MINISTERS OF STATE AMENDMENT BILL 1978

Date Introduced: 6 June 1978
House: House of Representatives
Presented by: Hon. A.A. Street,
Minister Representing the Minister for Administrative Services

Short Digest of Bill

Purpose
To amend the Ministers of State Act 1952 to increase the annual sum appropriated out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund in order to meet the payment of current salaries of Ministers of State; and to repeal the provisions governing the payment of allowances to Ministers of State.

Background
Section 66 of the Constitution provides that Parliament may provide for an annual sum to be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for the salaries of the Ministers of State. This has been done by the Ministers of State Act 1952. The Act was last amended in 1973 when the annual sum appropriated amounted to $302,000. Up to June 1977 this amount was found to be adequate to cover salaries including those of the then 25 Ministers of State. However, with the increased salaries for Ministers recommended by the Remuneration Tribunal and accepted by the government in 1976, combined with the appointment of Mr. Fife and Mr. Groom on 17 July and 20 December 1977 as the 26th and 27th Ministers of State respectively, it has now been found that the sum of $302,000 is insufficient to cover all Ministers' salaries. Consequently, this Bill seeks to increase the annual sum appropriated for this purpose.

Section 7(2) of the Remuneration Tribunal Act 1973 requires that the Tribunal shall from time to time inquire into and determine the allowances of Ministers of State. This provision makes moribund sections 6, 7, 8 and 9 of the Ministers of State Act 1952 relating to allowances payable to Ministers of State and consequently these sections are repealed by the Bill.

Main Provisions
Clause 3 of the Bill amends section 5 by substituting the sum of $325,000 for the current sum of $302,000 appropriated annually for the salaries of Ministers of State.
Clause 4 repeals sections 6, 7, 8 and 9 of the Act and substitutes a new section 6 which recognises the Remuneration Tribunal as the body to determine the allowances of Ministers of State.