



1968

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

REPORT

relating to the proposed construction of

**SOUND BROADCASTING
STUDIOS**

for the

**AUSTRALIAN
BROADCASTING COMMISSION
COLLINSWOOD
SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

Report No. 1/1969

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FOR SENATOR BRANSON.

I present the Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works relating to the following proposed work,

SOUND BROADCASTING STUDIOS FOR THE AUSTRALIAN
BROADCASTING COMMISSION, COLLINSWOOD, SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

I ask for leave to make a short statement.

(WHEN LEAVE GRANTED)

The summary of recommendations and conclusions of the Committee is as follows:

1. The Committee agree that the existing premises are substandard from the staff accommodation and operational viewpoints and are also unsuitable for radio broadcasting purposes.
2. There is an urgent need to amalgamate the broadcasting functions on the one site, preferably integrated with the television facilities at Collinswood.
3. There is a need for the works in this reference.
4. The site selected is suitable.
5. The Committee recommend the construction of the work in this reference.
6. The estimated cost of the work when referred to the Committee was \$3.7 million.

4 March 1969.

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

SOUND BROADCASTING STUDIOS FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION, COLLINSWOOD
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

R E P O R T

By resolution on 17 October 1968, the House of Representatives referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for investigation and report, a proposal for the construction of sound broadcasting studios for the Australian Broadcasting Commission at Collinswood, South Australia.

The Committee have the honour to report as follows:

THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION

1. The Committee received written submissions and drawings from the Australian Broadcasting Commission and the Department of Works and took evidence from representatives of these bodies at a public hearing in Canberra. A Sectional Committee inspected the A.B.C.'s existing radio and television facilities in Adelaide including the site for the proposed work.

THE REFERENCE

2. The A.B.C. established its South Australian television service in 1957 at Collinswood, on a $4\frac{1}{2}$ acre site about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of the city. Development at the time envisaged the eventual location there of the Commission's Adelaide radio studios and associated offices.

3. The proposal referred to the Committee comprising

- a three-storey radio studio wing;
- an orchestral studio wing; and

- a ten-storey building housing technical, administrative and staff amenities functions,

is designed to achieve this objective.

4. These buildings will replace the existing radio studios and offices owned or leased by the A.B.C. at Hindmarsh Square, Adelaide and at Norwood, an inner western suburb.

5. The estimated cost of the work is \$3.7 million.

THE PRESENT ACCOMMODATION

6. Hindmarsh Square An old stone building at Hindmarsh Square was purchased for the A.B.C. in 1932 and was adapted to house the facilities of the South Australian broadcasting service. Expansion took place in adjoining properties which were acquired in 1947 and 1948 respectively. These buildings now house studios, programme departments and associated offices. There has been no substantial rebuilding work since 1948 although amenities and improvements to office areas have been made progressively.

7. The A.B.C. leases two premises in the Hindmarsh Square area. The largest, Football House, is an old building not now suited to the use to which it is put. It is badly overcrowded and provides a poor standard of accommodation for the radio studios and offices located there. The second leased space is a small area in the O. & G. Insurance Building. It provides the Finance and Premises staff with a modest standard of accommodation.

8. Norwood The Star Odeon Cinema in Norwood has been recently leased and renovated to form a rehearsal and recording studio for the South Australian Symphony Orchestra. The building contains recording rooms,

a music library and offices. Although very satisfactory for its purpose, it is isolated from other A.B.C. buildings and staff, especially from the music department and radio recording engineers located at Hindmarsh Square with whom continuing contact is necessary.

THE NEED

9. The Sectional Committee observed during their inspection of the Hindmarsh Square buildings that although maintenance has been good and many improvements have been made, the nature of the buildings is such that, except for the O. & G. Insurance Building, they only provide a low standard of accommodation. It was also quite evident that it is just not practicable or economical to attempt further major additions or alterations.

10. Apart from the serious overcrowding which is general, many offices do not enjoy or have access to natural light, natural ventilation is inadequate, air conditioning is impracticable and there is a serious fire hazard. Furthermore, it has been extremely difficult to achieve reasonable acoustic conditions in radio studios.

11. Because the various elements which comprise the A.B.C. establishment in Adelaide are dispersed, there are problems of administration, inefficiencies result and there are increased operational costs. Not only are the various groups at Hindmarsh Square scattered around the Square but they are three miles from the South Australian Symphony Orchestra studios at Norwood.

12. The Committee agree that the existing premises are substandard from the staff accommodation and operational viewpoints and that they are also unsuitable for radio broadcasting purposes. There is clearly an urgent need

to amalgamate the broadcasting functions in the one building or group of buildings on the one site, preferably integrated with the television facilities at Collinswood.

13. The Committee are therefore agreed that there is a need for the works in this reference.

THE SITE

14. The $4\frac{1}{2}$ acre site at Collinswood is located some $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles north of the centre of Adelaide. It has frontages to Collins Street, Galway Avenue, North East Road and Rosetta Street.

15. The land was purchased in 1957 to establish, initially, the A.B.C.'s television service for South Australia. Long-term planning provided for integration of television and radio services on the site. With this in mind the existing television buildings have been positioned on the north-western portion of the site facing Collins Street.

16. The buildings on the site now are:

- an old home (which is to be demolished to allow construction of the proposed radio complex);
- a T.V. studio, technical services and scenery storage building;
- a T.V. engineering office block and store;
- an outside broadcast vehicle garage; and
- a news and film building (under construction).

17. Future planning envisages some extensions to the T.V. studio, engineering offices and stores and the construction of a small presentation studio and a permanent staging and scenery store. The proposed radio studio complex will be unaffected by these additions.

18. The Committee agree that the site selected is suitable for the relocation of the A.B.C.'s South Australian broadcasting services.

THE BUILDING PROPOSALS

19. Planning and Design The suburban location of the site calls for the integration of existing and proposed buildings into a garden environment in which provision is made for staff and visitors' car parking. Every effort is thus to be made to preserve the existing trees along the Rosetta Street and Galway Avenue frontages.

20. The building complex, including the existing buildings will house a staff of some 500. Each of the three units in the present proposal will be readily identifiable by the type of function it accommodates. Siting has been determined by the need to achieve optimum north-south orientation for the multi-storey Administration building and functional grouping of the two studio buildings.

21. Site planning is to be adjusted to maintain 250 on-site parking spaces for the cars of visitors and staff.

22. The Administration building is to have ten floors and a part-basement. Building services will be located in the sub-basement and on the top floor. Elsewhere it will provide space for office and general purpose activities, including programme departments, technical and service groups, management and staff recreation areas. In addition, it will contain a canteen on the ground floor to seat 200, an audition room and a theatrette. In planning the building, space has been provided to meet future expansion requirements.

23. The studio wing will be of three storeys designed for broadcasting operations, ancillary technical services and engineering requirements. A drama studio will rise through two floors and a light entertainment studio through three floors. General purpose and network studios will be located on the first floor together with all of the control booths. Mechanical plant and equipment will be accommodated on the third floor.

24. The orchestral studio with associated control and other rooms will serve as the recording and rehearsing studio for the South Australian Symphony Orchestra and the A.B.C.'s full-time choir, the Adelaide Singers. It will also house an audience of up to 300. While this building will have only one floor level, it will rise the height of two normal storeys to produce the volume necessary for orchestral sound quality and other acoustic requirements. The perimeter space of the studio will provide storage facilities, change rooms and offices for the conductor and visiting conductor. The link between this studio and the radio studio wing will permit easy and direct circulation of staff and will separate the two architectural elements.

25. Existing buildings will be connected to the new complex by a covered way which will border a landscaped court.

26. Structure, Materials and Finishes Foundation conditions are such that the buildings will need to be founded on piles up to 40 ft deep. The buildings will be framed in reinforced concrete. For particular acoustic needs, the framing will be stiffened beyond normal structural standards. The external cladding will be exposed aggregate pre-cast concrete panels. Exposed columns and other cast in situ work will be covered with a matching exposed aggregate finish.

27. Generally, windows will be single glazed in solar grey polished plate glass. Double glazing will be provided in the radio studio wing.
28. The roofs will be covered with galvanised metal trough decking and will be insulated against noise and temperature extremes. The orchestral studio roof will be concrete, covered with metal decking.
29. Floors will be cast in situ reinforced concrete with those in studios being sound isolated from the general structural frame. Smaller studios will have carpetted floors, as will private offices, the audition room, theatrette and special purpose areas, while those of the larger studios will be finished in timber. Most other areas will be finished in vinyl tiles.
30. The ceilings will generally be of a suspended acoustic mineral tile while those in utility and equipment areas will be off-form concrete, cement rendered or sprayed with flocculent asbestos as appropriate.
31. Internal walls in engineering, technical, operational and utility areas will be face brickwork and will be structurally isolated from the main framing to prevent transmission of building and environmental noise. Walls in office areas will be demountable partitions. Applied finishes will be restricted to reduce maintenance costs.
32. The precise location and extent of special acoustic finishes and treatment of studio walls and ceilings will be determined after the studios have been constructed so that a final "tuning" can be effected.
33. Mechanical Services Occupied areas in the Administration building, the studio wing and the radio and orchestral studio will be air conditioned from air handling plants chosen to suit the technical and operational

requirements of the areas they serve. The plants will be connected to central chilled and hot water equipment on the top floor of the office block. Space will be allowed in the plant room for further chiller plant to cope with any future load growth.

34. The design of the air distribution systems will recognise the special acoustic requirements of the radio and orchestral buildings. In the office block, the design of the system will permit occupants some freedom in choosing their own level of comfort.

35. Mechanical ventilation will be provided in toilets, cleaners' rooms, tea rooms, the canteen, the lift machinery room and other service areas.

36. An emergency diesel generating plant consisting of two automatic-start units, each with a capacity of 280 kW, will be installed to serve the existing T.V. studios and the new complex. Miscellaneous services will include monorail trolleys to serve the mechanical plant, sanitary incinerators, cold water and fire booster pumps and drinking water coolers.

37. Electrical Services As the substation supplying the television studios cannot be satisfactorily expanded in its present location, space is to be provided in the Administration building for a new substation. It will be located in the part-basement of the Administration building and will be capable of future expansion. The equipment will be supplied, installed and maintained by the Electricity Trust of South Australia. The main low voltage switchboard will be positioned adjacent to the substation and to the emergency generating plant.

38. The electricity will be generally reticulated from the main switchboard by underground cable to the existing and proposed new buildings. Light

and power services will be installed throughout as required.

39. Hydraulic Services Existing water, sewerage and stormwater services on the site will be retained and, where necessary, diverted to reconnect to mains in adjacent streets.

40. Stormwater will be drained from the buildings and car parks. Other hydraulic services will include cold water reticulation, a water softening unit, duplicate pumping equipment, water storage tanks, flusherettes and a hot water service.

41. Fire Protection An automatic fire detection and alarm system connected to the local fire brigade will be installed in the three buildings. Fire hydrants with hose reels are to be located so as to cover the buildings internally and externally. Auxilliary measures will include hand extinguishers, duplicate booster pumps, and alarm systems and combined fire and domestic elevated storage tanks.

42. The Committee's Conclusion The Committee recommend the construction of the works in this reference.

CAR PARKING

43. At present, 250 on-site car parking spaces are available for the vehicles of visitors and staff employed at Collinswood. The Committee were told that, in a proposal which is not part of the present reference, it is planned to acquire three adjoining blocks of residential land in Rosetta Street to boost this figure by 150 to 180 spaces.

44. The Committee noted that generally it is the Commonwealth's policy not to provide off-street parking space for employees' cars in city areas

but account is taken of the adequacy of public transport and parking space available for private vehicles within a quarter of a mile of the place of employment. In the case of the Collinswood studios and offices, it was pointed out that the available public transport does not suit the requirements of employees working shifts or unusual hours, that the studios are visited by a large number of people including artists, audiences etc and that off-street parking is not available within a reasonable distance. It is also relevant that the site is located in a primarily residential area.

45. In view of the nature of the car parking problem at Collinswood, we see no objection to the proposed extension of the car parking areas beyond the present site boundary.

ESTIMATE OF COST

46. The estimated cost of the proposed work when referred to the Committee was \$3.7 million as follows:

	\$
Administration building	2,273,000
Studio wing	805,000
Orchestral studio	540,000
Demolitions and external site works	82,000
	3,700,000

PROGRAMME

47. Subject to an early approval to proceed being given by the Parliament, it is planned to complete working drawings and tender documents in time to call tenders late in 1969. Allowing a construction period of 22 months, completion of the work is expected late in 1971.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

48. The summary of recommendations and conclusions of the Committee is set out below. Alongside each is shown the paragraph in the report to which it refers.

Paragraph

1. THE COMMITTEE AGREE THAT THE EXISTING PREMISES ARE
SUBSTANDARD FROM THE STAFF ACCOMMODATION AND OPERATIONAL
VIEWPOINTS AND ARE ALSO UNSUITABLE FOR RADIO BROADCASTING
PURPOSES. 12
2. THERE IS AN URGENT NEED TO AMALGAMATE THE BROADCASTING
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6. THE ESTIMATED COST OF THE WORK WHEN REFERRED TO THE
COMMITTEE WAS \$3.7 MILLION. 46

F. C. Chaney
(F.C. CHANEY)
Chairman.

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

27 February 1969.