
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

SIXTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL REPORT

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Membership of the Thirty-fifth Public Works Committee December 2004



Hon Judi Moylan MP
Chair



Mr Brendan O'Connor MP
Deputy Chair



Senator Alan Ferguson



Mr John Forrest MP



Senator Michael Forshaw



Mr Harry Jenkins MP



Mr Bernie Ripoll MP



Senator the Hon Judith Troeth



Mr Barry Wakelin MP

Membership of the Thirty-fourth Public Works Committee 2003 – August 2004



Hon Judi Moylan MP
Chair



Mr Brendan O'Connor MP
Deputy Chair



Senator Richard Colbeck



Senator Alan Ferguson



Senator Michael Forshaw



Mr Harry Jenkins MP



Mr Peter Lindsay MP



Mr Jim Lloyd MP



Mr Bernie Ripoll MP

Mr Lloyd was discharged from the Committee on 12 August 2004 when he joined the Ministry and was replaced by Mr Barry Wakelin MP.

Introduction

- 1.1 Section 16 of the *Public Works Act 1969* (the Act) requires that the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works report to the Parliament annually on its proceedings during the preceding calendar year. This is the Sixty-eighth Annual Report and covers the work of the Thirty-fourth and Thirty-fifth Committees for the period 1 January 2004 to 31 December 2004.
- 1.2 This report has four chapters, the contents of which are as follows:
 - an overview of the Committee's role and functions;
 - a summary of reports tabled by the Committee in the year ended 31 December 2004, and the Government responses to each report;
 - details of Committee activities other than inquiries; and
 - noteworthy issues raised in Committee reports and meetings during 2004.

Role

- 1.3 The role and operation of the Public Works Committee are defined in the Act. The Committee's primary duty is to consider each public work referred to it in accordance with the terms of the Act and to report its recommendations and conclusions to both Houses of the Parliament.
- 1.4 Under the Act, the Committee is required to consider all public works estimated to cost over six million dollars¹ and to report to Parliament on:
- the purpose of the work and its suitability for that purpose;
 - the need for, or the advisability of, carrying out the work;
 - whether the money to be expended on the work is being spent in the most cost effective manner;
 - the amount of revenue the work will generate for the Commonwealth, if that is its purpose; and
 - the present and prospective public value of the work.²
- 1.5 In reporting upon a work, the Committee may make any recommendations that it believes will deliver better value for the Commonwealth's dollar.

Establishment

- 1.6 In accordance with Section 7 of the Act, the Committee comprises nine members, including a Chair and Deputy Chair. In 2004 the Chair was the Hon Judi Moylan MP and the Deputy Chair was Mr Brendan O'Connor MP.
- 1.7 The Thirty-fourth Committee was appointed by the Parliament on 14 February 2002 and served until the prorogation of the Fortieth Parliament on 31 August 2004. The Thirty-fifth Committee was appointed on 6 December 2004.
- 1.8 The Committee is supported by a secretariat with staff employed by the Department of the House of Representatives. Throughout 2004 the

¹ *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Part III, Section 18 (8)

² *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Part III, Section 17

secretariat also supported the Parliamentary Standing Committee on ASIO, ASIS and DSD, and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories. Staff who supported the Public Works Committee were:

- Secretary - Mrs Margaret Swieringa;
- Inquiry Secretaries – Ms Vivienne Courto and Ms Sara Edson;
- Administrative Staff – Mrs Tiana Di Iulio; Ms Emily Davies and Mr Peter Ratas.

References to the Committee

- 1.9 Public works are referred to the Committee by means of a motion moved in either House of Parliament³. Works may also be referred by order of the Governor-General, at any time when the Parliament is not in session or when the House of Representatives is adjourned for a period exceeding one month.⁴
- 1.10 In 2004 all works examined by the Committee were referred in the House of Representatives on a motion moved by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration.
- 1.11 A public work referred to the Committee under Section 18 of the Act cannot be commenced before the Committee has investigated the proposal and made its report to both Houses of Parliament.⁵ Commencement, as interpreted under the Act, includes entering into a contract for the execution of the work or part of the work.⁶

The Committee's Operations

Conduct of Inquiries

- 1.12 Upon referral of a public work, the proponent Commonwealth agency provides the Committee with a statement of evidence (submission),

3 *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Section 18 (1).

4 *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Section 18 (4).

5 *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Section 18 (5).

6 *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Section 5

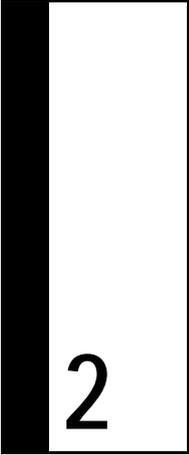
which contains comprehensive details of the works proposal. Referring agencies are required to describe in full all elements substantially affecting the cost of the project.

- 1.13 The works inquiry is then advertised by the Committee, usually by newspaper, and submissions are sought from organisations and individuals who may have an interest in the proposed work. In order to assist members of the public in making a submission, the complete evidence supplied by the referring agency, any other submissions received, and general information on the Committee's function and procedures are made available on the Internet.
- 1.14 Following the receipt of submissions, the Committee conducts a public hearing into the proposed work. The public hearing provides an opportunity for the proponent agency to elaborate on points made in its submission and to respond to any concerns raised by other stakeholders. Other parties who have made written submissions may also be invited to give oral evidence at the hearing. In order to facilitate the participation of local stakeholders, the public hearing is usually held at or near the site of the proposed works. This also gives Committee members the chance to inspect the works site at first-hand.
- 1.15 Having completed an inquiry, the Committee presents its findings in a report to Parliament, in which it makes recommendations on the works proposal. As a scrutineer of public expenditure, the Committee may make any recommendations it deems necessary to ensure that the proposed works deliver the best possible value for money. This may include recommending that a work does not proceed, or recommending that it proceed pending the fulfilment of certain conditions. The Committee's reports are available through:
- legal deposit libraries;
 - the Committee's secretariat; and
 - the Committee's webpage: www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/pwc
- 1.16 While the Government will normally consider recommendations made by the Committee as soon as reports are tabled, the Committee has adopted the practice of forwarding reports to those Ministers whose portfolios are responsible for the implementation of the Committee's recommendations. Reports are also forwarded to relevant Commonwealth agency heads for information and, when appropriate, for response to recommendations.

- 1.17 Each report is forwarded to the Minister for Finance and Administration as the relevant portfolio Minister for public works.

Government Responses

- 1.18 The Government usually responds to each report by way of a motion in the House of Representatives, to the effect that it is expedient for the work to proceed. Current practice is for the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration to move the expediency motion and in doing so, to detail the Government's response to the Committee's recommendations. When the expediency motion has been passed by the House, a public work may proceed.



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The Year in Review

Overview of Activities

2.1 Committee activities during 2004 comprised:

- 15 private meetings;
- nine public hearings; and
- seven inspections.

2.2 Members of the Committee also attended an Information Day for the Department of Defence Infrastructure Asset Development Branch in Canberra and the National Conference of Public Works and Environment Committees in Melbourne and Lorne, Vic. These activities are discussed in Chapter 4 of this report.

Committee Inquiries

2.3 During 2004 the Committee conducted inquiries into nine public works to the value of \$540 million. Summaries of the issues raised and conclusions reached during the Committee's investigations are provided in Chapter 3.

Works Exempt from Committee Scrutiny

- 2.4 The Act provides that certain works and organisations may be exempt from scrutiny by the Committee. Such exemption may be granted because:
- the work is urgent;
 - the work is being undertaken for defence purposes and scrutiny of the work would be contrary to the public interest;
 - the Governor-General is satisfied that the proponent agency is engaged in trading or competition with another body; or
 - the work is repetitive; that is, substantially similar to other works that have been, or are being, carried out.
- 2.5 In 2004 three works were exempt from Committee scrutiny. The circumstances of each exemption are briefly outlined below.

Special Forces Training Facilities for the Tactical Assault Group (East) Holsworthy, NSW

- 2.6 On 6 May 2004 the Department of Defence (Defence) notified the Committee of its intention to obtain an Order from the Governor-General to seek an exemption under Section 18 8(c) of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969* for the construction of Special Forces Training Facilities at Holsworthy, NSW.
- 2.7 The works, estimated to cost \$80 million, comprised counter-terrorist training facilities, indoor and outdoor ranges, and simulators. Both the Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon Robert Hill, and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration, Mr Peter Slipper, concurred that the works had national security implications and were therefore not suitable for scrutiny by the Committee.
- 2.8 On 27 May 2004 the Governor-General ordered that, as the proposed works were for defence purposes, the reference of the works to the Committee would be contrary to the public interest.

Extension to the Joint Electronic Warfare Operational Support Unit Facilities, Edinburgh, SA

- 2.9 On 18 May 2004 Defence again wrote to the Committee stating its intention to seek an exemption on national security grounds for the extension of facilities for the Joint Electronic Operational Support Unit at Edinburgh, SA.
- 2.10 The scope of the proposed works included the provision of working accommodation, specialist analysis and laboratory areas and training facilities, and was estimated to cost \$19.9 million. Defence stated that disclosure of the nature and scale of the project would be contrary to national security and may impede the operational capability of the unit.
- 2.11 On 10 June 2004 the Governor-General ordered that, as the proposed works were for defence purposes, the reference of the works to the Committee would be contrary to the public interest.

Refurbishment of ANZAC Park East and ANZAC Park West Buildings, Parkes, ACT

- 2.12 The proposed refurbishment of ANZAC Park East and ANZAC Park West buildings was referred to the Committee for consideration and report on Wednesday, 26 May 2004. The works comprised refurbishment of the two buildings, estimated to cost \$83.7 million, and fit-out of ANZAC Park West for the Australian Federal Police (AFP) at an estimated cost of \$22 million. The proponent agency for the works was the Department of Finance and Administration (DoFA). A public hearing into the proposed works was scheduled for 2 August 2004.
- 2.13 On 15 June 2004 DoFA wrote to the Committee expressing concern that the anticipated federal election may cause a considerable delay in the Committee's consideration and reporting of the work. DoFA stated that the AFP had received advice from its landlord to the effect that no extension of the lease on its current premises in Civic, ACT, would be available. DoFA explained that, should such a delay occur, the ensuing accommodation crisis would have serious financial and operational implications for the AFP.
- 2.14 In a letter to Mr Slipper of 17 June 2004 the Committee expressed itself satisfied that the ANZAC Park refurbishment project was sufficiently urgent to warrant an exemption from scrutiny under Section 18 (8) b of the Act. The Committee advised that the referral be withdrawn and that the work be made subject of an expediency motion.
- 2.15 On 24 June 2004 the motion was rescinded and the House of Representatives agreed, by reason of the urgent nature of the work, it was expedient that it

should be carried out without referral to the Committee. The following day, the Committee received a comprehensive briefing on the project from DoFA.

Concurrent Documentation

- 2.16 Concurrent documentation is the preparation of contract documentation before the Committee has completed its inquiry and reported to Parliament.
- 2.17 In 2004, requests for concurrent documentation were made in respect of six of the nine works referred to the Committee. Details of the works subject to concurrent documentation in 2004 are provided below. Information on the Committee's concerns in respect of concurrent documentation can be found in Chapter 4.

Proposed Fit-out of New Leased Premises for the Department of Health and Ageing at Scarborough House, Woden Town Centre, ACT

- 2.18 Upon conclusion of the public hearing on 22 March 2004 the Department of Health and Ageing (Health) requested the Committee's approval to proceed with design contract documentation concurrent with parliamentary consideration of the fit-out project. Health stated that concurrent design was required in order to maximise integration of its required fit-out with base-building works, thus minimising costs.
- 2.19 The Committee considered the Department's request and granted approval for concurrent documentation on 25 March 2004.

Provision of Facilities for Headquarters Joint Operations Command, NSW

- 2.20 On 21 June 2004 Defence requested the Committee's approval to progress its private financing procurement strategy for the Headquarters Joint Operations Command project, prior to the tabling of the Committee's report on the work. Defence explained that this would enable it to request proposals from short-listed consortia, but would not commit the Commonwealth to a private financing delivery option.
- 2.21 The Committee agreed to Defence's request on 24 June 2004.

Mid-life Upgrade of Existing Chancery at the Australian High Commission, Wellington, New Zealand

- 2.22 In a letter to the Committee dated 24 June 2004 the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) sought permission to commence preparation of contract documentation and short-listing activities concurrent with the Committee's consideration of the proposed Wellington Chancery upgrade works. The reason for the request was to ensure that the project would be completed according to plan in March 2006.
- 2.23 The Committee gave approval for documentation to proceed.

New Collection Storage Facility for the National Library of Australia at Hume, ACT

- 2.24 Immediately following the public hearing conducted on 13 August 2004, the National Library of Australia (NLA) sought approval to progress design development in parallel with the Committee's consideration of the proposed new collection storage facility. The NLA stated that collection growth would create a demand for new storage by early 2006 and that this timeline could only be achieved if a design consultant were engaged by November 2004.
- 2.25 The Committee considered and agreed to the request later the same day.

New East Building for the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, ACT

- 2.26 In a letter dated 12 August 2004 the Australian War Memorial sought the Committee's approval to proceed with design and tender documentation in respect of the New East Building. The chief point of concern for the War Memorial was that an election may be called prior to the tabling of the Committee's report and that this would result in significant delays in the project schedule. The War Memorial added that no contracts would be signed prior to parliamentary approval of the work.
- 2.27 The Committee agreed to the request on 13 August 2004.

Proposed Fit-out of New Leased Premises for the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet at 1 National Circuit, Barton, ACT

- 2.28 On 30 August 2004 the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet wrote to the Committee requesting permission to sign an Agreement to Lease prior to the completion of the Committee's inquiry into the proposed fit-out works. The Department explained that this would permit integration of fit-out works during construction, thereby obviating the need to undertake design

alteration work after the awarding of the construction tender contract, and resulting in cost benefits.

- 2.29 The Committee considered the Department's request and granted approval for the commencement of documentation activities on 31 August 2004.

Summary of Reports and Government Responses

Sixty-Fifth General Report

- 3.1 In accordance with Section 16 of the Act, the Committee tabled its sixty-seventh Annual Report on 10 March 2004. In 2004 the Committee tabled nine reports with a total estimated value of \$540 million. A list of the works reported on in 2004, and their estimated costs, is provided at Appendix A. Summaries of the reports tabled in 2004 follow, together with the Government response to each report

Site Remediation and Construction of Infrastructure for the Defence site at Randwick Barracks, Sydney – Interim Works (First Report of 2004)

- 3.2 The first report of 2004 presented interim findings and recommendations in relation to the proposed site remediation and construction of infrastructure for the Defence site at Randwick, Sydney. The proposal to carry out remediation and infrastructure works at Randwick Barracks was referred to the Committee for consideration and report on 12 December 2002. The project was estimated to cost \$85.4 million and it was envisaged that works would commence in June 2003, and be completed in 2006.

- 3.3 The need for the works was prompted by the nationwide rationalisation of Defence logistics and supply arrangements, which resulted in the closure of much of the former Navy Stores at Randwick Barracks. Defence decided to prepare the surplus portion of the Randwick site for sale and eventual residential development.
- 3.4 Late in 2002 Defence wrote to the Committee requesting that remediation of Stage 1A of the site, estimated to cost \$4.6 million, be approved as a separate medium work prior to consideration of the remainder of the project. Early approval of this project element was sought to enable Defence to meet revenue targets for the 2002 – 2003 financial year. The Committee approved this request on the understanding that the remainder of the works would be subject to full parliamentary scrutiny.
- 3.5 A public hearing into the proposed redevelopment works was scheduled to take place in Randwick on 16 April 2003. On 9 April 2003 Defence requested that the hearing be postponed indefinitely to enable the Department to refine elements of the project scope and funding.
- 3.6 In October 2003 the Committee received a letter from Defence stating that the Department was proceeding with three ‘medium works’ projects at the Randwick site prior to Committee consideration of the works. The reason given for commencing these works was that Defence was obliged to meet certain commitments to the Randwick City Council. In reply, the Committee expressed serious concern at the further disaggregation of the project and emphasised that the work elements defined as ‘medium works’ had been part of the total works package referred to the Committee in 2002. The Committee was disappointed that contracts valued at over \$8 million had been let without appropriate parliamentary scrutiny and requested that Defence prepare for a public hearing into the works already progressed as early as practicable in the 2004 sitting year.
- 3.7 A public hearing into the ‘interim works’ was conducted at Randwick on 12 March 2004. Work elements addressed at the hearing were:
- construction of a new community facility;
 - establishment and embellishment of the Randwick Environmental Park;
 - works associated with the relocation of army units from the disposal area;
 - preparation of land for sale, including removal of vegetation and remediation works, and
 - preparation for sale of Stage 1B and parts of Stages 5 and 6.
- 3.8 Significant matters raised at the public hearing included:

- **Procedural Matters.** The Committee explained that Defence's action in proceeding with works referred prior to the completion of the Committee's inquiry into those works constituted a breach of the Act. Defence responded that it was working to prevent the repetition of such an error.
- **Contamination.** Several public submissions expressed concern at contamination of soil and ground water at the disposal site. Defence elaborated on the level and extent of contamination at the site and explained the contamination testing processes used.
- **Remediation.** The Committee sought to ensure that the site would be remediated to a level fit for residential development. An independent site auditor explained the execution and validation of the remediation process. The Committee identified a regulatory gap in the execution and monitoring of remediation works.
- **Environmental Issues.** Questions were raised regarding the removal of vegetation at the site and the proposed formation of a detention basin in an existing ephemeral wetland. Defence assured the Committee that future development of the site would include landscaping and that the detention basin proposal had been reviewed by local and State environmental authorities.
- **Ecologically Sustainable Development.** Defence explained that ecologically sustainable development principles would be manifested in both the planning of the site and the recycling of materials.
- **Traffic Management.** Local residents expressed concern that traffic from the site may create a nuisance through headlight glare, dust and fumes. Defence stated that it would continue to work with the Randwick City Council to address these issues.
- **Consultation.** In response to criticism from some local residents, Defence described its consultation with the community and relevant trade unions.
- **Occupational Health and Safety.** Witnesses expressed fears that contamination at the Randwick site may present a health risk to both local residents and workers. The Committee expressed the view that remediation work at the site should be executed in such a way as to ensure the safety of workers and residents.
- **Commitments to Council.** The Randwick City Council submitted that Defence had failed to deliver the Randwick Environmental Park and Randwick Community Centre by November 2003 as promised, and requested that Defence provide additional funds for each project by

way of compensation. Defence explained that, while the budget for the 'interim works' was capped at \$8.75 million, contingency funds would be value-managed to deliver as many of the Council's requirements as possible. The Committee also obtained an agreement from Defence to provide a retractable partition wall for the preschool occupying part of the community centre.

3.9 In the light of the evidence received, the Committee recommended that:

- a map showing the extent and distribution of contaminants at the Randwick Barracks disposal site be placed on the project website for ready access by members of the public;
- an appropriate regulatory body be given responsibility for monitoring the execution of contamination remediation works to ensure proper health, safety and environmental controls are exercised; and
- the remaining portion of the works referred by Defence in December 2002 be subject to a thorough investigation by the Committee at the earliest opportunity and prior to the commencement of any further work elements.

Government Response

3.10 The Government responded to the Committee's report by way of a motion moved in the House of Representatives on 2 June 2004 by the Hon Peter Slipper MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration, to the effect that it was expedient for the works to proceed.

Proposed Fit-out of New Leased Premises for the Department of Health and Ageing at Scarborough House, Woden Town Centre, ACT (Second Report of 2004)

3.11 The Committee's second report of 2004, tabled in both Houses of Parliament on 2 June 2004, presented findings in relation to the proposed fit-out of new leased premises for the Department of Health and Ageing at Scarborough House, Woden Town Centre, ACT. The work was referred to the committee on 12 February 2004 at an estimated cost of \$18.5 million.

3.12 The need for the work was driven by the Department's objective of consolidating its Canberra activities at two sites, and the organisational and operational benefits expected to flow from such rationalisation.

3.13 Works required to meet the Department's objectives included:

- integration of building services into base-building works; and
 - general office fit-out to meet departmental requirements.
- 3.14 Issues raised during the Committee's consideration of the proposal included:
- **Costs.** The Committee questioned the Department on the savings to be gained through collocation, comparative leasing costs, relocations costs and arrangements for contingency and escalation.
 - **Building Amenities.** Aspects of the amenity of the proposed building addressed by the Committee included child-care facilities, cycle accommodation, fire safety arrangements, provisions for people with a disability and the personal workspace provided for employees.
 - **Consultation.** The Committee inquired into the agency's consultation with staff and with the Australian Greenhouse Office.
- 3.15 The Committee recommended that the proposed fit-out proceed.

Government Response

- 3.16 An expediency motion in relation to the proposed work was passed in the House of Representatives on Thursday, 3 June 2004.

Mid-life Upgrade of Existing Chancery Building for the Australian High Commission, Wellington, New Zealand (Third Report of 2004)

- 3.17 The proposal to carry out a mid-life upgrade of the existing chancery building for the Australian High Commission in Wellington, New Zealand was referred to the Public Works Committee on Wednesday 12 May 2004 and formed the subject of the Committee's third report for that year. The proponent agency for the work was the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). The estimated cost of the work was \$9.309 million.
- 3.18 In its evidence to the Committee, DFAT stated that, while the chancery building remained structurally sound, it was 26 years old and had not undergone any major works since its construction. As a result, certain amenities and building services were no longer adequate.
- 3.19 Work elements required to bring the facility up to modern standards included:
- modernisation of building services;

- improvement of security arrangements;
- consolidation of functions and occupation;
- renovation, reconfiguration and refurbishment of working accommodation; and
- resurfacing of external paved areas.

3.20 The Committee addressed the following issues during the course of its investigation:

- **Provision for People with Disabilities.** DFAT explained that the proposed refurbishment would address current inadequacies in the provision of facilities and access for disabled persons.
- **Removal of Hazardous Materials.** The Committee was informed that asbestos sheeting used in the construction of the building would be removed by appropriately qualified contractors operating under the highest safety standards.
- **Options Considered.** The Committee was interested to learn why DFAT had selected the proposed accommodation option. DFAT explained that a report by its consultants had indicated that the selected option would best serve DFAT's accommodation requirements. A copy of the report was subsequently provided to the Committee.
- **Security Provisions.** DFAT assured the Committee that the works proposal would enhance the security of the chancery and its occupants.
- **Base-Building Costs.** The Committee requested and obtained a detailed breakdown of costs for base-building works included in the proposed upgrade.
- **Space.** DFAT confirmed that there would be sufficient space for the chancery to remain operational while works were carried out. DFAT also outlined its intentions in respect of future use of surplus space in the building.
- **Seismic Building Codes.** The Committee requested and received supplementary information from DFAT regarding the building's compliance with applicable local earthquake codes.
- **Energy Efficiency.** The Committee sought to ensure that the range of energy conservation measures described in DFAT's submission had been discussed with the Australian Greenhouse Office (AGO) and would be implemented.

3.21 Having considered the evidence presented to it, the Committee recommended that the proposed mid-life upgrade of the existing chancery

and the Australian High Commission in Wellington proceed at the estimated cost of \$9.309 million.

Government Response

3.22 The expediency motion permitting the works to proceed was passed by the House of Representatives on 12 August 2004.

Provision of Facilities for Headquarters Joint Operations Command, NSW (Fourth Report of 2004)

3.23 The Committee's fourth report of 2004 addressed the provision of facilities for Headquarters Joint Operations Command near Bungendore, NSW. The work, proposed by the Department of Defence was referred to the Committee on 31 March 2004 at an estimated out-turn cost of \$318.08 million.

3.24 Defence attested that the establishment of a purpose-built, integrated facility of this type was critical to its operational objectives and would result in operational and administrative efficiencies.

3.25 The scope of works proposed by Defence comprised:

- construction of a headquarters building;
- provision of command, control, communications and information systems;
- construction of access and service roads;
- provision of engineering services and infrastructure;
- provision of corporate facilities, including recreational, messing and accommodation areas; and
- associated grounds and engineering works.

3.26 Major areas of Committee interest were:

- Site Selection. Defence explained that, unlike other areas considered, the Canberra-Queanbeyan region provided superior opportunities for back-to-back postings and spouse employment.
- Security. Defence assured the Committee that, while the facility was currently assessed at a low to medium security risk, the capacity existed to increase security should the threat level increase.

- Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) Principles. The Committee was keen to ensure that the private consortium responsible for the construction of the Headquarters Joint Operations Command (HJOC) would realise Defence's intentions in respect of ecological sustainability. Defence stated that such considerations, including waste management and energy use, would be addressed in the tender proposals.
- Traffic Management and Road Safety. Several submissions raised concerns regarding the increased traffic that would be generated by the facility and its impact upon the safety of local roads. Defence undertook to provide impact assessment advice to the local authorities. Defence stated further that it was investigating the viability of a bus service to the site.
- Social Infrastructure Impacts. Defence anticipated that, in early 2005, it would have access to survey data indicating where incoming personnel and their families would reside. Defence stated that when this information became available, it would meet with relevant social services to discuss any impacts of the HJOC project.
- Local Employment. The committee inquired whether the decision to deliver the project through a private consortium would reduce opportunities for local tradespeople. Defence responded that no difficulties of that kind were evident and that local businesses would be employed if local industry had the capacity to support the project.
- Impacts on Neighbouring Properties. The Committee received submissions from the Carwoola Community Association, ACT Forests and the Molonglo Radio Observatory, all of whom own properties in the vicinity of the HJOC, expressing concerns regarding the local impacts of the proposed development. Defence stated that the proposed work would not impact local communications services or farming practices, and added that noise, external lighting and visual impacts would be minimised. Defence also expressed an intention to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with ACT Forests. The Molonglo Radio Observatory raised concerns relating to the potential impact of radio frequency interference (RFI) from the HJOC facility on its sensitive radio telescope. Defence outlined a number of RFI mitigation strategies that would be employed at the site and undertook to engage in further consultation with the Observatory.
- Consultation. At the public hearing, Defence confirmed that it would continue consultation with relevant government agencies, neighbours and other stakeholders.

- Project Delivery. Defence attested that its decision to fund the HJOC project through private financing had been based on a business case which had indicated that the option represented superior value for money. Defence undertook to update the Committee on the progress of the project following the selection of the successful joint venture partner.
- 3.27 The Committee made five recommendations in respect of the HJOC proposal; namely that:
- Defence and its private consortium partners liaise with the New South Wales Department of Environment and Conservation Sustainability Programs Division to ensure that the HJOC facility meets the highest possible standards for the minimisation of waste production and energy use;
 - Defence liaise with the Greater Queanbeyan City Council and the New South Wales Roads and Traffic Authority in respect of traffic management and road safety issues arising from the proposed development;
 - Defence continue close consultation with the University of Sydney Molonglo Radio Observatory and implement all possible radio frequency interference mitigation measures during both the construction and operation of the HJOC facility to ensure that the Molonglo Radio Observatory can continue to operate without interference;
 - Defence provide it with reports on the progress of works and associated costs at each stage of completion of the HJOC project; and
 - the proposed provision of facilities for HJOC, NSW proceed at the estimated cost of \$318.08 million.

Government Response

- 3.28 The expediency motion permitting the works to proceed was passed in the House of Representatives on 12 August 2004. In moving the motion, the Hon Peter Slipper MP noted that Defence had agreed to the Committee's recommendations.

Proposed Development of Land at Lee Point in Darwin, for Defence and Private Housing (Fifth Report of 2004)

- 3.29 The fifth report of 2004 considered a proposal to develop land at Lee Point Road, Darwin, NT for Defence and private housing, which was referred to the Committee for consideration and report on 26 May 2004. The proponent agency for the work was the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) and the estimated cost was \$40 million.
- 3.30 According to DHA, the work was necessitated by an expected increase in the Defence housing requirement in Darwin from 1,766 homes at 30 June 2004 to 1,895 by 30 June 2007.
- 3.31 Works to be undertaken under the proposal comprised:
- installation of infrastructure and essential services;
 - landscaping; and
 - construction of approximately 725 dwellings.
- 3.32 Issues of significance raised during the inquiry included:
- **Design Detail.** Several submissions were critical of the level of design detail provided in the DHA's statement of evidence. The Committee requested that DHA provide it with more detailed information following the selection of the DHA's joint venture partner. The Committee also sought assurances that the design objectives stated by DHA would be key features of the development. The DHA subsequently supplied the Committee with a revised list in which the design objectives were expressed in mandatory rather than discretionary terms.
 - **Quality of Development.** Questions were also raised as to the quality of the development in terms of lot size and access to facilities and services. DHA responded that the proposed development would contain a mixture of lot sizes, adding that a trend towards smaller lots was occurring in most Australian capital cities. DHA's submission highlighted the range of existing services and facilities in the vicinity of the development, but the Committee took the view that new-comers to Darwin might be better served by a purpose-built facility that would provide a meeting place for families and promote a sense of community.
 - **Environmental Considerations.** The Committee was interested to know how DHA intended to balance its stated commitment to ESD principles with the need to reduce servicing costs per dwelling. DHA expressed the belief that it could comfortably satisfy both objectives within the

proposed lot size and yield. The Committee was concerned to learn that there was no nationally agreed rating system for the energy efficiency of homes in tropical areas and requested that DHA investigate ways to minimise the use of air-conditioning. DHA also assured the Committee that measures would be taken to address water management issues and to protect local vulnerable flora.

- **Heritage Considerations.** DHA supplied the Committee with legal advice to the effect that Native Title had been extinguished over the proposed development lots.
- **Site Considerations.** DHA informed the Committee that the Defence radar facility adjacent to the Lee Point Road site was to be relocated and would therefore have no impact upon the development. Further, DHA guaranteed that alternative access through the site to the Darwin Hospital would be maintained.
- **Public Consultation.** A submission made by a local resident was critical of the public consultation conducted by DHA in respect of the proposed development. The Committee requested that DHA place planning details on the development website and that this be updated regularly to improve public access to information.
- **Opportunities for Local Industry.** A spokesperson for the DHA stated that the provision of opportunities for local businesses and industry was an important feature of the development proposal.
- **Selection of a Joint Venture Partner.** DHA explained that the first stage of the selection process for the joint venture partner would be based on capability and would include the capacity for innovative design.
- **Value for Money.** The Committee requested that DHA provide it with a confidential analysis showing yield and dollar value for different combinations of lot sizes, including lots of 800, 750 and 600 square metres. DHA undertook to provide this information in two stages: after the development of a plan with the joint venture partner; and upon the completion of the approval process.

3.33 The Committee's report into the proposed work contained the following recommendations:

- that the DHA furnish it with updated information regarding the design and costs of the proposed Lee Point development after the selection of the joint venture partner, following the completion of the planning approval process, and thereafter upon the completion of major project milestones;

- that the DHA explore the possibility of including a purpose-built community centre within the proposed Lee Point housing development;
- that the DHA continue to investigate and utilise all possible design measures to facilitate the minimal use of air-conditioning throughout the Lee Point housing development;
- that the DHA develop and implement energy efficient measures specifically designed for use in tropical regions;
- that the DHA place details relating to the planning and execution of the Lee Point development on its project web site, and that these details be updated regularly as further information becomes available;
- that the DHA undertake a comprehensive program of community consultation through which members of the public may have input into the Lee Point housing development proposal;
- that the DHA conduct a thorough analysis of the projected yield and value of the Lee Point site using different combinations of lot sizes, and that this information be provided to the Committee upon the completion of the development plan and upon finalisation of the planning approval process; and
- that the proposed development of land at Lee Point, Darwin, for Defence and private housing proceed at the estimated cost of \$41,381,480 pending the fulfilment of the preceding recommendations.

Government Response

3.34 The Government responded to the Committee's fifth report by means of an expediency motion in the House of Representatives on 9 December 2004. The Hon Dr Sharman Stone, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration, noted that the DHA had accepted the recommendations made by the Committee.

Fit-out of New Leased Premises for the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet at 1 National Circuit, Barton, ACT (Sixth Report of 2004)

3.35 The Committee's sixth report of 2004 addressed the proposed fit-out of new leased premises for the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM & C) at 1 National Circuit, Barton, ACT, at an estimated cost of \$23 million. The work was referred to the Committee on 24 June 2004.

- 3.36 The need for the work was prompted by the imminent expiry of the lease on its current premises and reduced amenity caused by overcrowding and ageing and inadequate infrastructure. To rectify these problems, the Department elected to lease new premises at 1 National Circuit for a period of 15 years, and to undertake its own fit-out.
- 3.37 Works required to meet PM & C's objectives included:
- integration of essential building services into base-building works;
 - fit-out to meet operational requirements, including appropriate security provisions; and
 - general office fit-out.
- 3.38 The Committee's inquiry into the work focussed on the following issues:
- National Capital Authority (NCA) Approvals. The Committee sought to ascertain whether the Department's proposal would comply fully with the requirements of the NCA, particularly in respect of the roof and traffic management.
 - Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation. PM & C assured the Committee that all necessary fire safety and emergency evacuation provisions would be taken into account in the new building.
 - Staff Consultation. In its written evidence, the Department outlined its staff consultation process. The Committee was particularly interested to learn about consultation undertaken in relation to the proposed floor plan layout and the Department's decision not to provide on-site child-care.
 - Energy Efficiency. PM & C emphasised that it was engaged in discussions with the AGO regarding energy efficiency and water conservation measures.
 - Breakdown of Costings. The Committee requested and received confidential cost breakdowns for preliminaries, margin costs, professional and authority fees, contingency allowances and security costs. The Committee was also supplied with details of PM & C's current and future rental costs.
 - Future Expansion. The Department explained that the proposed new premises would allow for future expansion. The Committee remained curious as to why the estimated cost of the PM & C proposal was identical to that of a comparable - but 3,000 square metres larger - fit-out project being undertaken in the same street.

- 3.39 Having considered the evidence presented to it, the Committee recommended that the proposed fit-out proceed at the estimated cost of \$23 million.

Government Response

- 3.40 On 9 December 2004, the Hon Dr Sharman Stone moved in the House of Representatives that the works proceed.

Fit-out of New Leased Premises for the Attorney-General's Department at 3 - 5 National Circuit, Barton, ACT (Seventh Report of 2004)

- 3.41 The seventh report of 2004 addressed the proposed fit-out of new leased premises for the Attorney-General's Department (AGD) at 3-5 National Circuit, Barton, ACT. The work was referred to the Committee on 24 June 2004 at an estimated cost of \$23 million.
- 3.42 The need for the work was prompted by the AGD's wish to consolidate its three Canberra head office facilities into a single purpose-built building, and the operational benefits expected to flow from consolidation. The decision to relocate was considered timely due to the expiry over the next three years of the Department's existing leases. The degenerating condition, increased maintenance costs and reduced amenity of the current premises provided further impetus for the move.
- 3.43 Issues addressed in the Committee's report on the work included:
- **Future Expansion.** The AGD informed the Committee that it had obtained staff projections for the next 25 years.
 - **Consultation.** The Department explained that, at the time of the public hearing, consultation with staff had not been extensive as floor plans were yet to be finalised, however the project plan allowed for the development of a consultative forum at a future date.
 - **Advance Preparation.** The Committee expressed concern at being asked to commit Commonwealth monies to a project not scheduled for commencement until 2007. The AGD explained that, as its proposal was interdependent upon the proposal put forward by PM & C, it was advantageous that both project should be considered concurrently by the Committee. The Department added that while it was not customary to enter leasing arrangements so far in advance, it had secured financial

benefits for the Commonwealth. Details of the lease were subsequently provided in confidence to the Committee.

- **Costings.** The Committee raised concerns at the lack of detail provided in relation to costings and design. The AGD responded that it had developed a strong business case and did not foresee any significant variations to the proposal before the Committee. The Committee also sought to clarify why the project budget included significant expenditure in the 2004 and 2005-2006, if construction was not to commence until 2007. The Department explained that these figures had related to an earlier relocation date and undertook to keep the Committee apprised of the revised figures.
- **Ecological Sustainability.** AGD assured the Committee that it had held discussions with the AGO and the new premises would achieve at least a 4½-star energy rating.
- **Car Parking.** Noting the shortage of parking spaces in the Barton precinct, AGD explained that it had attempted to maximise the number of parking space available to staff in the new premises, adding that provision had also been made for cyclists.

3.44 In respect of the AGD proposal, the Committee:

- formally requested that the Department provide it with an update of the fit-out costings and design of the proposed development closer to the commencement date of construction;
- formally requested that the AGD advise it of any revision to the original budget figures for the proposed development; and'
- recommended that the proposed fit-out proceed at the estimated cost of \$23 million.

New East Building for the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, ACT (Eighth Report of 2004)

3.45 The eighth report of 2004 comprised an inquiry into the proposed construction of a new East Building for the Australian War Memorial (AWM) was referred to the Committee on 24 June 2004 at an estimated cost of \$11.6 million.

3.46 The AWM explained that the work was required to free up space in its main building to allow for expansion of the Post-1945 Conflicts galleries, which currently rate the lowest in terms of visitor satisfaction.

3.47 Specific work elements required to meet the AWM's objectives included:

- construction of a two-storey building providing some 3,000 square metres of floor space;
- construction of an underground tunnel linking the new building to the Memorial;
- fit-out to meet the AWM's requirements; and
- provision of rear access from the existing car park.

3.48 At the public hearing, the Committee questioned the AWM on the following issues:

- **Compliance with Site Master Plan.** As the AWM is situated in a designated area under the provisions of the National Capital Plan, there is a requirement for the proposal to be approved by the NCA. The NCA presented to the Committee a number of outstanding matters of concern in relation to the proposed building, including the nature of the roofing material and external wall treatments, the location of mechanical plant and exhaust vents the mesh perimeter cover, car-parking arrangements and the height and character of the building.
- **Consultation.** The Committee sought to ensure that the AWM would undertake appropriate consultation with the NCA, staff and the AGO.
- **Ecological Sustainability.** The AWM assured the Committee that it would meet the requirements of Environment ACT in respect of water management.
- **Design Features.** The Committee questioned the AWM on specific design features of the building, such as access and egress, the proposed tunnel and provisions for people with disabilities.
- **Project Delivery.** The AWM reported that the proposed work would be delivered by means of a Document, Design and Construct contract, as this method had proved successful in the delivery of the ANZAC Hall project.
- **Local Employment.** The AWM stated that a number of local contractors had already informally expressed interest in the project.

3.49 In the light of the evidence presented to it, the Committee recommended that:

- the AWM continue to liaise with the NCA in respect of the roofing and building fabrics utilised in the construction of the new East Building to ensure that suitable high quality materials are used, in keeping with the standards of the AWM precinct; and

- construction of the new East Building proceed at an estimated cost of \$11.6 million.
- 3.50 The Government responded by way of a motion moved in the House of Representatives on 9 December 2004 by the Hon Dr Sharman Stone granting approval for the works to proceed.

Development of a New Collection Storage Facility for the National Library of Australia at Hume, ACT (Ninth Report of 2004)

- 3.51 The Committee's ninth report of 2004 presented findings and recommendations in relation to the development of a new collection storage facility for the National Library of Australia (NLA) at Hume, ACT. The work, estimated to cost \$9.9 million, was referred on 24 June 2004.
- 3.52 The NLA submitted that the work was necessitated by the continued growth of its collection and the fact that all current storage facilities are at, or nearing, capacity. The need was further compounded by the imminent expiry of the NLA's lease on its existing repository at Hume.
- 3.53 The Committee's report on the proposal addressed the following issues:
- **Land Acquisition.** The NLA's statement of evidence reported that the proposed development site had not yet been purchased. The Committee wished to know if the requisite approval of the ACT's Land Development Agency had been acquired, and whether there was a chance that the preferred site may not be attainable. A letter from the NLA subsequently confirmed that the sale had been approved.
 - **Site Access.** The NLA explained that an existing adjacent street would provide access to the site during the construction of the proposed new access road to the facility.
 - **Future Expansion.** Noting that the proposed facility would meet the library's storage needs until 2013, the Committee inquired whether the proposal represented the most cost-effective long-term storage solution. The NLA replied that there was some further storage capacity at its Parkes premises and that it was considering a long-term strategy in consultation with other national collecting agencies.
 - **Site Selection.** The Committee asked the NLA to explain why the Hume site was the preferred option. The NLA explained that the decision had rested largely upon cost and accessibility factors.

- Compliance with the Development Control Plan. The NCA submitted that the NLA's proposal contained three features which were inconsistent with the required Development Control Plan for the area. These issues, specifically the proposed setback of the building, possible future expansion and the direction of the gable end of the roof, were addressed at the public hearing.
- Fire Protection and Security. The NLA assured the Committee that the building would have appropriate fire and security provisions.
- Environmental Sustainability. The NLA confirmed its intention to consult with the AGO regarding the environmental sustainability of the new facility.
- Local Employment. The NLA stated that no problems had been identified in respect of the local building industry's capacity to deliver the project.

3.54 The Committee recommended that the proposed development of a new collection storage facility for the NLA at Hume, ACT, proceed at the estimated cost of \$9.9 million.

Government Response

3.55 On 9 December 2004 the Government responded to the Committee's report by way of a motion in the House of Representatives to the effect that it was expedient for the work to proceed.

Other Activities

Defence Infrastructure Asset Development Branch Information Day

- 4.1 On 10 May 2004 the Committee and secretariat participated in a Public Works Committee Training Day for the Defence Infrastructure Asset Development Branch. The training was conducted at Parliament House and involved some 55 Defence personnel. The aim of the day was to instruct officers of the branch in the role and functions of the Committee and to assist them in understanding the Committee inquiry process.
- 4.2 The program commenced with welcome by Group Captain Warren Lear, Acting Director General of Defence Infrastructure Asset Development.
- 4.3 The first session of the program was delivered by Ms Robyn Webber, a senior officer of the House of Representatives, who provided a comprehensive overview of the Australian Parliamentary system, legislation and the committee process. This session set the work of the Committee within its broader parliamentary context.
- 4.4 The next session of the day dealt with the referral process and was delivered by Mr Jeff Kite, Assistant Director of Lands Operations and Public Works at DoFA. Mr Kite discussed DoFA's role in the public works consideration process, with particular reference to referral and expediency processes.

- 4.5 The third session, delivered by Group Captain Lear, discussed practical aspects of progressing works through the Public Works Committee process, with a view to providing staff with an understanding of the practical aspects to be considered.
- 4.6 After lunch Group Captain Lear provided an outline of projects to be presented to the Committee in 2004. The purpose of this session was to give Defence staff an understanding of the work commitment required in 2004 to progress projects through the Committee process.
- 4.7 The Hon Judi Moylan MP, Chair of the Committee, addressed the group on the requirements and expectations of Committee members in relation to evidence provided by referring agencies. This was followed by a step-by-step description of the inquiry process, provided by the inquiry secretary.
- 4.8 Group Captain Lear concluded the day with a summary of the day's activities.

National Conference of Parliamentary Public Works and Environment Committees

- 4.9 The 2004 National Conference of Parliamentary Public Works and Environment Committees was hosted by the Parliament of Victoria. It was held in Melbourne and Lorne from 11 to 14 July 2004.
- 4.10 The conference was attended by delegates from the relevant parliamentary committees of the Commonwealth, and of all Australian States and Territories. International delegates included members of the New Zealand Local Government and Environment Select Committee and representatives of the Swedish Environmental Objectives Council.
- 4.11 The Committee was represented at the conference by the Chair, Hon Judi Moylan MP, and Deputy Chair, Mr Brendan O'Connor MP.
- 4.12 The theme of the 2004 conference was *Emerging Challenges and Future Directions for Environment and Public Works Committees*. The programme for the public works stream included addresses by:
- Mr Tim Cave, General Manager, Major Projects Delivery Services, Department of Justice;
 - Professor Graeme Hodge, Director of the Privatisation and Public Accountability Centre, Monash University;

- Mr Tony Jolly, Chief Executive Officer, Spencer Street Station Authority;
- Mr Doug Jones, National President, Engineers Australia;
- Hon Judi Moylan MP, Chair, Joint Standing Committee on Public Works;
- Mr Kevin Greene MP, Chair, NSW Public Works Committee;
- Mr Russell Waler, Assistant Auditor-General, Victorian Auditor-General's Office; and
- Hon Christine Campbell MP, Chair, Public Accounts and Estimates Committee (Vic).

- 4.13 In addition to the addresses listed above, the programme included a field trip to Otway Fly and the Twelve Apostles. The plenary session included presentation and discussion of a paper by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage on the formalisation of the annual conference and international parliamentary committee involvement.
- 4.14 At the conclusion of the conference, delegates expressed their gratitude to the Parliament of Victoria for hosting a highly informative and successful event.
- 4.15 The 2005 conference will be hosted by the ACT Legislative Assembly.

Issues

Introduction

5.1 This chapter highlights the following significant issues considered by the Committee in 2004:

- concurrent documentation;
- demountable buildings;
- private sector financing;
- exemption of works for Defence purposes;
- monitoring of remediation works; and
- support.

Concurrent Documentation

5.2 The Committee has been somewhat disturbed by a significant increase in the number of agencies requesting concurrent documentation. Requests for concurrent documentation were made in respect of six of the nine works considered by the Committee in 2004.

- 5.3 Concurrent documentation is not a standard feature of the public works inquiry process and should only be requested when extraordinary circumstances make it impossible for agencies to meet critical project deadlines by any other means. It is the Committee's view that the commencement of project documentation prior to the completion of the Committee's inquiry into a work unnecessarily pre-empts the outcome of the Committee's deliberations and thereby inhibits appropriate parliamentary scrutiny. Therefore, the Committee seeks to remind agencies that all works projects are subject to time constraints and that sufficient time should be included in the project schedule to allow for thorough scrutiny by the Committee without recourse to concurrent documentation.

Demountable Buildings

- 5.4 In 2003 the Committee wrote to Senator the Hon Nick Minchin, Minister for Finance and Administration, expressing concern at the non-referral of works valued at some \$40 million, undertaken by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) at Baxter, SA. The Department had deemed demountable buildings, which formed the major elements of the proposal, to be 'moveable property' and therefore outside the statutory definition of a public work as detailed at Section 5 of the Act.
- 5.5 On 10 February 2004 the Committee was advised by the Hon Peter Slipper MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration, that a draft regulation would be made to the Act to the effect that large construction projects making extensive use of demountable structures should be referred to the Committee. This advice was welcomed by the Committee as a measure that would facilitate appropriate scrutiny of the expenditure of Commonwealth funds.
- 5.6 On 1 July 2004 a regulation to the Act was gazetted stating that temporary buildings and structures, and demountable buildings and structures, are now specifically included in the definition of a work.

Private Sector Financing

- 5.7 In March 2004 the Committee was notified by the Hon Peter Slipper MP that DoFA had received legal advice to the effect that:

...where the Commonwealth, or an authority of the Commonwealth, arranges for the provision, and subsequent leasing, of infrastructure to which is has set specific requirements that could not be met by the normal leasing of such facilities on the open market, it could be expected that the provisions of the Act would apply, that is, the proposal would require referral to the Committee.

- 5.8 This news was particularly welcomed by the Committee, given the increasing trend for Commonwealth agencies to acquire property and infrastructure through private financing and joint venture arrangements.

Exemption of Works for Defence Purposes

- 5.9 In 2004 two projects with a total estimated cost of \$99.9 million were exempt from Committee scrutiny on the grounds that the works were for defence purposes and such examination would be contrary to the public interest. While appreciating the need to maintain strict confidentiality in such circumstances, the Committee was concerned to retain oversight of project budgets to ensure the most cost-effective use of public funds, especially where large amounts of money are to be expended.
- 5.10 On 3 June 2004 the Committee wrote to Senator the Hon Robert Hill, Minister for Defence, stating its concerns and requesting that, in such cases, Defence provide the Committee with an in-camera briefing on project costs, to ensure appropriate scrutiny of expenditure.
- 5.11 On 31 August 2004, the Minister responded that Defence had limited its use of the exemption clause provided under Section 18 (8) of the Act and that the Act contained no requirement for in-camera briefings where works had been properly exempt.

Monitoring of Remediation Works

- 5.12 An issue of particular concern arising from the Committee's inquiry into interim remediation and construction works undertaken by the Department of Defence at Randwick Barracks was the execution of remediation works at the disposal site, particularly in relation to the removal of asbestos and other soil contaminants. At the public hearing into that matter, the State-appointed site auditor alerted the Committee to what he called "a regulatory gap" between the role of the site auditor,

who signs off on sites, and the role of the local Council and Environmental Protection Authority, who control what will be done at the site.

- 5.13 In view of this statement, the Committee recommended that an appropriate regulatory body be given responsibility for monitoring the execution of contamination remediation works to ensure that proper health, safety and environmental controls are exercised. The Committee subsequently wrote to the Hon Dr David Kemp MP, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, and the Hon Robert Debus MP, Minister for Environment, NSW requesting that the matter be placed on the agenda for the next national ministerial conference.
- 5.14 In July 2004 the Committee received a response from the Hon Robert Debus stating that the perception of a 'regulatory gap' might best be addressed through better stakeholder communication. He added that discussion of the matter at a meeting of Australia's Environment Ministers may further understanding of each jurisdiction's regulatory regimes.
- 5.15 The new federal Minister for Environment and Heritage, Senator the Hon Ian Campbell, responded to the Committee's letter in November 2004 stating that he could not see how the national conference of Environment Ministers could play a useful role in the matter. His view was that the issue would best be addressed by Defence and the NSW authorities.

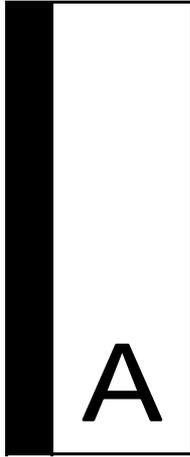
Support

- 5.16 The Committee's ability to fulfil its statutory obligations is in large measure attributable to the support provided by its secretariat. The Committee therefore wishes to record its appreciation for the work of its Secretary, Mrs Margaret Swieringa, and her staff.
- 5.17 The Committee also wishes to record its appreciation for other staff in the Parliament, who provide services to the Committee and its secretariat, and those officers in DoFA, who play an integral role in facilitating references and expediency motions. In this regard the Committee thanks Mr Jeff Kite for his continued support throughout 2004.

Hon Judi Moylan MP

Chair

16 March 2004



Appendix A – List of Inquiries

Inquiry	Report number	Date report tabled	Cost (\$m)
Sixty-seventh Annual Report		March 2004	
Site remediation and construction of infrastructure for the Defence site at Randwick Barracks, Sydney, NSW – Interim works	First Report of 2004	26 May 2004	\$85.4
Proposed fit-out of new leased premises for the Department of Health and Ageing at Scarborough House, Woden Town Centre, ACT	Second Report of 2004	2 June 2004	\$18.5
Mid-life upgrade of existing chancery building for the Australian High Commission, Wellington, New Zealand	Third Report of 2004	11 August 2004	\$9.309
Provision of facilities for Headquarters Joint Operations Command, NSW	Fourth Report of 2004	11 August 2004	\$318.08
Development of land at Lee Point, Darwin, for Defence private housing	Fifth Report of 2004	8 December 2004	\$41.38
Fit-out of new leased premises for the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet at 1 National Circuit, Barton, ACT	Sixth Report of 2004	8 December 2004	\$23
Fit-out of new leased premises for the Attorney-General's Department at 3-5 National Circuit, Barton, ACT	Seventh Report of 2004	8 December 2004	\$23
New East Building for the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, ACT	Eighth Report of 2004	8 December 2004	\$11.6
Development of a new collection storage facility for the National Library of Australia at Hume, ACT	Ninth Report of 2004	8 December 2004	\$9.9
Total Cost			\$540 Million

B

Appendix B – Committee Meetings and Hearings for the Year ended 31 December 2004

Type	Location	Number
Private	Canberra, ACT	53
Private	Canberra, ACT	54
Private	Canberra, ACT	55
Inspection/public hearing	Randwick, NSW	56
Inspection/public hearing	Canberra, ACT	57
Private	Canberra, ACT	58
Private	Canberra, ACT	59
Private	Canberra, ACT	60
Private	Canberra, ACT	61
Private	Canberra, ACT	62
Private	Canberra, ACT	63
Inspection/public hearing	Queanbeyan, NSW	64
Private	Canberra, ACT	65
Public hearing	Canberra, ACT	66
Private	Canberra, ACT	67
Inspection/public hearing	Darwin, NT	68
Private	Canberra, ACT	69
Inspection/public hearing	Canberra, ACT	70
Inspection/public hearing	Canberra, ACT	71
Private	Canberra, ACT	72
Inspection	Canberra, ACT	73
Public hearing	Canberra, ACT	74
Private/public hearing	Canberra, ACT	75

Private (41 st Parliament)	Canberra	1
Private	Canberra	2
Total		25