



12 January 2009

Mr James Catchpole
Committee Secretary
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
House of Representatives
PO Box 6021,
Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Catchpole,

On behalf of Townsville Enterprise, I enclose a submission on Enhanced Land Force Stage 1 Facilities Project, Lavarack Barracks, Townsville.

I thank the Department for the opportunity to contribute to the White Paper.

Please feel free to contact the General Manager Economic Development, Townsville Enterprise, Dr Lisa McDonald on 07 4726 2728 if you require further information on our submission.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Glenys Schuntner".

Glenys Schuntner
Chief Executive Officer

Townsville Enterprise Limited

Submission to

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

On

**Enhanced Land Force Stage 1 Facilities Project, Lavarack
Barracks, Townsville, Queensland**

January 2009

Townsville and the Australian Defence Force

Introduction

Defence is integral to Townsville's history and civic identity. Townsville's strategic potential – first recognised in colonial times – became manifest during World War Two when the city was transformed into a major staging post for allied operations in the Pacific.

Today, the local community is proud of Townsville's reputation as Australia's leading garrison city and of its ongoing involvement in major operational deployments to East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Townsville welcomes the Enhanced Land Force Stage 1 Project at Lavarack Barracks. The project will bring new residents to our region and provide valuable business opportunities for local companies. The current economic downturn has resulted in a substantial freeing up of construction and engineering capability to service the Enhanced Land Force Stage 1 Facilities Project.

Townsville Enterprise wholeheartedly supports the ADF's submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Public Works, specifically, the proposed infrastructure works for Lavarack Barracks to provide facilities for the 3rd Battalion, including:

1. new and extended protected mobility facilities; extended messing and medical facilities and a new close training area to support the 3rd Battalion;
2. new workshops and armoury facilities and refurbished maintenance facilities for increased logistics support to the 3rd Battalion and its supporting elements by the Joint Logistics Unit (North Queensland); and
3. new and refurbished elements of site wide infrastructure that are at capacity or do not meet condition requirements.

Townsville's Defence Role

Townsville not only welcomes the new ADF staff entering the region, the city also sees tremendous business opportunities associated with the construction and operations of the Third Battalion. Increased ADF activity in Townsville over the past few years has been matched by the increasing support of the ADF and its personnel by the Townsville community.

In May 2008, for instance, more than 10,000 residents attended celebrations to mark the return of soldiers serving overseas in Reconstruction Task Force 3 (Afghanistan) and the Timor-Leste Battle Group 3.

Commander of 3rd Brigade, Brigadier John Caligari, has remarked on the quality of support provided to defence personnel and on Townsville's growing maturity as a major defence location.

As has been the increasing trend in Townsville, the support for my soldiers has been even stronger and I greatly appreciate the efforts many in the community go to in demonstrating compassion and assistance for the families of my soldiers.¹

The strategic importance of Townsville as a major defence location is unlikely to diminish over the next twenty years and the city is well placed to provide the requirements of the ADF for construction, operations and services.

¹ *Townsville Bulletin*, 22 December 2007, p. 27; also *Townsville Bulletin*, 1 December 2007, p. 47

Townsville is the largest city in Northern Australia, and within reach of the key approaches and communication lines to Australia's foremost security and trading partners.

The city's future planning gives priority to strengthening critical economic and transport infrastructure; while the continued expansion and diversification of local industry will create greater scope for providing services, amenity and procurement support to ADF establishments and personnel.

Defence is a vital part of Townsville's economy, and a large range of services is procured locally by ADF establishments. These include vehicle maintenance and repair, fuel, medical support, food and hospitality, office supplies, laundry, cleaning, pest control, removals, accommodation and storage. Further, in terms of construction requirements for the establishment of facilities for the Third Battalion, the city boasts excellent construction and engineering capability – honed through many years of sustained growth and currently with substantial capacity to give priority to the ADF's needs.

At Townsville Enterprise we also believe that while our city's businesses have the ability to construct Third Battalion facilities to a high standard, they can also play a long term role in providing excellent service to the ADF. This can be achieved through the development of a local economic or procurement strategy and Townsville Enterprise would welcome further engagement with the ADF to progress such a strategy.

Conclusion

Townsville is a unique component of Australia's defence capability. It is a city with military heritage, strategic significance, economic strength, and community pride and support.

It is a valuable asset for Australia's force capability that must continue to be recognised and strengthened. Further research and investment in the city's capacity to support the ADF will benefit establishments, not just in Townsville, but in other Australian locations.

Ensuring the cooperation of industry, business and the community is fundamental to meeting the ADF's workforce and capability challenges over the next twenty years. And in this regard, the Townsville model has facilitated a high level of operational capability and a high level of personnel satisfaction, backed by strong community acceptance and support.

Townsville Enterprise acknowledges the great contribution made by the defence community to Townsville and looks forward to strengthening this vital relationship through the development of the Third Battalion Stage 1 Facilities at Lavarack Barracks.

