

Tuesday, 23 April, 2002

The Secretary,
Public Works Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT

2600

*Ref : GB 02/ 34
Transmit Via Fax
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Proposed Christmas Island Airport

We wish to make a brief statement concerning the proposed upgrade of the airport at Christmas Island.

Christmas Island is in the process of becoming a significant contributor to the Australian economy. At this present time the permanent population is being augmented by

The construction & operational staff for the Asia Pacific Space Centre, a billion dollar investment Australia

The 200 permanent staff for the operation of the Immigration Reception and Processing Centre (IPRC) costing in the region of \$100.0m

The operational staff for the upgraded port to service the Island.

The island is at present an under-utilised tourism venue, set in the tropical Indian Ocean and adjacent to the wealth centres of South East Asia. Its natural attraction, in conjunction with the intrigue promulgated by an operating space launching centre, could see the island becomes a very desirable tourism destination. It's developement, however constrained by it's lack of an adequate airport.

Without question Christmas Island needs an adequate airport.

There is a certain synergy between construction projects, in that it is cheaper per unit to produce 5,000m³ than 1,000 m³ of concrete. Similarly, plant and equipment brought to the island for one project may be used more economically on another project because it's mobilisation costs have already been paid. Similar argument can be made for cost of labour.

For the next 2 years, Christmas Island will support a huge amount of construction, and there will be no more economic time to upgrade the airport. We believe that for the sake of all concerned, the project should proceed without delay.

Yours Faithfully,
CONSOLIDATED CONSTRUCTIONS PTY LTD

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CHRIS SPOONER
ESTIMATING MANAGER

Enclosed