1. At the June meeting of the International Meat Council, Australia outlined some views about the organizational machinery which would be necessary for the Arrangement Regarding Bovine Meat to achieve its objectives. We also gave an indication of what might be included in a work programme for the Council and any subsidiary bodies that might be established. This paper expands on those ideas.

2. First of all it will be useful to recapitulate our basic approach to the Arrangement. Australia regards the Arrangement as an important result of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations on meat. The Arrangement goes considerably further than the consultative and information exchange roles of the former GATT Consultative Group on Meat. In particular, one of the primary objectives of the Arrangement is the liberalization of trade in meat and participants are encouraged to enter into discussions which will lead to the further dismantling of obstacles to this trade. It also makes provision for early warning of market imbalances as well as for the development of solutions to remedy such imbalances. Accordingly, it is our view that the Arrangement should become the focal point for the consideration of issues affecting international trade in meat and livestock. The recent UNCTAD Second Preparatory Meeting on Meat has already recognized the competence of the Arrangement and its Council in this field.

3. In our June statement we said that if the Arrangement is to function effectively it will be necessary for the Council to establish subsidiary bodies envisaged under Rule 9 of the agreed Rules of Procedure at an early stage. We believe there should be two such bodies, one to be called the Meat Trade Analysis Group and the other, the Special Projects Group. We propose that the International Meat Council authorize the establishment of these two groups at this meeting.

Meat Trade Analysis Group

4. Article IV of the Arrangement ascribes several important and complex functions to the Council:

- it is to evaluate the world supply/demand situation on the basis of material prepared by the secretariat.

- if, on the basis of this evaluation it determines that serious imbalances exist or threaten, it is to identify possible solutions for consideration by governments, including, where appropriate, special treatment for
developing countries. Article IV.3 makes it clear that these solutions can embrace a wide range of measures.

5. We do not believe it will be possible for the Council, meeting as a plenary body with representation often from capitals, to carry out these functions efficiently and expeditiously without some kind of inter-sessional assistance. When it meets the Council needs to consider more than raw data. The Secretariat will of course be able to contribute here by providing an interpretative analysis (Article IV.1). Nevertheless the Secretariat will naturally be unable to reflect the individual views of participants about the nature of emerging problems, and the possible solutions. So that these views can be brought into sharp focus when the Council meets, it will be important for a representative group to undertake the necessary preliminary work.

6. The Council's attention is directed by the Arrangement not just to imbalances that have emerged but also to those that threaten to emerge (Article IV.2). Possibly its role is even more important with respect to the latter than to the former. Judicious and well informed action by participants in this Arrangement may be able to resolve many difficulties in their incipient stages. Since problems of this sort can develop quite rapidly, and are subject to sudden changes in their nature and scope, early remedial action by the Council implies the existence of a working party which can meet conveniently and at short notice in Geneva.

7. Finally, we see a third rôle of such an inter-sessional group as being to follow up the deliberations and activities of the Council. For example, the Council is charged with making recommendations, for consideration by governments, which address the problems arising from actual or threatening market imbalances. It will be important that the responses of governments to such recommendations, or other actions that they may take, are monitored on a continuing basis.

8. In short we see the need for a Meat Trade Analysis Group which can:

- do the preliminary work needed to make the Council's activities efficient and fruitful;
- meet quickly and conveniently to consider suddenly emerging problems;
- exercise a follow-up rôle.

We would envisage it as being a relatively small, but representative group, with a membership of, say 5-7 countries, to be staffed by resident members of the Permanent Delegations to the GATT, though on occasions there may be need for experts from capitals to attend. It would function as a working group and would be oriented towards the preparation for and follow-up of the Council meetings. This would normally imply four meetings a year, with additional meetings as necessary.
Special Projects Group

9. The Arrangement lists as one of its primary objectives:

"to promote the expansion, ever greater liberalization and stability of the international meat and livestock market by facilitating the progressive dismantling of obstacles and restrictions to world trade in bovine meat...."

Article IV.5 calls on participants to:

"on a regular basis, enter into discussions ... with a view to exploring the possibilities of achieving the objectives of the present Arrangement, in particular the further dismantling of obstacles to world trade in bovine meat and live animals. Such discussions should prepare the way for subsequent consideration of possible solutions of trade problems ...."

10. The central place accorded by the Arrangement to liberalization recognizes the problems for international meat trade arising from government imposed measures. There is probably no internationally traded product which is encompassed by more trade restrictions than bovine meat. An international arrangement on meat which did not come to grips with this problem would be severely circumscribed in its usefulness. However, the discussions and solutions envisaged by these central provisions of the Arrangement require an active effort on the part of participants to ensure their realization. It is essential to provide a focus by which this can be done and to this end Australia proposes that a special projects group be established to develop a programme for discussions and identify the modalities of possible trade liberalization. In making this proposal we would wish to exclude none of the possibilities. We can envisage bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral discussions. Such discussions could embrace proposals for stabilization, joint disciplines, and mutual reductions in barriers to trade. It is important that the liberalization provisions of the Arrangement are given a real and practical meaning if existing problems in the meat trade are to be resolved and still more serious problems are not to develop.

11. Also, this Group could be given such special ad hoc tasks as the Council may identify from time to time. For example, it could usefully consider the implications for world trade in meat of the application of the Codes on Subsidies and Standards negotiated in the MTN.

12. We would suggest that the Special Projects Group also be a small, but representative group, to meet say, 3 or 4 times per year, with representation ordinarily from Permanent Delegations in Geneva.