

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

The Department of the Interior is a composite department - and has always been since its inception. It carries out Australia-wide functions such as elections, meteorology, land and property as well as local or municipal and State government functions in the Australian Capital Territory. Within this diverse group of functions lies the essence of the Department's role in the administration of Commonwealth government, though other activities have been added or deleted as circumstances have required from time to time. This paper is therefore primarily concerned with a summary of the growth and development of the various groups of activities which have shaped the character of the Department since federation and given it a major role in Commonwealth administration.

Created in 1901 as the Department of Home Affairs, subsequent developments have reflected the role originally given to it as a composite department by the first Prime Minister, Sir Edmund Barton. His unpublished private papers, which contain the only statement of functions for departments at Federation, allocate the following activities to Home Affairs: Elections, Inter-State Commission, Federal Capital, Census and Statistics, Astronomical Observations, Old Age Pensions, People of Special Races, Acquisition of Property (with State Consent), Acquisition of Railways (with State Consent), and Construction of Railways (with State Consent). The first Gazette contained a paper on the Works function which said "The Public Works Branch was the main core of the Department (Home Affairs)" but that it was also responsible for: Management of Public Service, Astronomy, Census and Statistics, Elections, Franchise, Lands Meteorology, Public Works, Railways, Rivers, Seat of Government, Surveys and Representation of the People. It continued, "A separate Public Works Department was not formed at the inception because Commonwealth works activities were not sufficiently large to engage one Minister's attention".²

In 1906, when the functions of the original departments were first gazetted, the Department of Home Affairs had the following activities: Acquisition of lands, Census and Statistics, Elections, Franchise, Interstate Commission, Public Service Commissioner, Rivers, Public Works, Railways, Representation of the People, and Seat of Government.³ It should be noted that the Astronomy and Meteorology functions mentioned above were not undertaken by the Department of Home Affairs until 1912. Responsibilities for astronomical and meteorological observations under the Meteorology Act (1906) were carried out by the Postmaster-General's Department until transferred to Home Affairs in 1912.⁴ The Public Service Commissioner and his staff from the Department of Home Affairs went to the newly created Prime Minister's Department on 1st July, 1912.⁵

When departments were re-organised in 1916, following Public Accounts Committee investigations,⁶ the original Department of Home Affairs was abolished and the related functions of Railways, Rivers and Public Works allocated to the newly created Department of Works and Railways.⁷

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1. The Barton Papers held in Commonwealth Archives.
 2. Commonwealth Gazette Number 1, 1901, page 4.
 3. Commonwealth Gazette Number 71 of 15th December, 1906.
 4. Commonwealth Gazette Number 26 of 13th April, 1912.
 5. Ibid.
 6. Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee Report Number 350 of 7th December, 1916.
 7. Commonwealth Gazette Number 172 of 1916 and Executive Council Minute Number 23/1917.

The remaining functions, together with migration and territorial functions from the Department of External Affairs which was also abolished, were allocated to the newly created Department of Home and Territories.⁸ The functions taken over from Home Affairs were: Astronomy, Elections, Franchise, Lands and Surveys, Meteorology and Seat of Government. The functions taken over from External Affairs were: Immigration and Emigration, Influx of Criminals, Naturalisation and Aliens, Pearl Fishing and Trepanng Fisheries in Australian Waters beyond Territorial Limits, People of Races (other than Aborigines in any State) for whom it is deemed necessary to make special laws, and Territories forming part of the Commonwealth.*

A restrictive migration policy was administered by the Department of Home and Territories from 1918, when the Passports function from Prime Minister's Department was transferred.⁹ Naturalisation and immigration restriction functions were carried out until 1945, when the Department of Immigration was formed to encourage migration from overseas as a result of post-World War II employment policy.¹⁰ The Department's territorial function once included Ashmore, Cartier, Nauru and Norfolk Islands, Papua and New Guinea, Northern and Central Australia. In 1951, when the Department of Territories was created from the earlier Department of External Territories, the remaining Northern Territory, Ashmore and Cartier Islands group of functions was transferred from the Department of the Interior.¹¹ The present administration of the Australian Capital Territory including Jervis Bay, other than the Naval Base, maintains the original territorial function given this Department in 1901.¹²

The economic boom after World War I wrought many changes which were reflected in departmental activities. Funds, now available to encourage prospecting for precious metals and minerals, were administered by the Department.¹³ In the Australian Capital Territory the construction of a Solar Observatory at Mount Stromlo, originally started in 1910, was completed and the War Museum started in 1924.¹⁴ The former, renamed Commonwealth Observatory in 1945, when the Victorian Government closed down its Melbourne Observatory, was transferred to the Australian National University as the Mt. Stromlo Observatory in 1957.¹⁵ The War Museum, renamed the Australian War Memorial to commemorate the deeds of Australian servicemen and women in all hostilities, still forms a branch of the Department.

* The Gazette notification has been accepted although there is some doubt about this. Memorandum 16/10677 from Mr. H.A. Earl, Acting Secretary, Public Service Commission states that while the Department of Works and Railways was created, the Department of Home and Territories was not established, nor were the Departments of Home Affairs and External Affairs abolished. See Prime Minister's file 1918/2866.

8. Commonwealth Gazette Number 188 of 21st December, 1916, page 360.
9. Executive Council Minute Number 104 of 17th July, 1918, page 1519.
10. Executive Council Minute Number 27 and Commonwealth Gazette Number 52 of 14th March, 1947.
11. Executive Council Minute Number 46 of 2nd July, 1951.
12. See above, paragraphs 2 and 3.
13. Commonwealth Gazette Number 19 of 15th March, 1923, page 360.
14. Public Service Board Circular Number 2.
15. Mt. Stromlo Observatory Act, 1956 and agreement with Australian National University on Interior file 56/208(96).

In November, 1924, a changed Government majority established the Federal Capital Commission to develop Canberra and the Australian Capital Territory.¹⁶ Many buildings in Canberra today, including the present Parliament House, East and West Block, and Hotels Acton, Ainslie, Beauchamp, Brassey, Canberra, Gorman, Kurrajong and Wellington, are lasting memorials to this Commission which was abolished in 1930.¹⁷ More will be said later about the Department's activities in the Australian Capital Territory. During this boom period, besides the migration and territorial functions mentioned above, the Department's functions also included Actuarial Matters, Cotton Research, Forestry (the Australian Forestry School was established in 1926 although it was not transferred from Adelaide University to its present site in Yarralumla, Australian Capital Territory until accommodation was ready in 1927.¹⁸), Geodesy and the National Museum of Zoology.¹⁹ The addition of these diverse activities provides further evidence of the composite nature and general role of the Department in the sphere of Commonwealth administration. It should be noted that during the years 1925-32 the Lands and Survey Branch of the Department of Home and Territories was transferred to the Department of Works and Railways.²⁰

In 1928 the Department of Home and Territories was abolished and the Department of Home Affairs recreated.²¹ Thus, when Depression economies merged the administration of departments in 1932, it was the three Departments of Home Affairs, Works and Railways, and Transport which formed the present Department of the Interior.²² The range of functions then carried out was: Alien's Registration, Astronomy, Australian War Memorial, Commonwealth Literary Fund, Elections and Franchise, Emigration of Children and Aborigines, Forestry, Immigration, Indentured coloured labour, Meteorology, Naturalisation, Northern Territory, Oil Investigation and prospecting, Passports, Prospecting for special metals, Pearl Shelling and Trepang Fisheries in Australian waters beyond territorial limits, Seat of Government, Solar Observatory, Conveyance of Members of Parliament and others, Geodesy (International map of the world and 129th meridian), Lands and Surveys, Properties (a) transferred, (b) acquired and (c) rented, Public Works and Services, co-ordination of Australian Transport Services, Federal Transport Council, Railways, and War Service Homes.

Few major functional changes occurred until after World War II, except for the war-time transfer of the Bureau of Meteorology to the Department of Air and brief separations of the Works function. However, local activity in Canberra greatly increased, as will be apparent by the number of boards and committees, mentioned later, dealing with the rationing of petrol and other fuels, rubber and tyres, manpower and coupons, salvage and collection of materials and money, etc. A separate Department of Works was created for six months, from November 1938 to April 1939, when it was abolished²³ to become the Works and Services Branch whose activities were controlled by the Allied Works Council until 1945. Another Department of Works was created from this Branch for five months, from February to June 1945, when it was abolished to form the Department of Works and Housing in July, 1945.²⁴ This organisation lasted until 1952

16. Section 4, Seat of Government (Administration) Ordinance, 1930-55.

17. Ibid.

18. Public Service Board 4 of 1926 and Interior file 64/15.

19. Executive Council Minute Number 8 of 1925 and Commonwealth Gazette Number 64 of 30th August, 1925.

20. Commonwealth Gazette Number 94 of 5th November, 1925, page 1687.

21. Gazette Number 139 of 5th December, 1928, page 3503.

22. Executive Council Minute 35/36 and Commonwealth Gazette Number 35 of 14th April, 1932.

23. Commonwealth Gazette Number 25 of 26th April, 1939.

24. Executive Council Minute Number 27 and Commonwealth Gazette Number 52 of 14th March, 1947.

When, again, it was abolished to separate its basic functions.** Throughout this period of separations, Works' staff and personnel activities were carried out by the Department of the Interior.

Mention has previously been made of how the migration and territorial functions left Interior when separate Departments of Immigration and Territories were formed in 1946 and 1951 respectively. However, the post-World War II years brought other functional changes. The War Service Homes function, which had been transferred to the Department when the War Service Homes Commissioner, Mr. H.C. Brown, became Secretary in 1932²⁵, left with the Works function in 1945. In 1946 the Department of Home Security, which had been created in 1941²⁶ was abolished.²⁷ Some of the functions went to the Department of Defence; others to the Department of Immigration. However, the civil defence functions formed the present Directorate of Civil Defence, a branch of Interior which includes the Australian Civil Defence School at Mount Macedon, Victoria.

In 1949, the functions of War Service Lands Settlement and Rural Land Schemes, which had been with the Department of Post-War Reconstruction until that Department was abolished, were transferred to the Department of the Interior with the appointment of a new Secretary, Mr. W.A. McLaren. In 1956, this function was transferred to the newly formed Department of Primary Industry.²⁸ In the same year the National Mapping function, which had been with the Lands and Survey Branch, was transferred to the Department of National Development.

In 1950, the News and Information Bureau was established as a branch of the Department.²⁹ The Bureau's present activities have grown from a 'Commonwealth publicity function' originally allocated to the Prime Minister's Department in 1923.³⁰ When this function was taken over by the newly formed Department of Markets and Transport in 1928,³¹ it was defined as 'Trade publicity and advertising in the United Kingdom and overseas'; to which was added 'Collection and dissemination of commercial and industrial information' when the Department of Markets replaced the Department of Markets and Transport in 1930.³² With the outbreak of war in 1939 these resources were absorbed into a newly created Department of Information whose primary function was: Information relating to war and War censorship of the press, broadcasting and cinemas.³³ When this department was abolished in 1950, the News and Information Bureau was established as a branch of Interior, with the following functions; to make Australia more widely and favourably known throughout the world, administration of the National Film Board, production of information and publicity material on important matters of national interest on the request of Ministers, and the supply of information services for overseas posts.³⁴

** See other historical summaries for further information on Department of Works.

25. "The reason for this was doubtless that Mr. H.C. Brown was at the time War Service Homes Commissioner". See Prime Minister's Department file A.6/1/1 of 11th August, 1936.
26. Commonwealth Gazette Number 125 of 26th June, 1941.
27. Executive Council Minutes 7 and 65 and Commonwealth Gazette Number 239 of 1946.
28. Commonwealth Gazette Number 53 of 12th January, 1956.
29. Executive Council Minute Number 29 and Commonwealth Gazette Number 15 of 17th March, 1950.
30. Commonwealth Gazette Number 19 of 15th March, 1923.
31. Commonwealth Gazette Number 129 of 15th December, 1928.
32. Executive Council Minute Number 16 of 1930.
33. Executive Council Minutes Numbers 83, 123, 167 and Commonwealth Gazette Number 153 of 30th November 1939.
34. Executive Council Minute Number 29 and Commonwealth Gazette Number 15 of 17th March 1950.

In 1950 the Commonwealth Railways, which had functioned under the direction of the Minister for the Interior since 1932, was transferred to the Department of Fuel, Shipping and Transport.³⁵ The following year, Interior's administration of the Commonwealth Shipping Act, which began in 1936, was transferred to the Department of Shipping and Transport.³⁶

As mentioned above, the Mount Stromlo Observatory was transferred to the Australian National University in 1957. However, a part of this branch remained. The ionospheric Prediction Service, which had its origins in the Radio Research Unit of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (now Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation) in 1942,³⁷ was transferred to the Observatory in 1947.³⁸ When the latter left the Department, the Ionospheric Prediction Service remained as part of the Administration Branch. It remained with this branch until 1963 when a major re-organisation of the Department's top structure established it as a separate branch.³⁹

In 1964 the Forestry and Timber Bureau, which had been established in 1924 to assist the Australian timber industry, was transferred to the Department of National Development. This transfer appropriately allocated the Bureau's research function to a comparatively new department whose primary responsibility is to develop Australia's natural resources. However, when the Bureau left, the Australian Capital Territory Forestry Section remained in the Department. It was transferred to the Lands Branch.⁴⁰

The most recent statement of the Department of the Interior's functions is consistent with the role of a composite department in Commonwealth administration set by the first Prime Minister in 1901. The functions are: Administration of the Australian Capital Territory and Jervis Bay Territory, Acquisition and leasing of land and property for Commonwealth purposes, Management of Commonwealth property, Meteorology, Ionospheric Prediction Service, Civil Defence, Parliamentary elections and referendums, Publicity and information, and War Graves.⁴¹

Functional Organisation

The Department is primarily organised by function to carry out its diverse activities, with some branches further subdivided by region to provide common services throughout the Commonwealth. Thus the primary organisation comprises eight specialised branches and two divisions which include a further eleven branches, viz. -

<u>Divisions</u>	<u>Specialised Branches</u>
Australian Capital Territory Services Division	Bureau of Meteorology
Facilities Branch	News & Information Bureau
Housing Branch	Electoral Branch
Lands & Policy Division	Survey Branch
Lands Branch	Ionospheric Prediction Service

35. Ibid.

36. Commonwealth Gazette Number 46 of 2nd July, 1951.

37. See Interior file 63/1017.

38. Executive Council Minute Number 14 of 20th March, 1947.

39. Public Service Board memorandum 63/3480 of 30th October, 1963 on G64/661(64).

40. Executive Council Minute No. 26 of 25th May, 1964 and Public Service Board memorandum 63/2461(81) of 22nd April, 1964 on Interior file G64/42. See also file G64/15.

41. Commonwealth Gazette Number 8 of 21st January, 1965.

<u>Divisions</u>	<u>Specialised Branches</u>
Planning, Establishments and Finance Branch	Australian War Memorial
Property Branches - 6 States plus Australian Capital Territory	War History Civil Defence

Departmental officers are located throughout Australia, nearby island and Antarctic weather stations, and at diplomatic missions overseas.

Matters dealt with by the Branches are -

Facilities Branch

Responsible for education, welfare and fire protection in the Australian Capital Territory (in collaboration with New South Wales authorities), rates and water charges, public transport, traffic problems, driving licences, motor vehicle and other registrations, Lake Burley Griffin, tourism, public halls, swimming pools and other community services. The Australian Capital Territory Police Force is attached for administrative purposes.

Housing Branch

Responsible for management and control of Government-owned houses & flats in Canberra and the sale of government houses. Administers fair-renting in the Australian Capital Territory, the Commissioner for Housing Loan Scheme and the provision of funds for co-operative building societies.

Lands Branch

Responsible for general land administration in the Australian Capital Territory including agriculture and stock, forest plantations, supervision of non-governmental building, city and rural leases, special leases for churches and clubs, parks and gardens, and plan printing.

Planning, Establishments and Finance Branch

Responsible for special investigations and forward planning for departmental activities, salaried and industrial personnel, allowances, leave and other conditions of service, establishment proposals, organisation and methods investigation, staff training and development, internal audit, estimates, accounting and financial control, compensation, security, travel and other facilities for Members of Parliament.

Property Branches - 6 States plus Australian Capital Territory

Responsible for the acquisition, leasing, management and disposal of land and property for Commonwealth purposes. The Australian Capital Territory Branch is also responsible for co-ordinating policy and controlling the overall acquisition, repairs, maintenance and works programmes.

Bureau of Meteorology

Provides meteorological services in Australia for the general public and for special needs by civil aviation, defence services, shipping, farming, engineering, commerce and science. Issues forecasts for gales, squalls, cyclones, rough seas, floods, heatwaves, bush fire dangers, frosts, hail and aviation hazards. Conducts research and liaison with overseas organisations for the advancement of the science of meteorology.

News and Information Bureau

Makes Australia more favourably and widely known to the rest of the world. Produces factual information, films and publicity material on topics of national importance for dissemination at home and abroad. Provides Commonwealth departments and instrumentalities with a common service agency for film, literary, photographic and artwork publicity. Maintains offices in London and New York, and has press attaches with diplomatic and trade commissioner posts overseas.

Electoral Branch

Administers the Commonwealth electoral and referendum laws. Responsibilities include keeping electoral rolls and habitation records up to date, divisional boundaries and redistribution reviews, polling facilities, and compulsory enrolment and voting provisions. Conducts Parliamentary elections and referendums elections for the Australian Capital Territory Advisory Council and Hospital Board, the Northern Territory Legislative Council, and miscellaneous elections for the Superannuation Board, Divisional Representatives, Apple and Pear Board, etc. Conducts Union Ballots arranged by the Industrial Registrar.

Survey Branch

Responsible for land, engineering and topographical surveys for Commonwealth purposes, including sub-divisions of Canberra and the Australian Capital Territory, State Property Branch requirements, navigational aids for civil aviation, levelling and detail surveys for national development, and instrumentation requirements for scientific research.

Ionospheric Prediction Service

Forecasts maximum usable frequencies for short wave radio transmission, based on observations of ionospheric and related solar and geophysical phenomena. Issues warnings on conditions likely to interrupt radio transmission. Publishes bulletins and tables of predictions.

Australian War Memorial

Provides a unique setting to commemorate the sacrifices and illustrate the deeds of Australian men and women who have served their country during wars. Displays dioramas, souvenirs, paintings, sculptures and other relics from the Sudan War to Malaya. Maintains records of military history and science, including war diaries, maps and films, etc. Overall management is vested in a Board of Trustees.

War History

Organises the production of the Official War History of Australia in the Second World War, 1939-45. The History consists of twenty-two volumes and a concise volume, only three of which have not been published.

Civil Defence

Responsible for Commonwealth programme to meet defence emergencies affecting the civilian population. Produces publications on the effects of nuclear and other weapons for public education. Provides various items of standard equipment for State authorities. Conducts the Australian Civil Defence School for members of Civil Defence units. Develops and implements plans for Commonwealth territories and special areas.

Boards and Committees

As mentioned above, many boards and committees have been formed from time to time. Whilst it is not exhaustive, the following list gives some indication of the diverse range of departmental activities:-

Commonwealth Literary Fund, 1916 - 1939⁴²
 Board of Higher Forestry Education, 1926 - 1964⁴³
 Board of Management of Australian War Memorial, 1926 - still meets⁴⁴
 National Memorials Committee, 1927 - still meets⁴⁵
 Canberra University College Council, 1929 - 1960⁴⁶
 A.C.T. Advisory Council, 1930 - still meets⁴⁷
 Canberra Public Cemetery Trustees, 1935 - still meets⁴⁸
 A.C.T. Apprenticeship Board, 1936 - still meets⁴⁹
 Commonwealth Oil Advisory Committee, 1937 - 1939⁵⁰
 Consultative Committee for Parks and Gardens, 1938 - 1951⁵¹
 National Capital Planning and Development Committee, 1938 - 1957⁵²
 A.C.T. Bush Fire Council, 1939 - still meets⁵³
 Advisory Board - Commonwealth Solar Observatory, Mount Stromlo, 1940 - 1957⁵⁴
 A.C.T. Salvage Committee, 1941 - 1947⁵⁵
 Defence Control Camouflage Committee, 1941 - 1945⁵⁶
 Allied Works Council, 1942 - 1945⁵⁷
 Bulk Oil Protection Advisory Committee, 1942 - 1945⁵⁸
 Canberra Nursery School Advisory Committee, 1943 - 1946⁵⁹
 A.C.T. Patriotic Funds Board, 1945 - 1952⁶⁰
 Australian Battlefields Memorials Committee, 1945 - 1956⁶¹
 Australian National Film Board, 1945 - still meets⁶²
 Canberra Firewood Supplies Committee, 1945 - 1950⁶³
 Canberra Milk Supply Committee, 1945 - 1954⁶⁴
 Ice Supplies Committee, 1945 - 1950⁶⁵
 Recreation Facilities Committee, 1945 - 1950⁶⁶
 Standing Committee on Development of Darwin, 1945 - 1949⁶⁷
 Wet Garbage Disposals Committee, 1945 - 1950⁶⁸
 A.C.T. Development Committee, 1946 - 1953⁶⁹
 Canberra Nursery School and Pre-School Advisory Committee, 1946 - 1951⁷⁰

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42. Records with Departments of External Affairs 1908-16; Home and Territories 1917-28, Home Affairs 1928-32, Interior 1932-39, Prime Minister's after separation of External Affairs in 1935. See file 39/1930
43. Interior file 60/724 (Forestry School transferred to A.N.U.)
44. Interior file 63/1150
45. Interior file 62/527
46. Interior file 59/908 (University College replaced by School of General Studies, A.N.U.)
47. Interior file 63/1929
48. Interior file 63/964
49. Interior file 64/2091
50. Commonwealth Archives Accession No. CP 887
51. Interior file 51/572
52. Interior file 64/1511 Replaced by National Capital Planning Committee, under N.C.D.C. Act
53. Interior file 63/802 and 64/1323
54. Interior file 55/269 (transferred from Interior)
55. Interior file 45/146
56. Records with Civil Defence Directorate
57. Records transferred to Department of Works
58. Records transferred to Department of National Development
59. Interior file 59/632 and 46/388
60. Interior file 55/509 and 44/1981
61. Interior file 59/1315
62. Cabinet Agendum No. 834 of 26th April, 1945
63. Interior file 52/745
64. Interior file 56/1936
65. Interior file 45/2118
66. Interior file 48/1607
67. Records at Department of Territories
68. Interior file 56/1310
69. Interior file 61/67
70. Interior file 59/576

9.
 Financial Advisory Committee to Imperial War Graves
 Commission, 1946 - 1956⁷¹
 General Purposes Committee to Imperial War Graves Commission,
 1946 - 1956⁷²
 National Mapping Council, 1946 - 1956⁷³
 Standing Committee on Development of Canberra, 1946 - 1957⁷⁴
 Traffic Advisory Committee, 1946 - 1954⁷⁵
 Zoological Parks and Reserves Committee, 1946 - 1952⁷⁶
 Departmental Disposals and Condemning Board, 1947 - 1956⁷⁷
 Department Tender Board, 1947 - still meets⁷⁸
 Jervis Bay Development Committee, 1947 - 1951⁷⁹
 A.C.T. Agricultural Advisory Committee, 1948 - 1952⁸⁰
 A.C.T. Road Safety Council, 1948 - still meets⁸¹
 A.C.T. Soil Conservation Council, 1948 - still meets⁸²
 Departmental Accidents Committee, 1948 - still meets⁸³
 Commonwealth Civil Defence Committee, 1948 - still meets⁸⁴
 Regional Climatological Consultative Committees, 1950 -
 still meets⁸⁵
 Canberra Pre-School Advisory Committee, 1951 - still meets⁸⁶
 Canberra Tourist Bureau Advisory Board, 1952 - still meets⁸⁷
 Canberra Technical Education Committee, 1956 - still meets⁸⁸
 Corroboree Park Youth Centre Council, 1956 - 1958⁸⁹
 Committee for Cultural Development in the Australian Capital
 Territory, 1948 - still meets⁹⁰
 Third Party Insurance Premiums Advisory Committee, 1956 -
 still meets⁹¹

Notes on Some Functions in the A.C.T.

These notes are not intended to cover all the administrative activities carried out over the years by the Department in the A.C.T. Nor is it intended that they should trace the growth and development of Canberra, which has been recorded elsewhere.⁹² Either attempt would go beyond the scope at present possible. The intention is rather to supplement the preceding account of the Department's functions by tracing its association with Canberra and recording some of its functions in the Territory, especially those which are no longer in the Commonwealth Service.

First Detail Surveys

As mentioned above in the first paragraphs of this paper, the Federal Capital Territory function was allocated to the Home Affairs portfolio in 1901 - before the area was transferred from New South Wales to the Commonwealth in 1909.⁹³ The Department's association with the planning and development of Canberra as the national capital also dates from the earliest period. It was the late Mr. C.R. Scrivener, subsequently Director

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71. Interior file 46/2104
 72. Interior file 49/1116
 73. Interior file GL 645 (now with Dept. of Nat. Dev.)
 74. Interior file 49/125
 75. Interior file 43/665 (previously known as Visibility Committee, March 1935 - July 1946)
 76. Interior file 62/191
 77. Interior file 39/2710
 78. Interior file 50/3239 and 64/1946
 79. Interior file 46/997 and 60/1004
 80. Interior file 56/1634
 81. Interior file 63/1491
 82. Interior file 49/2546
 83. Interior file 50/1398
 84. Civil Defence file 63/31 (Reconstituted in 1962 as Commonwealth and States Civil Defence Committee)
 85. Interior file 53/1754
 86. Interior file PWO/05
 87. Interior file 63/578
 88. Interior file 64/1297
 89. Interior file 64/2141
 90. Interior file 59/172
 91. Interior file 59/1402 (previously known as Insurance (Third Party) Claims Committee - formed 1947). 92. See "The Long View" by L. Wigmore and the earlier "Canberra" edited by N. White.
 93. Seat of Government Acceptance Act, 1900.

of Lands and Surveys, who conducted the surveys which provided the first detailed map of the Canberra area. This provided the basic information for the world-wide competition for a design of the national capital which was won by the Chicago architect Mr. Walter Burley Griffin on 23rd May, 1912.

Brickworks

The brickworks function in Canberra has been associated with the Department since the scheme to produce bricks locally was conceived in 1912. During the period 1913-16 it was with the Works Branch of the Department of Home Affairs when Canberra's development was under an Administrator responsible to the Minister of Home Affairs, King O'Malley. Because the position of Administrator was unpaid, the appointee, Colonel Miller, retained his position as Secretary of the Department of Home Affairs in Melbourne whilst undertaking the full-time responsibility of Administrator in Canberra, from August 1912 until 1916, when he relinquished his former position.

After the reorganisation of Commonwealth departments in 1916, the brickworks function was placed with the newly formed Department of Works and Railways until late 1924, when the Federal Capital Commission took over the function. During this time, due to manufacturing difficulties, the production of bricks was stopped for some years and resumed again in 1921. To overcome transport difficulties to the major constructional sites, a trainline was laid in 1924 from the Canberra Brickworks in Yarralumla to the line from Queanbeyan, meeting at Kingston and extending over the Molonglo River to Civic Centre. This considerably speeded up the completion of Parliament House, East and West Blocks, the Power House and hotels Acton, Ainslie, Beauchamp, Brassey, Canberra, Gorman, Kurrajong and Wellington. The line was later removed when the scheme to extend the line to Yass was discontinued.

When the Commission was abolished in 1930 the administration of the brickworks reverted to the Department of Works and Railways until 1932 when it was placed under Interior's Works and Services Branch; where it remained until the Works function was formed into a separate Department in 1938. Thereafter, it remained with Works until 1952, when it was attached to the Department's Administration Branch until it became a government-owned company named the Commonwealth Brickworks (Canberra) Limited on 1st July, 1960.⁹⁴ Directors of the Company are responsible to Parliament through the Minister for the Interior.

Electricity

The A.C.T. Electricity Authority, like the Brickworks, has had a similar continuous association with Canberra's administration. Following a report by Mr. F.W. Clements of the Melbourne Electric Supply Company (later, Chairman of the Electricity Commission of Victoria) which outlined a comprehensive scheme for Canberra's electricity requirements,⁹⁵ the Power House was constructed by the Works Branch of the Department of Home Affairs between 1912-15. Steam-generated electricity provided for requirements until September 1929, when Canberra and Queanbeyan were connected to the Burrinjuck Hydro-Electric Power Station by some 78 miles of 66,000 volt line; leaving the steam plant only for emergencies and system requirements prior to its abandonment in 1959-60. The original Burrinjuck system was later incorporated with the State-wide New South Wales interconnected system.

94. Interior file 61/1708

95. Home Affairs file "Power Plant Federal Capital" archives reference 2283/1911

Canberra's electricity is now supplied by three 66,000 volt lines and a major sub-station at Queanbeyan. Standby (diesel) generating plant of 4,000 k.w. capacity was purchased from the Electricity Commission of New South Wales in 1960.

Historically, the Electricity Authority has followed a similar administrative pattern to the Brickworks. It was attached to the Works function in Canberra until recently; i.e. under Home Affairs (pre-1916), Works and Railways (1916-24), Engineer's Department (of the Federal Capital Commission until 1930), Works and Railways (1930-32), and the Works and Services Branch (1932-38), 1939-45) until a separate Department of Works was created. After World War II, the Canberra Electric Supply formed part of the Works function until 12th October, 1953, when it was attached to Interior's Administration Branch. Since 1953, Canberra's population has grown from 28,800 to an estimated 82,000 at December, 1964. To meet this increase and the expected rate of growth of the Nation's Capital, output has increased from 12,400 k.w. to 68,150 k.w. with energy purchases of 243 million k.w. hours. Staff now number 75 male and 24 female salaried officers and 252 award employees. Revenue from sales reached £2,149,000 for 1964. It is the sixth largest undertaking of its kind in New South Wales - and demand is at present being doubled every five years.

Reflecting the growth and status of this important activity in the Australian Capital Territory, what was once the Electricity Section of the Department's Administration Branch was established as the A.C.T. Electricity Authority on 1st July, 1963.⁹⁶ Since then it has functioned under the control of a statutory Board of three members who are responsible to Parliament through the Minister for the Interior.

Education

Public Pre-school, primary, secondary and technical education is administered by the Department's Education Section, Facilities Branch, A.C.T. Services Division. But the provision of facilities varies somewhat from the original agreement with New South Wales. Originally, New South Wales departments were to build, equip and staff public schools for primary, secondary and technical education; the expenditure being reimbursed annually by the Commonwealth. However a precedent, since followed, was set in 1923 when a large central school at Telopea Park was built by the Department to best utilise the available equipment, stores and staff. Children would travel to and from school by special bus - a service still provided by the Department's Transport Section. Since this first central school was built, to replace the one-room schools usual to small communities throughout Australia even today, the Commonwealth has built 21 Primary Schools attended by 9,645 pupils, 7 Secondary Schools attended by 3,997 pupils and a Technical College whose size limits its present maximum enrolment of approximately 3,400 students.⁹⁷

Pre-school facilities, wholly administered and staffed by the Department's Education Section, have grown from a single Nursery School (1943-1949) to 30 Pre-School Centres for over 2,000 children, including an Occasional Care Centre near the main shopping area at the Civic Centre. Much credit is due to the Mothercraft Society and other interest-groups for their part in establishing these schools for children from 3 to 5 years. The continued interest and support of mothers and other community groups remain vital to the success of these schools as they were conceived, to meet the local requirements of Canberra residential areas.

96. Interior file 63/457

97. See "Education Director, 1965" for schools and file 63/1017 for enrolments to August, 1964.



During this period the Department was responsible for hotels Acton, Brassey, Havelock, Kurrajong and Lawley, and hostels Gorman, Mulwala, Warellan and Reid. At about this time the newly created National Capital Development Commission took over responsibilities for the planning of government housing. But the Department's Housing Branch still allocates homes and flats for rental, and arranges loans for tenants to purchase the homes they rent from the government.

Police

Since 1950, the A.C.T. Police Force has been attached to the Department for administration purposes. Originally a detachment of the New South Wales Police, the strength of the station grew from a single Constable to a Sergeant and four Constables when it was first taken over by the Commonwealth in 1927 as the Federal Territory Police. It was attached to Attorney-General's Department in 1930, when the Federal Capital Commission was abolished, until its transfer to the Department of the Interior in 1950. Reflecting the growth of Canberra's population and the increase of traffic and other problems, the A.C.T. Police Force has grown to its present strength of 148 policemen and 4 policewomen, organised into three Branches under the control of a Commissioner; together with 17 clerical and other staff.

Others

Besides the activities mentioned, there are many others which link this Department to Canberra's growth and development, through periods of rapid progress and interminable delays caused by a lack of funds or other shortages brought about by depression or war. The section of this paper on the functions of the A.C.T. Services Division and the Lands and Policy Division give some indication of the Department's responsibilities for administering and developing the national capital and the Australian Capital Territory. Not the least important of all the many links is that of the Parks and Gardens Section. Careful planning and constant attention over the years has turned Canberra into a garden city whose beauty attracts many thousands of Australians annually to their national capital.

MINISTERS FOR THE ACTIVITIES NOW COVERED
BY THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

External Affairs - 1st January 1901 to 14th November, 1916

Right Honourable Sir Edmund BARTON, P.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.
(also Prime Minister) - 1st January 1901 to
24th September 1903
Honourable A. DEAKIN
(also Prime Minister) - 24th September 1903 to
27th April 1904
Honourable W.M. HUGHES
27th April 1904 to 17th August 1904
Right Honourable G.H. REID, P.C., K.C. (later Sir George Reid)
(also Prime Minister) - 18th August 1904 to 5th July 1905
Honourable A. DEAKIN
(also Prime Minister) - 5th July 1905 to 13th November 1908
Honourable E.L. BATCHELOR
13th November 1908 to 1st July 1909
Honourable L.E. GROOM (later Sir Littleton Groom)
2nd June 1909 to 29th April 1910
Honourable E.L. BATCHELOR
29th April 1910 to 8th October 1911
Honourable J. THOMAS
14th October 1911 to 24th June 1913
Honourable P. McM. GLYNN
24th June 1913 to 17th September 1914
Honourable J.A. ARTHUR
17th September 1914 to 9th December 1914
Honourable H. MAHON
14th December 1914 to 14th November 1916

Home Affairs - 1st January 1901 to 17th February 1917

Honourable Sir William John LYNE, K.C.M.G.
1st January 1901 to 7th August 1903
Honourable Sir John FORREST, K.C.M.G.
7th August, 1903 to 24th September, 1903
Honourable Alfred DEAKIN
(also Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs) -
24th September 1903 to 27th April 1904
Honourable E.L. BATCHELOR
27th April 1904 to 17th August 1904
Honourable Dugald THOMPSON
18th August 1904 to 5th July 1905
Honourable L.E. GROOM (later Sir Littleton Groom)
5th July 1905 to 12th October 1906
Honourable T.T. EWING
12th October, 1906 to 24th January 1907
Senator the Honourable J.H. KEATING
24th January 1907 to 13th November 1908
Honourable Hugh MAHON
13th November 1908 to 2nd June 1909
Honourable G.W. FULLER
2nd June 1909 to 29th April 1910
Honourable King O'MALLEY
29th April 1910 to 24th June 1913
Honourable Joseph COOK (also Prime Minister later Sir Joseph Cook
G.C.M.G.) 24th June 1913 to 17th September 1914
Honourable W.O. ARCHIBALD
17th September 1914 to 27th October 1915
Honourable King O'MALLEY
27th October 1915 to 14th November 1916
Honourable F.W. BAMFORD
14th November 1916 to 17th February 1917

Home and Territories - 17th February 1917 to 10th December 1928

Honourable P. McM. GLYNN
17th February 1917 to 3rd February 1920
Honourable A. POYNTON, O.B.E.
4th February 1920 to 21st December 1921
Senator the Right Honourable G.F. PEARCE, P.C. (later Sir
George Pearce)
21st December 1921 to 18th June 1926
Senator the Honourable Sir T.W. GLASGOW, K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D.,
18th June 1926 to 2nd April 1927
Honourable C.W.C. MARR, D.S.O., M.C., V.D. (later Sir Charles Marr
K.C.V.O.)
2nd April 1927 to 24th February 1928
Honourable Sir Neville HOWSE, V.C., K.C.B., K.C.M.G., F.R.C.S.
24th February 1928 to 29th November 1928
Honourable C.L.A. ABBOTT
29th November 1928 to 10th December 1928

Home Affairs - 10th December 1928 to 12th April 1932

Honourable C.L.A. ABBOTT (later Administrator of the Northern Territory)
10th December 1928 to 22nd October 1929
Honourable A. BLAKELEY
22nd October 1929 to 6th January 1932
Honourable R.A. PARKHILL (later Sir Archdale Parkhill, K.C.M.G.)

Interior - 12th April 1932 to date

Honourable R.A. PARKHILL (later Sir Archdale Parkhill, K.C.M.G.)
12th April 1932 to 13th October 1932
Honourable J.A. PERKINS
13th October 1932 to 12th October 1934
Honourable E.J. HARRISON (now Sir Eric Harrison, K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O.)
12th October 1934 to 9th November 1934
Honourable T. PATERSON
9th November 1934 to 29th November 1937
Honourable J. McEWEN (now Rt. Honourable P.C.)
29th November 1937 to 26th April 1939
Senator the Honourable H.S. FOLL
26th April 1939 to 7th October 1941
Senator the Honourable J.S. COLLINGS
7th October 1941 to 13th July 1945
Honourable H.V. JOHNSON
13th July 1945 to 19th December 1949
Right Honourable P.A. McBRIDE (now Sir Philip McBride, P.C., K.C.M.G.)
19th December 1949 to 24th October 1950
Honourable E.J. HARRISON (now Sir Eric Harrison, K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O.)
24th October 1950 to 11th May 1951
Honourable W.S. KENT HUGHES M.V.O., O.B.E., M.C., E.D., M.A.
(now Sir Wilfrid Kent Hughes) - 22nd May 1951 to 11th January
1956 K.B.E.
Honourable Allen FAIRHALL
11th January 1956 to 10th December 1958
Honourable Gordon FREETH, L.L.B.
10th December 1958 to 18th December 1963
Senator the Honourable J.G. GORTON, M.A.
18th December 1963 to 4th March 1964
Honourable J.D. ANTHONY
4th March 1964

PERMANENT HEADS

<u>Name of Department</u>	<u>Period of office</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Decorations</u>
Home Affairs	1st January 1901 - 18th November 1901	Walter David BINGLE	I.S.O.
Home Affairs	19th November 1901 - 14th November 1906	David MILLER	I.S.O., V.D. (later C.M.G.)
(Colonel David Miller was transferred on 28th September, 1912 to Canberra as Administrator of the Federal Territory until the abolition of the Department of Home Affairs. Mr. W.D. Bingle acted as Secretary of the Department over this period)			
External Affairs to 1916 then Home & Territories	1st May 1901 17th March 1921	Atlee A. HUNT	C.M.G.
Home & Territories	18th March 1921 - 10th June 1928	John Gilbert McLAREN (later Sir John)	C.M.G.
Home & Territories to 1926 then Home Affairs	11th June 1928 - 31st December 1928	William James CLEMENS (later Sir William)	C.M.G. (K.C.M.G.) I.S.O.
(Appointed Chairman, Public Service Board 1st January, 1929)			
Home Affairs	1st January 1929 - 11th April 1932	Percival Edgar DEANE	C.M.G.
(Appointed Member War Service Entitlement Tribunal)			
Interior	12th April 1932 - 22nd November 1935	Herbert Charles BROWN	C.B.E.
Interior	23rd November 1935 - 1st May 1949	Joseph Aloysius CARRODUS	C.B.E.
(Appointed Director of Civil Defence 2nd May 1949)			
Interior	2nd May 1949 - 7th May 1963	William Alexander McLAREN	C.B.E.
Interior	8th May 1963	Richard KINGSLAND	D.F.C.