

1926.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

ELEVENTH GENERAL REPORT.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

ELEVENTH GENERAL REPORT.

To His Excellency the Right Honorable JOHN LAWRENCE, BARON STONEHAVEN, a Member of His Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Companion of the Distinguished Service Order, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth of Australia.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY :

In accordance with the requirements of Section 11 of the *Commonwealth Public Works Committee Act 1913-1921*, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works has the honour to submit the following report of its proceedings for the year ended 31st December, 1925 :—

1. During the year, the Committee held 184 meetings and examined 75 witnesses in connexion with the proposed works submitted. In making its inquiries, the Committee travelled 9,918 miles by rail, and 155 miles by road—a total of 10,073 miles.

QUESTIONS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE.

2. When the Committee presented its last general report, the following questions were under consideration, viz. :—

- (a) Construction of Sewage Treatment Works, Federal Capital.
- (b) Construction of Northern Main Sewer, Canberra.
- (c) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Toowong, Queensland.
- (d) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Brisbane Central.
- (e) Establishment of Royal Australian Air Force Station (No. 2) at Richmond, New South Wales.
- (f) Erection of Building in Brisbane for accommodation of Commonwealth Departments.

3. Since then, the following matters have been submitted to the Committee for inquiry and report, viz. :—

- (g) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Manly, New South Wales.
- (h) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at West Adelaide, South Australia.
- (i) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Lakemba, New South Wales.
- (j) Erection of Hotel (No. 4) at Canberra.
- (k) Erection of a building at Canberra to accommodate the National Library and for other purposes.
- (l) Construction of Boys' Naval Training Establishment at Geelong, Victoria.
- (m) Provision of Wharfage Accommodation and Shipping Facilities, Darwin, Northern Territory.
- (n) Construction of Dam across the Molonglo River, Federal Territory.
- (o) Erection of Permanent Administrative Offices, Canberra.

COMPLETED INQUIRIES.

The Committee has dealt with several of these questions, and has presented reports in connexion therewith, viz. :—

	Estimated Cost
(a) Construction of Sewage Treatment Works, Federal Capital	£60,000
(b) Construction of Northern Main Sewer, Canberra	82,000
(c) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Toowong, Queensland	57,739
(d) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Brisbane Central	447,670
(e) Establishment of Royal Australian Air Force Station (No. 2) at Richmond, New South Wales	177,400
(f) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Manly, New South Wales	71,861
(g) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at West Adelaide, South Australia	60,415
(h) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Lakemba, New South Wales	25,806
(i) Erection of Hotel (No. 4) at Canberra	55,000
(j) Erection at Canberra of a Building to accommodate the National Library and for other purposes	58,500
(k) Construction of Boys' Naval Training Establishment at Geelong, Victoria	88,700
(l) Erection of a Building in Brisbane for the accommodation of Commonwealth Departments	115,000
Total	£1,300,091

SUMMARY OF COMPLETED RECOMMENDATIONS.

(a) *Construction of Sewage Treatment Works, Federal Capital.*

5. This was a proposal to provide for the installation of a first unit of sedimentation tanks and trickling filters to deal with 500,000 gallons daily, being the sewage from 5,000 people, plus the flushing water necessary for scouring the sewers in the initial stages. It was also intended to install a small experimental unit capable of treating the sewage of 500 people by the activated sludge method, so arranged that either crude sewage or settled sewage from the sedimentation tanks could be passed through it. The scheme was designed to permit of these units being increased as necessity arose to treat the sewage of 10,000, or later of 25,000 people. The estimated cost of the treatment works to provide for 25,000 people was set down at £60,000, of which it was estimated that £37,000 would be spent in the first three years.

After careful consideration of all the evidence received, the Committee was unanimously of opinion that the proposal for the establishment of sewage treatment works at Canberra, as submitted by the Department, should be approved. It was recommended, however, that an additional activated sludge unit should be erected for the purpose of experimenting with the treatment of sewage by mechanical agitation in lieu of aeration. To obtain the best results from these experimental units, the Committee suggested that a competent officer should be placed in charge of them to carefully collect and prepare data as to the efficiency of the respective units, so that the future treatment of sewage might be carried out on the best possible lines.

(b) *Construction of Northern Main Sewer, Canberra.*

6. This embraced the construction of a main sewer leading northwards from the junction of the southern and main intercepting sewers on Commonwealth Avenue across the Molonglo River, and extending eastwards as far as Prospect Parkway. It was proposed that this section should be constructed of circular pre-cast reinforced concrete pipes of the Monier or similar type. The northern main sewer was designed to carry the sewage from a prospective total population in 50 years of 52,000 people, and the sizes of the pipes were calculated to take the whole of the sewage in 12 hours, the pipes running two-thirds full.

The total length of the sewer to be constructed was stated to be 9,550 feet, of which approximately 4,300 feet would be 30-inch diameter pipes, about 2,000 feet of 24-inch diameter, about 2,300 feet of 15-inch diameter, and about 950 feet would be of 9-inch cast iron piping carried below the Molonglo River in the form of an inverted syphon through a tunnel providing ample space for any additional pipes required in future. The estimated cost was set down at £82,000.

After hearing the evidence tendered in the matter, the Committee was satisfied that for the general development of Canberra on the lines laid down, the northern main sewer proposed was necessary, and recommended that the work be proceeded with as early as possible.

(c) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Toowong, Queensland.

7. This was a proposal to erect a telephone exchange building on a site already acquired by the Commonwealth at the corner of Church-street and Kensington-terrace, Toowong, and to install therein an automatic telephone switching system having an initial capacity of 2,000 subscribers' lines and an ultimate capacity of approximately 4,000 subscribers' lines. The estimated cost was set down at £57,739.

After hearing all the evidence, the Committee was satisfied that necessity existed for the establishment of the exchange, and recommended that the work be put in hand. At the same time, attention was invited to the fact that exchanges designed to cater for a greater number of subscribers were being provided in other States at a lower cost, and it was recommended that an effort be made to reduce the cost of the building proposed for Toowong.

(d) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Brisbane Central.

8. Owing to the capacity of the common battery manual switchboard now serving subscribers in the Central Exchange area, Brisbane, being almost exhausted, and building limitations precluding the possibility of extending the plant in the existing building, it was submitted that a new telephone exchange be erected on Commonwealth property in Elizabeth-street, Brisbane, and that there be installed therein an automatic telephone switching system having an immediate capacity of 10,000 subscribers' lines, and capable of accommodating additional future development in the Central area for a period of 20 years.

The estimated cost was set down at £447,670.

After investigating the matter in all its aspects, the Committee made the following recommendations :—

- (1) That the proposed installation be put in hand as early as possible ;
- (2) That the building be erected in accordance with the design submitted and in harmony with the future development of the proposed new General Post Office ;
- (3) That the building be veneered with granite on the basement and ground floor, the remainder of the front of the building and for about 36 feet along the lane from Elizabeth-street to be veneered with freestone ;
- (4) That if further floor space be necessary for the general work of the Department, dining-room accommodation be made available in a lightly-built structure on the roof ; and
- (5) That the air-treatment system as proposed be installed, and be so extended as to be capable of effectually dealing with the air contents of the upper floors in the building.

(e) Establishment of Royal Australian Air Force Station (No. 2) at Richmond, New South Wales.

9. The scheme prepared by the Air Board for the aerial defence of Australia includes the establishment of an Air Force Station in the vicinity of Sydney. Richmond was chosen as a most suitable locality for such a station, which in time of war would be a base for the operation of air units defending the important commercial and strategic centres of the Sydney and Newcastle areas.

The proposal submitted to the Committee for consideration provided for the establishment over a period of five years of a nucleus of units comprising squadrons for fighting, single seaters for light bombing and for co-operation with military forces, together with a flight for training purposes. The buildings proposed to be proceeded with included wing headquarters, hangars, stores buildings, cottages, barracks, messing, and recreation accommodation for permanent officers, non-commissioned officers, and men, and hutting, &c., for the citizen force trainees.

The type of construction suggested was wooden framing and walls with iron roofs, an exception being made in the case of stores, hangars, and guard-room, which it was asked should be of brick. It was proposed that a hangar and workshop at present on the site should be repaired and improved, and officers' and caretaker's quarters now occupying another site in the vicinity taken over from the State should be removed and re-erected to conform with the general scheme.

The total estimated cost of the scheme as submitted to the Committee, including accessory engineering services, but excluding the acquisition of the property, was set down at £177,400.

After carefully considering the whole of the evidence received in regard to this project, the Committee recommended :—

- (1) That in lieu of stipulating for the erection of timber buildings, tenders should be invited which would enable offers to be submitted in Konka or some similar material ;
- (2) That the two-story barrack buildings proposed should be of brick with partitions of lath and plaster or wood ;

- (3) That the pyrotechnic and bomb stores should be adequately protected by mounding or otherwise;
- *(4) That an effort should be made to complete the suggested arrangement for the laying of a 10-inch or 12-inch water main to Richmond from which an exclusive 6-inch pipe could be drawn to supply the Air Force Station;
- (5) That an additional area of five acres should be acquired for the purpose of installing sewage treatment works;
- (6) That an additional fire hydrant should be installed near the main stores building;
- (7) That failing the installation of the larger water main proposed, consideration should be given to the provision of an overhead tank or booster pump for fire-fighting purposes;
- (8) That funds should be provided in sufficient sums to enable this station to be completed in three years from date of approval.

(f) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Manly, New South Wales.

10. This was a proposal to establish an automatic telephone exchange at Manly on the present site in Pittwater-road to replace the existing magneto exchange and provide for future development. It was stated that steps were being taken to alter and enlarge the existing building to meet immediate requirements, but it was represented that to provide for future growth an automatic telephone switching system should be installed, having an immediate capacity of 3,200 subscribers' lines, and an ultimate capacity of 5,000 subscribers' lines. The estimated cost of the proposal as submitted to the Committee was £71,861.

Having satisfied itself of the necessity for increased telephone facilities at Manly, and ascertained that a more efficient service and increased revenue might be expected from the installation of the automatic system, the Committee agreed to recommend that the work be put in hand as early as possible.

(g) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at West Adelaide, South Australia.

11. This was a proposal to erect a telephone exchange building on a site acquired in Wainhouse-street, Torrensville, South Australia, and to install therein an automatic telephone switching system having an immediate capacity of 2,200 subscribers' lines and an ultimate capacity of approximately 5,000 subscribers' lines. The new exchange was designed to serve a portion of the city of Adelaide, previously catered for by the Central, Prospect, Woodville, and Henley Beach Exchanges. The greater part of the area being outside the two-mile limit of the existing exchanges referred to, most of the subscribers in the proposed West Adelaide area would be required to pay excess mileage charges for their telephone service. The estimated cost of the proposal as submitted to the Committee was £60,415.

After hearing the evidence tendered, the Committee agreed to recommend that the installation be put in hand as early as possible, but stipulated that the main roof of the building be covered with galvanized iron instead of slates, and that the rooms other than the switchroom be covered with galvanized iron outside and small fluted galvanized iron or fibrous plaster ceilings in lieu of reinforced concrete as proposed. These alterations it was expected would effect a saving of approximately £404.

(h) Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Lakemba, New South Wales.

12. Lakemba is a rapidly developing suburb of Sydney, telephonically served by the Lidcombe, Burwood, Homebush, Ashfield, and Kogarah exchanges. It was represented that under this arrangement the greater portion of the Lakemba area was outside the two-mile limit of the exchanges referred to, and over 300 subscribers were required to pay excess mileage charges.

* On 27th August, 1925, the Secretary, Department of Works and Railways, intimated that after further detailed investigations had been made in conjunction with officers of the Sydney Water and Sewerage Board, the New South Wales Agricultural Department, and the Hawkesbury Agricultural College, it was suggested that the Committee consider a new scheme of water supply for the Air Force Station. Instead of enlarging the Richmond town supply, the proposal was put forward that the plant of the Hawkesbury Agricultural College be extended and improved, at not more than the cost of the original scheme; and that the Air Force Station draw its supply from this source. The College supply was obtained by pumping from the Hawkesbury River. The pumping plant consisted of two electrically driven pumps controlled from the Power House, situated in a concrete tower, and with the suction tunneled through to low water; and it was stated that a great deal of trouble had been caused by the sand silting up. The water was taken from the shallow side of the river and delivered to the College through a 6-inch cast iron main which was in good order.

The proposal suggested for the Air Force Station was to extend the suction pipe to the deep water on the far side of the river, construct a concrete pipe head reservoir on the high ground on the north side of the river, and pump to the reservoir through a 6-inch cast iron pipe. The supply to the college and the Air Force Station would be by gravity, and the existing 6-inch pipe would be replaced by an 8-inch pipe as far as the College, and then extended to the Air Force Station by utilizing the 6-inch pipe. The College authorities would agree to maintain and work the extended plant and supply the Station with water at the rate of 3½d. per 1,000 gallons—or from 9d. to 1s. 2d. per 1,000 gallons cheaper than was possible by the Richmond town supply scheme. Other advantages included the provision of a three days' storage and a greater final head of pressure at the Station.

After careful consideration of the merits of this proposal as compared with that previously approved, the Committee decided to adopt the alteration, and on 28th September, 1925, the Department of Works and Railways was so informed.

A proposal was therefore submitted to erect a new telephone exchange building on a site acquired at the corner of Railway-crescent and Croydon-street, Lakemba, and to install therein an automatic telephone switching system having an initial capacity of 900 subscribers' lines and an ultimate capacity of approximately 3,500 subscribers' lines. The estimated cost of the proposal as submitted to the Committee was set down at £25,806.

During the course of its investigations, the Committee was unfavorably impressed with the fact that a blank wall of portion of the subsidiary buildings connected with the proposed exchange would be facing Railway-crescent, and recommended that it be treated sympathetically with the design of the Post Office, to avoid anything in the nature of an eyesore. The Committee also failed to see the necessity for a reinforced concrete roof over the whole building, and recommended that, excepting for the frame room, the roof should be of timber and iron with a corrugated iron ceiling. This would effect a saving of about £200.

The estimates of revenue and expenditure submitted showed that in the early stages there would be a loss on the Lakemba exchange, but it was explained in evidence that there would be a greater loss if it were necessary to continue connecting subscribers in the Lakemba area with their respective existing exchanges, because of the heavy expenditure necessary on cable, brought about by the fact that each subscriber was on an average three miles from an exchange. Furthermore, although the establishment of the exchange immediately would mean a loss, it was held that the loss would be greater if the establishment of the exchange were left to a later period ; and that at any rate the loss would be converted into a substantial profit at the end of five years.

Under these circumstances, the Committee recommended that, subject to the amendments indicated, the proposed installation of an automatic telephone exchange at Lakemba be proceeded with.

(i) Erection of a Hotel (No. 4) at Canberra.

13. In pursuance of the plan adopted of providing for a large proportion of the residential accommodation required at Canberra in the early stages by means of hotels, a proposal was submitted for the erection of a hotel capable of providing accommodation for 120 guests. The design of the building was in conformity with the ideal of a garden city, and provided for dining and other public rooms in a main central structure, with sleeping accommodation in separate pavilions grouped round the main building.

The estimated cost of the building as submitted to the Committee was set down at £55,000 and it was stated that the furnishing would probably cost an additional sum of about £10,000.

After carefully considering all the evidence placed before it, the Committee reported that to meet the plans of the Government for the early transfer of the Seat of Government to Canberra, the construction of a building of the class under consideration should be put in hand as early as possible, and recommended accordingly.

(j) Erection of a building at Canberra to accommodate the National Library and for other purposes.

14. This was a proposal to erect at Canberra a building on the north-west side of the main axis, similar and complementary to the building being erected in the Governmental group for the accommodation of Departmental secretariats. It was represented that about one-half of the building would be needed for the purposes of the National Library until a permanent structure for that purpose could be erected, and it was proposed that the remaining half should be used for those officials for whom office accommodation beyond that provided in the secretariat building would be required before the permanent Administrative Offices could be completed.

The estimated cost was ascertained to be approximately £80,000.

After carefully considering the evidence taken, the Committee recommended :—

- (1) That the erection of a building for the National Library and other purposes be proceeded with as early as possible ;
- (2) That a lower or basement floor be introduced into the central and north flanking building ;
- (3) That no lifts be provided in the building, but that space be left so that they may be included if required in the future ;
- (4) That a system of outside ornamental steps giving access to the middle and ground floors be provided ; and

(5) That consideration be given to the question of transferring officials to Canberra in three stages as under:—

Department.	To be transferred permanently.	To be transferred for session of Parliament
First Stage—		
Prime Minister	53	..
Public Service Board	2	..
Attorney-General	20	..
Auditor-General	3	..
Home and Territories	2	..
Treasury	3	..
Defence and Navy	20	..
Health .. ..	..	2
Works and Railways	1	..
Postmaster-General	4	..
Markets and Migration	3	..
Trade and Customs	3	..
	114	34
Total—148.		

Second Stage—

Home and Territories	40	..
Works and Railways	46	..
Treasury	48	..
Trade and Customs	82	..
Health	16	..
Markets and Migration	22	..
	Total	254

Third Stage—

The remainder of all Departments.

(k) Construction of Boys' Naval Training Establishment at Geelong, Victoria.

15. At the present time the boys for the Royal Australian Navy are trained aboard the training ship H.M.A.S. *Tingira* stationed at Sydney. The accommodation on this vessel is limited to that necessary for 250 boys, with arrangements said to be entirely inadequate for officers, ship's company, and trainees. It was represented that the requirements of the Navy have grown to such an extent that one ship cannot train the necessary number of boys; and that to provide for the requisite minimum of 300 boys with room for expansion, further accommodation was necessary. If this accommodation were to be provided afloat, it would be necessary, in addition to spending a large sum of money on the *Tingira*, to purchase and refit another suitable hulk, which, even if available, was said to present many inconveniences.

As a result of investigations outside Australia, it was represented that a shore establishment offered better training facilities and improved living conditions, besides being more economical than training afloat; and it was therefore proposed to provide a shore establishment on an area of approximately 46 acres at Geelong, portion of which area containing Osborne House, has been occupied by the Commonwealth for some years for naval purposes.

The projected establishment entailed the erection in the first instance of messing and sleeping accommodation for 300 boys; buildings for instructional purposes; hospital and isolation huts; messing and sleeping accommodation for ship's company; together with stores, buildings, &c. It was proposed that the existing building be altered and converted for the use of the administrative staff and as officers' quarters.

The estimated cost of the proposal as submitted to the Committee was set down at—

First stage (before occupation)	£88,700
Second stage (after occupation)	24,300
Third stage (future)	23,535
	£136,535

In its report, the Committee dealt only with the first stage.

It was stated in evidence that apart from letters received intimating that the original area of about $28\frac{1}{2}$ acres was being handed to the Commonwealth as a free gift by the Geelong Harbor Trust for use as a naval college, the Commonwealth possessed no documentary title to the property. Negotiations had been in train for some time with the object of making available to the Commonwealth an additional 18 acres on the same terms, but legislative action on the part of the State of Victoria was necessary before this could be finalized.

The Committee expressed the opinion that it was essential that the Commonwealth should possess a clear title to the whole of the $46\frac{1}{2}$ acres required for the establishment before entering upon the large expenditure contemplated, and recommended that no further expenditure be incurred until such a title was obtained.

With this reservation as to title, the Committee was satisfied from its investigation that an establishment of the class contemplated was necessary, and that Geelong offered an ideal site for its location. It therefore recommended that when the land became Commonwealth property necessary construction work be put in hand as early as possible.

(l) Erection of Building in Brisbane for accommodation of Commonwealth Departments.

16. On the eastern side of the Brisbane Central Railway Station is a block of land bounded by Edward, Ann, Creek, and Adelaide streets, having frontages of 660 feet to Ann and Adelaide streets by a depth of 297 feet. This land was held originally by three owners ; the Creek-street, or eastern end, having a frontage of 32 feet to Adelaide-street, was owned by the Presbyterian Church authorities ; the adjoining block of 132 feet was owned by the Commonwealth ; and the remainder at the western or Edward-street end, having a frontage of 396 feet to Adelaide-street, was the property of the State Government. For many years, suggestions had been made from time to time that this block should be formed into an ornamental square providing a picturesque entrance at the railway end of the city, but the State Government was unwilling to part with the whole of its property, on which some substantial buildings stood. After various representations, the State Government in 1916 suggested that the Commonwealth and State should each donate sufficient of their respective areas to permit of the formation of an ornamental square having a 200-feet frontage to Adelaide-street, by the full depth of the square, and that a strip of ground 14 feet wide from all the properties in the block fronting Adelaide-street should be granted to the Brisbane City Council for the purpose of widening that street.

The matter was reported upon by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in 1921, and on the 21st December of that year the House of Representatives adopted its recommendation that 34 feet of Commonwealth property fronting Adelaide-street should be handed over for ornamental square purposes, and that strips of 14 feet fronting both Ann and Adelaide streets should be made available to the City Council for the purpose of widening those streets. Subsequently, in 1922, the Committee recommended that steps be taken to erect on the remaining 99 feet, offices for the accommodation of those Commonwealth officials in Brisbane at present housed in rented premises.

During 1923, however, representatives of the citizens of Brisbane waited on the Acting Prime Minister, urging that the erection of the building be delayed, as it was desired to obtain a larger square. The City Council had acquired the Presbyterian Church property at the Creek-street end, and at a conference in Brisbane between the Minister for Home and Territories, the State Minister for Public Works, and the Mayor of Brisbane, a proposal was put forward that additional to the land already agreed to be ceded by the Commonwealth and State Governments for the purpose of the square, a further cession of land by the State Government of approximately 18,000 square feet (*i.e.*, 67 feet frontage to Adelaide-street) should be agreed to, provided the Commonwealth would cede a further similar area from its property. To compensate the Commonwealth Government for this proposed cession, it was proposed that the Brisbane Council should donate to the Commonwealth a similar area of 18,000 square feet from the property acquired from the Presbyterian Church Trustees ; provided also that the Commonwealth would acquire from the City Council an area of the Church land extra to the 18,000 square feet, proposed to be donated—the price to be paid by the Commonwealth to be one-half of the amount which it cost the Council for the acquisition of the land.

On 29th May, 1924, this matter was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for investigation ; but on 22nd October of that year, the Committee, taking evidence in Brisbane, was informed by the Deputy Mayor of Brisbane that the then existing City Council was not favorable to the scheme discussed in March, 1924, and had decided to go on with the square having a frontage of 200 feet to Adelaide and Ann streets. Subsequently, the Committee was informed that the Council had disposed of the Church property fronting Creek, Ann, and Adelaide streets.

Under these circumstances, the Committee recommended that no alteration be made in the position as existing in 1922, *i.e.*, that the Commonwealth agree to donate 34 feet of its Adelaide-street frontage for the formation of the square, and proceed with the erection of Commonwealth Offices on the remainder of its property having a frontage of 99 feet to Adelaide and Ann streets by a depth of 269 feet.

INQUIRIES INCOMPLETE.

17. Inquiries in respect of the undermentioned public works are incomplete:—

- (i) Provision of Wharfage Accommodation and Shipping Facilities, Darwin.
- (ii) Construction of Dam across Molonglo River, Federal Territory.
- (iii) Erection of Permanent Administrative Offices, Canberra.

In regard to (i), the Chairman of the Committee, on the 23rd September, 1925, by leave, made a statement in the House of Representatives in the following terms:—

“On behalf of the Commonwealth Public Works Committee, I desire to inform the House that owing to the inability of the Committee to obtain all the evidence necessary it has not been possible to present a report in regard to the proposed construction of a new wharf at Darwin.

On 16th March, 1925, the Committee commenced its inquiry and took a large amount of evidence in regard to a proposition submitted by the Government for the construction of a concrete wharf in accordance with designs prepared by J. F. Ramsbotham, M. Inst. C.E., M. Am. Soc. C.E., Director of Lighthouses.

During the course of the investigation, the Committee learned of the arrival of Sir George Buchanan, in Australia, and decided to ask him to give evidence in the matter.

On Sir George Buchanan being approached, however, it was ascertained that he also had been asked by the Government to submit *inter alia* a proposal for the provision of wharfage facilities at Darwin. He expressed his disinclination to give evidence in regard to the proposal while at the same time formulating a scheme of his own, and intimated that his ideas on the subject would not be available until embodied in a report which he intended to prepare on his return to England—

which report might be expected to reach the Government towards the end of 1925.

Under these circumstances, the Committee felt that it would not be fair either to the House or to itself to submit its report until the views of Sir George Buchanan could be obtained.

The evidence already taken by this Committee will, of course, as provided in the Act, be available for use by any subsequent Committee dealing with this matter.”

DISSOLUTION OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

18. By the dissolution of the House of Representatives on 3rd October, 1925, members of the Fourth Committee, in terms of Section 3 (iv) of the Commonwealth Public Works Committee Act, ceased to hold office as members of the Committee.

RECORD OF INQUIRIES.

19. Appended hereto is a return containing a record of inquiries of the Committee from the date of its appointment to 31st December, 1925.

G. H. MACKAY,

Chairman.

Office of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Federal Parliament House, Melbourne.

29th January, 1926.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS.

RECORD OF INQUIRIES.

The following is a list of proposed public works inquired into by the Committee from the date of its appointment to 31st December, 1925, with the result of its inquiries:—

Date of Inquiry.	Proposed Work.	Expenditure proposed by the Government.	Expenditure recommended by the Committee.	Amount in Excess of that proposed.	Amount in Reduction of that proposed.	Remarks.
1915.						
25th Jan. to 24th Feb.	Construction of a main sewer for the city of Canberra	£ 75,000	£ 75,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed
28th Jan. to 25th Feb.	Storage and regulating reservoir, Upper Queanbeyan River	100,000	..	..	100,000	Committee decided that there is no present necessity or urgency for this work
11th Mar. to 4th May	Erection of buildings at Flinders Naval Base	111,032	111,032	..	..	Recommended as proposed
19th Mar. to 5th May	Sewerage scheme for Flinders Naval Base	9,500	7,500	..	2,000	
6th May to 24th June	Lithgow Small Arms Factory Extension	66,600 (including power plant)	92,100	25,500	..	In lieu of making additions to the existing factory at Lithgow, the Committee recommended the erection of a factory at Canberra twice the size of the existing factory, the installation of new machinery therein, and the removal thereto of the existing machinery at a convenient date
6th May to 27th May	Increase of output, Small Arms Factory, Lithgow	..	..	..	..	Committee recommended establishment of a second shift
6th May to 17th June	Increase of plant, Small Arms Factory, Lithgow	38,727	38,727	..	..	Recommended as proposed
27th July to 26th Aug.	Small Arms Factory—location at Canberra	..	..	..	..	Site recommended
18th Sept. to 15th Oct.	Automatic Telephone Exchange, Sydney	93,008	..	..	..	Committee favorable to proposal subject to provision of additional means of ingress and egress
21st Sept. to 22nd Sept.	Barracks, quarters, gun park, &c., for R.A.F.A., Enoggera, Queensland	26,000	28,225	2,225	..	Recommended subject to improved lighting, water, and fire services
23rd Sept. to 24th Nov.	Cement Works for Commonwealth purposes	100,000	100,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed
28th Sept. to 6th Oct.	Alterations and additions to the Customs House, Sydney	37,500	29,500	..	..	Recommended, but stipulation made that occupants be removed to temporary accommodation during alterations
12th Oct. to 15th Oct.	Automatic Telephone Exchange, Malvern, Victoria	46,933	46,933	..	..	Recommended as proposed
12th Oct. to 15th Oct.	Automatic Telephone Exchange, Collingwood, Victoria	49,752	49,752	..	..	Recommended as proposed
25th Oct. to 26th Oct.	Additional Office accommodation, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne	35,000	35,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed
1916.						
14th Feb. to 1st Mar.	Selection of site for arsenal within the Federal Territory	..	..	..	..	Confidential report issued to Prime Minister
24th May to 31st May	Alterations and additions to the Customs House, Sydney (further report)	51,481	41,000	..	10,481	
25th Feb., 1915, to 21st Aug., 1916	Water Supply scheme for Flinders Naval Base	61,000 and 9d. per 1,000 gallons for water consumed	Capital cost nil; 1s. per 1,000 gallons with minimum annual payment of £4,000 for first three years, £3,500 for second three years, £3,000 thereafter	..	61,000	The interest on the capital cost of £61,000 as originally proposed, plus the cost of water consumed at 9d. per 1,000 gallons, more than counterbalances the annual payment under the scheme recommended

Record of Inquiries—List of proposed public works inquired into—continued.

Date of Inquiry.	Proposed Work.	Expenditure proposed by the Government.	Expenditure recommended by the Committee.	Amount in Excess of that proposed.	Amount in Reduction of that proposed.	Remarks.
1916. 10th Nov., 1915, to 30th Aug., 1916	Extension of Pine Creek-Katherine River Railway to Bitter (Mataranka) Springs	£ 320,000	£ 320,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed
13th July, 1915, to 24th Nov., 1916	City Railway, Canberra	378,972	280,000	..	98,972	The Committee recommended that requirements for some years be met by temporary surface lines at estimated cost of about £37,000
14th July, 1915, to 28th Nov., 1916	Dams for Ornamental Waters, Canberra	912,421	472,421	..	440,000	Most of the expenditure recommended, however, will be deferred for a period of years
1917. 16th Jan. to 20th Feb.	Extension of Postal Stores, Harbour-street, Sydney	68,532	68,532	..	..	Recommended as proposed
31st Jan. to 16th Mar.	Power House, Flinders Naval Base	15,000	9,500	..	5,500	
27th Sept. to 8th Mar., 1918	Flinders Naval Base—Erection of workshops, hospital, detention barracks, quarters for married officers and warrant officers; water, sewerage, and storm-water reticulations; electric distribution system; and accessory works for that establishment	168,845	142,641	..	26,204	
27th Sept. to 1st May, 1918	Henderson Naval Base—Two breakwaters, excavations, reclamations, basins or quaywalls, floating docks, administrative buildings, and permanent railways	4,529,109	2,908,859	..	19,250	The Committee recommended that work of the estimated cost of £1,601,000 be made the subject of further inquiry at a later date. A saving of £19,250 was effected in connexion with the transport of material from Wongong
1918. 18th June to 1st Aug.	Housing of Commonwealth workmen at Lithgow, New South Wales	73,762	..	..	..	The Committee recommended the erection of 150 houses instead of 100 as proposed, but at a lower average cost
20th Sept. to 29th Oct.	Arsenal Railway	62,614	62,614	..	..	Recommended as proposed
23rd Dec., 1918, to 26th June, 1919	Ordnance Store, Leichhardt, N.S.W.	69,283	..	..	6,300	The Committee recommended the addition of another story to the building proposed, but saved the cost of same by concentration of Ordnance business at Leichhardt. A further saving of £6,300 was effected by the relocation of the railway siding
1919. 19th June to 7th Oct.	Commonwealth Note Printing Offices	47,800	46,800	..	1,000	The Committee recommended a variation in the floor finish proposed which would result in a saving of £1,000
1920. 4th May to 9th June	Erection of mobilization and vehicle stores, Seymour, Victoria	78,672	80,472	1,800	..	Increase resulted from the recommendation of the Committee that fire sprinklers be installed in the Equipment Building
11th June to 19th July	Alterations and Additions to the General Post Office, Adelaide, S.A.	76,014	76,014	..	..	Recommended as proposed
13th July to 24th Aug.	Mobilization and vehicle stores, Midland Junction, Western Australia	36,570	..	..	..	The Committee recommended acquisition of additional seven acres and cottage thereon, but estimated that would be practically balanced by elimination of erection of caretaker's cottage proposed
3rd Nov., 1920, to 22nd Mar., 1921	Kidman and Mayoh's Wooden Ship-building Contract	135,200	..	..	..	The Committee recommended that under no circumstances would the Commonwealth be justified in taking over the ships proposed
22nd Dec., 1920, to 12th April, 1921	Extension by two floors of building under construction for General Post Office, Perth, W.A.	50,000	50,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed

Record of Inquiries—List of proposed public works inquired into—*continued.*

Date of Inquiry.	Proposed Work.	Expenditure proposed by the Government.	Expenditure recommended by the Committee.	Amount in Excess of that proposed.	Amount in Reduction of that proposed.	Remarks.
1920.						
22nd Dec., 1920, to 13th April, 1921	Erection of an additional telegraph line from Perth to Eucla via Transcontinental Railway route	£ 42,030	£ 42,030	£ ..	£ ..	Recommended as proposed
23rd Nov., 1920, to 20th April, 1921	Erection of additional telephone line between Sydney and Melbourne	37,000	37,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed
3rd March, 1921, to 6th May, 1921	Erection of Ordnance and other Defence buildings at Kelvin Grove, Brisbane, Queensland	53,041	52,131	..	910	The Committee recommended utilization of building to be acquired in lieu of erecting luncheon-rooms
23rd Nov., 1920, to 9th May, 1921	Erection of telephone trunk line between Brisbane and Sydney	35,200	31,514	..	..	The price of copper fell after preparation of estimate
1921.						
1st Feb., 1921, to 9th May, 1921	Establishment of automatic telephone exchanges at Albion and Newmarket, Queensland	89,779	89,779	..	..	Recommended as proposed
17th May, 1921, to 28th June, 1921	Establishment of automatic telephone exchanges at Ascot Vale and North Melbourne, Victoria	183,092	183,092	..	..	Recommended as proposed
8th March, 1921, to 7th July, 1921	Acquisition of lands for the proposed Anzac Memorial Square, Brisbane, Queensland	..	..	..	..	The Committee recommended— (a) That Commonwealth lands be transferred to State in exchange for suitable area for Commonwealth purposes in an approved locality, or alternatively (b) that Commonwealth area be sold to Brisbane City Council at valuation, or, failing acceptance of (a) or (b), that the Commonwealth agree to relinquish a strip 40 feet wide if the State relinquish an adjoining strip 160 feet wide for the purpose of forming a Memorial Square
30th March, 1921, to 3rd Aug., 1921	Erection of offices for Taxation and other Commonwealth Departments in Sydney	145,000	145,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed
23rd Feb., 1921, to 9th Nov., 1921	Re-modelling and additions, General Post Office, Sydney	268,807	289,000 plus cost of land	21,000 plus cost of land	..	The Committee's recommendation provided an additional 24,000 feet of floor space to enable the building to be reduced by two stories, and allow some margin for expansion when necessary
28th January, 1921, to 5th October, 1922	Extension of the Port Augusta-Oodnadatta Railway from Oodnadatta to Alice Springs	4,109,446	1,558,600	..	2,550,846	
28th January, 1921, to 5th October, 1922	Northern Territory Railway—Extension from Mataranka to Daly Waters	1,159,298	925,386	..	233,912	
14th Dec., 1921, to 6th April, 1922	Sewerage, Federal Capital—Construction of Main Intercepting Sewer from centre of City to connect with Main Outfall Sewer	66,000	66,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed
15th Dec., 1921, to 10th April, 1922	Water Supply, Federal Capital—Distributary Works within the City Area, Canberra	48,200	48,200	..	..	Recommended as proposed
19th Dec., 1921, to 11th April, 1922	Construction of Hostel at Canberra, with necessary engineering and other services	98,750	62,000	..	36,750	Committee recommended that construction be limited to central block and half the number of pavilions proposed
1922.						
25th Jan. to 31st May	Automatic Telephone Exchange and Equipment at South Brisbane, Queensland	121,086	121,086	..	..	Recommended as proposed
26th Jan. to 31st May	Automatic Telephone Exchange and Equipment at Cottesloe, W.A.	44,576	44,576	..	..	Recommended as proposed

Record of Inquiries—List of proposed public works inquired into—continued.

Date of Inquiry.	Proposed Work.	Expenditure proposed by the Government.	Expenditure recommended by the Committee.	Amount in Excess of that proposed.	Amount in Reduction of that proposed.	Remarks.
1922.						
24th Feb. to 14th March	Office Accommodation for Federal Taxation Department in Melbourne	£ 209,650	£ 125,000	£ 84,650		
23rd Feb. to 7th April	Office Accommodation in Adelaide for various Commonwealth Departments	115,000	115,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed
15th March to 19th June	Automatic Telephone Exchanges and Equipment at Brighton, Glenelg, and Prospect, S.A.	161,610	161,610	..	..	Recommended as proposed
4th May, to 12th Oct.	Automatic Telephone Exchange and Equipment at City South, Sydney	404,242	419,342	15,100	..	In view of value of site, the Committee recommended a six-story building in lieu of three stories proposed
8th May to 14th Sept.	Automatic Telephone Exchanges and Equipment at East Sydney, Randwick, Waverley, and Gordon, N.S.W.	497,452	497,452	..	..	Recommended as proposed
10th Aug. to 29th Aug.	Automatic Telephone Exchange and Equipment at South Melbourne, Victoria	111,738	111,738	..	..	Recommended as proposed
10th Aug. to 20th Sept.	Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Canterbury, Victoria	113,622	113,622	..	..	Recommended as proposed
12th Aug. to 3rd Oct.	Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Box Hill, Victoria	44,841	2,720	..	42,121	Committee recommended that existing manual exchange could be kept in operation without detriment to service until 1929
26th Aug. to 10th Oct.	Provision of Additional Quarters at Point Cook, Vic., for Staff of Royal Australian Air Force	31,500	31,500	..	..	Recommended as proposed
7th Oct. to 28th Oct.	Erection of Commonwealth Offices, Brisbane	127,000	115,000	..	12,000	Committee recommended erection of building in concrete
1923.						
21st March to 18th June	Erection of Provisional Parliament House, Canberra	174,000	..	..	..	The Committee recommended the erection of the nucleus of the permanent Parliament House, or alternatively, the erection of a provisional building on the site proposed below Camp Hill
9th April to 21st June	Construction of Provisional Administrative Offices at Canberra	135,500	..	..	..	Committee recommended that two units of two-storied brick or concrete buildings be provided
14th March to 26th June	Erection of Officers' Hostel, Canberra	39,000	25,000	..	14,000	Committee recommended that in lieu of a hostel on garden pavilion lines there be provided a compact two-storied structure under one roof
18th July to 16th Aug.	Erection of Telephone Workshops, Spencer-street, Melbourne	66,500	66,500	..	..
13th Aug., 1923, to 10th May, 1924	Establishment of Oil Dépôts, Darwin	12,000	..	..	..	No definite recommendation made, but suggested that proposal receive favorable consideration of the Government
13th Aug., 1923, to 13th May, 1924	Provision of Wharfage Accommodation and Shipping Facilities, Darwin	120,050	Nil	..	120,050	Proposal not recommended
24th Aug., 1923, to 27th May, 1924	Establishment of Aircraft Dépôt at Laverton, Victoria	296,836	296,836	..	..	Recommended as proposed
1924.						
5th March to 25th March	Erection of Additional Block of Seamen's Barracks, Flinders Naval Dépôt	33,000	33,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed
7th Feb. to 6th May	Construction of Railway to connect Canberra with Yass	433,000	131,000	..	*302,000	Recommended that for the present the line be terminated at the 205½-mile point

* This recommendation, if adopted, will also preclude the necessity of spending an amount of £310,725 by or on behalf of the State of New South Wales for the construction of its section.

Record of Inquiries—List of proposed public works inquired into—*continued.*

Date of Inquiry.	Proposed Work.	Expenditure proposed by the Government.	Expenditure recommended by the Committee.	Amount in Excess of that proposed.	Amount in Reduction of that proposed.	Remarks.
1924. 14th May to 27th May	Provision of Telegraph Cable between Sydney and Newcastle and Newcastle and West Maitland	£ 442,000	£ 442,000	£ ..	£ ..	Recommended as proposed
5th July to 30th July	Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Elsternwick, Victoria	168,075	168,075	..	..	Recommended as proposed
5th July to 5th Aug.	Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Northcote, Victoria	101,123	101,123	..	..	Recommended as proposed
3rd July to 8th Aug.	Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchanges at Unley and Norwood, S.A.	263,471	263,471	..	..	Recommended as proposed
12th Aug. to 21st Aug.	Construction of Southern Intercepting Sewer, Canberra	47,000	47,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed
10th June to 10th Sept.	Erection of a Secretariat Building at Canberra, including Post Office and Automatic Telephone Exchange	96,140	96,140	..	..	Recommended as proposed
6th Nov., 1924, to 14th Mar., 1925	Construction of Sewage Treatment Works, Federal Capital	60,000	60,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed
10th Nov., 1924, to 17th Mar., 1925	Construction of Northern Main Sewer, Canberra	82,000	82,000	..	..	Recommended as proposed
23rd Sep., 1924, to 18th Mar., 1925	Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Toowong, Queensland	57,739	57,739	..	..	Recommended as proposed
16th Sep., 1924, to 21st Mar., 1925	Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Brisbane, Central	447,670	451,670	4,000	..	Committee recommended that air treatment plant be extended to deal with air contents of upper floors of the building
2nd Oct., 1924, to 30th Mar., 1925	Establishment of Royal Australian Air Force Station (No. 2), at Richmond, N.S.W.	177,400	186,650	9,250	..	Committee recommended brick buildings in lieu of timber
1925. 16th April to 28th May	Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Manly, N.S.W.	71,861	71,861	..	..	Recommended as proposed
17th April to 28th May	Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at West Adelaide, SA.	60,415	60,011	..	404	Committee recommended galvanized iron roof in lieu of slates and reinforced concrete
16th April to 29th May	Establishment of Automatic Telephone Exchange at Lakemba, N.S.W.	25,806	25,806	..	200	Committee recommended that, except over the frame room, the roof should be of timber and iron with a corrugated iron ceiling in lieu of reinforced concrete
3rd June to 17th Aug. 3rd June to 21st Sep.	Erection of Hotel (No. 4) at Canberra Erection of a building at Canberra to accommodate the National Library and for other purposes	55,000 80,000	55,000 80,000	.. ..	.. ..	Recommended as proposed Recommended as proposed
2nd Sep. to 22nd Sep.	Construction of Boys' Naval Training Establishment at Geelong, Victoria	88,700	88,700	..	..	Recommended as proposed
26th Aug., 1924, to 24th Sep., 1925	Erection of a building in Brisbane for the accommodation of Commonwealth departments	..	..	..	..	Committee recommended no departure from its report on the same subject of 28th October, 1922