



Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

REPORT

relating to the proposed

RAAF BASE EDINBURGH, REDEVELOPMENT STAGE 1, ADELAIDE

(Eighth Report of 2000)

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
2000

The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

RAAF Base Edinburgh, Redevelopment Stage 1, Adelaide

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

5 October 2000
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 Trevor Rowe

Inquiry Secretary Ms Marie Kawaja

Administrative Officer Mrs Angela Nagy



Extract from the Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives

No. 126 dated Thursday, 29 June 2000

34. PUBLIC WORKS—PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE— REFERENCE OF WORK—RAAF Base Edinburgh, Redevelopment Stage 1, Adelaide

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: RAAF Base Edinburgh, Redevelopment Stage 1, Adelaide.

Question – put and passed.



List of abbreviations

AHC	Australian Heritage Commission
ARDU	Aircraft Research and Development Unit
CSP	Commercial Support Program
DIDS	Defence Integrated Distribution System
DSTO	Defence Science and Technology Organisation
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ETSA	Electricity Trust South Australia
JLU – South	Joint Logistics Unit (South)
LRWE	Long Range Weapons Establishment
LSLMSQN	Life Support Logistics Management Squadron
MPLMSQN	Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron
PFI	Private Financing Initiative
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
SA Water	South Australian Water Corporation



List of recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that work proceed on the proposal to provide new facilities at RAAF Base Edinburgh for the Aircraft Research and Development Unit (ARDU) in order to rationalise facilities, lead to more cost effective management processes and improve the working conditions of personnel.

Recommendation 2

Until the outcome of the Commercial Support Program under the Defence Integrated Distribution System tenders is known, the Committee recommends against the Joint Logistics Unit – South proposal proceeding, but held over for a future proposal, if that is necessary.

Recommendation 3

The Committee recommends the construction of new facilities for the Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron (MPLMSQN), pending clarification from Defence that its intention to re-use, rather than demolish a number of MPLMSQN buildings, will not affect the estimated cost of the project.

Recommendation 4

The Committee recommends that, subject to meeting heritage concerns, Defence demolish the identified Joint Logistics Unit and Aircraft Research and Development Unit buildings in the technical area on the basis that they have outlived their economic life.

Recommendation 5

The Committee recommends that the PABX at RAAF Base Edinburgh be upgraded to ensure its compatibility with other Defence systems in South Australia and to the relocation of the PABX to new secure facilities at the Base.

Recommendation 6

The Committee recommends that Defence examine all options to ensure that a suitable waste-water management plan is implemented and a solution found to

treat wash water run off that results from washing the P3C Orion aircraft. The management plan should meet the standards of the South Australian Environment Protection Authority.

Recommendation 7

The Committee recommends that Defence ensure that working conditions for defence personnel mirror those of the wider Australian workforce and that, where practicable, future proposed public works address the concerns of personnel employed at the facilities.

Recommendation 8

5.7

Subject to implementation of the Committee's recommendations in this Report, the Committee recommends that the RAAF Base Edinburgh, Redevelopment Stage 1, Adelaide, proceed.



Executive summary

- 1.1 The Committee's inspection of the RAAF Base Edinburgh confirmed that the facilities to be redeveloped should no longer be in use because of their age and condition. They had generally passed their economic life. The facilities consisted of small buildings dispersed over a large area requiring staff to move between buildings.
- 1.2 While the Committee understands the need for the project to proceed quickly, there are a number of environmental issues that the Committee is unable to ignore. Defence must address these concerns to ensure that contaminants in waste water from the RAAF Base Edinburgh does not pose serious environmental risks to local water ways and soil in accordance with the standards of the South Australian Environment Protection Authority.
- 1.3 Defence must also settle before proceeding with the project, the issue of private finance. There is a possibility that the market testing of logistics services as part of the Commercial Support Program under the Defence Integrated Distribution System could affect the scope and cost of the redevelopment proposal.
- 1.4 Finally, the Committee was concerned by the ambiguity of the evidence presented by Defence. The Defence Department's intention was not always apparent and at times contradictory.
- 1.5 The Public Works Committee has a responsibility to involve the wider community in its investigations. Submissions to the Committee should be written with that in mind.

Introduction

Inquiry Process

- 1.1 On 29 June 2000, the Minister for Finance and Administration referred a proposal for the redevelopment of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Edinburgh, Adelaide, to the Standing Committee on Public Works, for consideration and report to Parliament, in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*.¹
- 1.2 The Committee sought submissions for the Inquiry by advertising the proposed work in the *The Australian* and the *Adelaide Advertiser* on 6 July 2000.
- 1.3 The Committee also wrote to organisations, peak bodies and individuals who may have had an interest in the Inquiry. This included Senators from South Australia and Federal and State Members in whose electorates the work is located. The Committee invited the relevant Senators and Members to its inspection of the site and a public hearing. A list of Submissions appears at Appendix A.
- 1.4 On Wednesday, 23 August 2000 the Committee, accompanied by Ms Trish White, MLA, State Member for Taylor, inspected the RAAF Base Edinburgh and was briefed by representatives of the Department of Defence (Defence). On Thursday, 24 August 2000, the Committee took evidence at a public hearing held at Parliament House, Adelaide. A list of witnesses appears at Appendix B.

1 Extract from the Votes and Proceedings No. 126, 29.6.2000.

Scope of Proposal

- 1.5 Defence advised the Committee that the proposed redevelopment project comprised the following elements:
- relocation and consolidation of the Aircraft Research and Development Unit (ARDU) into new administrative and support facilities on the Base;
 - new Central Store and administrative facilities for Joint Logistics Unit (South) (JLU – South) and rationalisation of the supply functions on the Base;
 - new Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron (MPLMSQN) facilities;
 - upgrade of the trunk engineering services predominantly in the Technical Area of the Base;
 - removal of asbestos and demolition of redundant facilities.²
- 1.6 In addition, Defence advised of plans to dispose of 'significant portions' of adjacent Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) property.³

The Cost

- 1.7 Defence's original submission advised that RAAF Base Edinburgh, Redevelopment Project was \$37.7 million. However, Defence later revised this figure to \$39.9 million.⁴
- 1.8 The discrepancy was explained at the public hearing. Defence advised that the initial figure was an estimate based on December 1999 costs and that the revised figure is based on April 2003 estimates. Defence also advised that the \$39.9 million estimate was exclusive of Goods and Services Tax (GST). The Committee noted that while Defence would be required to pay GST, it would be reimburseable as a tax credit.⁵

2 Evidence, pp. 8, 13-14.

3 Evidence, pp. 9, 12.

4 Brigadier Garry Kelly, Director General Project Delivery, Department of Defence, Evidence, p. 53.

5 Evidence, p. 53.

Timing

- 1.9 Defence has proposed that, subject to the parliamentary approval, tenders be called in the latter part of 2000. This would enable construction to be completed by April 2003.⁶

RAAF Base Edinburgh

Location

- 1.10 The RAAF Base Edinburgh is located approximately 26 kilometres north of Adelaide and is collocated with DSTO Salisbury. It covers an area of approximately 890 hectares and the adjoining DSTO facility occupies approximately 1,340 hectares.⁷ The RAAF Base Edinburgh is bounded to the southwest by the Adelaide to Perth railway line, to the north by Bellchambers Road, to the east by West Avenue and to the west by Heaslip Road.

Historical Background

- 1.11 The RAAF Base Edinburgh and adjoining DSTO site was originally the site of the Salisbury munition factory that operated from 1942 to 1945.
- 1.12 Immediately after the Second World War, the Australian and British governments formed the Long Range Weapons Establishment (LRWE). Its purpose was to undertake a joint guided weapons testing project and to set up a long-range experimental firing range. The site became the LRWE's headquarters and the range was located at Woomera.
- 1.13 In 1954 an airfield was built next to the Salisbury Base. It was opened in 1954 by the Duke of Edinburgh and became known as the Edinburgh Base. In the same year, the RAAF Transport and Trials Unit, an arm of the LRWE, relocated to the Edinburgh site from the wartime Mallala airfield, which was some 50 kilometres away.
- 1.14 From 1955 until 1967 the Edinburgh site was used almost entirely for activities relating to weapons testing at Woomera. However, from the early 1960s other RAAF units were transferred to the site. In the 1970s, although a RAAF Base, Edinburgh provided limited support for weapons

⁶ Evidence, p. 53.

⁷ Appendix C, p. C-2. See also Evidence, p. 9.

testing at Woomera. In 1976 the RAAF's Aircraft Research and Development Unit (ARDU) took over the remaining weapons trials and transferred to the Edinburgh site from Laverton in Victoria.⁸

- 1.15 In 1977, following the establishment of the Maritime Patrol Aircraft Wing, the Public Works Committee examined and reported on a two-stage redevelopment of the Edinburgh site. The work was completed in 1981. Although a number of new facilities were constructed, many of the original buildings were refurbished and/or modified and remained in use.⁹
- 1.16 In the early 1990s the Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron (MPSLSQN) was formed at Edinburgh. Today RAAF Base Edinburgh comprises the operational and support units of the RAAF's long-range maritime patrol aircraft, the P3C Orion.

Role

- 1.17 The principal role of RAAF Base Edinburgh is to provide support to the Maritime Patrol Group, which has the following operational and surveillance activities:
- maritime surveillance;
 - anti-submarine surveillance/warfare;
 - anti-surface warfare;
 - Royal Australian Navy fleet support;
 - search and survivor supply; and
 - surveillance of Australia's region, in the areas of defence, customs, quarantine, immigration and fisheries.¹⁰

8 See current location of ARDU at Appendix C, p. C-3.

9 For a more detailed account of the geography and historical background of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Edinburgh, see Evidence, pp. 9-10.

10 Evidence, p. 11.

Future

- 1.18 In 1988 Defence reviewed the cost effectiveness of operating the RAAF's southern operational and flying training bases and concluded that RAAF Base Edinburgh should be retained as the home base of the Maritime Patrol Group, at least for the life of the P3C aircraft. The review estimated the P3C aircraft would remain in service until sometime between 2015 and 2030.

The Need for the Proposed Work

Introduction

- 2.1 Defence advised the Committee that the Redevelopment - Stage 1 proposal would enable RAAF Base Edinburgh to undertake its role in an efficient and cost effective manner. To do this, the various units at RAAF Base Edinburgh require facilities that are located close to aircraft flying and maintenance activities.¹
- 2.2 The various elements of the proposal are discussed below. They comprise:
- Aircraft Research and Development Unit (ARDU) facilities;
 - New Logistics Support;
 - Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron facilities;
 - Removal of asbestos and demolition of redundant facilities; and
 - Engineering services.

Aircraft Research and Development Unit Facilities

- 2.3 The role of the Aircraft Research and Development Unit (ARDU) is to enhance and extend the capabilities of Australian Defence Force aerospace systems in the area of advanced technology.² This involves 'applied
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1 Evidence, p. 13.

2 Evidence, p. 14.

research, engineering development, aircraft / stores compatibility, test and evaluation and electronic warfare systems operational support.³

Status of Current Facilities

- 2.4 Defence advised the Committee that there was a need to relocate and consolidate ARDU into new administrative and support facilities on RAAF Base Edinburgh,⁴ because the existing facilities were spread over DSTO and the Base.⁵ As a result, there were:
- insufficient storage and work areas;
 - ongoing maintenance costs to facilities and supporting engineering services that had passed their economic life;
 - inadequate water protection for personnel and equipment moving between facilities, because facilities were spread over 17 buildings;
 - several buildings with insufficient insulation, cooling and ventilation; and
 - occupational health and safety concerns.⁶
- 2.5 Defence advised the Committee that it believed locating new facilities close to ARDU's hangar and flightline⁷, would be the most cost-effective solution. In reaching this view, Defence had examined:
- contracting out activities; and
 - retaining present facilities.
- 2.6 Defence rejected the first option on the basis that the functions would need to be performed in facilities located close to existing ARDU hangar and flightline facilities.
- 2.7 The second option was rejected on the basis of the facilities' dispersed location, age, high cost of maintenance and their non-compliance with contemporary Building Code of Australia and Occupational Health & Safety standards.⁸

3 Evidence, p. 14.

4 Evidence, p. 13.

5 Evidence, p. 14.

6 Evidence, p. 14.

7 The 'flightline' is a parking area for aircraft. From this point the aircraft taxi to and from the runway.

8 Evidence, pp. 14-15.

Proposed Facilities

- 2.8 In relation to ARDU, Defence asked the Committee to consider the following proposals:
- new accommodation for ARDU headquarters, administration technical and laboratory staff for approximately 172 personnel;
 - replacement hangar workshop of approximately 300 square metres;
 - a ground support equipment storage area of approximately 350 square metres;
 - aircraft shelter to accommodate up to six aircraft;
 - provision of aircraft and general power outlets to an existing aircraft hangar;
 - refurbishment of an armament test support facility;
 - storage space of approximately 1,000 square metres to be located in a proposed new joint logistic unit warehouse;⁹ and
 - the removal of asbestos and demolition of existing ARDU buildings in the DSTO area.¹⁰
- 2.9 During its inspection of ARDU's facilities, the Committee noted that personnel were working in buildings that could be considered unsatisfactory by the wider Australian workforce. The various buildings were scattered over a large expanse of land and required staff to move between buildings.
- 2.10 The Committee found the present facilities to be unsatisfactory and, because of their dispersed nature, uneconomical. However, the Committee expressed concern about the smaller size of the proposed area for ARDU and questioned whether ARDU would have sufficient space for future expansion.
- 2.11 Defence's Director General, Project Delivery, Brigadier Garry Kelly, assured the Committee that the present concept plans were based on known staffing figures and estimated requirements of laboratories, workshops and storage facilities. He added that as the project proceeded, Defence would conduct value management studies to ensure users' requirements were fully defined.¹¹

9 Evidence, p. 52.

10 Evidence, p. 16.

11 Evidence, p. 54.

- 2.12 The Committee is of the view that the provision of new consolidated facilities at RAAF Base Edinburgh to ensure proximity to ARDU's hangar and flightline will provide an improved working environment for all staff.

Recommendation 1

- 2.13 The Committee recommends that work proceed on the proposal to provide new facilities at RAAF Base Edinburgh for the Aircraft Research and Development Unit (ARDU) in order to rationalise facilities, lead to more cost effective management processes and improve the working conditions of personnel.**

New Logistics Support

- 2.14 The Joint Logistics Unit – South (JLU – South) was recently formed at RAAF Base Edinburgh as an Australia-wide support/command unit. The formation of JLU - South occurred as part of the rationalisation of Defence Logistics, which has responsibility for procurement, stock control and warehousing for all Defence elements in South Australia.¹²

Status of Current Facilities

- 2.15 The main warehousing role of JLU – South is conducted from No. 6 Store, which is located on land previously occupied by the DSTO. Defence advised that this property is being sold to the South Australian Government under a lease back arrangement.¹³
- 2.16 While Defence advised the Committee that the JLU – South procurement, stock control and warehousing functions would be market-tested as part of the Commercial Support Program (CSP) under the Defence Integrated Distribution System (DIDS), it subsequently advised the Committee that:
- ... irrespective of the outcome, Government Furnished Facilities will be mandated given the strategic nature of the P3C aircraft logistics and spares storage requirements.¹⁴

12 Evidence, p. 18.

13 Evidence, p. 18.

14 Evidence, p. 18.

Proposed Facilities

- 2.17 Defence proposed that the new JLU - South facility consist of:
- warehouse and administrative accommodation to integrate the supply functions of JLU – South with 92 Wing Logistics elements;
 - staff amenities; and
 - administrative accommodation for 72 personnel.¹⁵
- 2.18 Defence considered contracting out the logistics support functions and rejected this option on the grounds that this placed control of '... vital Defence equipment with a civilian organisation outside the base'.¹⁶ However, Defence noted that:
- partial or total staffing of a new on-base warehouse by civilians or a contractor may be practical and is being considered as part of the CSP DIDS project.¹⁷
- 2.19 Defence advised the Committee that its preferred option was the provision of new facilities on RAAF Base Edinburgh close to the 92 Wing hangar flightline. Defence argued that this option achieved efficiencies through the integration of the JLU – South functions.¹⁸
- 2.20 At the public hearing the Committee noted that, had a contract been successfully let as part of the Commercial Support Program, the cost of the warehouse would have been borne by the contractor. In response, Brigadier Kelly indicated that Defence would have saved approximately \$6 million.¹⁹ He added that, under new policy, Defence was required to examine private financing initiatives.²⁰
- 2.21 In supplementary evidence provided to the Committee, Defence advised that provision had been made for Private Financing Initiatives in the recent market testing of logistics services in South Australia as part of CSP. However, the Committee noted Defence's advice that:
- ... the tender mandated the use of Government Furnished Facilities given the strategic nature of the PC3 aircraft logistics

15 Evidence, p. 21.

16 Evidence, p. 20.

17 Evidence, p. 20.

18 Evidence, p. 20.

19 Evidence, p. 56.

20 Evidence, p. 56.

spares storage requirements, but also invited tenderers to provide alternative proposals.²¹

2.22 Brigadier Kelly also provided the following information:

Should a tenderer propose a PFI alternative that is accepted, then the scope of works under the proposed Managing Contract for RAAF Base Edinburgh Redevelopment Project will be amended accordingly. If this occurs, I would of course advise the PWC of the impact on the project cost estimate, noting that the scope of the Redevelopment proposal would effectively remain the same as that considered by the committee on 24 August 2000.²²

2.23 At the time this further information was provided to the Committee the tender evaluation outcomes had not been made public, but 'at least one of the tenderers offered an alternative Private Financing Initiative (PFI) option'.²³

2.24 The Committee finds it unacceptable that Defence provided this crucial piece of evidence over three weeks after it was requested at the public hearing. The Committee is even more puzzled at Brigadier Kelly's advice that in the event of a Private Financing Initiative being accepted, the scope of the work will be 'amended accordingly' yet 'would effectively remain the same as that considered by the committee on 24 August 2000'.

2.25 Until Defence is able to clarify its intention after making its assessments and recommendations as part of the CSP DIDS for the provision of logistics services in South Australia, the Committee is unable to accept Defence's proposal for new logistics support as it now stands.

Recommendation 2

2.26 Until the outcome of the Commercial Support Program under the Defence Integrated Distribution System tenders is known, the Committee recommends against the Joint Logistics Unit – South proposal proceeding, but held over for a future proposal, if that is necessary.

21 Defence, Submission No. 10 (Supplementary), 15.9.2000, p. 4.

22 Submission No. 10 (Supplementary), 15.9.2000, p. 5.

23 Submission No. 10 (Supplementary), 15.9.2000, p. 4.

Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron Facilities

2.27 The Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron (MPLMSQN) is responsible for the logistics management of the P3C Orion weapons systems. In 1993, MPLMSQN was collocated with its operational clients at the RAAF Base Edinburgh. The Life Support Logistics Management Squadron (LSLMSQN) has also been located at the Base and collocated and integrated with the MPLMSQN.²⁴

Status of Current Facilities

2.28 Since its relocation to RAAF Base Edinburgh, MPLMSQN has been accommodated in Building 257 at the northern end of the Base, some 2.2 kilometres from the weapons systems its support. The MPLPSQN facility was refurbished at 'minimal cost' to accommodate 67 personnel.

2.29 The subsequent collocation and integration of the LSLMSQN with MPLMSQN, together with other support personnel, has brought the strength of the unit to 153 people. Although this number is expected to reduce to about 140, Defence argues that it exceeds initial expectations for the accommodation demands of the present facility.²⁵

Proposed Facilities

2.30 Defence has proposed the 140 staff be accommodated within the proposed new JLU – South administration facility, which would include administrative and office accommodation and other technical work areas. Elements such as a technical library and drawing office may be shared with some JLU – South personnel, '... while staff amenities could be shared with other building occupants'.²⁶

2.31 Defence advised that it prefers to construct new facilities for MPLMSQN rather than contract out all activities or extend currently occupied Building 257 and reconfigure work areas.²⁷

2.32 The Committee noted advice in Defence's original Submission that MPLMSQN buildings 180(B), 232, 257 and 820 were surplus to requirements and potentially available for demolition when new facilities

24 Evidence, p. 22.

25 Evidence, p. 22.

26 Evidence, p. 24.

27 Evidence, p. 23.

are constructed at the Base. Significantly, the buildings contain varying quantities of asbestos.²⁸ However, in supplementary evidence, Defence advised that the buildings would be re-used and not demolished.²⁹

- 2.33 The Committee noted that Defence's supplementary evidence relating to the use of the current MPLMSQN facilities is contradictory. At the one time Defence confirmed that the facilities had been 'identified as potentially available for demolition and possible use by No. 1 Airfield Defence Squadron'.³⁰
- 2.34 If Defence intends to re-use the buildings, the Committee must assume they are no longer considered surplus to requirements. The re-use of the buildings will effect the scope and need of the redevelopment proposal as well as the estimated cost, particularly as the cost of demolition is included in the overall costing for the project.
- 2.35 While the Committee supports the construction of new facilities for MPLMSQN, Defence must clarify its intentions with regard to proposed demolition of old buildings and adjust its estimated cost for the project delivery accordingly.

Recommendation 3

- 2.36 The Committee recommends the construction of new facilities for the Maritime Patrol Logistics Management Squadron (MPLMSQN), pending clarification from Defence that its intention to re-use, rather than demolish a number of MPLMSQN buildings, will not affect the estimated cost of the project.**

Removal of Asbestos and Demolition of Redundant Facilities

- 2.37 In addition to the MPLMSQN buildings, Defence's Submission also noted that, as a result of the redevelopment proposal, a number of facilities at the RAAF Base Edinburgh and the adjoining DSTO would most likely become surplus to requirements. Defence identified these facilities as 'potentially available for demolition' in order to minimise maintenance costs and

28 Paragraph 64 (b) Evidence, p. 28.

29 Submission No. 10 (Supplementary), p. 3.

30 Submission No. 10 (Supplementary), p. 3.

generally to ‘clean up’ the area. Most of these facilities contained varying amounts of asbestos that would need to be identified and removed in accordance with State and Federal requirements.³¹

2.38 Defence’s supplementary evidence confirmed the demolition of the following facilities within the RAAF Base Edinburgh:

- Joint Logistics Unit buildings 505, 510, 511, 512, 513, 515, 517, 542, 574;³² and
- ARDU buildings (identified in the revised plan as being located in the Technical Area) 580, 581, 586, 589 and 596 and relocation of 587 and 585 (not initially identified).³³

2.39 However, Defence’s supplementary evidence did not clarify whether a number of ARDU buildings within the DSTO area identified for demolition in paragraph 64 (a) of its Submission would be demolished.³⁴

2.40 The Committee was concerned about the amount of money allocated for demolition and asked Defence to indicate whether the cost of demolishing the identified buildings had been factored into the cost of the Stage 1 Redevelopment proposal.³⁵ Of interest to the Committee was the need for an asbestos survey to be conducted prior to demolition.³⁶

2.41 Initially, Brigadier Kelly was unable to identify whether the cost identified was for the asbestos survey or for the demolition, but expected that it would be covered within the demolition costs.³⁷ After further questioning by the Committee, Brigadier Kelly said he believed the budget for demolition was ‘shy’ and undertook to provide the Committee with further advice. He also noted that the consultancy was part of an overall package for the demolition, and believed that it was in the vicinity of \$30,000.³⁸

2.42 In a supplementary Submission, Brigadier Kelly provided the Committee with the following information:

I indicated at the Hearing that there appeared to be insufficient funds for demolition, assuming that all identified buildings at

31 Evidence, p. 28.

32 Paragraph 64 (b), Evidence, p. 28. See plan at Appendix C, p. C-4.

33 Paragraph 64 (b), Evidence, p. 28. See plan at Appendix C, p. C-4.

34 Evidence, p. 28.

35 Evidence, p. 64.

36 Evidence, p.28.

37 Evidence, p. 64.

38 Evidence, p. 89.

paragraph 64 of the Evidence were to be demolished. This is not the case...Only the buildings affecting new construction need to be demolished at this stage. Others will be addressed as part of the property disposal. The allocation of \$289,000 is therefore considered adequate.³⁹

- 2.43 The Committee inspected a number of buildings at RAAF Base Edinburgh site and was surprised and concerned that, given their condition, they were still being used by personnel.
- 2.44 The Committee supports the proposed demolition of the buildings identified by Defence, subject to Defence meeting heritage concerns. Heritage matters are discussed in Chapter 3.

Recommendation 4

- 2.45 The Committee recommends that, subject to meeting heritage concerns, Defence demolish the identified Joint Logistics Unit and Aircraft Research and Development Unit buildings in the technical area on the basis that they have outlived their economic life.**

Engineering Services

- 2.46 Defence advised the Committee that basic engineering services at RAAF Base Edinburgh date back to the 1940s and 1950s. Although some improvements took place as a result of the Base redevelopment project in the late 1970s, hydraulic services have deteriorated and fire fighting reticulation is increasingly unreliable.
- 2.47 In relation to the Base's communications system, Defence advised that it was '... old technology [that had] reached its capacity and suffers from frequent failures'.⁴⁰ In particular, 'the PABX servicing the Base is old, increasingly difficult to maintain, and requires replacement'.⁴¹
- 2.48 The upgrade of the engineering services would be predominantly in the Technical Area of the Base. Specific areas include:

39 Submission No. 10 (Supplementary), p. 3.

40 Evidence, p. 24.

41 Evidence, p. 26.

- replacement of hydraulic services, for example: sewerage lines, water, storm-water and fire fighting reticulation;
- new electrical substations for the proposed new facilities. The electrical supply to the Base will be assessed as part of the design process to confirm that sufficient capacity is available for the additional demand;
- Access roads and car parking;
- Additional ablutions and change rooms for 250 personnel in the Technical area;
- Replacement of communications services: PABX, telephone infrastructure and addition of new fibre-optic service to the existing cable infrastructure to cater for the proposed new facilities;
- Expansion and upgrade of the control cabling for engineering services for fire, security and power control.⁴²

2.49 The Committee sought clarification of the electrical supply to RAAF Base Edinburgh and in particular, Defence's comment that the supply to the Base '... will need to be assessed as part of the design process to confirm sufficient spare capacity is available for the additional electrical demand'.⁴³ Defence advised that the '... supply to the base was adequate⁴⁴ and that the redevelopment proposed would not increase overall demand for electricity.⁴⁵

2.50 When inspecting the RAAF Base Edinburgh PABX, the Committee found that it appeared to be in good condition. The PABX was in fact two PABXs, neither of which was particularly old. The Committee therefore questioned Defence about its earlier advice that the PABX was '... old, increasingly difficult to maintain, and requires replacement'.⁴⁶ The Committee also sought clarification as to whether there would be one telephone system for both the Base and DSTO.

2.51 At the public hearing Defence indicated that replacement of the PABX was linked to its capacity and that it was incompatible with Defence security standards for communication and data transfer.⁴⁷ Defence undertook to provide further information to the Committee.

42 Evidence, pp. 25-27.

43 Evidence, p. 26.

44 Evidence, p. 69.

45 Evidence, p. 69.

46 Evidence, pp. 26, 57.

47 Evidence, p. 58.

- 2.52 Defence later sought to clarify its communications problem with the current PABX. They advised that there are two PABXs in use at Edinburgh, separate NEC and Ericsson systems. The NEC system servicing the RAAF Base Edinburgh is incompatible with the Ericsson PABX which is in use at DSTO. As a result, operators are required to transfer incoming calls from one PABX to another, depending on whether the receiver is sited on the RAAF Base, or at DSTO or one of the five Army Barracks in South Australia.⁴⁸
- 2.53 A new PABX that is compatible with other Defence PABX systems in the region, would be located in a secure area of RAAF Base Edinburgh at the Base Command Post. It was anticipated that the new PABX would result in some staff reductions.⁴⁹
- 2.54 The Committee found the building housing the PABX at RAAF Base Edinburgh to be old and inappropriate for a modern communications facility.
- 2.55 The Committee has concluded that Defence has satisfactory reasons for replacing what it considers to be relatively new PABXs and understands that one of the existing PABXs will be moved to another Defence site and used more effectively there.

Recommendation 5

- 2.56 The Committee recommends that the PABX at RAAF Base Edinburgh be upgraded to ensure its compatibility with other Defence systems in South Australia and to the relocation of the PABX to new secure facilities at the Base.**

48 Submission No. 10 (Supplementary), p. 1.

49 Submission No. 10 (Supplementary), p. 2.

Environment and Heritage Issues

Environmental Protection Measures

3.1 In its Submission Defence listed the following key environmental issues in relation to the redevelopment of RAAF Base Edinburgh:

- protection of land and surface water;
- preservation of natural flora;
- preservation of fauna and enhancement of the habitat of significant species;
- waste collection and disposal;
- handling of dangerous and hazardous goods; and
- control of air and noise pollution.¹

3.2 Defence's original Submission did not provide detailed information on measures to address the abovementioned issues and the Committee perceived that environmental issues were not a priority of concern to Defence. The Committee nevertheless sought clarification on some issues that it believed Defence should address. They were:

- waste water; and
- fauna and flora.

¹ Evidence, p. 35.

Waste Water

- 3.3 In a Submission to the Committee, the South Australian Water Corporation (SA Water) pointed to environmental risks associated with contaminated stormwater and wash water that resulted from washing aircraft on the open tarmac and its subsequent disposal into the adjacent creek. SA Water was of the view that the redirection of large volumes of rainwater and wash water to sewer would cause flooding and other operational problems in the SA Water sewer system.²
- 3.4 SA Water suggested that an option would be to design a wash/drainage area as an integral part of the aircraft shelter contained in the redevelopment proposal. SA Water's proposition involved installing an oversized 'shower curtain' to isolate the wash waters within a so-called bundled area under the shelter.³ SA Water argued that this proposal would result in wash water being segregated from the stormwater, thereby reducing environmental risks and result in minor alternation to design and cost.⁴
- 3.5 A Submission from the City of Salisbury asked the Committee to '... encourage the RAAF Base Edinburgh to prepare a stormwater management plan for the site in consultation with Council'.⁵
- 3.6 The Committee raised these concerns with Defence, noting that the redevelopment proposal provided for a 1650m² open-sided aircraft shelter, to accommodate up to six aircraft, to be constructed over existing aircraft parking positions.⁶
- 3.7 In response Brigadier Kelly advised the Committee that, after considering the suggestion made by SA Water, Defence had concluded there would be 'considerable difficulty' washing Orion aircraft at the proposed aircraft shelter. This was because of the size of the aircraft and because there was no proposal to construct anything as large as SA Water's had proposed.⁷
- 3.8 Mr Bryce Routley, representing SA Water, suggested that rather than construct a separate structure for the P3C Orion, it may be possible to construct a raised roof area at one end of the shelter without changing the overall structure of the whole building.⁸

2 South Australian Water Corporation (SA Water), Submission No. 2, Evidence, pp. 72, 76.

3 An impervious containment system for spilled or leak materials – it can be a wall or mote.

4 Evidence, pp. 72, 76.

5 Evidence, p. 96.

6 Evidence, p. 17.

7 Evidence, p. 59.

8 Evidence, p. 77.

- 3.9 Mr Routley indicated concern that that the question of contaminated stormwater and waste water had been discussed with Defence on many occasions but that Defence had not taken any action.⁹ Mr Routley advised the Committee that there had been no consultation between Defence and SA Water in relation to the redevelopment proposal.¹⁰
- 3.10 Defence agreed with SA Water that there issues about stormwater and waste water that needed to be addressed. Defence advised the Committee that the Defence Estate Organisation had consulted with the Salisbury Council and SA Water on the general issue of storm-water run-off.¹¹ However, there had been no specific consultations on the proposal under consideration.¹² A study had been commissioned to examine trade wastes and stormwater run-off from the Base¹³ and to monitor the quality of water at the wash points in order to comply with the South Australian Environmental Protection Agency and trade waste legislation.¹⁴
- 3.11 In addition to this, a one-year monitoring program for stormwater quality would soon commence. The program would monitor the quality of the water entering the Salisbury Defence Site from the Playford and industrial areas to the north-east and north respectively.¹⁵
- 3.12 The Committee has some concerns about contaminated storm water and wash water resulting from the washing of aircraft. While the Committee appreciates the particular problem related to washing the P3C Orion, it believes contaminated water finding its way into local water ways as a result of activities from the Base could have a negative impact on the environment, result in significant costs to the local community and lead to public criticism of RAAF Base Edinburgh.
- 3.13 The Committee is of the view that the issue of contaminated water management at RAAF Base Edinburgh must be treated as a matter of priority by Defence.

9 Evidence, p. 77.

10 Evidence, p. 77.

11 Evidence, p. 59.

12 Brigadier Kelly, Evidence, p. 83 and Submission No. 10 (Supplementary), pp. 3-4

13 Evidence, pp. 59, 84.

14 Submission No. 10 (Supplementary), p. 4.

15 Submission No. 10 (Supplementary), p. 4.

Recommendation 6

- 3.14 The Committee recommends that Defence examine all options to ensure that a suitable waste-water management plan is implemented and a solution found to treat wash water run off that results from washing the P3C Orion aircraft. The management plan should meet the standards of the South Australian Environment Protection Authority.**

Fauna and Flora

- 3.15 Environment Australia informed the Committee that no flora and/or fauna surveys had been conducted on the work site and that it was therefore unable to comment on the potential impact the redevelopment proposal may have on flora and fauna species of national significance.¹⁶
- 3.16 The Committee noted advice from Environment Australia that the land at RAAF Base Edinburgh may provide suitable habitat for the Yellowish Sedge Skipper, a subspecies of butterfly that has been recently nominated for listing under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. Environment Australia had raised this matter with Defence and agreement reached that an environmental survey would be required for the area.¹⁷
- 3.17 At the public hearing Defence advised the Committee that no evidence had been found that the Yellowish Sedge Skipper existed at the Base. Its occurrence was restricted to stands of a rare plant occurring in low-lying fully drained areas on the coast. However, a separate Defence site exists close to one of the few remaining stands of the plant in the Adelaide coastal region and Defence had initiated a habitat restoration program in conjunction with the Salisbury City Council.¹⁸
- 3.18 The Committee notes that the habitat for the Yellowish Sedge Skipper is not on the works site and is satisfied with the restoration program at a separate Defence site has been initiated.

16 Submission No. 4, Evidence, p. 93.

17 Evidence, p. 93.

18 Evidence, p. 88.

Heritage Issues

Aboriginal Heritage

- 3.19 In its initial advice to the Committee, Defence advised the Committee that there were no entries for RAAF Base Edinburgh the adjoining DSTO site on the Register of Aboriginal Sites and Objects and the land was not subject to any Native Title claims.¹⁹
- 3.20 However, subsequent advice from Defence indicated that an indigenous heritage study had been completed and that found two locations of some Aboriginal significance, but neither of the sites was in the redevelopment area. Defence noted that the sites were of limited scientific significance, due to 'their disturbed nature' and that '... there is only a small possibility that the sites will contain intact cultural deposits'.²⁰

Other Heritage Issues

- 3.21 Defence's original Submission advised that '... as there are no heritage constraints affecting the development sites on the RAAF Base Edinburgh, no restrictions are expected on the planned construction works'.²¹ However, the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) highlighted a number of areas of concern.

Interim List of the Register of the National Estate

- 3.22 The AHC has advised the Committee that the works in the redevelopment proposal '... are located within a place that is in the Interim List of the Register of the National Estate'.²² Moreover, both the proposed demolitions and the construction of new buildings at RAAF Base Edinburgh may have an adverse impact on the Register of the National Estate values.²³ The AHC identified the following specific areas in the proposed work which may have an impact on the Interim List of the Register of the National Estate²⁴:
- ten of the 17 buildings proposed for demolition;

19 Evidence, p. 35.

20 Submission No. 12 (Supplementary), p. 2.

21 Evidence, p. 35.

22 Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) Submission No. 5, Evidence, p.103.

23 Submission No. 5, Evidence, p. 103.

24 Submission No. 5, Evidence, p. 103.

- the proposed upgrade of engineering services;²⁵
 - the proposed location for the new Aircraft Research and Development Unit building has been identified in the Conservation Management Plan for the former explosives factory as a distinctive feature; and
 - the construction of the building may require removal of part of a selected tree plantation identified in the Conservation Management Plan.²⁶
- 3.23 The AHC has advised the Committee that discussions have been held with representatives of the Defence Estate Organisation for the purpose of initiating further work on heritage assessment. As a result, heritage protection and conservation measures may be required, as well as some modifications to the current proposal. The AHC were of the view that the Defence Estate Organisation representatives were supportive of the further work, as well as investigating possible alternatives to the demolition of the buildings.²⁷
- 3.24 The AHC drew to the Committee's attention are a number of heritage constraints that need to be addressed as part of the Section 30 referral.²⁸ The Committee noted that this was contrary to earlier advice from Defence and hence raised the matter with Defence.
- 3.25 In response, Brigadier Kelly advised that Defence would go through a section 30 referral to the Australian Heritage Commission.²⁹ The Committee also noted that the Commission was aware of Defence's action.³⁰
- 3.26 In supplementary evidence to the Committee, Defence advised that a consultant had been engaged to assess the heritage significance of the redevelopment area and reported that none of the buildings identified for demolition in the Technical Area were recommended for conservation.³¹ However, a building referred to as No. 517, which had been re-located

25 Submission No. 5, Evidence, p. 104.

26 AHC Submission No. 8 (Supplementary), pp.1-2.

27 Submission No. 5, Evidence pp. 103-104.

28 Submission No. 8 (Supplementary), p. 1.

29 Evidence, p. 61.

30 Submission No. 8 (Supplementary), p. 1.

31 Submission No. 12 (Supplementary), p. 1.

from the RAAF airfield at Mallala, should not be demolished but tendered for sale.³²

- 3.27 Defence also indicated that ten buildings located on the DSTO site were referred to by the Commission as '... not planned for demolition as part of this project and will be addressed as part of the property disposal project.'³³
- 3.28 Defence advised that in most cases, buffer zones and tree plantations would be retained. However, to retain them adjacent to the aircraft apron would be an unreasonable impediment to any future development of operational support facilities, particularly when considering the limited number of options for efficient siting of future facilities. Defence undertook to address siting options in the Section 30 referral.³⁴
- 3.29 The Committee noted that Defence had created a 'heritage precinct' in which a number of existing facilities had been refurbished for ongoing use. Defence advised that the aim of the precinct was to maintain a number of buildings in their original form and layout to preserve the original function of the cordite factory.³⁵

Archiving of Photographs and Records

- 3.30 The Committee received a Submission from Mr Ron Brons, in relation to the photographing and archiving of former explosives factory buildings proposed for demolition.³⁶
- 3.31 The Committee asked Defence whether there were any problems in acceding to Mr Brons' request. Defence advised the Committee that it had given a commitment to appropriately documenting any buildings to be demolished.
- 3.32 The Committee noted that Defence would continue to consult with the AHC and the Australian Archives in order to achieve an appropriate archival solution for photographs and records.³⁷

32 See paragraph 2.38 of this Report, which showed building 517 as part of demolition area of Joint Logistics Unit buildings. See also Demolition of Technical Area Drawing at Appendix C, page, C-4.

33 Submission No. 12 (Supplementary), p. 1. See paragraph 2.33 of this report which noted some confusing advice provided earlier by Defence

34 Submission No. 12 (Supplementary), p. 1.

35 Evidence, p. 60.

36 Submission No. 1, Evidence, p. 91.

37 Evidence, p. 87.

- 3.33 The Committee has been encouraged by Defence's commitment to work with the AHC in order to bring about a favourable outcome for the protection of heritage values at RAAF Base Edinburgh, while maintaining a suitable outcome for its upgrade of the operational capabilities of the Base.

Consultations

Agencies

- 4.1 Defence advised the Committee that it had consulted with the following agencies in relation to the redevelopment of RAAF Base Edinburgh:
- Federal and State Government Representatives for the area;
 - South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service;
 - South Australian Water Corporation (SA Water);
 - Electricity Trust South Australia (ETSA) Utility;
 - Department of Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts;
 - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
 - Environment Australia;
 - the Australian Heritage Commission;
 - The South Australian Department of Industry and Trade;
 - City of Salisbury Council; and
 - Playford City Council.¹
- 4.2 The Committee noted Defence's advice that it had consulted with the South Australian Water Corporation (SA Water). However, as discussed in Chapter 3, the consultations related to the general issue of storm-water

¹ Evidence, p. 36.

run-off rather than specific issues raised in the redevelopment proposal before the Committee.

- 4.3 The Committee would expect that any future submission by Defence to specify the agencies consulted and to provide an overview of the consultations, to the extent that they may impact on the scope, the need and the cost of a public work.

Personnel

- 4.4 The Committee noted that wide consultations with personnel at RAAF Base Edinburgh did not appear to have taken place. In their original Submission, Defence did not indicate whether any particular staff needs had been addressed. For example, there was no mention that the women at the Base have been consulted and their specific concerns taken into account.

- 4.5 The Committee questioned Defence about the extent of staff consultations regarding aspects of the project. In reply Brigadier Kelly said:

I would expect there would be considerable periods of consultation on the base by the managing contractor, the project consultant, our people and the actual users, who will be sitting down with the airmen and airwomen who operate within the warehouse, within the workshops and so on, in determining exactly what they need.²

- 4.6 The Committee is of the view that consultation with relevant personnel is an important process for any Commonwealth body or agency, which has a proposed public work referred to the Committee for examination. Moreover, any concerns should be given due consideration and where appropriate reflected in the resulting proposal.

- 4.7 In the case of RAAF Base Edinburgh the Committee noted that various personnel have been working in buildings that could be considered unsatisfactory and inappropriate. The Committee commends the personnel at the Base for continuing to work under such conditions.

- 4.8 The Committee also noted in Defence's submission that the design philosophy for the redevelopment was to provide facilities that were '... austere, cost effective and utilitarian'.³ The Committee was interested to

2 Evidence, p. 62.

3 Evidence, p. 30.

know what was meant by austere. At the public hearing Defence explained that all of its facilities were '... not overly lavish'⁴ and while the word 'austere' may be harsh, the intention was not to '... overly embellish architectural style or fittings'.⁵

- 4.9 The Committee accepts that a Defence establishment may have as its prime objective the need for functionality and that, in this context, the design philosophy could be seen as appropriate.
- 4.10 However, the Committee is of the view that when Defence personnel are not deployed in combat conditions their working conditions should, as far as practicable, reflect the modern working environment of the wider Australian workforce. Therefore, the Committee expects that future works brought to the Committee for investigation would embrace a more flexible design philosophy. This would entail wide staff consultation and where practicable, implementation of their views and concerns.

Recommendation 7

- 4.11 The Committee recommends that Defence ensure that working conditions for defence personnel mirror those of the wider Australian workforce and that, where practicable, future proposed public works address the concerns of personnel employed at the facilities.**

4 Evidence, p. 69.

5 Evidence, p. 69.

General comments

- 5.1 The Committee's examination of the RAAF Base Edinburgh redevelopment proposal has highlighted a number of issues. They are:
- staff consultation;
 - environmental issues; and
 - the quality of submissions.
- 5.2 First, although Defence stressed the need for the buildings to meet Occupational Health and Safety standards, Defence does not appear to have had wide staff consultations, particularly with female personnel. The needs of personnel must be taken into account and integrated into the design philosophy of the facilities at the Base.
- 5.3 Secondly, Defence did not focus on environmental issues. Undoubtedly some of Defence's activities will produce contaminants and hazardous wastes that could cause environmental risks if not appropriately managed. Defence cannot assume that in the environmental area, it is immune from criticism if the effects of its activities in defence establishments degrade either the surrounding soil or waterways.
- 5.4 Thirdly, the Committee found Defence's Submission was unclear, confusing and contradictory. The use of acronyms and jargon while meaningful to Defence does not necessarily facilitate analysis and examination of issues. Similarly, maps and plans provided to the Committee need to be clear and correspond to the details given in relevant parts of the text.

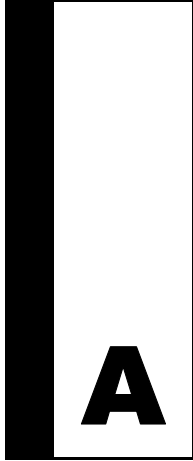
- 5.5 The Committee expects all Commonwealth agencies to present information in clear, concise and plain English. Such language will not only assist the Committee but also encourages the participation of the wider community in the inquiry process. The language used in submissions must keep that need in mind.
- 5.6 The Committee recognises the significance of RAAF Base Edinburgh and is of the view that present facilities warrant the redevelopment proposal. The Committee observed that in most, if not all cases, the facilities have passed their economic life and do not meet the working standards acceptable to the modern Australian workforce. They no longer effectively meet the needs of an important and modern defence establishment. The Committee's inspection of RAAF Base Edinburgh provided compelling evidence of the need for this project.

Recommendation 8

- 5.7 Subject to implementation of the Committee's recommendations in this Report, the Committee recommends that the RAAF Base Edinburgh, Redevelopment Stage 1, Adelaide, proceed.**

Hon Judi Moylan MP
Chair

5 October 2000



Appendix A—Witnesses

Byrne, Air Commodore Philip Darcy, Commander, Maritime Patrol Group, Department of Defence

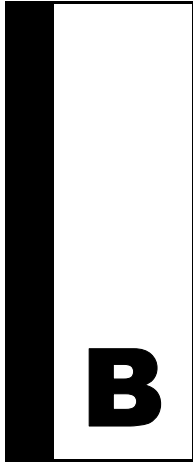
Kelly, Brigadier Garry Ross, Director General Project Delivery, Department of Defence

Mackie, Mr Campbell James, Managing Director, Savant Pty Ltd

Routley, Mr Bryce Ian, Trade Wastes Officer, SA Water, Trade Wastes

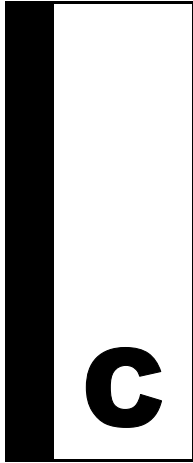
Spears, Group Captain William Harper, Commander Aircraft Research and Development Unit, Department of Defence

Tooth, Wing Commander John Marsen, Project Director, Department of Defence



Appendix B—Submissions

Submission No. 1	Mr Ron Brons, Croydon, Victoria
Submission No. 2	South Australia Water Corporation, Trade Wastes Section
Submission No. 3	City of Salisbury, Development and Environmental Services
Submission No. 4	Environment Australia
Submission No. 5	Australian Heritage Commission
Submission No. 6	South Australian Fire Services, Fire Safety Department
Submission No. 7	Australian Heritage Commission (Supplementary)
Submission No. 8	Australian Heritage Commission (Supplementary)
Submission No. 9	Department of Defence (supplementary)
Submission No. 10	Department of Defence (Supplementary)
Submission No. 11	Department of Defence (Supplementary)
Submission No. 12	Department of Defence (Supplementary)



Appendix C—Associated Drawings

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Regional Plan	C-2
Base Location Plan	C-3
Demolition of Technical Area	C-4

DIAGRAMS NOT AVAILABLE IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT

