



Our Ref: customer, service providers-raaf matters

Submission No. 6  
(Enhanced Land Force Stage 1 Facilities)

3 14/01/09

9 January 2009

Mr Mark Butler MP  
Committee Chairperson  
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works  
Department of House of Representatives  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

E: [pwc@aph.gov.au](mailto:pwc@aph.gov.au)

Dear Sir

**Submissions to Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works In regard to:**

**Enhanced Land Force Project - Stage 1 Facilities. Lavarack Barracks, Townsville, Queensland and Other Defence Bases**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee's inquiry into the public works for the Enhanced Land Forces Project - Stage 1 Facilities to be constructed at a number of Defence bases in Australia.

Public works are proposed at RAAF Base Richmond. Council submission to the Committee in regard to the works at the Base, on behalf of its community, is attached to this letter.

RAAF Base Richmond contributes significantly to Defence throughout Australia and is an important contributor to the local economy and social fabric. The Hawkesbury community has had a long association with the Base and expects that the association will continue for sometime.

Council supports the proposed public works being completed at RAAF Base Richmond to aid the Enhanced Land Force Project initiative of the Defence Force. The works in turn will further strengthen the strategic support role of Richmond RAAF Base in the overall Defence Force operations and capability.

For any enquiries in regard to this submission, please contact Fiona Mann, Strategic Planner with the General Manager's Unit on 4560-4579 or myself on the number below.

Yours faithfully

Peter Jackson  
General Manager

Direct Line: (02) 4560-4410



# **SUBMISSION**

## **Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works**

### **Enhanced Land Force Project - Stage 1 Facilities** Lavarack Barracks, Townsville, Queensland and Other Defence Bases

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#### **Part A General Statements**

- a. *Submissions due by 12 January 2009.*
- b. *Council does not make a request that all or part of this submission is to remain confidential.*
- c. *Council seeks advice on whether the Committee accepts the submission and authorises its publication.*
- d. *Council **does not seek to provide oral evidence at a Committee hearing.***
- e. *Council is aware that the Committee is an investigative committee and its functions and responsibilities are to report to the Parliament of Australia (Parliament) on a public works proposal considering:*
  - *the stated purpose of the proposed work and its suitability for that purpose;*
  - *the need for the work;*
  - *the cost-effectiveness of the proposal;*
  - *the amount of revenue it will produce if the work is revenue producing; and*
  - *the current and prospective value of the work*

#### **Part B Proposed Public Works**

- f. The project would see the Department of Defence spend \$793 million on two of three initiatives in the Enhanced Land Force Project – Stage 1 Facilities (announced 24/08/2006) being:
  - i. facilities and supporting infrastructure for the relocation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment from Sydney (Holsworthy Barracks) to Townsville (new Lavarack Barracks) by 2012; and
  - ii. facilities and infrastructure for training and joint enabling elements in five States to support the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion at Townsville and the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment to be located at Adelaide by 2011 (third initiative).

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- g. The public works will provide for the capability of a planned larger Army articulated in the Enhanced Land Force Project initiative. Most Stage 1 Facilities' works will take place at Lavarack Barracks to allow for the move of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion to Townsville. The other work will take place at RAAF Base Amberley, Ipswich QLD; Blamey Barracks, Kapooka NSW; Lone Pine Barracks, Singleton NSW; RAAF Base Richmond NSW; Holsworthy Barracks, Sydney NSW; Steel Barracks, Sydney NSW; Hopkins Barracks, Puckapunyal VIC; Bridges Barracks,

Puckapunyal VIC; RAAF Base Edinburgh, Adelaide SA; and Campbell Barracks, Perth WA.

- h. RAAF Base Richmond works involves new working accommodation and extended and refurbished support and administrative facilities for additional Air Force personnel and equipment for:

**No.37 Squadron -**

Refurbish/ reconfigure Building 213 for dedicated work area for Life Support Section  
Refurbish Hanger 320 for additional workforce of maintenance flight

**No. 1 Airfield Operational Support Squadron -**

Refurbish Headquarters building  
Additional hangars for vehicles and storage space

**No. 1 Combat Communications Squadron -**

New radio maintenance and office area and female ablutions  
Refurbish/ reconfigure existing office and training area

- i. The Enhanced Land Force Project - Stage 2 Facilities was announced in October 2007 and will be considered by the Committee in 2010 (ie. 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion facilities for support infrastructure).

**Part C Comment of Proposed Public Works**

1. **Project Scope and Site Locations.** Council supports the proposed public works being completed at RAAF Base Richmond to aid the Enhanced Land Force Project initiative of the Defence Force. The works in turn will further strengthen the strategic support role of Richmond RAAF Base in the overall Defence operations and capability. RAAF Base Richmond is a major industry and employer in the local government area and the works will likely contribute to the local economy.

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RAAF Base Richmond's role is strategic support, with activities extending to civic and diplomatic. The Base is home to the Air Lift Group (3 units, No.37 Squadron – Hercules), 10 other units and supporting aerospace industry contractors. It supports Sydney-based specialised units of the Tactical Assault Group East, 4th Battalion (Commando) Royal Australian Regiment and the Incident Response Regiment.

In contrast to the given importance of RAAF Base Richmond in Defence operations and capability (eg. secure point of departure in the Sydney Basin for Sydney/Melbourne/Canberra for large scale operations) that has been acknowledged in previous Defence reports (ie. Force Disposition Program and by the previous Minister for Defence (Dr Brendan Nelson MP) and the Minister for Defence, when Shadow Minister for Defence (Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon MP), that:

*"Labour has no plans to alter the status of RAAF Base Richmond, and should we be elected to government later this year Richmond will continue as a permanent operational facility" (26/09/07);*

there continues to be some uncertainty about the status of the Base at a policy level. The new Defence White Paper, which is being prepared, is also looking at the future of all Defence bases.

In light of the need for the public works at RAAF Base Richmond, Council believes the Committee should request Parliament and the Minister for Defence to re-confirm that the base is to be retained to resolve any status uncertainty and so that the Committee can appropriately report on any future public works in line with its responsibilities.

**2. Impact on the Local Community.** The Department of Defence's Statement of Evidence comment on the Impact on the Local Community indicates the project will have a positive impact on local economies and significant employment will be generated during the construction phase via Head contracts and local building sub-contractors. This comment must be qualified in that it mainly applies to project works for Lavarack Barracks, Townsville and RAAF Base Amberley given the range of works listed for these sites.

To ensure the local economies and communities where the other sites are located do benefit from projects works (support infrastructure), it should be demonstrated by the Department of Defence that locally sourced labour and/ or materials are included in the delivery of projects works. Department of Defence spending in local economies is important in the current economic climate.

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It is unlikely that the project works at RAAF Base Richmond would be disruptive to community and local business activities during or after construction; and in terms of the enhanced/ additional activities undertaken at the Base.

3. **Project Delivery System.** The Head contract for project works at each site should include requirements for locally sourced labour and/ or materials to be used in the delivery of works. Are the Head contracts to be only offered to pre-selected/ endorsed Department of Defence contractors, who may not have a local labour and/ or material content?

4. **Project Schedule.** The Department of Defence's expected project commence timeframe is mid 2009, subject to the Committee's report to the Parliament and hence Parliament's approval of the project.

Completion of works as soon as possible is supported, provided sufficient time is allowed to include a local labour and/ or materials content in any Head contract.

5. **Department of Defence Consultation Dates.** A Department of Defence letter (Defence Support Group) letter dated 19 December 2008 on the Committee's inquiry into the project advise on the one public hearing in Townsville on 22 January 2009 and that Defence is to conduct community consultation/ information sessions for the project.

Defence's consultation dates were not advised by the date of this submission and it is assumed they are subject to a favorable determination on the project by Parliament. Council would appreciate advice on Defence's consultation dates as soon as possible.

#### **Part D Submission Enquiries**

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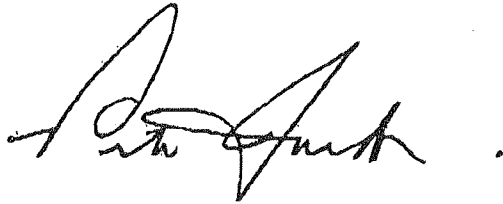
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**Part E      Submission Authorisation**



**Peter Jackson**  
General Manager  
Hawkesbury City Council

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