



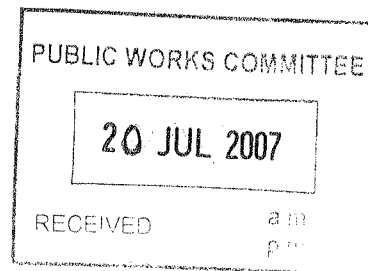
FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA

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20 July 2007

Mr John Fuhrman
 Inquiry Secretary
 Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
 Parliament House
 Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Mr Fuhrman,

Re: HMAS Creswell Redevelopment Jervis Bay Territory – Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

This submission, in respect of the above proposal, is made on the basis of my experience in heritage matters as a former Judge of the Land and Environment Court of New South Wales and in my capacity as a member of the Royal Australian Navy Reserve.

The submission hereunder is made in my personal capacity and not in my capacity as a Judge of the Federal Court of Australia.

1. Environmental and Heritage

HMAS Creswell is of vital significance to Australia's naval heritage. Its origins can be traced back to 1899 when the Australian colonies, prior to Federation, prepared a report for the British Admiralty which emphasised the need for the training of Australian Forces to undertake sea defence of Australia.

Captain Creswell, the Naval Commandant of Queensland, revised the report and presented it to the new Federal Government. The report emphasised not only the need for our own Navy but also for the training of local forces. In 1904 Captain Creswell (later to become Vice Admiral Sir William R Creswell) became the first naval member of the Commonwealth Naval Forces (see 'Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918', *The Royal Australian Navy* Volume IX).

The need to establish Naval training bases resulted from the *Naval Defence Act 1912* (Cth). Shortly after World War I Lord Jellicoe visited Australia and provided the Commonwealth Government with advice concerning training (see *Jellicoe* by A Temple Patterson, published 1969).

It is from these origins that HMAS Creswell was created for the very purpose of providing suitable training facilities for Australia's new Navy.

The replacement of the original buildings, now demolished, and restoration of other buildings around the Quarterdeck will reinstate the original concept of the training facility, and preserve the cultural significance of the base. The attached photograph shows the nucleus of the original training establishment.

The *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) provides recognition of the need to protect places of National Heritage significance. Although HMAS Creswell is not (to my knowledge) listed, I have no doubt that in due course it will be listed for protection under this Act

2. Operational

HMAS Creswell is Australia's officer and senior sailor training facility. From my personal experience the current facilities are barely adequate for trainees. There is a very real need to upgrade the standard of much of the accommodation and existing facilities, as well as to provide a swimming pool for training purposes.

The base is displayed to the public whenever there is a passing out parade and on open days and it is frequently visited by representatives of international naval forces. An appropriate standard of buildings, accommodation and facilities is required to demonstrate Australia's strong naval tradition which is the foundation of its present day operations.

HMAS Creswell should be of a similar standard to that of the Royal Military College, Duntroon, a premier training facility of the Army. At present the facilities at HMAS Creswell are noticeably inferior and fall short of expected standards. If we are to rely on maintaining a strong and efficient navy, adequate training facilities are essential.

3. Summary

I commend to the Committee the proposals which are described in the Statement of Evidence from the Department of Defence, dated May 2007.

The restoration of the Heritage buildings will be welcomed by the RAN and by the community. They are vital for the RAN's and Australia's heritage.

The upgrading of existing facilities and the provision of new training facilities is necessary to maintain proper standards for an Australian Defence Forces training facility.

Yours sincerely,

Dennis Cowdroy OAM (Justice)
(CMDR RANR)

