



Government of Western Australia
Department of Culture and the Arts
State Records Office of Western Australia

A Guide to the 1980 State Cabinet Records

PREPARED BY:

**THE STATE RECORDS OFFICE
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

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Introduction

Each year the State Records Office marks the release of the State Cabinet records on or near the first Monday in June, which is celebrated as Western Australia's Foundation Day.

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

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

The 1980 State Cabinet records are held by the State Records Office of WA, the authority with responsibility for identifying, managing, preserving and providing the community with access to the State's archives.

The 1980 State Cabinet records comprise:

- **Cabinet Minutes and Decisions**

These records are available at the State Records Office Search Room. The State Records Office is situated on the Ground Floor of the Alexander Library Building, James Street Mall, Perth Cultural Centre. The State Records Office Search Room is open Monday – Friday, 9.30am – 4.30pm.

For further details about accessing original Cabinet Minutes and Decisions, please contact the State Records Office on ph. 9427 3360 or email sro@sro.wa.gov.au.

The 1980 State Cabinet Records

An Overview

Unlike the release of Cabinet papers at the Commonwealth level, where more sensitive documents remain embargoed beyond the 30-year period, all of the 1980 State Cabinet records for Western Australia are released for public access 30 years after the records have been created.

The main set of records is called 'Cabinet Minutes and Decisions'. The State Cabinet decisions also include agenda and submissions to Cabinet and are simply listed chronologically.

The nature of recording Cabinet minutes and decisions has changed over time. In more recent times, the documentation associated with a Cabinet decision tends to be more extensive than that of earlier times. In 1980, Cabinet recordkeeping was quite detailed. The documentation associated with a Cabinet deliberation was attached to many of the decisions, although not in every case.

The 1980 State Cabinet Records

A Description

Cabinet Minutes and Decisions

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

Location: *State Records Office of Western Australia*

Reference: *Series 1228, Consignment 1819, files 1979/437v4–1980/318v1*

Quantity: *14 files, 1.6 linear metres*

Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1979/437 v4	07/01/1980 – 29/01/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/020 v1	04/02/1980 – 18/02/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/020 v2	05/03/1980 – 17/03/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/020 v3	24/03/1980 – 21/04/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/020 v4	24/04/1980 – 20/05/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/086 v1	26/05/1980 – 09/06/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/086 v2	16/06/1980 – 07/07/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/086 v3	14/07/1980 – 06/08/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/086 v4	11/08/1980 – 03/09/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/226 v1	08/09/1980 – 22/09/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/226 v2	29/09/1980 – 29/10/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/226 v3	03/11/1980 – 10/11/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/226 v4	17/11/1980 – 01/12/1980
Cabinet Minutes and Decisions	File 1980/318 v1	08/12/1980 – 22/12/1980

Events and Issues that Made News in 1980

This historical overview has been prepared by Archivists at the State Records Office of Western Australia

In the international sphere, 1980 was the year of the US/Iran hostage crisis. For 444 days American embassy staff in Teheran, were held in captivity by Iranian revolutionary students. A failed rescue attempt by US forces in April of that year was said to have destroyed Jimmy Carter's re-election chances and in November, Ronald Reagan was elected President of the United States in a landslide. In 1980 the Olympic Games were held in Moscow but were subject to a US lead boycott because of the USSR's invasion of Afghanistan.

In March 1980, President Tito of Yugoslavia died and in August in Poland Lech Walesa led the Gdansk shipyard strikes resulting in the official recognition of the non-communist *Solidarnosc* movement. Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, the South American human rights activist, won the 1980 Nobel Peace Prize and in November an earthquake near Naples in Italy killed nearly 5,000 people. In December John Lennon was shot and killed in New York City.

In Australia in 1980, the Coalition under Malcolm Fraser was re-elected; 'I Got You' by Split Enz reached number 1 on the Singles Chart; Azaria Chamberlain was taken by a dingo at Ayers Rock; Bruce Beresford's award winning film *Breaker Morant* was released; Beldale Ball won the Melbourne Cup; and AC/DC's Bon Scott died in London, his ashes later interred in Fremantle cemetery.

In WA, a State election was held in February and saw the re-election of Sir Charles Court's Government under the slogan *Let's Leap into the Eighties*. The split in State Parliament between the National Country Party, in coalition with the Liberal Party, and the independent acting National Party, led by Hendy Cowan, was maintained after this election. In January 1980 the Town of Goldsworthy was destroyed by Cyclone Amy and His Majesty's Theatre reopened after much renovation in May - a month that also saw 33 arrests in Forrest Place after a demonstration against section 54B of the Police Act, which restricted unauthorised protests. In August at Noonkanbah, a blockade of drilling equipment and protests occurred in defence of Aboriginal land rights, making this one of the main issues dominating State politics that year.

In 1980 WA had a population of 1.25 million people. A 600ml bottle of milk cost 31 cents and bananas cost 69 cents a kilogram. A three bedroom home with a swimming pool in Willetton cost \$54,000, and to furnish it with a new Husqvarna dishwasher and a Pye 22 inch screen colour television would see you spending \$329 and \$549 respectively.¹

¹ 1980 costs sourced from 1980 State Cabinet Minutes and Decisions and *The West Australian* newspaper.

State Cabinet deliberations in 1980

Following are a selection of notable issues raised in the Western Australian State Cabinet records of 1980. The description of the issues is generally taken directly from wording used in the Cabinet Minutes and Decisions. Dates shown below are the date(s) of deliberation in the State Cabinet records.

Dampier to Perth Natural Gas Pipeline : 07/01/1980

Cabinet considered an EPA report on the Dampier to Perth Natural Gas Pipeline and approval was sought by the Minister for Fuel and Energy, to give the go ahead for the development of the pipeline along the recommended route. Cabinet approved.

Rockingham Sub-Regional Centre : 14/01/1980

State Cabinet considered the Rockingham Sub-Regional Centre Study and accompanying information supplied by the Shire of Rockingham, which included a proposal to encourage State Government Departments to establish regional offices in Rockingham. Cabinet referred this to the proposal to the Public Service Board “without any policy directive” re: regional offices.

International Tension – Indian Ocean Surveillance – Moscow Olympics : 21/01/1980, 09/06/1980

In light of the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, State Cabinet decided “to support strongly the Commonwealth Government’s plans to step up surveillance in the Indian Ocean in co-operation with the United States of America.” One of the international measures against this invasion was a USA organised boycott of the 1980 Moscow Olympics. In June Cabinet approved two State Government employees to attend the Olympics, but only if they took leave without pay.

Adoption of Children Act : 21/01/1980, 03/06/1980, 01/09/1980

An initial proposal for a “Voluntary Contact Register” by the Department of Community Welfare required further investigation by the Attorney General. In June Cabinet noted that the establishment of a similar contact register by Adoption Jigsaw had caused alarm to some parents of adopted children. Cabinet was advised by the Minister for Community Welfare that “under no circumstances will any adoption records be made public”. In September Cabinet approved amendments to the Act about the overseeing of overseas adoptions.

W.A. Literary Fund : 29/01/1980

Cabinet was advised by Crown Law that the Literary fund, which had been supporting some of the activities of the Fremantle Centre Press and providing advice to authors, had “no legal existence, is not legally entitled to make financial grants, or to conduct activities of the type which it has been undertaking.” In light of this, Cabinet approval was sought for it to become an incorporated body.

Pastoral Leases – Foreign Ownership – Roebuck Plains and Brooking Springs Stations : 29/01/1980

In December 1979, Cabinet rejected plans to transfer the ownership of Roebuck Plains and Brooking Springs Stations to wholly owned Philippines interests. It clarified the situation further by stating that it preferred ownership by “Australian interests”, which meant “50%, or more” Australian ownership.

Kings Park - Radio Tower : 29/01/1980

After some public concern and press reports, a proposal for a new Radio Tower on Metropolitan Water Board land in Kings Park, to facilitate Police communications, was not approved by Cabinet.

Joondalup Development Corporation – Mineral Claims : 21/01/1980, 29/01/1980, 22/09/1980

It was reported to State Cabinet the validity of the transfer of land to the Joondalup Development Corporation was “challenged by the Mines Department” due to existing limestone mining claims. After investigation by the Crown Law Department the Minister for Mines and the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning recommended that the relevant land be transferred to the Joondalup Development Corporation.

Ethanol/Alcohol Production – Ord River : 11/02/1980, 24/03/1980, 16/06/1980, 14/07/1980

State Cabinet considered a proposal from Argyle Alcohol Company to establish an ethanol industry at Ord River and an inter-departmental committee was set up “to examine the ethanol project in the context of the ... development of the irrigation area”.

Star Swamp – North Beach : 11/02/1980

Cabinet approved the proposal to expand the Star Swamp nature reserve by vesting surrounding State Housing Commission land to the City of Stirling and the WA Wildlife Authority.

International Year of the Disabled 1981 : 05/03/1980, 31/03/1980

State Cabinet agreed that the Minister of Health, coordinate the Government’s participation in the Year of the Disabled Person scheduled for 1981. A broad based Committee was appointed, headed by Sir George Bedbrook, to oversee activities along with an Executive Officer and a budget. Potential Commonwealth funding was also discussed.

“Smoke Out Days” : 10/03/1980

Cabinet approved the proposal from the Cancer Council and the National Heart Foundation for “Smoke Out Days” to encourage smokers not to smoke on a particular day as part of health education.

TV Satellite : 10/03/1980, 17/09/1980

Cabinet discussed a satellite broadcasting proposal for WA to improve television services to people in remote areas. It decided to support the proposal in principle “in the absence of a better alternative at this stage”.

Noonkanbah/Aboriginal Land Rights : 17/03/1980, 12/05/1980, 21/07/1980, 08/09/1980, 22/09/1980, 29/09/1980, 29/10/1980, 24/11/1980

Cabinet concerns and reports about the Noonkanbah dispute feature considerably in 1980 State Cabinet records. In March Cabinet approved the actions of the Premier and relevant Ministers regarding this issue and endorsed “the proposal for Amax to proceed to meet its obligations to drill at Noonkanbah”. In July Cabinet decided that a proposed agreement between the State Government as proposed by the Noonkanbah Community be dealt with by the Attorney General, the Minister for Mines, the Minister for Cultural Affairs and the Minister for Community Welfare. In September Cabinet approved moves to offer Government related work to truck drivers/owners who had been black banned by unions due to their volunteer work on the Noonkanbah convoy. On 20 October Cabinet approved proposed discussions with the Australian Petroleum Exploration Association and the WA Chamber of Mines “as a preliminary to talks with Aboriginal interests.”

Absorption of Traffic Control into the Police : 17/03/1980, 06/05/1980, 09/06/1980, 04/08/1980

Cabinet decided that the Minister for Police to confer with the Police, the Road Traffic Authority (RTA) and local governments to investigate the mechanisms for the absorption of the RTA into the Police and later asked Treasury to review the financial aspects of the proposal. In August Cabinet decided “that, in view of the result of the response from local authorities, there be no amalgamation of the Police and the RTA”.

Western Australia Overseas Projects Authority : 17/03/1980, 12/05/1980, 04/08/1980, 27/10/1980 (2 Decisions)

State Cabinet approved the appointment of project staff to carry out responsibilities regarding to agricultural development projects in Iraq and Libya. In October Cabinet approved an amendment Bill “to facilitate the audit of overseas operations”, and for a General Manager to be appointed.

International Treaties and Conventions/ Human Rights : 17/03/1980, 31/03/1980

Cabinet had been concerned that by signing treaties “the Commonwealth by becoming party to a treaty (would attract) to itself legislative power which it would not otherwise have” with respect to matters that “have been traditionally controlled by the States”. The Attorney General reported that WA “has been endeavouring to ensure that treaties and the external affairs power (of the Commonwealth) are not used by future Commonwealth Governments to alter ... the traditional federal constitutional division of legislative executive and judicial powers between the Commonwealth and the State”. On 31 March State Cabinet decided to advise the Commonwealth about its objections to its plans to ratify the UN’s Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Increase in Size of State Cabinet : 24/03/1980, 26/05/1980, 14/07/1980, 04/08/1980, 15/09/1980, 05/11/1980

After discussion about constitutional matters, a proposal to amend the WA Constitution Act to increase the size of State Cabinet from 13 to 15 was approved. Two honorary Ministers had been appointed after the February

election. Throughout 1980 there were further Cabinet discussions about the constitutional validity of the draft legislation enabling this.

Proposed Dampier Port Authority : 24/03/1980, 22/09/1980

Cabinet approved the drafting of the Dampier Port Authority Bill to fulfil part of the North West Gas Development Agreement with regards the provision of a Port Authority with agreed principles for its operation by way of public regulation and by mainly private means.

Canning Vale Prison Complex : 31/03/1980, 17/09/1980, 24/11/1980

State Cabinet approved the building of a Special Maximum Security Prison at Canning Vale at a cost of \$5.5 million. In September Cabinet noted that there were “extra operating costs arising from the modern facilities needed”.

Minister’s Offices – Security Arrangements : 14/04/1980, 01/12/1980

Cabinet discussed the concern that State Ministers’ offices were open to electronic surveillance and approved the Police to check the security of Ministers’ office and their home phones and approved ASIO to assist with improvements to security.

Woodman Point – Jervoise Bay : 21/04/1980 (2 Decisions), 03/09/1980, 08/09/1980, 24/11/1980

Following on from 1979 Cabinet deliberations, planning for the development of Woodman Point and Jervoise Bay intensified in 1980 with Cabinet advised about proposals for an “Offshore Component Construction Industry”, major offshore breakwaters for Jervosie Bay, shipbuilding and repair facilities, a deep draft fishing terminal and a “Back-up Industrial Estate”. Cabinet noted the proposals but asked that Treasury “report back urgently about the financial implications”. In September Cabinet considered the Public Works Dept. report “Jervoise Bay Rational Development Marine Recreation First Stage”.

SECWA Power Plant Construction Programme : 21/04/1980, 09/06/1980

Cabinet considered the recommendations set out in a confidential review of the construction of further coal fired plants at Muja Power Station “on the understanding that adequate cooling water is available” and that “regular reports are to be made to Cabinet on progress”. In June it approved the Muja Stage D development.

Car Pooling : 06/05/1980, 14/07/1980

In May Cabinet directed that legislation be prepared “to exempt car pool operators from the hire and reward provisions of the Transport Act, the Road Traffic Act and the Taxi Cars (Coordination and Control) Act. Cabinet approved a draft Bill to “remove a legislative anomaly”.

Australian Royal Commission into Drugs (Williams Report) : 12/05/1980, 25/08/1980

State Cabinet considered the WA Commissioner of Police’s report on the far reaching recommendations of the Australian Royal Commission of Inquiry into Drugs set up by the Commonwealth and several State Governments and

headed by Mr Justice Williams. Cabinet later authorised the Minister for Police to deal with these matters at his discretion at the inaugural meeting of the national Ministerial Police Advisory Committee in Melbourne on 29 August 1980.

Ord River Hydro Power : 12/05/1980

State Cabinet endorsed the conclusions of the Ord River Hydro – Electrical Proposal which recommended the construction of a hydro power station, with an emphasis on the project obtaining complete Commonwealth funding “because of the disabilities suffered by Western Australia in respect of power costs”.

North West Shelf Development Project : 09/06/1980

Cabinet was advised that the Joint Venturers were unable to formally commit to the Project because of various matters including lack of finalisation of Gas sales with SECWA and the securing of equity finance by Woodside. Cabinet noted and approved action by State Departments to ensure all support possible was given to the Project, including relevant works programs.

Aluminium Smelter Proposals : 09/06/1980

State Cabinet approved recommendations by the Minister for Resources Development to invite CSR, Reynolds Metals and Shell to form a consortium to carry out a feasibility study and review proposals also submitted by Alcoa.

Capital Punishment : 09/06/1980, 28/07/1980, 22/09/1980, 03/11/1980

State Cabinet requested the Attorney General to advise it “on ways of legislating to ensure more certain periods of detention in ... cases which qualify for capital punishment”. Cabinet wished to ensure that prisoners with commuted death sentences “would be detained with suitable tight security” and with “hard conditions for life”. A Bill was prepared to enable “strict security life imprisonment”.

Greyhound Racing : 16/06/1980, 05/11/1980

Because it was facing serious financial problems, a committee to inquire into the greyhound racing industry was appointed on approval by Cabinet and a draft report was later forwarded for consideration. Cabinet decided to agree in principle “to the proposals for carrying on Greyhound Racing but without any additional Government guarantees”.

“Lotto Bloc” : 23/06/1980, 20/10/1980

In principle approval was given by Cabinet to the WA Lotteries Commission to participate in a “Lotto Bloc” with other States, which later saw the expansion of Lotteries in Australia.

Arming of Police Officers : 23/06/1980

The Hon. Bill Hassell MLA, the Police Minister, reported to Cabinet that he discussed with the Commissioner of Police the arming Police officers and that the Commissioner was “strongly opposed to the general arming of police officers ... (and) ... would appreciate Government support of his position”.

Swan River West Bank Landscape Proposals : 30/06/1980

A plan for the landscape of the West Bank of the Swan River, from the Causeway to Bardon Park was presented to Cabinet by the Hon. June Craig MLA, the Minister for Urban Development and Town Planning. Cabinet noted the plan but noted that the phasing out of the East Perth Power Station needed "more study and comment".

Dental Act – Amendments : 30/06/1980, 28/07/1980

Among several recommendations by the Health Minister on amendments to the Dental Act, the use of courtesy title "Doctor" by registered Dentists was not approved by Cabinet.

Carnarvon Flood Damage : 14/07/1980

The Hon. Ian Laurence MLA, the Minister for the North West, reported that he had visited Carnarvon with the Prime Minister on 5 July 1980 to inspect Gascoyne River flood damage.

Photographic Identification on Drivers Licences : 18/08/1980

The Minister for Police reported that he had canvassed RTA and Police opinion on a proposal for photographic identification on drivers' licences and that they thought it had merit, but forwarded the matter to Cabinet to determine whether there would be "possible public resentment" at the measure. Cabinet decided that no action would be taken.

Hyogo Prefecture (Japan) – Sister State relationship : 25/08/1980

The Premier reported to Cabinet that Governor Sakai of Hyogo Prefecture was seeking to form a sister State relationship with WA. Cabinet authorized negotiations to be opened.

Mining Act 1978 – Private Landholders Provisions : 28/08/1980

The Minister for Mines submitted to the State Cabinet Farmers Union concerns and opposition to the private landholders' provisions in the 1978 Mining Act. Cabinet confirmed that minerals are property of the Crown but investigated changes to the Act "to remove any reasonable doubts currently held by farmers, and others."

National Petroleum Advisory Committee (NPAC): 03/09/1980

The Minister for Fuel and Energy provided a confidential SECWA report to Cabinet on the National Petroleum Advisory Committee (NPAC), which gave "a list of interim recommendations in relation to the management of fuel supplies in any emergency situation". Cabinet gave in principle approval to the recommendations.

Law of Public Assembly (Section 54B) : 22/09/1980

A report by the Police Minister on the first year of operation of Section 54B of the Police Act recognized that there had been "numerous conflicts between Police and various groups ... expressing their opposition to the public assembly law." Cabinet decided that no action would be taken to a proposal to amend the law to introduce a formal appeal procedure if the Commissioner of Police refused an application.

North West Shelf Gas Project : 06/10/1980 (2 Decisions)

Cabinet noted the formal commitment made by the Joint Venturers in accordance with the North West Gas Development Agreement and endorsed the Minister for Resources Development's actions taken to construct roads, landing facilities, housing, etc, and agreements for the supply of gas to the South West and the Pilbara for a 20 year period.

Drought Situation in Agricultural Areas : 06/10/1980

The Minister for Agriculture reported that 27 shires in the eastern wheatbelt that had been declared drought affected. State Cabinet approved drought relief measures including loans to those affected and relief to pastoralists for re-stocking.

Cyclonic Screening Government Houses – North West : 15/10/1980

A proposal by the Minister for Housing for all new government housing in the North West to have "cyclonic screening" was approved in principle by Cabinet.

Welfare of Aborigines : 20/10/1980

The Minister for Community Welfare reported to Cabinet that "the Department of Community Welfare is pursuing policies in relation to aborigines which would not have the support of this Government." Cabinet decided that a Committee of Ministers, comprising the Ministers for Community Welfare, Health, Cultural Affairs and Housing confer about the matter and report back to Cabinet.

"System 7 – Red Book" : 20/10/1980

The Minister for Conservation and Environment submitted the Environmental Protection Authority report on "System 7 – the Kimberley", giving recommendations on National Parks and Nature Reserves.

BBC Television Film Production in WA : 05/11/1980

It was reported that the Minister for Industrial Development and Commerce had been approached by the BBC with a proposal to produce television films in WA. A consortium comprising TVW Ltd, Seven Network, BBC and the State of WA was formed to support the proposal. In light of WA Film Council support, Cabinet approved the signing of an all parties 'Heads of Agreement' document "subject to Treasury study of the proposal (and) satisfactory arrangements about subjects to be used in production."

Western Suburbs Study (North South link) : 10/11/1980

There had been proposals to Cabinet over the years to develop "an integrated major transport route" through the Western Suburbs which included the development of Servetus Street. Cabinet had asked for studies to be done and these were presented. Cabinet decided "to return papers to Minister (for Urban Development and Town Planning), pending discussion with local authorities".

Asbestos Diseases Society : 17/11/1980

A report by the Minister for Health on a submission by the Asbestos Diseases Society for a public inquiry was considered by State Cabinet. Cabinet did not agree to a public inquiry and but stated that “where there are cases of personal hardship for which there is no legal or social cover ... each case will be studied on the basis of the circumstances prevailing at the time.”

Firemen’s Strike : 17/11/1980

In light of a strike by firemen, Cabinet asked the Attorney General and Minister for Labour and Industry to “examine possible amendments to the Industrial Arbitration legislation and/or the introduction of an Essential Services Bill”.

Perth Entertainment Centre : 24/11/1980

Cabinet approved Treasury to negotiate the renewal of the lease of the Entertainment Centre with TVW Ltd for further consideration.

Term of Parliament : 01/12/1980

The Attorney General was asked by the Premier to report on the possible extension of the term of Parliament from 3 to 4 years. The pros and cons were described, but cabinet asked the Attorney General for further studies and report again “particularly in respect of the problems of the term of the Legislative Council.”

Ord River Project – Support Measures : 01/12/1980 (2 Decisions)

Recommendations from the Minister for Agriculture for subsidies of aerial spraying and to foster dry and wet season rice crops, and the restoration of the concession on excess water for irrigators, was approved. Cabinet also approved the drafting of a prospectus for the development of the Sugar Industry on the Ord River.

Taxi Industry Study : 08/12/1980

Cabinet considered the findings of the ‘Study of the Taxi Industry in Perth’ which included a need to relax controls, gradually introducing some competition. Cabinet approved for the report to be released to the public.

Psychosurgery and Electro Convulsive Therapy : 20/12/1980

The Minister for Health asked Cabinet to approve the setting up of a committee “for the purposes of examining the medical, legal and ethical questions related to psychosurgery and electro convulsive therapy”. The Minister expressed the desire to gain “contemporary view of the situation”, especially with regard to those patients who express “an opposition to the treatment”.

Mineral Royalties : 22/12/1980

State Cabinet approved “a royalty level of 7½ per cent *ad valorem* for diamonds” and to reconsider “the original approval for royalty levels under the Mining Act to be 2 per cent”, requiring “consideration of the level being 5 per cent, and to include those minerals against which no royalty now applies.”

The 1980 State Cabinet Members

A State Election occurred on 23 February 1980 for all 55 members of the Legislative Assembly and 16 of the 32 Legislative Council members. Due to the retirement of the Deputy Premier, Sir Desmond O'Neil, and Hon. Graham MacKinnon MLC, and the defeat of the Health Minister, Hon. Alan Ridge MLA, at the State election, there were new faces in Sir Charles Court's fourth Ministry, which was sworn in on 5 March 1980. Future Premier Ray O'Connor became Deputy Premier and the Ministry also included future State Liberal Leaders Bill Hassell and Barry MacKinnon. The current Minister for Mines and Petroleum, the Hon. Norman Moore MLC, became the Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet. Minister Ridge was defeated in his Kimberley seat by Ernie Bridge, who was the first Aboriginal elected to WA Parliament.

Court Ministry (until 5 March 1980)

The Hon. Sir Charles Walter Michael COURT, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., M.L.A.
Premier; Treasurer; Minister Co-coordinating Economic and Regional Development

The Hon. Sir Desmond Henry O'NEIL, M.L.A.
Deputy Premier; Chief Secretary; Minister for Police and Traffic; Regional Administration and the North-West

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

The Hon. Graham Charles MacKINNON, M.L.C.
Minister for Works; Water Supplies; Tourism; Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

The Hon. Raymond James O'CONNOR, M.L.A.
Minister for Labour and Industry; Consumer Affairs; Immigration; Fisheries and Wildlife; Conservation and the Environment

The Hon. Ian George MEDCALF, E.D., Q.C., M.L.C.
Attorney-General and Minister for Federal Affairs

The Hon. Peter Vernon JONES, M.L.A.
Minister for Education; Cultural Affairs; Recreation

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

The Hon. Edgar Cyril RUSHTON, M.L.A.
Minister for Transport

The Hon. Keith Alan RIDGE, M.L.A.
Minister for Housing

The Hon. David John WORDSWORTH, M.L.C.
Minister for Lands; Forests

The Hon. Margaret June CRAIG, M.L.A.
Minister for Local Government; Urban Development and Town Planning

The Hon. Raymond Laurence YOUNG, M.L.A.
Minister for Health; Community Welfare

Court Ministry (5 March 1980 -)

The Hon. Sir Charles Walter Michael COURT, K.C.M.G., O.B.E., M.L.A.
Premier; Treasurer; Minister Co-coordinating Economic and Regional Development

The Hon. Raymond James O'CONNOR, M.L.A.
Deputy Premier; Minister for Labour and Industry; Consumer Affairs; Immigration; Regional Administration and the North West; Tourism

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

The Hon. Ian George MEDCALF, E.D., Q.C., M.L.C.
Attorney-General and Minister for Federal Affairs; Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

The Hon. Andrew MENSAROS, M.L.A.
Minister for Works; Water Resources; Minister Assisting the Minister Coordinating Economic and Regional Development; Housing

The Hon. Peter Vernon JONES, M.L.A.
Minister for Resources Development; Mines, Fuel and Energy; Industrial Development and Commerce

The Hon. Edgar Cyril RUSHTON, M.L.A.
Minister for Transport

The Hon. Raymond Laurence YOUNG, M.L.A.
Minister for Health

The Hon. William Leonard GRAYDEN, M.L.A.
Minister for Education; Cultural Affairs and Recreation

The Hon. David John WORDSWORTH, M.L.C.
Minister for Lands; Forests

The Hon. Margaret June CRAIG, M.L.A.
Minister for Local Government; Urban Development and Town Planning

The Hon. William Ralph HASSELL, LL.B, M.A., M.L.A.
Chief Secretary; Minister for Police and Traffic; Community Welfare

The Hon. Gordon Edgar MASTERS, M.L.C.
Minister for Fisheries and Wildlife; Conservation and the Environment

The Hon. Ian James LAURENCE, B.A., M.L.A.
Honorary Minister Assisting the Ministers of Housing; Regional Administration and the North West; Tourism

The Hon. Barry John MacKINNON, B.Ec., A.A.S.A., M.L.A.
Honorary Minister Assisting the Minister of Industrial Development and Commerce

The Hon. Norman Frederick MOORE, B.A., Dip. Ed., M.L.C.
Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet