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Title:

Press release - Improper use of government property

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PRESS RELEASE.

2.4.74

The following statement was released today by the Chairman of the Public Service Board, Mr G. Inns:

The Public Service Board has received information from a number of sources which alleges the improper use of Government property by some officers in the Lands Titles Office of the Registrar-General's Department.

It has also been alleged to the Board that some officers have conducted private business of a remunerative nature in official hours and have undertaken other outside employment without the permission of the Board.

Under the Public Service Act, public servants are expressly prohibited from engaging in paid employment outside the Public Service without the approval of the Public Service Board.

The Board's own preliminary enquiries have indicated that there is sufficient basis in these allegations to justify, in the public interest, a full scale investigation into specific areas of the Lands Titles Office.

The part played by some Surveying firms in Adelaide in their relationship with a number of officers in the Lands Titles Office will also form part of the enquiry.

It should be made clear, however, that although these allegations are of a serious nature, the Board's own preliminary enquiries indicate that improper practices are not widely spread.

The overall efficiency of the Registrar-General's Department is not in question.

Under the Public Service Act, the Public Service Board is empowered to conduct investigations into Departments and to summon persons before the Board to assist in these investigations.

The Board's enquiry will commence on Monday 8 April by formal hearing and several persons have already been summoned to appear and give evidence.

The enquiry is expected to last several days and assisting the Board in its enquiry will be legal counsel from the Crown Law Department.

The Premier, the Attorney-General and the Registrar-General of Deeds have been advised of the Board's intention to conduct the enquiry, and they fully support the course of action to be taken by the Board.