

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

REPORT

relating to the

SPECIAL BROADCASTING SERVICE RELOCATION OF RADIO & TELEVISION ARTARMON, NSW

(Twelfth Report of 1991)

The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works



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Special Broadcasting Service
Relocation of
Radio & Television
Artarmon, NSW

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**MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC WORKS**

(Thirtieth Committee)

Mr Colin Hollis MP (Chairman)
Mr William Leonard Taylor MP (Vice-Chairman)

Senate

Senator Bryant Robert Burns
Senator Paul Henry Calvert*
Senator John Robert Devereux

House of Representatives

Mr Ewen Colin Cameron MP
Mr Lloyd Reginald O'Neil MP
Mr Russell Neville Gorman MP
Mr Bruce Craig Scott MP

* Appointed on 24.8.90 following the retirement of Senator
Dr Glenister Sheil

**SECTIONAL COMMITTEE ON SPECIAL BROADCASTING
SERVICE RELOCATION OF RADIO & TELEVISION
ARTARMON, NSW**

Mr Colin Hollis MP (Chairman)
Mr Russell Neville Gorman MP (Vice-Chairman)
Mr Lloyd Reginald O'Neil MP

Committee Secretary: Peter Roberts

Inquiry Secretaries: Ambika Prasad (to 3.11.91)
Sarah Hnatiuk (from 4.11.91)

Secretarial Support: Di Singleton

EXTRACT FROM THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

No. 89 dated Wednesday, 9 October 1991

- 12 PUBLIC WORKS - PARLIAMENTARY STANDING
COMMITTEE - REFERENCE OF WORK - RELOCATION
OF SPECIAL BROADCASTING SERVICE RADIO AND
TELEVISION, ARTARMON, NSW: Mr Price (Parliamentary
Secretary to the Prime Minister), for Mr Beddall (Minister
representing the Minister for Administrative Services), pursuant
to notice, moved - That, in accordance with the provisions of
the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, the following proposed
work be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on
Public Works for consideration and report: Special Broadcasting
Service, relocation of radio and television, Artarmon, NSW.
Mr Price presented plans in connection with the proposed work.
Debate ensued.
Question - put and passed.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

RELOCATION OF SPECIAL BROADCASTING SERVICE RADIO AND TELEVISION, ARTARMON, NEW SOUTH WALES

By resolution on 9 October 1991, the House of Representatives referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report the proposal for the relocation of Special Broadcasting Service Radio and Television, Artarmon, New South Wales.

THE REFERENCE

1. The work proposed in this reference involves the refurbishment of an existing building complex, which the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) plans to purchase for use by its radio, television and corporate services. The complex consists of:

- . a two-storey office area, on which the bulk of the work will be carried out to create offices and radio studios
- . a warehouse, part of which will be converted to television studios
- . a five-storey car park.

2. The proposal includes essential repairs and maintenance to the fabric of the buildings, the upgrading of existing fire protection and building services in accordance with current regulations and the fitting out of approximately half the building area for the SBS's use.

3. The total cost estimated for the whole project is \$34.9m at June 1991 prices. This sum includes the costs of acquiring the site, renovating the building, consultants' fees, relocating and making good to existing leased premises. The limit-of-cost for the refurbishment of the building is \$14.5m.

THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION

4. At a private meeting on 14 November 1991, the Committee resolved to appoint a Sectional Committee of three members to conduct the inquiry related to this reference. The Sectional Committee consisted of the Mr C Hollis MP (Chairman), Mr R N Gorman MP (Vice-Chairman) and Mr L R O'Neil MP.

5. The SBS provided the Committee with a written submission and plans relating to the proposed work and was examined at a public hearing held in Artarmon on 18 November 1991. Submissions were also received, and the Sectional Committee took evidence from:

- . Mr E C Mack MP
- . the Australian Journalists' Association (AJA)
- . the Public Sector Union (PSU) and the Professional Radio and Electronics Institute of Australia (PREIA), jointly
- . Mr K Seneviratne.

6. Submissions were also received from:

- . Childcare At Work Ltd
- . Commonwealth Fire Board
- . Telecom Australia
- . The Council of the City of Willoughby.

7. Before the public hearing, the Sectional Committee inspected the current leased premises of the SBS's radio station 2EA at Bondi Junction and its television and corporate services at Milsons Point. It was also shown through the empty building complex in Artarmon which the SBS plans to acquire and fitout.

8. A list of witnesses who gave evidence at the public hearing is at Appendix A. The Committee's proceedings will be printed as Minutes of Evidence.

9. On 28 November 1991, the Sectional Committee's report on the relocation of the SBS to Artarmon was presented to the Full Committee and endorsed.

BACKGROUND

10. The SBS was established in 1978 to provide multilingual radio services and multicultural television to the Australian public. Its charter requires it to meet the needs of ethnic, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities for information and entertainment in languages other than English, and to contribute to the retention and development of language and other cultural skills now present in Australia. The SBS endeavours to increase awareness of the contribution of a diversity of cultures to the continuing development of Australian society and to promote understanding and acceptance of that diversity. The SBS is also expected to extend the range of Australian television and radio services, to make use of Australia's creative resources and to contribute greatly to the overall diversity in Australian broadcasting.

11. Recent legislative changes, resulting from the passage of the *Special Broadcasting Service Bill 1991* through both Houses of the Parliament, provide the SBS with a new charter and the full range of corporate powers appropriate to an independent public authority. As such, the SBS will be able to engage in long-term planning for the first time. From the point of view of the proposal before the Committee, there are two important consequences of the SBS's new status as a statutory authority. In the first place, it will be allowed to borrow money and, secondly, it will raise revenue through sponsorship and advertising associated with its programs and through other means. The Government has already authorised borrowing to finance the purchase of premises for the SBS.

12. At present, the SBS provides multilingual radio services to Sydney, Melbourne, Geelong, Newcastle, Wollongong and Brisbane, and television services to all state capital cities and Canberra and to a number of regional centres. The SBS's television services will be extended to other centres. The SBS also provides program sales and merchandising services, and radio program material to other radio stations.

13. The SBS operates from premises in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra, its major presence being in Sydney. It is the SBS's needs for accommodation in Sydney that forms the subject of this report.

THE NEED

14. If the SBS is to maintain and extend its services as set out in its charter, it requires suitably equipped and located accommodation. However, the SBS's current premises do not provide adequately for its needs. These premises are fragmented, not cost-effective and unsuitable for the types of activity in which the SBS engages, particularly those relating to its television service. Furthermore, the current premises are not available for long-term lease and the fact that they are leased means that there is no long-term security of tenure for the SBS.

Fragmentation

15. The SBS's Sydney operations are accommodated in three leased premises:

- . its radio station at Bondi Junction
- . its television and corporate services at Milsons Point
- . storage facilities at Artarmon.

The SBS argues that it would function more efficiently and cost-effectively if all its operations were housed in one building. It has reached the stage in its evolution when it needs to establish itself as an integrated operation.

Cost of Leasing

16. The cost of leasing the three premises has escalated over the last five years at a rate in excess of inflation and the annual budget appropriation available to the SBS. Since 1987, the annual rental on the SBS's premises has increased by 44% and consumed an increasing proportion of the SBS's annual appropriations. The SBS argues that suitable accommodation could be more cheaply provided if it owned its own premises.

17. Another advantage in ownership as against leasing is security of tenure. This eliminates the possibility of forced moves from leased premises and the attendant costs associated with moving to and fitting out new premises.

Unsuitability

18. While the accommodation at Bondi Junction is in a relatively new building that provides a pleasant work environment, it presents two major problems. The air-conditioning is inadequate and could be upgraded to the standard required by the SBS only at considerable expense. Storage space is limited and cannot be increased by the use of compact storage systems because the building structure is incapable of supporting the weight.

19. The accommodation at Milsons Point is less satisfactory than that at Bondi Junction, especially with respect to the amount of space available to the number of people who have to be accommodated. Studios and technical areas have been set up within the constraints of an office building, with the result that there is inadequate studio space for certain activities. The floor area is small and the ceiling height in the studio is less than half that considered necessary in the industry. As a consequence, panel discussions are limited to three people, full-length shots of people cannot be obtained and audiences cannot be accommodated. More complex productions can be pursued only by hiring alternative accommodation, which is expensive and inconvenient. In summary, the SBS's ability to produce television programs is very seriously constrained by their present premises.

20. Furthermore, basic building services at the Milsons Point premises are inadequate, requiring the SBS to install and maintain expensive additional plant to cope with the special air-conditioning and electrical power requirements of its technical equipment.

Length of Lease

21. The SBS will have to move out of its Milsons Point premises in 1995 when the head lessee is required, as a condition of the lease, to carry out a major upgrading of the building.

Committee's Conclusion

22. The Committee believes that the Special Broadcasting Service's current premises in Sydney do not provide adequate facilities for the Special Broadcasting Service to implement its charter fully. Nor do they allow the Special Broadcasting Service to provide radio and television services to the Australian public in as efficient and cost-effective manner as possible. The

Committee concludes that there is a need to provide appropriate accommodation for the Special Broadcasting Service's radio, television and corporate services in Sydney.

THE PROPOSAL

Options

23. Before selecting a building for renovation to its requirements, the SBS considered four options:

- . extending the present leases when they expire in May 1993
- . leasing alternative premises
- . purchasing a site and constructing a new building
- . purchasing and adapting an existing building.

24. Extending the present leases was seen as undesirable in the light of the drawbacks associated with them, which are detailed in paragraphs 14-20. Leasing alternative premises suffers some of the same disadvantages attached to the present premises, namely, uncertainty of tenure and the possibility that rental costs will continue to escalate. The SBS concluded that 'the purchase of a site, with or without buildings capable of being adapted was identified as the preferred approach, subject to being able to satisfy locational, functional and financial criteria'.

25. Sixteen sites were considered as possibilities for the SBS's purposes, against the criteria of:

- . a cost below \$39m, the sum approved by the Loan Council as the SBS's upper borrowing limit
- . a situation within 5km of the Central Business District, readily accessible by public transport and car and with access to amenities, such as shops

- building features that included 1 000m² of office space, 350m² of space with 6m high ceilings and large floor areas that would provide for the 'horizontally disposed' nature of television activities and for flexibility in its future use
- a completion date of December 1992, allowing the SBS to move out before the expiry of its current leases in May 1993.

Greatest weight was attached to the criteria of cost and accessibility.

26. All eight of the sites without buildings were rejected because the expense of constructing a new building was too great or the building could not be completed by the SBS's December 1992 deadline. Of the sites with buildings, that at Artarmon met all the SBS's criteria and was selected by the SBS as suitable for adaptation to its requirements. Details of the other sites considered and the reasons for their rejection are given in Table 1.

The Artarmon Property

27. As shown on the maps in Appendix B, the site of 1.996ha is located approximately 5km north of Sydney's Central Business District on the corner of Herbert and Frederick Streets, Artarmon. The 25 year old complex on this site consists of:

- a two-storey office block with a floor area of 5 177m²
- a warehouse of 14 212m², a section of which has been partially adapted for use as a production centre for film and television
- a storage area of 5 507m²
- a five-storey car park for 366 cars.

28. The buildings are generally in good condition. They will, however, require extensive repair and maintenance, as well as significant upgrading to satisfy the requirements of current local regulations and the modifications needed by the SBS.

Table 1 - Details of alternative sites considered for SBS's relocation and reasons for their rejection

Site Location	Building Type	Reasons for Rejection	Earliest Completion Date	Total Project Cost (\$m)	Location	Size (m ²)
400 Waitte Street, Ultimo	existing	timing, size	Sept. 1993	-	-	9130
424-492 Harris Street, Ultimo	existing	timing, cost	Sept. 1993	>45	-	-
700 Harris Street, Ultimo	new	timing, cost	Dec. 1993	>55	-	-
62 Booth Street, Annandale	existing	location, size	-	-	Under flight path	8000+
164 Chalmers Street, Central	new	timing, cost	Dec. 1993	>55	-	-
South Dowling Street, Botany	new	timing, cost, location	Sept. 1993	>45	Remote from public transport	-
Lord Street, Botany	new	cost, location	-	>40	Remote from public transport, 10km from city	-
Epping Road, North Ryde	existing	cost, location	-	>45	Remote from public transport, 10km from city	-
349 Bulwarra Road, Ultimo	existing	location, size	-	-	Access by road difficult	7500+
45-47 Jones Street, Ultimo	existing	cost	-	>38	-	-
Pacific Highway, Gore Hill	new	timing, cost	Dec. 1993	>40	-	-
46-52 Mountain Street, Ultimo	existing	timing, cost, size	Dec. 1993	Not for sale	-	8000+
100 Bulwarra Road, Ultimo	existing	timing, cost, location	Dec. 1993	>40	Remote from public transport	-
Orion Park, Lane Cove	new	timing, cost, location	Dec. 1993	>45	Remote from public transport, 10km from city	-
Strathfield Business Technology Park	new	timing, cost	Dec. 1993	>40	-	-

Plans for the Use of the Building

29. The SBS plans to accommodate its activities within an area of approximately 11 000m², mostly on the two levels of the office block. The television studios will be located towards the centre of the site, in the warehouse section of the complex and immediately adjacent to the two-storey section of the building. In this situation, the provision of the required 6m high ceiling will be possible and the studios will be well isolated from surrounding road noise. Furthermore, there will be direct pedestrian access from the main entry and truck access from Frederick Street.

30. The radio studios will be on the first floor, the technical areas on the ground floor and offices on both floors. The area immediately below the existing car park will be adapted to provide storage space for television sets and props, as well as air-conditioned archival storage areas for files, audio tapes and video tapes.

31. Most of the warehouse area is surplus to the SBS's requirements. The SBS plans to lease the space to another user, preferably one involved in an industry-related activity.

32. Plans showing the proposed uses of the complex are in Appendix C.

Proposed Work

33. Paragraphs 34-38 of the report summarise the work proposed by the SBS; more details are provided in Appendix D.

Site Works

34. As the existing building covers the entire site area, there is only a limited amount of work to be carried out on the site. The major work required consists of repairs to the stormwater disposal system and changes to vehicular entry and exit arrangements.

Building Works

35. Because of its age, the building does not satisfy a number of current regulations, most important among which are those relating to fire safety. It will not be possible to comply totally with all current fire regulations, but both the Council of the City of Willoughby and the New South Wales Fire Brigade have indicated that the proposed upgrading of the building satisfies the intentions of the regulations. All other work will be carried out to the relevant Australian Standards and Codes, such that the completed building complex will provide a level of accommodation and services consistent with a completely new building.

36. Apart from essential works associated with fire safety, the building works will be confined to adapting the office and storage areas to the SBS's needs. The major items of work will involve the creation of courtyards to provide natural light to both levels of the office block and the introduction of a number of vertical penetrations to facilitate movement between the two levels of the building. Other work includes:

- . the removal of all existing partitions, ceiling panels and floor finishes and their replacement
- . the refurbishment of the main entry and service areas
- . the upgrading of existing electrical, fire protection and communication systems to the SBS's operational requirements.

Fitout Works

37. The fitout will involve the construction of plasterboard and glass partitions to provide a combination of individual and open office space. The areas for production and transmission of radio and television programs will require the construction of acoustically isolated spaces, with provision for cabling and special building services. Some of these areas will also need to be equipped with electronic screening to protect against the intrusion of unwanted radio and television signals.

38. It is not proposed to fit out the vacant warehouse spaces at this stage. Work in these areas will be restricted to the minimum necessary to ensure the safety of the total building complex and its occupants, as well as allowing some restricted use for storage or film and television production.

ISSUES RELATING TO THE PROPOSAL

39. A number of issues are raised by the SBS's proposal and will be discussed in paragraphs 40-88. They include:

- . the need for the collocation of all the SBS's services
- . the time frame for the project
- . financial issues
- . the location of the building
- . aspects of the renovation process, including fire precautions, the allocation of space, access to natural light, energy conservation and car parking
- . equipment
- . child care
- . consultation.

COLLOCATION

40. Bringing radio, television and corporate services together in the same building will produce economies from the use of shared facilities. It will also allow much greater contact between those with common interests in the radio and television services. Such contact will facilitate the exchange of information between the two areas and should help to produce a stimulating, creative work environment.

Committee's Conclusion

41. The Committee supports the collocation of the Special Broadcasting Service's radio, television and corporate services.

TIME FRAME FOR THE PROPOSED WORKS

42. Although the SBS could extend the leases on its current premises to May 1995, it intends to relinquish them in May 1993 for reasons discussed

further in paragraph 46. This imposes a tight time frame on the acquisition and renovation of the Artarmon building. The unions pointed to the timetable having already slipped and questioned whether the SBS's program of work could be achieved in the time available. However, the SBS is confident that it is possible and, where modifications to the timetable are necessary, they will be accommodated within the project's budget.

43. The unions indicated that the tight time frame for the project and the haste, with which the SBS has moved, has or may have untoward consequences. The first of these is inadequate consultation between management and themselves; this is dealt with in detail in paragraphs 85-87. There is also the potential problem of the SBS's incurring penalty costs if it fails to adhere to its program of work, and the likelihood of increased costs associated with the use of 'fast-track' building techniques.

Committee's Conclusion

44. The Committee is concerned about the tight time frame of the project to relocate the Special Broadcasting Service's operations to Artarmon. Even though the Special Broadcasting Service has received assurances that the project can be completed in the time allowed, the Committee considers that such assurances may not be well-founded.

Committee's Recommendation

45. The Committee recommends that the Special Broadcasting Service report to the Committee every three months on its progress in meeting the program set out for its relocation to Artarmon.

FINANCIAL ISSUES

46. As indicated in paragraph 16, the cost of the SBS's leased premises over the last five years has escalated at a rate faster than inflation and consumed an increasing proportion of the SBS's budget. Quite apart from any other advantages of the SBS's owning its own building, purchasing it will reduce the escalation of costs associated with its accommodation, and will allow the SBS to convert its outgoings on accommodation into an asset base. A further factor in the SBS's favour in relation to acquiring its own premises is the current relatively low cost of property.

47. The total cost of acquiring the Artarmon site, adapting and fitting out the building, paying for technical equipment and consultants, and making good to existing leased premises is estimated at \$34.9m at June 1991 prices. The SBS claims that, when completed, the part of the complex that the SBS will be using 'will provide a level of accommodation and services entirely consistent with a completely new building, with the added benefit of being achieved at approximately half the estimated cost of such a facility'. The purchase of the site and its renovation will be financed by a loan which will be paid off, at the latest, in 20 years' time.

48. The SBS plans to lease the warehouse space excess to its requirements and use the revenue from this source to finance local productions. It is not, however, counting on it as a source of income. The SBS has already received a number of proposals for the use of the warehouse and anticipates that, with a worst case scenario, it might expect to earn about \$900 000 per annum. On the basis of the firm interest that has already been expressed by one party, an income of \$100 000 a year could be expected from this source alone.

49. Mr Mack told the Committee that 'when you are doing renovations the cost is incredibly elastic, so it could very easily end up as much as a new building or it could end up substantially reduced'. He suggested that a blow-out in costs could be prevented by setting a fixed amount of money, within which the architects had to work, rather than simply accepting an estimate.

50. The AJA, PSU and PREIA expressed a number of concerns about the project. They described the Artarmon building as a 'third-rate industrial space' and foresaw it becoming, over the years, 'an aged refurbished hulk with increasing maintenance bills and little resale value'. The PSU and PREIA suggested that a suitable, existing building in the Central Business District could be purchased more cheaply. The unions also pointed out that the potential for raising revenue by leasing the warehouse space that is excess to the SBS's requirements may not be great and may involve the SBS in expenditure to refurbish this space to a lettable condition.

51. The unions also identified a number of other areas of financial significance. If the SBS's program of works overruns, penalty costs are incurred. Furthermore, the 'fast-track' method of project planning is

associated with greater cost than normal procedures. With respect to its staff, the SBS will be obliged to pay financial compensation to staff following the SBS's move to Artarmon. The unions estimated that this might amount to over \$250 000.

Committee's Conclusions

52. The Committee does not support the siting of Government agencies in expensive premises in the Central Business District. It believes that they should be decentralised as far as is practicable to meet their prescribed functions. In this respect, the Committee approves of the choice of Artarmon as a suitable location for the Special Broadcasting Service.

53. The Committee acknowledges that the Special Broadcasting Service may experience short-term difficulties in leasing out the space excess to its requirements. However, it believes that in the long-term a site, that is only 5km from the Central Business District and has been acquired at a relatively low cost, will prove an asset to the Special Broadcasting Service.

54. The possibility of a cost overrun on the project is of concern to the Committee and will require careful monitoring.

Committee's Recommendations

55. The Committee recommends that:

- . the cost of the project be contained within the limit-of-cost estimate
- . the Special Broadcasting Service report to the Committee every three months on the progress of the work against its projected cost.

LOCATION

56. The location of the Artarmon building satisfied the SBS's criteria of distance from the Central Business District and access to transport, roads and amenities. The Artarmon building is also situated in the 'very heartland of the media', close to Channels 2, 7 and 9, the Australian Film Television and Radio School, Film Australia and ancillary services that include production houses, and advertising and actors' agencies. The advantages of

such close proximity to these bodies include contact with other areas of the media and the ease of sharing contributors to news and current affairs programs. Access to production houses, which the SBS expects to use more extensively in the future, will also be facilitated.

57. In commenting on the Artarmon location, the AJA pointed out that it is further than the SBS's current premises from the centre of the city where journalists cover state and local news. The AJA suggested the need for some means of getting their material quickly to SBS headquarters, for example, from an office or van in central Sydney, and the SBS indicated that the suggestion would be considered.

58. Another witness before the Committee, Mr Seneviratne, suggested that a more suitable location for the SBS was the western suburbs with its large population of non-English speaking people. Were the SBS to be situated in such an area, it would be closer to many of its contributors and an important part of its audience, and able to involve this section of the population in its operations more easily. A move to such an area would also be in line with the Government's policy of decentralisation.

59. The Artarmon building is 800m from St Leonards railway station, which is a major interchange for buses and has a frequent train service. For the 71% of SBS staff who have indicated that they will drive to work, road access to the area will be improved with the completion of the Gore Hill Freeway in 1992 and the Harbour Tunnel. There will be parking on site.

60. There is a shopping centre at St Leonards, and the North Sydney Hospital and educational institutions are nearby. The SBS proposes to introduce a minibus service to assist staff members and visitors to reach public transport and the shops in St Leonards.

61. Travel to Artarmon and changed access to shops and services will impact on both staff and program contributors. While the Artarmon building is not far from Milsons Point and will not entail much change to travel by staff and contributors presently working at Milsons Point, the considerably greater distance between Artarmon and Bondi Junction might be expected to have a greater impact. However, conflicting claims were made to the Committee in relation to the relative ease of access to Artarmon and Bondi Junction.

Committee's Conclusion

62. The Committee is sympathetic to the argument that the Special Broadcasting Service should relocate to the western suburbs but believes that, when all factors are taken together, the Artarmon site is the most suitable. It appreciates the unions' concerns about the impact of the proposed move on staff, particularly the need for transport to take shift workers between the buses and trains at St Leonards and the Artarmon building.

Committee's Recommendation

63. The Committee recommends that the Special Broadcasting Service provide transport for its shift workers between the buses and trains at St Leonards and the Artarmon building.

BUILDING FEATURES

64. Several features proposed for the renovated building deserve comment.

Fire Precautions

65. Although it is not bound by state and local regulations, the SBS intends to submit formal development and building applications to the Council of the City of Willoughby. These applications are reviewed by the New South Wales Fire Brigade as well as by the Council. The SBS has also undertaken to pay attention to two points raised by the Commonwealth Fire Board:

- . the need for compartmentation to prevent the spread of fire through the complex
- . the need to maintain the integrity of fire compartments when new cabling is run through fire and smoke barriers so that the integrity of these barriers is not compromised.

66. With regard to the risk of loss of property from fire, the SBS has had a policy for a number of years of insuring all major capital assets. It plans to extend this insurance cover to include the Artarmon site as soon as it becomes SBS property, and to increase it progressively during the

construction phase of the project so that the replacement value of all improvements is covered adequately.

Committee's Conclusion

67. The Committee commends the Special Broadcasting Service for its intention to submit formal development and building applications to state and local authorities.

The Work Environment

68. The amount of space allocated to the various SBS activities will be in general accordance with the Commonwealth Accommodation Guidelines and established broadcasting standards. The construction of internal courtyards and glazed roof lights will maximise the provision of natural light to the large floor areas of the building and the lower floor, which is partially below ground.

69. Both unions were doubtful that access to natural light within the building would be sufficient, and the AJA has questioned the adequacy of the space allowed for staff. The AJA claimed that space allocations were based on current staffing levels, and not establishment levels, and no allowance had been made for any future increase in staff numbers, which might be anticipated if an English language news bulletin is introduced. Furthermore, the space originally planned for news and current affairs in the Artarmon building appeared to the unions to have been reduced to contain costs. The SBS indicated that information on the staff's requirements for space had been collected but no decisions had been taken.

Energy

70. Various energy conservation measures are planned for the building. Extensive use will be made of natural light, solar hot water heaters will be supplied for the kitchen and toilet areas, and the building will be zoned to minimise air-conditioning and lighting use outside normal working hours. The car park, being open to the air, does not require air-conditioning.

Committee's Conclusion

71. The Committee encourages the use of energy efficient building design and noted, with approval, that the Special Broadcasting Service intends to evaluate the opportunities that the Artarmon building presents for energy conservation.

Committee's Recommendation

72. The Committee recommends that it receive a copy of any results from the Special Broadcasting Services's studies of the building's potential for employing energy conservation measures.

Car Parking

73. The SBS expects that, even allowing for the reservation of some of the car park for other occupants of the building as required by the Council, all shift workers and the bulk of those working regular office hours will be accommodated by the car park. The SBS plans to give priority to ensuring shift workers have access to the car park.

74. The issue of car parking for SBS employees was raised in the context of the desire of the majority of employees to drive to work, the local shortage of parking spaces and the problem of peak hour congestion in Sydney. Mr Mack suggested that the SBS should not encourage its employees to drive to work by providing them with parking. Instead, the parking should be available for short-term use only. A further deterrent to the use of cars would be to charge for parking. As the Government does not require its agencies to provide parking for their employees, the existence of the car park as part of the Artarmon complex would represent a bonus for SBS employees, provided at tax payers' expense. Mr Mack suggested that SBS employees should not have free parking available to them but should be charged for it.

Committee's Conclusion

75. The Committee approves of the Special Broadcasting Service's plan to give preference to shift workers when allocating parking spaces to its staff.

Committee's Recommendation

76. The Committee recommends that the Special Broadcasting Service report to it on:

- the number of car park spaces that will be allocated to Special Broadcasting Service staff and other tenants of the building
- the criteria that will be employed to allocate the available space among the Special Broadcasting Service's staff and visitors.

EQUIPMENT

77. SBS will spend \$5m on engineering equipment and cabling to meet SBS's special needs. Some equipment that cannot operate close to the transmission towers in Artarmon will be replaced. However, it is SBS's intention that, in moving to Artarmon, the primary emphasis will be on relocating its current equipment rather than on re-equipping. New equipment will be purchased from budgetary appropriations.

78. The AJA expressed its concern that the issue of computerisation for the news areas had not been taken up in the context of SBS's relocation. The union argued that computerisation would increase the journalists' efficiency and could be appropriately incorporated into a major move. The Committee concurs with this view and urges the SBS to consider as complete a re-equipment as funds allow.

CHILD CARE

79. The SBS will make every effort to ensure that suitable child care services are available for the staff at Artarmon. It has retained consultants to advise on staff needs for child care. A survey of child care needs has been carried out and is being analysed at present. Once the results are available and the staff, unions and the SBS's consultant on child care have been consulted, a firm policy can be developed.

80. The SBS acknowledges that its staff have special child care needs in that many of them work part time and/or out of hours. It points out that there are a number of child care centres in the vicinity of the Artarmon building which supply places to people with similar work patterns. It is possible that places will be available at these centres, for example, the ABC's

which is not fully utilised. The SBS has considered reserving places in other child care centres for its staff or setting up a referral service. The AJA and Childcare At Work Ltd suggested that an on-site centre should be established. The SBS claims that there is unlikely to be sufficient demand to justify this and it could not fund such a significant investment.

Committee's Conclusion

81. The Committee supports the Special Broadcasting Service's approach to satisfying its staff's needs for child care. It cannot, however, form a final view on the matter until the survey and consultations have been completed.

Committee's Recommendation

82. The Committee recommends that the Special Broadcasting Service report to the Committee on the policy that it develops for dealing with its staff's needs for child care.

CONSULTATION

Commonwealth Agencies

83. The Australian Heritage Commission and the Department of the Arts, Sport, the Environment, Tourism and Territories indicated to the SBS that the renovation of the Artarmon building presented no problems to them.

State and Local Government

84. The SBS has consulted with state and local government agencies. The Road Traffic Authority raised no objection to the SBS's proposed move to Artarmon. As indicated in relation to fire safety in paragraph 65, the SBS has been in touch with the Council of the City of Willoughby and the New South Wales Fire Brigade, and intends to comply with their requirements and regulations.

The Unions

85. The SBS kept the unions informed of its search for a new building and the selection of the Artarmon site through its national consultative forum, the National Joint Consultative Committee. More frequent meetings are now planned to allow consultation about matters relating to the relocation.

The consultative process will involve an Accommodation Working Party comprised of management and union representatives, and local work place management teams which will deal with individual work areas. The unions have agreed to these consultative mechanisms, and the SBS has provided training sessions to facilitate the operation of workplace management teams. However, the AJA has identified problems with the operation of the workplace management teams.

86. The unions were critical of the SBS for not involving them in the selection of the new site. The unions were, however, advised that the selection process had been set in train and did not at any stage indicate a wish for additional consultation. Furthermore, commercial-in-confidence restraints limited the extent to which consultation with staff and unions was possible. However, as a result of the limited consultation in relation to the choice of site, the unions claim that their members are doubtful that they will be adequately involved in expressing their views and negotiating the later stages of the project. This attitude is reinforced by the tight time frame for the relocation. The unions foresee that the speed with which the project must be carried out will preclude adequate consultation.

87. The SBS acknowledged the need for 'a more positive approach in the future' to employee-management discussions, and the SBS and the PSU and PRELA indicated their commitment to strengthen the consultative processes. The SBS pointed out that the unions had not coordinated their approaches with each other and, in some cases, had expressed opposing views on some issues. From the SBS's point of view, it is easier to deal with unions that work closely together.

Committee's Conclusion

88. To achieve the most efficient, physically pleasant and harmonious work environment in the new premises, the Committee urges the Special Broadcasting Service to consult widely and in detail with its staff and the unions. It suggests that the consultative process would be eased considerably if the unions were able to present a joint approach to negotiations with management.

PROGRAMMING AND COST

89. The limit-of-cost for the refurbishment of the building is \$14.5m at June 1991 prices. The program proposed for the refurbishment is as follows:

- . start of construction in January 1992
- . completion of building adaptation in June 1992
- . start of technical installation in June 1992
- . completion of fitout in December 1992
- . completion of technical installation in February 1993.

Committee's Recommendation

90. The Committee recommends that the refurbishment of 14 Herbert Street, Artarmon by the Special Broadcasting Service proceed at a cost of \$14.5m at June 1991 prices.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

91. The conclusions and recommendations of the Committee and the paragraphs in the report to which each refers are set out below:

Paragraph

1. The Committee believes that the Special Broadcasting Service's current premises in Sydney do not provide adequate facilities for the Special Broadcasting Service to implement its charter fully. Nor do they allow the Special Broadcasting Service to provide radio and television services to the Australian public in as efficient and cost-effective manner as possible. The Committee concludes that there is a need to provide appropriate accommodation for the Special Broadcasting Service's radio, television and corporate services in Sydney. 22
2. The Committee supports the collocation of the Special Broadcasting Service's radio, television and corporate services. 41
3. The Committee is concerned about the tight time frame of the project to relocate the Special Broadcasting Service's operations to Artarmon. Even though the Special Broadcasting Service has received assurances that the project can be completed in the time allowed, the Committee considers that such assurances may not be well-founded. 44
4. The Committee recommends that the Special Broadcasting Service report to the Committee every three months on its progress in meeting the program set out for its relocation to Artarmon. 45
5. The Committee does not support the siting of Government agencies in expensive premises in the Central Business District. It believes that they should be decentralised as far as is practicable to meet their prescribed functions. In this respect, the Committee approves of the choice of Artarmon as a suitable location for the Special Broadcasting Service. 52

6. The Committee acknowledges that the Special Broadcasting Service may experience short-term difficulties in leasing out the space excess to its requirements. However, it believes that, in the long-term, a site, that is only five kilometres from the Central Business District and has been acquired at a relatively low cost, will prove an asset to the Special Broadcasting Service. 53
7. The possibility of a cost overrun on the project is of concern to the Committee and will require careful monitoring. 54
8. The Committee recommends that:
 - the cost of the project be contained within the limit-of-cost estimate
 - the Special Broadcasting Service report to the Committee every three months on the progress of the work against its projected cost. 55
9. The Committee is sympathetic to the argument that the Special Broadcasting Service should relocate to the western suburbs but believes that, when all factors are taken together, the Artarmon site is the most suitable. It appreciates the unions' concerns about the impact of the proposed move on staff, particularly the need for transport to take shift workers between the buses and trains at St Leonards and the Artarmon building. 62
10. The Committee recommends that the Special Broadcasting Service provide transport for its shift workers between the buses and trains at St Leonards and the Artarmon building. 63
11. The Committee commends the Special Broadcasting Service for its intention to submit formal development and building applications to state and local authorities. 67

12. The Committee encourages the use of energy efficient building design and noted, with approval, that the Special Broadcasting Service intends to evaluate the opportunities that the Artarmon building presents for energy conservation. 71
13. The Committee recommends that it receive a copy of any results from the Special Broadcasting Services' studies of the building's potential for employing energy conservation measures. 72
14. The Committee approves the Special Broadcasting Service's plan to give preference to shift workers when allocating parking spaces to its staff. 75
15. The Committee recommends that the Special Broadcasting Service report to it on:
 - the number of car park spaces that will be allocated to Special Broadcasting Service staff and other tenants of the building
 - the criteria that will be employed to allocate the available space among the Special Broadcasting Service's staff and visitors. 76
16. The Committee supports the Special Broadcasting Service's approach to satisfying its staff's needs for child care. It cannot, however, form a final view on the matter until the survey and consultations have been completed. 81
17. The Committee recommends that the Special Broadcasting Service report to the Committee on the policy that it develops for dealing with its staff's needs for child care. 82

18. To achieve the most efficient, physically pleasant and harmonious work environment in the new premises, the Committee urges the Special Broadcasting Service to consult widely and in detail with its staff and the unions. It suggests that the consultative process would be eased considerably if the unions were able to present a joint approach to negotiations with management. 88
19. The Committee recommends that the refurbishment of 14 Herbert Street, Artarmon by the Special Broadcasting Service proceed at a cost of \$14.5m at June 1991 prices. 90



Colin Hollis
Chairman

28 November 1991

APPENDIX A

WITNESSES

BIALOGUSKI, Mr Stefan Henri, Member, Accommodation Working Party, Australian Journalists Association, 403 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills, New South Wales, 2010

CAREY, Mr Michael Thomas Martin, Member, House Committee, Television, Australian Journalists Association, 403 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills, New South Wales, 2010

CASEY, Ms Robyn Gai, National Industrial Officer, Public Sector Union, 191-199 Thomas Street, Haymarket, New South Wales, 2000

DANIEL, Ms Susan Dene, Organiser, Australian Journalists Association, 403 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills, New South Wales, 2010

DIACK, Mr Richard Francis, Head of Resources and Marketing, Special Broadcasting Service, 4 Cliff Street, Milsons Point, New South Wales, 2061

FELTHAM, Mr Peter, Organiser, Public Sector Union, 191-199 Thomas Street, Haymarket, New South Wales, 2000

JOHNS, Mr Brian Francis, Executive Director, Special Broadcasting Service, 4 Cliff Street, Milsons Point, New South Wales, 2061

LLOYD-JAMES, Mr Andrew Thomas, Head of Television, Special Broadcasting Service, 4 Cliff Street, Milsons Point, New South Wales, 2061

LUU, Mr Quang Tuong, Head of Radio, Special Broadcasting Service, 4 Cliff Street, Milsons Point, New South Wales, 2061

MACK, Mr Edward Carrington, MP, Parliament House, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, 2600

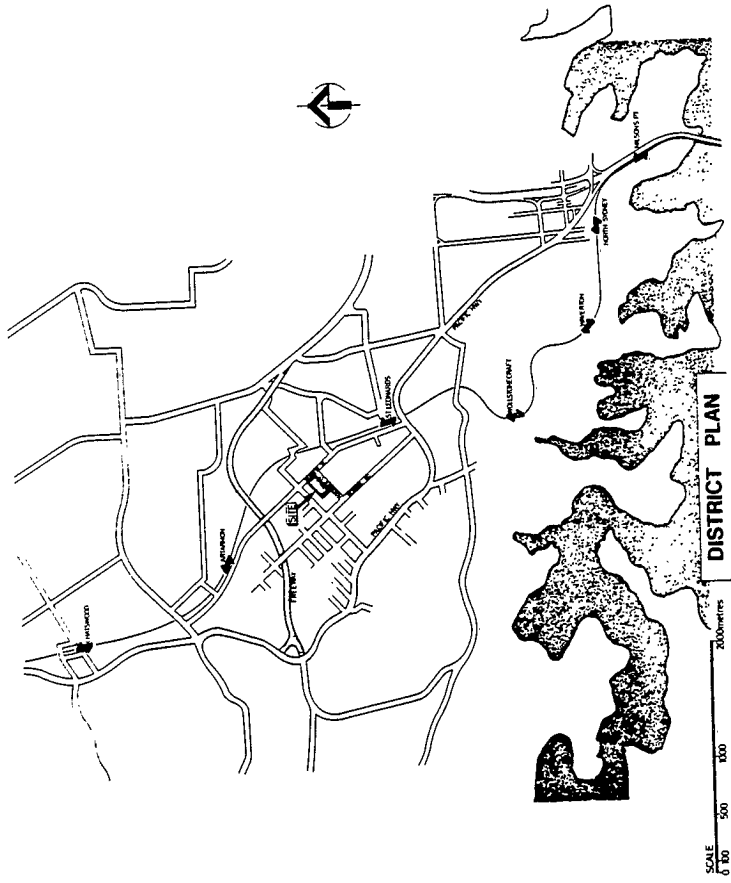
MADELEY, Mr Bryan, Director of Engineering, Special Broadcasting Service, 4 Cliff Street, New South Wales, 2061

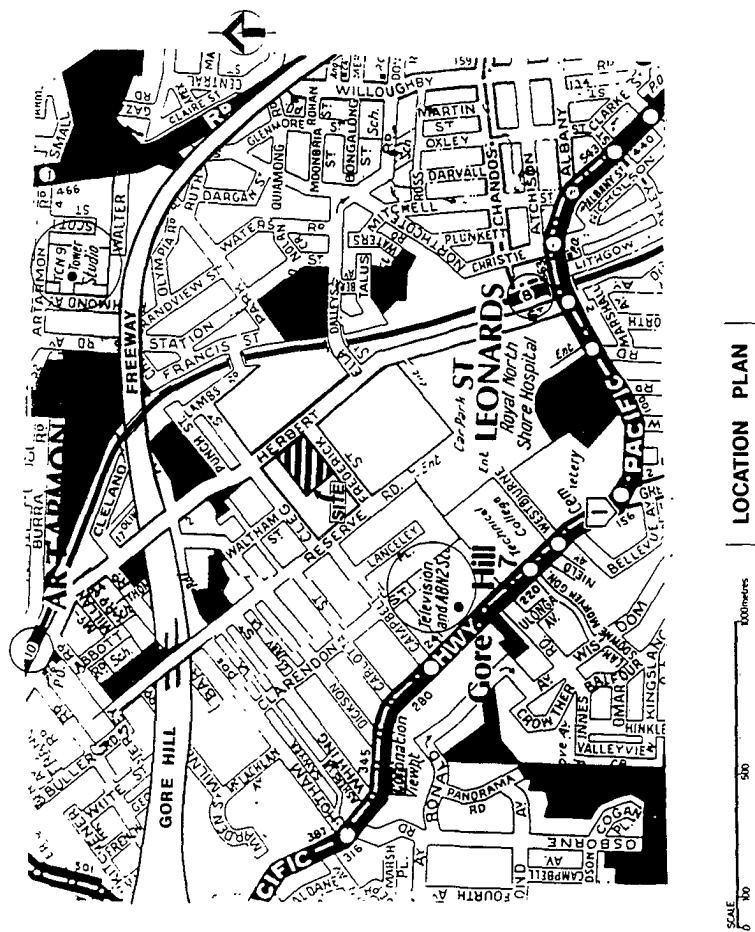
SENEVIRATNE, Mr Kalinga Upali, 66 Carlingford Road, Epping, New South Wales, 2121

SLATER, Mr Douglas John, Managing Director, Slater Farrell Consultants, 14 Keston Avenue, Mosman, New South Wales, 2088

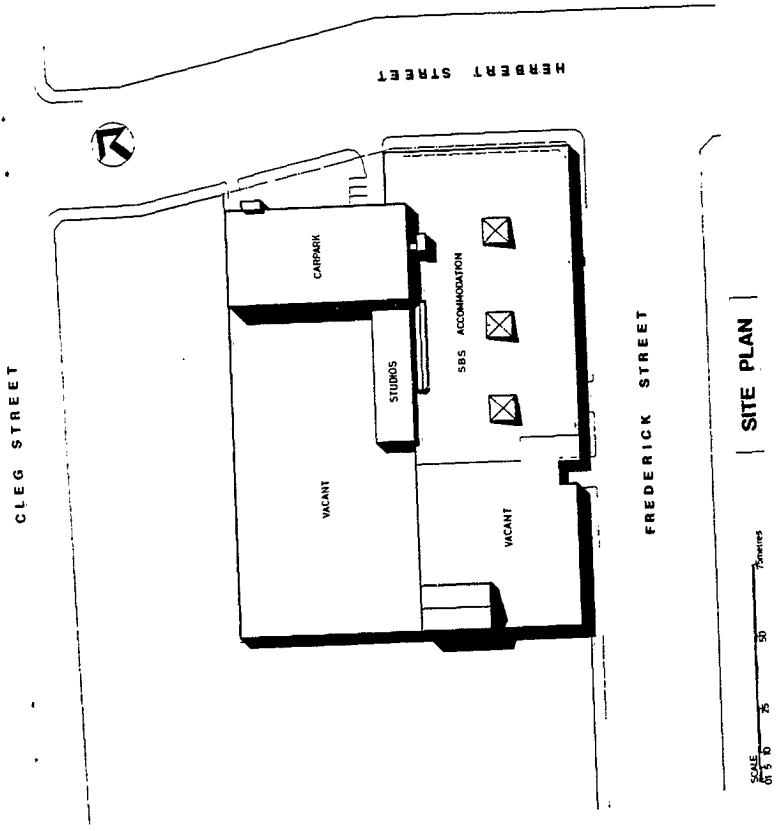
TSOUKALIDIS, Mr Dimitrios John, Workplace Delegate, Public Sector and Broadcasting Union, SBS, PO Box 028, Milsons Point, New South Wales, 2061

APPENDIX B



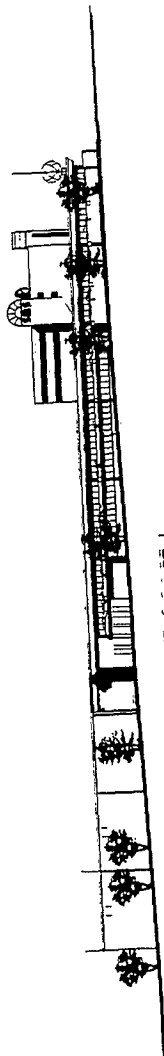


LOCATION PLAN

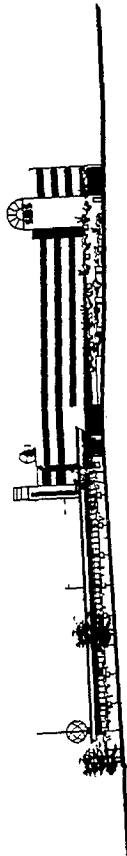


SITE PLAN



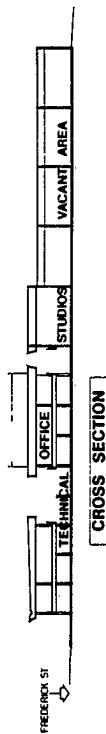
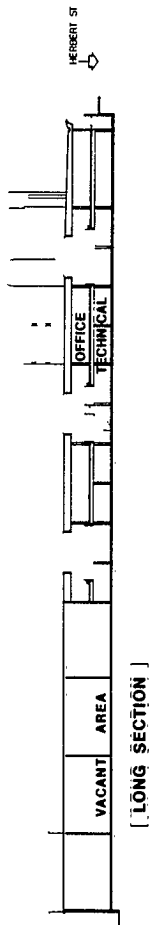


[SOUTH ELEVATION TO FREDERICK ST.]



[EAST ELEVATION TO HERBERT ST.]

| ELEVATIONS |



SCALE
0 5 10
5 meters

SECTIONS

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Demolition

1. Demolition work will be confined largely to the removal of redundant and obsolete building services, as well as existing ceilings, partitions and floor finishes. Equipment will be removed from the existing kitchens and canteen areas, as will all existing tiling and fittings in toilet areas.
2. A section of warehouse roof will be removed to provide an area for the construction of the new television studios, as will other roof areas associated with creating internal courtyards and glazed roof lights. An existing timber mezzanine floor, supported on steel columns and beams, will be removed for fire safety reasons.

Structural

3. The existing building footings are reinforced concrete and are designed to support suspended floors and general roof framing. New concrete footings will be provided as required for new structural systems.
4. The existing concrete slabs on grade are designed for industrial purposes to support a distributed load of 30kPa. Existing suspended concrete floor slabs are designed for normal office and amenity purposes, to support a live load of 3Kpa. The suspended slabs are a combination of in-situ and precast prestressed concrete, providing an effective 2-hour fire rating.
5. The existing roof framing is designed to support live loads of approximately 0.5kPa, and is constructed of open web steel trusses supported on steel columns. Roof purlins are folded steel and the roof sheeting is profiled steel with zincalume finish.
6. A new roof structure will be provided to the new television studio areas, with a 6m clearance to the lighting grid. The studio roof will be designed to provide the acoustic performance required for studio operations.

Architectural

7. The overall design concept will be to adapt the existing building fabric to provide functional and efficient spaces, appropriate to a creative broadcasting organisation. The existing two-storey section of the existing building complex, provides considerable scope to create the type of working environment required, at moderate cost. The following is a general description of the existing architectural elements, together with an outline of the proposed modifications.

8. Existing walls on common boundaries are constructed of concrete blocks with structural steel supports. Where necessary, these walls will be extended up to roof level to achieve the necessary fire rating. Existing walls on street boundaries are a combination of reinforced concrete and brick/concrete block construction. All exposed external walls will be cleaned as necessary.

9. Existing internal walls separating office and warehouse areas are constructed in concrete masonry, and will be extended and upgraded as necessary, incorporating fire-rated door openings where necessary. A new masonry wall in fire-rated construction will be provided to isolate the area under the carpark from the general warehouse area.

10. New walls to amenities and service areas will be constructed in masonry, with all amenity areas being fully tiled. To facilitate flexibility and allow future changes, walls in office and technical areas will be constructed of steel studs clad with plasterboard. Acoustically sensitive areas will have enhanced isolation by means of additional layers of plasterboard, and in some cases, twin-wall construction.

11. Existing ceilings in the first floor office areas will be upgraded with new acoustic ceiling tiles fitted in the existing suspension system. Existing ceilings in the amenities areas will be removed and replaced with new acoustic ceilings to match those in the office areas. A new suspended acoustic ceiling system will be provided throughout the ground floor office and technical areas, comprising mineral wool tiles laid in a metal suspension system. New suspended plasterboard ceilings will be provided in new amenities areas.

12. All existing floor finishes will be removed, and woollen carpets laid throughout the office and corridor areas. Floors in lightwells and amenities areas will be finished with ceramic tiling, while a new computer access floor with carpet tiles will be provided in all technical areas. Maintenance areas and stores will be provided with sheet vinyl, while the television studios will have vinyl tiles laid on a specially levelled floor. Appropriate floor finishes for radio studios will be provided.

The access arrangements for disabled persons will be facilitated by level entries to both floors of the building, while a passenger lift will provide ease of movement between levels. Dedicated car parking for disabled persons will be provided at ground level, adjacent to the main entry, and toilets and other facilities specifically designed for use by disabled persons will be provided within the building.

13. Energy conservation measures will include extensive use of natural light within the building, use of solar hot water heaters for kitchen and toilet areas, natural ventilation to the multi-level carpark and zoning of the building to minimise air-conditioning and lighting costs outside of normal working hours.

Mechanical

14. Existing redundant heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems and equipment will be removed. New ventilation and air-conditioning systems will be installed in strategic locations to provide conditions appropriate to the specific functions within the SBS occupied areas.

15. Smoke control systems will be incorporated for improved fire safety in warehouse, technical and office areas. Existing automatic roof vents in the warehouse roof will be overhauled to ensure proper action in case of need.

16. A hydraulic lift will be provided in a central location to allow ease of movement between floors for disabled persons.

Electrical

17. The existing electrical supply and on-site substation will be maintained, although existing power reticulation associated with redundant electrical and mechanical process equipment will be removed. Metered power supply will be provided to the areas that the SBS does not propose to occupy.

18. The existing electrical switchboards will be repaired and upgraded with new control equipment, and new switchboards will be provided as required. Electrical power will be provided to all offices, technical spaces and studio areas, including power to an uninterruptable power supply and communication equipment. General power outlets will be provided to normal office standards.

19. New light fittings will be provided as appropriate to office, store, technical, studio and circulation spaces, including special lighting where required. A new emergency lighting system, including illuminated exit signs, will be provided throughout the complex, in accordance with the relevant regulations.

20. The existing telephone system will be removed and replaced with a new PABX installation, including the necessary modifications and rewiring of the telephone sub-circuits.

21. The existing emergency generation plant will be relocated from the current leased premises, and reinstalled to provide the required emergency power supply.

Fire Services

22. The existing wet pipe sprinkler system will be retained and upgraded as required to suit the new floor layout and in order to comply with current fire regulations. A new fire hydrant and hose reel system will be provided throughout the entire building.

23. Fire detectors will be installed in the new air-conditioning and ventilation systems, in accordance with current regulations.

24. Fire extinguishers will be provided in locations to be advised by the NSW Fire Brigade, and an emergency evacuation system will be installed.