



Australian Government

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HQJOC Project 102/2004

Ms Vivienne Courto

Inquiry Secretary
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms Courto

**HEADQUARTERS JOINT OPERATIONS COMMAND PROJECT
RESPONSE TO PWC SUBMISSION FROM NSW DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the submission dated 28 April 2004 from the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation.

Defence is openly committed to taking a leading role in pursuing sustainable environmental initiatives within the framework of its mission. An external consultant has been engaged by Defence to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (Cth) and in accordance with guidelines provided by Department of Environment and Heritage, previously known as Environment Australia.

Defence acknowledges and appreciates the considerable input that has been received from Resources NSW, currently the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation as part of the consultation process.

The draft Environmental Impact Statement released for public consultation included consideration of aspects such as affect on local landfill, water management, waste management and minimization, ecologically sustainable development, best practices measures and energy use and provides recommendations for the management of these issues. The issues raised in the submissions received are being addressed in the Supplementary Report, which will be submitted to the Minister for Environment and Heritage for approval.

These issues need to be considered in the context of Defence's proposal to procure the Headquarters Joint Operation Command buildings and infrastructure under private finance arrangements. This process will engage the private sector to design, construct, operate and maintain the headquarters for a minimum lease period of 20 years.

The planning and design concepts presented in Defence's Statement of Evidence are indicative only and have been used in the preparation of the design model for estimating the project cost. Defence's requirements for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the facility will be defined in an Output Specification. This is a performance-

based document that will incorporate requirements related to best practice sustainability initiatives, including the recommendations of the Environmental Impact Statement and any conditions directed by the Minister for Environment and Heritage.

Mandatory soil, water and waste management measures will be required both during the construction and operation of the facility as part of the overall Environmental Monitoring and Management Plan to be developed by the successful tenderer.

Principles such as waste avoidance, reduction, reuse and recycling will be an integral part of the Output Specification, and will become part of the tender evaluation process. The responsibility of devising best practice solutions for waste management during construction and operation of the facility will rest with the successful tenderer.

Sustainable water management practices were the basis of developing an Integrated Water Management Cycle in the Environmental Impact Statement. The methodology adopted examined the total integrated water cycle of the proposed site by looking at the synergies between water supply sources, groundwater, stormwater and wastewater. The hydrological and geological assessment of the site confirmed that the optimal source of water is a combination of deep groundwater bores and stormwater capture and reuse from the site facilities.

Through the Output Specification, Defence will ensure that innovative energy efficiency opportunities are maximized and ecologically sustainable development measures are achieved during the design process, by incorporating requirements such as the achievement of '5 Star Rating' for the facility in accordance with the Green Building Council of Australia's accreditation process.

Defence places a high priority on innovative responses to the sustainability issues associated with this project and is not seeking low cost solutions but quality outcomes that represent best practice and best value for money. One of the benefits of the private finance arrangement is the strong incentive to develop a design solution that minimises whole of life costs.

Defence is focussing on the integration of actions and programs that are aimed at embedding energy management and ecologically sustainable development principles into all relevant aspects of the project. Collectively these actions will contribute to an overall reduction in energy consumption, associated greenhouse gas emissions and operating costs, all of which align with the Defence, and broader Commonwealth, environmental policies.

Defence recognises the importance of continuing consultation with relevant agencies such as the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation to ensure adequate systems, processes and methods will be implemented during design, construction and operation of the facility to achieve minimal environmental impact and maximum long term cost savings.

Yours sincerely

Original signed on 21 May 2004

BRIAN PLENTY

Air Commodore

Director General Headquarters Joint Operations Command Project

May 2004