

future.

The Department agreed to all of the recommendations, and subsequently asked the Ombudsman to comment on its draft procedures for personnel working in Antarctica. In addition, following protracted negotiations over the amount of compensation, the Department of Finance approved a payment of over \$9 000 for the applicant.

A D M I N I S T R A T I V E L A W W A T C H

Requirement to consult the ARC on review issues

New editions of the Legislation and Cabinet Handbooks bring the role of the Council to the attention of government departments and agencies. The Council discussed with the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet the appropriate wording in the handbooks, which remind agencies of the need to consult the Council when considering proposals with major implications for the administrative review system. The Attorney-General in June 1988 wrote to his ministerial colleagues drawing their attention to the requirements to consult both the Council and his Department.

The new Cabinet handbook, recently released, states that 'Particular note should be taken of the Administrative Review Council's role when Cabinet Submissions involving legislation with administrative review implications are being prepared. Consultation at an early stage with the Council should occur through the Attorney-General's Department.'

The Legislation Handbook, due for release shortly, contains further guidelines. These include the advice that where legislation confers discretionary powers these should normally be subject to some form of external review on the merits; that the appropriate body will normally be the Administrative Appeals Tribunal; that strong reasons would need to be advanced to support creation of a specialist review tribunal and that very strong reasons would be needed to support proposed exclusions from the AD(JR) Act.

Legislative changes to the Complaints Act

In late 1987 the Parliament passed several amendments to the Complaints (Australian Federal Police) Act 1981 as part of the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1987. Consequential amendments recently were made to the Australian Federal Police (Discipline) Regulations. The main effects of the amendments are:

- . to provide a statutory basis for the procedures developed by the Ombudsman and the AFP to deal with minor complaints;