Cabinet Minutes

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Research Guide to Cabinet minute records at Queensland State Archives

Queensland State Archives (QSA) is the official repository for Queensland Government records selected for permanent retention because of their continuing value. The archived public records are from state government departments, state courts, local government authorities and statutory authorities. The records are in our facility at Runcorn, Brisbane, and open records are available for viewing in the Reading Room, free-of-charge.

Queensland State Archives (QSA) holds the Queensland Government Cabinet Minutes from the first Cabinet Meeting of the Nicklin Coalition Government on 21 October 1957 until the Cabinet Meeting held on 2 June 1998. Access to records less than 30 years old is restricted.

The main finding aid for records held at QSA is the <u>Queensland State Archives' online catalogue</u> (known as ArchivesSearch).

The following citation abbreviations are used throughout our catalogue:

ITM QSA Item (describes the item)

PR Physical Representation (generally the original or microfilm copy)

DR Digital Representation (for a digital image)

S Series (for series of records)

A Agency (for the creating or responsible agency).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that our catalogue contains images, names and voices of people who have died.

Overview

Cabinet is defined in the Queensland Cabinet Handbookⁱ 'the forum in which all important questions of government policy, administration, and legislation are collectively considered'. The Cabinet consists of all Ministers of the Crown but has no legal powers or status. Its decisions are put into effect by Ministers after endorsement by the Executive Council or through Ministers empowered by Acts of Parliament.

The first Queensland Cabinet was formed in December 1859. From that time until the 1957 Nicklin Coalition Government, Cabinet Minutes were not officially recorded - decisions were noted on the relevant departmental files by the Minister or Ministers.ⁱⁱ

The 1957 Nicklin Coalition government was the first state government in Australia to establish a Cabinet Secretariat, with a non-political secretary. The Cabinet system established at this time survived with few substantial amendments until 1989.

Cabinet decisions are given the formal title *minutes*. The term *decisions* is not strictly applicable to Cabinet in the legal sense as the exercise of statutory powers is normally the legislative responsibility of individual ministers or of the Executive Council.

Information recorded in the Cabinet Minutes (Decisions) includes the location and date of the meeting, decision number, submission number, title, and decision and circulation statement, for example, all ministers. Each decision has been stamped and signed by the Secretary to Cabinet. A statement of certification as a correct copy is also stamped.

Every year since 1972, following the release of the cabinet decisions, QSA adds an historian's overview of important decisions and highlights from Cabinet Minutes on the QSA website on the Queensland Government cabinet minutes web page.

Cabinet Secretariat

Minutes (Decisions and Submissions)

S142

21/10/1957-30/9/2020

To find cabinet decisions and submissions, search the indexes to cabinet minutes, S737. Cabinet submissions were intended to lead to cabinet decisions and come in four distinct forms: policy, authority to prepare a Bill, authority to introduce a Bill, and authority to forward significant subordinate legislation. Submissions include the submission number, copy number and the name of the person or department making the submission. Each submission is stamped with the date received. Supporting documentation for submissions is included, such as plans, reports and bills. The circulation records for submissions are printed on salmon-coloured cards. Prior to the 22 September 1958 they were printed on separate cards and then on the back of the circulation records for decisions. They record the submission number, subject, time, date, number of copies received and circulation details (number, name of minister or department, date and time).

Indexes to Cabinet Minutes

<u>\$737</u> 21/10/1957–31/12/1984

Use this series of subject indexes to find Cabinet Minutes, S142. Each page represents a photocopy of a single card; cards and pages have been arranged by subject heading. Card entries include submission number, title or subject of submission, name of Minister presenting submission, decision number and date.

Attachments Presented with Cabinet Submissions

S145

1/1/1952-27/8/2007

This series contains file copies of reports and other documentation presented with Cabinet submissions during the relevant period. In many cases the reports are duplicate copies of reports held with the Minutes (Decisions and Submissions), S142. This series represents the filed copies of the reports. A list is held by the Cabinet Secretariat which assigns a number to the report and in most cases, links this to the Submission number. The earliest reports filed were given the numeric sequence shown, ranging from 9–1, then divisions 1a, 1b, etc. In later years the single running number sequence becomes clearer. Up to 1989, some file copies of reports were microfilmed in S142, Minutes (Decisions and Submissions) – the digitised microfilms are available on the Reading Room PCs.

Colonial Secretary's Office

Register of Minutes Prepared for Cabinet

S11919

25/7/1877-18/11/1878

This self-indexing register of minutes is arranged by subject. It records the date, subject of the matter for consideration and any remarks, eg. returned and date, not laid before Cabinet, how disposed of.

Finding aids

Further information about finding Cabinet minutes is in our *Search procedure - Cabinet minutes (decisions and submissions)* available in the Reading Room. For further information about other Cabinet records, please refer to our *Research Guide to Executive Council minutes*.

Footnotes

Need more information?

Check our online catalogue <u>ArchivesSearch.</u>
Phone us on (07) 3037 6777 or you can <u>email</u> an archivist.

Department of the Premier (1990) Queensland Cabinet Handbook, Brisbane: Government Printer.

Lack, Clem, Three Decades of Queensland Political History 1929–1960, S.G. Reid, Brisbane: Government Printer. p.15

[™] *Ibid.*, p.15