THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA 1969—Parliamentary Paper No. 85

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

REPORT

relating to the proposals for the construction of

CUSTOMS BUILDING

and

INCINERATOR

at

Melbourne (Tullamarine) Airport (Ninth Report of 1969)

Presented pursuant to Statute and ordered to be printed 28 August 1969

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(2) Appointed 20 August 1969.

(2) Elected Vice-Chairman 21 August 1969.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Department of Works, Canberra, A.C.T.

Departmental No. 20 Executive Council Meeting No. 27

MINUTE PAPER FOR THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Public Works Committee Act 1913-1966

Recommended for the approval of His Excellency the Governor-General in Council that the proposal—Construction of Customs Building and Incinerator at Melbourne (Tullamarine) Airport, Victoria—(particulars of which are set out in the attached statement) be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for investigation and report to the House of Representatives.

C. R. KELLY Acting Minister of State for Works

Approved in Council

PAUL HASLUCK

Governor-General

3 July 1969

Filed in the Records of the Council

K. W. PEARSON

Acting Secretary to the Executive Council

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Garward, S. H., Esq., Chief Airport Architect, Department of Civil Aviation, Aviation House, 188 Queen Street, Melbourne, Victoria	1–37 58–59			
Grant, L. G., Esq., Principal Architect, Victorian and Tasmanian Branch, Department of Works, Commonwealth Centre, Latrobe Street, Melbourne, Victoria	69–95			
Mansell, G. W., Esq., Assistant Collector, Department of Customs and Excise, Customs House, 1–13 William Street, Melbourne, Victoria	60–68			
McIntosh, K. S., Esq., Assistant Director-General (Animal Quarantine), Department of Health, Philip, Australian Capital Territory	38–57			
Ozanne, W. H. A., Esq., Assistant Director of Works (Design), Victorian and Tasmanian Branch, Department of Works, Commonwealth Centre, Latrobe Street, Melbourne, Victoria				
Walsh, J. E., Esq., Assistant Comptroller—General, (Management Services) Department of Customs and Excise, Barton, Australian Capital Territory	60-68			
Webb, Dr. R. C., Commonwealth Director of Health for Victoria, Commonwealth Centre, Spring and Latrobe Streets, Melbourne, Victoria				
Whitaker, R. J., Esq., Section Engineer, Victorian and Tasmanian Branch, Department of Works, Commonwealth Centre, Latrobe Street, Mel- bourne, Victoria	69–95			

CUSTOMS BUILDING AND INCINERATOR AT MELBOURNE (TULLAMARINE) AIRPORT

REPORT

On 3 July 1969, His Excellency the Governor-General in Council referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for investigation and report to the House of Representatives, proposals for the construction of a Customs Building and an Incinerator at Melbourne (Tullamarine) Airport, Victoria

The Committee have the honour to report as follows:

PART I—INTRODUCTION

COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION

1. The Committee received written submissions and drawings from the Departments of Civil Aviation, Works, Customs and Excise, and Health and took evidence from representatives of these departments at a public hearing in Sydney. We inspected the sites for the Customs House and for the incinerator at Melbourne Airport and, during a visit to Sydney Airport, the newly completed Customs House and incinerator under construction.

THE REFERENCE

- 2. The proposals referred to the Committee are for the construction of
 - a Customs House, containing about 10,500 sq. ft of public and office space on a site about 2,100 ft south of the terminal building; and
 - an incinerator complex comprising two waste disposal units and provision for a third, to be located on the western side of the airport.
- 3. The estimated cost of the Customs House is \$460,000 and of the incinerator \$250,000.

MELBOURNE (TULLAMARINE) AIRPORT

4. The unsuitability of the facility at Essendon for further development as the principal domestic or international airport for Mel-

bourne led to a decision to create a major airport at Tullamarine about 12 miles northwest of the city.

- 5. The airport covers an area of 5,300 acres. The runways are a main runway 8,500 ft long running generally north and south and an east-west runway 7,500 ft long. There is room for both to be extended and the master plan allows for the construction eventually of a parallel runway system in the south-east part of the airport.
- 6. The passenger terminal buildings are being built south-east of the intersection of the completed runways and the area set aside for the international freight complex including the Customs House is south of the terminals. Further to the south the airlines maintenance areas are being established.
- 7. The control tower and operations centre and facilities connected with maintenance of the airport and its services by the Department of Civil Aviation are located near the western boundary. The site for the incinerator is south of these buildings.
- 8. The committee have already reported to the Parliament on the following major works proposals at the new airport:
 - airfield pavement (1963):
 - additional engineering services, roads, instrument landing systems (1965);
 - terminal and services buildings, control tower, fire stations, D.C.A. maintenance areas etc. (1965);
- domestic airlines maintenance bases (1968).
- 9. The Committee noted that the airport is now expected to be opened for international traffic at about the end of May 1970.

PART II—CUSTOMS HOUSE

THE NEED

10. International aircraft operating into Melbourne Airport will bring in freight which will not have been cleared through customs

at other international airports in Australia en route. In addition, Trans-Australia Airlines and Ansett Airlines of Australia, as handling agents for international airline companies, which do not have rights to operate into Melbourne, will also bring in freight which will not have been cleared at other Australian international airports.

- 11. There is therefore a requirement at Melbourne Airport for an international freight complex comprising freight buildings to be used by the airline companies, a building to accommodate freight forwarders and customs agents and a Customs House for the Department of Customs and Excise.
- 12. During the early planning of the airport, an area south of the terminal complex was reserved for international freight purposes. This site was selected on the basis that it should be reasonably close to the passenger terminals because for many years a major part of freight will continue to be carried in passenger aircraft. The site is also convenient to the road system for the despatch or collection of freight.
- 13. Sites have now been allocated to Qantas, Pan American Airways, Trans-Australia Airlines and Ansett Airlines of Australia for the erection, at their own cost, of international freight buildings. A site has also been allocated to a company of air freight forwarders and customs agents for the erection of a freight building at their own cost.
- 14. Near the centre of the complex a site has been reserved for a Customs House. Each of the buildings mentioned in the previous paragraph will have a room or rooms for customs officers to assist in the quick clearance of freight but these units will remain comparatively small. The cost of providing this accommodation is being borne by the airline companies and agents. However, the Customs House is required to provide administrative and operational headquarters on the airport for the Department of Customs and Excise and is required to be erected at Commonwealth expense.
- 15. Under Part 2, Section 19 of the Customs Act 1901-1965, it is the responsibility of an airport owner to provide to the satisfaction of the Department of Customs and Excise suitable office accommodation at the airport for the exclusive use of customs officers. The proposal to build a Customs House at Melbourne Airport is thus sponsored by the Department of Civil Aviation.

16. Committee's Conclusions. The Committee consider that the need has been established for the provision of a Customs House at Melbourne Airport at Commonwealth expense. We believe that the site selected is suitable for the purpose.

FUNCTIONS AND ACCOMMODATION

- 17. The amount of freight carried by aircraft has shown a marked growth in recent years and it has been estimated by Qantas that a minimum annual growth rate of 26 per cent will be maintained at Melbourne Airport during the next five years.
- 18. The Customs House has been planned to meet requirements for a period of five to seven years. Engineering services, toilets and other fixed installations have been planned at the western end of the building to facilitate expansion to the east when enlargement of the building is required.
- 19. The Customs House will be a public building catering for business entailed in the entry and clearance of imported commercial cargo. It is to accommodate:
 - the sub-collector and his immediate administrative staff and equipment;
 - staff engaged in the processing of documents for commercial imports of air cargo;
 - departmental airport records, equipment and stores;
 - amenities for a staff which will be on duty seven days per week and up to 18 hours per day.
- 20. Externally, the building will measure about 122 ft by 63 ft and be of two storeys. Internally, it will provide about 14,400 sq ft of floor space occupied by service areas (3,000 sq ft), non-working areas including public space, storage and circulation (3,500 sq ft), working areas (7,000 sq ft) and amenities (900 sq ft). At the western end of the lower level will be located the main plant room, garages and toilet areas. The remainder of the floor will be used for public space where customs agents and importers can prepare documents and pay moneys and for the invoice room and associated functions.
- 21. On the first floor will be the offices for the sub-collector and other senior staff, office space for the processing of aircraft papers and administrative purposes and for the examination and the classification of imported commercial film. The staff amenities area is also to be at this level.

BUILDING PROPOSALS

- 22. The building has been sited to be readily accessible to others in the international freight complex and to the public by road. The site is to be landscaped with lawns and tree-planting, consistent with the general treatment of the area. On-site parking for 60 cars is to be provided.
- 23. Structure. The perimeter walls will be of load bearing brick construction. The ground floor slab will be of reinforced concrete and founded on shallow compacted fill. The first floor will comprise pre-stressed precast concrete units spanning 30 ft from a central spine beam system to a continuous concrete perimeter beam bearing on the outer brick walls. The spine beams and central supporting columns will be of steel, the columns being encased in concrete.
- 24. Over the first floor two bay steel portal frames will span the building transversely at 20 ft centres. Roof construction which will be 4 in thick pre-stressed pre-cast concrete units spanning between portal frames, is designed to attenuate the effects of aircraft noise in office areas.
- 25. Finishes. Externally, the proposed finishes have been selected to harmonise with the terminal and other buildings. The walls will be of selected face brick and the deep fascia at roof level will be rendered with white quartz aggregate to match in colour and appearance the horizontal beams of the terminal. Window frames are to be of anodised aluminium and double glazed to reduce sound penetration.
- 26. Internally, permanent walls will be either finished in face brick or plastered. Demountable partition walls will be formed in 2½ in laminated plaster. Ceilings in offices and public areas will be suspended plaster acoustic tiles. Floor finishes will generally be vinyl tiles and skirtings. In toilets, floors will be finished in mosaic tiles and the walls in ceramic tiles.
- 27. Engineering Services. Airport sewerage and water supply mains will be extended to the Customs House.
- 28. The office and public areas are to be air conditioned from individual multi-zone air handling units connected to the chilled water and hot water boiler plants. The plants will be sized to cater for a 50 per cent future extension of the building.

- 29. Toilets and cleaners' areas will be mechanically exhausted and domestic hot water will be available at basins, cleaners' sinks and in the amenities area.
- 30. Electricity will come through an underground cable from a substation at the rear of the building. The electrical installation will include cabling, switchboards, power outlets and lighting. Exterior lighting will include security and car park lighting.
- 31. The building will be protected by a thermal fire alarm system, fire hydrants and manual fire extinguishers.
- 32. Committee's Recommendation. The Committee recommend the construction of the Customs House, as proposed.

PART III—INCINERATOR

THE NEED

- 33. Garbage, and especially garbage derived from foodstuff of an animal origin, fruit and uncooked vegetables carries a high risk of introducing diseases of plants and animals. Many of these are important exotic diseases such as foot and mouth disease, swine fever, Newcastle disease of poultry and in the case of plants and fruit, various fruit flies and other insects.
- 34. The Department of Health is primarily responsible for preventing the entry of these diseases into Australia from overseas. In respect of food and other waste products removed from international aircraft on arrival in Australia, the policy is to destroy this material by incineration at the airport concerned. The actual disposal of the garbage at airports is carried out by the Department of Civil Aviation.
- 35. When international operations commence at Melbourne Airport, in addition to Qantas, aircraft cabin servicing and provisioning will be carried out by both Trans-Australia Airlines and Ansett Airlines of Australia acting as agents for other overseas carriers. We noted that consequently, there is a strong possibility of cross contamination occurring in the airline operators flight kitchen and/or cabin servicing facilities between locally generated garbage and that of an overseas origin.
- 36. The Committee were told that all waste material generated in both the domestic and overseas airlines food preparation/cabin service facilities is therefore regarded as quarantine garbage which should be destroyed on the airport.

- 37. Other sources of garbage at the airport will be the public concession facilities both in the terminal and elsewhere, offices, aircraft maintenance areas, staff lunch rooms etc. The composition of airport garbage ranges from very wet waste food, food preparation scraps, paper cardboard cartons, non-combustible and combustible products.
- 38. Because of the many sources at which garbage is generated, the strong possibility of cross-contamination and the economic benefits to be obtained by using dry garbage as a source of fuel to assist in the destruction of wet garbage from the flight kitchens, restaurants and cafeterias, the proposal is that all airport garbage be destroyed at the airport incinerator. The only wastes which, by agreement of the Department of Health, will not require incineration are locally produced tins and bottles.
- 39. The Committee concluded that there is a need for an incinerator at Melbourne Airport in which to dispose of all garbage generated at the airport except locally produced tins and bottles.

SITE

- 40. The site proposed, south of the D.C.A. area on the western side of the airport is so located in relation to the terrain that it will be possible to deliver garbage to the charging floor by vehicle and to remove ash by vehicle from the lower level.
- 41. Besides this advantage, the site is remote from present and future runways and the lines of sight and height of the chimneys will not interfere with aircraft operations. Furthermore, any smoke discharge from the unit, which we were assured would be minimal, will be generally carried away from other occupied areas by the prevailing winds.
- 42. The Committee believe that the site selected is suitable.

THE PROPOSAL

43. Capacity. The Committee were informed that following the commencement of both domestic and international operations, the amount of airport generated garbage is expected to average 1,500 cu ft per day, being about equal parts of wet and dry refuse. This volume and composition is equivalent to 30,000 lbs per day. It has been forecast that by 1980, the daily volume will be 2,200 cu ft or 44,000 lbs per day.

- 44. The proposal submitted to the Committee has been designed on the basis of two incinerator units, to burn the initial loading of 30,000 lbs per day in one eight-hour shift. The two units would be able to destroy the 1980 forecast quantity in up to two eight-hour shifts. The design proposed will allow for an extension of the building to take a further incinerator unit should the need arise.
- 45. Design. Designs are based on the standards of the Incinerator Institute of America and comply in respect of chimney heights and products of combustion with the requirements of the Clear Air Regulations of Victoria.
- 46. Taking advantage of the sloping site, the building, having three levels, will minimise the requirement for the mechanical handling of garbage and ash. At the top level or charging floor, garbage skips will be unloaded and discharged into the incinerator hoppers. The incinerators are to be located at the intermediate level, where tending of the fire and ash removal will be effected. Ash disposal chutes will discharge into tip trucks at the lower level. Access between the charge floor and disposal floor will be by an external staircase which will continue to the lower level. A secondary stair within the building will connect the disposal floor with the lower road.
- 47. A staff change and lunch room and toilets are to be located at the upper level near the parking area and vehicle washing facilities.
- 48. Structure. The roof and wall cladding to the charge floor will be supported on a steel frame carried on the perimeter beams of the charge floor slab. Below the charge floor, beams, columns, staircases, plinths, retaining walls and footings will be in reinforced concrete.
- 49. The amenities building will be constructed in load bearing brick with a concrete floor and metal deck roof.
- 50. Materials. The external walls to the disposal floor and the retaining walls of the lower road and staircase will be faced with dark brown bricks.
- 51. The north and south walls of the charge floor will be ribbed galvanised sheet steel cladding. On the eastern side, the loading bay and ramp will be in concrete and there will be two 'tilt-up' doors finished with ribbed sheet steel. The fascia to the charge floor will be in the same material.

- 52. The western walls of the charge and disposal floor will be continuous galvanised steel louvres with wire screens.
- 53. The incinerator flues will be steel and lined with fire brick.
- 54. Internal finishes will be consistent with the building's function and provide hard wearing and easily cleaned surfaces. Floors will be granolithic and walls finished in face brick or off-form concrete.
- 55. In the amenities area the concrete floor will be finished with vinyl tiles and skirtings, ceilings will be of plaster board and the walls of bagged brick. In toilet areas, floors will be covered with mosaic tiles.
- 56. Incinerators. Two separate incinerator units using common ancillary equipment are proposed, so that one unit can operate while the other is being maintained. Each incinerator will be of the heated hearth, multiple chamber type with top feed, incorporating primary and secondary auxiliary oil firing.
- 57. Garbage will arrive at the incinerator building in 15 cu ft skips which will be handled at the charging floor by manually operated trolleys. In the case of kitchen garbage, free moisture from the skips will be drained in the airline operators kitchen garbage rooms. Free moisture from cabin service waste will be drained at the incinerator.
- 58. Cans and bottles from kitchen preparation areas will be separated from kitchen garbage and disposed of elsewhere. Cans and bottles from aircraft will, however, pass through the incinerator.
- 59. Ash will be raked manually from the incinerators for discharge through a chute into trucks at the lower level.
- 60. Electrical services. Electric power will be supplied by extending the 22 kV overhead reticulation to a pole-mounted substation near the building. The electrical installation will include cabling, switchboards, power outlets and lighting. Lightning protection will be provided for the smoke stacks.
- 61. Civil Engineering Services. A bitumen surfaced two-lane access road from the airport operations road is proposed. Paving near the building and the loop access road to the lower level will be in concrete.
- 62. A combined fire and domestic water main will be extended from the D.C.A. maintenance area.

- 63. Because it would be uneconomic to extend the sewer line from the terminal area, domestic sewage and waste from washing down areas will be treated in a septic tank on the incinerator site. The effluent will pass through a sand filter and then be chlorinated before discharge.
- 64. Fire Protection. A thermal fire detection system will be installed and connected to the alarm panel at the airport fire station. Fire hydrants will be provided to cover the complex.
- 65. Committee's Recommendation. The Committee recommend the construction of the incinerator complex, as proposed.

PART IV—PROGRAMME AND ESTIMATES

PROGRAMME

- 66. Both the Customs House and the incinerator will be required when international operations commence at the airport—now expected to be at the end of May 1970. In both cases the Department of Works was authorised in July 1968 to complete detailed designs, working drawings and tender documents ready for the calling of tenders. This aspect of the work is now almost complete.
- 67. The Committee were told that in the case of the Customs House, the extremely tight construction timetable will not permit the whole of the building to be completed in time. It is planned therefore to commence operations on the ground floor only. We were informed that this space is expected to be ready for occupation 36 weeks after construction commences and that a further 11 weeks will be required to complete the remainder of the building.
- 68. Forty weeks is the time required for the completion of the incinerator complex after tenders are called and a contract is let.
- 69. On the basis that the month of September will be required, after the tabling of this report, for the Parliament to pass an expediency motion and for tenders to be called and examined and contracts to be let, it was apparent to the Committee that no part of the Customs House or the incinerator will be available when international operations commence. The Parliament should be informed of the arrangements proposed during the interim period.

ESTIMATES OF COST

70. When the work was referred to the Committee, the estimated cost of the Customs House was \$460,000 and of the incinerator complex \$250,000.

PART V-CONCLUSION

PROGRAMME FOR PRESENT WORK

71. In normal circumstances, when a project is referred to the Committee, design is at the preliminary stage and further development of the plans is suspended until the Committee has completed its investigation and reported to the Parliament and the Parliament has, on the basis of the Committee's report, considered whether it should approve the work. The final design and tender documentation stage which may then occupy up to 12 months or more is commenced when the Parliament's endorsement is obtained. In most cases, the Committee's enquiry is completed within two or three months so that generally there is little interruption in the transition from preliminary to final design.

72. In some recent cases, the Government has, coincidentally with the reference of a project to the Committee, authorised the Department of Works to proceed with the preparation of final drawings and documents on the basis of the designs submitted to the Committee. We believe that this expedient is a reasonable and acceptable procedure in selected cases, where there is a particular urgency for the work, but we think that it is undesirable for it to become the general practice because it presupposes the Parliament's endorsement of the project. It follows, of course, that should the Parliament direct that the work be not carried out or built in a form other than that submitted, then there will be a degree of wasted design time and effort.

73. In the case of the present reference, the Department of Works in July 1968 was authorised to proceed with final documentation and the stage has now been reached where tenders can be called within a week or two if the Parliament's approval is obtained.

74. The Committee consider it improper, even in the circumstances in this instance, for detailed design and documentation to, in effect, be completed before a project has been cleared by the Parliament. There is a clear statutory requirement for certain works proposals to be referred to the Committee and the procedures for and timing of references

are well known. We received no satisfactory explanation for the failure to submit these works to the Committee in reasonable time, especially considering that the proposals were sufficiently advanced in July 1968 for an approval to be given for final designs to be developed.

75. The Committee's concern is all the more serious because the construction schedules set for these works appear to be impossibly short and the facilities to be provided are fundamental to the efficient operation of a \$50 million complex which itself is now running over three years late. As it happened, we found the plans satisfactory, but in other circumstances, we might have had little alternative to endorsing them because of the tight target dates.

76. We consider that in this instance, little respect has been shown to the rights of the Parliament and recommend that steps be taken to prevent a recurrence.

MELBOURNE AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT

77. The history of the present reference is unfortunately typical of most aspects of the development of the new Melbourne Airport.

78. In a report tabled in the Parliament on 7 November 1968, the Committee were highly critical of the organisation of the project, commenting that '... the overall development programme has lacked direction and co-ordination' and noting that the commencement of international operations at the airport had slipped back from 1967 to the end of 1969.

79. We have now been told that in the period since we commenced our 1968 enquiry, the date for the commencement of operations has fallen back a further six months to the end of May 1970. In other words, the airport which has been under construction for nearly seven years is now expected to open, for its initial commercial operations, more than three years after the original target date.

80. It is inexplicable that the planning and construction of this airport continues to be managed so ineffectively. Little can be done now to improve matters so far as Melbourne is concerned, but it is clear that a searching examination should be made of the departmental arrangements and procedures for planning and designing airport works to ensure that satisfactory results are achieved with future major projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

81. The summary of recommendations and conclusions of the Committee is set out below. A re

oncl long	The summary of recommendations usions of the Committee is set out be uside each is shown the paragraph it to which it refers.	elow.	9.	and of the incinerator complex \$250,000 70 It is improper for detailed design and documentation to	
1.	Parage The need has been established for the provision of a Customs	graph		be completed before a project has been cleared by the Parlia-	
	House at Melbourne Airport at Commonwealth expense 1	16	10.	In this instance, little respect has been shown to the rights	
 3. 	The site selected is suitable 1 The Committee recommend the construction of the	16		of the Parliament. We recommend that steps be taken to prevent a recurrence 76	
4.		32	11.	The planning and construc- tion of Melbourne Airport	
	incinerator at Melbourne Air- port in which to dispose of all garbage generated at the air- port except locally produced		12.	continues to be managed ineffectively 80 A searching examination should be made of Depart-	
		39		mental arrangements and pro-	
5.	The site selected for the incinerator is suitable 4	42		cedures for planning and de- signing airport works to ensure that satisfactory results are	
6.	The Committee recommend the construction of the incinerator complex as pro-			obtained with future major projects 80	
	Appropriate the property of the control of the cont	65		F. C. CHANEY, Chairman	
7.	No part of the Customs House or the incinerator will be available when Inter- national Operations com-	, I	Work Parlia	mentary Standing Committee on Public	c
				ugust 1969.	

Paragraph

8. The estimated cost of the

Customs House was \$460,000