



THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

THIRTIETH GENERAL
REPORT

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CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraph</u>
Twentieth Committee	1
Proposals Referred to the Committee	3
Meetings	8
Scope of Works to be Reviewed	9
Department of Civil Aviation References	11
Review of Public Works Committee Act and Regulations	15
Appreciation	16
Staff	18

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

THIRTIETH GENERAL REPORT

To His Excellency the Right Honourable Lord Casey, P.C., C.H., D.S.O.,
M.C., K.St.J.,
Governor-General in and over the Commonwealth of Australia.

May It Please Your Excellency:

In pursuance of the requirements of Section 11 of the Public Works Committee Act 1913-1966, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works have the honour to submit the following report on their proceedings during the First Session of the Twenty-sixth Parliament.

TWENTIETH COMMITTEE

1. Members of the Twentieth Committee were appointed in the Senate and in the House of Representatives on 22 February 1967. They were Senator G.H. Branson, Senator F. Dittmer, Senator E.W. Prowse, Messrs. L.L. Bosman, F.C. Chaney, W.J. Fulton, R. McN. Holten, A.W. James and W.P. O'Connor.

2. At the first meeting of the Committee on 23 February 1967, Mr. F.C. Chaney was elected as Chairman and Mr. W.P. O'Connor as Vice-Chairman.

PROPOSALS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE

3. Sixteen proposals were referred to the Committee during the period covered by this report. Inquiries on fifteen have been completed or are approaching finality and reports on eleven have been presented to Parliament.

4. The eleven proposals on which reports have been presented and the estimated cost of each when referred to the Committee are:

Telephone Exchange Building, Pitt Street, Sydney, New South Wales	\$7,200,000
Beef Roads, Western Barkly Tablelands, Northern Territory	\$9,850,000
Engineering Services to Casuarina Sub-Division, Neighbourhood Unit No. 2, Darwin, Northern Territory	\$2,250,000
Mail Exchange Building, Perth, Western Australia	\$3,200,000
Commonwealth Offices, Lismore, New South Wales	\$600,000
Reconstruction of Sutherland Wharf, Cockatoo Island Dockyard, New South Wales	\$1,600,000
Airfield Pavements, Mackay, Queensland	\$1,250,000
Airfield Pavements, Rockhampton, Queensland	\$1,100,000
Stage 4 Extension of Stokes Hill Power Station, Darwin, Northern Territory	\$4,600,000
Airfield Pavements and Terminal Building Extensions, Adelaide Airport, South Australia	\$1,780,000
Site Preparation for Future Domestic Terminals and Additional Roadworks in the North-West Building Area, Sydney Airport, New South Wales	\$3,150,000

5. Inquiries on the four following works are nearing completion and it is expected that reports on each will be tabled early in the next Session. The estimated cost of these works when referred to the Committee is indicated.

Rebuilding of Melville Rehabilitation Centre, Western Australia	\$700,000
Technical Testing and Laboratory Centre, Garden Island, New South Wales	\$570,000

Avionics Workshop, Royal Air Station, H.M.A.S. Albatross, Nowra, New South Wales	\$530,000
Commonwealth Offices, Brisbane, Queensland	\$7,200,000

6. Although the proposal to redevelop the Royal Australian Navy's base at Manus Island in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea was referred to the Committee in May 1967 and the site inspection was carried out shortly afterwards, inquiries have not yet been completed. This is due to the changes that have occurred in the redevelopment proposals and to the resulting delays that have occurred in the presentation of departmental submissions.

7. A tabulated summary of the references is attached.

MEETINGS

8. The Committee held 47 meetings during 1967 and two in 1968 to the date of this report. The taking of evidence and inspections involved visits to Sydney, Darwin, the Western Barkly Tablelands area of the Northern Territory, Manus Island, Port Moresby, Perth, Lismore, Mackay, Rockhampton, Nowra, Adelaide and Brisbane. A considerable number of public hearings and meetings was also held in Canberra.

SCOPE OF WORKS TO BE REVIEWED

9. In paragraphs 20 to 22 of the Twenty-ninth General Report, reference was made to an opinion of the Attorney-General stating that, in his view, the Public Works Committee Act did not preclude from Committee scrutiny works for the Commonwealth outside the geographical boundaries of the Commonwealth.

10. Consequent upon this opinion, the proposal to develop the facilities at the Royal Australian Navy's base at Manus Island was referred to the Committee in May 1967 for investigation and report to Parliament. This is the first instance of a proposed work outside the Commonwealth being referred to the Committee.

DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION REFERENCES

11. In paragraph 16 of the last General Report, the Nineteenth Committee drew attention to the hasty planning which appeared to precede the presentation of the Mascot and Tullamarine Airports references to the Committee in 1965. Comments were made that "... the preparation of designs often appeared to have been rushed with the result that some basic planning decisions had not been taken" and that "... there could have been a better understanding of the works in the Departments concerned had planning of the projects been approached less hurriedly".

12. The following table compares the estimated cost of the current works at Mascot and Tullamarine when referred to the Committee, with the estimates most recently accepted by the Government.

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Cost when reported on by Committee</u>	<u>Current Estimate</u>
	\$	\$
Mascot - Extension of North-South Runway (1963 reference)	11,000,000	12,930,000
" - Site Works in North-West Building Area (1965 reference)	5,200,000	6,530,000
" - International Terminal and Associated Works (1965 reference)	17,900,000	23,311,000
" - Operations and Control Tower Building (1965 reference)	2,396,000	3,000,000
" - Site Preparation for Instrument Landing System (1965 reference)	1,700,000	2,450,000
Tullamarine - Airport Pavements (1963 reference)	16,000,000	12,000,000
" - Additional Aprons, Services, Roads and I.L.S. (1965 reference)	4,300,000	4,500,000
" - Terminal Building Complex and Associated Works (1965 reference)	18,696,524	24,800,000

In addition, approval has been given for a \$2 million contingency for Mascot and \$1.5 million for Tullamarine for design detailing and unforeseen variations.

13. The Committee have no charter to reopen an inquiry into a reference once tenders have been accepted but we believe we have a duty to express our grave concern at the wide disparity between the original and current estimates for these works, particularly for the terminal buildings. It is apparent from the information we have that where dramatic increases have occurred they are generally a consequence of hurried or faulty planning. In one instance it is relevant to note that the cost of part of the work was omitted from the estimate given the Committee.

14. The Committee believe that the history of these projects emphasises the need for care by Departments when contemplating the expenditure of public funds on major works and for more thorough consideration of detail in the preliminary stages of design.

REVIEW OF PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE ACT AND REGULATIONS

15. The Committee understand that the Government has now completed the review of the Public Works Committee Act and Regulations mentioned in the previous General Report and that amending legislation will be introduced shortly.

APPRECIATION

16. To the many departmental and private witnesses who gave evidence at the public hearings and to those who assisted at site inspections and in other ways, the Committee express their gratitude.

17. We are also most appreciative of the co-operation and services provided by the Principal Parliamentary Reporter and his staff.

STAFF

18. Mr. J.L. Mahor joined the staff of the Committee in June 1967 as an assistant to the Secretary. Miss F.M. Brown resigned in May 1967 and has been replaced by Mrs. J.R. Thompson.

J. Blaney

Chairman.

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA, A.C.T.

14 February 1968.

APPENDIX

Date Proposal Referred	Proposed Works	Date of Report	Date Report Presented	Expenditure Proposed when Referred to Committee	Expenditure Recommended by Committee	Amount Additional to that Proposed	Amount less than Proposed	Date Motion for Expediency Passed	Remarks
1. 3.1967	Telephone Exchange Building, Pitt Street, Sydney, New South Wales	5. 4.1967	6. 4.1967	\$7,200,000	\$7,200,000	-	-	18. 4.1967	Recommended as proposed, the completion of building to be accelerated if practicable.
15. 3.1967	Boef Roads, Western Barkly Tablelands, Northern Territory	2. 5.1967	3. 5.1967	\$9,850,000	\$9,850,000	-	-	11. 5.1967	Recommended as proposed.
15. 3.1967	Engineering Services to Casuarina Sub-Division, Neighbourhood Unit No.2, Darwin, Northern Territory	16. 5.1967	17. 5.1967	\$2,250,000	\$2,250,000	-	-	18. 5.1967	Recommended as proposed. As it was evident that improvement of Darwin's arterial road network, including Bagot Road was overdue, the Committee recommended that a programme of improvements be commenced.
11. 5.1967	Mail Exchange Building, Perth, Western Australia	22. 8.1967	23. 8.1967	\$3,200,000	\$3,230,000	\$30,000	-	6. 9.1967	Recommended but with provision of an amenities area on the roof of the building.
11. 5.1967	Development of Royal Australian Navy Base at Manus Island, Territory of Papua and New Guinea				Inquiry incomplete				
7. 7.1967	Commonwealth Offices, Lismore, New South Wales	22. 8.1967	23. 8.1967	\$600,000	\$600,000	-	-	6. 9.1967	Recommended as proposed.

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20. 7.1967	Reconstruction of Sutherland Wharf, Cockatoo Island Dockyard, New South Wales	6. 9.1967	7. 9.1967	\$1,600,000	\$1,600,000	-	-	20. 9.1967	Recommended as proposed.
14. 8.1967	Airfield Pavements, Mackay, Queensland	20. 9.1967	21. 9.1967	\$1,250,000	\$1,250,000	-	-	5.10.1967	Recommended as proposed.
14. 8.1967	Airfield Pavements, Rockhampton, Queensland	21. 9.1967	26. 9.1967	\$1,100,000	\$1,100,000	-	-	25.10.1967	Recommended as proposed. The Committee urged the Commonwealth to assist the Rockhampton Golf Club in re-establishing its course consequent upon the acquisition of part of its land for airport purposes.
7. 9.1967	Stage 4 Extension of Stokes Hill Power Station, Darwin, Northern Territory	19.10.1967	24.10.1967	\$4,600,000	\$4,600,000	-	-	1.11.1967	Recommended as proposed.
20. 9.1967	Airfield Pavements and Terminal Building Extensions, Adelaide Airport, South Australia	31.10.1967	1.11.1967	\$1,780,000	\$1,780,000	-	-	2.11.1967	Recommended as proposed.
4.10.1967	Site Preparation for Future Domestic Terminals, and Additional Roadworks in the North-West Building Area, Sydney Airport, New South Wales	31.10.1967	1.11.1967	\$3,150,000	\$3,150,000	-	-	2.11.1967	Recommended as proposed.

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26.10.1967	Rebuilding of Melville Rehabilitation Centre, Western Australia			Report yet to be presented					
26.10.1967	Technical Testing and Laboratory Centre, Garden Island, New South Wales			Report yet to be presented					
1.11.1967	Avionics Workshop; Naval Air Station, H.M.A.S. Albatross, Nowra, New South Wales			Report yet to be presented					
19. 1.1968	Commonwealth Offices, Brisbane, Queensland			Report yet to be presented					