

Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration

ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates Hearing – May 2010

Finance and Deregulation Portfolio

Outcome 2, Program 2.2

Topic: Surplus Commonwealth Land

Question reference number: F 112

Type of Question: Written

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 9 July 2010

Number of Pages: 4

Senator Humphries asked:

- a) In 2007 the then Opposition Leader promised to release surplus Commonwealth land. How much Commonwealth land has been released since December 2007?
 - i. For the land that has been released, can the Department please provide the following information for each site:
- b) Is there any land in the pipeline of release?
- c) For the land that is scheduled for release, can the Department please provide the following information for each site:
 - i. Location of the site
 - ii. Amount of land at the site
 - iii. Land valuation of the land
 - iv. Anticipated final sale price
 - v. Anticipated amount of revenue to the Commonwealth generated by the land sale.

Answer:

a) In relation to the release of surplus Commonwealth land since December 2007, the Department of Finance and Deregulation (Finance) is aware of the following disposals. Some disposals involve sales on the open market.

Since December 2007, the Commonwealth has undertaken open market sales of the following properties:

- the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) site at Cannon Hill, QLD (approximately 6.8 hectares (ha));
- the former Department of Defence (Defence) Bushmead Rifle Range at Hazelmere, WA (approximately 273 ha);
- the former Defence rail siding at Jennings, NSW (approximately 4.68 ha);
- Defence land Hobart, TAS (approximately 0.06 ha);
- Defence land at Whyalla, SA (approximately 0.2 ha);
- two properties managed by the Finance at Lithgow, NSW (approximately 0.2 ha);
- a property managed by Finance at Dampier, WA (approximately 0.13 ha);
- a property managed by Finance at Barton, ACT (approximately 1.9 ha); and
- a property managed by Finance at Dapto, NSW (approximately 0.08 ha).

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Attempts have also been made to dispose of the Defence sites at 'West Wattle Grove', Moorebank (approximately 55 ha), and Schofields (approximately 146 ha) in NSW, and the CSIRO site at Indooroopilly, QLD (approximately 7.2 ha), on the open market. These sales were not achieved, principally due to the downturn in the 2008-2009 property market. The 'West Wattle Grove' site is no longer considered surplus. The Commonwealth will pursue options for the disposal of the Schofields and Indooroopilly sites in the future.

Other sales can occur on a priority basis to State and Local Government and to Commonwealth funded organisations at either market or concessional rates.

The priority (including concessional priority) sales of:

- the Fort Scratchley site managed by Finance at Newcastle, NSW (approximately 3.54 ha), to the Newcastle City Council;
- land managed by Finance at Goorooyarroo, NSW (approximately 24 ha), to the NSW Government;
- Defence land at Moorebank, NSW (approximately 0.49 ha), to the NSW Fire Service;
- Defence land at Moorebank, NSW (approximately 0.38 ha), to Integral Energy;
- Defence land at Oakey, QLD (approximately 1.29 ha), to the Jondaryan Shire Council;
- Defence land at Bullsbrook, WA (approximately 2.2 ha), to the City of Swan;
- Defence land at Gungahlin, ACT (approximately 52 ha), to the ACT Government;
- Defence land at Muirhead, NT (approximately 15 ha), to Defence Housing Australia (DHA);
- Defence land at Casula, NSW (approximately 0.14 ha), to RailCorp NSW;
- Defence land at Ingleburn, NSW (approximately 1.31 ha), to the Sydney Water Corporation;
- Defence land at Wodonga, VIC (approximately 19.89 ha), to the City of Wodonga;
- Defence land at Fremantle, WA (approximately 1.5 ha), to the City of Fremantle; and
- 23 properties managed by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs in Charleville, QLD, to the QLD Government, Indigenous Business Australia and Aboriginal Hostels Limited.

The Government has also agreed to priority sales of:

- Defence Site Lawson, ACT (approximately 149 ha), to DHA;
- Defence land at North Penrith, NSW (approximately 43.7 ha), to Landcom;
- Defence Site Maribyrnong, VIC (approximately 128 ha), to VicUrban;
- Defence land at Schofields, NSW (approximately 5 ha), to the Transport and Infrastructure Development Corporation;
- Defence land at Singleton, NSW (approximately 1 ha), to RailCorp NSW; and

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- Defence land at Port Augusta, SA (approximately 3 ha), to the City of Port Augusta.

The sale of each site is being finalised between Defence and the purchaser.

The transfer of:

- land at the former Defence Jezzine Barracks, QLD (approximately 12.41 ha), to the Townsville City Council; and
- land at the former Defence HMAS Platypus, NSW (approximately 1.84 ha), to the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust.

b) Yes.

c) i – iii. The Register of Surplus Commonwealth Land Potentially Suitable for Housing and Community Outcomes (the Register) lists properties intended for disposal up to 2013. The Register is available on the Finance website (<http://www.finance.gov.au/property/lands-acquisition/register-surplus-commonwealth-land.html>). Below is detail from the Register, identifying the location and amount of land at each site.

State/Territory	Property*	Owner Agency	Site Area (approximate hectares)	Target Time for Release
ACT	Belconnen Communications Station, Baldwin Drive, Lawson	Department of Defence	149	2009-10
ACT	Banks Street, Yarralumla	CSIRO	1.92	2009-10
NSW	Former Naval Stores Depot, Spurway Street, Ermington	Department of Defence	16	2009-10
NSW	Ingleburn Army Camp, Old Campbelltown Road, Ingleburn	Department of Defence	309	2011-12
NSW	North Penrith, 'Thornton Park'	Department of Defence	43.7	2009-10
NSW	Nirimba Drive, Quakers Hill, Schofields	Department of Defence	146	2009-10
QLD	120 to 140 Meiers Road, Indooroopilly	CSIRO	7.2	2009-10
QLD	Ibis Avenue (Bruce Highway) Rockhampton	CSIRO	32.4	2009-10
QLD	233 and 240 Middle Street, Cleveland	CSIRO	2.7	2009-10
QLD	University Drive, Douglas (Townsville)	CSIRO	16.6	2009-10
SA	Elizabeth North Training Depot, Broadmeadows Road, Smithfield	Department of Defence	33	2012-13

Other Commonwealth properties scheduled for release, and not suitable for housing and community outcomes, are identified in the Commonwealth Land Audit, however, this information is classified and not available for public release.

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c) iv – v. The Commonwealth Property Disposals Policy provides that Commonwealth property, having no alternative efficient use, is to be sold on the open market at full market value.

Where a sale would facilitate housing and/or community outcomes, or other Commonwealth or cooperative policy initiatives, a priority sale (direct to purchaser without the property first being offered on the open market) to State or Local Governments, or to Commonwealth funded organisations, may be arranged with the sale to be negotiated on the basis of the intended end-use. Concessional sales are those priority sales concluded at a purchase price below market value.