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Review of FOI legislation

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The operation and administration of the FOI legislation is to be reviewed by the Senate Standing Committee on Constitutional and Legal Affairs following the first 3 years of operation of the Freedom of Information Act 1982. Submissions from interested groups, organisations and individuals are welcome. The closing date for submissions is 21 February 1986, and the Committee expects to conduct public hearings after this date.

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Social Security Appeals Tribunal

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At the Annual Conference of members of the Social Security Appeals Tribunals (SSATs) held in Melbourne on 9 - 10 November 1985, the Minister for Social Security, the Hon Brian Howe M.P., made an announcement which indicated that the full recommendations of the ARC's Report No. 21, The Structure and Form of Social Security Appeals, would not be implemented immediately. However, the Minister's proposals could be interpreted as the first step in a staged implementation of those recommendations. He intends appointing State Presidents of the SSAT (for 3 year terms) and to hand over a range of responsibilities to them. He will not be appointing a National President of the SSAT and the SSAT will not be given determinative powers for the present. Executive (departmental) members will be retained as suggested by the ARC. It is understood that some of the details of the Minister's proposals are still to be finalised.