



Australian Government
Defence

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Mr Graham Perrett MP

Chair
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Perrett

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE QUESTION ON NOTICE: EDINBURGH DEFENCE
PRECINCT MID TERM REFRESH PROJECT**

1. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works Public and In-Camera hearings for the Edinburgh Defence Precinct Mid Term Refresh Project were held on 04 October 2023, three questions were taken on notice. I am pleased to provide the answers to the Committee's questions.
2. **Question One - Legacy contamination.** In relation to legacy contamination, such as heavy metals, asbestos, hydrocarbons and PFAS, the Deputy Chair asked: *Which heavy metals? Mercury?*
 - a. **Defence response.** Recent investigations undertaken at the Edinburgh Defence Precinct have detected heavy metals above the South Australian Environmental Protection Authority waste fill criteria, these include Arsenic, Barium, Copper and Manganese. Mercury was not detected.
 - b. **Supplementary Information.** The project will manage any potential contamination in accordance with a project specific Construction Environmental Management Plan, in compliance with the Environmental Protection Act (1993) and other Defence contamination policies.
3. **Question Two - Central Emergency Power Station Facility.** In relation to any potential noise impacts from the facility generators, the Deputy Chair asked: *What's the expected decibels? What's the noise impact?*
 - a. **Defence response.** Acoustic analysis indicates that noise emission levels, produced by the proposed emergency generation plant will be approximately 66 decibels at the exterior of the nearest Defence building; which is located approximately 90 meters away. As such, the project does not anticipate any noise impacts to either the public or any Defence personnel located within on-base living in accommodation.
 - b. **Supplementary Information.** For context, 34 decibels is equivalent to the level of a person's whisper, 60 decibels is equivalent to a normal conversation and 80 decibels is equivalent to a garden lawn mower.



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4. **Question Three - Central Emergency Power Station Facility.** In relation to any potential noise impacts from the facility generators, the Deputy Chair asked: *What's the noise impact? You've done a noise map? You've done a forecast?*
- a. **Defence response.** The acoustic analysis undertaken to date considered noise mapping as part of the site selection approval process. Site selection for each of the Central Emergency Power Station locations were selected to balance power transmission requirements and noise impacts to adjacent facilities (Defence and non-defence). As such, the project does not anticipate any noise impacts to either the public or any Defence personnel located within on-base living in accommodation.
- b. **Supplementary Information.** The proposed location of the Central Emergency Power Station facility on RAAF Base Edinburgh is approximately 850 meters away from any on-base living in accommodation. There is no living-in accommodation on the Defence Science and Technology Edinburgh site. Therefore, the proposed generation plant will have no noise impacts.
5. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require additional information.

Yours sincerely,

MJ Quinn, CSC
Colonel
Acting Director General Capital Facilities and Infrastructure
17 October 2023