



*Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works*

# **REPORT**

relating to the proposed

## **STAFF COLLEGES COLLOCATION PROJECT, WESTON CREEK, ACT**

(Twelfth Report of 1999)

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA  
1999

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The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

# **Staff Colleges Collocation Project, Weston Creek, ACT**

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

25 November 1999  
Canberra

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## Membership of the Committee

Chair            Hon. Judi Moylan MP

Deputy Chair   Hon. Janice Crosio MBE, MP

Members        House of Representatives

Mr John Forrest MP

Mr Colin Hollis MP

Mr Peter Lindsay MP

Mr Bernie Ripoll MP

Senate

Senator Paul Calvert

Senator Alan Ferguson

Senator Shayne Murphy

## Committee Secretariat

Secretary            Mr Bjarne Nordin

Inquiry Secretary    Mr Michael Fetter

Administrative Officer   Mrs Angela Nagy





## **Extract from the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives**

No. 33 dated Tuesday, 30 March 1999

### **20. PUBLIC WORKS—PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE— REFERENCE OF WORK—STAFF COLLEGES COLLOCATION PROJECT, WESTON CREEK, ACT**

Mr Slipper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration), pursuant to notice, moved—That, in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, the following proposed work be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report: Staff Colleges Collocation Project, Weston Creek, ACT.

Debate ensued.



1. On 30 March 1999, the House of Representatives referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report the proposed Staff Colleges Collocation Project, Weston Creek, ACT.

## THE REFERENCE

2. The terms of the reference were as follows:

The single services currently conduct middle level officer training in their individual staff colleges. Collocation of the three colleges onto one site was most recently proposed in the context of the Defence Efficiency Review studies. The services colleges are presently located at Queenscliff, Victoria; Balmoral, Sydney; and Fairbairn, ACT for Army, Navy and Air Force, respectively.

The Department of Defence proposes to collocate the three existing single service staff colleges in new facilities to be constructed at Weston Creek, ACT, to sit adjacent to the existing Australian Defence College. The works now proposed are needed to improve efficiency in the delivery of middle level officer training and, thereby, realise savings in operating costs and reinforce an emerging ADF joint culture.

The works are in three main components, consisting of an educational and administration facility, supporting library, catering and gymnasium facilities and the augmentation of existing infrastructure, roadways, parking facilities and landscaping.

### Cost of proposed works

3. When referred to the Committee, the estimated out turn cost of the proposed work was \$28 million.

## THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION

4. The Committee received a written submission from the Department of Defence (Defence) and took evidence from Defence officials at a public hearing held at Parliament House, Canberra, on 11 June 1999. The Committee also received written submissions and took evidence from representatives of the following organisations and individuals:
  - Borough of Queenscliffe;
  - National Capital Authority; and
  - Master Builders Association of the ACT.
5. Written submissions were also received from:
  - Ms Annette Ellis MP (Member for Canberra);
  - Weston Creek Community Council;
  - Families at Work;
  - Environment Australia—Environment Protection Group;
  - ACROD—ACT Division; and
  - Mr T. L. Barker.
6. On 17 August, the Committee met with councillors and staff of the Borough of Queenscliffe before inspecting historic buildings and a new military instruction facility at Fort Queenscliff. The opportunity was taken to have informal discussions with members of a large group of local residents assembled at the entrance to the Fort who expressed deep concerns about the ramifications of the relocation of the Army Staff College from Queenscliff to Canberra.
7. On 2 and 30 September and 21 October, the Committee held further hearings at Parliament House, Canberra and took evidence from Defence officials and representatives of the Australian Heritage Commission.
8. Whilst the Committee's inquiry on this reference was unusually protracted, it was felt necessary to conduct an exhaustive examination of the rationale and justification for the location decision.
9. A list of witnesses who appeared at the public hearings is at Appendix A. The Committee's proceedings will be printed as Minutes of Evidence.

## BACKGROUND

### Current education arrangements

10. The ADF's current officer education arrangements have a number of streams encompassing:
  - precommissioning;
  - direct entry;
  - middle level Command and Staff training at single service staff colleges; and
  - joint education at the Joint Australian College of Defence and Strategic Studies.

### Precommissioning

11. This involves undergraduate education at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) which aims to provide a blend of academic and military cultures.

### Direct entry

12. This is geared to personnel with tertiary qualifications or personnel who have completed the officer entry courses. The latter will continue to enter officer ranks from the three service colleges—the RAAF College (Point Cook), the Royal Military College (Duntroon) and the RAN College (*HMAS Creswell*, Jervis Bay). A recommendation of the Defence Efficiency Review (DER) that a single precommissioning college be established has not been accepted. The three institutions will remain.<sup>1</sup>

### Command and staff

13. Middle level officer Command and Staff training, at the Major equivalent level, is currently conducted at separate single independent staff colleges. Each staff college provides professional education through presentations by resident directing staff, visiting presenters and syndicate work.

### RAN

14. The RAN Staff College was established in June 1978, with the long-term aim of producing up to 45 staff trained officers per year for the RAN. The Staff College course is conducted over 6 months, with two courses per year. Up to six foreign students attend each course.

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<sup>1</sup> *Transcript*, 11 June 1999, p. 45.

15. The RAN Staff College is housed in what were described as 'old' facilities at *HMAS Penguin*, in Sydney. Facilities are shared with the RAN Medical Training School and the Hydrographic School. Defence advised the Committee that present planning has identified *HMAS Penguin* for possible rationalisation in the medium term.

### Army

16. The Army Command and Staff College course has been conducted at the historic Fort Queenscliff, Victoria, since 1947. The student population comprises 60 Australian students and 25–30 foreign students. Facilities were described to the Committee as ranging from 'good to ageing'. There is little spare space available for expansion. Administrative support and some accommodation are provided from Crows Nest, about 300 metres from the Fort. Unlike the Navy, the Army's course is undertaken over a 12-month period.

### RAAF

17. The RAAF's Staff College is located at RAAF Base Fairbairn in what were described as 'ageing and mainly dysfunctional facilities'. The Base has been sold and the College facilities are leased from the new owners. Defence plans to vacate the site by May 2003.

### Civilian

18. The Defence Management Diploma Program course is the civilian equivalent of the single Services staff college course. It is a 12-month course conducted in leased premises in Canberra. The course is a balance of academic subjects delivered by a tertiary institution and by Defence specific coursework. It provides for 48 students of which 36 are Australian.

### Previous studies on collocated staff colleges

19. The need for collocated staff colleges has been under examination by Defence and the Parliament for some time.
20. Opportunities for joint education for middle level ADF officers do not presently exist, apart from short courses conducted at the ADF Warfare Centre. The role of this institution is to conduct courses to equip personnel for specific tasks. The duration of the courses ranges from one to two weeks. It is located at RAAF Base Williamstown. It is tasked with the support of the Commander, Australian Theatre, located in Sydney, to provide training, doctrine, exercises and war gaming—the features which support the operational roles of Headquarters Australian Theatre. It is not given a role in

- professional military education. Rather, it provides short training courses to meet its roles.<sup>2</sup>
21. In October 1995, the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade reported to Parliament on a far-ranging inquiry conducted into the provision of academic studies and professional military education undertaken by officer cadets and officers at Defence single service and joint training and education establishments throughout Australia.
  22. The report recommended:
    - The RAN Staff College, Army Command and Staff College and the RAAF Command and Staff College be integrated into a single tri-Service ADF Command and Staff College located in Canberra; and
    - The integration of the RAN Staff College, Army Command and Staff College and the RAAF Command and Staff College into a single tri-Service ADF Command and Staff College with appropriate single Service elements be[ing] phased in over the next two to three years.<sup>3</sup>
  23. The catalyst for implementation of this recommendation came 18 months later with the publication of the Defence Efficiency Review (DER) (March 1997). The DER highlighted several key areas for improvement in Defence training and education in general and for military officers in particular.
  24. These included:
    - increased emphasis on joint education and training;
    - merging and sharing common elements; sharing common overheads;
    - better integration of Defence training into the national training system;
    - rationalisation of schools and facilities along joint Services lines; and
    - restructuring the delivery organisation.
  25. The DER recommended that the Joint Services Staff College merge with the Australian College of Defence and Strategic Studies at Weston Creek, ACT. This recommendation has been implemented and new facilities have been constructed on the site at Weston to house the integrated colleges.
  26. The DER also prompted two interrelated initiatives:
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<sup>2</sup> *Transcript*, 11 June 1999, p. 47.

<sup>3</sup> Commonwealth Parliament—Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade—Report—*Officer Education: The Military after next*, October 1995, Parliamentary Paper 189/95), p. xiii.

- defining an appropriate single process educational model and curriculum; and
- identifying the most suitable location for the joint education of middle level ADF officers.

#### **Direct savings from collocation**

27. The DER estimated that savings made from collocation would be between \$2–4 million annually. This estimate was derived from comparisons of maintaining three colleges and a collocated college. Most direct savings would be in personnel, garrison support, administrative support and removal expenses. In terms of personnel, a collocated college would involve savings in 43 personnel which would realise more than \$2 million per annum in savings. In addition, further cost savings will accrue from a number of other areas including course material. Defence advised that 70 per cent of course material is common to all students. Collocation would result in a high proportion of common and joint education.

#### **COMMAND AND STAFF COURSE**

28. The DER recommended collocated Command and Staff colleges should include a review of curricula to effect maximum integration without detracting from single Service training outcomes. The review has been undertaken and has resulted in Defence adopting the new Australian Command and Staff Course which will be undertaken by selected officers after 10–16 years of service. It will be a joint integrated course, with officers from the three services attending, although it will also provide for single service elements. It is planned to conduct the course over 44 weeks. This length is consistent with the current Army and RAAF staff college courses. The course will be divided into three study areas—common study, single service and joint operations.

#### **Common study**

29. This component will last for 21 weeks and aims to prepare officers for wider Defence employment. It will include a strategic studies module, which allows students to assess fundamental concepts of strategic thought. Students will analyse and examine contemporary Australian security and defence policy and the development of military strategies to satisfy Government objectives. They will also examine processes by which military capabilities are defined, acquired, developed and sustained to meet defence requirements. Students will also examine and analyse command, leadership, management and study and practice staff skills. The common study area will also be attended by Defence civilian staff.

### Single service

30. The component, of 14 weeks duration, aims to prepare students for future employment in their Service and prepare them for joint operations. A senior Defence official, with responsibilities for the development of joint education and training within the ADF, told the Committee:

The single service component will concentrate on promoting excellence in single service war fighting competencies and will address other specific objectives to meet single service requirements; for example, the preparation of unit commanders for the three services. I should note here that although we are very keen to promote our joint competence, the ADF believe we can only meet that joint competence on a solid bedrock of single service expertise. We are not downgrading the importance of having a single service expertise.<sup>4</sup>

### Joint operations

31. The final component, of 9 weeks duration, will deal specifically with preparing officers to plan and execute joint operations, including peace keeping, peace enforcement, humanitarian aid and disaster relief. This component, for the first time, will provide education at the operational level for staff officers working in operational headquarters such as Headquarters Australian Theatre. The Joint Operations component will take over some of the education formerly undertaken at the Joint Services Staff College, which occupied facilities at Weston.<sup>5</sup>

### Numbers attending the course

32. Defence advised that the Army's training liability is for more than 60 students to attend the course. Numbers are constrained to that level because of competing staffing requirements. The RAN's staffing and student numbers were reviewed in July 1999. The RAN has, as a result, undertaken to post a minimum of 15 officers to the two 2000 courses and not less than 25 and a maximum of 34 per annum from 2001. The course will be incorporated into RAN career path planning for officers and will be given greater prominence in career planning. The RAAF will have a requirement for 32 students.
33. Defence advised that current planning indicates the following mix of students:

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4 *Transcript*, 30 September 1999, p. 4.

5 *Transcript*, 2 September 1999, p. 26.



- 80 Army;
  - 48 RAAF;
  - 35 Navy; and
  - 12–15 civilians from the Defence Management Diploma.
34. These include overseas students; in the Army total of 80, about 20 are expected from overseas. Defence advised that the mix and number of overseas students depends to some extent on the nature of relations with various countries in the region.
35. Defence advised that it expects ADF numbers attending the college to remain at this level but the requirements of the Services may change in the future.

#### Qualifications

36. When the course is established, the military qualification will be 'ACSC'. Defence advised that given the level of the course, it is intended to involve private providers and seek accreditation to a Masters degree. This is, however, a matter to be determined during the development of the curriculum.

#### Promotion prospects

37. Defence advised that 50 per cent of Army staff college graduates can expect to be promoted in due course. For the RAAF, close to 100 per cent of graduates will be promoted. In terms of the RAN, Defence advised that whilst there are no historical records, it believes about 30 per cent of students are promoted. The RAN has a policy that attendance at Staff College is not a prerequisite for promotion at present. This will change with the introduction of the ACSC and it is estimated that between 50–75 per cent of RAN students will be promoted.

#### Management of college

38. Defence advised that a 1-star officer (Brigadier equivalent) will be the Commandant for the Australian Command and Staff Course. Under the Commandant will be three Colonel equivalents. During the joint phase of training these will be responsible for a range of matters across each service. During the single service components each will be responsible for undertaking tasks associated with single service components. The Commandant will be rotational and will be appointed according to normal selection procedures for executives of the ADF.

## THE NEED

### Facilities implications

39. Defence advised that if each of the single Service staff colleges remained in their existing facilities, effective implementation of the educational model would not be possible.
40. Further, an opportunity to build on an emerging ADF joint culture would be lost, potential economies in operating costs could not be realised, significant investment in ageing facilities would be required in any case, and rationalisation of college estate holdings would not be possible.
41. Defence maintained that facilities would be required either through redevelopment of an existing site or development of a new site for the implementation of the proposed educational model.
42. A lease option would not have the necessary flexibility of use found on a Defence base to install and operate joint operational training platforms, even if a suitable premises were identified to meet the physical accommodation needs.
43. Due to past and proposed property rationalisations, redevelopment is not proposed at either RAAF Base Fairbairn or at *HMAS Penguin*.
44. Redevelopment of an existing staff college site is therefore only possible at Fort Queenscliff.
45. Defence concluded that because development space has become available at the Weston Creek campus with the formation of the Australian Defence College, and since the campus is planned as an educational precinct, new development at Weston Creek is the main alternative to redevelopment at Fort Queenscliff for the Australian Command and Staff Course.
46. The Committee's assessment of the suitability of the two locations is in the following paragraphs.

## WESTON CREEK

47. The Weston Creek site, comprising 5.2 hectares, is located 9 kilometres by road from the Canberra CBD. The site is National Land controlled by Defence.

### Joint Services Staff College

48. The Joint Services Staff College was established at Weston Creek in the 1970s, using facilities erected in the 1950s for a construction company.

49. In 1994, new facilities were completed at Weston Creek for the Australian College of Defence and Strategic Studies which provides for strategic level development of more senior ADF and Departmental officers. In January 1999, the two colleges—the Joint Services Staff College and the Australian College of Defence and Strategic Studies were merged as the Australian Defence College. The College conducts two courses:
- Defence Staff Course—of four months duration; and
  - Defence and Strategic Studies Course—of eight months duration.
50. These courses are for senior military and civilian officers and are attended by 60 students per year of which approximately 30 per cent are from overseas. They are aimed to ensure that officers and officials possess appropriate skills needed to understand and operate effectively in complex security environments through an understanding of global, regional and national issues of defence and strategic importance.<sup>6</sup>

#### Facilities available

51. A number of buildings have been left vacant or in partial use only with the merging of the Weston Creek colleges. Defence advised that these vacated facilities are neither of sufficient size nor adequate design to accommodate the collocated staff colleges.
52. However, clearing these ageing facilities would yield space on the Weston Creek site appropriate to the needs of the proposed Australian Command and Staff Course, and the Australian Defence College.
53. Defence advised that the preferred collocated facility option is that which best implements the proposed educational model.
54. The most recent works at Weston Creek were the following:
- provision of new office and training accommodation in 1993/94 for the Australian College of Defence and Strategic Studies. Works also included construction of library and gymnasium facilities, extension to the catering facility, and limited upgrade work to the existing Joint Services Staff College instructional facility; and
  - construction of an annex to the Australian Defence College building in 1998 to provide for the integration of the former Australian College of Defence and Strategic Studies and the Joint Services Staff College.

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6 Defence to Committee, 30 September 1999.

## QUEENSCLIFF

### Location

55. Fort Queenscliff is situated on Shortlands Bluff on the eastern extremity of the Queenscliff Peninsula. The site overlooks Port Phillip Bay and the shipping lanes to Melbourne and Geelong.

### Development of defences

56. Construction of military fortifications on Shortland Bluff commenced in 1861, with the main Fort being largely constructed between 1882–85. It was the headquarters of a chain of forts constructed to protect Melbourne and Geelong from seaward attack. During the second half of the 19th century, Melbourne was one of the single wealthiest points in the world, especially due to the value of gold bullion brought to its bank vaults from Ballarat and Bendigo. Port Phillip was consequently the most heavily defended port in the Southern Hemisphere and one of the most heavily defended ports in the British Empire. The Fort has landward and seaward defences. The landward defences include the wall, the Keep<sup>7</sup> and gorge. The seaward defences include guns, gun positions, magazines, searchlights and a fire directing station.

### Continuous occupation since 1883

57. The Fort has been occupied continuously by Colonial and Commonwealth armed forces since 1883. At the end of the Second World War, Fort Queenscliff was no longer needed to function as a fort. In December 1946, the Fort became the home of the Army's Command and Staff College. The Army also controls a 1.4 hectare property at Crows nest, about 300 metres west of the Fort.
58. The Fort is listed on the Register of the National Estate.

### Public Works Committee involvement

59. In 1982, the Public Works Committee examined and reported on a proposed redevelopment of Fort Queenscliff (Committee's Sixteenth Report of 1982, Parliamentary Paper 281/82). The proposed redevelopment, estimated to cost \$8.3 million at September 1982 prices, (\$16.1 million at June 1999 prices using the Implicit Price Deflator for Non-farm Gross Domestic Production) involved the following elements:
  - a new military instruction facility;

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7 The Fort's last line of defence and the command post for landward defences.

- alterations to existing buildings and engineering services;
  - living accommodation;
  - a quartermaster store and ration store;
  - transport compound; and
  - associated roads, carparking, landscaping and engineering services.
60. Of significance, for the purposes of this report, are questions raised by the Committee, as far back as 1982, in relation to possible economies which could be achieved by integrating the individual service staff colleges into a joint service staff college. The Committee's report in this regard states:

The Committee was advised that during the 1960s, a proposal to establish an Australian Services Staff College was developed. The RAAF Staff College was established at RAAF Base Fairbairn in anticipation of this proposal being implemented. The proposal was abandoned in 1978, however, following a number of studies carried out by the Department of Defence. The size and location of individual staff colleges were to remain the responsibility of the individual services. This led to a decision by the Chief of the General Staff that the [Army's] Command and Staff College should remain permanently at Queenscliff.<sup>8</sup>

61. The redevelopment of the Fort proceeded on that basis.

#### Comparisons of operating costs

62. In late 1997, following the DER, Defence commissioned a consultant to examine two remaining locations for a collocated staff college—Weston Creek and Queenscliff. Defence advised that the study found that taken over a 15-year period, on a net present value basis, a Weston Creek location would result in savings of more than \$11 million. The Defence consultant found recurrent costs at Weston to be \$7.9 million, while at Queenscliff they would be \$9.2 million.
63. Defence pointed out, however, that the decision to proceed with the Weston Creek option was not based purely on financial savings. It also took into account what Defence believes were more significant non-quantifiable costs and benefits.

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<sup>8</sup> Joint Standing Committee on Public Works, *Redevelopment of Fort Queenscliff, Vic.*, 16th Report of 1982, Parliamentary Paper 281/82, p. 4

### Non-quantifiable costs and benefits

64. Defence advised that these considerations cover a wide range of factors. At Weston, the Staff College would be able to build on synergies and share resources with the Australian Defence College. It will also draw on the ready availability of Government, Military and academic lecturers available from a vast number of institutions.
65. The Weston location would also provide greater posting stability for officers and families—which is considered to be very important to many personnel at that stage of their careers. In Canberra, Defence will have the opportunity to provide much greater stability. There are significant numbers of positions and appointment at the Major (equivalent) level in Defence Headquarters. The possibility of obtaining back to back postings is much higher in Canberra than Queenscliff.

### Committee questioning

66. The Committee noted that collocation of the College in Canberra would require abandoning Queenscliff, with a modern military instructional facility, and developing a similar institution at another site. The Committee was concerned that the decision to collocate the three single service colleges in Canberra was driven in large measure by undefined benefits. The Committee therefore sought to specify the extent of these benefits and, between August and October, sought additional information from Defence on their importance in deciding to collocate the college in Canberra.

### Importance of back to back postings

67. The staff college course will run for 44 weeks, a relatively short period when overall ADF postings average between two to three years. A significant argument used by Defence to demonstrate the benefits of a Canberra location is that to be derived from back to back postings. The Committee questioned how this practice has worked in the past in relation to the existing single service staff colleges and how it will be improved if the College were located in Canberra rather than in Queenscliff.
68. At Queenscliff, of the 60 Army officers on the course, nine were posted from Canberra. The Army has not been able to achieve back to back postings because Queenscliff does not afford this option. Defence advised that based on a review of student movements to and from Queenscliff during the past three years, 22 per cent of all postings there were from Canberra and 33 per cent of postings from Queenscliff have been to Canberra. There are no other Defence facilities or bases close to Queenscliff.

69. If the College were located in Canberra, Defence advised that it has been estimated that 50 per cent of personnel will have back to back postings. This means that 50 per cent of postings would have been saved.
- In recent years we have had an increasing number of people declining to go to staff college at Queenscliff because of the disruption that a one-year posting has on spouse employment...<sup>9</sup>
70. The Committee questioned the basis of this further, suggesting that it would be beneficial to the individual's career to make that sort of sacrifice. Defence acknowledged that this is recognised, but increasingly, personnel are making wider judgements about family life and spouse employment. In recent years, the Army Staff College has worked its way completely through the current future Staff College reserve list in order to fill the course. Over the past five years the Army has placed 60 students annually at Queenscliff. On average, 15 officers per annum decline the opportunity to attend the college at Queenscliff. The Committee asked Defence to explain the reasons.
71. Defence advised that anecdotal evidence suggests there are two important reasons—disruptions to children's education and lack of spouse employment. Officers are also concerned by the two year return to service obligation imposed on staff course graduates when there are no guarantees of promotion. This is further complicated when they are also required to decide if they wish to accept an Military Superannuation and Benefits Scheme Retention Benefit—a five year commitment, which is required to be served consecutively. This equates to an additional seven years of service.
72. This should not arise in Canberra with 50 per cent back to back postings. Defence added that a substantial number of people attending Weston Creek will be in Canberra or will be posted after training—in many cases would have postings in Canberra before and after a year of staff college training.
73. The RAAF has the option of back to back postings because the staff college is located in Canberra and 47 per cent of students there are posted from Canberra (average over the past 3 years) and 74 per cent of students graduating from the RAAF Staff College were posted to Canberra. Furthermore, 30 per cent of RAAF students had three Canberra postings in a row. Defence advised that the Army could be expected to follow a similar pattern of postings if the Staff College were located in Canberra.
74. RAN currently runs two six-month courses per year. In 1999, most postings after Staff College have been or will be to appointments in the Sydney area. This allows back to back postings. Defence advised that this pattern is likely to change when the location of the Staff College changes.
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<sup>9</sup> *Transcript*, 11 June 1999, p. 41.

### Implementation in Canberra

75. If the College were located in Canberra, Defence envisages an officer's first posting would be to the Command and Staff course or a working level appointment in Canberra which does not require the qualifications of command and staff course education. The next posting would be from the Staff College to a staff appointment in Defence Headquarters.
76. The Committee asked Defence to describe the tasks to be undertaken in these appointments. Defence advised that there are operational, strategic and project management appointments in Canberra which require the skills gained from attending the Command and Staff course. Personnel will come to Canberra from the field with their single service skills, receive their command and staff education and training and then proceed to the staff environment of Australian Defence Headquarters. Following that, they would they would go out to command a field unit.
77. This posting policy, to appointments in Canberra, is to avoid a posting that is unnecessary—a 12 month posting to a remote locality unnecessary from a family and cost perspective.

### Queenscliff

78. Although Defence advocated, very strongly, the location of the college in Canberra, the Committee pursued an examination of the technical feasibility of providing the facilities required at Queenscliff.
79. Defence did not pursue this option to any significant extent, believing that qualitative and quantitative factors supported the Weston Creek option. The Queenscliff facilities, whilst described by Defence as 'good', would not be able to cater for the number envisaged and facilities at Queenscliff would need to be extended. Queenscliff at present caters for 80 students. At Weston Creek there will be 180 students.
80. Sufficient scoping was undertaken by the Defence consultant in 1997 to suggest that development to the extent required for the collocation of a single service college would have substantial visual impact on the Fort. When questioned further regarding further development options available at Queenscliff, Defence advised that only two buildings, the mess and the old quartermaster store could be demolished and replaced. Other buildings could be internally readapted, but the scale of the facility required would be similar to the Military Instructional facility. The only area large enough would be the parade ground. Defence advised that if land were not available



at Weston, they would have looked more closely at Queenscliff, which had not been tested from a heritage point of view.<sup>10</sup>

81. The Committee noted that capital costs at Weston Creek would be in the order of \$10 million more than Queenscliff. Defence advised the Committee that:

The figures we had in for building a collocated staff college at Queenscliff are very, very conservative. Our experience is that as soon as we touch something with a heritage restriction on it, the cost doubles. There are two points: firstly, it is listed in legislation and it cannot be touched, it will remain there as a heritage building forever; secondly, it will probably cost us twice as much as our original estimates if we want to build a collocated staff college at Queenscliff.<sup>11</sup>

#### Need for property rationalisation

82. The DER found that there was a need to reduce the size of the Defence estate through rationalisation and consolidation and specifically identified a need for location decisions to take account of education, the education of children of service members, and spouse employment. Defence believes the location of the college at Weston is in accordance with this guidance. The establishment of the college in Canberra would provide a degree of posting stability unmatched at any other location. The only apparent benefit of the Queenscliff option would be initial and capital cost savings—this assumes a heritage compliant solution is available. These savings would be offset by operating costs in a few years.

#### Canberra-centric

83. The Committee suggested to Defence that without hard evidence to the contrary, the Weston Creek option could be viewed as a further manifestation of a community perception that the ADF is becoming too Canberra-centric. It was advised that Defence believes what should be in Canberra is that which is appropriate to Canberra in terms of the command and management of the Defence organisation and the ADF.
84. Since 1990, significant numbers of ADF personnel and functions have, in fact, been removed from Canberra. This will continue with the closure of *HMAS Harman*. In addition, entire headquarters functions have been relocated to Melbourne and Sydney and to other locations.

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10 Defence to Committee, 30 September 1999, p. 9.

11 *Transcript*, 30 September 1999, p. 12.

85. The Committee questioned Defence further about the strategic reasons for moving functions from Canberra. Defence advised that the thrust to decentralise was based on the functional appropriateness of location. The reasons some functions were formerly in Canberra were for technological reasons. Technological advances have enabled Defence to reduce a number of functions undertaken in Canberra. Defence facilities planning involves the rationalisation of the Defence estate and functions at locations which achieve cost effectiveness. Each function has its own rationale for its location—the move of the Army to the north, the move of half the RAN fleet to Western Australia and the rationalisation of RAAF Bases. All are being dealt with on the basis of functional rationality to save on overheads.
86. During the inspection of Fort Queenscliff, the Committee noted the presence of sophisticated and expensive audio visual and computer equipment used as training and teaching aids. Defence advised that items of this equipment considered to be useful will be re-used in the new facility. The Committee is concerned that valuable teaching resources may nevertheless be made prematurely redundant. The Committee believes Defence should exercise sound judgement in determining the appropriateness of the transfer or disposal of these valuable assets.

#### Collegiate atmosphere

87. The Committee noted that the large majority of personnel undertaking courses will be married with families. This raised the question of maintaining a collegiate atmosphere. Defence believes the same benefits derived at Queenscliff will be achieved at Weston Creek. There will be significant numbers of exercises and syndicate discussions, visits and exercises at the ADF Warfare Centre. These will provide opportunities to build closer links between personnel involved.

#### Housing in Canberra

88. The Committee asked Defence if there had been communication with the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) about the additional housing required in Canberra. Defence advised that the project team had met with the DHA on 10 June. Because the project has more than 12 months to run, housing issues are not considered by Defence to be significant at this stage. Defence also advised that DHA would prepare a business study and would make a decision whether or not it would acquire additional houses. If DHA cannot provide the number required, the commercial market will be used.
89. In comparative terms, the cost of accommodation was taken into account in the financial analysis and is close to cost neutral between the two locations.

## **Committee's Conclusions**

- 90. The three services currently conduct middle level officer training at individual staff colleges located in Sydney, Canberra and at Queenscliff. Collocation of the colleges would achieve financial and manpower savings and reinforce an emerging joint culture in the Australian Defence Force.**
- 91. An education model has been developed for collocated staff colleges which covers common, single service and joint education. Implementation of the new education model will require additional educational and support facilities.**
- 92. Existing Air Force and Navy staff colleges are unsuitable for further development due to property ownership and site constraints.**
- 93. There is a need to provide new facilities to house students and staff of the Australian Command and Staff course which is due to commence in 2001.**
- 94. A site at Weston Creek, occupied by the Australian Defence College, has the capacity for expansion. Further development of the Queenscliff site is constrained by heritage issues and distance from other educational supports.**
- 95. Comparative operational costs between Weston Creek and Queenscliff favour the former. In addition, non-quantifiable benefits such as posting stability strongly favour the Weston Creek site.**

## **QUEENSCLIFF—HERITAGE AND LOCAL REACTIONS**

### **Transfer to Victorian Government**

- 96. The Minister for Defence wrote to the Victorian Premier on 3 March advising that the Commonwealth proposed to transfer properties at Queenscliff and Portsea at no cost to the Victorian Government. On 8 April the Premier acknowledged the offer and noted that an investigation of issues was required before providing a detailed response. The Federation Fund will provide \$7 million to Defence in compensation.**
- 97. The Crows Nest site will be sold on the open market.**

### Future uses of the Fort

98. The Committee asked Defence if possible future uses of the Fort had been identified. Defence advised that no final uses have been determined. A process has started in which it would be necessary to involve all interested parties—the State Government as well as the Council of the Borough of Queenscliffe.
99. Ultimately it would be the Victorian Government which would lead the decision on the final outcome. There has been some initial interest in the site, but the process of transfer has just commenced and it is expected to continue during the next 18 months. Defence is not aware that the Victorian Government does not want the site. Defence is confident that the Fort is a facility in good condition and that a future use can be found. Defence advised the Committee that it is keen to ensure that Queenscliff has a viable future. Defence has obligations under the *Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975* in relation to Defence heritage properties and this includes occasions when the disposal of properties occur.
100. Defence has disposed of a number of properties over recent years, which are listed on the Register of the National Estate. Defence is required to ensure the properties are appropriately and properly looked after.
101. The Committee asked for details of the cost of maintaining the heritage values of the property. Defence advised that a nominal costing was produced by a consultant in 1997 which assessed the cost of about \$500 per square metre would need to be applied to existing heritage buildings for upgrades every 15 years. This would encompass 2,500 to 3,000 square metres—so the cost would be about \$1.5 million every 15 years. General maintenance would be about \$100,000 per annum.
102. Defence advised that discussions and correspondence started in July 1997. One discussion occurred in May 1998 between the Minister for Defence and the Council.<sup>12</sup>
103. Consultations with State and Local Government authorities started in earnest at the beginning of June with a visit by Queenscliffe Council and State and Federal officials to Queenscliff to gain an appreciation of the site and to understand the issues confronting Defence. The Commonwealth was represented by Senator Abetz and the State Government by the Minister for Natural Resources and the Environment (Hon. Marie Tehan). Defence stated that there has been contact with Queenscliff Council since June 1997. There

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12 *Transcript*, 11 June 1999, p. 43

were opportunities for the Council to approach Defence officials responsible for the disposal of properties.

#### **Possible adverse consequences**

104. The Committee is mindful of the possible adverse consequences to the local Queenscliff economy stemming from closure of the Army Staff College. The Council of the Borough of Queenscliffe indicated to the Committee that over the past 139 years, the military have been outstanding custodians of the complex. Buildings at Queenscliff have proven their adaptability and durability over 139 years. The Council believes there is room for expansion and further adaptation.
105. The Council advised that the operating budget for the facility is about \$20 million per annum. If the Army Staff college is relocated elsewhere, Queenscliff would lose 10 per cent of the local community overnight and associated financial contributions to the local economy. In addition, other infrastructure would possibly be lost—for example a primary school and a range of banking services.
106. Defence advised that it was decided to offer the property to the Victorian Government 18 months before departure to give a degree of certainty to the future. Defence will now work with the Victorian Government to ensure there is a future use of the property and that it is looked after in accordance with heritage obligations.
107. The Council also pointed out that the Crows Nest site, to be sold separately, would be subject to the Queenscliff Planning Scheme. Council zoning of the site would affect its real value and affect any cost-benefit analysis.

#### **Maintaining the heritage values**

108. The Committee is concerned to ensure that the heritage integrity of the Fort is maintained after it is transferred to the Victorian Government. Accordingly, the Committee invited representatives of the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) to a briefing on its statutory role in preserving the national heritage and measures which could be implemented to ensure the future integrity of the Fort.
109. The AHC advised that the *Australian Heritage Commission Act* does not protect properties once the Commonwealth ceases to be the owner. Fort Queenscliff would be protected once it is listed under State legislation. To maximise assurances it would be necessary to list the site on the date of settlement. For its part, the AHC, during the leadup to the transfer of the property, would be looking to define possible uses and to obtain agreement on conservation management plans which would guide the future direction

- of heritage management down to a level of detail involving the prohibition of any development on the historic parade ground.
110. The AHC advised that at present, the Victorian Government is examining options for possible future uses of the property. There has been no agreement on transfer. The AHC would become involved in negotiations when the transfer takes place. The AHC will use its best endeavours to ensure that Defence updates the Conservation Management Plan for the property and that the Victorian Government would complete the plan once a use for the site has been determined.
  111. These conditions could be included in the transfer agreement. Similar arrangements and procedures have been included successfully with Commonwealth heritage-listed light stations which have been transferred to the State governments.
  112. The Committee pointed out to the AHC, that Heritage Victoria may establish a separate set of values for the heritage of the Fort. The AHC responded by indicating that, based on previous experience, the heritage values would be similar to those enunciated by the Commonwealth.
  113. The existing Conservation Management Plan, prepared in 1982, provides considerable direction for the future. The AHC would ask Defence to update the Plan in terms of the heritage significance and request Heritage Victoria to adopt it. It would then be the responsibility of Heritage Victoria to manage the implementation of the Plan.
  114. The Committee asked the AHC about the extent of control and subsequent development which may be proposed in the future after the site has been transferred to the State of Victoria. The Committee was particularly concerned about the prospect of unsympathetic development.
  115. The AHC advised that the Commonwealth would not have a role to play once the property is transferred. The heritage stewardship role would need to be assumed by Heritage Victoria. The AHC also advised that future substantial development of the site would require a permit from Heritage Victoria. The AHC believed it unlikely that Heritage Victoria would issue such a permit.
  116. The Committee asked the AHC if it would be possible to include caveats and covenants in the transfer documentation—bearing in mind that the Commonwealth will be relinquishing the power to preserve the heritage values of the property. There is also the question of responsibilities for maintaining the Fort.
  117. The AHC advised that it would seek to include such provisions in the transfer documentation. The transfer of Commonwealth light stations to the

States was cited by the AHC as an example of the process which could be followed. This was described to the Committee as follows:

When we transferred the light stations ... we tried to get a lot of conditions into the transfer documentation—things like managing it appropriately, upgrading the management plan on a five-yearly basis, making sure all of them continue to have a physical presence to ward against vandalism. ... We worked very long and hard with AMSA on the light stations and with other State Governments to ensure that we got the best level of protection we could.<sup>13</sup>

118. The Committee then asked the AHC if it would be possible to insert a provision in the transfer documentation which would prohibit the site and facilities passing from Government hands. The AHC advised that such a condition could be inserted in the transfer documentation. This was the case with the AMSA agreement—the light stations were to remain with State governments.

119. Defence expressed confidence to the Committee that that the Victorian Government will find a suitable tenant to replace Defence.<sup>14</sup>

120. Brigadier Kelly advised the Committee:

...While we are sympathetic to the heritage issues we do not believe those sorts of things can drive our business. They are not our core business. Defence has always taken a great interest in its heritage facilities, and I think the proof of that has been evident to the Committee in many hearings. The fact is that we get to the point where we cannot continue an inefficient situation and we have to move on. We have done that in a number of locations in recent years. We have moved out of North Head. We have to move out of Portsea. I could probably name about 15 where we had an emotional tie to the particular place but it was just too inefficient for us to remain there so we have had to move on. Nevertheless, in moving out of Queenscliff we are taking a great interest in what happens to the facility and how we ease, for the people of Queenscliff, our relocation...<sup>15</sup>

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13 *Transcript*, Private Briefing, 21 October 1999, p. 5.

14 *Transcript*, 11 June 1999, p. 124.

15 *ibid.*, pp. 125–6.

### **Committee's Conclusion**

- 121. Although the property has been offered to the State of Victoria, the Committee has strong concerns about the future use of the Fort Queenscliff property when the Army college is collocated in Canberra.**

### **Committee's Recommendation**

- 122. During negotiations concerning the transfer documents with the State of Victoria, the Commonwealth should insist on the inclusion of caveats and covenants in the documents to preserve the heritage value of the property similar to those which applied to former lighthouse stations.**

## **THE PROPOSAL**

### **Outline**

123. A main educational complex is proposed to provide for the course management and training staff, area support staff and educational facilities.
124. A separate catering facility and library and gymnasium area works are also proposed.
125. It is not proposed to establish living-in accommodation on the Weston Creek site, since current arrangements in the Canberra area will be satisfactory for Weston Creek personnel.

### **Establishment population**

126. The total population at Weston Creek is expected to increase campus from about 108 staff and students presently associated with Australian Defence College activities, to a total of some 370 from the beginning of 2001.
127. Of the 370 personnel, 240 will be students from the Australian Defence College (60) and the proposed Australian Command and Staff Course (180).
128. The remainder will be Defence and contract staff supporting education and administration at the Weston Creek campus.

### **Main educational complex**

129. The concept adopted in development of the facilities requirement is based on education and training being at two levels:
- first level—students meet in a central forum for the presentation of subject matter principles and concepts, or for presentations by distinguished guests; and



- second level—small group learning and knowledge reinforcement.

### Theatres and syndicate rooms

130. Theatres are intended to provide the forum for the first level requirement, with sufficient being available on campus to meet the single Service needs as well as the joint and common training needs.
131. At the second level, syndicate rooms or classrooms will be provided to suit the needs of small groups.
132. The theatres and syndicate rooms will be provided with audio-visual links to facilitate single Service and joint operations training.
133. The total student dependency is 180, although an additional capacity of up to 30 students, comprising mainly Reservists undergoing staff training may be required for short periods.
134. Three theatres fitted with appropriate seating and necessary audio-visual facilities will be for the single Service training period.
135. One theatre will have capacity to seat 220 personnel and will provide a venue for all students, directing staff, and short-term students to assemble for common and joint lecture sessions. This same theatre will also provide an open floor area for use as the base for joint command and control exercises.
136. Should a requirement arise to increase overall seating capacity, temporary seating can be added in the open area. The remaining two theatres will seat 60 each.

### Syndicate rooms

137. Twenty-two syndicate rooms will meet the requirements for teaching small groups in single service and common topics. They will accommodate a minimum of 8 students and will be the students' home base. Sixteen of the syndicate rooms will need to provide for 50 per cent more seating capacity to cope with a joint headquarter structure during joint training exercises. Two sub-syndicate rooms are planned to be attached to each of the 16 larger syndicate rooms to facilitate exercise activities.

### Offices

138. Individual offices are proposed for senior staff. Permanent college directing staff will also have individual offices to provide for in-confidence management of assignments and assessments, and for student counselling. Shared office areas will be mainly provided for other staff and contract support. The number of offices or workstations will be:

<b>Zone</b>	<b>Number of Personnel</b>	<b>Function</b>
Executive	11	College command and management activities, and reception-security.
Academic	53	Directing, training development, support and doctrine staff.
Administrative	32	Garrison, reprographic and support services, and stores management.

### **Administrative facilities**

139. General administrative facilities will also be provided. The facilities comprise those functions being displaced from the ageing Joint Service Staff College facilities and facilities to support the staff course students. They include change and shower facilities for the staff course students, computer server room, conference facilities or staff rooms for each staff zone, stores and maintenance storage areas, reprographics and other close support facilities.
140. A visiting medical officer's room and provision for banking or credit union will also be provided.
141. Kitchenette facilities will be positioned through the building, to be accessible to students and staff.

### **Support facilities**

142. Commercial food outlets are beyond reasonable walking distance from the Weston Creek campus and a catering facility has been provided to support the Australian Defence College. Defence advised that the facility will be unable to support the substantially increased numbers of personnel.
143. It is therefore proposed to provide a central facility for campus-wide catering, with capacity for lunchtime cafeteria style service and separate a la carte meals, and dining for formal college functions. The facility will have a seating capacity of 200 and will include contain a foyer, cloakroom, bar and drinks area, anteroom and dining area, and a kitchen with the capability to prepare and cook all food on site. Staffing for up to 12 personnel is expected. Defence advised that siting of the facility should provide for possible later expansion.

### **Committee questioning**

144. The Committee sought an assurance from Defence that the need for a new kitchen facility will remain and that it would not be shut down in the future as part of further cost-cutting measures. Defence advised the Committee that the facility will be operated under a commercial support program and cater for the entire site population. It will require the capacity to cater for functions

involving students and visiting groups such as visiting staff colleges. There will be a need to provide catering for overseas students with special dietary requirements.

### **Library and gymnasium**

145. The library and gymnasium will be unable to cope with the increased dependency, though their respective sites and recent construction provide an opportunity to extend rather than rebuild the facilities where this is cost-effective. Both facilities will be operated jointly between the collocated staff colleges and the Australian Defence College.
146. The required library floor area is expected to be up to double that which presently exists. This assumes substantial rationalisation of existing single Service collections before relocation to Weston Creek and ease of access to other Defence libraries in Canberra for inter-library loans.
147. Defence assured the Committee that the effect of changing technology in storage and retrieval will be taken into account during design. Accommodation for additional library staff will need to be provided.
148. The existing gymnasium contains equipment and facilities similar to that in many other military bases. An extension to the gymnasium is proposed, mainly in the workout area. The overall floor area is expected to double. External volleyball and tennis court facilities will be added to, while other more substantial requirements can be met off campus. An office will be provided for a part-time physical training instructor, for equipment maintenance and to conduct regular fitness tests.

### **Carparking requirements**

149. Additional carparking is proposed for the collocated staff colleges. Based on current usage at Weston Creek 280 carpark spaces will be required for a total population of 370 plus visitors.
150. The existing permanent carpark has a 110 vehicle capacity. A further 170 parking spaces are proposed.
151. Defence advised that insufficient space exists within the campus to accommodate these additional vehicle carparks, so additional space outside the current Defence controlled property is required.

## CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

### Master planning

152. The proposed project development will to be consistent with the Weston Creek Development Plan of August 1998, for the use of Weston Creek as an educational precinct.

### Design features

153. The proposed facilities would be similar to the exterior of the existing Australian Defence College building. They would therefore incorporate a general two-storey height limit (with extension to a third storey where the land falls away), with consistent face brickwork and metal-framed windows to external walls, and concrete tiles to the roof. Landscaping will be required to complement the existing site standards.
154. The buildings would use reinforced concrete floors and columns, with lightweight trusses supporting the tiled roofs, as used in the Australian Defence College building. The number of internal load bearing walls and columns would be minimised for maximum internal layout flexibility.

### National Capital Authority

155. The Committee questioned the National Capital Authority (NCA) about the extent to which it will be involved in the aesthetics of building development on the site. The NCA advised that the external appearance and consistency in the use of materials and colours are critical aspects. The NCA also has a broader planning interest to ensure that the site is used properly and does not produce any unintended adverse side effects. The Development Control Plan is the mechanism for addressing these issues. (Planning issues and environmental impacts are discussed further at paragraph 174 below.)

### Internal design

156. Internal fitouts for the main instructional building, library extension and catering facility would be typical of modern commercial offices, using carpet on floors, suspended ceiling tiles and internal walls lined with painted plasterboard and interspersed with floor to ceiling glazed panels. Storage areas would incorporate epoxy surfacing on the floors.
157. Spaces occupied by staff and students, including the catering facility dining and lounge areas, would be air-conditioned using ceiling mounted registers and ducting within ceiling spaces. Interior lighting would typically be low glare fluorescent fittings flush mounted in the ceiling to provide adequate lighting on work surfaces.

158. Lecture theatres and teaching spaces would have specialised lighting, zoned with separate controls. The theatres will be equipped with audio-visual equipment necessary to meet the needs of central presentations, with cabling to other teaching spaces. Lighting and audio-visual control will be available from the lectern. Suitable acoustic treatment is required through the new facilities.
159. A comprehensive campus wide IT network, using optic fibre is required with a capacity sufficient for administrative needs. Separate fibre links between the main theatre and the syndicate rooms are to be installed to provide for expedient installation of exercise equipment. The server room would be designed to the appropriate security standard, and would be provided with strengthened walls and ceiling, and additional security alarms.

### Security

160. The site and buildings would be monitored by security guards after hours, with the assistance of electronic intruder alarms. Where buildings and spaces are secured, access may be by electronic card key monitored by a central building management system. This system would also monitor and control the engineering services.

### Engineering

161. Engineering services would be designed to normal commercial standards, making maximum use of site services presently servicing the Weston Creek campus. Fire alarm systems would be incorporated into the campus security system.

### General design principles

162. The general principles will include:
- the provision of cost effective and utilitarian facilities of energy efficient design suitable for the climate conditions, and of a style compatible with the existing main Australian Defence College facility;
  - adoption where possible of conventional construction techniques and materials, in particular those commonly used by the construction industry in the Canberra area;
  - a flexible configuration, reflecting a requirement for changing technology in education delivery, military simulation and information retrieval services;

- utilisation of durable materials that combine long life with minimum maintenance; and
- careful consideration of educational requirements, including those associated with small group adult learning and role playing for joint operations development, and the occupational health and safety of occupants.

### Design standards

163. Where appropriate, the design of new facilities would conform to the relevant sections of the:

- Building Code of Australia;
- Relevant current Australian Standards and Codes;
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 1991*;
- Defence Manual of Fire Protection Engineering (MFPE);
- Defence Security Manual (SECMAN);
- Defence Facilities Communications Cabling Standard;
- Environmental Protection Act and Regulations; and
- Workplace Health and Safety Act and Regulations.

### Subsurface conditions

164. The Committee questioned Defence about subsurface conditions at the site and if unexpected latent conditions could add to the cost of the project. This point was made to Defence following a suggestion from the Committee that the site is located on a fault line. Defence advised that there will be variability in the depth to rock. Geotechnical surveys were initiated but, at the time of the public hearing, the results were not available. The cost of the project allows for a footing system comprising piers linked to the bedrock. This is a similar system used for the foundations of the ADC building which have performed adequately since constructed.

### Slope

165. The Committee noted during the site inspection that parts of the site are relatively steep and asked Defence if this would also generate additional costs. Defence advised that the slope across the site would present the opportunity to develop a third level on one end of the complex. This would not add to the cost but enable the reduced building footprint to be achieved.

### Fire protection

166. The following principles were adopted for the design of the fire protection systems:

- all construction and fire protection requirements will, as a minimum, be in accordance with the provisions of the Building Code of Australia (BCA), the Defence Manual of Fire Protection Engineering (MFPE) and all other applicable codes and standards. The levels of fire protection specified are above BCA requirements and have been determined by a risk assessment and risk management approach to fire protection;
- Defence will require certification from a suitably qualified certifier, that the design and construction meet the requirements of the BCA, MFPE, relevant codes and standards and any additional Territory and Defence requirements;
- any recommended departures from BCA requirements in relation to the project will be technically assessed by Defence specialist fire protection staff. Agreed departures (ensuring an equivalent or higher level of protection than BCA requirements) will require written approval at Director General level; and
- successful tenderers will be required to produce a Quality Assurance Plan to clearly show how BCA, Australian Standards and any additional Defence requirements in relation to fire protection/fire safety will be met and maintained.

### Energy efficiency

167. Defence advised the Committee that the facilities will be designed and constructed to be energy efficient. Energy targets will be established initially, modified if necessary during the design process and implemented during construction and operation.

168. The design of all power supply, electrical and mechanical equipment will include an assessment of energy use applying life cycle costing techniques and power demand analysis. Facilities will incorporate building management systems, metering and other provisions to measure energy use and to allow regular energy audits.

169. Lighting will be controlled, where possible, by photoelectric switches in conjunction with time switch schedules to reduce energy consumption and consequential greenhouse gas emissions. This will include the provision of personal sensor controlled lighting to intermittently occupied areas.

170. Lamps will be high efficiency fluorescent, compact fluorescent or discharge type. External lighting is to be designed to minimise glare and colour distortion. Where appropriate, time switches are to be installed at airconditioner controls to reduce running costs when premises are unoccupied.
171. Consideration will be given to the control and or monitoring of building services through a central energy management system.

### **Committee's Conclusions**

172. **The nature and extent of the education complex are based on predetermined student numbers and staff and the format of the Staff College course.**
173. **Support areas such as administration, kitchen and dining facilities take into account the number of staff and the remoteness of the site from commercial outlets.**
174. **Principles and standards adopted for the design reflect contemporary practices adopted by Defence for similar development proposals.**

## **ENVIRONMENT AND TERRITORY PLANNING**

### **Environment**

175. An environmental construction management plan will be prepared and will be approved before construction commences. Measures will be implemented to minimise dust and to prevent any contamination from run off.
176. Redundant buildings and structures will be demolished, and debris cleared from the site. An investigation will be undertaken to determine any presence of asbestos and a certified contractor will be engaged to dispose of asbestos.
177. An environmental management plan will be prepared for the ongoing management of the facilities when completed.
178. There is a substantial belt of mature trees along the eastern boundary and the eastern half of the northern boundary. An agreement between Defence and the ACT Government provides that this belt of trees be protected. The proposed development leaves this belt of trees intact.

### **National Capital and Territory planning**

179. The National Capital Authority (NCA) advised the Committee that the site at Weston is unleased National Land located outside Designated Areas of the National Capital Plan (NCP).



180. The General Policy Plan of the NCP includes the site as 'broadacre areas' and 'education and office establishment used by the Department of Defence' is a permitted use within that land use category.
181. The Special Requirements of the National Capital Plan makes provision for a Development Control Plan (DCP) to apply to sites which are National Land outside designated areas.
182. Once approved, the DCP will form the basis of any detailed assessment of the proposal by the NCA. The DCP is a device which draws together the interests of the Commonwealth, the Territory and the applicant.
183. The NCA pointed out that a portion of Territory Land, at the north-east corner of the site is required for a carpark.
184. The northern boundary of the site interfaces with the Molonglo River Corridor and neighbouring land on the boundary is unleased Territory Land managed by the ACT Government.
185. Defence proposes to acquire and extend the site to the north-west for a carpark. In terms of land use, this would encroach into the 'River Corridors' land use policy area where 'Educational establishment by/for the Department of Defence' is not permitted.
186. It will therefore be necessary to make amendments and variations to the NCP and the Territory Plan to be made to permit the acquisition and development of a carpark.
187. The NCA has agreed in principle to support an amendment to the National Capital Plan, subject to the parking proposal producing no significant adverse environmental impact on the site. In terms of the wider proposal, the NCA advised the Committee that the proposed development is supported in principle with details to be subsequently formally assessed for compliance with the DCP when completed.
188. Defence acknowledged that both plans will require amendment and noted the NCA's in principle support for the proposed development. Concerns regarding the environmental impact of the carpark will be addressed in concert with the NCA during the detailed design of the carpark.

#### Traffic

189. At the public hearing, the Committee was advised that traffic access between the Weston Creek campus and Cotter Road was the subject of a traffic study to identify an appropriate strategy to handle increased traffic.

190. The traffic study recommended traffic lights be installed at the intersection. The report concluded:

...vehicle and passenger safety on Cotter Road will be improved significantly in the event of the Cotter Road/site access being signalised. The conflict between turning traffic and through traffic will be removed as vehicles accessing the existing Staff Colleges will only turn across opposing traffic lanes when the traffic signals allow.<sup>16</sup>

191. The Committee pointed out to Defence at the public hearing that there are three sets of traffic lights within one kilometre of the entrance. It seemed to the Committee to be unnecessary to impose another set of traffic lights on the travelling public in order to cater for relatively small numbers of vehicles requiring access to the College site. Defence advised that the decision to install traffic lights will not be taken unilaterally, but in consultation with the ACT Government. Defence will be responsible for meeting the cost of providing the traffic lights.
192. The Committee also asked the NCA if it would be involved in planning issues relating to traffic—especially relating to the need to provide a safe entrance to the site. The NCA advised that the question of traffic would be a matter to be addressed under the special arrangements of the NCP which requires the NCA to consider the external effects of particular development proposals.

## CONSTRUCTION WORKFORCE

193. Over the expected 14 month construction period, an average of 80 personnel would be directly employed on construction activities. In addition, it is anticipated that construction would generate further job opportunities from the prefabrication of components, and the manufacture and distribution of materials.

## CONSULTATION

194. The following authorities have been advised of the proposed project, and will be further consulted during the project delivery, namely the:
- Federal Member for Canberra;
  - Victorian Government;

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16 Connell Wagner Pty Ltd, *Traffic study—Collocated Staff Colleges Project, Weston Creek*, June 1999, p. 7.

- ACT Government;
- National Capital Authority;
- ACT Electricity and Water Authority; and
- Borough of Queenscliffe.

## LONGER TERM PLANNING

195. Defence advised that further development works at Weston Creek will remain consistent with the proposed use of the area as an educational precinct for middle and senior level military and civilian officer development.
196. Consideration may be given to relocating existing expert analytical centres to the Weston Creek campus, to draw more broadly on the intellectual effort of the students and directing staff, and to inject tactical and operational level doctrine into the Joint and single Service exercises.
197. Future works may therefore include provision for the following:
- Department of Defence and ADF sponsored activities, such as the Defence Systems Management Course (Mt Macedon, Victoria) and the Strategic Planning Institute (Canberra); and
  - Single Service sponsored activities, such as the Maritime Studies Program (*HMAS Creswell*, Jervis Bay), the Land Warfare Studies Centre (Royal Military College, Duntroon), and the Air Power Studies Centre (RAAF Base Fairbairn, Canberra).
198. The location of these facilities will be the subject of separate studies to take into account the development space to remain at Weston Creek and Defence requirements.

## COST AND TIMING

### Cost

199. The out turn cost of this project is \$28 million. This includes design costs, construction costs, other professional fees and charges, furniture and fittings, contingency, and a predicted indexation adjustment over the design and construction period.
200. The Committee noted the estimated cost of design and management fees and questioned their justification. Defence advised that nominally, the basis for project management is usually between 2–2.5 per cent of the estimated cost of the project. Design fees are generally between 5–6 per cent. The project is

considered to be relatively routine, compared with more technical projects and Defence consider the percentages allocated for project management and design, about 8 per cent of the project cost, to be appropriate in this case.

### Timing

201. When the proposal was referred to the Committee in March 1999, Defence planned to have the works committed in late 1999. The intention was to have all works substantially complete and accessible before the end of Year 2000, in order that the facilities ready for the first intake in 2001. Defence recognised that the project would need Parliamentary approval. The Committee's inquiry has been relatively lengthy but this is a consequence of a need to ensure that the proposed location in Canberra is the most appropriate and that the scope of the proposed work can be justified.

### Committee's Recommendation

**202. The Committee recommends the construction of the Staff Colleges Collocation Project, Weston Creek, ACT at an estimated out turn cost of \$28 million.**

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

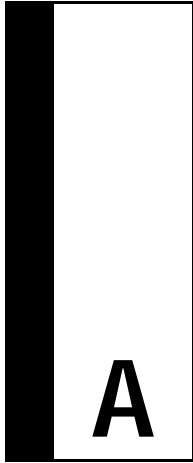
203. The Committee's conclusions and recommendations and the paragraphs in the report in which they occur are set out below:

- 1. The three services currently conduct middle level officer training at individual staff colleges located in Sydney, Canberra and at Queenscliff. Collocation of the colleges would achieve financial and manpower savings and reinforce an emerging joint culture in the Australian Defence Force. (Paragraph 90)**
- 2. An education model has been developed for collocated staff colleges which covers common, single service and joint education. Implementation of the new education model will require additional educational and support facilities. (Paragraph 91)**
- 3. Existing Air Force and Navy staff colleges are unsuitable for further development due to property ownership and site constraints. (Paragraph 92)**
- 4. There is a need to provide new facilities to house students and staff of the Australian Command and Staff course which is due to commence in 2001. (Paragraph 93)**

5. **A site at Weston Creek, occupied by the Australian Defence College, has the capacity for expansion. Further development of the Queenscliff site is constrained by heritage issues and distance from other educational supports. (Paragraph 94)**
6. **Comparative operational costs between Weston Creek and Queenscliff favour the former. In addition, non-quantifiable benefits such as posting stability strongly favour the Weston Creek site. (Paragraph 95)**
7. **Although the property has been offered to the State of Victoria, the Committee has strong concerns about the future use of the Fort Queenscliff property when the Army college is collocated in Canberra. (Paragraph 121)**
8. **During negotiations concerning the transfer documents with the State of Victoria, the Commonwealth should insist on the inclusion of caveats and covenants in the documents to preserve the heritage value of the property similar to those which applied to former lighthouse stations. (Paragraph 122)**
9. **The nature and extent of the education complex are based on predetermined student numbers and staff and the format of the Staff College course. (Paragraph 172)**
10. **Support areas such as administration, kitchen and dining facilities take into account the number of staff and the remoteness of the site from commercial outlets. (Paragraph 173)**
11. **Principles and standards adopted for the design reflect contemporary practices adopted by Defence for similar development proposals. (Paragraph 174)**
12. **The Committee recommends the construction of the Staff Colleges Collocation Project, Weston Creek, ACT at an estimated out turn cost of \$28 million. (Paragraph 202)**

Hon. Judi Moylan MP  
Chair

25 November 1999



## **Appendix A—Witnesses**

BAIN, Mr Ross Kenneth, Assistant Secretary Property Management, Department of Defence

BIRRER, Air Commodore Ken, Acting Head Joint Education and Training, Department of Defence

BUGG, Mr Robert John, Mayor, Borough of Queenscliffe

DAWES, Mr David, Chief Executive, Master Builders Association of the ACT

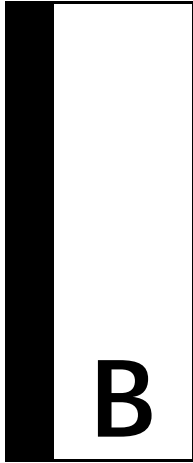
DE CORTE, Ms Bernardette, Heritage Advisor, Borough of Queenscliffe

ELLIOT, Mr Paul James, Councillor, Borough of Queenscliffe

HUDA, Mr Shamsul, Senior Town Planner (Development Approval), National Capital Authority

KELLY, Brigadier Garry Ross, Director General Project Delivery, Department of Defence

PRICE, Mr Gary Arthur, Chief Executive Officer, Borough of Queenscliffe



## **Appendix B—Associated Drawings**

Site Location	B-1
Zone Development Plan, Weston Creek	B-2
Site Map	B-3
Level 1 Plan	B-4
Level 2 Plan	B-5
Level 3 Plan	B-6