

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

T W E N T Y - N I N T H G E N E R A L

R E P O R T

C O N T E N T S

	<u>Paragraph</u>
Nineteenth Committee	1
Proposals Referred to the Committee	6
Timing of References	9
Department of Civil Aviation References	13
Non-Reference of Defence Works	17
Scope of Works to be Reviewed	20
Review of Public Works Committee Act and Regulations	23
Fees and Allowances	25
Appreciation	27
Staff	29

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

TWENTY-NINTH GENERAL REPORT

To His Excellency the Right Honorable Lord Casey, P.C., C.H., D.S.O.,
M.C., K.St.J.,
Governor-General in and over the Commonwealth of Australia.

May It Please Your Excellency:

In pursuance of the requirements of Section 11 of the Public Works Committee Act 1913-1965, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works have the honour to submit the following report on their proceedings during the Twenty-fifth Parliament.

NINETEENTH COMMITTEE

1. Members of the Nineteenth Committee were appointed in the Senate and the House of Representatives on 4th March, 1964. They were Senator K. M. Anderson, Senator F. Dittmer, Senator E. W. Prowse and Messrs. W. J. Brimblecombe, A. A. Buchanan, R. L. Dean, W. J. Fulton, C. E. Griffiths and W. P. O'Connor. Mr. Dean was elected as Chairman and Mr. O'Connor as Vice-Chairman.
2. Senator Anderson resigned on 18th August, 1964 and Mr. Dean on 30th September, 1964. Senator J. E. Marriott and Mr. L. L. Bosman were appointed to fill the respective vacancies. Mr. Brimblecombe was elected as Chairman to replace Mr. Dean.
3. Senator Marriott resigned on 26th August, 1965 and was replaced by Senator M. F. Scott. Senator G. H. Branson was appointed on 17th March, 1966 to replace Senator Scott on his resignation.
4. Following an opinion of the Attorney-General about the powers of a Temporary Chairman during the prolonged absence overseas of both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Mr. Buchanan and Senator Dittmer were elected as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively on 1st September, 1966.

5. Mr. Buchanan and Senator Dittmer resigned as Chairman and Vice-Chairman on 27th October, 1966. Mr. Brimblecombe and Senator Dittmer were re-elected as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively.

PROPOSALS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE

6. Thirty-three proposals were referred to the Committee in the period covered by this report. Reports on all references have been completed and presented to Parliament. The taking of evidence and inspections involved visits to Perth, Darwin, Cairns, Brisbane, Coolangatta, Sydney, Wollongong, Melbourne and Adelaide. A considerable amount of evidence was also taken in Canberra. The Committee held 38 meetings in 1964, 52 in 1965 and 47 in 1966.

7. The proposed works and the estimated cost of each when referred to the Committee are as follows -

Regional Laboratory for C.S.I.R.O., Shenton Park, W.A.	\$928,000
Stage Two, Land Research and Regional Survey Laboratories for C.S.I.R.O., Black Mountain, A.C.T.	\$474,000
Radio Australia Booster Station, Darwin, N.T.	\$3,066,000
Airfield Pavements at Cairns Airport, Q'ld.	\$1,286,000
Top Springs to Wave Hill Road, N.T.	\$2,200,000
Barrack Blocks for Junior Ratings at H.M.A.S. "Cerberus", Westernport, Vic.	\$1,522,000
R.A.A.F. Academy, Point Cook, Vic.	\$1,908,000
Engineering Services to Casuarina Subdivision, Darwin, N.T.	\$2,272,000
Permanent Barracks and Depot Accommodation for A.R.A. Units at Broadmeadows, Vic.	\$1,650,000
Augmentation of Darwin Water Supply, N.T.	\$2,424,000
Post Office and Telephone Exchange, Wollongong, N.S.W.	\$1,289,000
Radiophysics Laboratory for C.S.I.R.O., Epping, N.S.W.	\$1,600,000
Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport, N.S.W. -	
- Site Preparation of North-West Building Area	\$5,200,000
- Ground Preparation for Instrument Landing System	\$1,700,000
- Operations and Control Tower Buildings	\$2,396,000
- Buildings and Services for the International Terminal Complex and Associated Aircraft Pavements in the North-West Building Area	\$17,900,000

Melbourne (Tullamarine) Airport, Vic. -

- Additional Aprons, Vehicular Pavements, Engineering Services, Roads and Instrument Landing System	\$4,300,000
- Buildings and Services to Terminal Complex, Control and Equipment Building, D.C.A. Maintenance Area, Fire Station	\$18,696,524
Extension of 02/20 Runway and Associated Taxiway Works, Perth Airport, W.A.	\$880,000
Commonwealth Offices, Perth, W.A.	\$5,960,000
Migrant Hostel, Randwick, N.S.W.	\$3,910,000
Extension of A.B.C. Television Studios, Gore Hill, N.S.W.	\$800,000
Laboratories for C.S.I.R.O. Indooroopilly, Q'ld.	\$1,150,000
Nightcliff High School, Darwin, N.T.	\$2,200,000
Master Plan for Progressive Rebuilding and Construction of Mess, Galley and Recreation Centre at H.M.A.S. "Leeuwin", Fremantle, W.A.	\$725,000
R.A.N. Armament Depot, Kingswood, N.S.W.	\$790,000
New Kitchen at Repatriation General Hospital, Heidelberg, Vic.	\$994,000
Extensions to Repatriation General Hospital, Concord, N.S.W.	\$1,225,000
Additional Facilities at Repatriation General Hospital, Springbank, S.A.	\$574,000
Laboratories and Ancillary Buildings for Division of Chemical Engineering, C.S.I.R.O., Clayton, Vic.	\$1,400,000
First Stage of Progressive Rebuilding at H.M.A.S. "Nirimba", Quakers Hill, N.S.W.	\$1,800,000
Development of Airfield Pavements at Coolangatta Airport, Q'ld.	\$1,300,000
Migrant Hostel, Springvale, Vic.	\$4,250,000

8. A tabulated summary of the references is attached as Appendix 'A'.

TIMING OF REFERENCES

9. In each of the last three General Reports the Committee drew attention to the need for a more orderly flow of references. The purpose of this request was, primarily, to enable the Committee to devote an appropriate amount of time to each reference without feeling under pressure to complete the inquiry and possibly reach hasty conclusions.

10. The Committee appreciate that decisions to proceed with many projects need to be considered in the annual budgetting context, but nevertheless we feel that a more even flow of work to the Committee should be possible. We would wish, for example, to avoid a repetition of our experience in 1966 when in the seven months to the end of July we received only three references, whilst in the three months between the beginning of August and the dissolution of Parliament we were given no less than eight separate proposals to examine.

11. It is clear that the number of works which will be referred to the Committee in the future will grow so that we consider it important that steps be taken, where possible, to regulate the flow of references.

12. The timing of a number of the references we examined was such that unless the matter was handled quickly the timetable for the work would have been delayed. We therefore suggest that where a work is to be referred to the Committee, the programme make a reasonable allowance for our investigation.

DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION REFERENCES

13. Two features of the major Department of Civil Aviation references handled in 1965 were the subject of specific comment by the Committee. The first related to the scale of terminal facilities being provided at both Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) and Melbourne (Tullamarine) Airports. In commenting on the high level of expenditure of public money on terminal facilities, the Committee noted that the daily pattern of international and domestic airline operations is characterised by a number of traffic peaks. In the case of international flights, the

basic reason is the keen competition between a relatively large number of airlines and the desire of each to provide a service which meets the needs of passengers at times of departure and arrival, not only at points of origin and destination, but also en route. The Committee could not accept that the same wish to satisfy passengers' needs was the basic cause of peaks in domestic airline traffic and considered that some congestion at airports caused by peaks in traffic could be avoided. It was clear that whatever was the cause of peaks, not only at the Sydney and Melbourne terminals, but also in the case of other terminals provided by the Commonwealth, facilities which represent a substantial public investment lie idle for long periods during hours of operation.

14. Whilst agreeing, in the case of the Sydney and Melbourne terminals, that to build to a lesser scale than that proposed would not be expedient, the Committee concluded that by spreading the daily load on the terminals more evenly, the time in the future when extensions would be required could be deferred. The Committee found evidence of the need for a searching inquiry into the planning of commercial airline operations in Australia with a view to reducing the peak loading of airport facilities and to produce a more economic utilisation of installations and staff.

15. The Committee were pleased to note that the Minister for Civil Aviation set up a Committee of Inquiry on this subject and that a study of the problem is now in hand. We had an opportunity to discuss our views with the Committee of Inquiry on 23rd August, 1966.

16. At a total value of about \$50m, the Department of Civil Aviation works submitted in 1965 are the most costly group referred to the Public Works Committee at one time. Not only because of the cost factor, but also because of the significance of the works, the Committee were concerned that the preparation of designs often appeared to have been rushed with the result that some basic planning decisions had not been taken. Whilst appreciating that there was limited time for detailed planning between the Government's decision to proceed and the target date for the commencement of the work, we believe that we could have been more informative in reporting to Parliament and there could have been a

better understanding of the works in the Departments concerned had planning of the projects been approached less hurriedly.

NON-REFERENCE OF DEFENCE WORKS

17. During 1965 the Committee reviewed the use by the Government of the provisions of Section 15 (6B) of the Public Works Committee Act to exempt from Committee scrutiny, defence works whose investigation by the Committee would have been "... contrary to the public interest". We noted that in 1963, 1964 and 1965 more than 21 individual defence works, together valued at over \$70m, were exempted by decision of the Executive Council, whereas in the same period we examined only three defence projects whose total value was less than \$5m.

18. The Committee agree that in the case of works, the investigation of which at public hearings could prejudice security, or where there is an extreme urgency for the facilities, exemptions should be obtained. However, it was apparent that there had been cases of defence projects in which neither of these factors operated but where exemptions were nevertheless obtained.

19. After the matter was drawn to the attention of the Prime Minister, the Committee were assured that most careful thought will be given before any future defence works are exempted from examination by the Committee.

SCOPE OF WORKS TO BE REVIEWED

20. Section 21(2) of the Acts Interpretation Act has, in the past, been interpreted in relation to the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act as restricting works which are required to be investigated and reported on by the Committee, to works "... in and of the Commonwealth". By interpretation, the restriction has applied to public works being carried out for the Commonwealth outside the Commonwealth. The effect of this view has been that public works being constructed for the Commonwealth in the external territories or at posts overseas, have been considered to be outside the scope of the Act.

21. In an opinion given in March 1966, the Attorney-General stated that he did not adopt this view and "... would not myself regard Section 21(2) as restricting the scope of the Act to public works of the Commonwealth constructed in the Commonwealth".

22. We believe that this opinion is entirely consistent with the intentions of the Public Works Committee Act and feel that Parliament is entitled to be informed through reports of the Public Works Committee about expenditure on major Commonwealth works wherever they may be built. In the light of the Attorney-General's opinion, the Committee have assumed that the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act will apply in the future to public works being constructed for the Commonwealth outside the Commonwealth as well as those in it.

REVIEW OF PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE ACT AND REGULATIONS

23. The effectiveness of the existing Public Works Committee Act and Regulations in the light of current practices and procedures, both in the Committee and in Parliament, was closely studied during 1966. The Committee found that there is a need to modernise the Act, particularly in relation to defining the scope of the Committee's inquiries and the works which are required to be referred to it including those of statutory authorities.

24. Amendments to the relevant sections of the Act, and a number of machinery changes, have been suggested and are now being examined by the Prime Minister.

FEEES AND ALLOWANCES

25. As a result of amendments made to the Public Works Committee Act and Regulations late in 1965, Members sitting fees and travelling allowances were increased with effect from 1st November, 1964. Although the date of effect of the new rates for Members of the Committee is the same as for the higher salaries and allowances for Members of Parliament,

it was necessary to back date the operation of the Public Works Committee legislation to enable this to be done.

26. To avoid a recurrence of this situation, we believe that any further review of the salaries and allowances paid to Members of Parliament should also embrace an examination of the fees and allowances paid to members of parliamentary committees.

APPRECIATION

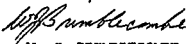
27. The Committee wish to record their appreciation of the assistance given by the many people who gave evidence as witnesses or who assisted during site inspections and in other ways. As the most frequent witnesses before the Committee, we are grateful to the officers of the Department of Works for their co-operation and willingness to fit in with our meeting and inspection arrangements.

28. We are particularly grateful to the Principal Parliamentary Reporter and his staff for their co-operation and service.

STAFF

29. Mr. J. H. Marshall left the staff of the Committee in November, 1964 after almost five years as Secretary. We record our appreciation of his able service. He has been succeeded by Mr. M. Adamson.

30. Mrs. Y. Erett, Steno-Secretary, was replaced on resignation in May 1965, by Miss F. M. Brown.


W. J. BRIMBLECOMBE
Chairman

Office of the Parliamentary Standing
Committee on Public Works,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA A.C.T.

27th October, 1966.

SUMMARY OF INQUIRIES

Date Proposal Referred	Proposed Work	Date of Report	Date Report Presented	Expenditure Proposed when Referred to Committee	Expenditure Recommended by Committee	Amount Additional to that Proposed	Amount Less than Proposed	Date Motion for Expediency Passed	Remarks
9/4/1964	Regional Laboratory for C.S.I.R.O., Shenton Park, Western Australia	7/5/1964	7/5/1964	\$928,000	\$1,074,000	\$146,000	-	12/5/1964	Additional cost arose from Committee recommend- ation to air condi- tion all laboratory areas. Otherwise recommend- ed as proposed.
16/4/1964	Stage Two, Land Research and Regional Survey Lab- oratories for C.S.I.R.O., Black Mountain, Australian Capital Territory	19/5/1964	19/5/1964	\$474,000	\$474,000	-	-	12/8/1964	Recommended as proposed.
22/4/1964	Radio Australia Booster Station, Darwin, Northern Territory	15/9/1964	17/9/1964	\$3,066,000	\$3,068,000	\$2,000	-	14/10/1964	Recommended as proposed with inclusion of window air conditioning units.
20/5/1964	Airfield Pavements at Cairns Airport, Queensland	20/8/1964	25/8/1964	\$1,286,000	\$1,286,000	-	-	16/9/1964	Recommended as proposed.
19/8/1964	Top Springs to Wave Hill Road, Northern Territory	18/2/1965	18/3/1965	\$2,200,000	\$2,700,000	\$500,000	-	16/3/1966	Recommended but with the bitumen sealing of a 12 ft. width of the proposed road.
20/10/1964	Barrack Blocks for Junior Ratings at H.M.A.S. "Cerberus", Westernport, Victoria.	9/11/1964	10/11/1964	\$1,552,000	\$1,608,000	\$56,000	-	7/4/1965	Recommended but with inclusion of heating and study rooms.

Date Proposal Referred	Proposed Work	Date of Report	Date Report Presented	Expenditure Proposed when Referred to Committee	Expenditure Recommended by Committee	Amount Additional to that Proposed	Amount Less than Proposed	Date Motion for Expediency Passed	Remarks
20/10/1964	R.A.A.F. Academy, Point Cook, Victoria	18/2/1965	18/3/1965	\$1,908,000	\$1,938,200	\$30,200	-	28/4/1965	Recommended, but with inclusion of larger study/bed- rooms, wash basins in each study/bed- room and increased provision of showers. The Committee re- commended a change in the roofing material which could result in a saving of up to \$100,000.
11/11/1964	Engineering Services to Casuarina Subdivision, Darwin, Northern Territory	7/4/1965	8/4/1965	\$2,272,000	\$2,272,000	-	-	28/4/1965	Recommended as proposed.
12/11/1964	Permanent Barracks and Depot Accommodation for A.R.A. Units at Broadmeadows, Victoria	27/4/1965	4/5/1965	\$1,650,000	\$1,650,000	-	-	20/5/1965	Recommended as proposed.
12/11/1964	Augmentation of Darwin Water Supply, Northern Territory	4/5/1965	6/5/1965	\$2,424,000	\$2,424,000	-	-	20/5/1965	Recommended as proposed.
18/12/1964	Post Office and Telephone Exchange, Wollongong, New South Wales.	1/4/1965	6/4/1965	\$1,289,000	\$1,295,400	\$6,400	-	20/5/1965	Recommended but with inclusion of ex- ternal glass and metal screen in public lobby. Savings are expected to result in use of substitute for copper on the roof.

Date Proposal Referred	Proposed Work	Date of Report	Date Report Presented	Expenditure Proposed when Referred to Committee	Expenditure Recommended by Committee	Amount Additional to that Proposed	Amount Less than Proposed	Date Motion for Expediency Passed	Remarks
23/3/1965	Radiophysics Laboratory for C.S.I.R.O., Epping, New South Wales	18/5/1965	19/5/1965	\$1,600,000	\$1,600,000	-	-	25/5/1965	Recommended as proposed.
18/5/1965	Site Preparation for North-West Building Area, Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport, New South Wales	21/9/1965	23/9/1965	\$5,200,000	\$5,200,000	-	-	30/9/1965	Recommended as proposed. The Committee suggested that the borrow areas for the extraction of sand from Botany Bay be kept under review to prevent erosion on the nearby beach front.
18/5/1965	Ground Preparation for Instrument Landing System, Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport, New South Wales	14/9/1965	15/9/1965	\$1,700,000	\$1,700,000	-	-	23/9/1965	Recommended as proposed.
18/5/1965	Operations and Control Tower Buildings, Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport, New South Wales	26/8/1965	31/8/1965	\$2,396,000	\$2,352,000	-	\$44,000	23/9/1965	Recommended but with substitution of aluminium for copper as the roofing material.

Date Proposal Referred	Proposed Work	Date of Report	Date Report Presented	Expenditure Proposed when Referred to Committee	Expenditure Recommended by Committee	Amount Additional to that Proposed	Amount Less than Proposed	Date Motion for Expediency Passed	Remarks
18/5/1965	Buildings and Services for the International Terminal Complex and Associated Aircraft Pavements in the North-West Building Area, Sydney (Kingsford-Smith) Airport, New South Wales	15/12/1965	21/10/1965	\$17,900,000	\$17,900,000	-	-	10/11/1965	Recommended as proposed. The Committee also made recommendations regarding access to the north-west area, the provision of staff dining facilities and the reduction of the peak hour congestion of airport facilities.
18/5/1965	Additional Aprons, Vehicular Pavements, Engineering Services, Roads and Instrument Landing System, Melbourne, (Tullamarine) Airport, Victoria	3/8/1965	25/8/1965	\$4,300,000	\$4,300,000	-	-	2/9/1965	Recommended as proposed. The Committee also recommended accelerated construction of the terminal buildings.
18/5/1965	Buildings and Services to Terminal Complex, Control and Equipment Building, D.C.A. Maintenance Area, Fire Station, Melbourne (Tullamarine) Airport, Victoria	9/11/1965	10/11/1965	\$18,696,524	\$18,696,524	-	-	18/11/1965	Recommended as proposed. The Committee recommended provision of staff dining facilities and the reduction of congestion at airports at peak hours.

Date Proposal Referred	Proposed Work	Date of Report	Date Report Presented	Expenditure Proposed wasn Referred to Committee	Expenditure Recommended by Committee	Amount Additional to that Proposed	Amount Less than Proposed	Date Motion for Expediency Passed	Remarks
15/9/1965	Extension of 02/20 Runway and Associated Taxiway Works, Perth Airport, Western Australia	11/11/1965	12/11/1965	\$880,000	\$880,000	-	-	30/11/1965	Recommended as proposed but the Committee suggested a re-examination of costs in the light of the cost of runway pavements elsewhere.
15/9/1965	Commonwealth Offices, Perth, Western Australia	7/12/1965	8/12/1965	\$5,960,000	\$5,960,000	-	-	9/12/1965	Recommended as proposed.
27/10/1965	Migrant Hostel, Randwick, New South Wales	17/3/1966	22/3/1966	\$3,910,000	\$3,925,000	\$15,000	-	20/9/1966	Recommended as proposed with in- clusion of a toilet in each family unit.
9/12/1965	Extension of A.B.C. Television Studios, Gore Hill, New South Wales	30/3/1966	31/3/1966	\$800,000	\$1,180,000	\$380,000	-	11/5/1966	Construction of four additional upper floors on Studio Office Wing as recommended.
9/3/1966	Laboratories for C.S.I.R.O., Indooroopilly, Queensland	3/5/1966	4/5/1966	\$1,150,000	\$1,150,000	-	-	11/5/1966	Recommended as proposed.

APPENDIX 'A' (6)

Date Proposal Referred	Proposed Work	Date of Report	Date Report Presented	Expenditure Proposed when Referred to Committee	Expenditure Recommended by Committee	Amount Additional to that Proposed	Amount Less than Proposed	Date Motion for Expediency Passed	Remarks
11/5/1966	Nightcliff High School, Darwin, Northern Territory	16/8/1966	17/8/1966	\$2,200,000	\$2,150,000	-	\$50,000	21/10/1966	The proposal was to build the school in two separate stages. The Committee recommended advancing the completion of the second stage by including it as part of the main contract with a consequential cost saving.
12/5/1966	Master Plan for Progressive Rebuilding, and Construction of Mess, Galley and Recreation Centre at H.M.A.S. "Leeuwin", Fremantle, Western Australia	16/8/1966	17/8/1966	\$725,000	\$725,000	-	-	28/9/1966	Recommended as proposed. Complete rebuilding programme estimated to cost \$3,250,000.
11/8/1966	R.A.N. Armament Depot, Kingswood, New South Wales	20/9/1966	21/9/1966	\$790,000	\$790,000	-	-	28/9/1966	Recommended as proposed.
17/8/1966	New Kitchen at Repatriation General Hospital, Heidelberg, Victoria	13/9/1966	15/9/1966	\$994,000	\$994,000	-	-	20/10/1966	Recommended as proposed.
17/8/1966	Extensions to Repatriation General Hospital, Concord, New South Wales	14/9/1966	15/9/1966	\$1,225,000	\$1,225,000	-	-	20/10/1966	Recommended as proposed.

Date Proposal Referred	Proposed Work	Date of Report	Date Report Presented	Expenditure Proposed when Referred to Committee	Expenditure Recommended by Committee	Amount Additional to that Proposed	Amount Less than Proposed	Date Motion for Expediency Passed	Remarks
24/8/1966	Additional Facilities at Repatriation General Hospital, Springbank, South Australia	14/9/1966	15/9/1966	\$574,000	\$574,000	-	-	28/9/1966	Recommended as proposed.
31/8/1966	Laboratories and Ancillary Buildings for Division of Chemical Engineering, C.S.I.R.O. Clayton, Victoria	22/9/1966	27/9/1966	\$1,400,000	\$1,400,000	-	-	29/9/1966	Recommended as proposed.
31/8/1966	First Stage of Progressive Rebuilding at H.M.A.S. "Nirimba", Quakers Hill, New South Wales	11/10/1966	12/10/1966	\$1,800,000	\$1,800,000	-	-	21/10/1966	Recommended as proposed. Complete rebuilding programme estimated to cost \$8m to \$9m.
15/9/1966	Development of Airfield Pavements at Coolangatta Airport, Queensland	11/10/1966	12/10/1966	\$1,300,000	\$1,300,000	-	-	21/10/1966	Recommended as proposed.
28/9/1966	Migrant Hostel, Springvale, Victoria	19/10/1966	20/10/1966	\$4,250,000	\$4,250,000	-	-	26/10/1966	Recommended as proposed. Resiting of staff quarters and basketball courts recommended.