

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

SIXTIETH GENERAL REPORT

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THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
1997

The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

Sixtieth General Report

(Covering the period 1 January 1996
to 31 December 1996)

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PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

SIXTIETH GENERAL REPORT

Pursuant to section 16 of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works is required to report to the Parliament on its proceedings during the previous 12 months. This report, the Committee's Sixtieth, is for the period 1 January 1996 to 31 December 1996 and covers the proceedings of the 32nd Committee.

THE COMMITTEE

Committee Membership

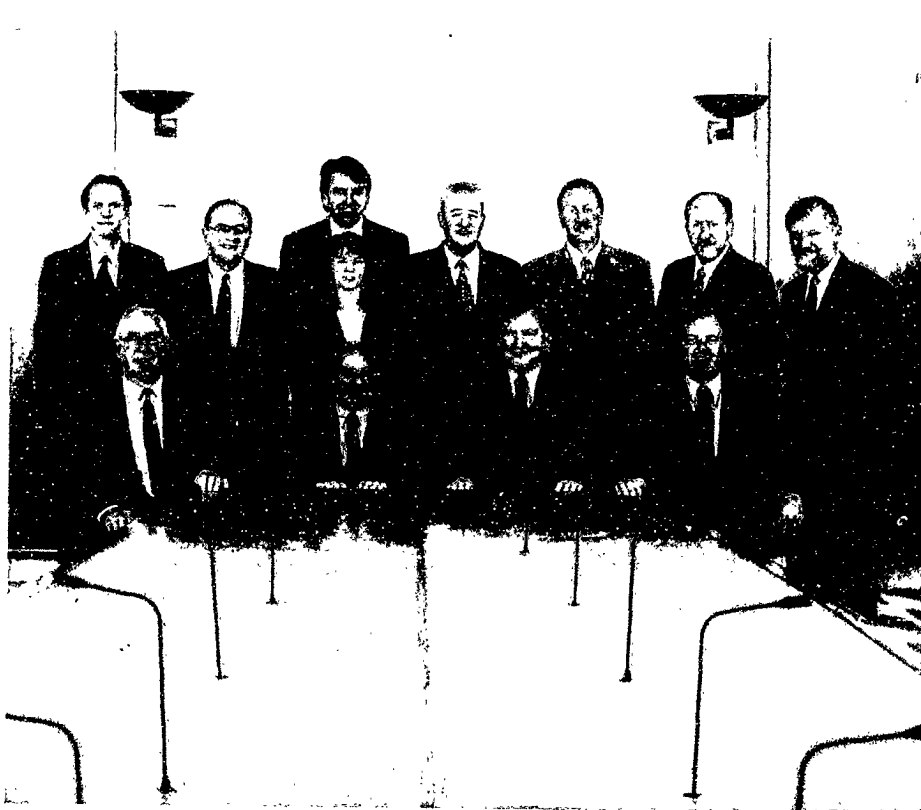
1. The 38th Parliament commenced on 30 April 1996. On 29 May, the House of Representatives and the Senate appointed the following Members and Senators to be members of the 32nd Committee.

Mr Neil Andrew MP
Mr Colin Hollis MP
Mr Richard Evans MP
Mr John Forrest MP
Mr Ted Grace MP
The Hon Michael Lee MP *
Senator Paul Calvert
Senator Alan Ferguson
Senator Shayne Murphy

* Mr Michael Hatton MP replaced the Hon Michael Lee MP on 26 June 1996, following his resignation from the Committee.

2. Four members had served on the Committee in previous Parliaments: Mr Andrew (from February 1985 to June 1987; and from May 1993); Mr Hollis (from February 1985 - Chairman from October 1987); Senator Calvert (from August 1990 - Vice-Chairman from May 1994); and Senator Murphy (from February 1995).

3. The Committee met for the first time on 30 May. Mr Andrew was elected Chairman and Mr Hollis was elected Vice-Chairman. Following his election as Chairman, Mr Andrew paid tribute to the stewardship of Mr Hollis, who served the Parliament as Chairman from October 1987 and Senator Calvert, who was Vice-Chairman from May 1994.



Members and the Secretariat of the 32nd Committee. Standing (from left to right): Bjarne Nordin (Secretary), Michael Hatton MP, Richard Evans MP, Lynette Sebo (Administrative Officer), Senator Alan Ferguson, Senator Shayne Murphy, John Forrest MP, Michael Fetter (Assistant Secretary); seated (from left to right): Ted Grace MP, Colin Hollis MP (Vice-Chairman), Neil Andrew MP (Chairman), Senator Paul Calvert. (Photo: AUSPIC)

REFERENCES AND REPORTS

New References:

4. The Committee received ten references during 1996. In comparison with previous years, the number of references seems modest, reflecting a truncated working reduced by the 1996 elections, and resulting in the appointment of the Committee in May and the first reference being received in mid-June.

5. Five references were reported on as follows:

- ☐ Implementation of rockfall risk reduction strategies on Christmas Island;
- ☐ CSIRO Research Interaction Centre and biomolecular research facilities, Black Mountain, ACT;
- ☐ Development of operational facilities at RAAF Base Tindal, NT;
- ☐ Development of facilities for 5 Aviation Regiment at RAAF Base Townsville; and
- ☐ Development of infrastructure on Townsville Field Training Area, Townsville.

Unreported References:

6. At the end of the year, the following five references had not been reported on:

- ☐ Development of operational facilities at RAAF Base Darwin;
- ☐ Extension to the main runway at Adelaide International Airport;
- ☐ Development of facilities for the Army Logistics Training Centre and the Bandiana Logistics Group at Bandiana and Bonegilla, Victoria;
- ☐ Development of No.6 Squadron facilities at RAAF Base Amberley, QLD; and
- ☐ Development of buildings and services in support of the Department of Defence Joint Project 2043, High Frequency Modernisation Project; Urana, Victoria.

7. Inspections and public hearings into the development of operational facilities for RAAF Base Darwin were held on 21 and 22 October and inspections and public hearings for the High Frequency Modernisation Project and the Facilities at Bandiana and Bonegilla, Victoria, were held on 25 and 26 November. The Committee was unable to complete reports on these works before the summer adjournment. Inspections and public hearings into the remaining three references were scheduled in early 1997.



The Committee's inquiry into the Department of Defence High Frequency Modernisation Project included inspections of a number of sites in remote areas. Shown above are Members of the Committee and Defence officials at a "greenfield" site near Urana in the Riverina district of New South Wales on which a modern High Frequency receiver station will be constructed. The site has extensive buffer zones which will provide protection against electro magnetic radiation. It is the natural habitat of an endangered bird - the Plains Wanderer. The site, and a second site for a transmitter station, was purchased by Defence and the land has been leased back to the former owners.



A proposal, from the CSIRO, for the construction of a Research Interaction Centre at Black Mountain, Canberra, for the Division of Plant Industry, was the subject of an inspection and public hearing in October. This Division, the largest Division of the CSIRO, employing more than 450 scientific staff, seeks to improve Australia's agribusiness industries through research directed at improving Australia's international competitiveness and resource bases. During the inspection of the Division's Headquarters at Black Mountain, members of the Committee had the privilege to see a number of plant pressings, held by the Division's herbarium, collected from the east coast of Australia by Sir Joseph Banks in 1770 during the voyage of discovery by Captain James Cook. A number of pressings are shown on the table (lower left). From left to right: Ms Jo Palmer (researcher - CSIRO herbarium), Bjarne Nordin (Secretary) Neil Andrew MP (Chairman), Colin Hollis MP (Vice Chairman), Dr John Huppertz (Assistant Chief - Division of Plant Industry) and Richard Evans MP. (Photo: CSIRO)

Cost of Projects Examined

8. The cost of projects reported on during the year was \$88.526 million. Details of reports tabled, including recommendations and conclusions, are at Appendix A.

MEETINGS

9. The Committee and Sectional Committees met 37 times during 1996. There were 17 private meetings, 13 inspections and 7 public hearings.

10. Meetings and Inspections were held at the following locations:

Location	Main committee	Sectional committee
Canberra	14	2
Melbourne	1	1
Sydney	1	1
Christmas Island	3	
Townsville	1	4
RAAF Base Tindal		2
Darwin		2
Urana		2
Bandiana		2
Point Wilson		1

Further details are at Appendix B.

MATTERS RAISED IN REPORTS

11. While the Committee usually takes the opportunity to comment on significant matters raised in reports during the year, there were no matters raised this year which warrant reporting upon.

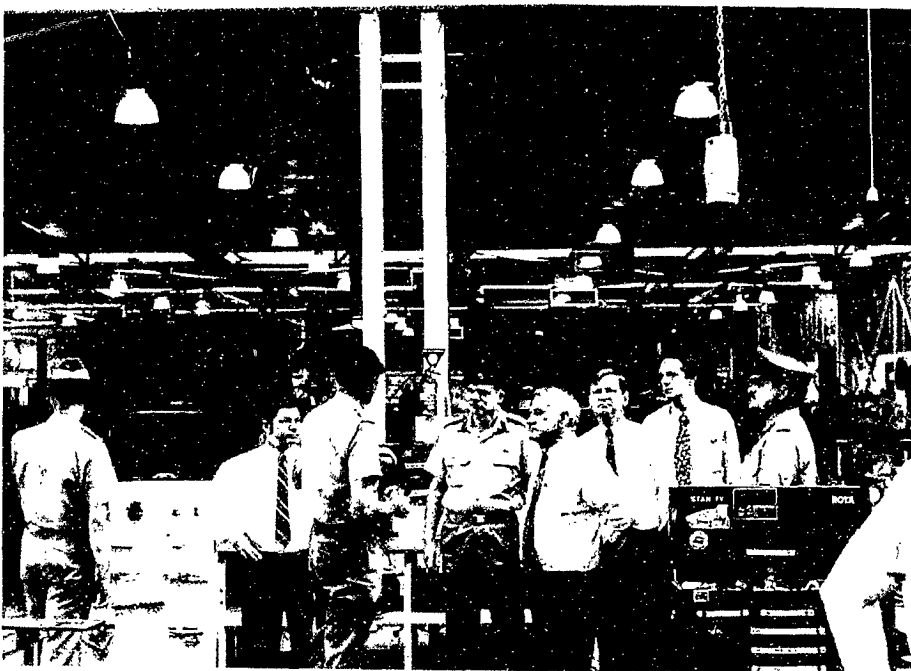
12. An important contribution to the Committee's inquiries is the submissions on proposals prepared by departments or agencies. As part of its inquiry process, the Committee advertises inquiries in newspapers - either nationally or locally,

depending on the complexity of projects. Copies of departmental submissions are made available to interested parties on request and sent by the Committee to organisations and individuals who have been consulted by departments or agencies during the development of proposals. Names and addresses are provided by sponsoring departments.

13. The Committee aims to ensure that parties with an interest in a major Commonwealth public works proposal are consulted, given the opportunity to comment on proposals and to have their views considered by the Committee. If objections are raised, departments are asked to respond in writing. Matters of disagreement may be pursued by the Committee at public hearings and comment about these may be made in the Committee's reports, when warranted. The Committee believes however, that its public proceedings should not be used as a forum for debate about matters beyond the scope of its charter.

14. With one exception, yet to be reported on, the year in review was marked by general agreement on public works proposals from organisations and individuals consulted by departments. The Committee believes this is due to departments being more conscious of their obligations to consult early and widely during the development of proposals, before they are referred to the Committee. One positive result has been that public hearings have not been unduly protracted. Another result has been the avoidance of extraneous debate on issues of marginal relevance being introduced into the Committee's deliberations.

15. The Committee recognises that public works projects often result in benefits flowing to local communities, in addition to the actual buildings and services provided. This was illustrated in two of the Committee's investigations during 1996. As part of the development of facilities in Townsville for the 5 Aviation Regiment and for infrastructure on the Townsville Field Training Area, the Townsville City Council commissioned a study by the Centre for Applied Economic Research at James Cook University, illustrating the economic benefits of each proposal. The studies showed that economic benefits flowing from the two Townsville projects amounted to a total of \$120 million. The projects were also each predicted to create over 300 full-time and part-time jobs for members of the local community.



The Committee's final inspection and public hearing was held on 26 November into the proposed development of facilities for the Army Logistics Training Centre and the Bandiana Logistics Group at Bandiana and Bonegilla, Victoria. The Commonwealth has made substantial investments in facilities for the Army at both locations during the past decade and the proposal examined by the Committee is intended to rationalise the use of facilities, including the adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Shown above are members of the Committee inspecting motor trade training facilities at Bandiana.

BRIEFINGS

16. The Committee's private meetings in Canberra during Parliamentary sitting weeks involve consideration of draft reports, correspondence and the future program of inspections and hearings. At these meetings during 1996, departments and agencies briefed the Committee on a number of issues including:

Department of Primary Industries and Energy

- [1] progress report on Maralinga test site - in situ vitrification trial;

Overseas Property Group

- ☐ progress in relation to a number of overseas works;
- ☐ a request to increase the project cost for the refurbishment of Australia House in London;
- ☐ new budgetary arrangements and property principles;
- ☐ progress of overseas works;

Department of Defence

- ☐ the medium works program for 1996/97;
- ☐ the Defence High Frequency Modernisation Project;

CSIRO

- ☐ a request for funding of new facilities for the Division of Plant Industry, Black Mountain, ACT;

Defence Housing Authority

- ☐ activities of the Authority since its foundation, operations during 1995/96 and future references; and

Federal Airports Corporation

- ☐ progress report on Sydney Airport International Terminal roads and carpark improvements.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEES CONFERENCE

17. The fifth conference of Commonwealth and State Public Works Committees was hosted by a committee of the ACT Legislative Assembly on 5-6 August 1996, in Canberra. Representatives of the Commonwealth, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australian, Tasmanian, ACT and New Zealand legislatures were in attendance. The conference provides a forum for discussion on the operations of public works committees across Australia and New Zealand and compares methods of scrutiny of funding for public works.

18. At the Canberra conference, guest speakers presented papers on topics including:

- ☐ sustainable resources and their infrastructure;
- ☐ public works in the ACT - an overview;
- ☐ strategic asset management in relation to capital investment;
- ☐ techniques of project delivery; and
- ☐ pre-qualification and security of payments.

MEDIUM WORKS

19. Under the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, all public works estimated to cost \$6 million or more must be referred to the Committee. Medium works - those with an estimated cost of between \$2 million - \$6 million may also be referred. The Committee is aware that some departments may divide a single project, costing more than \$6 million, into two or more components to avoid the need for referral to the Committee. To avoid this, the Committee requests information from departments on medium works. The plans and sites may be inspected by the Committee, to determine if further investigation is warranted.

Department of Defence

20. In June, the Department of Defence provided the Committee with information on the 1995/96 and 1996/97 medium works programs. In August, officials briefed the Committee on details of the medium works program for 1996/97.

Australian War Memorial

21. In November, the Director of the Australian War Memorial advised the Committee of refurbishment to the Memorial at a cost less than \$6 million. It was agreed that the Committee would inspect the site of the proposed works early in 1997 and then advise of any need for further information or referral.

OVERSEAS WORKS

Australia House, London

22. The Committee did not examine any new overseas works during the year. However, it did consider a request from the Overseas Property Group to increase funding for the refurbishment of Australia House in London from \$14.25 million to \$21.28 million.

23. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman took the opportunity to inspect Australia House in July, while in London on private business.

24. The Committee agreed to a request to increase funding for the Australia House refurbishment.

Overseas Inspections

25. Overseas inspections, briefings and meetings of the Committee are not recognised by the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*. The Committee believes this is an unsatisfactory impediment to its ability to discharge its responsibilities and that inspections are essential for approval of expenditure on overseas public works.

26. In October, the Committee Chairman met with the Chairman of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (the Rt Hon Ian Sinclair MP) regarding overseas inspections and meetings. The two Chairmen have also discussed the matter with the Speaker of the House (the Hon Bob Halverson OBE MP). The issue remains unresolved.

27. During the year, Committee members were able to conduct some overseas inspections while away on other business. These inspections included:

- ☐ Australia House, London (Mr Neil Andrew MP and Mr Colin Hollis MP);
- ☐ the Australian Embassy at Budapest (Mr Neil Andrew MP and Senator Alan Ferguson);
- ☐ the Australian Embassy at Warsaw (Mr Neil Andrew MP and Senator Alan Ferguson);
- ☐ a property in Berlin for a relocated Australian Embassy and land purchased for construction of the Ambassador's residence (Mr Neil Andrew MP and Senator Alan Ferguson); and
- ☐ the proposed site in Shanghai for Consulate-General staff accommodation (Mr Colin Hollis MP).

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE ACT

Amendments to the Act

28. During the year, the Committee discussed the merits of amending the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, to reflect current construction prices and to improve the Committee's administrative arrangements.

29. Suggestions included:

- ☐ increasing the statutory limit for referrals from \$6 million to a figure reflecting the higher cost of construction;
- ☐ requiring that the Committee be kept informed of all public works between \$5 million and \$10 million and, if considered in the public interest, allowing the Committee to conduct formal examination of any such project;
- ☐ inserting a clause in the Act to allow the Committee to give approval for concurrent documentation; and
- ☐ requiring a central agency to prepare an annual consolidated list of public works proposals for a given financial year.

30. At the end of 1996, the Committee was continuing its consideration of these matters, especially amendments to the Act and consequential arrangements.

Exemptions

31. The *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, provides some scope for works to be exempted from referral to the Committee. The grounds for exemption relate to urgency, national security or repetitiveness. There were no works exempted on the grounds of urgency or national security in 1996. Several works were exempted on the grounds of their repetitive nature, in accordance with subsection 18(8A) of the Act which states:

(8A) The Minister for Administrative Service may, by notice published in the Gazette, declare a work to be a repetitive work for the purposes of subsection (8) if,

- (a) he is satisfied that the work is substantially similar to other works that have been carried out, or are being carried out or are likely to be carried out from time to time by or for the Commonwealth, or by or for an authority of the Commonwealth to which this Act applies; and
- (b) the Committee has agreed to the work being so declared.

32. Following briefings and inspections of the sites in question, the Committee agreed to requests for the following works to be declared repetitive:

- ☐ the Federal Airports Corporation - provision of 200 carparking spaces and a pay and walk operational system at Sydney Airport; and
- ☐ the Minister for Administrative Services - noise insulation works proposed for Newington College.

SECRETARIAT

33. During 1996, the House of Representatives Committee Office, which administers the Committee Secretariat, was restructured. The result of the restructuring is the linking of the secretariat with that of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family and Community Affairs. Resources are shared and staff allocated according to each Committee's workload.

34. At the end of 1996, the Secretariat staff involved with the Public Works Committee included:

Secretary Bjarne Nordin

Assistant Secretary: Michael Fetter

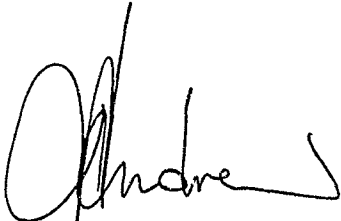
Secretarial Support: Lynette Sebo

35. The former Secretary to the Public Works Committee, Mr Peter Roberts, and an Assistant Secretary, Ms Denise Denahy, retired in 1996. The Committee wishes to acknowledge their contributions to the Committee and the Parliament over many years.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

36. The Committee also records its appreciation to Parliamentary staff and support agencies involved in facilitating various facets of its operations including:

- ☐ House of Representatives Staff - the Transport Office, Duplicating Section, Bills and Papers and Table Office;
- ☐ the Government Printing Office and the Australian Government Publishing Service;
- ☐ the Office of the Minister for Defence;
- ☐ the Parliamentary Reporting staff (Hansard) and the Sound and Vision Office; and
- ☐ the Parliamentary Library - Legislative Research Service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Andrew', with a large, stylized initial 'N'.

Neil Andrew MP
Chairman

13 February 1997

APPENDIX A

DETAILS OF THE COMMITTEE'S REPORTS PRESENTED DURING 1996

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Development of infrastructure on Townsville Field Training Area, Townsville	A-12

Implementation of rockfall risk reduction strategies on Christmas Island

Referred	17 June 1996
Public hearing held	11 July 1996
Report dated	19 September 1996
Report presented	10 October 1996
Motion for expediency passed	n/a
Report number	1/96
Proposed expenditure	n/a
Expenditure recommended	n/a
Parliamentary Paper	136/96

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The Commonwealth has a responsibility to implement measures designed to reduce the risk of fatality at various locations in Flying Fish Cove.
2. Before December 1996, the Department of Environment, Sport and Territories should have ready a rockfall risk management plan for Flying Fish Cove which identifies events, documents responses, assigns responsibilities, requires continuous research and monitoring, and increases community awareness of risks and dangers. Simulated exercises should be undertaken.
3. *Ficus microcarpa* trees should be planted upslope from the rockfall barrier to provide extra protection in the longer term.
4. As is evident from the major rockfall in 1972, the Committee believes that the Boat Club site remains a high risk area. Therefore, the Committee recommends that premises owned by the Christmas Island Boat Club should be demolished and a new safer site, proximate to water frontage, and consistent with the Town Plan, be found.

5. The Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories and Christmas Island Shire Council should give favourable consideration to construction costs of a new club building being wholly or partially funded from the Community Benefit Fund.
6. Land for private development is the most pressing need on Christmas Island.
7. Block 408 in the Kampong should be demolished at the end of its economic life, expected to be in three to five years time.
8. Following the construction of the rockfall barrier and the implementation of a general rockfall risk reduction management plan, the future of Block 412 should be re-evaluated at the end of the same period. However, the Committee favours the eventual removal of Block 412.
9. Dwelling units at the south-west corners of both blocks, considered to be at greatest risk, should be progressively and permanently vacated.
10. The Department of the Environment, Sport and Territories, in conjunction with Christmas Island Shire Council, should identify parcels of land for residential and other developments that comply with the Draft Town Plan.
11. Land for private housing development should be offered without delay.
12. The future use of the site of Block 408, post demolition, should not preclude its use as a revegetated area to provide nesting sites for the Christmas Island frigate bird. If Block 412 is demolished, the same uses could apply.
13. Potential trade-offs between the use of the sites as recommended and the use of land containing vestiges of primary rainforest, at present not favoured for development by the Australian Nature Conservation Agency, should be investigated.

**CSIRO Research Interaction Centre and biomolecular research facilities,
Black Mountain, ACT**

Referred	21 August 1996
Public hearing held	11 October 1996
Report dated	7 November 1996
Report presented	19 November 1996
Motion for expediency passed	3 December 1996
Report number	2/96
Proposed expenditure	\$17.1 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	294/96

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Existing CSIRO research facilities for biomolecular research at Black Mountain are inadequate, dispersed, overcrowded and do not meet contemporary occupational health and safety standards.
2. There is a need to provide modern research facilities for biomolecular research to enable the Division of Plant Industry to continue research programs aimed at benefiting Australia's multi-billion dollar agribusinesses.
3. Facilities for staff working at the Black Mountain site are inadequate.
4. A Research Interaction Centre, integrated with new biomolecular research laboratories, would provide opportunities for the CSIRO to publicly display the results of research being undertaken by all Divisions and heighten the profile of the organisation and the scientists who make a major contribution to Australia's scientific research efforts.

5. The provision of the Research Interaction Centre has strong support from organisations and individuals with an interest in fostering public knowledge of CSIRO achievements in science.
6. Market research indicates that the Research Interaction Centre will attract more than 100,000 visitors annually.
7. Based on admission charges, the Centre will be self-funding.
8. The location of the proposed complex makes good use of space available within the Division of Plant Industry precinct.
9. The design concept integrates the proposed laboratories, Research Interaction Centre, conference facilities and staff amenities in a functional manner.
10. Further consideration needs to be given to the provision of covered access to the complex from the kerbside to the front entrance.
11. The Committee recommends the construction of the CSIRO Research Interaction Centre and Biomolecular Research Facilities, Black Mountain, ACT, at an estimated cost of \$17.1 million.

Development of Operational Facilities at RAAF Base Tindal, NT

Referred	21 August 1996
Public hearing held	21 October 1996
Report dated	21 November 1996
Report presented	4 December 1996
Motion for expediency passed	10 December 1996
Report number	3/96
Proposed expenditure	\$31.4 million at November 1995 prices
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	358/96

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. An examination by the Department of Defence of operational capabilities has revealed a number of deficiencies in existing facilities at RAAF Base Tindal.
2. These deficiencies have impacted on the ability of the Base to perform its assigned roles in a safe and flexible manner.
3. There is a need to provide:
 - ☐ dispersed parking for four maritime patrol aircraft on individual explosive ordnance aprons and a secure facility from which aircraft operations can be managed;
 - ☐ dispersed explosive ordnance loading and unloading aprons for C130 transport aircraft;

- ☐ quick reaction alert facilities at the end of the primary runway, including the provision of sun protection, engineering and communication services;
 - ☐ the general purpose movements apron to be enlarged to permit dedicated parking of wide body aircraft and improved manoeuvring of aircraft;
 - ☐ a new Base Command Post from which the Base Commander can exercise command and control of Base personnel during exercises and contingencies; and
 - ☐ new accommodation for use by personnel deployed to RAAF Base Tindal during exercises and contingencies.
4. The extent of the proposed ordnance loading aprons can be justified on the basis of operational requirements, improved security and occupational health and safety.
 5. The proposed squadron operations and technical support facility will considerably enhance the management of deployed maritime patrol aircraft, or other deployed aircraft, to RAAF Base Tindal.
 6. The siting and design of the quick reaction alert facilities enhance operational effectiveness by enabling fighter aircraft to remain ready for prolonged periods and for personnel to sustain longer duty periods.
 7. Extensions to the air movements apron will facilitate the parking and movement of wide body aircraft.
 8. The proposed Base Command Post will enable Base command to direct defence of the airfield and facilities during exercises and contingencies.
 9. The Committee has some concerns about the necessity for major expenditure on earth covering of deployment accommodation for noise attenuation at the sites identified in the proposal.
 10. Whilst the Committee accepts the need for new deployment accommodation at RAAF Base Tindal, the significantly large proportion of the project budget allocated for this purpose and the, as yet, untested conditions under which the facilities would operate, require some caution to be exercised in approving the facilities as proposed.

11. Further consideration should therefore be given to the location of this accommodation, given the cost.
12. The Committee recommends that a further evaluation of the cost and benefits of covered accommodation be undertaken and resubmitted to the Committee before this component of the project is commenced.
13. Subject to the recommendation in paragraph 86, the Committee recommends the development of operational facilities at RAAF Base Tindal at an estimated cost of \$31.4 million.

Development of Facilities for 5 Aviation Regiment at RAAF Base Townsville

Referred	21 August 1996
Public hearing held	24 October 1996
Report dated	5 December 1996
Report presented	11 December 1996
Motion for expediency passed	12 December 1996
Report number	4/96
Proposed expenditure	\$21.332 million at August 1996 prices
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	391/96

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Black Hawk helicopters operated by 5 Aviation Regiment at RAAF Base Townsville have experienced unexpectedly high rates of corrosion. This has been attributed to the use of high strength, lightweight alloys in helicopter structures and the operation and storage of aircraft in humid and salt laden atmospheric conditions. Prolonged exposure to ultra-violet radiation has affected internal electronic components and plastic fittings.
2. RAAF Base Townsville remains the preferred location of 5 Aviation Regiment due to the proximity of 3 Brigade and impracticalities and considerable investment associated with alternative locations.
3. High corrosion rates have diminished the capacity to operate the helicopters through to Life of Type, planned for 2015, affected aircraft serviceability and has required expenditure on maintenance, with associated costs expected to exceed sustainable funding levels.

4. The Department of Defence has implemented a Corrosion Control Program for the helicopters to permit 5 Aviation Regiment's Black Hawk helicopters to operate effectively through to Life of Type.
5. To satisfy the requirements of the Corrosion Control Program, there is a need to provide environmental protection shelters serviced by dehumidification equipment and an enclosed helicopter washing facility.
6. Based on the number of Black Hawk and Chinook helicopters operated by 5 Aviation Regiment and current maintenance programs, there is a requirement for 19 Black Hawk and four Chinook shelters.
7. The Department of Defence estimates that cost of environmental protection shelters would be recovered after two years, based on the \$1.5 million cost of corrosion control undertaken in 1995 on four helicopters.
8. Existing transport and some technical workshop facilities are located at inappropriately remote sites, from 5 Aviation Regiment's precinct at RAAF Base Townsville.
9. The facilities are inadequate and their locations present an ongoing cost to unit efficiency.
10. There is a need to relocate 5 Aviation Regiment's Small Arms Repair Section and to refurbish the gunship helicopter arming point.
11. The proposed environmental protection shelters, the provision of dehumidification equipment and the helicopter wash facility can be justified as providing the necessary facilities for the successful and economic implementation of the Corrosion Control Plan.
12. The scope of works for the transport compound and workshop facilities can be justified on the basis of considerably improved working conditions, improved shelter and security for the extensive fleet of vehicles and resulting improved efficiency.
13. The extent of proposed ancillary work will improve the Small Arms Repair Section and Ordnance Loading Aprons.
14. The Committee recommends the development of facilities for 5 Aviation Regiment at RAAF Base Townsville at an out-turn cost of \$21.332 million.

Development of Infrastructure on Townsville Field Training Area, Townsville

Referred	21 August 1996
Public hearing held	25 October 1996
Report dated	5 December 1996
Report presented	11 December 1996
Motion for expediency passed	12 December 1996
Report numbered	5/96
Proposed expenditure	\$18.694 million
Expenditure recommended	As above
Parliamentary Paper	392/96

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. A need exists to provide the necessary infrastructure to enable elements of the Australian Defence Force to undertake collective and joint training in live fire and manoeuvre, at Brigade level, in the Townsville Field Training Area.
2. Of development options examined, the preferred option is the provision of infrastructure to support training at Brigade level which will allow the Range to be developed close to its maximum potential and provide training benefits within a realistic time-frame and at realistic costs.
3. The extent of the proposed development can be justified on the grounds of public safety, effective management and maximum use of the Range, in accordance with the user requirement and concepts for manoeuvre operations.
4. The Committee supports the use of Army Engineers on elements of the project which would provide training benefits and not directly compete with the private sector.

5. Design standards will conform with relevant codes, statutes and operational manuals and procedures.
6. The Committee recommends the development of infrastructure on the Townsville Field Training Area at an estimated out-turn cost of \$18.694 million.

APPENDIX B

MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE - 1996

* denotes Sectional (sub) Committees

Date	Location	Purpose
30 May	Canberra	Private meeting
13 June	Melbourne/Sydney	Inspection
20 June	Canberra	Private meeting
24 June	Sydney	Inspection *
27 June	Canberra	Private meeting
10 July	Christmas Island	Inspection
11 July	Christmas Island	Inspection
12 July	Christmas Island	Private meeting
22 August	Canberra	Private meeting
12 September	Canberra	Private meeting
16 September	Canberra	Private meeting
19 September	Canberra	Private meeting
10 October	Canberra	Private meeting
11 October	Canberra	Inspection *
11 October	Canberra	Hearing *
17 October	Canberra	Private meeting
18 October	Sydney	Inspection *
21 October	RAAF Base Tindal	Inspection *
21 October	RAAF Base Tindal	Hearing *
21 October	Darwin	Inspection *
22 October	Darwin	Hearing *
23 October	Townsville	Private meeting
23 October	Townsville	Inspection *
24 October	Townsville	Hearing *
24 October	Townsville	Inspection *
25 October	Townsville	Hearing *
31 October	Canberra	Private meeting
7 November	Canberra	Private meeting
21 November	Canberra	Private meeting
25 November	Urana	Inspection *
25 November	Urana	Hearing *
26 November	Bandiana	Inspection *
26 November	Bandiana	Hearing *
5 December	Canberra	Private meeting
12 December	Canberra	Private meeting
18 December	Point Wilson	Inspection *
18 December	Melbourne	Briefing*