



Committee says 'oui' to Paris Embassy refurbishment

In its seventh report of 2009, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works has recommended the commencement of a refurbishment of engineering services in the Australian Embassy, Paris.

Designed by Australia's Harry Seidler in the 1970s, the Embassy is composed of two curved buildings, and is within sight of the Eiffel Tower. The project, to be delivered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), has an estimated cost of \$28.3 million, and is part of a long-term plan to progressively refurbish the chancery building.

The Committee held a public hearing with DFAT in Canberra, and was pleased to note the environmentally sustainable features being included in the project. In particular, DFAT proposes to enable zoned control of the heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems, to enable more efficient use.

Whilst DFAT proposed to install independent 'smart-metering' in some parts of the chancery, the Committee has recommended it extend installation of the meters throughout the entire chancery building to encourage energy efficiency.

'The Committee is pleased to see environmental sustainability so carefully considered in this project,' said Committee Chair, Senator the Hon Jan McLucas. The Senator added that 'the Committee believes it is fundamental for all Commonwealth buildings, in Australia or overseas, to apply high environmental standards, and to continue the Commonwealth's role as a leader in energy efficient operations.'

The House of Representatives is expected to vote on a motion to approve the works on Wednesday, 25 November 2009.

For interview: Contact the Committee Chair, Senator the Hon Jan McLucas's media advisor, Derek Tipper on 0434 663 757.

For copies of the report, please visit the Committee website <http://www.aph.gov.au/pwc> or contact the Committee Secretariat on 02 6277 4636.