

THE Daily Telegraph

SYDNEY, Saturday, November 2, 1996

Weather: Sunny periods, 21 degrees

Phone 9288 3000

\$1* M



The **DERBY**
12-page colour liftout
FORM TIPS CALLANDER DUFFICY

\$208 health fund rise vetoed

By SUE DUNLEVY
Political Reporter

GIANT health insurer MBF has become the first company to have an application for a premium increase rejected by the Federal Government.

Health Minister Michael Wooldridge has knocked back a bid for what is understood to be a 15 per cent rise — up to \$208 a year for a family — because it was too high, *The Daily Telegraph* has learned.

Previously, applications for increases have been approved automatically.

But the Government is getting tough to preserve the benefit of its \$450 tax break for private insurers.

A spokeswoman for Dr Wooldridge said yesterday the fund, the biggest in NSW, had been asked to "rework its sums" if it wanted to raise premiums for its 280,000 members.

It is understood MBF had applied for a 15 per cent increase that would have seen premiums for top hospital cover for a family rise by around \$208 a year from November 18.

Neither the fund nor the government would comment on the size of the original application yesterday.

But a spokesman for MBF said the application had not been rejected but that the Government had wanted to

Continued Page 2

EMMA'S HUG



Princess Diana gives cancer victim Emma Jones, 13, a big hug at the Darling Harbour fund-raising lunch yesterday.

Picture: GRANT TURNER

By BRYCE CORBETT

AFTER a day marked by stiff royal protocol and lofty, obtuse speeches, the offer of a heartfelt hug was a prospect Princess Diana just couldn't resist yesterday.

Diana was the special guest at a Commonwealth Day Council fund raising

luncheon at Darling Harbour when she was taken to meet a group of children with special needs.

Among them was cancer survivor, 13-year-old Emma Jones, a Woollahra student.

As she gazed at the Princess, Emma politely asked if she could have a hug.

"May I cuddle you?" she inquired with all the royal decorum she could muster. "I think you're so wonderful."

Without a moment's hesitation, an obviously touched Diana consented.

"Of course you can," she said.

"I like hugs too."

With the intense glare of

cameras monitoring the couple's every move, it was hardly an intimate moment with the Princess of Wales.

But the generosity of the gesture was lost on no one present. Least of all Emma.

"I thought it was going to be amazing just being here

Continued Page 4

METRO

Business: P114; Comics: P108; Crosswords: P109;
Television: P110; Weather: P117

TeleClassifieds
P123 (9288 2000)

This newspaper participates
in newspaper recycling

