

Proposed fitout of the new Commonwealth Parliament Offices at One Festival Tower, Adelaide

Department of Finance

15 July 2024

Opening Speech

I would like to begin by acknowledging the Ngunnawal people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today and pay my respects to their Elders past and present. I would also like to acknowledge the Kurna people as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters where the Adelaide Commonwealth Parliament Offices - that we are bringing before the committee today, is located.

Thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of Finance's proposal for the future home of the Commonwealth Parliament Offices in South Australia - which I will refer to as the CPO throughout this hearing.

As the Committee will be aware, CPOs are provided in each capital city across Australia and play a critical role supporting government and parliamentarians.

This proposal seeks to fit out the new CPO premises at One Festival Tower, Adelaide.

This includes the fit-out of two concurrent floors and will deliver contemporary and fit for purpose office accommodation for parliamentarians and their staff.

The CPO typically provides office accommodation and facilities for visiting parliamentarians, and for several permanent office holders. Further to housing permanent residents, the Adelaide CPO hosts regular international delegations, meetings of the Cabinet, visiting parliamentarians, ministers, and high office holders. During peak times the CPO can host up to 20 Ministers and their staff- which significantly exceed current capacity.

The current CPO was established in 1994, 30 years ago. Since this time the security, IT, accessibility, and operational requirements of a modern parliamentary office have changed, and the current Adelaide CPO is no longer fit for purpose. For some time now this has been impacting users of the CPO such as ministers, parliamentarians, staff, partnering agencies and visitors.

At the end of 2021, with the current CPO lease due to expire in 3 years, Finance took the opportunity to consider the current suitability of the fit out. On review, Finance concluded that the current space no longer met the requirements of a modern CPO.

The procurement for a new lease was via an open approach to market, to identify suitable premises that could provide the required security infrastructure and importantly, deliver value for money for the Commonwealth.

In March this year, the Special Minister of State provided the authority for Finance to enter into a lease for the new Adelaide CPO at One Festival Tower. This lease runs for 10 years with two five-year extension options.

As such this proposal is designed to support parliamentarians doing business in Adelaide for at least the next 20 years.

The design for the fit out and construction of the new premises is driven by highly specific security and confidentiality requirements - and these requirements have influenced every aspect of the proposed works.

This includes:

- Fifteen independently secured suites for permanent residents and visiting parliamentarians;
- A dedicated space for the Prime Minister and Cabinet functions including a secure cabinet room and the associated facilities to run effective in person and virtual meetings;
- Secure and flexible communications and IT facilities that support multiple departments to provide infrastructure required for Ministers, and;
- Safe and secure car park for parliamentarians, curbside drop off for Comcar users and a functional Media room, parents' room, and other amenities.

In line with the Commonwealth procurement rules, the project will encourage local industry and Indigenous Business participation and we will approach local construction companies to undertake the construction of the fit out.

Subject to parliamentary approval, the project is forecast to commence construction in January 2025 and is expected to be completed by July 2025 with relocation the following month.

Chair, that concludes my opening statement, I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to present today and we stand ready to answer any questions from the Committee.