	Tas.	N.T. (a)	A.C.T. (a)	Abroad	Total
Assistance to aged persons—										
Age pensions	600,206	432,555	247,122	158,657	118,492	50,226	..	117	5,077	1,612,451
Delivered meals	359	114	148	172	115	60	..	..	..	968
Personal care	1,921	2,283	1,191	1,107	883	266	..	..	..	7,651
Telephone concessions	2,710	2,084	877	654	509	219	..	..	..	7,053
Total	605,196	437,036	249,338	160,590	119,999	50,771	..	117	5,077	1,628,123
Assistance to incapacitated and handicapped persons—										
Invalid pensions	127,034	68,190	49,088	30,195	20,320	9,893	..	24	1,735	306,477
Sheltered employment allow- ances	1,484	..	31	944	575	41	..	..	..	3,075
Handicapped children's bene- fits	1,017	444	330	275	309	94	..	..	..	2,469
Rehabilitation services	2,581	3,248	1,234	982	908	369	..	..	6	9,329
Total	132,116	71,882	50,683	32,396	22,112	10,397	..	24	1,741	321,350
Assistance to unemployed and sick persons—										
Unemployment benefits	93,760	66,361	42,422	20,475	19,753	7,746	752	470	..	251,740
Sickness benefits	24,395	18,193	8,596	4,855	4,415	1,692	188	498	..	62,833
Special benefits	4,281	2,560	1,746	735	777	422	422	50	..	10,992
Structural adjustment assis- tance	21,552	22,427	2,516	2,790	252	1,503	..	..	..	51,040
Other	7	1	6	1	2	2	..	..	..	20
Total	143,995	109,542	55,286	28,856	25,199	11,365	1,362	1,018	..	376,625
Assistance to ex-servicemen(b)—										
War and service pensions and allowances	165,767	124,014	78,823	41,715	36,995	20,376	..	334	1,885	469,908
Other benefits(c) . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,254
Total	165,767	124,014	78,823	41,715	36,995	20,376	..	334	1,885	474,162
Assistance to widowed and de- serted spouses—										
Widows' pensions	87,955	66,474	33,325	25,193	18,459	8,521	..	29	1,435	241,389
Assistance to families and child- ren—										
Child endowment	79,395	62,885	34,401	21,937	19,084	7,099	..	9	39	224,848
Maternity allowances	2,767	1,978	1,177	695	659	229	..	1	..	7,506
Supporting mothers' benefits	26,473	15,786	13,505	9,293	8,102	2,819	..	9	104	76,092
Orphans' pensions	601	291	223	146	76	43	..	..	..	1,381
Total	109,236	80,940	49,306	32,071	27,921	10,190	..	18	144	309,827

For footnotes see end of table

**AUTHORITIES OF THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT, SOCIAL SECURITY
CASH BENEFITS TO PERSONS, 1974-75—continued**
(\$'000)

	N.S.W. (a)	Vic.	Qld	S.A. (a)	W.A.	Tas.	N.T. (a)	A.C.T. (a)	Abroad	Total
Other social security and welfare programs—										
Funeral benefits	647	417	260	159	112	44	..	..	2	1,641
Telephone rental concessions n.e.c.	455	374	190	115	112	53	..	..	..	1,299
Compassionate allowances	18	24	41	6	2	2	..	..	2	95
Assistance to homeless persons . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	275	..	275
Other(c) . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	432
<i>Total</i>	1,120	815	491	280	226	99	..	276	4	3,742
Health benefits(d)	316,713	189,926	99,358	78,337	60,187	22,144	..	50,383	..	817,045
Total social security	1,562,098	1,080,629	616,610	399,438	311,098	133,863	1,362	52,199	10,286	4,172,263

(a) State totals for New South Wales and South Australia also include most of the unallocable expenditure on cash benefits to persons resident in the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory respectively. (b) For details see Chapter 5, Repatriation. (c) Expenditures on this item are unallocable by States and are included in total only. (d) For details see Chapter 14, Public Health.

**AUTHORITIES OF THE COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT, SOCIAL SECURITY
CASH BENEFITS TO PERSONS**
(\$'000)

	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Assistance to aged persons—					
Age pensions	582,889	680,322	887,750	1,146,387	1,612,451
Delivered meals	218	226	398	958	968
Personal care	1,592	1,830	3,273	4,949	7,651
Telephone concessions	2,955	3,806	4,172	5,394	7,053
<i>Total</i>	<i>587,654</i>	<i>186,184</i>	<i>895,593</i>	<i>1,157,688</i>	<i>1,628,123</i>
Assistance to incapacitated and handicapped persons—					
Invalid pensions	119,387	138,194	184,699	226,022	306,477
Sheltered employment allowances	590	742	1,161	1,418	3,075
Handicapped children's benefits	456	438	429	582	2,469
Rehabilitation services	3,107	3,945	4,658	6,203	9,329
<i>Total</i>	<i>123,540</i>	<i>143,319</i>	<i>190,947</i>	<i>234,225</i>	<i>321,350</i>
Assistance to unemployed and sick persons—					
Unemployment benefits	10,795	25,997	46,553	58,246	251,740
Sickness benefits	10,262	15,906	26,610	41,407	62,833
Special benefits	2,420	2,851	4,368	6,983	10,992
Structural adjustment assistance . . . . .	..	..	..	..	51,040
Other . . . . .	..	..	80	44	20
<i>Total</i>	<i>23,477</i>	<i>44,754</i>	<i>77,611</i>	<i>106,681</i>	<i>376,625</i>
Assistance to ex-servicemen(a)—					
War and service pensions and allowances	234,979	260,150	297,304	355,803	469,908
Other benefits	3,823	4,058	3,720	4,025	4,254
<i>Total</i>	<i>238,802</i>	<i>264,208</i>	<i>301,024</i>	<i>359,828</i>	<i>474,162</i>
Assistance to widowed and deserted spouses—					
Widows' pensions	90,514	104,627	140,505	180,957	241,389
Assistance to families and children—					
Child endowment	198,442	216,581	253,860	225,360	224,848
Maternity allowances	8,554	8,617	7,970	7,782	7,506
Supporting mothers' benefits . . . . .	..	..	..	40,586	76,092
Orphans' pensions . . . . .	..	..	..	458	1,381
<i>Total</i>	<i>206,996</i>	<i>225,198</i>	<i>261,860</i>	<i>274,186</i>	<i>309,827</i>
Other social security and welfare programs—					
Funeral benefits	1,653	1,583	1,579	1,578	1,641
Telephone rental concessions n.e.c.	662	802	863	1,024	1,299
Emergency assistance to wool-growers(b)	21,327	187	..	..	..
Compassionate allowances	91	98	104	104	95
Assistance to homeless persons . . . . .	..	..	..	..	275
Other	137	132	134	378	432
<i>Total</i>	<i>23,870</i>	<i>2,802</i>	<i>2,680</i>	<i>3,084</i>	<i>3,742</i>
Health benefits(c)	409,480	508,133	581,283	659,003	817,045
Total social security	1,704,333	1,979,225	2,451,473	2,975,651	4,172,263

(a) For details see Chapter 5, Repatriation. (b) For details see Chapter 22, Rural Industry. (c) For details see Chapter 14, Public Health.

Commonwealth Government social services

Under the provisions of Section 51 of the Constitution, the Commonwealth Government is empowered to legislate on:

'(xxiii) Invalid and old age pensions:

'(xxiiiA) The provision of maternity allowances, widows' pensions, child endowment, unemployment, pharmaceutical, sickness and hospital benefits, medical and dental services (but not so as to authorize any form of civil conscription), benefits to students and family allowances;';

On 1 July 1947 with the passage of the *Social Services Consolidation Act 1947*, all Acts providing social service benefits were amalgamated. The Act is at present styled the *Social Services Act 1947*.

The social security benefits provided by the Commonwealth Government under the *Social Services Act 1947*, and the date on which each came into operation, are:

Age pension	1 July 1909
Invalid pension	14 October 1910
Maternity allowance	10 October 1912
Child endowment	1 July 1941
Widow's pension and allowance for one child	30 June 1942
Funeral benefit	1 July 1943
Allowances for wife and one child of pensioners who are invalided	8 July 1943
Unemployment benefit	1 July 1945
Sickness benefit	1 July 1945
Special benefit	1 July 1945
<i>Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service</i>	10 December 1948
Additional pension for second and subsequent children of pensioners who are invalided	11 October 1956
Additional pension for second and subsequent children of widows' pensioners	16 October 1956
Supplementary assistance for rent-paying age and in- valid pensioners	23 October 1958
Supplementary assistance for rent-paying widows' pensioners	28 October 1958
Mother's allowance for widows' pensioners with dependent children	8 October 1963
Student endowment	14 January 1964
Allowances for wife and one child of age pensioners who are not invalided	14 October 1965
Additional pension for second and subsequent children of age pensioners who are not invalided	14 October 1965
Guardians' allowances for widowed and other unmarried age and invalid pensioners with children in their care	14 October 1965
Sheltered employment allowance	30 June 1967
Training scheme for widow pensioners	27 September 1968
Special payments to the surviving spouse of a pen- sioner couple	10 October 1968
Additional pension for all children (i.e. allowance for one child converted to additional pension as for other children)	10 October 1968
Supplementary allowance for rent paying sickness beneficiaries after six weeks	28 September 1970
Wife's pension (superseded wife's allowance)	5 October 1972
Supporting mother's benefit (including mother's allow- ance and additional benefit for children)	3 July 1973
Double orphans' pension	9 October 1973
Incentive allowance for sheltered employees	1 November 1974
Handicapped child's allowance	30 December 1974

Age and invalid pensions and associated payments

Age pensions are payable to residentially qualified men and women who have reached the ages of 65 and 60 respectively. They are subject to a means test unless the person is permanently blind or has reached the age of 70. They are also subject to tax.

To be residentially qualified for age pension a person must generally be living in Australia on the date of application for the pension and have lived in Australia for ten years continuously at some time. If a person has completed five years, but not ten years, continuous residence at some time, and has lived in Australia for periods which exceed a total of ten years, the period of continuous residence otherwise required is reduced by the total of his periods of residence in Australia in excess of ten years. Any periods of absence during which a person's home remains in Australia, and absences in certain other circumstances, may be counted as residence, and any absence in an external Territory other than Norfolk Island, counts as residence in Australia. Residence in New Zealand or the United Kingdom may be treated as residence in Australia.

Invalid pensions are payable to persons, sixteen years of age and over, who are permanently incapacitated for work to the extent of at least eighty-five per cent, or permanently blind. They are subject to means test unless the person is permanently blind.

There is no residence qualification for invalid pension if the permanent blindness or incapacity occurred within Australia (including an external Territory other than Norfolk Island) or during temporary absence from Australia. As a result some people not residentially qualified for age pension but who have reached age pension age receive an invalid pension. Invalid pension is subject to tax in these cases but not in others.

A wife's pension is payable to the wife of a pensioner not entitled, in her own right, to an age, invalid or repatriation service pension. There is no residence qualification but a means test applies. Wife's pension is taxable only if her husband has reached the age of 65.

Rates of pension. The maximum standard rate was increased to \$2,145 per annum (\$41.25 a week) from 13 May 1976. This is payable to a single, widowed or divorced pensioner, or a married pensioner whose spouse is not receiving a pension or a tuberculosis allowance. The standard rate may also be paid to each of a married pensioner couple who are living apart for an indefinite period due to illness or infirmity of either or both. The maximum rate for a married pensioner couple (known as the married rate) was increased to \$3,562 per annum (\$68.50 a week) from 13 May 1976 (i.e. \$1,781 per annum or \$34.25 a week each). For a married person, whose spouse receives a tuberculosis allowance, or a service pension, the maximum rate is also \$1,781 per annum (\$34.25 a week).

Additional pension for each dependent child under 16 years is payable, subject to the means test, at the rate of up to \$390 per annum (\$7.50 a week). Widowed or other unmarried age or invalid pensioners with a dependent child may receive a guardian's allowance up to \$4 a week, or up to \$6 a week if the child is under 6 years of age or is an invalid child requiring full-time care. Guardian's allowance is also subject to the means test. Eligibility for the additional pension for children is extended to include a child over sixteen years, provided he is wholly or substantially dependent on the pensioner and is receiving full-time education at a school, college or university. Supplementary assistance of up to \$5 a week (standard rate pensioners) and \$2.50 a week (married rate pensioners) subject to a special means test, is available to pensioners if they pay rent or pay for board and lodging or for lodging.

On the death of one member of a married pensioner couple the surviving pensioner spouse becomes entitled to receive, for up to six fortnightly instalments, the equivalent of the two pensions that would have been paid if the spouse had not died. For the purpose of this provision the term 'pensioner' includes a person in receipt of age, invalid, wife's or repatriation service pension, or a sheltered employment allowance.

A table showing the maximum rates of pension operating since 1 July 1909 at dates prior to 14 October 1965 is included on page 608 of Year Book No. 51. Details of the respective rates and allowances payable since 14 October 1965 are included in subsequent Year Books.

The means test is the same for age and invalid pension purposes. As already noted, it does not apply to the permanently blind or, in the case of age pensions, to people who have reached 70 years of age. In other cases, the means test operates to reduce pension payable if a claimant's *means as assessed*—in effect, the claimant's annual income other than from property plus 10 per cent of the excess of the claimant's property over \$400—exceed prescribed limits. In the case of a person entitled to the standard rate of pension, the limit is \$1,040; in other cases, it is \$897. If means as assessed exceed these figures, half the excess is subtracted from the appropriate maximum rate of pension. If means as assessed do not exceed these figures, the appropriate maximum rate is payable.

The effect of the means test is to preclude from entitlement to any pension a person subject to the means test and whose 'income' exceeds \$102.50 a week or whose property exceeds \$53,700 in value (these figures are both lower if the claimant has both income and property). The corresponding figures for a married couple without children are \$85.75 a week and \$45,000 (each partner).

Supplementary assistance is subject to a special means test, the effect of which is to reduce the maximum annual rate by the excess of a person's means as assessed over \$52 (standard rate pensioner) or half the excess of means as assessed over \$52 (married rate pensioners).

Certain types of income are exempted. The main exemptions are: income from property; gifts or allowances from children, parents, brothers, or sisters; benefits from friendly societies; child or student endowment; Commonwealth Government health benefits and amounts received from registered hospital or medical benefit organisations. The amount of a pensioner's income included in means as assessed may also be reduced by up to \$312 per annum (\$6 per week) for each dependent child under sixteen years or full-time student in the pensioner's care.

A special concession is made available to recipients of superannuation pensions and annuities, the annual rate of such payments being converted to a property equivalent for means test purposes by reference to a specific conversion factor. This conversion is to the pensioner's advantage in the majority of cases but where this is not so, the payments are treated as income.

Certain types of property are disregarded. They include the permanent home of the pensioner, furniture and personal effects, the surrender value (up to \$1,500) of life insurance policies, the capital value of annuities or contingent interests, and the value of reversionary interests.

For the purposes of the means test, the means as assessed of a married person are normally taken to be half of the combined means as assessed of the married couple. Exceptions may be made where the spouses are legally separated or in other special circumstances.

AGE AND INVALID PENSIONS IN FORCE 30 JUNE 1975

	<i>N.S.W.</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>S.A.</i>	<i>W.A.</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>N.T.</i>	<i>A.C.T.</i>	<i>Aust.</i>
Age—									
Males .	125,972	95,408	56,148	33,875	26,489	11,225	719	1,380	351,216
Females .	276,398	205,431	110,306	73,404	53,342	23,044	981	3,103	746,009
Persons .	402,370	300,839	166,454	107,279	79,831	34,269	1,700	4,483	1,097,225
Invalid(a)—									
Males .	41,963	23,863	16,424	9,703	6,676	3,341	504	343	102,817
Females .	26,965	14,394	11,040	6,645	4,285	2,119	295	224	65,967
Persons .	68,928	38,257	27,464	16,348	10,961	5,460	799	567	168,784

(a) Includes recipients of sheltered employment allowance.

NEW PENSIONERS, BY SEX AND MARITAL STATUS: AUSTRALIA, 1974-75

<i>Marital status</i>	<i>Age pensioners</i>			<i>Invalid pensioners</i>		
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females(a)</i>	<i>Persons(a)</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
Single(b)	6,008	8,549	14,557	6,863	4,151	11,014
Married	42,682	37,475	80,157	14,912	3,330	18,242
Widowed	6,573	21,025	27,598	1,114	703	1,817
Divorced	1,027	1,307	2,334	840	481	1,321
Total	56,290	68,356	124,646	23,729	8,665	32,394

(a) Excludes transfers from wives' allowance to age pension.

(b) Includes married but permanently separated.

The average age of new age pensioners was 69.9 years for men and 68.3 years for women.

NEW INVALID PENSIONERS, BY AGE GROUP: AUSTRALIA, 1974-75

		16-19 years	20-44 years	45-59 years	60-64 years	65 years and over	Total
Males	number	1,225	3,502	10,229	8,242	531	23,729
Females	number	1,151	2,614	4,632	159	109	8,665
Persons	number	2,376	6,116	14,861	8,401	640	32,394
	Per cent	7	19	46	26	2	100

AGE AND INVALID PENSIONS: SUMMARY, AUSTRALIA

Year	Pensioners at end of year		Total payments during year(c)			Average weekly pensions as at end of year		
	Age		Invalid(b)	Total	Total	Invalid		Age and invalid combined
	Number	Rate(a)				Age(d)	(d)		(d)
			No.	No.	\$'000	\$	\$	\$
1970-71	807,711	613	134,075	941,786	702,276	14.36	16.54	14.67
1971-72	832,693	620	138,818	971,511	818,517	16.38	18.98	16.75
1972-73	931,812	678	149,609	1,081,421	1,072,449	19.70	22.67	20.11
1973-74	1,027,582	729	156,783	1,184,365	1,372,409	23.99	26.73	24.35
1974-75	1,097,225	763	168,784	1,266,009	1,612,468	33.09	36.28	33.51

(a) Number of pensioners per 1,000 persons of pensionable age (males aged 65 years and over and females aged 60 years and over). (b) Includes recipients of sheltered employment allowance. (c) Includes allowances and supplementary assistance. (d) Includes supplementary assistance, additional pensions for children, and guardian's allowance, where applicable.

Sheltered employment allowance and associated payments

Sheltered employment allowance is payable to disabled people who are employed in sheltered workshops and are otherwise qualified to receive an invalid pension or would become so qualified if they ceased to be provided with sheltered employment. The allowance is subject to the same means test as applies to invalid pension and is paid at the same rate. It is payable in the form of a supplement to the sheltered employee's wages. The allowance is not taxable unless the sheltered employee has reached age pension age.

A sheltered employee is entitled to the same additional payments as an invalid pensioner except that no supplementary assistance is payable. Instead, all people in receipt of sheltered employment allowance receive an incentive allowance of \$5 a week. There is no means test on the allowance but a person precluded by his or her means from receiving sheltered employment allowance is not entitled to incentive allowance.

In the year ended 30 June 1975, workshops were approved under the *Social Services Act 1947* to pay sheltered employment allowances on behalf of the Department of Social Security. At 30 June 1975 sixty workshops were paying the allowances to 2,772 disabled employees. Employees in other sheltered workshops continued to receive invalid pensions. Expenditure during the year 1974-75 was \$3,075,401.

Widows' pensions and associated payments

There are three categories of widowed pensioners—

Class 'A'. A widow who has the custody, care and control of one or more qualifying children under the age of sixteen years or full-time dependent students;

Class 'B'. A widow who, because she has no qualifying children or students in her custody, care and control, is not eligible for a Class 'A' widow's pension but is either at least 50 years of age or, after having reached the age of 45, has ceased to receive a Class 'A' pension by reason of ceasing to have the custody, care and control of a qualifying child or student; and

Class 'C'. A widow not eligible for Class 'A' or Class 'B' widow's pension, is under 50 years of age but is in necessitous circumstances following her husband's death (in normal circumstances, the Class 'C' pension is not payable after 26 weeks have elapsed from the death of the husband but, if the widow is pregnant, the period is extended until the child's birth, whereupon the widow may then become eligible for a Class 'A' widow's pension).

For classes 'A' and 'B' the term 'widow' includes a wife who has been deserted by her husband for a period of at least six months; a divorcee; and a woman whose husband has been for at least six months in prison or in a mental hospital. A woman who, although not legally married, has been living with a man for at least three years as his wife on a *bona fide* domestic basis and subsequently loses her partner by reason of death, desertion or his imprisonment or admission to a mental hospital is treated as though she had been legally married to him.

A period of residence in Australia before claiming a pension is not required if a woman and her husband were residing permanently in Australia when she became a widow. In other circumstances, five years continuous residence preceding lodgment of the claim may be required, but this is waived in the case of a woman whose husband has died overseas if she has resided continuously in Australia for ten years at any time and returns to Australia to live.

A widow's pension is not payable to a woman receiving an age or invalid pension, a sheltered employment allowance, or a war widow's pension. A deserted wife or a divorcee who has not taken reasonable action to obtain maintenance from her husband or former husband may be ineligible for a widow's pension.

Current rates of pension. With effect from 4 May 1976, the maximum rate of pension for all classes of widows is \$2,145 per annum (\$41.25 a week) plus, in the case of widows with children, mother's allowance of \$208 per annum (\$4 a week) or \$312 per annum (\$6 a week) where at least one child is under 6 or is an invalid requiring full-time care, plus \$390 per annum (\$7.50 a week) for each dependent child who is under 16 years or is a full-time dependent student. Supplementary assistance of up to \$260 a year (\$5 a week) is also available to widows who pay rent or pay for board and lodgings or for lodgings and who are wholly or substantially dependent on their pension. The amount of this assistance cannot exceed the amount of rent paid.

Widow's pension is subject to a means test but is not taxable if the recipient is under 60. If she is 60 years or more, the pension is taxable but mother's allowance, additional pension for children and supplementary assistance are not.

Means test. Widow's pensions are subject to a means test on income and property. The means test for widow pensions also applies to recipients of the supporting mother's benefit described below. The rate of pension payable in any case depends on the claimant's *means as assessed*. When calculating the means as assessed of a claimant for Class 'A' widow's pension or supporting mother's benefit no amount in respect of property is taken into account where the value of the widow's or supporting mother's property is \$4,500 or less. If the value of property exceeds \$4,500 the woman's total assets or property are equated with income by treating each complete \$20 of assets above \$2,000 as equivalent to an income of \$2 a year. This amount is the property component. Means as assessed may consist entirely of the property component, entirely of income, or of various combinations of the property component and income. As for age and invalid pensions some types of income and property are disregarded for purposes of calculating means as assessed. The method for calculating the means as assessed of a claimant for Class 'B' widow's pension is the same as for single, widowed or divorced claimants for age or invalid pension (*see* page 422). For Classes 'A' and 'B' widows and supporting mothers annual maximum standard rate of pension plus any additional allowances are reduced by half of the amount of any means as assessed in excess of \$1,040. There is no specific means test for the Class 'C' pension, which is paid only where it is evident that a widow has insufficient means of support. Supplementary assistance is reduced by the amount by which *means as assessed* exceed \$52.

The average age of new widow pensioners admitted during 1974-75 was: Class 'A', 36.3 years; Class 'B', 56.6 years; Class 'C', 42.7 years; and for all classes, 44.6 years.

It should be noted that deserted wives ineligible for Class 'A' or Class 'B' widow's pension because six months have not expired from the date of desertion by the husband may be eligible for assistance from the Government of the State in which she lives. The Commonwealth Government subsidises the State Governments for this purpose under the States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act. It also assists deserted wives in the Territories during the first six months after desertion.

WIDOWS' PENSIONS: 1974-75

	Number admitted —all classes (a)	Pensions current at end of year				Average weekly pension at end of year (b)	Amount paid in pensions during year (b) (c)
		Class 'A'	Class 'B'	Class 'C'	All classes		
						\$	\$'000
New South Wales	9,184	24,554	19,143	40	43,737	44.84	86,252
Victoria	6,793	19,164	14,876	16	34,056	44.67	66,474
Queensland	2,751	8,302	7,809	9	16,120	45.76	33,325
South Australia	1,731	6,154	5,662	6	11,822	43.99	23,873
Western Australia	2,362	4,930	4,493	19	9,442	44.37	18,459
Tasmania	707	2,481	1,616	6	4,103	46.88	8,521
Northern Territory	124	381	259	..	640	49.53	1,320
Australian Capital Terri- tory	194	552	319	..	871	44.72	1,702
Abroad . . . . .	..	(d)	(d)	(d)	(d)	..	1,465
Total	23,846	66,518	54,177	96	120,791	44.89	241,392

(a) Excludes transfers from one class to another. (b) Includes supplementary assistance and allowances. (c) Includes payments to benevolent homes for maintenance of pensioners. (d) Included in the figures for the State or Territory in which the pensioner is normally domiciled.

WIDOWS' PENSIONS: SUMMARY, AUSTRALIA

Year	Number admitted —all classes (a)	Pensions current at end of year				Average weekly pension at end of year (b)	Amount paid in pensions during year (b) (c)
		Class 'A'	Class 'B'	Class 'C'	All classes		
						\$	\$'000
1970-71	18,223	47,146	43,157	96	90,399	19.72	90,514
1971-72	19,413	49,811	42,893	80	92,784	23.31	104,627
1972-73	28,275	57,872	47,768	77	105,717	28.28	140,505
1973-74	25,458	64,084	51,137	89	115,310	32.79	180,957
1974-75	23,846	66,518	54,177	96	120,791	44.89	241,392

(a) Excludes transfers from one class to another. (b) Includes supplementary assistance and allowances. (c) Includes payments to benevolent homes for maintenance of pensioners.

For details of training scheme for widow pensioners, see page 435.

Supporting mother's benefit

Supporting mother's benefit is for unmarried mothers, mothers who are deserted de facto wives, de facto wives of prisoners, or separated wives. The benefit becomes payable six months after the date of the event giving rise to eligibility (e.g. six months after the date of birth of a child, or six months after the date of separation). A supporting mother is qualified to receive a benefit if she is residing in Australia on the date on which she lodges her claim for the benefit and, if unmarried, the child was born while she was residing in Australia; or, in the case of a married woman living apart from her husband, she was residing in Australia immediately before they commenced to live apart; or, in the case of a deserted de facto wife or the de facto wife of a prisoner, if she was residing in Australia immediately before the de facto relationship ceased; or if a woman has been continuously resident in Australia for not less than five years immediately preceding the date on which she lodged a claim for the benefit. To be eligible for the benefit a woman must be supporting an eligible child under the age of 16 years, or an older dependent full-time student. The rate of supporting mother's benefit, including mother's allowance and payments for children, is the same as for Class 'A' widow's pension.

It should be noted that a woman ineligible for supporting mother's benefit because six months have not expired from the date of the event otherwise giving rise to eligibility may be entitled in the meantime to assistance from the Government of the State in which she lives. The Commonwealth Government subsidises the States for this purpose under the States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act. If the woman is living in one of the Territories, the Commonwealth Government may make assistance available in the first six months after desertion.

Fringe benefits

The Commonwealth Government makes available to pensioners (and in certain cases, recipients of supporting mother's benefits) several 'fringe benefits'. In most cases these are subject to a special means test. These benefits include—

a one-third reduction in telephone rental (this is available to the blind without a means test). The costs for 1974-75 were \$7,052,656 for concessions and \$192,639 for administering the scheme;

a 50 per cent reduction in fares for Commonwealth Government railway and shipping services: certain postal concessions;

a 10 per cent discount on book purchases from Commonwealth Government bookshops (this is available free of means test);

free hearing aids;

the availability without charge of certain pharmaceutical prescriptions;

free optometrical consultations; and

additional nursing home benefits.

State Governments, local government authorities and private organizations also provide certain fringe benefits. The most valuable of these are reductions in local government rates and in public transport charges.

The means test operates on the basis of means as assessed as defined for pension purposes. A standard-rate pensioner whose means as assessed are less than \$1,716 qualifies for those fringe benefits subject to the means test. A married-rate pensioner qualifies if their means as assessed are less than \$1495.

Funeral benefits

A benefit of up to \$40 is payable to an eligible age, invalid, wife or widow pensioner who is liable for the funeral costs of another such deceased pensioner, a deceased child or a deceased spouse; a benefit of up to \$20 is payable to any (other) person liable for the funeral costs of a deceased age or invalid pensioner in respect of whose burial a funeral benefit may be granted. These benefits are subject to the 'fringe benefits' means test, applied in the first case, to the person liable for the funeral costs and, in both cases, to the means of the deceased pensioner or beneficiary (where relevant) prior to his or her death.

FUNERAL BENEFITS GRANTED
(Number)

<i>State, Territory, etc.</i>	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
New South Wales	22,430	20,802	20,854	20,418	21,772
Victoria	14,881	13,973	13,782	13,939	14,184
Queensland	8,505	8,046	8,168	8,219	8,797
South Australia	4,937	4,976	4,918	4,909	5,164
Western Australia	3,741	3,649	3,470	3,386	3,769
Tasmania	1,408	1,474	1,424	1,497	1,494
Northern Territory	8	7	12	21	17
Australian Capital Territory	175	178	175	178	256
Abroad	3	8	..	n.a.	n.a.
Total	56,088	53,113	52,803	52,567	55,453

Total cost of funeral benefits granted during 1974-75 was \$1,640,595.

Portability of social service payment

Age, invalid and widows' pensions, and supporting mother's benefits, continue in force for recipients who have left Australia unless they left before 8 May 1973 or their pension or benefit is subject to the provisions of either of the reciprocal agreements with New Zealand or the United Kingdom. In certain cases of hardship, the pension or benefit may continue for people who left before 8 May 1973.

Maternity allowances

A maternity allowance is payable to a woman who gives birth to a child if she resides, or intends to reside permanently in Australia and gives birth to the child in Australia, and to a woman who

gives birth to a child while travelling to Australia if she intends to reside permanently in Australia, provided she receives no benefit similar to a maternity allowance from the country from which she came. A woman who gives birth to a child during a temporary absence from Australia may also be eligible. An alien mother may receive the allowance if she or her husband resided in Australia for at least twelve months immediately prior to the birth of the child, or if she is likely to remain in Australia permanently. Payment may be made in respect of the birth of a still-born child, or a child who lives for less than twelve hours, if at least five and a half months had elapsed from the date of conception.

Rates of allowance. The allowance is \$30 if the mother has no other children under sixteen, \$32 if she has one or two other children under sixteen, and \$35 if she has three or more other children under sixteen. In the case of multiple births the allowance is increased by \$10 for each additional child born. An advance payment of \$20 may be made four weeks before the expected date of birth. The balance is payable immediately after the birth.

MATERNITY ALLOWANCES: CLAIMS PAID AT EACH RATE 1974-75
(Number)

	Single births		Multiple births								Total claims paid
			Twins			Triplets			Other		
	\$30	\$32	\$35	\$40	\$42	\$45	\$50	\$52	\$55	\$62	
New South Wales	33,514	41,677	7,506	342	457	102	4	9	..	..	83,611
Victoria	24,298	32,260	5,784	221	318	67	4	3	..	..	62,955
Queensland	14,668	18,142	4,398	102	191	55	1	4	1	..	37,562
South Australia	8,433	10,012	1,414	59	104	17	1	1	..	..	20,041
Western Australia	8,243	10,579	1,868	77	106	28	2	2	..	1	20,906
Tasmania	2,839	3,611	699	23	44	9	..	..	..	..	7,225
Northern Territory	796	967	390	5	7	4	..	..	..	..	2,169
Australian Capital Territory	1,574	2,109	324	17	17	2	..	..	..	..	4,043
Abroad	15	8	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	26
Total	94,380	119,365	22,386	846	1,244	284	12	19	1	1	238,538

MATERNITY ALLOWANCES: CLAIMS PAID, AUSTRALIA

Year	Claims paid			Amount paid
	Single births	Multiple births	Total	
1970-71	267,235	2,817	270,052	\$'000 8,554
1971-72	269,148	2,858	272,006	8,617
1972-73	249,340	2,544	251,884	7,970
1973-74	243,375	2,527	245,902	7,782
1974-75	236,131	2,407	238,538	7,506

Child and student endowment

A person who is resident in Australia and has the custody, care, and control, of one or more children under the age of sixteen years or of a full-time student child sixteen or more but under twenty-one years, or an approved institution of which children are inmates, is qualified to receive an endowment in respect of each such child. Full-time student children are those receiving full-time education at a school, college or university and who are not in employment or engaged in work on their own account. There are provisions to meet cases of families divided because of divorce, separation, unemployment or death of a parent. There is no means test.

Twelve months residence in Australia is required if the claimant and the child were not born here, but this requirement is waived if the Department of Social Security is satisfied that they are likely to remain in Australia permanently. Where the child's father is not a British subject, endowment is payable if the child was born in Australia, if the mother is a British subject, or if the Department is satisfied that the child is likely to remain permanently in Australia. Under certain conditions, endowment may be paid to Australians who are temporarily absent overseas.

Rates of endowment. Since 12 October 1971 the weekly rates have been: children under sixteen years—50 cents for the first or only child; \$1.00 for the second; \$2.00 for the third; and then increases of 25 cents for each subsequent child, making \$2.25 for the fourth, \$2.50 for the fifth and so on.

For each eligible student child sixteen or more but under twenty-one years the rate is \$1.50 a week. The rate payable for each child under sixteen years in an approved institution is \$2.00 a week. For changes in the rates introduced in 1976 see Appendix.

Number of claims and endowed children—children under sixteen years. The number of families receiving child endowment at 30 June 1975 in respect of children under sixteen years was 1,915,818, an increase of 26,748 or 1.42 per cent during the year.

**CHILD ENDOWMENT: CLAIMS AND ENDOWED CHILDREN UNDER 16 YEARS
30 JUNE 1975**

<i>State, Territory, etc.</i>	<i>Family groups</i>			<i>Approved institutions</i>		
	<i>Claims in force</i>	<i>Endowed children under 16 years</i>		<i>Number (a)</i>	<i>Endowed child inmates under 16 years</i>	<i>Total endowed children under 16 years</i>
		<i>Number</i>	<i>Average number per claim</i>			
New South Wales	668,471	1,369,618	2.05	149	5,541	1,375,159
Victoria	525,211	1,100,830	2.10	128	4,651	1,105,481
Queensland	280,174	608,871	2.17	47	1,829	610,700
South Australia	178,978	364,047	2.03	68	1,045	365,092
Western Australia	162,198	345,272	2.13	72	4,430	349,702
Tasmania	58,970	126,461	2.14	23	399	126,860
Northern Territory	12,021	28,295	2.35	24	286	28,581
Australian Capital Territory	29,678	62,912	2.12	2	13	62,925
Abroad	117	241	2.06	..	..	241
Total	1,915,818	4,006,547	2.09	513	18,194	4,024,741

(a) All institutions approved for receipt of endowment.

The following table shows, as at 30 June 1975, the number of claims in force and the number of endowed children under sixteen years in family groups, classified according to the number of endowed children in the family group. The families included in the table are not necessarily made up entirely of the children of one marriage, but may include step-children, foster children, adopted children, and any other children in the custody, care and control of the claimant.

**CHILD ENDOWMENT: ENDOWED CHILDREN UNDER 16 YEARS IN FAMILY GROUPS
TOTAL, 30 JUNE 1975**

<i>Number of endowed children under 16 years in family group</i>	<i>Claims in force</i>	<i>Endowed children under 16 years</i>	<i>Number of endowed children under 16 years in family group</i>	<i>Claims in force</i>	<i>Endowed children under 16 years</i>
1	658,786	658,786	9	584	5,256
2	710,240	1,420,480	10	194	1,940
3	354,010	1,062,030	11	64	704
4	131,397	525,588	12	24	288
5	40,091	200,455	13	6	78
6	13,834	83,004	14	1	14
7	4,800	33,600	15 or more	3	52
8	1,784	14,272	Total	1,915,818	4,006,547

**CHILD ENDOWMENT: CLAIMS AND ENDOWED STUDENT CHILDREN
30 JUNE 1975**

State, Territory, etc.	Family groups			Approved institutions		Total endowed student children
	Claims in force	Endowed student children		Number(a)	Endowed student child inmates	
		Number	Average number per claim			
New South Wales	79,464	88,461	1.11	22	157	88,618
Victoria	75,296	85,581	1.14	32	104	85,685
Queensland	25,470	28,417	1.12	9	124	28,541
South Australia	22,823	25,625	1.12	18	150	25,775
Western Australia	16,767	18,797	1.12	21	127	18,924
Tasmania	5,335	5,890	1.10	4	4	5,894
Northern Territory	581	645	1.11	9	7	652
Australian Capital Territory	4,019	4,667	1.16	..	..	4,667
Abroad	14	19	1.36	..	..	19
Total	229,769	258,102	1.12	115	673	258,775

(a) Included with approved institutions in first table on page 429.

**CHILD ENDOWMENT: ENDOWED STUDENT CHILDREN IN FAMILY GROUPS
TOTAL, 30 JUNE 1975**

Number of endowed student children in family group	Claims in force	Endowed student children	Number of endowed student children in family group	Claims in force	Endowed student children
1	203,223	203,223	4	87	348
2	24,853	49,706	5 or more	3	16
3	1,603	4,809	Total	229,769	258,102

**CHILD ENDOWMENT: CHILDREN UNDER 16 YEARS
LIABILITY AND EXPENDITURE, 1974-75
(\$'000)**

State, Territory, etc.	Annual liability at 30 June 1975			Total payments to endowees and institutions during year(a)
	Family groups	Approved institutions	Total	
New South Wales	69,772	576	70,348	68,638
Victoria	57,044	484	57,528	56,129
Queensland	32,849	190	33,039	32,180
South Australia	18,225	109	18,334	18,285
Western Australia	17,999	461	18,460	17,625
Tasmania	6,696	41	6,737	6,610
Northern Territory	1,654	30	1,684	1,663
Australian Capital Territory	3,236	1	3,237	3,052
Abroad	12	..	12	(b)48
Total	207,488	1,892	209,380	204,230

(a) See footnote (b) to summary table below.
children; separate figures are not available.

(b) Includes expenditure for endowed student

**CHILD ENDOWMENT: STUDENT CHILDREN, LIABILITY, AND
EXPENDITURE, 1974-75**
(*\$'000*)

<i>State, Territory, etc.</i>	<i>Annual liability at 30 June 1975</i>			<i>Total payments to enawees and institutions during year</i>
	<i>Family groups</i>	<i>Approved institutions</i>	<i>Total</i>	
New South Wales	6,900	12	6,912	7,345
Victoria	6,675	8	6,683	6,756
Queensland	2,217	10	2,227	2,221
South Australia	1,999	12	2,011	1,953
Western Australia	1,466	10	1,476	1,460
Tasmania	459	..	459	489
Northern Territory	50	1	51	37
Australian Capital Territory	354	..	364	360
Abroad	1	..	1	(a)
Total	20,132	52	20,184	20,620

(a) Included in preceding table showing expenditure for endowed children under sixteen years; separate figures are not available.

CHILD ENDOWMENT: SUMMARY, AUSTRALIA

<i>Year</i>	<i>At end of year</i>					
	<i>Family group claims in force</i>			<i>Total endowed children</i>	<i>Annual liability for endowment (b)</i>	<i>Total payments during year (b)</i>
	<i>For children under 16 years(a)</i>	<i>For student children(a)</i>	<i>Approved institutions</i>			
1970-71	1,797,628	196,999	469	4,155,930	\$'000 207,499	\$'000 198,467
1971-72	1,843,478	209,466	485	4,234,500	234,972	216,610
1972-73	1,870,638	202,768	505	4,238,882	232,207	(c)253,890
1973-74	1,189,070	216,490	511	4,260,739	231,093	225,392
1974-75	1,915,818	229,769	513	4,283,516	229,564	224,850

(a) Claims by families with children under sixteen and student children are shown in both columns. Information on the number of families having such dual claims is not available. (b) A number of endowments are paid every twelve weeks. During two years out of every three there are four such payments but every third year there are five. Figures for annual liability therefore, reflect trends in expenditure on child endowment more accurately than do figures for payments. (c) Expenditure for this year includes five twelve-weekly payments for endowed children under 16 years.

Double orphan's pension

This pension is payable to the guardian of a child both of whose parents or adoptive parents are dead, or one of whom is dead and the other missing. It is also payable in cases where one parent is dead and the other is a long-term inmate of a prison or mental hospital. Payment is made for orphans who are under 16 years or who are full-time students under 21. There is no means test. The pension is payable at the rate of \$10 a week for each eligible child. A double orphan's pension is not payable if the child attracts a war orphan's pension under the Repatriation Act.

Handicapped child's allowance

Parents or guardians of a child under 16 years who is severely handicapped mentally and/or physically, is living in the family home, and needs constant care and attention, are entitled to a handicapped child's allowance. The allowance is not subject to any means test. The rate of the allowance is \$10 a week. A residence qualification similar to that for child endowment applies to the allowance.

Unemployment and sickness benefits and associated payments

Unemployment and sickness benefits are paid to men over sixteen and under sixty-five years of age, and women over sixteen and under sixty years of age, who are unemployed or who are temporarily incapacitated for work and thereby suffer loss of income. They must have been living in Australia

during the preceding twelve months or be likely to remain permanently in Australia. Both benefits are subject to an income test. A person cannot receive both benefits simultaneously, nor can a person receive either benefit at the same time as an invalid, widow's or repatriation service pension.

For unemployment benefit purposes, a person must establish that he is unemployed, that his unemployment is not due to his being a direct participant in a strike, that he is capable and willing to undertake suitable work, and that he has taken reasonable steps to obtain such work. Registration for employment with the District Employment Office of the Commonwealth Employment Service is necessary. For sickness benefit purposes, a person must establish that he is temporarily incapacitated for work because of sickness or accident and that he has thereby suffered a loss of salary, wages or other income. A married woman is not eligible to receive a sickness benefit if it is reasonably possible for her husband to maintain her. Where her husband is able to maintain her only partially, a benefit may be paid at such rate as is considered reasonable in the circumstances.

Rates of Benefit. The maximum weekly rates of unemployment and sickness benefit payable, and the permissible income in respect of benefit periods which commenced after the introduction of increased benefits in May 1976, are as follows:—

	<i>Maximum weekly rate</i>	<i>Permissible weekly income</i>
	\$	\$
Married man (includes additional benefit for wife)	68.50	6.00
Single person aged 21 years or more	41.25	6.00
Single person aged 18 to 20 years	41.25	3.00
Single person aged 16 or 17 years	36.00	3.00
A person aged under 21 years who does not have a parent living in Australia	36.00	6.00

These amounts should be increased by \$7.50 for each child under 16 years, or a full-time student in the care of the beneficiary.

After the benefit has been paid for six consecutive weeks a beneficiary who is paying rent, or is paying for lodgings, may be entitled to supplementary allowance of up to \$5.00 a week. The amount of any such allowance cannot exceed the amount of rent paid.

The weekly rate of benefit is reduced by the amount by which a beneficiary's other income exceeds the amount of permissible income. For unemployment benefit purposes the income of the spouse is also taken into account unless the claimant and his spouse are permanently separated. The income of the spouse of a sickness beneficiary affects only the assessment of additional benefit to which the beneficiary may be entitled for the spouse. For sickness benefit purposes the income from an approved friendly society, or other similar approved body, in respect of the incapacity for which sickness benefit is payable is disregarded. 'Income' does not include child endowment or other payments for children, health benefits and payments from Medibank or registered benefit organisations, or an amount paid in reimbursement of medical, dental or similar expenses. The supplementary allowance is reduced by the amount by which a beneficiary's other income exceeds \$1.00 a week in the case of a single person and by half of the excess of the beneficiary's income over \$2.00 a week in the case of a married person.

The amount of compensation, damages or similar payment, or war pension, if paid in respect of the same incapacity as that for which sickness benefit is claimed, is deducted from the sickness benefit if paid in respect of the same period. If not paid in respect of the same incapacity, compensation in respect of the same period is regarded as income and war pension is ignored.

There is a waiting period of seven days during which unemployment or sickness benefit is not usually payable, but this waiting period is not required to be served more than once in any period of thirteen weeks.

Special benefit

A special benefit may be granted to a person not qualified for unemployment or sickness benefit who is not receiving an age, invalid or widow's pension, a service pension or a tuberculosis allowance and who, because of age, physical or mental disability or domestic circumstances, or for any other reason, is unable to earn a sufficient livelihood for himself and his dependants. Recipients of special benefits include, among others, persons caring for invalid parents, and persons ineligible for a pension because of lack of residence qualifications.

Special benefits are also paid to immigrants who are in Commonwealth Government centres or hostels awaiting their first placement in employment in Australia. During this time they receive a short instruction in English and in Australian conditions to facilitate their assimilation into the community and employment.

No means test or residence requirement is laid down but there is an overriding requirement that a person must be suffering hardship to be granted a special benefit.

The maximum rate of special benefit is the same as for unemployment benefit.

UNEMPLOYMENT, SICKNESS, AND SPECIAL BENEFITS 1974-75

	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Number admitted to benefit during year—									
Unemployment—									
Males	173,532	121,980	94,442	42,794	48,521	15,106	1,362	1,851	499,588
Females	66,390	53,616	33,481	19,150	20,764	6,982	340	991	201,714
Persons	239,922	175,596	127,923	61,944	69,285	22,088	1,702	2,842	701,302
Sickness—									
Males	39,022	24,788	18,335	7,429	9,688	3,468	516	793	104,039
Females	11,086	6,781	4,253	1,882	2,316	676	73	271	27,338
Persons	50,108	31,569	22,588	9,311	12,004	4,144	589	1,064	131,377
Special—									
Ordinary—									
Males	1,242	789	1,151	151	318	236	13	5	3,905
Females	5,159	2,681	3,034	974	1,273	564	58	83	13,826
Persons	6,401	3,470	4,185	1,125	1,591	800	71	88	17,731
Immigrants—									
Persons	1,622	..	119	161	..	..	..	..	1,902
Total—									
Males(a)	213,796	147,557	113,928	50,374	58,527	18,810	1,891	2,649	607,532
Females(a)	82,635	63,078	40,768	22,006	24,353	8,222	471	1,345	242,878
Persons(b)	298,053	210,635	154,815	72,541	82,880	27,032	2,362	3,994	852,312
Persons on benefit at end of year—									
Unemployment—									
Males	39,090	31,033	18,805	9,313	6,802	2,717	136	128	108,024
Females	18,315	14,591	8,877	4,915	4,209	1,722	29	66	52,724
Persons	57,405	45,624	27,682	14,228	11,011	4,439	165	194	160,748
Sickness—									
Males	7,384	6,279	2,766	1,562	1,531	574	45	208	20,349
Females	2,055	1,618	620	345	319	108	10	54	5,129
Persons	9,439	7,897	3,386	1,907	1,850	682	55	262	25,478
Special—									
Ordinary—									
Males	529	359	193	69	92	100	2	4	1,348
Females	1,460	1,138	658	349	359	197	13	30	4,204
Persons	1,989	1,497	851	418	451	297	15	34	5,552
Immigrants—									
Persons	13	..	28	8	..	..	..	..	49
Total—									
Males(a)	47,003	37,671	21,764	10,944	8,425	3,391	183	340	129,721
Females(a)	21,830	17,347	10,155	5,609	4,887	2,027	52	150	62,057
Persons(b)	68,846	55,018	31,947	16,561	13,312	5,418	235	490	191,827
Benefits paid during year—									
Unemployment . . \$'000	93,760	66,361	42,422	20,475	19,753	7,746	752	470	251,740
Sickness \$'000	24,395	18,193	8,596	4,855	4,415	1,692	188	498	62,833
Special(b) \$'000	4,281	2,560	1,745	735	776	421	422	50	10,992
Total benefits paid . \$'000	122,436	87,114	52,764	26,065	24,945	9,860	1,362	1,018	325,565

(a) Excludes immigrants in Government centres or hostels awaiting their first placement in employment in Australia.

(b) Includes immigrants in the category described in footnote (a).

UNEMPLOYMENT, SICKNESS, AND SPECIAL BENEFITS: SUMMARY, AUSTRALIA

Year	Number admitted to benefit during year		Average number of persons on benefit at end of each week		Amount paid in benefits				
	Unem- ployment	Sickness	Special (a)	Unem- ployment	Sickness	Special (a)	Special (a)		
1970-71	137,963	73,601	22,982	14,979	9,524	4,293	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
1971-72	255,417	83,879	18,147	29,110	11,927	3,968	10,795	10,262	2,420
1972-73	280,573	101,249	16,267	39,580	16,163	4,090	25,997	15,906	2,851
1973-74	229,231	118,190	16,698	34,148	20,655	4,480	46,553	26,610	4,368
1974-75	701,302	131,377	19,633	116,603	24,346	5,331	58,246	41,407	6,983
							251,740	62,833	10,992

(a) Includes immigrants in Government centres or hostels awaiting their first placement in employment in Australia.

Appeals Tribunals

Appeals Tribunals were established in all States and in the Australian Capital Territory on 10 February 1975, and shortly afterwards in the Northern Territory. The purpose of the Tribunals is to provide an independent avenue of redress for people who feel aggrieved by decisions of the Department of Social Security, which administers payments made under the Social Services Act. Each Tribunal consists of two independent members, usually a lawyer and a welfare worker, and a seconded officer from the Department of Social Security. The Tribunals operate as informally as possible. Appeals may be lodged by personal attendance, telephone, letter or on a special form.

The Tribunals do not have the power themselves to overturn decisions by the Department of Social Security but they make recommendations to the Department.

Reciprocal social services agreements with other countries

New Zealand. An agreement between the Governments of Australia and New Zealand for reciprocity in social services came into operation on 3 September 1943 and was amended from 1 July 1949. The reciprocal arrangements cover age and invalid pensions, widow's pensions, child endowment, and unemployment and sickness benefits, and apply to both permanent and temporary changes of residence. Residence in one country may be treated as residence in the other country in relation to entitlement to benefits in which a residential qualification applies. Persons from one country taking up a permanent residence in the other country become eligible for any of the specified benefits of the new country under the same conditions (with one or two exceptions) as apply to citizens of that country. Persons in receipt of any of the specified benefits in one country may continue to receive those benefits while temporarily absent in the other country.

United Kingdom. Under a reciprocal agreement on social services between the United Kingdom and Australia residence in one country may be treated as residence in the other country as the basis for entitlement to benefits in which a residential qualification applies. Australians going to the United Kingdom for permanent residence are treated in the United Kingdom as if they have been insured under the National Insurance Scheme while in Australia, so that they can qualify for various National Insurance benefits. There is also provision for the safeguard of social service rights for persons going from one country to the other for temporary residence.

Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service

The Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service assists people who are unable to work because of long-term disability or who have had to give up their employment because of sickness or injury. It aims to help disabled people to reach their maximum physical, mental and social usefulness and to prepare them for suitable employment. Towards this aim, it provides co-ordinated programs of treatment and training to meet the special needs of each disabled person. Responsibility for the delivery of these services rests with the eleven residential and day-attendance centres and the thirteen regional rehabilitation units which are currently operated by the service.

Rehabilitation may be provided free to people receiving, or eligible to receive, invalid or widow's pension, or unemployment, sickness or special benefit, to people receiving tuberculosis allowance, to people aged 14 or 15 years who, without treatment or training, would be likely to qualify for invalid pension at age 16, to national servicemen and members of the permanent forces who are disabled at time of discharge but are ineligible for rehabilitation assistance from the Department of Veteran's Affairs, and to people who became disabled while working for the Commonwealth Government and are covered by the Compensation (Commonwealth Employees) Act, 1971. People from these groups may be selected for rehabilitation if their disabilities are a substantial handicap for employment but can be overcome by treatment or training, and if there are reasonable prospects that they will be able to take up employment following rehabilitation. Disabled people who do not qualify for the free service may pay for rehabilitation themselves and provision is made for charges to be reduced in accordance with each person's capacity to pay. Private or Government organisations may also sponsor rehabilitees.

For people receiving free rehabilitation, payment of pension or benefit continues during treatment. When vocational training begins, pension or benefit is suspended and replaced by training allowance. This allowance is based on the adult male average award wage adjusted quarterly. Living-away-from-home allowance is paid where necessary. Fares and living expenses (including those of an attendant where required) in connection with treatment, training or attendance for an interview or for medical examination may also be paid. Necessary artificial replacements, surgical aids and appliances may be provided, free of charge, to a person receiving treatment and training or who needs them to assist him to engage in a suitable vocation after the discontinuance of his treatment and training or who needs them otherwise to assist in his rehabilitation.

Vocational training is given to the people at the rehabilitation centres by occupational therapists, vocational counsellors and qualified trade and commerce teachers who assess and train each person in the skills which make best use of ability and which are best adapted to the employment situation.

In addition to the services provided at each centre, technical schools, business colleges, universities, training on-the-job in commerce or industry and correspondence courses are all used for training purposes. Text books and equipment may be provided during treatment or training; alternatively these may be supplied after treatment or training is discontinued to enable a rehabilitee to engage in employment. If supplied after treatment or training is discontinued the rehabilitee must meet the cost, but payment can be made by instalments.

Throughout the process of rehabilitation, vocational rehabilitation counsellors maintain contact with the disabled person and provide guidance and encouragement where necessary. The Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service currently employs 70 such counsellors who play a significant role in the co-ordination of the non-medical aspects of rehabilitation.

Since its inception in 1948 the Rehabilitation Service had been able to assist some 44,000 severely handicapped people, including over 31,000 who were able to undertake—or return to—gainful employment.

Numbers dealt with by the service.

REHABILITATION SERVICE: AUSTRALIA, 1974-75

Category	Accepted for treatment and training	Provided with vocational training		Placed in employment		Expenditure(a) \$'000
		Com-menced	Completed	After training	Without training	
Invalid pensioners	374	151	86	75	102	} n.a.
Unemployment, sickness and special beneficiaries	1,501	404	248	187	581	
People whose rehabilitation is continued under Sections 135P or provided under 135s of the Social Services Act(b)	304	19	13	16	208	
People aged 14-15 years	93	16	10	10	41	
Other	12	4	3	..	4	
Total	2,284	594	360	288	936		9,329

(a) Excludes capital expenditure by the Department of Construction on sites and buildings and administrative costs of the Rehabilitation Service and Central Administration. (b) Persons receiving invalid pensions, etc., when accepted for rehabilitation and who, on becoming ineligible for the pension, etc., are provided with rehabilitation on payment of the cost by themselves; or cases sponsored from the outset by themselves or an authority.

REHABILITATION SERVICE, 1974-75

State	Number accepted for rehabilitation				Number placed in employment				Expenditure(a)
	Unemployment sickness and special beneficiaries			Total	Unemployment sickness and special beneficiaries			Total	
	Invalid pensioners	Other	Total		Invalid pensioners	Other	Total		
New South Wales	111	237	113	461	45	112	55	212	\$'000
Victoria	93	486	69	648	51	237	51	339	2,581
Queensland	71	269	100	440	35	146	105	286	3,248
South Australia	46	225	48	319	24	107	40	171	1,234
Western Australia	34	179	72	285	13	91	26	130	982
Tasmania	19	105	7	131	9	75	2	86	914
Total	374	1,501	409	2,284	177	768	279	1,224	9,329

(a) Excludes capital expenditure by the Department of Construction on sites and buildings and administrative costs of the Rehabilitation Service and Central Office.

Training scheme for widow pensioners

The Training Scheme for Widow Pensioners (T.S.W.P.) which helps widow pensioners and supporting mothers to acquire a vocational skill to enable them to undertake full or part-time employment was incorporated into the new National Employment and Training System (N.E.A.T.) which commenced on 1 October 1974.

Widow pensioners undergoing training with the T.S.W.P. were informed of the transfer to the N.E.A.T. system but where it appeared that a widow pensioner would be disadvantaged from transfer to N.E.A.T., arrangements were made to allow trainees to complete their training under T.S.W.P.

Of the 869 applications received during 1974-75, 716 were accepted. Seven hundred and nineteen widow pensioners and supporting mothers commenced training, 1164 completed training and 621 were placed in employment. Expenditure during the year was \$862,794.

Compassionate allowances

These allowances are paid by the Commonwealth Government on a discretionary basis to certain people who are unable to qualify for pensions or other benefits under provisions of the Social Services Act. Expenditure on compassionate allowances and payments of a similar nature during 1974-75 was \$96,911.

Commonwealth Government assistance to welfare organisations

The Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act 1954 is designed to encourage the provision of homes in which aged persons may reside in conditions approaching normal domestic life.

To be eligible for assistance under the Act an organisation must be:

- (a) carried on otherwise than for the purposes of profit or gain to the individual members; and
- (b) a religious organisation, an organisation of which the principal objects or purposes are charitable or benevolent, an organisation of former members of the defence forces established in every State or a State branch of such an organisation, an organisation approved by the Governor-General for the purposes of the Act, or a local governing body.

An organisation conducted or controlled by, or by persons appointed by, the Australian or any State Government is not eligible for assistance under the Act.

The Director-General of the Department of Social Security may make a grant of money to an organisation as assistance towards meeting the cost of the construction or purchase of a home, including land, to be used permanently for the accommodation of aged persons. The grant is made on a basis of \$4 for each \$1 raised by the organisation but is limited to \$9,360 for a single unit of accommodation and \$10,920 for a double unit plus up to \$1,920 per unit for land. Money which the organisation received from a governmental body other than a local governing body does not attract subsidy.

Before a grant is made the Director-General must be satisfied that the sum of the money expended and the money at present available for expenditure by the organisation towards the capital cost of the home, together with the amount of the grant, will be not less than the capital cost of the home.

The following table gives information regarding grants approved during 1974-75. The amounts granted include new grants approved in 1974-75 together with adjustments made during the year in respect of grants originally approved in earlier years.

AGED OR DISABLED PERSONS HOMES: GRANTS AND AMOUNTS APPROVED
AND BEDS PROVIDED, 1974-75

State	Grants approved		Beds provided and type of accommodation			
	Number	Amount (\$'000)	Self- contained	Hostel	Nursing	Total
New South Wales	68	10,028	679	59	423	1,161
Victoria	45	7,743	456	173	117	746
Queensland	29	4,711	102	140	240	482
South Australia	34	5,632	312	120	118	550
Western Australia	32	7,431	511	183	96	790
Tasmania	19	1,525	157	..	-2	155
Northern Territory	..	..	..	..	..	..
Australian Capital Territory	1	227	26	..	..	26
Total	228	37,299	2,243	675	992	3,910

The following table gives information regarding grants approved for each of the past five years. The amounts granted in each year include new grants approved in that year together with adjustments made during the year in respect of grants originally approved in earlier years.

**AGED OR DISABLED PERSONS HOMES: GRANTS
AND AMOUNTS APPROVED, AND BEDS PROVIDED
AUSTRALIA**

Year	Grants approved		Beds provided
	Number	Amount (\$'000)	Number
1970-71.	235	18,972	4,136
1971-72.	241	23,792	4,760
1972-73.	228	19,741	3,989
1973-74.	171	18,999	3,417
1974-75.	228	37,299	3,910

Since the commencement of the Act in December 1954, 3,138 grants amounting to \$224,801,401 have been approved, and accommodation has been provided for 56,134 aged and disabled persons.

The Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act also provides a *personal care subsidy* of \$15 a week for persons of eighty years of age or over who receive approved personal care while living in hostel type accommodation provided by organisations eligible under the Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act. The following table gives details of the premises approved, payments made and number of residents aged eighty years or over residing in the approved premises.

AGED OR DISABLED PERSONS HOMES ACT, PERSONAL CARE SUBSIDIES, 30 JUNE 1975

	N.S.W.	Vic.	Qld	S.A.	W.A.	Tas.	N.T.	A.C.T.	Aust.
Approved premises No.	122	128	74	57	52	19	2	2	456
Residents qualifying No.	2,855	3,245	1,807	1,586	1,267	367	8	21	11,156
Percentage of qualifying residents to total residents	50.40	64.86	51.80	65.00	67.00	73.40	40.00	40.00	58.07
Subsidies paid, 1974-75 \$'000	1,907	2,283	1,191	1,101	883	266	7	14	7,651

The *Aged Persons Hostels Act 1972* was introduced to stimulate the provision of more hostel-type accommodation for needy aged people.

Under the scheme the Commonwealth Government will meet the full cost of providing new hostel accommodation for two aged people for every one at present in an eligible unsubsidised home, or for one additional person for every two in a home previously subsidised on a dollar-for-dollar basis between 1954 and 1957. The organisation will not be required to make any contribution from its own resources unless the capital cost exceeds \$11,700 per person accommodated, or the bed capacity of the new home exceeds the number of 'free' beds to which the organisation is entitled. A further grant of up to \$250 for each person accommodated is available for furnishing the new hostel.

The new scheme is limited to a period of three years expiring on 27 September 1975 to encourage organisations to move quickly in taking advantage of the benefits the scheme offers.

This Act also has the effect of placing the old established organisations, which conducted homes prior to the introduction of the \$2 for \$1 scheme, in the same relative position as that achieved by newer organisations which have received a \$2 for \$1 subsidy, i.e. where two-thirds of their accommodation will have been provided by the Government.

Admission to these homes is based strictly on need with regard to the applicant's health, age, accommodation and financial situation. Since the commencement of the Act, 148 grants have been approved, totalling \$58,742,166.

AGED PERSONS HOSTELS ACT GRANTS, 1974-75

	Persons accommodated				Amount		
	No. of grants	Hostel beds	Staff beds	Total beds	Capital grants (\$'000)	Furnishings grants (\$'000)	Total grants (\$'000)
New South Wales . . .	36	1,505	47	1,552	19,722	396	20,118
Victoria	21	501	26	527	6,570	127	6,697
Queensland	16	775	19	794	9,432	199	9,631
South Australia	3	28	1	29	745	7	753
Western Australia . . .	4	93	9	102	1,315	26	1,341
Tasmania	1	23	1	24	335	6	341
Northern Territory . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Australian Capital Territory . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Total	81	2,925	103	3,028	38,120	760	38,880

Introduction of the *Handicapped Persons Assistance Act* has greatly extended the scope of Commonwealth Government assistance available to non-profit organisations providing approved services for physically and mentally handicapped people. The Act came into operation in December 1974, and repealed both the *Sheltered Employment (Assistance) Act 1967* and the *Handicapped Children (Assistance) Act 1970*. Under the new legislation approved organisations may apply for a wide range of subsidy towards the cost of providing capital projects, maintenance and equipment in respect of sheltered workshops, activity therapy centres, training centres, residential accommodation and holiday homes. Grants are also available in respect of rental paid for premises and the salary payments to approved staff employed in the provision of the prescribed services.

Grants on purchases of buildings, equipment etc. take the form of a \$4 subsidy for each \$1 raised by an eligible organisation from non-government sources. Rent is subsidised at a rate equal to 80 per cent of the approved rental paid subject to certain conditions. Salary costs may be subsidised to an amount equal to 100 per cent of salary paid to staff employed in new ventures but this is reduced to 50 per cent after the premises have been providing the service for 2 years or more.

As well as assisting organisations with establishment and running costs, the legislation also provides financial encouragement to sheltered workshop administrators to provide the type of training for the handicapped which will prepare them, where possible, for open employment. A *training fee* of \$500 is paid to organisations providing approved sheltered employment for each handicapped employee who, having received at least 6 months training in the workshop, graduates to open employment and remains there for at least 12 months.

Introduction of the *Handicapped Persons Assistance Act* in December 1974 also saw the transfer of the administration of Handicapped Childrens' Benefit from the Commonwealth Department of Health to the Department of Social Security. Where an organisation provides approved residential accommodation for mentally or physically handicapped children under 16 years it becomes entitled to receive a Commonwealth benefit of \$3.50 per day in respect of each resident child. This payment replaces that previously paid under Division 5A of Part V of the *National Health Act 1953*.

The following table gives number of premises and grants approved during 1974-75 financial year in each State.

HANDICAPPED PERSONS ASSISTANCE ACT(a): GRANTS APPROVED 1974-75

State	No. of approved premises(b)	Capital grants(c)		Other grants(d)		Total all grants		Expenditure
		No. of grants	Amount approved	No. of grants	Amount approved	No. of grants	Amount approved	
			\$		\$		\$	\$
New South Wales	233	711	2,910,769	572	1,093,749	1,283	4,004,518	4,851,351
Victoria	140	274	1,740,918	499	1,166,907	773	2,907,825	2,455,666
Queensland	98	359	849,002	269	450,079	628	1,299,081	1,774,007
South Australia	36	170	967,662	368	778,154	538	1,745,816	3,917,454
Western Australia	34	213	238,826	193	469,746	406	708,572	1,199,400
Tasmania	18	62	623,066	90	173,440	152	796,506	735,932
Total	559	1,789	7,330,243	1,991	4,132,075	3,780	11,462,318	14,933,810

(a) Includes Sheltered Employment (Assistance) Act and Handicapped Children (Assistance) Act both repealed December 1974. (b) Total approved sheltered workshops activity therapy centres and training centres as at 30 June 1975. (c) Residential and non residential buildings, equipment and maintenance. (d) Training fee, salary subsidy and rent.

Grants approved under the Handicapped Children's (Assistance) Act and the Sheltered Employment (Assistance) Act in 1973-74 numbered 672 and 987 respectively amounting to \$5,544,320 and \$3,776,020.

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN'S BENEFIT

State	Number of approved handicapped persons homes(a)	Estimated number of handicapped children accommodated(a)	Number of days benefit paid	Total amount of benefit paid
				\$
New South Wales	18	417	95,390	345,573
Victoria	14	385	60,895	195,950
Queensland	17	150	29,724	96,888
South Australia	8	176	38,069	128,501
Western Australia	8	160	23,559	74,946
Tasmania	4	72	15,504	48,965
Total 1974-75	69	1,360	263,141	890,823
Total—				
1973-74	55	1,560	273,052	582,137
1972-73	53	1,185	286,060	429,090
1971-72	49	1,295	291,989	437,984
1970-71	44	1,262	303,830	455,745

(a) As at 30 June.

The *Homeless Persons Assistance Act* was introduced in December 1974 to help non-profit organisations and local governing bodies which provide accommodation, food and social welfare services for homeless men and women.

The Act enables grants to be made to eligible organisations to meet the cost of purchasing, constructing, altering or renting buildings to be used as homeless persons' assistance centres, as well as to meet the cost of purchasing furniture, furnishings and equipment for such centres. Grants also meet half the salary of a social welfare worker employed at a centre, and help to meet the cost of providing food and accommodation for homeless persons, at an approved centre, or of meals provided at such centres for non-resident homeless persons.

The rate of the food and accommodation subsidy has been prescribed at 75 cents per day and the rate of meals subsidy as 25 cents per meal.

HOMELESS PERSONS ASSISTANCE ACT: GRANTS APPROVED, 1974-75

\$

State or Territory	Building projects	Rent of premises	Furniture, equipment	Staff salaries	Food and accommodation	Meals for non-residents	Total
New South Wales . . . . .	..	..	..	..	84,423	8,184	92,607
Victoria . . . . .	..	12,834	227	15,130	98,269	15,626	142,086
Queensland . . . . .	..	6,320	2,042	228	31,460	6,551	46,601
South Australia . . . . .	..	..	..	..	10,684	2,144	12,828
Western Australia	9,660	2,730	20,301	..	11,550	2,418	46,659
Tasmania . . . . .	..	147	..	..	2,679	624	3,450
Australian Capital Territory . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Northern Territory . . . . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Australia	9,660	22,031	22,570	15,358	239,065	35,547	344,231

The *Delivered Meals Subsidy Act* 1970 came into operation on 15 April 1970. Its purpose is to help organisations to establish, maintain, expand and improve 'meals-on-wheels' services. The subsidy is at the rate of \$2.50 for every ten meals provided by approved organisations. At 30 June 1975, 450 organisations had received a total subsidy of \$1,490,292 under the Act. Organisations eligible for grants under the Act are the same as those specified under the Aged or Disabled Persons Homes Act.

Commonwealth Government assistance to States

The *States Grants (Deserted Wives) Act 1968* provides for assistance to be given by the Commonwealth Government to the States in respect of aid for needy mothers with children where there is no breadwinner and the mothers are not eligible for benefits under the Social Services Act. Broadly, these include deserted wives during the first six months of desertion, wives during the first six months of the husband's imprisonment, deserted de facto wives, de facto wives of prisoners, other separated wives and unmarried mothers.

The type of assistance attracting a grant may be provided in the form of cash, food or clothing. The grant is made by the Commonwealth Government to the States on the basis of half the cost of the approved assistance paid to the mother or half the amount of Class 'A' widow's pension or supporting mother's benefit, which would have been payable had she been qualified to receive it, whichever is the lesser.

All States are now receiving assistance under the scheme. In 1974-75 payments by the Commonwealth Government amounted to \$6,932,168.

The *States Grants (Home Care) Act 1969* provides that the Commonwealth Government will share with participating States on a \$2 for \$1 basis, the cost of developing approved housekeeping or other domestic assistance provided wholly or mainly for aged persons in their homes. The Commonwealth Government will also share on a \$2 for \$1 basis with participating States up to a maximum of one-third of the capital cost of approved senior citizens' centres as well as meeting on a \$2 for \$1 basis with the States the cost of a salary of a welfare officer employed by such a centre. All States participate in this scheme. The Commonwealth Government share was increased to two-thirds of State expenditure from 1 July 1973.

**PAYMENTS TO STATES FOR HOME CARE, SENIOR CITIZENS'
CENTRES, AND WELFARE OFFICERS, 1974-75**

(\$)

<i>State</i>	<i>Home Care Services</i>	<i>Senior Citizens' Centres</i>	<i>Welfare Officers</i>	<i>Total</i>
New South Wales	610,854	348,629	225,714	1,185,197
Victoria	441,404	149,420	51,553	642,377
Queensland	1,244,406	153,347	11,371	1,409,124
South Australia	563,303	363,104	15,777	942,184
Western Australia	115,981	28,206	14,865	159,052
Tasmania	123,806	154,050	..	277,856
Total	3,099,754	1,196,756	319,280	4,615,790

Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory welfare services

Provision of social security and welfare services in these two Territories is the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government. In so far as welfare items can be identified for territorial accounting purposes, the following table shows the cost of providing these services.

**AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON SOCIAL SECURITY AND WELFARE^(a)
NORTHERN TERRITORY AND AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
(£'000)**

	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Northern Territory—					
Current outlay	8,027	8,478	10,570	11,462	20,277
Gross capital formation (b)	455	348	623	220	500
Total outlay	8,482	8,826	11,193	11,682	20,777
Australian Capital Territory—					
Current outlay	* 395	635	756	874	1,375
Capital outlay—					
Gross capital formation (b) . . . . .	..	..	..	..	501
Total outlay	395	635	756	874	1,876

(a) Includes expenditure on aboriginal affairs. (b) Expenditure on fixed assets and increase in stocks.

Aboriginal welfare

A referendum in May 1967 led to the repeal of Section 127 of the Constitution which provided that in reckoning the numbers for census purposes, Aboriginals should not be counted; and to the deletion of the words 'other than the Aboriginal race in any State' from Section 51 (xxvi) which relates to the power of the Commonwealth Parliament to make laws in respect to people of any race. The Commonwealth Government's aim is to help Aboriginals become self-managing and self-sufficient, while at the same time preserving and developing their own distinctive culture. It now shares with the States power to legislate in respect of Aboriginal people. The Commonwealth Government has assumed full responsibility for policy, planning and co-ordinating in respect of Aboriginal affairs at the national level, and has established a Department of Aboriginal Affairs with regional offices in all States and the Northern Territory. The Department also serves the Council for Aboriginal Affairs, comprising a Chairman and two members. In November 1973 an election was held by Aboriginals throughout Australia to establish the first National Aboriginal Consultative Committee, a group of 41 Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders which will be elected every two years, to advise the Government on Aboriginal needs. At the request of the Committee, the second election which was scheduled for November 1975, was deferred for nine months. Subsequently, the Government established an independent inquiry into the role of the Committee. The inquiry is to report by August 31, 1976.

Outlays by Commonwealth Government authorities, which have been identified as specifically relating to Aboriginal advancement, are shown in the following table.

**OUTLAY ON ABORIGINAL ADVANCEMENT BY COMMONWEALTH
GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES**

(\$'000)

	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75
Final consumption expenditure—					
Law, order and public safety	24	28	715	1,190	2,582
General research	369	429	449	1,252	1,286
Education	3,066	3,540	4,413	5,451	10,037
Health	393	603	1,069	1,518	2,734
Welfare	8,194	9,072	12,915	21,118	39,564
Housing	89	32	844	228	1,553
Community development	1	4	1	160	..
Recreation	77	115	466	809	1,281
Labour and employment	489	651	1,020	1,843	1,450
<i>Total final consumption expenditure</i>	<i>12,702</i>	<i>14,474</i>	<i>21,892</i>	<i>33,569</i>	<i>60,487</i>
Gross capital formation—					
Expenditure on new fixed assets—					
General research	57	41	64	248	367
Education	851	632	2,263	3,085	6,300
Health	103	7	277	1,087	1,597
Welfare	1,057	330	623	228	507
Housing	518	860	784	324	69
Community development	290	975	1,388	2,081	3,619
<i>Total expenditure on new fixed assets</i>	<i>2,876</i>	<i>2,845</i>	<i>5,399</i>	<i>7,053</i>	<i>12,459</i>
Expenditure on existing assets—					
Community development . . . . .	..	..	1,547	421	2,976
<i>Total gross capital formation</i>	<i>2,876</i>	<i>2,845</i>	<i>6,946</i>	<i>7,474</i>	<i>15,435</i>
Transfer payments—					
Transfers to persons	2,527	3,012	4,920	7,012	8,699
Grants for private capital purposes	2,168	2,283	6,829	19,582	35,109
Grants to the States—					
Current	800	1,665	6,649	6,670	13,142
Capital	6,200	7,535	15,351	25,580	23,907
<i>Total transfer payments</i>	<i>11,695</i>	<i>14,495</i>	<i>33,749</i>	<i>58,844</i>	<i>80,857</i>
Net advances—					
To the States . . . . .	..	-39	-19	-19	-18
To other sectors	725	672	362	1,207	1,712
<i>Total net advances</i>	<i>725</i>	<i>633</i>	<i>1,343</i>	<i>1,188</i>	<i>1,694</i>
Total outlay	27,998	32,447	63,930	101,075	158,473

State expenditure on certain welfare services

The following table shows net expenditure from State government funds on certain welfare services. The figures exclude expenditure on unemployment, bush fire, flood, etc. relief, Aboriginal welfare, and some other items which are excluded because information cannot be obtained for all States. Loan fund expenditure is excluded also. Because of differences in organisation and accounting methods, the information shown for the items is not on exactly the same basis for all States; it may also be incomplete because particulars of some activities are not separately recorded and are therefore excluded. The expenditure shown is 'net' in the sense that receipts for services rendered have been deducted from gross expenditure.

NET EXPENDITURE BY STATE GOVERNMENTS ON CERTAIN WELFARE SERVICES
(S'000)

<i>Service and year</i>	<i>N.S.W.</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>S.A.</i>	<i>W.A.</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>Total</i>
1973-74—							
Relief of aged, indigent and infirm, child welfare, etc.	48,450	29,821	10,931	15,818	15,996	4,154	125,170
Miners' phthisis	39	44	..	..	84	..	168
Total 1973-74	48,489	29,865	10,931	15,818	16,080	4,154	125,338
Total—							
1972-73	41,814	26,083	11,541	12,036	13,964	3,681	109,120
1971-72	33,758	23,132	8,282	9,044	12,838	3,164	90,219
1970-71	25,184	17,965	6,836	6,999	10,320	2,876	70,182
1969-70	21,453	14,317	5,702	5,751	8,817	1,966	58,006

Social Welfare

The Department of Social Security provides a professional social work service, a welfare service to migrants including a telephone interpreter service, (*see also Migrant Welfare, Settlement and Integration, Chapter 7*) and after care for refugees. It administers grants to the following bodies: Australian Council of Social Service, Australian Council on the Ageing, Australian Council for Rehabilitation of Disabled, Good Neighbour Councils, voluntary welfare agencies to employ social workers for work amongst migrant communities (Grant-in-Aid Scheme), Australian Council of Trade Unions to develop a research unit, State Governments for Social Policy Planning Units, Australian Branch of International Social Service and locally based community welfare agencies in serious financial difficulty (emergency funding only).

To assist in its role of advising the Government on welfare policy, the Department of Social Security initiates, develops and evaluates experimental projects in social welfare and undertakes research studies. The experimental projects currently being administered and evaluated by the Department are the Australian Assistance Plan, Community Information Centres and Welfare Rights Program.

The Australian Assistance Plan aims to assist in the planning and development, at a regional level, of integrated patterns of community welfare services which are complementary to the welfare policies and programs of the Commonwealth and State Governments and local government authorities, voluntary organisations and consumer groups. Thirty-seven regions in Australia are participating in the pilot phase of the Plan.

A pilot project of twelve Community Information Centres is being developed and evaluated to determine ways of establishing an effective system of information and referral for all members of the community.

The Welfare Rights Program consists of grants to 10 self-help organisations to enable them to employ a Welfare Rights Officer who aims to improve the access of disadvantaged persons to welfare services and entitlements.

The *Social Welfare Commission*, established under the *Social Welfare Commission Act 1973*, operated from April 1974 as an independent statutory advisory body on social welfare matters in Australia. It had operated for 12 months previously as an Interim Committee. The Government announced in February 1976 its intention to abolish the Social Welfare Commission.

The functions of the Commission are to recommend on the development of a balanced and integrated national program of social welfare and to establish program priorities accordingly. The Commission is responsible particularly for identifying and reporting on community needs in the welfare field.

The Commission consists of nine part-time Commissioners and a full-time Chairman and Deputy Chairman. It reports to the Minister for Social Security, and to the Parliament through the Minister.

In pursuit of its broad responsibilities for social analysis as the basis for recommending to Government on welfare matters, up until March 1976 the Commission had—

- published some 60 titles which have been widely distributed free-of-charge;
- participated in, and presented papers at conferences, seminars, working groups etc.;
- funded a total of 47 research projects at a cost of some \$515,000; 21 projects had been completed and 26 others were continuing;
- made Fellowship awards to enable four people to undertake particular studies in an area of social policy of relevance to their own experience and expertise;
- undertaken major inquiries into the care of young children and care of the aged;
- established in co-operation with State Governments the first comprehensive study of services for families;
- developed and evaluated the Australian Assistance Plan and tabled in Parliament a report on the pilot phase of the Plan;
- presented a progress report on social welfare manpower in Australia, indicating preliminary findings and suggesting areas requiring further study;
- published papers on the role of local government in social welfare, issues in governmental financing of voluntary bodies, legislation for child and family welfare in the Australian States and Territories, and the needs of lone parent families in Australia;
- issued papers on the financing of social welfare activities in Australia, looking especially at expenditure patterns and levels of responsibility;
- undertaken preliminary work on classifying welfare services for comparative and forward planning purposes;
- convened committees to examine policy for inter-country adoptions and to develop guidelines on Commonwealth Government assistance towards national voluntary agencies. Papers on these subjects were forwarded to the Government.

The role of voluntary agencies in Australian social welfare

Voluntary agencies have played an important role in the provision of social welfare services in Australia since the earliest days of settlement. The oldest voluntary organisation in Australia is the Benevolent Society of New South Wales, founded in 1818, 'to relieve the poor, the distressed, the aged and the infirm'. During the 19th century voluntary agencies were active in all States providing homes for orphan and abandoned children; industrial schools for older boys and girls often rescued from total destitution in the streets; relief in food and clothing for widows, old people and families of the unemployed; hospitals for the sick poor; and institutions for the aged and invalid.

Although in this century the Commonwealth and State Governments have taken over many tasks formerly carried out by voluntary agencies, this has not led to any diminution in voluntary activity. The voluntary sector is probably more active today than it has ever been, not only carrying out its traditional role, but in opening up new fields of activity.

In caring for the aged, voluntary agencies are co-operating with the Government in providing aged persons homes, retirement villages, hostels for the frail aged and nursing homes for the sick aged. In addition to the provision of residential care, voluntary agencies are increasingly offering service to the aged in their own homes to enable them to be independent as long as possible. Services include 'Meals on Wheels', home help, leisure programs in senior citizens centres, friendly visiting to the lonely aged and sheltered workshops to provide meaningful activity, and many similar services designed to enhance the well-being of the aged.

The same pattern of activity is seen in services for the mentally and physically handicapped. Voluntary agencies provide day and residential schools for handicapped children, sheltered workshops for those able to undertake some employment and hostels for the handicapped in both sheltered and open employment. Many organisations provide home visiting services and occupational therapy for the home-bound, special training centres for various forms of rehabilitation, and recreational programs for those unable to participate in general community activities. The handicapped field is also noted for its activities in bringing together self help groups of the handicapped and their families to promote the well being of the handicapped and to encourage study and research into both prevention and rehabilitation.

Besides the various forms of health services described above, many major hospitals are provided by the voluntary sector. Of the approved hospitals in Australia, almost 15 per cent are run by voluntary organisations. Such hospitals cover a wide range of needs and in addition provide nursing training which may ultimately be of service to the full range of hospitals and nursing homes.

Family and child welfare has long been an important area for voluntary activity. Children's homes provide for children deprived of normal home life because of serious problems within the family, in a wide variety of units ranging from the small family group home in an ordinary house in the suburbs, to the large unit of cottage homes grouped together. As with other services, recent years have shown a marked emphasis on preventive services through family welfare agencies and to greater use of substitute families in adoption and foster care programs.

Within the modern family welfare agency, assistance is given not only with money and food, as in the last century, but with marriage guidance, parental counselling and home-maker services, all designed to keep the family together as a unit. Other voluntary agencies run services for the single mother or provide day-care services to assist working mothers, in particular the one parent family or the family under special strain.

The well-being of Australian youth is also a matter of concern to the voluntary sector which runs youth activities of many varieties, offers adolescent counselling services and is showing a growing concern for the seriously emotionally disturbed and those becoming addicted to drugs.

As well as these general community services, special services for Aborigines have been a feature of voluntary activity. Formerly these were mainly concerned with the mission area but of late many agencies have been formed, often run wholly by Aborigines, to assist urban dwellers. Legal aid services, head start programs, nutrition programs and many others are now being made available through voluntary effort.

The care of immigrants is also a significant activity and again much of this work is now undertaken by settled immigrants in conjunction with longer established Australians.

Prisoners and ex-prisoners also receive their share of attention. Organisations exist to visit prisoners and assist their families. These will also assist prisoners on discharge, to re-settle in the community, either at home, in lodgings or in hostels provided by the agency. Other agencies concern themselves with alcoholics, homeless men and women and others temporarily destitute.

The list of activities by no means covers all the work done by the voluntary sector. New and experimental services such as Lifeline and Samaritans, drug contact centres, drop-in coffee houses, street workers for alienated youth and many others, are evidence of the continued ability of the voluntary sector of social welfare to develop and meet new social needs.

Another area of developing interest involves the participation of various kinds of citizen groups in social welfare services. These include Community Information Centres and Community Aid services largely manned by volunteers; groups of clients of social welfare services who provide both a service for their members and liaise with Departmental services on questions of the way service is offered to people in need; and Resident Action groups who are concerned to participate in any replanning of their neighbourhood. This area of citizen involvement can be expected to become more and more important over the next few years.

During 1973 and 1974 many new fields of activities opened up for voluntary groups. The Australian Assistance Plan (*see* page 444) is aiming to involve a wide range of community groups through Regional Councils of Social Development in the planning and development of local community services. Grants are available from the Schools Commission to groups to provide programs for disadvantaged children, and from the Department of Recreation and Tourism to provide for voluntary activity by and for young people.

Studies of social needs and of the quality and the adequacy of present services are a continuing concern of the voluntary sector which through the work of Councils of Social Service at the State and the national level, promote the well-being of the deprived and disadvantaged sections of the community and the general social development of Australia.

