



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

# Official Committee Hansard

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

**Reference: Fit-out of new leased premises for the Department of Employment and  
Workplace Relations at Brindabella Park, Australian Capital Territory**

FRIDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2006

CANBERRA

BY AUTHORITY OF THE PARLIAMENT



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**JOINT STATUTORY COMMITTEE ON  
PUBLIC WORKS**

**Friday, 8 September 2006**

**Members:** Mrs Moylan (*Chair*), Mr Brendan O'Connor (*Deputy Chair*), Senators Forshaw, Parry and Troeth and Mr Forrest, Mr Jenkins, Mr Ripoll and Mr Wakelin

**Members in attendance:** Senators Parry and Troeth and Mr Forrest, Mr Jenkins and Mrs Moylan

**Terms of reference for the inquiry:**

To inquire into and report on:

Fit-out of new leased premises for the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations at Brindabella Park, Australian Capital Territory

## **WITNESSES**

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**Committee met at 10.45 am**

**CHAIR (Mrs Moylan)**—I declare open this public hearing into the proposed fit-out of new leased premises for the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations at Brindabella Park ACT. This project was referred to the Public Works Committee on 22 June 2006 for consideration and report to parliament in accordance with subsection 17(3) of the Public Works Committee Act 1969, which concerns the examination and reporting on a public work. In accordance with subsection 17(3) of the Public Works Committee Act 1969:

- (3) In considering and reporting on a public work, the Committee shall have regard to -
- (a) the stated purpose of the work and its suitability for that purpose;
  - (b) the necessity for, or the advisability of, carrying out the work;
  - (c) the most effective use that can be made, in the carrying out of the work, of the moneys to be expended on the work;
  - (d) where the work purports to be of a revenue-producing character, the amount of revenue that it may reasonably be expected to produce; and
  - (e) the present and prospective public value of the work.

The committee earlier today received a confidential briefing from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and inspected the site of the proposed works. The committee will now hear evidence from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

[10.47 am]

**BARLOW, Mr Michael Allan, Director, Property and Facilities Management Team, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations**

**GRAHAM, Ms Vanessa, Chief Financial Officer and Acting Group Manager, Corporate, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations**

**SINHA, Mr Aloka, Assistant Secretary, Business Services Branch, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations**

**HASTINGS, Mr Alan Edward, ACT Director, IA Group Pty Ltd**

**NOLAN, Mr Andrew Douglas, Director, Rider Hunt Canberra Pty Ltd**

*Witnesses were then sworn or affirmed—*

**CHAIR**—The committee has received a statement of evidence from DEWR. This will be made available in a volume of submissions for the inquiry and will also be available on the committee's website. Does DEWR wish to propose amendments to the submission that it has made to the committee?

**Ms Graham**—The department would like to draw the committee's attention to the amended table 1 from the statement of evidence, as provided to the secretariat on 5 September 2006. DEWR can now confirm that the amended table is a correct reflection of the staff numbers.

**CHAIR**—Thank you very much. Would you please read the change into *Hansard*.

**Ms Graham**—The original table shows staff numbers of 2,271 for 1 December 2005. This figure should read 2,871. There is no change to the total figure projected for June 2007.

**Senator PARRY**—Sorry, you said 1 December 2005?

**Ms Graham**—That is right.

**Senator PARRY**—On the table that you have amended and given to us the line reads: '1 January 2006: 2,271 is deleted and replaced by 2,871.

**Ms Graham**—We seem to have a timing difference. It is 1 January.

**Senator PARRY**—Is that 2006?

**Ms Graham**—Yes.

**CHAIR**—Ms Graham, I invite you to make a short statement in support of your submission.



**Ms Graham**—This proposal seeks approval for the fit-out of a new building to be leased by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations at 29-31 Brindabella Business Park in Canberra. The building is being developed by the Capital Airport Group. Currently, DEWR's national office in Canberra has 13 buildings in the Australian Capital Territory, with approximately 3,000 staff accommodated in those 13 different buildings located in Civic, Turner and Brindabella Business Park. Recent government policy announcements, predominantly relating to workplace relations and welfare to work reforms, have led to staff increases of approximately 440 staff in the DEWR national office.

Accommodation pressures are further accentuated by the expiration of an existing DEWR sublease agreement with Air Services Australia. This tenancy is approximately 2,400 square metres and is situated in the Alan Woods Building in Civic. Additional facilities, such as conference and meeting rooms, have been diminished in several of the existing DEWR tenancies to allow for additional workstation accommodation in order to meet the basic needs of the department. Due to the significant staffing increases resulting from the policy changes and the machinery of government changes in recent years, DEWR now has a need for an additional tenancy in the order of 10,500 square metres.

The DEWR statement of evidence detailed the proposed approach to meeting this requirement, which is via the building at 29-31 Brindabella Business Park. There is an opportunity to maximise the space efficiencies available as a result of the larger floor plates on offer in this building. In addition to these efficiencies, DEWR will be exploiting the opportunity to co-locate currently fragmented working groups and reinstate the synergies that will facilitate the efficient delivery of departmental outputs. DEWR considers that savings in the initial infrastructure costs will be achieved by relocating into a single building rather than taking up several smaller tenancies.

Consideration has also been given to the needs of present and future DEWR staff with disabilities. Interior workspaces and resource and meeting areas will have a comprehensive range of features, including adequate space for circulation of wheelchairs, accessibility of all basic amenities such as toilets, adjustable workstations and tables, and auto-opening doors. In addition, the existing childcare capacity at Brindabella Business Park will be more than doubled to provide a total of 174 placements for preferential use of Brindabella Business Park staff.

The Brindabella building is designed to achieve a 4.5 star Australian building greenhouse rating and the proposed lease allows for both the landlord and the tenant, DEWR, to achieve this rating by maximising energy efficiencies in both the base buildings and the tenancy areas. The budget for the fit-out is approximately \$15.1 million. This includes workstations, furniture and fittings and appropriate allowances for contingencies as well as design and project management components.

**CHAIR**—In looking at this proposal, we have discussed in part staffing numbers in the confidential cost estimates, but I think there are some issues that we can probably cover in this public hearing. There have been considerable changes, as you have outlined. I notice that the department has 13 sites across Canberra. Have you looked at the future? Is it good for you operationally to have staff scattered in different buildings over a fairly wide area?

**Ms Graham**—It is difficult, but what we have tried to do in proposing this building is, as I said earlier, to have one big building rather than create more smaller tenancies, because the more that we have around, the more difficult it is to actually co-locate areas that need to work together.

**CHAIR**—You said earlier that this is going to accommodate new staff, so you are not actually going to achieve the co-location of existing staff except for, I think, 135.

**Ms Graham**—It will not just be new staff; some of the staff are already in current buildings, but they are in there at the expense of meeting rooms and conference rooms. So it will also allow us to cater for the staff in current buildings in a way that is much friendlier to their work environment. A lot of them are quite cramped at the moment.

**CHAIR**—What are the lease arrangements for the other 13 locations? What is the time line? What I am getting at here is: has the department looked at total consolidation? We did the AFFA building—is that what it is called, Senator Troeth?

**Senator TROETH**—Yes, Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

**CHAIR**—They were vacating the whole building. Did the department look at taking up a whole building or a large part of a big building and co-locating its entire staff?

**Ms Graham**—We certainly have considered those sorts of options. At the moment, that level of accommodation is not around. We are always looking at a consolidated building that will allow us to house as many staff as possible.

In terms of the leasing arrangements for all of our other properties, we have tried to ensure that they all coincide and end in 2011 so that we can look at a longer term strategy. As I said before, the machinery of government changes and the new policy announcements were made quite rapidly and we had to adapt quite quickly. We have tried to place ourselves in a position where a longer term strategy could be found as we go forward, but at the moment we believe this is the best option that we have available.

**CHAIR**—This is a fair expenditure, and it seems that in the longer term you are going to have to do some more consolidation. I just wonder how you see that happening.

**Ms Graham**—I guess we would see that happening probably around 2011. But, again, it is very dependent on the government of the day and the nature of the department. As we have seen, we have changed quite rapidly over the last two years and the question is whether over the next five years we may find that we have similar issues. Indeed, it could go in the opposite direction: we could end up losing functions and therefore needing to do the opposite.

**CHAIR**—You now have staff located in three different sites in the Brindabella location and you will still have 12 of the 13 other sites operating as well. Is my understanding correct?

**Ms Graham**—We will; that is right. Most of the other locations are in Civic or Brindabella Park. The idea was to ensure that we were centralised around the Civic area and Brindabella Park. The ones in Civic and Turner are very close together. In particular, the one in Turner, 217 Northbourne Avenue, has a specific function in that part of the building. The rest of them in

Civic are within walking distance. If we co-locate the rest of the people in Brindabella Park, at least we have two central areas that we are consolidating in.

**CHAIR**—All right. Thank you very much. I am sure the additional material we sought in the confidential cost briefing will help us to see what sort of scoping studies were done in relation to accommodation for this exercise.

**Senator PARRY**—I find the proposal fairly straightforward. In fact, if they were all this simple, it would make our life a lot easier on this committee. I want to follow on from what the chair was saying about the master planning. I think the statement at 2.9.1 on page 19 is a little ambiguous. It says that the group have built in excess of 10 commercial office buildings and there is provision for another five. Is that indicating that at some stage in the future DEWR may look at one of those five buildings? Is that why that is highlighted in that particular section?

**Ms Graham**—My understanding is that it just included that information for completeness. It does mean that there will be additional capacity at Brindabella Park. As we go forward and start looking at our longer-term strategy, if you like, it means that we might have some flexibility there.

**Senator PARRY**—So it is a part of that process. You have explained very well that there are actually two distinct precincts within walking distance of each other, and one specialist section at Turner, which is not really relevant. So, in the precinct where the new building is, you do at least see some scope in the future for expansion to suit the needs of the department?

**Ms Graham**—That is right.

**Senator PARRY**—Do you feel, on that basis, that there is value for money being exercised to meet current needs and potential future needs? Taking into account the fluid nature of DEWR at the moment, it must make planning extremely difficult with staffing numbers. That is made evident in your table. Our concern is to make sure that we are approving good value for money. Are you confident that is the case?

**Ms Graham**—We are confident that is the case. In our planning we have tried to ensure that we are situated so that we are making the most of what we are spending now and that we are not spending money unnecessarily.

**Senator PARRY**—To me, everything else you have outlined quite clearly in the submission: the needs, the scope and the type of office layout. My colleagues might ask questions about the other aspects such as occupational health and safety.

**Mr JENKINS**—I would like to ask some questions about the consultation. You make reference to the department outsourcing to a national property service provider. Who is that?

**Ms Graham**—Our national property service provider is United Services Group. All of our property arrangements are provided by them and have been for some time.

**Mr JENKINS**—Is it maintenance cleaning that we are talking about?

**Ms Graham**—It is in the area of lease management, maintenance, cleaning—those types of arrangements, yes.

**Mr JENKINS**—But it does include lease management?

**Ms Graham**—It does have lease management in there as well, yes.

**Mr JENKINS**—Is that for all the properties?

**Ms Graham**—That is for all properties that DEWR has.

**Mr JENKINS**—Under ‘external consultations’ you have listed a whole host of people. How would you characterise the different agencies that you have consulted?

**Ms Graham**—I am not quite sure—

**Mr JENKINS**—Let us go through the ones you have listed. Was there any consultation, for instance, with the territory government about transport issues?

**Ms Graham**—We understand that those sorts of matters are being discussed between the relevant authorities. We certainly have not had direct consultation. We are aware of the issues. We have planned the accommodation and we already have in place things like access to shuttle buses between Brindabella Park and Civic to facilitate staff transfer; we considered that, I guess, in terms of looking at the building. But we understand that the relevant authorities are having those discussions.

**Mr JENKINS**—The relevant authorities being who?

**Ms Graham**—The ACT government. I understand they are discussing things with the Commonwealth government in terms of transport.

**Mr JENKINS**—Which part of the Commonwealth government?

**Ms Graham**—The department of transport.

**Mr JENKINS**—What issues have been raised in the consultations with external bodies and governmental agencies?

**Ms Graham**—We know that the ACT government is responsible for the roads. But, in terms of external consultations—not only in this but also in the previous location of people to Brindabella Park—we have had discussions with ACTION buses and those types of people in ACT government to see what facilities were available. That led to us organising the shuttle bus service that we have. But it is the building owners at Canberra airport that have the primary responsibility for consulting with the ACT government and those bodies responsible for the planning of the ACT.

**Mr JENKINS**—I would have to acknowledge that you are the meat in the sandwich of the strange planning arrangements to do with the site that you have already moved staff to and are

moving more staff to. The bus that you have arranged—what usage numbers are we talking about at the moment?

**Ms Graham**—We have roughly 40, I think—is that correct?

**Mr Sinha**—Yes, 40 people.

**Ms Graham**—Forty people using it on a daily basis.

**Mr JENKINS**—That starts at Civic, so that links into the ACTION bus network.

**Ms Graham**—That is correct.

**Mr JENKINS**—And there are no buses out to the airport?

**Ms Graham**—There is no ACTION bus service to the airport. This is a commercial bus arrangement through Deane's Buslines. It is not our bus service.

**Mr JENKINS**—How did the decision come about; what made the department become proactive about getting that arranged?

**Ms Graham**—One of the things that we were very conscious of when we were moving staff out there from the Civic area, which was the first time, was the fact that people were used to getting to a particular area for work and that we were imposing extra travel on them. We wanted to ensure that the staff were looked after and that is why we were very keen to organise the shuttle bus. Originally, we hired our own shuttle buses to take people back and forth. The commercial arrangement became a lot more viable. Indeed, as it is a commercial bus, other people can use it, but our staff are able to use it with special passes.

**Mr JENKINS**—Your submission says that there was to be internal consultation with 'user groups, relevant unions and industrial groups' during July 2006. Did that go ahead and what form did the consultation take?

**Ms Graham**—We have had a fairly large program of consultation with staff. Some of that was in conjunction with the CPSU through the staff consultative forum that we have in the department, which has CPSU representation. We have certainly had a range of meetings on a weekly basis with the people who would be relocating to this building so they can provide us with feedback on issues that might be arising, to allow us to consult with them on issues that they might have around accommodation or transport—their needs, if you like. So there have been regular meetings held with staff throughout the lead-up to where we are today. We have an intranet site that is accessible by all staff, with questions and answers, the latest project information, the status of the project. Once we get past the committee's process then we will be having more detailed discussions with the staff affected in terms of work area design and those sorts of things.

**Mr JENKINS**—Did any of the consultations arise out of the provisions in an EBA?

**Ms Graham**—An EBA? I am not sure we know what that is.

**Mr Sinha**—Our employee agreement.

**Ms Graham**—Our employee agreement—the certified agreement?

**Mr Sinha**—Yes.

**Ms Graham**—Right. There are staff who are employed under the certified agreement on the staff consultative forum, so they are represented through that forum.

**Mr JENKINS**—But you are unsure whether the certified agreement had a provision that when staff are relocated they be formally involved in consultations?

**Ms Graham**—I am pretty sure that it does have that requirement in it, but we would have consulted our staff anyway and we have been doing that as part of the process.

**Mr JENKINS**—And the consultation with the unions?

**Ms Graham**—As I said, the union was involved through the staff consultative forum and is able to provide comments through that forum.

**Mr JENKINS**—What issues have arisen out of the internal consultations?

**Ms Graham**—We are conducting a survey at the moment—I guess that is on a slightly more formal basis than informal feedback—and we are yet to collate the data associated with that. But I guess things like the travel in particular were things that we had already addressed and that we have already spoken to people about. I would say that that is the major issue that has arisen, only because people were familiar with people already moving out to the original buildings we had in Brindabella Park.

**Mr JENKINS**—What area is set aside for workstations for individuals? When you sat down to do the planning, you must have set areas for workstations based on people's classifications or whatever.

**Ms Graham**—The average for each workstation is 18 square metres, and that is consistent across the department. As we said, we will have to go through the consultation process with staff. I will pass over to Mr Barlow, who can give you a little more information on that.

**Mr Barlow**—I might just clarify the 18 square metres per person a little bit. Each workstation is based on about 6.8 to 7.2. However, 18 square metres includes all of the facilities—the kitchens, the meeting rooms, the conference rooms, the break-out points you would have seen on the plans and so on. So 18 covers all of those items.

**Mr JENKINS**—So 6.8 to 7.2 is on the desk and the monitor, through to 18 for all the break-out spaces?

**Mr Barlow**—For all-encompassing—

**Mr JENKINS**—What about internal offices?

**Mr Barlow**—Internal offices are around the 14 square metre mark.

**Mr JENKINS**—The configuration that was used for the open office—is this a cluster that has been developed elsewhere, or is this something that you are putting on stream here?

**Mr Barlow**—We actually use it in the building that you will have seen across the way.

**Mr JENKINS**—Yes.

**Mr Barlow**—We also use it in other buildings in Sydney, in particular, and it seems to work quite well. It is quite functional.

**Mr JENKINS**—Does it have an advantage of bundling IT cabling and things like that?

**Mr Barlow**—It does. It certainly uses an umbilical—basically a power pole, but it is, if you like, more flexible as well.

**Senator TROETH**—We spoke about this briefly out at the site, but could you tell us about the strategies that you have incorporated to ensure that the exclusion of sound as much as possible is going to be achieved, given the proximity to the airport.

**Ms Graham**—I can start, but I might need to hand over to someone else. Certainly my understanding is that the building windows are double glazed, and that particular building has the same level, if you like, of sound control as the other buildings that we already have out there. It is the building owners' responsibility. I will hand over to Alan, who will be able to give you a bit more detail.

**Mr Hastings**—The building has been designed and constructed in accordance with the BCA and relevant Australian standards to meet the acoustic integrity of the building. The internal fit-out will recognise that and complement that where it needs to complement it. That will be taken into account in materials selection and the location of critical areas in the accommodation planning.

**Senator TROETH**—Have there been any complaints about sound in the other building that you are already using?

**Mr Hastings**—We are not aware of those, and there are a number of other Commonwealth agencies located in the park itself, including DEWR. We are not aware of any issues arising out of that.

**Senator TROETH**—I also want to ask you about the types of heating, ventilation and air conditioning that are proposed for the building.

**Ms Graham**—Mr Hastings can answer those questions as well.

**Mr Hastings**—Let me couch it in the context of it being state-of-the-art and very contemporary in its design and technical performance. The building itself is designed against the current thinking in energy management, energy usage and building performance. I understand

that it is being modelled quite effectively at the moment and is probably achieving beyond its performance benchmarks. The detailed technical aspects of it I can provide to the committee; I will have to take that on notice and provide it later.

**Senator TROETH**—If you could provide just a couple of lines to give us some idea, that would be helpful, thanks. My other questions were probably covered by Mr Jenkins's questions on the traffic and whether you anticipate any traffic-flow issues after you have moved into the new premises. You explained that there was parking available to the north; will that cover the parking of the staff who will be moving into the new building?

**Ms Graham**—There is parking there for the current building, and that seems to be fairly sufficient. There is also a new multi-storey building car park being built to cater for the new buildings that are coming on-line. So we certainly do not think that parking is an issue. In terms of the buses, we have provided them to ensure that we do not have transport issues. We have tried as best we can to address the issues that we thought might arise. I have the total figure here, if that helps: there will be 1,200 parking spaces in 12 months.

**Mr FORREST**—Going now to the floor plans that were presented to us, I am curious as to the location of the kitchen, which is on the north-west corner, as far away from everything as possible. I wonder why the kitchen is not more centrally located on the floor plans you have given us.

**Mr Barlow**—There is actually three kitchen points on each floor. The little nib at the end where we stood this morning is one kitchen area. Right in the centre of the building behind the lift well there is another kitchen area.

**Mr FORREST**—Is that on each floor?

**Mr Barlow**—That is correct.

**Mr FORREST**—Staff amenities in one and the kitchen in another location?

**Mr Barlow**—Yes. The staff amenities are the central point for a break-out, if you like, and then at each end of the floor there is another kitchen and break-out area.

**Mr FORREST**—I notice that in the statement of evidence on page 17, there is reference to the provision of first-aid and prayer rooms. I am quite pleased to see that; but I do not see it on the plan. I see a first-aid room allocated—perhaps they are one and the same—but I do not see any allocated area for a prayer room. Has it been overlooked?

**Mr Barlow**—It is one and the same. It would be put to best use, I guess, on a daily basis.

**Ms Graham**—Madam Chair, I might interrupt to give you a little more information on the cooling and heating.

**CHAIR**—Thank you.



**Ms Graham**—As long as there are not too many follow-up questions! The base building cooling load is 850 kilowatts; installed capacity will be 1,200 kilowatts. The base building heating load is 440 kilowatts; the installed capacity will be 610 kilowatts. I am looking at those numbers and thinking that they probably mean ‘pretty cool’ and ‘pretty warm’. There is supplementary cooling capacity of 20 watts per square metre on all floors, with any one floor capable of 50 watts per square metre. We think that is more than adequate for the proposed fit-out.

**CHAIR**—Thanks for that. Back to you, Mr Forrest. Did you have further questions?

**Mr FORREST**—No, I am fairly satisfied.

**CHAIR**—Can I ask a couple. One is about child care. I did ask the question onsite, but I think we should cover it for the public record.

**Ms Graham**—The childcare facilities at Brindabella Park are doubling in size in the next 12 months to increase the capacity to 174 available places. We understand that the current capacity is not utilised fully at the moment anyway, so that does mean there is quite a bit of room to move. Preference is given to the staff who work in the airport precinct. So there is a reasonable capacity there.

**CHAIR**—Thank you very much. The other issue I would like to cover with you is access equity for people with a disability. Can you run through what you have done to ensure that all people have access to the building. And can you just tell us whether the building has any public function? Do you have members of the public coming to the building, or does it have purely an administrative function?

**Ms Graham**—Mainly administrative, but I will hand over to Mr Barlow, who will be able to fill in just a little more detail.

**Mr Barlow**—With regard to disabled access, many of these things have been covered off by the base building—ramps, height of lift buttons and all those sorts of items. The entrance doors to each part of our tenancy are going to be automatic sliding doors, so we are integrating some things into what is already there with the base building. With regard to the public having access to the building, there are normally not more people than you would expect for a meeting and it is pretty ad hoc. There is no shopfront, if you like.

**CHAIR**—So accessibility for the general public is good as well as—

**Mr Barlow**—Correct.

**CHAIR**—for those who have a disability and would need certain considerations.

**Mr Barlow**—Yes.

**CHAIR**—There are lots of different forms of disability, so what are some of the other things you are doing in the building to accommodate people with a disability?

**Ms Graham**—We have adequate circulation for wheelchairs to ensure that they can turn, accessible toilets at each level of the building and, as Mr Barlow mentioned, automatic doors. We have delayed action door closing to allow a bit more time to get through; corridors and aisles that are wide enough; and adjustable workstations, tables and desks. Door handles will be according to a preferred door handle design. There is provision of seating at strategic points so that there are rest stops for people. There are kitchenettes and other equipment that is also accessible. There are non-slip floors and short-level carpet pile to ensure that wheelchairs can move. There is also adequate lighting and there are low-brightness diffuser light fittings to minimise any glare. And there is voice enunciation in the lifts.

**CHAIR**—Good.

**Mr FORREST**—What about evacuation on the occasion of a fire, with no elevators operating?

**Ms Graham**—There are fire stairs, as I understand it. I think we pointed those out in the plan this morning.

**CHAIR**—Yes, you did. We saw them on the site.

**Mr FORREST**—But what about evacuation for the disabled?

**CHAIR**—You would have to lift the disabled people down.

**Ms Graham**—Yes, that is right. In the buildings that we have in Civic, we do already have in place a different evacuation procedure for people who are in wheelchairs to ensure that they can be picked up by fire wardens and can get out of the building. Having tested it with a broken ankle, I can attest to that.

**CHAIR**—What about car parking for people with a disability? Is that going to be provided; and, if so, how many spaces are likely to be provided?

**Ms Graham**—It is the airport authority that nominates how many parking spaces there should be for disabled people, but they certainly will be available.

**CHAIR**—Can you also for the record give us a brief heads-up on energy conservation matters. For example, have you consulted with the Greenhouse Office, and what standard of energy rating will this building achieve—for the public record?

**Ms Graham**—I will hand over to Mr Barlow. He will give you the details.

**Mr Barlow**—We have consulted with the Greenhouse Office. While we have not signed a lease at this point, we have been negotiating, if you like, with the building owner to attach the Green Lease Schedule, as designed by the Greenhouse Office. It looks good at the moment.

**CHAIR**—It has not been agreed to yet?

**Mr Barlow**—It has not been executed, no. It is agreed in principle. That will allow for both building owner and tenant to achieve a 4.5 star ABGR.

**CHAIR**—So you are undertaking energy and water conservation measures?

**Mr Barlow**—Yes, we have gained certification for our environmental management system at our 64 Northbourne Avenue tenancy and we are going to implement it in this building as well.

**CHAIR**—Good. Thank you. I have no further questions.

**Mr JENKINS**—I have a question which goes to the design of the base building. We have all these breakout areas and things like that, but on each of the floors above the ground floor there are only two small verandah spaces. What happens for smokers?

**Ms Graham**—Not being a smoker, I am not sure. I will hand over to Mr Barlow, who can tell us what arrangements we have.

**Senator PARRY**—Mr Barlow is a smoker, is he?

**Ms Graham**—No, but maybe he knows some.

**Mr Barlow**—Just for the record, no, Mr Barlow is not a smoker. We actually do not allow access to the balconies anyway. Our health and safety reps do not allow that, which is fine. Our preference is not to have smoking within 50 metres of our building. That is implemented in all of our buildings at the moment.

**Mr JENKINS**—So there has been a decision not to use the verandahs?

**Mr Barlow**—Correct.

**Mr JENKINS**—Thank you.

**CHAIR**—Before closing, can I thank you all for appearing here today and for facilitating our inspection this morning. It was much appreciated.

Resolved (on motion by **Senator Parry**, seconded by **Mr Jenkins**):

That, pursuant to the power conferred by section 2(2) of the Parliamentary Papers Act 1908, this committee authorises publication of the evidence given before it and submissions presented at the public hearing this day.

**Committee adjourned at 11.27 am**