

**Queensland  
Government**

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Queensland **Fire and  
Rescue Service**

Joint Steering Committee for Public Works  
Department of the House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra, ACT 2600

Dear Madam Chair

**Re: Proposed Lavarack Barracks Redevelopment Stage 4, Townsville, Queensland.**

I write to you on behalf of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) who, under the Integrated Planning Act (IPA), are a *referral agency* for Special Fire Services.

As a referral agency, plans are submitted to our Community Safety offices for review and assessment by our Building Approval Officers (BAO's). When reviewing and assessing plans for new developments, our primary concern is for occupant safety and the safety of firefighters who may respond to emergency situations.

It is reassuring to read in Section 47 – *Fire Protection*, of the 'Statement of Evidence to the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on Public Works' that '*The design of the fire protection systems will, as a minimum, be in accordance with the provisions of the Building Code of Australia, the Defence Manual of Fire Protection Engineering and other applicable Codes and Standards*'. The application of these Codes and Standards should make this a safer workplace for both the occupants and firefighters if they are required.

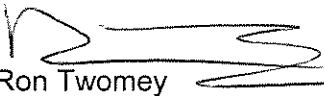
Another important role of the BAO's is to ensure that the individual components of the fire safety installations function effectively as a whole. Our experience is that although a facilities fire safety installations may comply with the Building Code of Australia (BCA) and relevant Australian Standards, the systems may generate multiple false alarms.

False alarms are a major concern to the QFRS as they can create complacency in the building occupants and draw vital resources away from genuine emergencies. To address this, our BAO's are trained to evaluate plans for this potential issue and provide recommendations for improvement. This is most effectively done during the design phase, not when the building is partially complete.

The second sentence in Section 47 states that '*the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service will be invited to visit the site and offer comment on the design*'. This is too late in the process. The QFRS must be included in the design phase so that our BAO's can provide advice prior to any construction, thus avoiding any costly refit.

If you require any further advice regarding the role that QFRS can play in this development please call our Manager Community Safety, Paul Lange, on (07) 4724 4327.

Yours sincerely

  
Ron Twomey 21/03/2007  
**Assistant Commissioner**  
**Queensland Fire and Rescue Service**  
**Northern Region**



Statist Award 2006



Service and Planning Award 2006

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