

benefits provided under the Act. The members of the Social Security Commission are the principal officers of the Social Security Department.

The country has been divided into 20 districts with a branch office of the Social Security Department in the principal town of each district. Each office is administered by a Registrar of Social Security. The Commission has granted to these Registrars powers for the granting of supervision of all types of benefit except the emergency and miners benefits.

The Health Department administers the health benefits while the Inland Revenue Department collects the contributions of the social security fund.

(i) Old Age, Survivors and Disability Pensions—Australia

In Australia the Social Services Act provides a system of income maintenance payments. Outlays are financed from the National Welfare Fund, established in 1943, which derives its revenue from an annual appropriation from the Commonwealth's consolidated revenue and from interest. The Social Services Act governs age and invalid pensions, funeral benefits, widow's pensions, maternity allowances, unemployment and sickness benefits, family allowances and the rehabilitation service. Of the cash benefits, only family allowances, maternity allowances, and pensions for blind persons are paid without a means test.

Eligibility for Age Pensions

Age pensions are payable to needy men 65 years of age and over, and to needy women age 60 and over, who are British subjects. A period of 10 years of continuous residence is required, except that a person with at least 5 years of continuous residence can qualify for an age pension provided his total period of residence exceeds 10 years by an amount equal to the number of years his continuous residence falls short of 10. Supplements for dependent wives and children are available for age pensioners who are permanently incapacitated or blind.

Eligibility for Invalid Pensions

Invalid pensions are payable to British subjects 16 years of age and over who have resided in Australia for a continuous period of 5 years, and who are permanently incapacitated for work to the extent of 85 per cent of working capacity, or are blind. If the incapacity or blindness occurred outside Australia, the residence requirement is the same as for the age pensions. Invalid pensions also include wives' and children's supplements. Invalid pensioners who qualify for age pensions are transferred to age pension rolls on reaching retirement age.

Rates of Age and Invalid Pensions

In 1964 the maximum rate of the age or invalid pension is £5 15s. a week plus a rent allowance of 10s. a week for those entirely dependent on their pension. Where the wife of a pensioner is ineligible for a pension in her own right and her husband is incapacitated for work or permanently blind, she may be granted a wife's allowance at a maximum weekly rate of £4 15s. if she is age 60 or more, £3 if she is under age 60. Pensioners in receipt of an age or invalid pension may claim a child's supplement, payable at the rate of 15s. a week, for each child under age 16 or, if the child is a student, under age 18.

Sources:

New Zealand, *Social Security Act, 1938* as amended.

New Zealand, Social Security Department, *Social Security Cash Benefits in Zealand*, Wellington, 1963.

United States, D.H.E.W., *Social Security Programs Throughout The World*, 1964, Washington, 1964.