

12 Oct 22

Committee Secretary  
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

**Submission to the 'Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on the Robertson Barracks Base Improvements (closing 25 October 22)'**

As involved with Defence in Darwin I need to make this a confidential submission. My points in response to the 'Defence Department of Defence—Robertson Barracks Base Improvements Submission 1 (dated September)' on the [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary Business/Committees/Joint/Public Works/RobertsonBarracks/Submissions](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Public_Works/RobertsonBarracks/Submissions) site are:

Compared to the older well shaded and naturally ventilated accommodation blocks that have now been allocated to the United States Marine Corps personnel living at Robertson Barracks as part of the Marine Rotational Force – Darwin, United States Force Posture Initiatives, the design of the new living-in accommodation rooms will clearly require air-conditioning for much of the year. The '... optimised facades for solar access and insulation, with shading shrouds on living-in accommodation and on the western façade of the mess', will stop most natural breezes from the directions of the normal prevailing winds. The proposed shading to the North and South of the windows, along with small sliding windows rather than having large expanses of louvres (as with USMC rooms), means there will be little effective natural ventilation. Could the Public Works Committee consider the negative operational and health impacts of air-conditioning on the acclimatisation of Australian Army personnel, as well as the diminished habitability and additional energy cost of having to live in air-conditioned rooms rather than having access to best natural ventilation for most of the year?

The group external balconies on the western side of the proposed living-in accommodation blocks will need much more shading if they are to be bearable in the afternoon sun. Could the committee ensure there are arrangements so the tables and chairs are shaded from 4:30 PM onwards (after work hours), while maintaining maximum ventilation with bifold doors and insect screening on both ends on the rooms adjoining the balconies?

There is no public transport to Robertson Barracks, and private e-scooters are illegal in the NT. However, e-bikes are feasible particularly in the dry season. Nevertheless, many Australian Army personnel prefer conventional bikes for their fitness benefit. Secure/accessible ground level storage could be considered for conventional and e-bikes. Furthermore, could the committee also consider the Australian Army

personnel preference for private cars and hence the requirement for shaded car parking? Could the committee also consider providing shaded storage and significant charging arrangements for private EV as particularly important to future proof transport arrangements for living-in personnel?

Could the committee consider provision of external clotheslines in addition to ‘...heat pump dryers in the living-in accommodation and installation of clothes lines in laundry rooms ....’, as being the most effective and environmentally effective clothes drying option for most of the year? External clotheslines are also required for the mosquito treatment process of Australian Army uniforms in North Australia.

Could the committee consider provision of solar hot water with 25% solar electrical battery backup to replace the Defence proposal for gas backup?