

Introduction

Referral of Work

- 1.1 On 29 March 2006 the proposal to provide facilities for Phase One of the Single Living Environment and Accommodation Precinct Project (project Single LEAP) at Holsworthy Barracks, NSW and Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera and RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland, was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works (the Committee) for consideration and report in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969* (the Act).¹ The proponent agency for this work is the Department of Defence (Defence).
- 1.2 The Hon Gary Nairn MP, Special Minister of State, advised the House that the overall out-turn estimated cost of the project was \$406 million. Subject to parliamentary approval, the proposed works were planned to commence in early to mid 2007, with completion scheduled for 2009.

¹ Extract from the *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives*, No. 92, Wednesday 29 March 2006

Background

- 1.3 Defence is required to provide high quality accommodation solutions for all Australian Defence Force (ADF) members. These include living in accommodation, rent allowance and other options such as living in their own home.²
- 1.4 Living-in accommodation (LIA) is the provision of on-base housing for military members, with amenities and standards linked to rank and duration of residence.³
- 1.5 Project Single LEAP will provide LIA facilities at three sites: Holsworthy Barracks, NSW and Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera and RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland.⁴

Inquiry Process

- 1.6 The Committee is required by the Act to consider public works over \$6 million⁵ and report to Parliament on:
 - the purpose of the work and its suitability for that purpose;
 - the need for, or the advisability of, carrying out the work;
 - whether the money to be expended on the work is being spent in the most cost effective manner;
 - the amount of revenue the work will generate for the Commonwealth, if that is its purpose; and
 - the present and prospective public value of the work.⁶
- 1.7 The Committee called for submissions by advertising the inquiry in the *Courier Mail* and the *Sydney Morning Herald* on Saturday, 6 May 2006. The Committee also sought submissions from relevant government agencies, local government, private organisations and individuals who may be materially affected by or have an interest in the proposed work. The Committee subsequently placed submissions and

2 Appendix C, Submission No 1, Department of Defence, paragraphs 1 – 2

3 *ibid*, paragraph 2

4 *ibid*, paragraph 4

5 *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Part III, Section 18 (8)

6 *ibid*, Section 17

other information relating to the inquiry on its web site⁷ in order to encourage further public participation.

Inspection and Public Hearings

- 1.8 On 29 June 2006 the Committee visited Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera and RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland to inspect the scope and environs of the proposed works at these sites. This was followed by a public hearing held at RAAF Base Amberley.⁸
- 1.9 An inspection of the proposed works at Holsworthy Barracks, NSW was undertaken on 11 August 2006. Later that day the Committee received a commercial-in-confidence briefing on project costs from Defence, and held a further public hearing at the Moorebank Area Officer's Mess, NSW.⁹
- 1.10 On 14 September 2006 the Committee received a further commercial-in-confidence briefing on project costs from Defence at Parliament House, Canberra.

7 See <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/pwc>

8 See Appendix D for the official Hansard transcript of the evidence taken by the Committee at the public hearings on Thursday, 29 June 2006 RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland

9 See Appendix E for the official Hansard transcript of the evidence taken by the Committee at the public hearings on Friday, 11 August 2006 Moorebank Area Officers Mess, NSW