

Introduction

Referral of Work

- 1.1 On 15 March 2005 the proposal for the new consulate-general building, Bali, Indonesia, was referred to the Public Works Committee for consideration and report to the Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969* (the Act).¹ The proponent agency for this work is the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).
- 1.2 The Hon Dr Sharman Stone MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration, advised the House that the estimated cost of the proposed works was \$7.15 million. Subject to parliamentary approval, works are planned to commence in August 2005, and completed by late 2006.

Background

Australian Diplomatic Presence in Bali

- 1.3 Australia has maintained a consular presence in Bali since 1981 and plays an important representational role in Indonesia as well as providing consular service to Australian visitors and residents.²

¹ Extract from the *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives*, No. 24, Tuesday 15 March 2005

² Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 2.1

- 1.4 The new Consulate-General building will serve as Australia's ongoing representative office in Bali and will be tenanted by:
- DFAT;
 - Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA); and
 - Australian Federal Police (AFP).³

The Site

- 1.5 The site for the proposed new Australian Consulate-General in Bali is located at Jalan Kapten Tantular, Renon. The Renon area is predominantly occupied by Provincial Balinese Government buildings.

Inquiry Process

- 1.6 The Committee is required by the Act to consider public works over \$6 million⁴ and 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.⁵
- 1.7 The Committee called for submissions by advertising the inquiry in *The Canberra Times* on Saturday, 2 April 2005. The Committee also sought submissions from relevant government agencies, local government, private organisations and individuals, who may be materially affected by or have an interest in the proposed work. The Committee subsequently placed submissions and other information relating to the inquiry on its web site in order to encourage further public participation.

3 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 1.3

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

5 *ibid*, Section 17

Public Hearing

- 1.8 Under the terms of the Act, the Committee may not convene at any place outside Australia and its external Territories. Where a public work is to be carried out outside Australian and its external Territories, the Committee:
- ...shall consider the work on the basis of plans, models and statements placed before it and of evidence (if any) taken by it.⁶
- 1.9 On 27 May 2005, the Committee received a briefing from DFAT officers on the scope and environs of the proposed works to be undertaken in Bali. This was followed by a public hearing held at Parliament House, Canberra.⁷

6 *ibid*, Section 18B

7 See Appendix D for the official Hansard transcript of the evidence taken by the Committee at the public hearing on Friday, 27 May 2005 in Parliament House, Canberra

