



**Australian Services Union
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Mr. Graham Perrett MP
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Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
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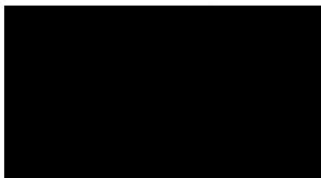
Dear Chair Perrett

Supplementary submission - Proposed Fit-out of New Leased Premises at 6 Parramatta Square
The Australian Services Union wishes to respond the ATO's supplementary submission 2.

We have provided with this submission two documents the ATO provided recently to the ASU and its staff at Parramatta. They do not address the issues we raised with the Committee in our submission dated 16 September.

We now briefly set out below the ASU's responses to the ATO's supplementary submission.

Yours sincerely



Jeff Lapidos
Branch Secretary
ASU Taxation Officers' Branch

1. ATO Consultation with staff and their Unions has been inadequate.

The ASU believes the ATO's consultation to date has been inadequate because the ATO has not advised how it will address the concerns we raised with it, as indicated below.

2. Reduction in total space

The ATO has not explained why it has reduced its net lettable area or address how the Commonwealth might benefit from an increased area, given the need for this in our submission. We accept this point may be beyond the scope of the Committee's authority, but say it is relevant to an assessment of how well the proposed fit out meets the Commonwealth's needs.

3. Prayer Room

The ATO appears embarrassed to confirm it will make a dedicated prayer room available. It should make this commitment and provide staff and their Unions with the details of how it proposes it would be fitted out. Is one prayer room big enough for over 1,400 staff in Western Sydney. This may well depend on the size and facilities of the room. The ATO approach of putting the onus on staff to propose the number, size, and level of services provided for the room, and any additional amenities such as wash areas is unreasonable. The ATO says it has experience with these things. It should clearly state its proposal and why, so staff and their Unions can propose any changes they think are required.

4. Lunch and break out facilities

The ATO's figure of 45% of staff is not helpful. It should advise the number of desks it proposes for each floor, and the exact number and type of tables and chairs it proposes for each floor. Staff and their Unions can then assess the adequacy of the proposal. The ATO assertion that the number of amenities, such as fridges and microwaves, will depend on the number of breakout areas and number of staff on each floor, provides us with no information at all. We submit the Committee should be able to take into account the concerns of staff and their Unions in its assessment of the ATO proposal for this aspect of the fit out.

5. Toilet facilities and squat toilets

The ATO first says that this is the landlord's responsibility and not relevant to the fit out. The ASU suggests to the Committee that it is within the scope of its authority to consider the adequacy or otherwise of a new building's toilet and bathroom facilities. The ATO's Parramatta office draws its employees from across Western Sydney. It is one of the most multi-cultural regions in Australia. The ATO should tell its staff and their Unions exactly how the bathrooms on each floor are to be configured, how many stalls, urinals, showers and sinks will be on each floor. It is grossly unreasonable for the ATO to say it will not consider the use of 'squat' toilets unless individual tax officers come forward to request them. The ATO should take it from the ASU that it is desirable to have at least one squat toilet in each bathroom, both male and female, on each of its floors and ensure this is provided.

6. Disability bathrooms

The ATO again says there is nothing to see here because the building will meet national standards. But these standards are out of date. We know this from our experience of the current Parramatta office. What is the cost to the ATO of ensuring that the disability bathrooms on each of its floors have a door which can be easily operated on both sides by a disabled employee? The ATO says it will wait until confronted with the situation. The ATO recently altered a disabled bathroom door at its Parramatta office to meet the needs of a disabled employee. It took months to arrange. It should be forward thinking and make provision for this now.

7. First Aid Rooms

The ATO again provides no detail of the size or the facilities of the first aid rooms, other than it meets a Code of Practice. The ASU has members in the ATO who are first aid officers. They have raised their concern with our Union about the need for a toilet in each first aid room. These first aid officers consider it unreasonable to expect a distressed employee to have to rush out of the first aid room to either vomit or discharge other bodily functions in a 'nearby' toilet. What happens if the employee does not or cannot make it to the toilet? The ATO is silent on the real issues which first aid officers need to address in practice.

8. Hot desking

The ATO talks about how its proposal for hot desking meets the ATO's business needs. It says nothing about how it meets the professional needs of its employees, which is a commitment in the ATO Enterprise Agreement 2017. It appears uninterested in its commitment to satisfy the professional needs of its employees.

9. Lockers

The ATO says the proposed lockers are adequate. The ASU disagrees. Everyone at the Parramatta office is accustomed to having a dedicated desk with a unit with drawers and shelves etc. close by. The proposal is radically different. The ATO has not said who gave the feedback that its proposal is "sufficient" for staff needs. Was it one person? Hundreds? Which office were they at? When was this feedback provided. It has not said whether it also received feedback from employees indicating a need for larger, more sophisticated lockers. Frankly, the ASU finds it unbelievable that no ATO employee has indicated a concern about the size of the proposed lockers. How much more expensive would it be to provide larger, more user friendly lockers? Does the ATO consider this would be an undesirable luxury? It would seem so.

10. Bicycle racks, showers and lockers to encourage walking, running and cycling

The ATO says that full details of these facilities have been provided. But the ASU could not find the details of how many bike racks, showers, toilets and lockers will be provided for males and females or how they will be configured.