



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

# Official Committee Hansard

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC  
WORKS

**Reference: Redevelopment of Tarin Kowt, stage 1, Afghanistan**

THURSDAY, 29 OCTOBER 2009

CANBERRA

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**PARLIAMENTARY STANDING**  
**COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS**

**Thursday, 29 October 2009**

**Members:** Senator McLucas (*Chair*), Senator Troeth (*Deputy Chair*), Senator Forshaw and Mr Champion, Mr Forrest, Ms Hall, Mr Lindsay, Mr Price and Mr Slipper

**Members in attendance:** Senators Forshaw, McLucas and Troeth and Mr Champion, Mr Forrest and Mr Lindsay

**Terms of reference for the inquiry:**

To inquire into and report on:

Redevelopment of Tarin Kowt, stage 1, Afghanistan

**WITNESSES**

**GREEN, Major Julie, Staff Officer Grade Two Force Engineer, Headquarters Joint Operations Command..... 1**

**GRICE, Brigadier William, Director, General Infrastructure Asset Development, Department of Defence ..... 1**

**HUTCHINSON, Mr Peter John, Consultant to Defence, Sinclair Knight Merz..... 1**

**SIMS, Brigadier Andrew, Director, General Support, Headquarters Joint Operations Command..... 1**



**Committee met at 8.02 am**

**GREEN, Major Julie, Staff Officer Grade Two Force Engineer, Headquarters Joint Operations Command**

**GRICE, Brigadier William, Director, General Infrastructure Asset Development, Department of Defence**

**HUTCHINSON, Mr Peter John, Consultant to Defence, Sinclair Knight Merz**

**SIMS, Brigadier Andrew, Director, General Support, Headquarters Joint Operations Command**

**CHAIR (Senator McLucas)**—I declare open this meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works. Welcome Brigadier Grice for, I think, the last time in this room.

**Brig. Grice**—In this room, yes.

**CHAIR**—On behalf of the committee we congratulate you for your long service to our committee and to the Department of Defence and we thank you for the cooperative way in which we have been able to work with you not only in my short time but also, I understand, over many, many years.

**Brig. Grice**—Thank you very much. It has been wonderful working with the committee, including the other end of the table!

**CHAIR**—They are the naughty ones! I invite you to make an opening statement. Is there anything any of you wish to add about the capacity in which you appear today?

**Mr Hutchinson**—I am a project manager and contract administrator.

**Brig. Grice**—The Department of Defence proposes the redevelopment of Tarin Kowt. The project will provide upgraded living and working accommodation for Australian Defence Force personnel deployed to Tarin Kowt in Afghanistan. The project will replace the interim accommodation currently being used and provide longer term, sustainable facilities with appropriate protection. The new facilities include protected living and accommodation, kitchen facilities and working accommodation. Improvements will also be made to some existing facilities. The estimated outturn cost of stage 1 of the proposal is \$37.723 million, exclusive of GST. Subject to parliamentary clearance, construction would commence in early 2010 and be complete by mid-2011. Because all details of the project relate to a current operational deployment of defence, I request that the committee conduct an in camera hearing on the project.

**CHAIR**—Thank you. Correct me if I am wrong, but I understand that this is the first time you have brought a matter of an overseas capital work to our committee. We thank you for that. We recognise the fact that this is supporting operational activity and, with the agreement of the committee, I think we can adopt your suggestion that we now go into an in camera hearing. Are there questions that committee members would like to pose before we go into the in camera hearing?

**Mr FORREST**—This is about Afghanistan, isn't it?

**Brig. Grice**—Yes.

**Mr FORREST**—I was just wondering about the ownership at the end of the useful life of the works. What will happen and who will ultimately end up owning it?

**Brig. Sims**—Based on historical guidance from the government, we will probably look to donate or gift it to the government of Afghanistan. Certainly the intent will not be to sell it to them. At this stage the intent is to gift it at the end of its useful life.

**CHAIR**—Are there any further questions? There being none, we will now hear evidence in camera.

*Evidence was then taken in camera—*

**Committee adjourned at 8.43 am**