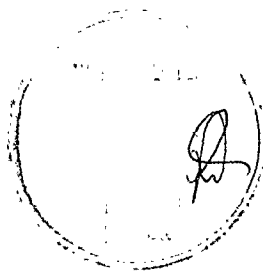


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Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

SIXTY-FIRST GENERAL REPORT

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
1998

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

Sixty-first General Report

(Covering the period 1 January 1997
to 31 December 1997)

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CONTENTS	Paragraph
THE COMMITTEE	1
. Committee Membership	1
. Resignation of Chairman	2
REFERENCES AND REPORTS	3
. 1996 References	3
. New References	4
. Re-referrals	5
. Unreported references	8
. Cost of projects examined	13
MEETINGS	14
MATTERS RAISED IN REPORTS	18
. Importance of Parliamentary scrutiny	18
. Register of the National Estate	23
. Payments to subcontractors	26
BRIEFINGS	28
MEDIUM WORKS	29
. Department of Defence	30
. Garden Island	31
. Australian War Memorial	33
. Department of Industry, Science and Technology	35
. Royal Military College, Duntroon	36
. Airservices Australia	37
. Australian Industrial Property Organisation (AIPO)	38
. Cameron Offices, ACT	39
. Federal Airports Corporation	42
EXEMPTIONS	43
COMMONWEALTH FIRE SAFETY POLICY	45

OVERSEAS WORKS	48
. Property operations	52
. Staff apartments, Jakarta	53
ROLE OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE	56
AMENDMENTS TO THE ACT	57
CONFERENCES	59
. Public Works Committee Conference	59
SECRETARIAT	60
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	61

APPENDIX A	Page
------------	-------------

. Details of the Committee's Reports Presented During 1997	A-1 to A-35
--	-------------

APPENDIX B

. Meetings of the Committee - 1997	B-1 to B-2
---------------------------------------	------------

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

SIXTY-FIRST 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 sixty-first, covers the period 1 January 1997 to 31 December 1997.

THE COMMITTEE

Committee Membership

1. Committee membership at 31 December 1997 was:

Mr Wilson Tuckey MP—Chairman

Mr Colin Hollis MP—Deputy Chairman

Senator Paul Calvert

Mr Richard Evans MP

Senator Alan Ferguson

Mr John Forrest MP

Mr Ted Grace MP

Mr Michael Hatton MP

Senator Shayne Murphy

Resignation of Chairman

2. On 20 August 1997, the Chairman, Mr Neil Andrew MP, resigned from the Committee in order to meet his responsibilities as the Chief Government Whip. Mr Wilson Tuckey MP was appointed to the Committee by the House of Representatives on 2 September, and elected Chairman of the Committee on 4 September. The Committee records its appreciation of Mr Andrew's service and Chairmanship since the commencement of the 38th Parliament. Mr Hollis made the following statement when tabling a Committee report on 28 August 1997:

Let me, on behalf of the Committee, put on record his [Mr Andrew's] work on the Public Works Committee over many years and, in particular, the exemplary way in which he led the Public Works Committee during its 18 or so months under his chairmanship. The Committee wishes him well in his new position. He will be sorely missed on the Public Works Committee.

REFERENCES AND REPORTS

1996 References

3. The Committee tabled 13 reports during 1997. Five of these involved references received in late 1996. These reports were:

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

New References

4. The Committee received 10 new references during 1997 and six of these were reported on during the year. These were:

- Sydney Airport: International Terminal—Olympic upgrading;
- Development of infrastructure on the Bradshaw Field Training Area, near Timber Creek, NT;
- Development of operational facilities at RAAF Base Learmonth, WA;

- Redevelopment of facilities for 51st Battalion Far North Queensland Regiment throughout Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait;
- Development of facilities—Stage 3, at HMAS *Stirling*, WA; and
- Australian National Maritime Museum Maritime Heritage Centre, Wharf 7, Pyrmont, NSW.



In July, the Committee inspected existing facilities and proposed sites encompassing the proposed redevelopment of facilities for 51st Battalion, Far North Queensland Regiment. The scope of the proposed work was to enhance the ability of this largely General Reserve reconnaissance and surveillance unit to meet its operational commitments, which extend throughout far north Queensland and into the Torres Strait. Shown above are Committee members and Army officers at the site proposed for the construction of a new Regimental Headquarters complex in Cairns.

Re-referrals

5. The Committee received two re-referrals during 1997:

- the decontamination for disposal of the former Albion Explosives Factory site, Deer Park, Victoria. This reference is discussed later in this report; and
- the extension of the National Film and Sound Archive, Acton, ACT.

6. The House of Representatives originally referred the National Film and Sound Archive project to a previous Committee in October 1995. The former Committee received submissions and held a public hearing on the proposal in December 1995. The House of Representatives was dissolved on 29 January 1996 for the 1996 Federal Election, and the reference lapsed. The Committee received a re-referral of the National Film and Sound Archive project in August 1997.

7. The *Public Works Committee Act 1969* provides that evidence taken by a former Committee may be considered as evidence taken by the present Committee, provided the references are substantially similar. After inspecting the Archive facilities, the Committee moved to accept the former submissions, correspondence and evidence as current for this inquiry. The report was tabled in October 1997.

Unreported references

8. The following four references were not reported on in 1997:

- Redevelopment of Eastern Region Operations Centre at RAAF Base Williamtown, NSW;
- HMAS *Albatross* Stage 1 Redevelopment, Nowra, NSW;
- New facilities for the National Museum of Australia and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies; and
- East Coast Armament Complex, Point Wilson, Vic.

9. The Committee's inquiry into the Redevelopment of Eastern Region Operations Centre at RAAF Base Williamtown was postponed at the request of

the Department of Defence. It is expected that the inquiry will be conducted during 1998.

10. Inspections and public hearings into the Redevelopment of HMAS *Albatross* were held in November 1997 and a report will be tabled early in 1998.

11. The Committee held inspections and three days of public hearings into the New Facilities for the National Museum of Australia and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in December 1997. Further public hearings were planned in 1998.

12. Inspections and public hearings into the East Coast Armament Complex at Point Wilson, Vic, were planned for February 1998.

Cost of projects examined

13. The total cost of projects reported on during the year was \$761.181 million. Details of reports tabled, including recommendations and the Minister's responses, are at APPENDIX A.

MEETINGS

14. The Committee met 48 times during 1997. There were 18 private meetings, 16 inspections and 14 public hearings.

15. Meetings and inspections were held at the following locations:

Location	Main Committee	Sectional Committee
Canberra	23	1
Sydney	4	3
Adelaide		2
Darwin	1	
RAAF Base Amberley	2	
Albion, Vic	1	
Brimbank, Vic	1	
Timber Creek, NT	1	
RAAF Base Darwin		1
RAAF Base Learmonth		1
Exmouth, WA		1
Cairns		2
HMAS <i>Stirling</i> , WA	2	
HMAS <i>Albatross</i> , NSW		2



During the year, the Committee undertook inspections and held public hearings at a number of remote locations. In April, the Committee convened a public meeting at Timber Creek, located 285 kilometres west of Katherine, Northern Territory during which residents of this remote community were briefed by Army officers on the proposed development of infrastructure on Bradshaw Station. The Bradshaw property, comprising 8,710 square kilometres, was acquired by Defence as the basis of a field training area. Shown above are Committee members (right) Army officers (centre) and representatives of the local community.

16. While conducting inspections at RAAF Base Amberley, near Ipswich, QLD, the Committee took the opportunity to carry out an informal inspection of the air traffic control centre at Brisbane International Airport. This facility was the subject of the Committee's Seventh Report of 1993, *Construction of air traffic control centres at Brisbane and Melbourne—Parliamentary Paper 264/1993*).

17. Further details of the Committee's meetings are at APPENDIX B.



Since its inception in 1914, the Committee has held meetings in numerous unusual settings. In November, this tradition continued with a public hearing held aboard the SS South Steyn, a former Manly ferry, which was moored adjacent to the National Maritime Museum at Pyrmont in Sydney. The public hearing was convened to consider the proposed construction of the Maritime Heritage Centre. Shown above are (from left to right): Mr Richard Evans MP, Senator Paul Calvert, Bjarne Nordin (Secretary) Mr Wilson Tuckey MP (Chairman) and Mr Colin Hollis MP (Vice Chairman).

MATTERS RAISED IN REPORTS

Importance of Parliamentary scrutiny

18. The function of the Public Works Committee, as set out in the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, is to facilitate Parliamentary scrutiny of expenditure of taxpayers' money on public works. The Committee has a strong history of identifying areas in which public money is not being used effectively.

19. During 1997, the Committee examined the proposal for decontamination of the Albion Explosives Factory site, at Deer Park, Vic. The Committee has a long-standing interest and involvement in the Albion site, beginning with its report in 1988 on the proposal to relocate the explosives factory to Mulwala, NSW (*Committee's Seventh Report of 1988—Parliamentary Paper 143/1988*). The Committee conducted an inquiry into the decontamination process at Albion in 1994. At the time of that inquiry, the estimated cost of the remediation of the site, submitted by the Department of Defence, was \$57 million in a worst-case scenario.

20. In 1995, the Government accepted the Committee's recommendation for an independent assessment of the Albion project. Coffey Partners International Pty Ltd completed its report in January 1996. The report was not published until June 1996, due to the Federal Election. The report recommended that a minimum cost remedial program be undertaken at the site.

21. The project was re-referred to the Committee in the 38th Parliament. This time, the proposal involved the implementation of a low-cost remedial program. The Committee's report recommended that the program proceed.

22. The Albion project demonstrated the strengths of the Public Works Committee, and its ability to facilitate vigorous Parliamentary scrutiny of public works expenditure. In his response to the report, the Minister recognised the Committee's vigilance in achieving savings on the Albion project by saying:

This case in particular demonstrates the virtue of the operations of the Parliamentary Public Works Committee. Their vigilance has potentially saved the taxpayer at least \$30 million and they should be congratulated.



The Committee's inquiry into the Albion decontamination project involved an extensive inspection of the former munitions factory site, covering 460 hectares. Shown above are Committee members and Defence officials during the inspection.

Register of the National Estate

23. During investigations into the proposed Albion decontamination works, it emerged that the site had been identified by the Australian Heritage Commission for listing on the Register of the National Estate. The Committee invited representatives of the Australian Heritage Commission to provide a briefing on the processes leading to the identification of a site for listing on the Register. The Commission outlined the following stages:

- determining historic, natural or indigenous aspects of the proposed site and an assessment of their importance to the local community;
- a Commissioner makes a final decision about whether a site should be entered on the Register;

- the decision is gazetted, and is placed on the Interim Register with the provision of a three-month appeal period; and
- the site is entered on the full Register of the National Estate.

24. During the briefing session, the Committee questioned the rationale for the Commission identifying Albion as a site worthy of inclusion on the Register of the National Estate. In its report, the Committee noted the Australian Heritage Commission's intention to list the site on the Register of the National Estate, but recommended:

Apart from the treelines and the black powder mill, all existing structures on the site should be demolished as they present a potential health and safety hazard. A management regime will need to be developed for the black powder mill.

25. The Government's response to the report indicated that the works as recommended by the Committee would proceed.

Payments to subcontractors

26. The Committee continued to focus on guarantees of payments to subcontractors and their agents for work carried out on construction projects. In this context, the Committee's report on the National Maritime Museum Heritage Centre (*Committee's Thirteenth Report of 1997—Parliamentary Paper 318/1997*) expressed the view that the very least the Museum could do during the preparation of contract documents would be to include the following provisions of Australian Standard 2124, which at paragraph 43 provides:

(a) Before the Principal makes each payment to the Contractor, the Superintendent may, not less than 5 days before a payment certificate is due, in writing request the Contractor:

(i) to give the Superintendent a statutory declaration by the Contractor, or where the Contractor is a corporation, by a representative of the Contractor who is in a position to know the facts declared, that all workers who have at any time been employed by the Contractor on work under the Contract have at the date of the request been paid all moneys due and payable to them in respect of the employment on the work under the Contract; and

(ii) to provide documentary evidence to the Superintendent that at the date of the request all workers who have been employed by a subcontractor of the

Contractor have been paid all moneys due and payable to them in respect of their employment on work under the Contract.

27. The Committee contacted the Australian Procurement and Construction Council in October and invited representatives of the Council to provide a briefing on national progress towards guarantees of payments to subcontractors. This briefing will take place in 1998.

BRIEFINGS

28. The Committee's private meetings, usually held in Canberra during Parliamentary sitting weeks, involve consideration of draft reports, planning future inspections and public hearings, and dealing with items of correspondence. The meetings are also used as an opportunity for departments and agencies to brief the Committee on relevant issues. During 1997, these briefings included:

- Overseas Property Group—staff apartments at Jakarta (27 February); and general operations of OPG (20 November);
- Commonwealth Fire Board—Review of Commonwealth Fire Safety Policy (6 March);
- Defence Housing Authority—Refurbishment works at RAAF Base Darwin (20 March); and general operations of DHA including recent changes to land development policy, new acquisition strategies, issues facing the Authority and details of the current housing program (30 October);
- Domestic Property Group—possible amendments to the *Public Works Committee Act 1969* (15 May);
- Airservices Australia—Sydney International Terminal (29 May);
- Department of Defence—Medium works program for 1997/98 (29 May);
- Australian Heritage Commission—Albion decontamination project (5 June);
- Department of Administrative Services—Fire safety policy (4 September);

- Australian Bureau of Statistics and Domestic Property Group—Cameron Offices, ACT (23 October); and
- Federal Airports Corporation—Progress of works at Sydney International Terminal (27 November).

MEDIUM WORKS

29. Under the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, all public works estimated to cost more than \$6 million must be referred to the Committee. Medium works, those with an estimated cost of between \$2 million and \$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. Details of medium works examined by the Committee are detailed in the following paragraphs.

Department of Defence

30. The Department briefed the Committee on the 1997/98 medium works program. The program included:

- Shoalwater Bay Training Area, small arms range development—\$2.132 million;
- Rockdale Multi-user Depot, Sydney—\$5.271 million;
- Sutherland Multi-user Depot, Sydney—\$4.209 million;
- Dundas Multi-user Depot, Sydney—\$4.662 million;
- New Base Personnel Administration and Training Centre, RAAF Base Richmond—\$4.54 million;
- Watsonia redevelopment project, Simpson Barracks, Watsonia, Vic—\$5.361 million;
- Port Wakefield Redevelopment, Army Technology and Engineering Agency—\$4.196 million;
- Warradale Barracks Redevelopment Facilities, SA—\$4.721 million;

- Construction of an Engine Build-up Facility for 492 Squadron, RAAF Base Edinburgh—\$4.015 million; and
- New facilities for the relocation of 114 Mobile Control Radar Unit to RAAF Base Darwin—\$5.299 million.

Garden Island

31. The Department of Defence medium works program for 1997/98 also included three projects for Garden Island, Sydney, at a total cost of \$13.85 million. The works were:

- Relocation of Navy functions at Garden Island—\$2.855 million;
- Advance works for submarine basing at Garden Island—\$5.2 million; and
- Refurbishment of Building 89/90 at Garden Island—\$5.8 million.

32. Given the total cost of works at Garden Island, the Committee considered it appropriate to examine the proposed works further. In August, Defence provided detailed briefings on each of the proposals and the Committee conducted a lengthy inspection of the site. Following this, the Committee agreed to the works proceeding without referral.

Australian War Memorial

33. In November 1996, the Australian War Memorial advised the Committee of a planned refurbishment at a total cost of over \$7 million. There were several elements to the refurbishment, including:

- Improving visitor access and circulation between levels in the centre of the building—\$1.35 million;
- Gallery Development code compliance works—\$1.8 million;
- Floor strengthening and plant replacement—\$0.75 million;
- Conservation building works—\$1.65 million; and
- Gallery refurbishment—\$1.5 million.

34. The Committee was briefed by staff of the War Memorial, viewed the plans and inspected the extent of the proposed refurbishment in March 1997. Given that none of the elements themselves were above \$2 million, the Committee resolved that the matter did not need to be referred.

Department of Industry, Science and Technology

35. The Department advised the Committee of a planned fitout and refurbishment of leased premises at Allara Street, Canberra, at a cost of \$5.999 million. The Committee inspected the premises in March.

Royal Military College, Duntroon

36. RMC Duntroon informed the Committee of works comprising refurbishment of the clothing store and rectification work on the hydrotherapy pool. The Committee inspected the site in March.

Airservices Australia

37. Airservices Australia outlined a plan for a \$5.8 million refurbishment of the Alan Woods Building, Canberra. The Committee requested six-monthly reports on progress and a final itemised cost of the project.

Australian Industrial Property Organisation (AIPO)

38. AIPO advised the Committee of a proposed fitout of the Sirius Building in Woden, ACT, at a cost of \$4.65 million. The Committee requested six monthly reports on progress and a final itemised cost of the project.

Cameron Offices, ACT

39. The Australian Bureau of Statistics advised the Committee of refurbishment work to the Cameron Offices in Belconnen, ACT, required to bring the offices up to current occupational health and safety and security guidelines. The cost of the proposed works was \$6.25 million. The Cameron Offices are scheduled for demolition in approximately three years. The Committee was concerned whether expenditure of \$6.25 million could be justified.

40. The Committee inspected the Cameron Offices in September. The Domestic Property Group provided a detailed briefing on the following subjects relevant to Cameron Offices:

- the merits of proceeding with the refurbishment as proposed;
- the implications of restricting the refurbishment to basic rectification of occupational health and safety components of the work;
- other ways in which improvements to accommodation could be achieved, including relocation to other premises in Canberra; and
- possible demolition of the building.

41. The Committee accepted that the Cameron Offices desperately needed upgrading to meet current safety standards, and that there was no suitable alternative accommodation for the ABS. The Committee approved the upgrade of the Cameron Offices, noting however, that future planning for ABS accommodation must begin now in order to be resolved when Cameron Offices are due for demolition.

Federal Airports Corporation

42. The FAC advised the Committee of a proposal to upgrade the airport power supply capacity at the Sydney international terminal at a cost of \$5.3 million. The Committee resolved that the matter did not require referral.

EXEMPTIONS

43. The *Public Works Committee Act 1969* provides 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 during 1997. However, 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 Services 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.

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

- Defence Housing Authority—refurbishment of 10-12 Houses at RAAF Base Darwin (reason: urgent and repetitive works); and
- Federal Airports Corporation—proposed taxiways for Sydney Airport, costing \$43.1 million (reason: previously declared repetitive).

COMMONWEALTH FIRE SAFETY POLICY

45. In 1995, the Commonwealth Government adopted the Building Code of Australia (BCA) as the technical standard for new works and major refurbishments. All Committee inquiries include investigation of a project's compliance with BCA Standards. In February, the Committee was informed of a Government Review of Fire Safety Policy for Existing Commonwealth Facilities. The terms of reference for the Review were to investigate and report on, among other things: a fire safety policy for all Commonwealth owned or occupied facilities; responsibilities and monitoring of individual agencies; Commonwealth liabilities in terms of fire safety; and a fire safety education and awareness program.

46. Mr Charles Halton CBE, who acted as a Strategy Consultant to the Review, briefed the Committee on the Review and its implications for the Public Works Committee in March. The Committee received the Review's report in September 1997. One recommendation affects the Committee's operations:

Recommendation No. 6—The present arrangements for the Commonwealth Fire Board and its Secretariat should cease at the end of calendar 1997. DAS should take early action to assist the Public Works Committee to identify suitable private sector resources who can provide the type of support to the Committee on fire safety issues previously provided by the Board.

47. The Committee was briefed on the Review's implications by officers of the Domestic Property Group on 4 September 1997.

OVERSEAS WORKS

48. The Committee, as part of its responsibilities under Section 18 B of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, examines public works constructed outside Australia and the external Territories as referred. Such works include embassies and accommodation for Australian embassy staff. The Act, however, stipulates that the Committee has no power to conduct formal investigations outside Australia and must rely on plans, models and evidence taken at public hearings in Australia, although statements may be received from persons who are in or outside Australia.

49. The Committee considers the restriction on its activities to be a serious impediment to its ability to undertake effective scrutiny of overseas works as part of its investigatory functions. As such, in successive General Reports since 1991, the Committee has expressed concern about its inability to inspect locations and sites of proposed overseas facilities and to have informal discussions with local staff and authorities. In many cases, local embassy staff and design and construction personnel have been required to travel to Canberra to appear at the Committee's public hearings.

50. The Committee has consistently suggested that it may be more cost effective for a sectional Committee to be permitted to travel to countries where new projects are proposed and this concern has been expressed in letters from successive Committee Chairmen to the appropriate Minister.

51. The proposed referral of the Berlin Chancery and residence, of which the Committee has been notified, has prompted a reinforcement of previously expressed concerns about the inadequacy of current provisions under the Act relating to scrutiny of overseas referrals. Accordingly, the Committee resolved in November to advise the relevant Minister that;

- the Public Works Committee Act should be amended to allow the Committee to obtain evidence overseas; and
- pending consideration of this request and the passage of amending legislation, special arrangements should be made to allow a sectional Committee to travel to Germany to hold discussions with Embassy officials in Bonn and to undertake a site inspection of the Berlin Chancery.

Property operations

52. The Committee is also aware of the Government's policy to reduce the amount of Commonwealth-owned property. Individual Commonwealth agencies must now meet all overseas accommodation costs from their own budgets. At a briefing in May, representatives of the Overseas Property Group told the Committee:

Until a year ago, occupancy of property overseas was in accordance with stated need and government willingness to fund capitally, whereas now it is within the province of agencies to make determinations of whether they wish to use their property leasing funds in total, subsidise it to some degree with their running costs or, alternatively, reduce representation at particular locations and retain the funding level that has been devolved to them in the last year.

Staff apartments, Jakarta

53. In June 1995, the Committee received a reference involving the construction of an apartment block in Jakarta for Australian embassy staff. The Committee's inquiry was deferred at the request of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, in October 1995. The Committee received an update on the project in June 1996, and in January 1997 received a letter from the Overseas Property Group advising that the apartment project had been cancelled.

54. The reasons given by OPG for the cancellation of the project included a report prepared for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade detailing the opposition of embassy staff to apartment-style living (the "Purdon" report) and the changing government policy towards ownership of property.

55. In February, the Committee resolved that OPG advise the Committee of the details of the sale of land which was purchased for the construction of the apartments, when that sale was finalised. The Committee had not received any further information at the end of 1997.

ROLE OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

56. Changes to Commonwealth property policy have resulted in reduced Commonwealth involvement in the construction of buildings and increased leasing arrangements with the private sector. The Public Works Policy Group suggested some new roles for the Committee in the changing property environment. The Commonwealth leases some three million square metres of

property for use mainly as office accommodation. The Policy Group suggested the Committee could expand its role to include scrutiny of accommodation expenses to ensure greater Commonwealth value for money. The Committee notes this change would require amendments to the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*. The proposal to broaden the role of the Committee is under active consideration by the Committee.

AMENDMENTS TO THE ACT

57. For several years, the Committee has discussed raising the statutory limit for referral of works, which is currently \$6 million. The Public Works Policy Group made a submission to the Committee, outlining a proposal to raise the limit to \$10 million.

58. The Committee also raised the problem of approval of concurrent documentation before Parliamentary approval of a project. While the Committee has, on occasion, approved concurrent documentation for a project before or during its inquiry, the Act currently does not specifically give clear direction to the Committee. This matter is under further investigation.

CONFERENCES

Public works Committee Conference

59. The Chairman and Secretary to the Committee attended the Public Works Committee Conference in Brisbane on 14-16 July 1997. The Chairman presented a paper on behalf of the Committee, outlining its work in the previous financial year. Issues canvassed at the Conference included:

- Private sector expectations of the capital works program;
- Private sector involvement in public infrastructure;
- Case studies in Queensland public works;
- Inspection of a Gateway Ports Project; and
- Public Works Committee update reports.

SECRETARIAT

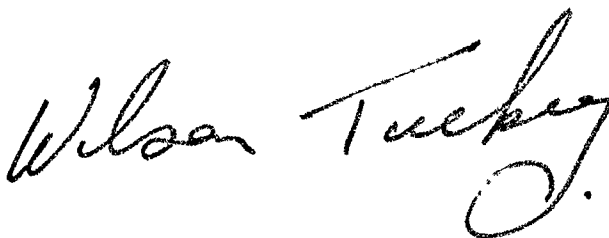
60. At the end of 1997, the Public Works Committee Secretariat comprised:

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|
| □ | Secretary | Mr Bjarne Nordin |
| □ | Assistant Secretary | Mr Michael Fetter |
| □ | Research Officer | Ms Bronwen Jagers |
| □ | Administrative Officer | Ms Lynette Sebo |

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

61. The Committee records its appreciation to Parliamentary staff and other agencies involved in supporting the Committee's operations including:

- Department of the House of Representatives Staff—Transport Office, Printing Office, Bills and Papers Office and the Table Office;
- Department of the Senate staff—Table Office;
- Government Printing Office and the AGPS;
- Office of the Minister for Defence;
- Parliamentary Reporting staff (Hansard) and the Sound and Vision Office; and
- Parliamentary Library staff.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Wilson Tuckey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, stylized "W" and "T".

Wilson Tuckey MP
Chairman

12 March 1998

APPENDIX A

DETAILS OF THE COMMITTEE'S REPORTS PRESENTED DURING 1997

	Page
Development of operational facilities at RAAF Base Darwin	A-2
Development of buildings and services in support of Department of Defence Joint Project 2043, High Frequency Modernisation Project	A-4
Development of facilities for the Army Logistics Training Centre and the Bandiana Logistics Group at Bandiana and Bonegilla, Vic	A-6
Extension to the main runway at Adelaide International Airport	A-8
Development of No. 6 Squadron facilities at RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland	A-11
Decontamination for disposal of the former Albion Explosives Factory site, Deer Park, Vic	A-13
Sydney Airport: International Terminal—Olympic upgrading	A-16
Development of infrastructure on the Bradshaw Field Training Area, near Timber Creek, NT	A-19
Development of operational facilities at RAAF Base Learmonth, WA	A-22
Redevelopment of facilities for 51st Battalion Far North Queensland Regiment throughout Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait	A-24
Extension of the National Film and Sound Archive, Acton, ACT	A-27
Development of facilities—Stage 3, at <i>HMAS Stirling</i> , WA	A-30
Australian National Maritime Museum Maritime Heritage Centre, Wharf 7, Pyrmont, NSW	A-33

Development of operational facilities at RAAF Base Darwin

Referred	21 August 1996
Public hearing held	22 October 1996
Report dated	6 February 1997
Report presented	13 February 1997
Motion for expediency passed	6 March 1997
Report number	1/97
Proposed expenditure	\$59.5 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	6/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The military presence in Darwin reflects Government policy for an increased defensive presence in the north of Australia.
2. RAAF Base Darwin is a vital component of the Defence infrastructure in the north and is likely to remain for many years at its present location.
3. Military and civilian infrastructure at RAAF Base Darwin represents a significant investment by the Commonwealth and the cost of relocating the RAAF Base to another site on the grounds of aircraft noise or public safety cannot be justified.
4. The Committee notes the responsible efforts of the RAAF in promulgating noise abatement procedures which have reduced the incidence of noise complaints.
5. The Department of Defence should establish a dedicated telephone line for receiving and recording any complaints about aircraft noise and a mechanism for their speedy investigation and reporting back to the complainants.

6. There is a need to provide RAAF Base Darwin with facilities to meet assigned operational roles in a safe and effective manner.
7. The proposed development works will enhance the operational effectiveness of RAAF Base Darwin as a forward operational redeployment base and an air defence base for Darwin.
8. The Committee recommends the development of operational facilities at RAAF Base Darwin at an estimated out-turn cost of \$59.5 million.

Minister's response

The Department of Defence proposes to provide the base with the facilities needed to perform its operational role in a safe and effective manner. RAAF Base Darwin forms part of a chain of defensive airfields across northern Australia and is vital to the air defence of Darwin. Together with RAAF Base Tindal, it is used for operational training and the air element of the Australian Defence Force in northern Australia, often in conjunction with regional air elements. The proposed development works would enhance the operational effectiveness and capability of RAAF Base Darwin as a forward operational base and air defence base for Darwin. Of paramount importance is the improvement of safety associated with ordinance loading activities. The estimated outturn cost is \$59.5 million. It is anticipated that construction will start in May 1997 and be completed by November 1999. The Public Works Committee, in its report tabled on 13 February 1997, concluded that there is a need for the project and recommended that it proceed. I would like to thank the committee for their support.

Development of buildings and services in support of Department of Defence Joint Project 2043, High Frequency Modernisation Project

Referred	10 October 1996
Public hearing held	25 November 1996
Report dated	6 February 1997
Report presented	13 February 1997
Motion for expediency passed	6 March 1997
Report number	2/97
Proposed expenditure	\$75 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	7/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The Defence high frequency communications network is being modernised at a cost of \$505 million.
2. The modernisation will consist of four communications nodes, each comprising a transmitter station, receiver station and local management facility. There will also be a primary and secondary national management facility.
3. The communications nodes will be located in the Riverina, Townsville, North West Cape, and Darwin.
4. Existing facilities are aged and need refurbishment, and at two nodes, new facilities are required.
5. Facilities to house the high frequency equipment will be located on existing Defence properties and properties acquired for radio communications purposes. All are in areas which Defence believes are free of electromagnetic interference and have sufficient buffer zones to protect them from urban encroachment.

6. The extent of the proposed work will entail the construction of new facilities for the Riverina transmitter and receiver on sites which Defence believes are suitable. Elsewhere, the proposal will make good use of existing facilities, which will need to be modified. The scope of the proposed work can therefore be justified.
7. Design and construction principles for the project are consistent with current practice and recognised Australian building standards.
8. Before properties are offered for sale, Defence should ensure that any soil contamination has been remedied in accordance with State or local government requirements.
9. The Committee recommends that the Department of Defence provide annual reports on the status of redundant properties - particularly in relation to the cost of the remediation of any soil contamination, when they are to be sold and the amount of revenue received.
10. The Committee recommends the construction of buildings and services in support of the Department of Defence Joint Project 2043, High Frequency Modernisation Project, at an estimated cost of \$75 million.

Minister's response

The Department of Defence proposes to redevelop up to 11 existing defence communication facilities and to construct new facilities on three greenfield sites. The proposal will provide for the installation of modern, state-of-the-art high frequency radio equipment satisfy the needs of the Australian Defence Force. The development proposal will provide for access roads, security, engineering services and buildings to house the transmitter, receiver and management functions. The program has been approved in the August 1996 budget context, and the current estimated cost for the building works and services aspect of the program is \$75 million. It is anticipated that a contract will be awarded in June 1997 with a total project completion in 2002. The Public Works Committee, in its report tabled on 6 February 1997, concluded that there is a need for the project and recommended that it proceed. I would like to thank the committee for their support.

Development of facilities for the Army Logistics Training Centre and the Bandiana Logistics Group at Bandiana and Bonegilla, Vic

Referred	19 September 1996
Public hearing held	26 November 1996
Report dated	13 February 1997
Report presented	27 February 1997
Motion for expediency passed	19 March 1997
Report number	3/97
Proposed expenditure	\$16.081 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	19/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. There is a need to:
 - upgrade several administrative facilities for the Bandiana Logistics Group (BLG);
 - rationalise training facilities to support the creation of the Army Logistics Training Centre (ALTC);
 - rationalise messing in North Bandiana; and
 - further upgrade engineering services.
2. The scope of the proposed Stage 2 development will rectify a number of deficiencies which have arisen as a result of organisational changes, will involve adaptive reuse of buildings as well as new construction and can be justified because the Bandiana/Bonegilla area will remain as the Army's major logistics training establishment.

3. The Committee recommends the development of facilities for the Army Logistics Training Centre and the Bandiana Logistics Group at an estimated out-turn cost of \$16.081 million.

Minister's response

The Department of Defence proposes to redevelop facilities at Bandiana. This work will concentrate on the administrative functions controlled by the Bandiana Logistics Group and the headquarters and trade training facilities for the Army Logistics Training Centre. This project allows for the rationalisation and collocation of logistics training in the Bandiana area and replaces substandard and inappropriately located World War II-style buildings. The Public Works Committee in its report tabled on 27 February 1997 concluded: first, there is a need to upgrade several administrative facilities for the Bandiana Logistics Group, to rationalise training facilities to support the creation of the Army Logistics Training Centre, to rationalise messing in North Bandiana and to further upgrade engineering services. Second, the scope of the proposed stage two development will rectify a number of deficiencies which have arisen as a result of the organisational changes, will involve adaptive reuse of the buildings as well as new construction and can be justified because the Bandiana-Bonegilla area will remain as the army's major logistics training establishment. Third, the committee recommends development of facilities for the Army Logistics Training Centre and the Bandiana Logistics Group at Bandiana and Bonegilla at a cost of \$16.08 million. I would like to thank the committee for their support.

Extension to the main runway at Adelaide International Airport

Referred	3 December 1996
Public hearing held	7 February 1997
Report dated	27 February 1997
Report presented	6 March 1997
Motion for expediency passed	19 March 1997
Report number	4/97
Proposed expenditure	\$48 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	27/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The current runway length of Adelaide International Airport imposes payload constraints on departing wide bodied international aircraft.
2. Under existing arrangements more than half of the airfreight from South Australia is exported through other Australian airports. This penalises the State's export potential by reducing competitiveness due to higher transport costs, uncertainties in the timely delivery of goods and a reduction in the quality of perishable goods.
3. There is a need to lengthen the runway to make full use of airfreight capacity (especially to Asian airports on existing flights) provide greater opportunities for direct export of South Australian products and enhance the development of international tourism to the State.

4. Analysis has indicated that the selected runway length of 3,100 metres would be sufficient to accommodate full volumetric payloads on all types of aircraft in passenger configurations to all North Asian destinations, under the worst planning conditions. This length is also sufficient to accommodate Boeing 747 freighter aircraft with full payloads to South-East Asian hubs and Boeing 747 - 400 freighters to Hong Kong with a 90 per cent payload.
5. Extending the runway to 3,100 metres would require an extension of 572 metres. Alternatives assessed against environmental and community impacts, cost and the impact on airport and road operations, indicate that extending the runway to the south-west is the best solution.
6. Extending the runway to the south-west will require diversion of Tapleys Hill Road or a tunnel to be constructed under the extended runway. On the basis of cost the short deviation option is preferred.
7. Each component in the scope of the proposed works is directly related to the runway extension and can therefore be justified.
8. The proposal has been well publicised and an Environmental Impact Statement and Response Document were prepared at Ministerial direction.
9. An enhanced aircraft noise monitoring study will be undertaken at the State's expense to improve the level of precision of predictions of noise events from aircraft operations and the Australian Noise Exposure Concept data.
10. Consideration should be given for noise amelioration to houses in Glenelg North following receipt of the results of the noise monitoring study.
11. The Committee recommends the construction of extensions to the main runway at Adelaide International Airport at an estimated out-turn cost of \$48 million.

Minister's response

The Federal Airports Corporation on behalf of the state and federal governments proposes to construct a runway extension at Adelaide

International Airport. This extension has been identified by the South Australian government as a priority infrastructure project. The development is supported by this government. The runway extension will provide the opportunity for direct flights to target Asian destinations. Direct flights are considered necessary for facilitating tourism and the export of produce and products from South Australia and thus the economic growth of the state. The estimated turnout cost is \$48 million. It is anticipated that the construction will start within the next two months and be completed by November 1998.

The Public Works Committee in its report concluded that there is a need for the extension of the main runway at Adelaide airport and recommended that it proceed subject to the following recommendations. Consideration should be given for noise amelioration to houses in Glenelg North following receipt of the results of the noise monitoring study. The FAC has advised that additional monitoring of aircraft noise has commenced in Glenelg North and that the results will be referred to the Adelaide Airport Environmental Committee for consideration. I would like to thank the committee for their support.

Development of No. 6 Squadron Facilities at RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland

Referred	10 October 1996
Public hearing held	14 March 1997
Report dated	15 May 1997
Report presented	2 June 1997
Motion for expediency passed	17 June 1997
Report number	5/97
Proposed expenditure	\$10.25 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	86/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. No 6 Squadron is responsible for F-111 aircrew conversion training and the provision of an operational strike and reconnaissance capability.
2. The Life of Type of F-111 aircraft will expire in 15-20 years.
3. Both the aircraft and squadron personnel represent a substantial equipment and training investment.
4. Facilities at RAAF Base Amberley occupied by No 6 Squadron are inadequate due to their dispersed locations, age and condition.
5. There is a need to provide new purpose built facilities for No 6 Squadron's existing command, administrative, technical and training functions at RAAF Base Amberley.
6. The extent of the proposed scope of the works can be justified as being consistent with the functional requirements for squadron facilities.

7. Design features to be adopted are consistent with functional requirements and recognise the need to comply with relevant standards and codes.
8. The scope of the proposed works capitalises on the adaptive reuse of existing hangars.
9. A Master Plan has been developed for the future development of RAAF Base Amberley with which the proposed works are consistent.
10. Careful phasing of the works will minimise disruption to the continued operation of No 6 Squadron during construction.
11. On the basis of evidence received, the Committee recommends the development of facilities for No 6 Squadron at RAAF Base Amberley at an estimated out-turn cost of \$10.25 million.

Minister's response

The Department of Defence proposes to provide the base with the facilities needed to perform its operational role in a safe and effective manner. RAAF Base Amberley provides a key training and maintenance role for the F111C and F111G strike and reconnaissance aircraft. Amberley provides the support base for a chain of defensive airfields across northern Australia, and it is vital to the air defence of Australia. The proposed development works will enhance the effectiveness and capability of RAAF Amberley to meet the supporting role for the air defence systems of Australia. The facilities will provide flight line, maintenance workshops, equipment storage facilities, training and administration accommodation for the No. 6 Squadron. The estimated outturn cost is \$10.253 million. It is anticipated that the construction will start in September 1997 and be completed by May 1998. The Public Works Committee in its report, tabled on 2 June 1997, concluded that there is a need for the project and recommended that the project proceed. Defence acknowledges and accepts the recommendations of the report. I would like to thank the committee for their support.

**Decontamination for disposal of the former Albion Explosives Factory site,
Deer Park, Vic.**

Referred	6 March 1997
Public hearing held	10 April 1997
Report dated	19 June 1997
Report presented	24 June 1997
Motion for expediency passed	25 June 1997
Report number	6/97
Proposed expenditure	\$3.84 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	109/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. There is a need to decontaminate and remediate the remaining 40 per cent of the Albion Explosives factory site and for total site disposal.
2. Any costs to the Commonwealth of decontamination and remediation should be offset against the potential value of the property.
3. On the basis of evidence received, all appropriate measures are being taken to minimise health risks.
4. The involvement of the Urban Land Authority as the manager of the cleanup and development of the site can be justified on the basis of expertise and a proven track record. The decision by Defence to enter into a single source arrangement with the Urban Land Authority, without testing the market, was based on independent advice to Defence from a number of sources.
5. Based on expert advice, of the remediation options considered, the on-site repositories are feasible technically, offer the greatest flexibility and have cost advantages.

6. The design concepts of the on-site repositories will require testing before detailed design commences.
7. Whilst the Commonwealth will retain the long-term risk arising from site decontamination, expert advice to the Committee indicated that there will not be any health problems caused by the use of on-site repositories.
8. Responsibility for undertaking regular monitoring of the on-site repositories should be assigned to relevant State authorities at the time of the finalisation of the formal agreement for the remediation, disposal and development of the site by Defence and the Urban Land Authority.
9. A Preliminary Land Use Plan has been developed which forms an integral part of the combined remediation and development strategy for the site. This plan will need to be further developed into a Local Structure Plan under the Brimbank Planning Scheme.
10. The State of Victoria will assume ownership of a large amount of parkland to be managed by the Victoria University of Technology.
11. In land transfer negotiations between the Commonwealth and the State of Victoria the significant improvement to public amenity arising from the transfer should be recognised.
12. Any additional costs associated with infrastructure improvements on land designated for public use should not be the responsibility of the Commonwealth.
13. Relevant Commonwealth environment protection agencies are satisfied that the process involved in the progressive sale will adequately provide for Commonwealth commitments relating to the protection of endangered species on the site.
14. Apart from the treelines and the black powder mill, all existing structures on the site should be demolished as they present a potential health and safety hazard. A management regime will need to be developed for the black powder mill.

15. The Committee recommends that the Urban Land Authority and the Department of Defence enter into an agreement for the decontamination and disposal of the former Albion Explosives Factory site, Deer Park at an estimated cost to the Commonwealth of \$3.84 million.

Minister's response

The Department of Defence proposes to enter into an agreement with Victoria's Urban Land Authority to dispose of the site of the former Albion explosives factory at Deer Park in the western suburbs of Melbourne. The property is around 460 hectares in area and is contaminated mainly by organic explosive compounds and requires decontamination before release. Decontamination would be managed by the Urban Land Authority on behalf of Defence and development and sale of the property would be carried out by the authority. The value of the property would be returned to Defence progressively during the development. The net cost to the Commonwealth of this arrangement is estimated at \$3.84 million. Development of the site is expected to commence later this year, with the first sales of individual blocks for housing expected to occur towards the middle of 1998.

The Public Works Committee in its report tabled on 24 June 1997 concluded that there is a need to decontaminate and dispose of the site and supported Defence entering an agreement with the Urban Land Authority to manage the clean-up and development of the site. Defence acknowledges and accepts the recommendations of the report. This case in particular demonstrates the virtue of the operations of the Parliamentary Public Works Committee. Their vigilance has potentially saved the taxpayer at least \$30 million and they should be congratulated.

Sydney Airport: International Terminal—Olympic Upgrading

Referred	16 April 1997
Public hearing held	21/22 May 1997
Report dated	19 June 1997
Report presented	24 June 1997
Motion for expediency passed	25 June 1997
Report number	7/97
Proposed expenditure	\$350 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	110/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Sydney Airport, as the main gateway to Australia, has an essential role in meeting increasing passenger demand into the next century.
2. As no decision on the location of a second Sydney airport has yet been made, Sydney Airport remains the only international airport in NSW.
3. If improvements required to cater for increased traffic are not made, the ability of the airport to cope with demand will be seriously impeded.
4. The timing of the Olympics and its associated pressures on facilities mean that any improvements will need to commence immediately in order to avoid construction during the Olympic period.
5. Forecasts provided by the Federal Airports Corporation indicate that ten additional gate positions and associated facilities are required which would satisfy requirements until 2003.

6. Options were considered for developing two expansion zones and the preferred options (1 and 5) are the least costly and most appropriate.
7. The Committee accepts assurances from Airservices Australia and the Federal Airports Corporation that air traffic safety measures associated with Option 5 are appropriate and adequate.
8. The success of the project is dependent on continuing and adequate consultations between the Federal Airports Corporation and all affected users.
9. Particular attention should be given to the needs of people with disabilities during the detailed design phases.
10. A large proportion of the cost of the proposed investment will be offset by increased revenue expected from retail operations. The Committee was assured by the FAC of the commercial viability of the project.
11. The Committee recommends the proposed Sydney Airport: International Terminal—Olympic Upgrading project proceed at an estimated cost of \$350 million.
12. Any further development of Sydney Airport should have appropriate environmental clearances before being referred to the Committee.

Minister's response

Sydney international airport will be the gateway to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and in recognition of this the Federal Airports Corporation has begun planning the services and infrastructure needed to support the Sydney promise to the world of providing Olympic and Paralympic Games to mark the turn of the century. The existing terminal and air site facility at Sydney international terminal will both require expansion in order to meet demands put upon them by the forecast growth in passenger movements over the next few years.

Additional facilities required to meet the expected demand by 2003 are 10 additional aircraft parking positions, extensions to the aircraft taxiway system, new air side departure lounges and associated retail facilities at piers B and C, additional check-in and baggage claim facilities, associated building works and related engineering and building service improvements. Completion of the project will ensure that expected airline industry demands will be

accommodated through to 2003, the level of service provided to passengers will be equivalent to the world's best practice, the commercial viability of the airport will be enhanced and there will be an appropriate return on the investment.

An elemental cost plan prepared for the project provides for a design and construction cost to completion of approximately \$350 million. Work is scheduled to commence around July 1997 and to be completed by January 2000.

The Public Works Committee, in its report tabled on 24 June 1997, concluded that there is a need for the project and recommended that particular attention should be given to the needs of people with disabilities during the detailed design phases and that any further development of Sydney airport should have appropriate environmental clearances before being referred to the committee. The FAC has noted and accepts the conclusions and recommendations of the committee. I would like to thank the committee for their support.

Development of infrastructure on the Bradshaw Field Training Area, near Timber Creek, NT

Referred	19 March 1997
Public hearing held	1 May 1997
Report dated	19 August 1997
Report presented	28 August 1997
Motion for expediency passed	4 September 1997
Report number	8/97
Proposed expenditure	\$53.66 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	170/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. A phased relocation of sub-units from Sydney and Puckapunyal to 1st Brigade at Robertson Barracks, near Darwin, is underway and is expected to be completed by the year 2000.
2. At present, elements of 1st Brigade undertake field firing and manoeuvre training at the Mount Bunday Field Firing Range. The limited size of Mount Bunday will restrict use of the range to sub-units.
3. The requirement to train 1st Brigade as a single entity requires sufficient land. This has been overcome by the acquisition for development of the pastoral lease of Bradshaw Station, a 8,710 square kilometre property.
4. The Bradshaw property lacks the necessary infrastructure to enable training at Brigade strength to be undertaken.

5. There is a need to develop the necessary infrastructure on the Bradshaw Field Training Area to allow sub-units, units and formations to conduct collective and joint training in live fire and manoeuvre activities.
6. A number of development alternatives were considered by Defence, of which full infrastructure development comprising access and training support facilities would meet the requirements of the phased relocation of 1st Brigade to Darwin from southern states by the year 2000.
7. The proposed facilities will provide the infrastructure to permit and support cost effective and realistic training for Australian Defence Force units stationed, or deployed for training, in the north.
8. The infrastructure to be provided is necessary to ensure the long term operational and environmental viability of the Bradshaw Field Training Area as a manoeuvre and live fire training area.
9. The proposed development has the strong support of the NT Government.
10. Environmental impact assessments of the use of the property by Defence for a field firing and manoeuvre area are being undertaken and the results of these assessments will require consideration by relevant Territory and Commonwealth Ministers.
11. The Committee recommends the development of infrastructure on the Bradshaw Field Training Area, near Timber Creek, NT at an estimated out turn cost of \$53.66 million.

Minister's response

The Department of Defence proposes to develop the Bradshaw Field Training Area to allow company, battalion and brigade sized units to conduct collective and joint training in live fire and manoeuvre activities. This proposal will allow Defence to develop the area to provide long-term sustainability and greater training opportunities and ease the environmental pressure on the Mount Bunday training area. The proposal will provide a bridge over the Victoria River in the vicinity of Timber Creek; working accommodation for the range control organisation; living and working accommodation for the range masters; communications facilities; an internal road net-work; two camps; vehicle

crossing points over creeks and rivers; two C130-capable airfields; and vehicle wash points. The estimated out-turn cost is \$53.66 million. It is anticipated that construction will start about now and be completed by the end of the year 2000. The Public Works Committee, in its report tabled on 28 August 1997, supports the proposal, and its recommendations are consistent with Defence proposed development plans.

Development of operational facilities at RAAF Base Learmonth, WA

Referred	15 May 1997
Public hearing held	30 June 1997
Report dated	25 September 1997
Report presented	1 October 1997
Motion for expediency passed	2 October 1997
Report number	9/97
Proposed expenditure	\$69 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	171/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. RAAF Base Learmonth is a bare base which forms part of a chain of defensive airfields across northern Australia, whose primary function is to serve as a deployment base for aircraft in a contingency.
2. The Base was developed during the early 1970s and 1980s and no further development or major maintenance work has occurred since.
3. In the context of the primary function of RAAF Base Learmonth, the Department of Defence undertook an examination of operational facilities required which revealed a number of deficiencies and shortcomings.
4. There is a need for operational facilities at RAAF Base Learmonth to be upgraded to bring them into line with requirements designed to enhance its capabilities for the deployment of fighter, strike and maritime aircraft in a safe and flexible manner.
5. The extent of the proposed development represents a substantial upgrading required to enable the Base to support aircraft operations in

a safe and flexible manner at levels required by the Department of Defence and can therefore be justified.

6. The Department of Defence should enter into further discussions with the Shire of Exmouth about the practicalities of upgrading the Pavement Classification Number of the runway.
7. The Committee recommends the development of operational facilities at RAAF Base Learmonth, Western Australia, at an estimated out turn cost of \$69 million.

Minister's response

The Department of Defence proposes to construct new facilities to improve the operational effectiveness of the RAAF Base Learmonth. The RAAF Base Learmonth forms part of a chain of defence airfields across northern Australia. It is vital to the air defence of north Western Australia. Learmonth is a bare base under the command of Head-quarters Air Command and is administered by No. 321 Air Base Wing based in Darwin. The primary function of the base is to serve as a deployment base for combat aircraft in a contingency. The proposal will enhance the operational effectiveness and capability of RAAF Base Learmonth. Of paramount importance is the provision of facilities to enable deployed fighter, strike and maritime patrol aircraft elements—including their support—to operate at Learmonth in conditions that accord with ordnance safety regulations and to enable safe loading and unloading of air transported ordnance.

The Public Works Committee, in its report tabled on 30 September 1997, concluded that there is a need for the project and recommended that it proceed subject to the following recommendation: The Department of Defence should enter into further discussions with the Shire of Exmouth about the practicalities of upgrading the pavement classification number (PCN) of the runway. The Department of Defence has reviewed the potential to increase the PCN and has formally advised the shire that, following completion of the runway resurfacing works, the PCN will be increased to PCN 50. Subject to parliamentary approval, it is anticipated that construction will start in November 1997 and be completed by November 1999. The estimated outturn cost of the proposal is \$69 million. I would like to thank the committee for their support.

Redevelopment of facilities for 51st Battalion Far North Queensland Regiment throughout Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait

Referred	15 May 1997
Public hearing held	11 July 1997
Report dated	25 September 1997
Report presented	1 October 1997
Motion for expediency passed	19 November 1997
Report number	10/97
Proposed expenditure	\$22.5 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	172/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The role of the 51st Battalion Far North Queensland Regiment, as a Regional Force Surveillance Unit, is to conduct reconnaissance and surveillance operations in Cape York, the Gulf country and the Torres Strait.
2. Elements of the unit are dispersed over more than 20 locations and its area of operations covers more than 640,000 square kilometres.
3. Since 1985, the unit has increased in size by 400 per cent in personnel numbers, with an even greater increase in holdings of major equipment.
4. The general lack of modern storage facilities and poor working conditions at headquarters, company headquarters and patrol locations are having an adverse impact on the ability of the unit to undertake assigned tasks.

5. Consideration, by Defence, of options which would overcome deficiencies at Porton Barracks revealed that the most cost effective solution would be to relocate all Cairns based elements to a greenfield site.
6. A property on the former Queerah Meatworks site has been identified as suitable for acquisition, costing in the order of \$3 million, which could be offset by revenue from sale of Porton Barracks and the Mann Street property.
7. Relocation of Bravo Company Headquarters to RAAF Base Scherger would not be practical due to the remoteness of the site and associated transport and administrative costs.
8. The Atherton site is adequate in size has the potential to be redeveloped and is protected from urban encroachment.
9. Use of the Naval installation site on Thursday Island, in conjunction with the Normanby Street site, is acceptable to Defence due to their close proximity.
10. The extent of the development of facilities at 22 sites within the Far North Queensland Regiment's area of operations is necessary to enable the performance of its role in an efficient and cost effective manner and can therefore be justified.
11. The Committee recommends the redevelopment of facilities for the 51st Battalion Far North Queensland Regiment throughout Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait at an estimated out turn cost of \$22.5 million.

Minister's response

The Department of Defence proposes to redevelop facilities for the 51st Battalion Far North Queensland Regiment throughout Far North Queensland and the Torres Strait. This proposal will enhance the unit's ability to meet its operational commitments. The proposal involves redeveloping some existing facilities and providing new facilities, where appropriate, to address current deficiencies with respect to functionality, size, noncompliance with building, and occupational health and safety standards. The estimated outturn cost is \$22.5 million. It is anticipated that the construction will start in March 1998 and be completed by December 1999. The Public Works Committee report

tabled on 1 October 1997 supports the proposal and the recommendations are in agreement with Defence's proposed development plans. I would like to thank the committee for its support.

Extension of the National Film and Sound Archive, Acton, ACT

Referred	6 August 1997
Public hearing held	19 December 1995
Report dated	2 October 1997
Report presented	22 October 1997
Motion for expediency passed	30 October 1997
Report number	11/97
Proposed expenditure	\$14.85 million
Expenditure recommended	\$12.4 million at Sept 1994 prices.
Parliamentary Paper	195/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The National Film and Sound Archive's administrative and technical accommodation is inefficient and does not comply with current occupational health and safety standards.
2. An examination of options aimed at overcoming accommodation problems revealed the construction of a new administrative and technical support building contiguous with the existing headquarters building at Acton to be the less expensive and more practical solution.
3. The heritage importance of the site and the existing headquarters building are reflected in planning principles adopted for the design. The materials and finishes to be used will complement the existing headquarters building.
4. The extent of the proposed new building will meet the requirements of the National Film and Sound Archive for at least the next ten years.
5. Construction of the new building will improve efficiency, enable display areas to be increased and will attract more visitors.

6. Engineering services and fire protection measures to be provided are consistent with requirements of a building housing both offices and laboratories and technical support facilities and can be justified on that basis.
7. After the building has been in use for 12 months engineering services providing heating, ventilation and cooling of the complex should be audited to determine their efficiency.
8. The Archive should continue consultations with the Australian Heritage Commission and the ACT Conservation Council during design development about the landscape plan.
9. The Committee recommends the construction of the National Film and Sound Archive headquarters accommodation, Canberra at a cost of \$12.4 million at September 1994 prices.

Minister's response

The government agreed in the 1997-98 budget to the construction of purpose-built accommodation for the archive at its Acton headquarters and refurbishment of the archive's existing headquarters building. The agreement was made to remedy the dangerously unsafe working conditions within the archive. The existing buildings at Acton are suitable for the public functions of the NFSA but are inadequate for its administrative and specialist technical facilities. Current use of the buildings does not satisfy occupational health and safety building standards and is at odds with the heritage aspects of the building and site. The new building is required to provide safe, secure and suitable facilities and accommodation for the NFSA, and the consequential refurbishment of the existing building is necessary for the same reasons, as well as to improve access to its collections.

This proposal will include construction of a new two-storey building to house the NFSA's administrative and technical functions; refurbishment of the existing headquarters, including public galleries, to house the public functions of the NFSA; refurbishment of the existing residence building to house corporate affairs staff; demolition of the existing demountable buildings, metal clad storage structures and nitrate vaults; redevelopment of the character of the site and buildings within a landscape setting; and retention of the existing permanent car park with minor modifications. Additional on-site parking will be provided for approximately 25 cars and five tourist coaches. The out-turn

cost of the proposal is estimated to be \$14.85 million. The project will be funded through instalment purchase payments of approximately \$2.3 million per annum for a period of up to 15 years. It is anticipated that construction will commence in November 1997 and be completed in mid to late 1999.

The Public Works Committee in its report tabled on 21 October 1997 concluded that there is a need for the project. In response to the recommendations of the committee, the National Film and Sound Archive has provided the following comments: The National Film and Sound Archive will arrange for an efficiency audit of the engineering services, providing heating, ventilation and cooling, once the building has been in use for 12 months. The Archive will be happy to incorporate any identified changes which will make the building operate more efficiently. The Archive will consult further with the Australian Council for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled to ensure that access to the southern main entry does not discriminate against the disabled. The Archive will continue to consult with the heritage authorities during further landscape design developments. I would like to thank the committee for its support.

Development of facilities—Stage 3, at HMAS *Stirling*, WA

Referred	23 September 1997
Public hearing held	5 November 1997
Report dated	20 November 1997
Report presented	27 November 1997
Motion for expediency passed	3 December 1997
Report number	12/97
Proposed expenditure	\$19 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	317/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The development of naval operational and support facilities at HMAS *Stirling* has spanned almost three decades and has involved the expenditure of more than \$450 million in 1997 prices.
2. Development has reflected the dynamics of Defence policy in relation to the home porting of warships at HMAS *Stirling*.
3. Recent changes in Defence policy, including the 1987 announcement of the two ocean navy, has led to requirements for additional or enlarged facilities to accommodate increased demands, some of which have been provided as a result of an examination by the Committee in 1994.
4. A need exists to further improve operational support, training, logistics and personnel support facilities at HMAS *Stirling* either by the provision of extensions to existing facilities or through new construction to accommodate the home porting of half of the Australian fleet.

5. With the exception of the proposed clearance diving facilities and the flight deck procedural training facility, and based on the evidence received, the extent of the proposed work can be justified as meeting anticipated requirements.
6. Facilities required and proposed for the naval diving clearance teams should be reviewed. The review should include the benefits of the construction of a new facility at a more suitable location.
7. The siting of the flight deck procedural trainer should be reviewed, in relation to overall cost, including the provision of power, without compromising safety or the realism of training scenarios.
8. The Department of Defence has an exemplary record in the environmental management of Garden Island and has demonstrated a commitment, within operational constraints, towards the conservation and protection for public use of the environmental values of the Island.
9. The Committee recommends the proposed development of facilities—Stage 3 at HMAS *Stirling*, WA. at an estimated out turn cost of \$19 million.

Minister's response

The Department of Defence proposed development encompasses the provision of new and modified operational support, training, logistic support and personnel support facilities, including the provision of associated engineering services. The development proposal will provide facilities in support of the government's decision to base half of the Australian fleet at HMAS *Stirling*. The development of HMAS *Stirling* reflects a strategic need to support major fleet units operating in the Indian Ocean and minor fleet units generally operating closer to the coastline. The estimated outturn cost is \$19 million. It is anticipated construction will commence in May 1998 and be completed by April 1999.

The Public Works Committee, in its report tabled on 27 November 1997, commented that with the exception of the proposed clearance diving facilities and the flight deck procedural training facility, and based on the evidence received, the extent of the proposed work can be justified as meeting anticipated requirements. In response to the recommendations of the

committee, Defence has provided the following comments: The facilities for the clearance diving team were proposed to be refurbished and extended as an element of the project. The committee recommended that this element be reviewed to "include the benefits of the construction of a new facility at a more suitable location". Defence will revalidate the cost effectiveness of refurbishment and extending the existing clearance diving team facility, compared to constructing a new facility, before committing the works. The committee also recommended "the siting of the flight deck procedural trainer should be reviewed". Defence has confirmed that a review will be undertaken as part of the design development process. This will ensure that the trainer is sited in the most cost effective and environmentally sound position.

**Australian National Maritime Museum Maritime Heritage Centre, Wharf
7, Pyrmont, NSW**

Referred	23 September 1997
Public hearing held	7 November 1997
Report dated	20 November 1997
Report presented	27 November 1997
Motion for expediency passed	3 December 1997
Report number	13/97
Proposed expenditure	\$19.5 million
Expenditure recommended	as above
Parliamentary Paper	318/97

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The Australian National Maritime Museum, as a national institution, plays a key role in reflecting Australia's maritime heritage and culture through public displays, restoration, storage and research.
2. Leased premises, some distance from its main exhibition building in Pyrmont, house Museum support activities, including the growing store of artefacts and other material. The lease on these premises expires in mid-1999, when the site will be available for redevelopment.
3. There is a need to find other suitable accommodation to house the Museum's support activities, preferably adjacent to the main exhibition building.

4. The Commonwealth has been offered a property, Wharf 7, adjacent to the main exhibition building, by the City West Development Corporation, for development contingent upon the inclusion of elements of the Sydney Maritime Museum in any new facility, and that any Museum development adhere to the Pyrmont Bay Master Plan, Amendment No 2, Wharves 7-10.
5. Based on the evidence provided to the Committee, the site is considered suitable for the proposed building to house the Museum's library, laboratories, workshops, collection display areas, meeting rooms, amenities and offices.
6. The design of the proposed building recognises planning parameters and, based on the evidence, will meet the Museum's functional and spatial requirements.
7. The success of the proposed development depends on providing a readily identifiable link between the main exhibitions building and the centre and the resolution of public liability issues. This will require the Museum to discuss further with the City West Development Corporation and the Council of the City of Sydney issues of public liability and the placement of objects, with maritime themes, in the public park which separates the two buildings.
8. The cost of the proposed work will be met from savings offset from rent being paid for leased premises and from commercial tenancies in the proposed facility.
9. The Committee recommends the construction of the proposed Australian National Maritime Museum Maritime Heritage Centre, Wharf 7, Pyrmont, NSW at an estimated out turn cost of \$19.5 million.

Minister's response

The museum proposes to acquire a 99-year lease for a 2,852 square metre site known as Wharf 7, Pyrmont, and to construct a building to provide accommodation for its back-of-house activities, including collection display areas and a library. The lease will be acquired from the City West Development Corporation of the New South Wales government for a cost of \$4.5 million. The cost of the development—\$19.5 million in all—will be borrowed from a

major bank and repaid over a period of approximately 12 to 14 years using rental offsets and income earned from commercial activities on the site. The new site will provide the opportunity for the museum to collocate with the Sydney Maritime Museum, a move the museum believes will be advantageous to both organisations.

The building will accommodate the museum's collection, curatorial, conservation and registration staff, laboratories, workshops and library. An innovative design solution will provide the public with the maximum access to the collection and the back-of-house activities compatible with safety and efficiency. The estimated outturn cost is \$19.5 million. It is anticipated that construction will start in April 1998 and be completed by April 1999.

The Public Works Committee, in its report, concluded that there is a need for the project, subject to the following recommendation: The success of the proposed development depends on providing a readily identifiable link between the main exhibitions building and the centre and the resolution of public liability issues. This will require the museum to discuss further with the City West Development Corporation and the council of the City of Sydney issues of public liability and the placement of objects with maritime themes in the public park which separates the two buildings.

In response, the museum welcomes the report and recommendations of the committee and has provided the following comments: The museum is experienced in the area of public liability. With respect to not leasing the park area between our two facilities the museum is confident that such an arrangement will not expose it to any more complex risk beyond its present level of exposure. Negotiations with the City West Development Corporation are continuing to ensure the space provides a strong and effective link between the two museum facilities. To that end a number of options are being jointly explored to incorporate appropriate works of public art such as sculptural works or objects of a strong maritime nature which can provide an "address" to the new facility and can reinforce the link with the existing building. I would like to thank the committee for its support.

APPENDIX B

MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE - 1997

* denotes Sectional (sub) Committees

Date	Location	Purpose
31 January	Sydney International Terminal	Inspection *
6 February	Canberra	Private meeting
7 February	Adelaide Airport Terminal	Inspection *
7 February	Adelaide	Public hearing *
13 February	Canberra	Private meeting
27 February	Canberra	Private meeting
6 March	Canberra	Private meeting
13 March	RAAF Base Amberley	Inspection
14 March	RAAF Base Amberley	Public hearing
20 March	Canberra	Private meeting
24 March	Australian War Memorial, Canberra	Inspection
10 April	Albion	Inspection
11 April	Brimbank	Public hearing
30 April	Timber Creek	Inspection
1 May	Darwin	Public hearing
2 May	RAAF Base Darwin	Inspection *
15 May	Canberra	Private meeting
21 May	Sydney International Terminal	Public hearing
22 May	Sydney International Terminal	Public hearing
29 May	Canberra	Private meeting
5 June	Canberra	Private meeting
19 June	Canberra	Private meeting
26 June	Canberra	Private meeting
30 June	RAAF Base Learmonth	Inspection *
30 June	Exmouth	Public hearing *
10 July	Porton Barracks, Cairns	Inspection *
11 July	Cairns	Public hearing *
19 August	Garden Island	Inspection
19 August	Sydney	Private meeting
4 September	Canberra	Private meeting

5 September	National Film and Sound Archive, Canberra	Inspection *
25 September	Canberra	Private meeting
29 September	Cameron Offices, Canberra	Inspection
2 October	Canberra	Private meeting
23 October	Canberra	Private meeting
30 October	Canberra	Private meeting
5 November	HMAS <i>Stirling</i> , WA	Inspection
5 November	HMAS <i>Stirling</i> , WA	Public hearing
7 November	Darling Harbour, Pyrmont	Inspection *
7 November	Darling Harbour, Pyrmont	Public hearing *
20 November	Canberra	Private meeting
21 November	HMAS <i>Albatross</i> , NSW	Inspection *
21 November	HMAS <i>Albatross</i> , NSW	Public hearing *
27 November	Canberra	Private meeting
8 December	National Museum of Australia, Canberra	Inspection
8 December	Canberra	Public hearing
9 December	Canberra	Public hearing
17 December	Canberra	Public hearing