



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

# Official Committee Hansard

JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

**Reference: Defence Intelligence Training Centre at Kokoda Barracks, Canungra,  
Queensland**

THURSDAY, 2 AUGUST 2001

CANUNGRA

BY AUTHORITY OF THE PARLIAMENT

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**JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS**

**Thursday, 2 August 2001**

**Members:** Mrs Moylan (*Chair*), Mrs Crosio (*Vice-Chair*), Senators Calvert, Ferguson and Murphy and Mr Forrest, Mr Hollis, Mr Lindsay and Mr Ripoll

**Senators and members in attendance:** Mrs Crosio and Mrs Moylan and Senators Ferguson and Murphy

**Terms of reference for the inquiry:**

New facilities for the Defence Intelligence Training Centre at Kokoda Barracks, Canungra, Queensland

**WITNESSES**

<b>DOWSE, Lieutenant Colonel Simon Richard, Commandant, Defence Intelligence Training Centre, Department of Defence .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>FERRARIS, Mr Diego Felice, Director Project Delivery, Department of Defence.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>FITZGERALD, Mr Patrick Harrison, Environment and Heritage Officer, Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association Inc .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HARRISON, Ms Rachael, Member, Catholic Worker.....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>KELLY, Brigadier Garry Ross, Director General Capital Infrastructure, Department of Defence .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>le GOULLON, Mr Damian, Member, Catholic Worker .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>LEA Mr George William, President, Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association Inc .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>NELSON, Ms Elva Beth, Treasurer, Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association Inc.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>RUSSELL, Mr Peter, Project Consultant, May and Russell Architects.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>STAPLETON, Mrs Michelle Ann, Secretary and Funding Coordinator, Beechmont Community Association.....</b>	<b>31</b>



**Committee met at 10.34 a.m.**

**CHAIR**—Welcome. I declare open this public hearing of the Joint Public Works Committee inquiring into the redevelopment of the Defence Intelligence Training Centre, Canungra, and I thank you for attending the hearing. I would like to welcome Mrs Kay Elson, the member for Forde. Thank you for coming today and taking an interest in what is happening in your electorate. I would also like to extend an apology from the state member of parliament, Kev Lingard, who is unable to be here today.

This project was referred to the Public Works Committee on 24 May 2001 for consideration and report to parliament. In accordance with subsection 17(3) of the Public Works Committee Act 1969:

(3) In considering and reporting on a public work, the Committee shall have regard to -

- (a) the stated purpose of the work and its suitability for that purpose;
- (b) the necessity for, or the advisability of, carrying out the work;
- (c) the most effective use that can be made, in the carrying out of the work, of the moneys to be expended on the work;
- (d) where the work purports to be of a revenue-producing character, the amount of revenue that it may reasonably be expected to produce; and
- (e) the present and prospective public value of the work.

Earlier this morning, the committee received a briefing and inspected existing facilities and the site of the proposed works. Yesterday afternoon, we inspected the proposed site of the field training facility. We also did a fly over of the area under consideration for some of the development. The committee will hear evidence from the Department of Defence, the Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association, the Beechmont Community Association and the Catholic Worker.

[10.36 a.m.]

**DOWSE, Lieutenant Colonel Simon Richard, Commandant, Defence Intelligence Training Centre, Department of Defence**

**FERRARIS, Mr Diego Felice, Director Project Delivery, Department of Defence**

**KELLY, Brigadier Garry Ross, Director General Capital Infrastructure, Department of Defence**

**RUSSELL, Mr Peter, Project Consultant, May and Russell Architects**

**CHAIR**—I now welcome representatives of the Department of Defence. The committee has received a submission and several supplementary submissions from the department. These submissions will be made available in a volume of submissions for this inquiry, and they are also available on the committee's web site. Does the department wish to propose any amendment to the submissions it has made to the committee?

**Brig. Kelly**—I do propose a minor amendment to the evidence in paragraph 3. We identified that the current facility was constructed in 1984; it was actually constructed in 1987. I would like to propose a change to update our submissions in response to several submissions that were made to the committee. At the time of preparing the evidence, we had not decided on a site for the field facilities, but as a result of the submissions by the Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association and the Beechmont Community Association, we did identify a potential site and we identified the general area of that in our response. Since then, we have found that that proposed site would conflict with some potential future use of the range templates, so we have now identified an alternative site. That site is two kilometres north of where we previously identified, so in paragraph 5 of both of our responses to those submissions, we would change the sentence which says, 'However, it will be approximately two kilometres to the north of the Back Creek landscape,' to reflect that it will be approximately four kilometres to the north.

**CHAIR**—Thank you. I now invite you to make a brief opening statement in support of your written submission.

**Brig. Kelly**—This proposal advocates the redevelopment of the Defence Intelligence Training Centre at Kokoda Barracks, Canungra. in Queensland. The mission of the Defence Intelligence Training Centre is to provide intelligence training and education which meets the needs of the defence intelligence community, thereby enhancing the conduct of military operations and promoting the security of Australia. There has been a significant operationally driven increase in the demand for defence intelligence training over the past four years. Despite the provision of temporary instructional facilities at the centre, it has not been possible to close the gap between the number of defence personnel requiring intelligence training and the number of spaces available on courses conducted by the Defence Intelligence Training Centre.

The main instructional facility was constructed in 1987 and was designed to meet very different organisational, functional and security requirements. This facility is now overcrowded and dysfunctional. Nine demountable buildings have already been pressed into service as barely

adequate, supplementary instructional facilities. The facilities at the centre cannot physically accommodate any more trainees and, in addition, there is no space available for the extra staff who would be needed to train them. This has led to a shortage of trained intelligence personnel in the Australian Defence Organisation.

This facility will provide specialised training areas; office accommodation for command, management, instructional, support and administrative staff; associated amenities; and physical and electronic measures to manage access throughout the facility to meet varying security requirements. The project will also provide limited field training facilities and an upgrade to two living-in accommodation blocks in Kokoda Barracks used by students at the Defence Intelligence Training Centre.

The estimated cost of the proposed works is \$17.4 million in February 2001 prices. Subject to parliamentary approval, design works are planned to commence later this year with construction commencing by mid-2002. Project completion is planned for June 2003. The project would generate employment for up to 50 workers during the construction period, mostly in the subcontractor and unskilled worker areas.

The new facilities will enable the Defence Intelligence Training Centre to conduct adequate and appropriate training to meet the needs of the Defence intelligence community. The proposed new facilities will have minimal impact on the local community, either during the construction period or in its later operation. Defence considers there are no significant environmental or heritage issues, and an internal Defence environmental certificate of compliance has been approved in accordance with the Defence environmental management policy. Commonwealth, state and local government representatives and instrumentalities have been advised or consulted.

**CHAIR**—Given that Defence has decided to bring the various defence organisations together for training, what do you see as the benefits of amalgamating the three service intelligence organisations for training here? Also, where do trainees come from? Are trainees from Australian civil and police agencies trained at the Defence Intelligence Training Centre? Which countries have trainees come from to attend courses here under the Defence Cooperation Program over the last five years?

**Lt Col. Dowse**—To firstly address your issue concerning the benefits of bringing the defence intelligence training into one location, I would argue there are two key benefits and they relate to cost and culture. In terms of cost, what we have been able to do by establishing DIntTC as it is in its current location is provide one centre for intelligence training for all three services within the ADF and indeed members of the Australian Defence Organisation—that is, defence civilians who work in the intelligence field.

**CHAIR**—Can I ask you to explain what DIntTC is?

**Lt Col. Dowse**—DIntTC is the shortened form of the Defence Intelligence Training Centre. The cost has meant that no longer do individual services have to maintain their own single service intelligence training capacity. They can now give those resources to us and indeed save a considerable amount of both capital and ongoing costs as a result of that amalgamation.

The second aspect is to do with culture. Like many large organisations, the Defence Force can occasionally fall into what we call a stovepiping syndrome, where specialists within service areas can fail to recognise the benefits of working fully with their colleagues in other service or specialist areas. Because we get all members of the defence intelligence community coming here and sharing a classroom or a syndicate room at particular times, they come to understand the requirements and capabilities of their colleagues in the profession. This has been under way for about four to five years now, and it is my belief, as we see people coming back for advanced training, that we are starting to see the real cultural benefits. People understand what it is that the other services do and how they can work to assist them, rather than seeing them as competitors. I would argue strongly that, on both the cost and the cultural ground, there have been real benefits in the Defence Intelligence Training Centre's operations.

With regard to your second question about the source of our trainees, essentially we take trainees from all three services—the Royal Australian Navy, the Royal Australian Air Force and the Australian Army. Within those organisations, there are intelligence specialties, and those people get general training in their intelligence skills here at the Defence Intelligence Training Centre. In some regards, there are specialist intelligence skills taught to particular members of each service.

You asked specifically about external training. We have in the past provided some external training to non-defence members of the Australian government or quasi government organisations. This has always been on a trial basis with a view to expanding our knowledge base and to perhaps giving them an idea of whether or not they could benefit from our training in future.

The last question you had concerned the sourcing of training for people outside Australia. I must beg your forgiveness, but I do not have the figures for the last five years. We could certainly make them available by the end of the hearing; however, I will give an indication now. In the last 12 months the centre has trained 24 people from outside Australia. They were sourced from the United Kingdom, the United States of America, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, the Kingdom of Thailand, the Republic of the Philippines, Malaysia and the Republic of Singapore. We had a total of 24, 15 and 19 people trained at the Defence Intelligence Training Centre in 1998, 1999 and 2000 respectively. We also conducted a mobile training team activity, where we sent some of our staff into selected countries in the region—most recently, Thailand and the Philippines—and trained people in basic intelligence techniques in their home locations.

**CHAIR**—Thank you.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Page 6 of the report at paragraph 23 stated:

Some duplication of areas such as conference rooms and syndicate rooms is unavoidable because two levels of access control must be maintained within the facility.

Has defence calculated the additional cost due to the duplication of some areas and those two levels of access control?



**Lt Col. Dowse**—Essentially, we are in the position of being required to train people in the use and interpretation of highly sensitive and classified information. That is what the intelligence game is about. That intelligence has been won by a great deal of expense and effort, and it requires sufficient protection to make sure that the sources and agencies involved in collecting it and their techniques are not compromised—and therefore its value—and, indeed, their safety is not compromised.

Therefore, there are strict building and procedural requirements in place for any buildings where such material is to be discussed, taught, analysed or stored. The Defence Intelligence Training Centre would be such a building. However, we are mindful of the cost involved in building a building entirely to those standards. What we are suggesting is that, as the project develops, we have an area within the building which is a controlled access area but is not an accredited security area. This would allow us to have our basic administration and some executive functions in this controlled area. It also allows us to provide training outside the highest classification levels, particularly if we are going to be training people who do not need to be trained at the highest level. In short, it gives us the flexibility to be able to provide training at all ends of the spectrum.

**Brig. Kelly**—Given that that is such a specific requirement, we have not costed a single option with or without the duplication. We have just assumed that the duplication is required. I cannot tell you what the cost of that duplication is, but the total cost of the project averages out at about \$3,000 per square metre, so we could get a feel from that. I would say that we do not see it particularly as duplication from our point of view in justifying the project. It is more that you might see it as duplication because there are two conference rooms, for example, in the same building.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Can I take you back to your comment that the expected completion is June 2003. Looking at some of the demountables we inspected this morning, are you actually very confident that it is going to be finished then? Looking at the occupational health and safety, I do not know how your trainees even get into the room, let alone stay in the room.

**Brig. Kelly**—We are anticipating that, subject to approval by parliament after endorsement from this committee, we will engage our project manager and our design consultant before the end of this year, have design well under way by the end of this year and let a contract early next year. About a 15-month construction period would be about appropriate, so mid 2003 is quite an achievable aim.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Will the refurbishment of all those accommodation facilities and rooms we saw and inspected be completed at the same time—so, as you increase trainees, because you are going to have better facilities, you will have accommodation here?

**Brig. Kelly**—That is correct.

**Senator FERGUSON**—There has been a considerable amount of evidence presented to us from the Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association. Are you satisfied that the site that has now been chosen is far enough away from their area of concern that it could alleviate any of the concerns that they may have had previously?

**Brig. Kelly**—Yes, I am. We had not identified that this might be of such concern. In our evidence, we simply stated that it would be adjacent or close to the cantonment area, for reasons of convenience, which to us implied that it would not be in that area. However, when we received the two submissions, we did identify that we needed to identify a general area for the facility, and we have shown the committee the specific area. Given that that is four kilometres north of the Back Creek Gorge area in a different catchment area, we are quite confident that that will address their concerns.

**Senator FERGUSON**—Will there still be a requirement to close that area at Back Creek Gorge or Killarney Glen for certain periods?

**Brig. Kelly**—There will be, completely unrelated to this project or this facility. That is an arrangement which has been arrived at locally whereby the area is open to the public for the majority of the time, in particular at weekends and during school holidays, but it is closed as required for Defence purposes.

**Senator FERGUSON**—So whether this proposal you put before us proceeds or otherwise, it will not make any difference to the current arrangements that you have?

**Brig. Kelly**—It has absolutely no impact.

**Senator FERGUSON**—No impact whatsoever?

**Brig. Kelly**—No.

**Senator FERGUSON**—Are there any other matters with the new site that would in fact make it, in your opinion, more accessible? Is there a creek or a stream that flows through there?

**Brig. Kelly**—Do you mean accessibility to Back Creek Gorge?

**Senator FERGUSON**—Yes.

**Brig. Kelly**—No. There is nothing we are doing on this project that will impact on it in anyway.

**Senator FERGUSON**—And your new site is downstream?

**Brig. Kelly**—It is downstream, but in a different catchment area. I just emphasise that it is well downstream from the Back Creek Gorge.

**Senator FERGUSON**—I notice also that there are proposals for further redevelopment in this area to be brought forward. Is that next year?

**Brig. Kelly**—We are hoping to program that for next year. That project will pick up additional redevelopment of the base. You have seen some of the old facilities on the base. Some of them are quite inefficiently run in terms of messing, so the project will look at rationalisation of messing, upgrade of living-in accommodation, a general upgrade of that

working accommodation, which is dysfunctional and old, and an upgrade to engineering services.

**Senator FERGUSON**—What would be the consequences of this current proposal not going ahead?

**Brig. Kelly**—Essentially, it would leave Lieutenant Colonel Dowse in the situation which he currently has, where he is unable to meet the defence requirement to train a certain number of trainees per year, and those who he does train will be being trained in suboptimal conditions.

**Senator FERGUSON**—And this is the only training centre in Australia?

**Lt Col. Dowse**—This is the only Defence Intelligence Training Centre in Australia.

**CHAIR**—Did you examine other options for the location of this facility?

**Brig. Kelly**—Six areas within Australia were looked at before Canungra was chosen, and within the Canungra area, five options were looked at. I am unable to tell you what the other six were off the top of my head.

**CHAIR**—Can you tell us the rationale for choosing to stay on this site and to replace some of the older facilities?

**Lt Col. Dowse**—The decision to stay at this site was arrived from both the training effectiveness and a business case perspective. In terms of the business case perspective, the figures worked out in our favour when it came to calculating the cost of bringing trainees and those who support our training—such as visiting lecturers—to the Defence Intelligence Training Centre. Essentially, here at Canungra we sit very much in the middle of the catchment area for the Defence Intelligence Training Centre's trainees. That was the first key consideration for us.

The second one in terms of training effectiveness is that we have access here to a wide variety of training environments. We have ranges that we can go and exercise in to replicate workplace conditions on operations, plus we have some other urban areas close at hand if we need to be considering operations in places like that. Essentially, that gives us a wide range of options that we would not necessarily enjoy elsewhere.

Lastly, we are particularly well suited in proximity to other Australian Defence Force units and assets. In the intelligence game, we must never lose sight of the fact that we are trained to support operators. The fact that we have the Enoggera Army base very close at hand—and, likewise, RAAF base Amberley close at hand—has provided excellent training opportunities for us. Likewise, we have the Royal Australian Navy Headquarters of South Queensland in Brisbane, which allows us access to visiting ships of war, both from Australia and from allied services.

More close to home, right across the ridge from us there is a subelement of the Headquarters Regional Training Centre known as the Command Staff and Operations Wing. Its job is to train officers, in particular, but also, more recently, senior noncommissioned officers and warrant officers in the fundamentals of military operations. The fact that they are developing the

doctrine for that not 400 metres from where we are developing intelligence doctrine and training is a tremendous symbiotic relationship. For all those reasons, and for some other more detailed ones contained in the consultant's report, it was decided that Canungra was the best place for the Defence Intelligence Training Centre, a decision that was endorsed by the Chief of the Defence Force and the Secretary to the Department of Defence in March last year.

**Brig. Kelly**—For the record, the other six sites were Simpson Barracks at Watsonia, which is in the north-east suburbs of Melbourne; HMAS *Cerberus* at Crib Point in Victoria; Laverton, between Melbourne and Geelong; RAAF Williamtown, north of Newcastle; the Liverpool military area in New South Wales; and Duntroon in the ACT. The Weston Creek property in the ACT was also looked at but was discarded in a preliminary investigation.

**Senator FERGUSON**—I just want to go back to clarify something in my own mind. From what you said in response to my questions about the Back Creek Gorge conservation group, it would appear that the proposals that we are looking at today are really separate from many of the things that they raised in their submission, which deals with the policy and the management of the area rather than the proposals that we are looking at today. Am I right in suggesting that?

**Brig. Kelly**—That is correct.

**Senator FERGUSON**—There are other, ongoing issues that do not relate to the proposed expenditure and the works that we are talking about today?

**Brig. Kelly**—That is correct. The issues to which you refer are ongoing but absolutely unaffected by the discussions today.

**Mrs CROSIO**—You were talking about the sites that were investigated before this one was chosen. We are told that we need no extra land here for this particular proposal but, looking at future activities, does Defence plan to acquire any land around Canungra? No-one has a crystal ball; we do not know what will happen in 10 or 15 years time. In the immediate long term—if there is such a phrase—do we have enough land to have expansion here for facilities like these?

**Brig. Kelly**—I am not aware of any proposal to acquire additional land.

**Mrs CROSIO**—In other words, we are quite happy with what we have at the moment.

**Brig. Kelly**—The training area has been in use since World War II and it has seen some peak load periods—particularly Vietnam, which did lead to the additional acquisition of land, which has led to some of the issues referred to here today. But, since then, it has been in a relatively steady state. It is currently providing training for infantry units moving to Timor, but there is no requirement, as far as I am aware, for additional land.

**Mrs CROSIO**—And that training has been going on for some time, and the facility is more than adequate?

**Brig. Kelly**—Training has been going on here for many, many years.

**Senator MURPHY**—In some evidence submitted to the committee, a report in the *Gold Coast Bulletin* on 3 September 1999 says that:

The Australian Heritage Commission also extracted an undertaking from the Army to consult with it before anything was done to change the existing situation on its Canungra land.

Despite that undertaking the Army conducted and published a 1997 Land Management Plan without once referring it to the Commission; nor did the plan make any reference to Killarney Glen.

Is that the case?

**Brig. Kelly**—I cannot comment on that specifically. I would be surprised, but I cannot comment.

**Senator MURPHY**—In a letter in response to the submission by the Australian Heritage Commission which raised some issues, I think you acknowledge that there were some. The letter said:

... minor errors in the Canungra Land Warfare Centre Environment Management Plan and will take action to have appropriate corrections made.

Has that happened?

**Brig. Kelly**—I do not believe it has at this stage, but we can pass that information to the appropriate people.

**Senator MURPHY**—Could you advise the committee of that when it has happened.

**Brig. Kelly**—I will.

**Senator MURPHY**—In response to the issue that the Australian Heritage Commission raises in respect of archaeological matters and Aboriginal heritage sites, you say:

A survey of the vegetation and fauna of the proposed development site will be undertaken during the design phase of the project to minimise any significant construction impacts of the DIntTC redevelopment.

and:

A survey for Aboriginal artifacts by a qualified archaeologist with the assistance of representatives of the Wangerabba people will be undertaken prior to the commencement of the design phase of the project.

When is that supposed to take place?

**Brig. Kelly**—That will take place once we have engaged our project manager and get into the design phase of the project. It will be an activity which would occur in consultation with the geotechnical investigations, I would suggest. We have fairly refined processes to do this as a result of recent experience in North Queensland where we have involved the local indigenous traditional landowners in our assessment of the condition of the land. We have also engaged them to be monitors or to respond to and advise in any circumstances where we discover

indigenous relics. That has been a good process at RAAF Base Townsville, and we would expect to employ the same process here.

**Senator MURPHY**—Are you required to get any certification from the Australian Heritage Commission once that is completed?

**Brig. Kelly**—I do not believe so.

**Senator MURPHY**—Are you required to advise the Australian Heritage Commission of the findings of that study?

**Brig. Kelly**—I do not believe so.

**Senator MURPHY**—Is that something that you normally do?

**Brig. Kelly**—No, I do not believe we go back to the AHC and advise them that we have discovered relics unless it is very significant. The instances in Townsville—and there have been half a dozen—have been of some local significance but not of such importance that we would go back to the AHC and advise them. That is not to say that we would not raise it with them in our routine consultations with them.

**Senator MURPHY**—Regarding your environmental certificate of compliance: with regard to the issue of erosion and sediment control, particularly as it relates to the Coomera River and Back Creek, there is a requirement, as I understand it, that there not be any sediment inflow into either the Coomera River or Back Creek—I am not sure which one—where you are proposing to build the new centre.

**Brig. Kelly**—Yes. The environmental certificate of compliance raises a number of points that need to be taken into account during the construction and also during the operation. Our contractor will be required to comply with an environmental management plan for the construction that will be developed by the project manager or by the construction contractor. The reason that we identified specifically, and I noted separately, the requirement to avoid sediment and erosion into the Coomera River is that the Coomera River is the water supply for the Canungra containment.

**Senator MURPHY**—Is the Coomera River a controlled flow river or a natural flow river?

**Brig. Kelly**—I am not 100 per cent sure if there are controls upstream. By ‘control’ do you mean dams, weirs and so on?

**Senator MURPHY**—Yes.

**Brig. Kelly**—Our water supply certainly depends on the weir within the Canungra area. Someone else at the table might be able to advise whether there are other weirs upstream; I am not aware of any.

**Senator MURPHY**—Is there any information with respect to flooding of the river?

**Lt Col. Dowse**—There is some information available that suggests that the site is suitable and is protected from major flood events.

**CHAIR**—Can I pursue a few more questions about the siting of the new Defence Intelligence Training Centre. Can you detail for us why this site was chosen in preference to the other four sites within Kokoda Barracks?

**Lt Col. Dowse**—The reason for choosing the site on the high ground overlooking the Coomera River is to do in the main with security reasons and to a lesser extent with some military cultural reasons. If I may get the military cultural reasons under way first: the additional building of a new facility adjacent to the new facility would have involved possible intrusion into an area locally known as ‘the grassy knoll’ which lies between the Defence Intelligence Training Centre and Headquarters Regional Training Centres. It occupies a central position in the barracks and has become a ceremonial focus point, including our flag station and a number of memorials to soldiers, sailors and airmen and units who have served within the Australian Defence Force during various conflicts. For those reasons, it was felt we would not wish to intrude upon that area if there was an option.

As it turned out, there was an option, and the security measures, which I will outline in a moment, supported us in that move. Those security measures essentially meant moving a facility which handles classified information away from a position which was, in my opinion, unsatisfactorily close to a public road. The current main instructional facility that we use lies within 35 metres of the main road which leads to the Binna Burra tourist resort, a road which is heavily trafficked and certainly not controlled by us in any way, shape or form. Because of its position adjacent to the road, the potential for access to the immediate surrounds of our main instructional facility has been a security concern for some time both from a direct access viewpoint and also from the point of view of potential remote access to some of our material coming out of the MIF. For that reason, the further we can move from public roads the happier we are. The location we have proposed as the new site for the MIF satisfies the requirement of being away from public roads. It also gives us the room for growth should we require it, being a largely unencumbered site at this stage.

**Brig. Kelly**—In addition, there were some master planning and engineering considerations. Sites 2, 3 and 4 are relatively steeper than the chosen site, and sites 4 and 5 in particular would conflict to some extent with proposed master planning in those areas.

**CHAIR**—You raised the issue of classified material. Can the committee be certain that the security measures will be adequate in the new facility in the new location that is being proposed? Can we be assured that there will be adequate security for classified material?

**Lt Col. Dowse**—The construction standards which apply to the building as proposed are the first layer of protection in this particular regard and are certainly certified by government as adequate for that purpose. The siting of the building itself is the second layer of protection—being further away from public and inadvertent or deliberate access. The third layer is essentially all to do with the procedures and the diligence of the staff who work there, and it is something which of course we stress very highly within the intelligence community. For those three key reasons I believe you can be certain that if it is built as anticipated and staffed accordingly then the material will be secured within it.

**CHAIR**—How far away from the river is it? On the map it looks quite close. Then you have a steep, like a mountain, ridge—

**Lt Col. Dowse**—On the far side, yes.

**CHAIR**—Can you comment on the security issues around having that river run on that boundary and also on the ridge and road access for the public to that area immediately adjacent to the proposed site.

**Lt Col. Dowse**—There is no public road leading onto the eastern side there across the Coomera River. We believe the Coomera River itself provides a bit of a ‘moat’ although of course it can be crossed below the weir. In our opinion it would be most unusual to have members of the public either inadvertently or deliberately coming up the road that exists behind a gate and on Defence property. I would believe the security patrols that exist within the Canungra cantonment are adequate security against such a contingency.

**CHAIR**—And the river?

**Lt Col. Dowse**—It provides a moat-like effect but it can be crossed, so we do not see it as an impermeable barrier to our east, by any means.

**CHAIR**—How far away is that from the boundary?

**Mr Russell**—Approximately 80 metres.

**CHAIR**—Are there any environmental issues there that particularly need to be taken into account?

**Mr Russell**—The final location of the building is subject to an environmental scan.

**CHAIR**—In relation to the building, has a geotechnical survey of the site been undertaken? At paragraph 52 you talk about possible expansion in the future. Can you tell us when is the need for expansion of the facility likely and what impact that would have on the area?

**Brig. Kelly**—The short answer to the question on geotechnical examination is that, no, we have not had a detailed geotechnical examination at this stage. The requirement for future expansion is not based on any known requirement. It is simply prudent planning that we would normally undertake to ensure that the site is not built on in such a way that we limit future expansion and that we design the building such that it can be expanded or extended at a future stage if required.

**CHAIR**—Are you proposing to do a geotechnical survey?

**Brig. Kelly**—Absolutely. It will be critical.

**Mr Ferraris**—In relation to your previous question about the security measures, the method of construction we propose is to fully design the building first and have it certified by the



security authorities. When we have all the clearances on the design, that will allow us to go and build it. That will give us that assurance.

**CHAIR**—I will have some more questions on the design later.

**Senator MURPHY**—Will all of the buildings you are going to construct here have the capacity for 25 per cent expansion?

**Brig. Kelly**—Yes. It is common if we are building something that we take account of the potential to expand it in terms of space and adding on services later and we construct the building in such a way that it actually can be broken into and expanded at a later stage. That is actually more difficult with shielded buildings, from a security point of view, but it has been done. We have just completed an expansion of one of the most secure buildings in Australia, at Salisbury, last year.

**Senator MURPHY**—With regard to the environment, this is a general question. An accusation has been made of Defence in respect of weeds. Is Defence, in terms of its lands within Australia, required to meet any of the national weed management programs?

**Brig. Kelly**—I cannot specifically answer that question but I can say that where we have environmental management plans which are developed in consultation with local authorities I would expect that that would be the case.

**Senator MURPHY**—Could you just advise us about that. I am interested in a general sense, albeit the accusation is laid here about—

**Brig. Kelly**—Yes. The answer is probably in this room somewhere and perhaps someone will give it to you.

**Mrs CROSIO**—On page 7 of your submission, in paragraph 31 you have stated:

The estimated cost is \$17.4m excluding GST at February 2001 prices. The cost estimate includes construction costs with fitout, professional fees, furniture and fittings, additional computer hardware and cabling, and a contingency sum. The project budget is yet to be out-turned to reflect escalation.

Is Defence now able to provide the committee with an out-turned cost reflecting the impact of escalation?

**Brig. Kelly**—This has not been officially out-turned, but our estimate of the out-turned price would be \$17.745 million.

**Mrs CROSIO**—On your living-in accommodation, on page 6, paragraph 26, of your submission you state:

The project includes provision for the refurbishment and upgrading to a current standard of 90 rooms of Officer accommodation and 84 rooms of Senior Non-Commissioned Officer accommodation ...

Will those proposed upgrades of live-in accommodation for the officers and the senior noncommissioned officers bring all of the accommodation here at Canungra up to the current standards?

**Brig. Kelly**—No, they will not. There are some rooms here at the moment that do meet our current requirements for training accommodation. This will update some of the older but relatively new accommodation, which is in brick accommodation rather than the old weatherboard. It will update some of those, and the remaining accommodation will be updated as a result of the Canungra redevelopment project to follow next year.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Also in your report you have told us:

104 rooms of Other Ranks accommodation are being similarly upgraded as a separate project in the current financial year.

What was the cost of upgrading the 104 rooms for other ranks?

**Brig. Kelly**—\$1.2 million.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Has all accommodation for other ranks now been upgraded?

**Brig. Kelly**—No. That is just two of the more modern barracks. I believe that under the redevelopment project we would perhaps look at demolishing and completely replacing some of the older barracks.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Still on page 6, in paragraph 27, you say:

The proposed facility would accommodate 95 members of staff and a maximum of about 160 trainees on any one day plus a small number of visiting lecturers.

Is there now sufficient live-in accommodation on base for staff and students?

**Lt Col. Dowse**—Yes, there is.

**Senator FERGUSON**—Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association wrote a letter to the committee responding to your letter of 11 July. One of the issues they raise—which may be one of misinterpretation—is that in paragraph 3 of your letter you refer to ‘new facilities’, plural, in terms of development but in paragraph 5 of your letter you imply that there is only one training facility. Can I assume that in your letter when you talk about ‘new facilities’ you talk about the facilities that are included in this project that we are discussing today and that because there is more than one building that is why you use the term ‘facilities’ rather than ‘facility’?

**Brig. Kelly**—I have issued two environmental certificates of compliance for the new facilities, plural, one being the new instructional facility and one being the field training facilities. That was not to imply that there is more than one field training facility; there is a single field training facility. I have to say that the words ‘facilities’ and ‘facility’ tend to be interchangeable.

**Senator FERGUSON**—We have seen the compliance certificates that you have, and there are two of them.

**Brig. Kelly**—I was referring to the two different sites, those two facilities.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Brigadier, with your long-term planning, in your paragraph 46, you say:

Funding provision has been made for a Canungra Redevelopment Project is programmed with a 2002/03 Year of Decision. Components of the project, which has yet to be scoped, would include messing rationalisation, working and training accommodation, ...

et cetera. Why was this particular project we are now having a hearing about today programmed in advance of that particular redevelopment project?

**Brig. Kelly**—I think it is safe to say that this project was programmed because it was critically required for the reasons that you have heard. I believe the Canungra redevelopment was actually a couple of years down the track, so it has been brought forward as a result of the exercise we went through for this project. When we looked at the living-in accommodation and saw that we could upgrade some of it but other elements had to be upgraded, that was one of the instigators.

The final solution to providing this facility was also another trigger to bringing it forward. The project was originally approved within Defence last year, in about November, based in principle on an extension to the existing facility, but our consultants were asked to go away and look at a business case to see if it was actually smarter to go to a green field site. A green field site was about \$2½ million more expensive, so had not been the favoured solution to begin with. However, when we looked again at other uses for the existing facility we saw that by using the existing facility for, for example, the new headquarters for the regional training centres we could save \$3.9 million. It made business sense to go to a green field site for the new facility and for other reasons, including a better technical solution with an unlimited site, and it avoided interrupting the process of the Intelligence Training Centre for 12 to 18 months, which would have made the backlog even worse.

At that point it was apparent that we needed to do other things in the Canungra area to make the total solution a smarter one, and so the Canungra redevelopment work was actually brought forward. It was not a case of having a plan to do something and then pulling DIntTC forward. DIntTC was identified and that, to an extent, dragged the Canungra development after it. Mind you, in a planning sense the Canungra redevelopment has been out there since the early 1990s, approximately, but we just had not got to it. This gave it the trigger.

**CHAIR**—I have one other question, and it relates to the Commonwealth government's commitment to ecologically sustainable development and the reduction of greenhouse gases. To that end, the Australian government has established the Australian Greenhouse Office. Can you tell me whether you have been in contact with the Australian Greenhouse Office in order to meet the government's requirements to reduce energy use? What are the targets you have set, in terms of reductions and any other issues around sustainable measures in the redevelopment of the proposed buildings here?

**Brig. Kelly**—I might start out and then invite additional comment. We have recently put up four projects to the committee, and it was only through that process that we became fully aware of the Australian Greenhouse Office interest and the services that they could provide. As a result of that, Mr Ferraris has been to discuss these projects with the members of the organisation, some of whom gave evidence at a meeting yesterday. We have agreed that we will establish a framework within which we will work to achieve their aims, while ensuring that Defence meets its aims as well. I do not believe we have reached a point where we are specifically identifying targets for energy savings in specific buildings but, as part of the framework we need to work through with the Greenhouse Office, we will engage a specialist energy adviser as one of the consultants in the design process. That adviser will help us to achieve targets, or to set targets which then must be achieved.

**Mr Ferraris**—The only thing I would like to add is that Environment Australia has identified that they are developing specific targets, and their time frame is towards the end of this year. As a separate consultancy, our environment and heritage people are in the process of engaging an energy adviser to come up with some interim targets for us. They are not available at this moment, because the work has not been done, but we are certainly not waiting round for the Environment Australia targets.

**CHAIR**—Have you already been in touch with the Australian Greenhouse Office in relation to this particular project? I know that in the last two days we have had other projects we have discussed.

**Mr Ferraris**—I had a meeting with the Australian Greenhouse Office in relation to this last Friday, where we agreed a way ahead and how we would approach it. We have already done some work the Greenhouse Office is very happy with. That was in relation to the DSTO project—the AMRL redevelopment, which the committee saw some time ago. They are very satisfied with the process we have put in place there, with an energy adviser, in consultation with the Greenhouse Office. The commitment we have made is basically to apply the same approach to this project, as well as to the Oakey one.

**CHAIR**—In the evidence we heard yesterday and the day before we have not been able to establish whether there will need to be any increase in capital costs to meet those requirements, but it certainly seems apparent that there would be a reduction in operating costs over the life of the buildings.

**Brig. Kelly**—Many of the people advising us at the moment are advising that good design is not necessarily more expensive. There are many passive measures we can take, including appropriate siting and so on, which we do anyway, which can reduce energy costs. In general terms, I suppose the assessment would be that it will cost more money, and we have to ensure that we take that into account up-front when we set our budgets.

**CHAIR**—Thank you. Did Mr Russell have something to say about that?

**Mr Russell**—It is a significant step forward that Defence is appointing a specialist energy consultant for this project and for other projects it is engaged in. That step enables the setting of appropriate benchmarks and then targets and the proper analysis of the range of tools available

to designers to improve energy efficiency. It should become a matter of course that buildings are designed to be energy efficient. There are obvious benefits for all of us.

**CHAIR**—Yes. Thank you very much for your evidence.

[11.25 a.m.]

**FITZGERALD, Mr Patrick Harrison, Environment and Heritage Officer, Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association Inc**

**LEA Mr George William, President, Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association Inc**

**NELSON, Ms Elva Beth, Treasurer, Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association Inc**

**CHAIR**—Welcome. The committee has received a submission and a supplementary submission from Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association. These submissions will be made available in a volume of submissions for the inquiry and they are also available on the committee's web site. Do you wish to propose any amendment to the submission you have made to the committee?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Yes, we have some minor amendments. On page 5 of our first submission, the first line of item 10 reads 'March 2000'; it should read 'March 2001'. On page 7, line 11, 'October' should read 'September'. In relation to the information within the square brackets on that page, we would like to add some short sentences: Range control gave permission to do the entire Back Creek walk to a Brisbane resident on 18 August 2000. During August 2000, range control advised Southbank TAFE that access through Back Creek Gorge was prohibited. At a consultative meeting with our association on 31 August 2000 the Army said that most of the Back Creek walk constituted a trespass, but acknowledged, 'We can't police it.' We also have two statements and some other information that we wish to present.

**CHAIR**—Can you table those statements?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—We wish to table those in camera, but we can do that at the end of the hearing.

**CHAIR**—Do you want to proceed with the public hearing now and then at the end of the hearing table some statements in camera?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Yes, and we can provide some of our sources of the information that we have provided in our submission.

**CHAIR**—Is the committee happy to do that?

**Senator FERGUSON**—We should hear the in camera evidence at the end of the public evidence and then move on to the next witness.

**CHAIR**—Do you want to give written statements in confidence, or do you want to make an oral presentation to the committee?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—We will make an oral presentation, but we have two written statements that we wish to present in camera.

**Senator MURPHY**—Do you want to speak to those?

**CHAIR**—Do you want to speak to the statements that you wish to table in camera?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—In general terms, one of them relates to the recent violations of the public access arrangements, but the person who has supplied us with the statement is very fearful of repercussions if her identify is revealed.

**CHAIR**—I understand that, but do you wish to speak in camera about that matter or do you just wish to table—

**Mr Fitzgerald**—No. I think we will just table the statements.

**CHAIR**—Fine. Thank you.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Does that really appertain to the costing of the public works we have before the committee today?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—In one sense it does not, but it is relevant. We have concerns about the omission of the Back Creek landscape listing and some environmental and heritage management in the area. An illustration of one of those concerns is the violations that we referred to in our second submission. We do not believe that it indicates the extent of care and consideration of environmental management that is claimed. To that extent, I submit that our information is relevant.

**Senator MURPHY**—The group should be aware that information you provide us in camera is exactly that, and we are unable to use it.

**CHAIR**—We are unable to publish the information, but the committee can take it into account when making a decision. We cannot publish information that is provided in camera.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—No, we would not wish it to be published, but we want the committee to be aware of the issues.

**CHAIR**—You have given us a lot of written information that the committee has had time to read and consider. Will you keep your statement to your submission fairly brief, so that we can get through the rest of the witnesses today? After you have given us a brief statement in support of your written submission, we will proceed to questions.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—We are concerned that the statement of evidence states that there are no environmental and heritage impacts arising from this proposal. We note Brigadier Kelly's comments, but we are not entirely satisfied about this, because there is a longstanding history of non-recognition of the Back Creek landscape listing and the social, cultural, environmental and heritage values of the area. As we said in our submission, the statement of evidence refers only

to natural values of the Canungra listing, and there is no mention of the Back Creek landscape listing, with its social, aesthetic, historical and natural national estate values. We believe that both the statement of evidence and the environmental management plan for the headquarters regional training centres are inadequate documents, as they do not record fully and accurately the environmental and heritage status of the Kokoda Barracks closed training area. As I have said, there is no mention of the Back Creek landscape listing for its social and cultural values.

The statement of evidence confirms that part of this proposal involves new remote facilities that may be further developed over time, yet no specific details were given about those facilities, such as their description, precise location and extent, or the activities at the facilities or the time frames of their expansion. We were and still are concerned that the facilities could result in serious adverse environmental and heritage impacts, which we have listed on page 6 of our first submission. Should any of those impacts arise in future, the community would regard it as a poor return for the money expended. Accordingly, we have made requests that the Public Works Committee take the actions listed on page 3 of our first submission. We have also asked for written assurances from Defence that the DInt redevelopment, including its new remote facilities and any extension of them, will not now or at any time in future be located in or affect the social, aesthetic, historical and natural national estate values of the Back Creek landscape.

We place on record that our association is not opposed to any justified redevelopment of the DInt centre that is in the national interest and that does not result in adverse impacts on Killarney Glen and the Back Creek Gorge and the public interest therein. As I have said, there is a longstanding refusal by Army and Defence to recognise social and cultural environmental and heritage values in the Killarney Glen-Back Creek Gorge area, and that stems back to 1984-96 in an Army review of land requirements for ministers. Also, a 1986-87 interdepartmental committee failed to identify those values, as did the 1990 publicly funded land management plan by Gutteridge, Haskins and Davey. Again, in 1996 the environmental management plan by Sinclair Knight Merz failed to identify those special environmental and heritage values. Against Heritage Commission advice, the Back Creek landscape listing was ignored in that environmental management plan.

In 1999 and again in 2000, at official meetings Defence personnel made two denials of the existence of social value for the Killarney Glen-Back Creek Gorge area, even though the Heritage Commissioner provided written advice to Defence of the existence of those values. The Army's EMP recommended the institution of a national estate values committee and an environmental management advisory committee. The status and the make-up of these is still not known. The Australian Heritage Commission recommended a local community presence on both committees. Our association should be part of those committees and should be consulted by the Army in respect of the whole Back Creek Gorge and its national estate values, not simply over access to Killarney Glen.

We believe it is inappropriate for Army and Defence to be the sole decision-makers concerning environmental and heritage matters, especially in the Killarney Glen-Back Creek Gorge area. There is a long-standing culture of 'might is right', 'the Army knows best' and 'the Army's environmental management credentials are above question'. This is not correct and there is considerable room for improvement, and we say that without in any way denying Army credit where credit is due. The problem as we see it is that principle is not reciprocated. We would be pleased to answer questions on the matter after a short comment from our president.



**Mr Lea**—I would just like to say that I completely endorse the comments made by our environmental officer. However, I wish to draw to the attention of the committee that there has never been an environmental impact statement for Killarney Glen and the Back Creek Gorge that provides for community input. Such an impact study is long overdue. I think our concerns are very much justified in this case. That is all I have to say.

**CHAIR**—Thank you very much. I am going to go first to the deputy chair. Do you have a question?

**Mrs CROSIO**—I have a number of questions. Mr Fitzgerald, you have referred to this statement a number of times in what you have just provided to us and I have also read it in the report. How would you describe the ‘social and cultural’ aspects of what we are talking about?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—I think the Heritage Commission defines ‘social’ as being those values such as recreational outdoor education and tourist values. Even Brigadier Darryl Low Choy, in a National Trust address which we included in our submission, cited the Australian Heritage Commission as the principal source of guidance as to what constitutes our heritage. His criteria for social value, if I remember correctly from that document, included recreational values, tourist values and outdoor education.

**Mrs CROSIO**—So your organisation has taken that definition into account in its submission.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Yes. That is the big difference between our association and many other conservation associations: we include social, cultural and even economic considerations in our definition of environment. We are not simply concerned with natural values and for too long here there has been a focus on natural values only, to the exclusion of social and cultural values. As the Heritage Commission has said publicly to the Beechmont community, the expression of social value at Killarney Glen necessitated continuing public access.

**Mrs CROSIO**—As you would be aware, most of the submission we are talking about this morning—and I brought up issues of costing—is looking at structures within the existing bounds here. I think we have been able to show with that question this morning that that is not actually going to interfere with the area that you are concerned about, but one of the other areas that you were concerned about was the relocation of the particular site. It has now been confirmed in public evidence that that is going to be four kilometres to the north and a different catchment area, so are you concerned any longer with that aspect of your submission?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—If that is the case—

**Mrs CROSIO**—No, not ‘if’. That is the case. It is positive, not hypothetical.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Accepting that, we would be satisfied that this proposal would not have any adverse impacts on the Back Creek landscape area.

**Mrs CROSIO**—You are really confirming for us what we were trying to find out about that: that you have no concern with it.

**Ms Nelson**—The acceptance of the Back Creek listing is something that we are very serious about too—the fact that Army accepts that, it documents it and has it in its records, that that listing is there—because it has been suppressed. The documents that Army have do not even mention it. It is very important that that listing is mentioned.

**Senator MURPHY**—Is this the National Estate list?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—The Back Creek landscape listing, yes.

**Ms Nelson**—Yes.

**Senator MURPHY**—On the National Estate?

**Ms Nelson**—On the National Estate.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Yes. It is on the full Register of the National Estate and it has never been acknowledged by the Army.

**Ms Nelson**—We are very concerned with that because the Howard government's decision to have public access into Killarney Glen means that people go down there—and it means that it has a social or cultural value. People are going there for recreation, and it is very important that that be accepted for that reason alone.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—And it is important that it is openly recognised. It was of grave concern to us when we read the statement of evidence to see reference to the Canungra listing with natural values only. Yet, for four years there has been this other listing which was very important to the community, and it is completely ignored. Naturally, we have concerns about that.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Is it being ignored because it is not listed in evidence before us or do you think it has been ignored because Army just does not—

**Mr Fitzgerald**—It is being ignored in all public statements.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Would your organisation be satisfied if, in future applications for any particular expansion of the site or in area works around here, the Army listed that they acknowledge those values? Is that what you are saying?

**Ms Nelson**—That would be a great help, yes.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—It would go a long way to instilling confidence in our association and in the community to see the Army publicly acknowledge the existence of the Back Creek landscape—that area—for its social and cultural national estate value, instead of the constant reference to only the natural values of the Canungra listing.

**Senator FERGUSON**—They have never denied its existence, have they?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—No, they have not denied it, but they have not acknowledged it publicly.

**Senator FERGUSON**—That is because it is listed, isn't it?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—As we pointed out in our second submission, if the full environmental and heritage status of an area is not openly described then, in a sense, it is difficult for other community bodies or even local authorities who read the document to make informed decisions as to whether the proposal, or any particular proposal, will impact on a cultural value. If you only list natural values and you say that there are no other impacts then who is to argue against that? If the Back Creek landscape listing was fully recognised in that document for its social and cultural value, not just for its natural value, then any member of the public would be in a position to make a fully informed decision as to whether or not there is an impact on these values.

**CHAIR**—We have an opportunity to recall Defence at the end of the hearing and perhaps that is a question that we can put to them at that time.

**Senator MURPHY**—Can you tell us something about this alleged breach of access? When did it happen?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—It happened on Friday, 13 July this year. Mr George Lea's mother received a phone call from a visitor to say that there had been firing down there and that it was open. She immediately phoned Beth and me. We thought, 'Well, this can't be right. It is open. We haven't received a notice of closure,' and we at first thought, 'It is Friday afternoon. Is it really necessary?' But we thought that we had better go and check, so we immediately went down to the entrance to Killarney Glen. Within a minute of arriving there two soldiers appeared at the gate in full camouflage uniform and carrying weapons. We went straight up to them and asked, 'Is a military exercise in progress?' They confirmed that it was. Beth queried the validity of this because there was no 'closed' sign on the Killarney Glen gate, the pedestrian gate was not padlocked and we had not received advice of a closure. The soldier concerned told us that the Army had been sending people out during the day. He said, 'You can go in if you want to but you will be told to leave.' We did not want to create undue complications.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Is this the only time that this has happened or has it happened on a regular basis?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—It is the first time it has happened at this level. Late last year there were some closures that we were not advised of, and there were some closures for activities other than military training. When we went in afterwards we found quite a lot of litter—just rubbish—that we had to pick up. I was surprised at that. I have served in the Army and, believe me, we are not anti-Army.

**CHAIR**—What do you see as a solution to that problem so it does not happen in the future? What would you like ideally to see happen?

**Ms Nelson**—When we found the first lot of litter I kept it because I assumed that we would be going to a meeting with the Army in a short time and that we would be able to take it along. Perhaps we could come to an agreement where there would be a handover/takeover day and an inspection at the end of a closure—so that we would know. There has not been anything since, and that was way back in March—quite a long time ago.

**Mrs CROSIO**—You said this one occurred in July, with the opening?

**Ms Nelson**—This latest one was in July.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Did you immediately get in contact with the Army to find out how that happened?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—No, we did not. We went down to the notice at the intersection of Gorge Road to Nerang to see if that sign said ‘closed’ or ‘open’. It said ‘open’. To be truthful about it, we had no confidence at that stage that anything would be said or done about this other than an apology or, ‘It won’t happen again.’

**CHAIR**—Can we go back to my original question? What mechanism would you like to see in place if the situation arises in the future—and hopefully it will not—when the sign says ‘open’ when the area should be closed?

**Ms Nelson**—I am emphatic in my belief that that recent violation of the public access arrangement was no accident or oversight. We spoke to the soldier at the gate. We told him that there was always a ‘closed’ sign on the gate. He told us he would report the fact that there had been a breach of protocol.

**CHAIR**—I understand your concern but I am asking—and I would like to get an answer to it—how would you like to see these matters resolved? What would be ideal, from your point of view, in getting a resolution?

**Ms Nelson**—To be able to be confident that when we have dealings with Army we are treated sincerely and seriously.

**CHAIR**—What process do you think is going to give you confidence that that can take place?

**Ms Nelson**—There have been so many little incidents that they have personally taken my confidence right away.

**CHAIR**—I do understand that.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Frankly, I am at a loss. I do not have an answer for that. Maybe there could be a full, open environmental impact statement where everybody could make their submission and out of that whole process could come some formal procedures or processes to which everybody would be bound. That, in a general sense, is the best answer that I can give to you today.

**Senator MURPHY**—Let us look at appendix 13 to your submission, which is a letter from the former Minister for Defence, John Moore. It says:

The arrangements for access are intended to provide for the needs and concerns of all parties. Army now has the mechanisms in place necessary to control public entry to Killarney Glen so that training may be conducted safely, and the public has been granted, for the first time, legal access to the area.

I will ask Army about that in due course. Are you happy about the letter that was sent to the secretary of the Friends of Back Creek Gorge?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—We were not entirely happy, because we were promised joint management of the site.

**Senator MURPHY**—But did you follow that up?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—We did follow it up. It caused great tension in our group—to be truthful about it—and we decided to try to make consultation work. We were in no position to really take a stand at that stage. Our family had been through enough for many years. We just wanted to make some sort of progress and move forward, even though we held reservations about that letter. You must remember too that to some extent the decision to grant public access was policy on the run. There were five years during which arrangements that were more well thought out could have been put in place.

**Mrs CROSIO**—You did want public access, is that right?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Our family has been fighting for public access for ages.

**Mrs CROSIO**—That is what I thought, from your submission.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Yes, and it is the Army and Defence who were totally opposed to any public access to that site.

**Mrs CROSIO**—I thought in answer to Senator Murphy you said that caused tension within your group.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—No. That was the joint management issue, the fact that we were not granted joint management. That was taken away from us at the first consultative meeting where the Army announced in front of Mrs Elson that there would be no joint management.

**Senator FERGUSON**—Who was promised the joint management?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Kay Elson, on 12 March at Killarney Glen.

**Senator MURPHY**—I will come back briefly to the access issue. With regards to public access, given that this is Defence land and they do have some management responsibilities, even though you might not agree with them—

**Mr Fitzgerald**—We entirely agree.

**Senator MURPHY**—At the end of the day, I am just trying to look at how we might deal with the critical issue of access to the area.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—On the morning of 12 March there was a rally at Killarney Glen when Kay Elson announced the decision. We had only had a short period to digest this proposal; we

received an unsigned fax from the Prime Minister. We were given to understand that advanced notice of closure would involve an actual notice at the gate, with some dates on it, advising the public that from such and such a date to such and such a date Killarney Glen would be closed.

**Senator MURPHY**—You do not have a problem with that?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—We have not got that much.

**Senator MURPHY**—If that were to happen, you would not have a problem with that approach?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—No.

**Senator MURPHY**—You acknowledge that there will be some times when it has to be closed?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Yes. Our family is on the record right from the very start, saying we wanted to share this place with the Army. We have never tried to exclude the Army from use of the area, but we do have some concerns about how it is used and how these arrangements are put into place.

**Senator MURPHY**—I have to say that I have not read all the documentation in detail, so you may have explained this in your submission: can you tell me what you see your role—or your group's role—as being, if there were a joint management arrangement? What role do you think you would have?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—We would like that to be extended to the whole Back Creek Gorge area, because of the particular national estate values there. We were given to understand that we would have the role of being able to manage that area on a day-to-day basis when it was open to the public.

**Senator MURPHY**—Doing what?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Visitor information. It would be similar to a national park: we could be doing ground maintenance, weed control, restoration—and there is a great need for that in Back Creek Gorge—guided tours, educational tours, visitor interpretation and information.

**Senator MURPHY**—Have you ever put a proposal together on that?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—We presented a detailed conservation management plan to Brigadier Hammond on 5 March this year. We had an immediate interim reply, which we considered was quite promising. He was going to investigate the matter and get back to us. To date, we have had no further reply.

**Senator FERGUSON**—I have been sitting here for the last 10 minutes trying to work out what issues of management and policy have to do with the proposed expenditure that we, as a

public works committee, are here to inquire into, within the existing arrangements that have been put forward. You are talking about policy and management issues and not—

**Mr Fitzgerald**—I appreciate what you are saying, Senator. Our submission arose from the fact that the Back Creek landscape listing was omitted from the Defence statement of evidence. We had some legitimate concerns about that, because any expansion of the new remote facilities over time, if they were to be put in Killarney Glen or the Back Creek Gorge area, could have adverse impacts in the future. If those incremental facilities were expanded, the authorities or even our association, might not be informed about them. We might just be told, ‘This has happened.’

**Senator FERGUSON**—History does not show that. Whenever there has been any public works proposal in any area, every interest group within the area is contacted, and a number of interest groups were contacted in this area.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—But Defence does have the management ability to decide, virtually on a day-to-day basis, that it might use that training area today—or for some facility—and it does not necessarily have to go through a whole set of rigorous open procedures such as these here today.

**Senator FERGUSON**—What is there that concerns you about the existing proposals we are looking at today?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—If we had written advice from the Army and Defence confirming what has been said today—that at no stage in the future will there ever be any adverse impact on the social and cultural values of the Back Creek Gorge area—we would be satisfied.

**Senator FERGUSON**—They could say that about the proposal that we have before us today. No-one knows what future proposals are going to be. We can only deal with proposals we have before us currently. Future governments of any persuasion might have different ideas.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Our concern was that, once this particular proposal was approved, some of these new remote facilities that might be further developed in time could be developed without anyone knowing about it or being told.

**Senator FERGUSON**—What do you mean by ‘further remote facility’? What remote facility are you talking about now?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—I am talking about the new remote facilities which Defence specified in their statement of evidence.

**Mrs CROSIO**—Which is now going four kilometres north. It is not going to impact.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Yes, but that was the basis upon which we made a submission. If the Back Creek landscape listing had been fully identified, with all its national estate values, and had there been a statement in there saying, ‘At no time, now or in the future, will any of these facilities be located in the Back Creek landscape or affect adversely the values of the Back Creek landscape listing,’ we would not have wasted our time presenting a submission. It is as simple as that.

**Senator FERGUSON**—I do not know that anybody can guarantee something will not happen at some stage in the future, because things change. Our concern, as the Public Works Committee, is with the current proposal, where the proposed facility is four kilometres or so north of the Back Creek Gorge and downstream of the Killarney Falls. I would have thought that the Army has responded quite positively in your case to any concerns you might have had, making sure that they do not have any impact on the area that you are concerned about.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—In relation to this proposal, that may be the case, but there was a statement made by Brigadier Kelly in which he claimed that there was great care and effort made in environmental management planning. The recent violations at Killarney Glen are an illustration that that is not necessarily the case.

**Senator FERGUSON**—Which violations?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—The violations of the public access arrangements—

**Senator FERGUSON**—The access arrangements? Is that an environmental issue?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Yes. We have been advised by the Heritage Commission—and it is stated in the previous Defence instructions on environment and heritage protection—that the definition of environment is not restricted to natural values; it includes social and cultural values.

**Senator FERGUSON**—You said in your statement—I think I have written it down correctly—that we should not take the view that the Army's environmental credentials are beyond question. We do not. That is why we question them. It is simply a misunderstanding of the role that we play to assume that we think the Army's environmental credentials are greater than anybody else's.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—I was not referring to the committee; I was referring to general attitudes. The Army and Defence would have the community believe that their environmental credentials are beyond question.

**Senator FERGUSON**—Is there any reason why you constantly refer throughout your submission to the Howard government and not to the Australian government, which it really is?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—No particular reason: it is the Howard government, it was the Hawke government—

**Senator FERGUSON**—It is not really. That is the way it is portrayed by some newspaper people, but you are talking about the Australian government. I notice a little bit further on you even talk about Mrs Elson and her government. I have the greatest admiration for Mrs Elson and the hard work that she does and, whilst she might make a very good Prime Minister, I do not think she has any current aspirations to that job. I am surprised at the language you use when you talk about Mrs Elson and her government and about the Howard government. We are talking about the Australian government. Governments come and go, but the government is always the Australian government. I am surprised at the terminology you use. That is all

**Proceedings suspended from 12.00 p.m. to 12.16 p.m.**

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**CHAIR**—We will resume the hearing. I remind the representatives of the Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association that you are still under oath. Senator Murphy wants the opportunity to ask another question. We will then ask everyone to leave the room while we take some evidence in camera from representatives of the Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association.

**Senator MURPHY**—Mr Fitzgerald, I understood you to say that you are happy for the Army to be here. Can you indicate to me that there is no objective on the part of the Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association to deny the Army access to the area?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—To Killarney Glen and Back Creek Gorge?

**Senator MURPHY**—Yes.

**Mr Fitzgerald**—That is absolutely the case; that is the truth. We have not, never have been, are not now or will be in the future opposed to some Army use of Killarney Glen and Back Creek Gorge. We just want to share it with them and have all National Estate values recognised, expressed and respected.

**Senator MURPHY**—I refer to the letter that was sent to Joyanne McGovern in respect of the public access process and the mechanism. Even though there has been a breach of the mechanism, you are generally happy with that although you have an objective for a joint management arrangement. Is that correct?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—We will deal with the access one first. We are generally happy with that. As we have said in our conservation management plan to Brigadier Hammond, we would like those access arrangements to be extended to the entire Back Creek Gorge, which has a history of access through it. Access through the entire gorge is one of the Heritage Commission's recommendations, by the way.

**Senator MURPHY**—You stated that you initially sought some joint management arrangement, but you have not got that. That is an objective you have?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—In principle, we do not mind whether there is consultation or joint management; we just want something to work and we want an end to some negative attitudes that have confronted us. In practice, maybe the only way to solve that is that we do have some management rights. To put it another way, our main concern is that under a consultative mechanism we really have no rights. The danger is that you are just told, 'This is going to happen.' As the Army has said to our group, we do not have the rights that Mrs Elson assured us that we did have.

**Senator MURPHY**—If we can put aside Mrs Elson's statement for the moment, in terms of consultation, that raises the question that, if there are proposed changes or any other proposals by Defence, you would like to be advised of them?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—Yes, and not just over Killarney Glen, but the whole of Back Creek Gorge.

**Senator FERGUSON**—I notice that you are an association. How many members does your association have?

**Ms Nelson**—We have 86.

**Senator FERGUSON**—Of those 86, how many would you consider to be active members?

**Ms Nelson**—At a regular meeting once a month, we would probably have an average of eight or nine.

**Senator FERGUSON**—How many members of your association, apart from you three, would have seen and read the submission that you have put in to this committee?

**Ms Nelson**—Those who have been to regular meetings would be well aware of what we were doing.

**Senator FERGUSON**—So the eight or nine of that membership?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—But we were cautious to observe the committee's requirements that that document not be released for public examination. It was the prerogative of the Public Works Committee to make it a public document.

**CHAIR**—But it does not apply to the membership of your own association, does it?

**Mr Fitzgerald**—We did not think that it would, but we were not sure so we erred on the side of caution any way.

**CHAIR**—I ask for the room to be cleared while we take evidence in camera.

*Evidence was then taken in camera, but later resumed in public—*

[12.33 p.m.]

**STAPLETON, Mrs Michelle Ann, Secretary and Funding Coordinator, Beechmont Community Association**

**CHAIR**—Welcome. We have received a submission from the Beechmont Community Association. It will be made available in a volume of submissions for the inquiry and also on the committee's web site. Do you wish to propose any amendment to your submission?

**Mrs Stapleton**—No.

**CHAIR**—I now invite you to make a brief statement in support of your submission.

**Mrs Stapleton**—As a community representative, our association has a network of subcommittees and affiliated organisations, and our objectives encompass advancing the community interests and services deemed to be beneficial to the citizens of the Beechmont district. We asked our affiliated organisation, the Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association, to keep our members regularly informed of matters following the Prime Minister's announcements, via Kay Elson, in March last year of public access management arrangements for Killarney Glen and Back Creek Gorge.

Regarding the DIntTC proposal, I note today that since the submissions went forward to your committee there have been two changes by the Army as to where that remote location is going. To me that is indicative of knee-jerk responses to our community's concerns and considerations. I am not sure where it would have gone if we had not put submissions in.

As I think Mrs Crosio suggested, there is no crystal ball. There may be future expansion and our concern is that we do not know whether Killarney Glen will be safe in the future. We have been told that the DIntTC proposal will not impact on Killarney Glen and Back Creek Gorge. We have also been told that the area will be required to be closed at certain times. Consultative processes have to have elements of reciprocity and trust. With such a poor track record, Army and the Department of Defence have done nothing to persuade our community that Back Creek Gorge is a key concern of theirs and that we can trust them with its future.

The Back Creek Gorge recreational area, including Killarney Glen, is extremely important to the surrounding community, not only in terms of its social and environmental benefits but also in terms of the ecotourism economic potential to our community. Ecotourism is the way of the future. It pumps millions of dollars into our economy. With the chickenfeed amount that the government, with the DIntTC proposal, is putting into this resource here, our concerns are still founded on the fact that we are still unsure of Killarney Glen's future. I reiterate that nothing Army has done has reduced our lack of trust.

Much public money has, as we have seen, been spent on Army studies and plans that are grossly deficient and do not identify the environmental and heritage values of Back Creek Gorge. We have done some studies ourselves. Our organisation, as part of a reference group, contributed to research regarding tourism in the Gold Coast hinterland being conducted by the

Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism at Griffith University. This organisation, the Australian Heritage Commission and the Department of Industry, Science and Resources developed a guidebook launched in May entitled *Successful tourism and heritage places: a guide for tourism operators, heritage managers and communities*.

Back Creek Gorge is a community resource and it is a heritage place—whether the Army and the Department of Defence like it or not and despite them having left it out of their environmental management plan. Within this guidebook it states that a heritage place provides additional income and employment, diversifies local economies, strengthens local identity and sense of purpose, and can help protect and maintain the use of places which mean a great deal to local people. I do not think the Army realises how much Killarney Glen and Back Creek Gorge mean to local people, nor their potential in the future for our economy.

If the Public Works Committee in its examination of the DIntTC proposal is unable to categorically ensure the preservation of the cultural heritage values of Back Creek Gorge, then the Beechmont Community Association asks that this matter be formally submitted to any other government department and/or agency that can do this, because at present the community has no faith in the Army and the Department of Defence. It is deeds not words that tell the story and no amount of words will give us that faith. With the burgeoning south-east Queensland population in terms of tourism potential, I question how relevant it is for the Army to have anything to do with looking after Killarney Glen. One of the considerations that we put to the committee is that the Department of the Environment and Heritage look at taking over Killarney Glen and then working cohesively, and with meaningful consultation and participation, with the Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association in benefiting that area, given its potential social, environmental and economic strengths.

**CHAIR**—I would like to clear up one point before I go to my colleagues for questions. The fifth dot point of paragraph 5 of the submission of the Beechmont Community Association refers to a newspaper report which indicated that the Joint Committee on Public Works had already tabled its report on the project. This came, I believe, from newspaper articles on the brief. That is quite incorrect. The only thing that has happened is what normally happens with a public works reference; that is, before the Joint Committee on Public Works can deal with the matter, the minister must come into parliament and formally refer the work to the committee. So there is no question that any report had been tabled on this project before this public hearing took place.

This is the procedure for all Public Works inquiries; that is, the matter is referred in the parliament to Public Works. Before the project can formally be given the go-ahead by the minister, the Joint Committee on Public Works must go through this procedure that we are going through today and then go back to the parliament and give a report on the procedures that we have undertaken and our recommendations. I want everyone here to understand that process and get that quite clear.

**Mrs Stapleton**—Thank you for that reassurance. There was also, at the time, a lot of Army public relations, if you will, or propaganda saying how wonderful this was for the community. It looked a little as if they had already accepted that it was all actually happening.

**CHAIR**—Bear in mind that, if you look at the record of this committee, both in the time that I have been chair and prior to that, you will notice that on many occasions this committee has reported back to parliament and asked for certain things to be done before projects went ahead or in fact did not even agree to those projects continuing. I want to assure everyone here that this committee is not a rubber stamp committee. This committee takes its responsibilities very seriously and will report back to parliament according to the evidence that it has heard. Now over to my colleagues for questions.

**Mrs CROSIO**—I would like to ask you the same question I asked the Back Creek association. Now that the Army have stated in public evidence before us today that the site they are going to have is quite different from the site they originally intended, are you happy?

**Mrs Stapleton**—No, I will never trust what they say, because they have said things in the past. It may not be in regard to the DIntTC proposal. There are certain questions that I would like the Army to answer at a later stage. For example, if they are not actually using Killarney Glen within the DIntTC proposal, what are they doing in there? We have never been told. We know that it has been a buffer zone for the Army. We want to know what exercises were taking place in there.

**Mrs CROSIO**—But, from the Back Creek association's evidence, it was only the one occasion. We have been able to narrow it down. Definitely on one occasion the 'closed' sign was not put up.

**Mrs Stapleton**—Yes. As I say, the area has in the past been used as a buffer zone and now they are doing military exercises in there. I am wondering why it has changed.

**Senator FERGUSON**—Firstly, Mrs Stapleton, you might regard changed proposals as knee-jerk reactions, but I would have thought that that is what the process is for—the submissions that are put in. If the Army looks at submissions put in by local communities and takes account of their concerns, that is not a knee-jerk reaction; that is in fact reacting to community concerns, which I would have thought would have allayed some of the fears that you have.

**Mrs Stapleton**—Looking back over the Army's track record, which is documented in many documents, they have said things before and they have changed tack, all in the name of defence of the nation. I know that a lot of the time the Army expect local government and communities to make changes to fit in with their needs because of the defence of the nation, but there is very little the other way around for communities. So our concerns are still not—

**Senator FERGUSON**—I suggest, with respect, that you are out of step with community concerns because, having been on the Joint Committee on Public Works now for five or six years and the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee for a number of years, I have found that Army and the defence forces have an excellent track record in working with the communities in the areas where they have land. In fact, in most cases, and as recently as the past three public hearings that we have had, the community have welcomed everything that the defence forces have done and the consultation that has taken place. It is possible that what you perceive to be inadequate consultation and a poor track record might reflect somewhat on the community here as much as on the Army.

**Mrs Stapleton**—Senator Ferguson, you have just made a major generalisation about the community. Basically, all I can do is represent my own community, and that is what I am here to do today. I also represent a number of communities around Queensland in the unfunded community centre network of Queensland, and I can tell you quite a few stories that do not add up to what you have just said. So your generalisation, in my terms, means that we are on opposite sides of the fence. I judge every individual situation on its merits. Today I am here to put our community's concerns forward, and that is all I can do today.

**Senator FERGUSON**—But you have made a broad, sweeping statement about the Army's track record—

**Mrs Stapleton**—In this area with regard to—

**Senator FERGUSON**—You did not say in this area; you talked about the Army's track record. I can tell you that their track record is recognised by this committee and others as being excellent with regard to community consultation and the way that they interact with the communities in which they have Defence Force personnel living.

**Mrs Stapleton**—Senator Ferguson, they do not with regard to the Beechmont community. We have eight affiliated organisations and eight subcommittees.

**CHAIR**—I suggest that we get back to the regular line of questioning.

**Mrs Stapleton**—Certainly.

**CHAIR**—In terms of your representation, can you give us an overview of the Beechmont Community Association: who do you represent, how many members do you have and where do your members live?

**Mrs Stapleton**—There are 98 members in this financial year. We have representation of a youth subcommittee, which is a 30-member strong youth organisation called RIFF, Real Interest for our Future. We have a funding subcommittee, we have a history subcommittee, we have a community library subcommittee, we have an arts and cultural subcommittee, we have a community market subcommittee and we have an information technology subcommittee. We have affiliated organisations, including the Beechmont playgroup, the Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association, the Beechmont Rural Fire Brigade—I think I have left out one or two.

**CHAIR**—And are your 98 members local people?

**Mrs Stapleton**—Yes, they are. Over the last three years, we have seen how easily community assets can be lost if governments and communities do not work together. It took us three years, dealing with six state government departments, to acquire our old school site for a multipurpose community facility. So we are quite au fait with bureaucracy and how it often does not work towards what the community's needs are. So that is our background.

**Senator MURPHY**—I assume you were here when we talked to the Back Creek Gorge Association. In so far as access is concerned, in your submission you say at point 5, 'Will access

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to the Killarney Glen be limited to our community? There are some limitations, as you know, but given that the Back Creek Gorge Association—and I do not wish to misrepresent them—I think, accept that there will be some limitations, are you okay with what, essentially, should be in place, albeit that there may have been some hiccups with the implementation of the process?

**Mrs Stapleton**—I feel that the aspects of ecotourism and proper management of the assets at Killarney Glen and the Back Creek Gorge can be better managed within the hands of the community and whatever other agency will work well with the community. That is up to your committee and Back Creek Gorge to work with whoever that other agency will be. There is not enough community input at present to have that asset managed properly, in my opinion.

**Senator MURPHY**—Given that this is Defence land and that Defence does use it, you are not seeking to deny Defence access to it, are you?

**Mrs Stapleton**—Certainly not, but we would like to know what they are actually doing in there.

**Senator MURPHY**—Also in paragraph 5 you say you want to know where the remote facilities are. Given that you would know that this is a Defence intelligence operation, why would it be essential for you to know the specific location of anything? It is about intelligence training.

**Mrs Stapleton**—I completely understand that there have to be vows of secrecy where intelligence is happening.

**Senator MURPHY**—It is to protect the interests of the nation.

**Mrs Stapleton**—Of course, but protecting the interests of the nation is about other assets as well. This is peacetime, and we are out to bring in import dollars and tourists are this country's bread and butter at the moment. University research shows that the south-east corner will become more and more populated, and tourists are heading this way because of our world heritage listed places.

**Senator MURPHY**—Have you taken the opportunity to see on the maps where the Defence people have indicated that the remote training will be? Does that seem to meet your requirements?

**Mrs Stapleton**—The distance, yes, but the management, no, and that is probably where it is not your realm, but the DInt proposal—

**Senator MURPHY**—No, a lot of these things are not in our realm at all, but they sometimes get caught up in the process. You say:

The Back Creek Gorge is listed on the Register of the National Estate ... for its social, aesthetic, historical and natural national estate values (Database No. 014735).

The Heritage Commission, in its letter to the committee, says that the Canungra land warfare training centre is listed on the Register of the National Estate for natural values. Of course, that is probably its primary listing; it will have other values.

**Mrs Stapleton**—Yes.

**Senator MURPHY**—There has been some criticism from community groups about Defence not acknowledging that, but its primary value is natural and it does include the other values. They have acknowledged that, and they are bound to comply with those values. The Heritage Commission has said that development should not impact on those values. The response by the Department of Defence—I am not sure whether you have had the opportunity to access it, but copies have been sent out—states:

... Defence fully appreciates the importance of the protection of the natural and cultural significance of this area and will ensure that construction and operation of the new main facility will not impact significantly in any way.

The remote training facility will be placed within, as I understand it, the Register of the National Estate area, and that is an issue that we will take up with Defence regarding whether they have spoken to the Heritage Commission and whether they have complied with any criteria that the Heritage Commission may place on that. Is there anything over and above that that they should do? If they comply with the Heritage Commission criteria, that should be sufficient, shouldn't it?

**Mrs Stapleton**—They have had a long time to comply with the Heritage Commission's recommendations, which they have not done yet, and also to the BCGCA's CMP—it is over five months, and we are waiting for a reply.

**Senator MURPHY**—Do you say that they have not complied with the Heritage Commission—

**Mrs Stapleton**—The recommendations of the Heritage Commission.

**Senator MURPHY**—Can you tell me which ones?

**Mrs Stapleton**—From memory, no, but my colleague Pat Fitzgerald will. My memory of that is not terribly—

**Senator MURPHY**—We have to deal with specifics when talking about something that has not been complied with in this respect.

**Mrs Stapleton**—The environmental committees have not yet been set up.

**CHAIR**—Would you like to take that question on notice and come back to the committee with a written response?

**Mrs Stapleton**—Yes, certainly, thank you. I know that the two committees, EMAC and the other committee, have not established them as yet.



**CHAIR**—Thank you very much, Mrs Stapleton.

[12.55 p.m.]

**HARRISON, Ms Rachael, Member, Catholic Worker**

**le GOULLON, Mr Damian, Member, Catholic Worker**

**CHAIR**—On behalf of the committee, I welcome you. The committee has received a submission from Catholic Worker, which will be made available in a volume of submissions for the inquiry and also on the committee's web site. Do you wish to propose any amendment to your submission?

**Mr le Goullon**—Only to clarify and complete that submission.

**CHAIR**—Yes. The committee has had time to consider your written submission, so would you please make a brief statement in support of it.

**Mr le Goullon**—I am acting as a witness for the Catholic Worker. I represent, in a sense, a very difficult thing to define. Just as Christianity is very difficult to define, so is the Catholic Worker. In a sense we see ourselves as a set of Christians who are acting in moral conscience and we have a number of supporters who also support our concerns over the use of this military facility and any possible further use of the military facility in terms of training Indonesian forces. We have been presenting public protest and concerns about this military facility for the past 10 years, over the training of Indonesian military forces. We submit that the facility should not upgrade and increase its capacity to provide this military assistance until it reviews its past conduct in encouraging forces, such as the Indonesian armed forces, to believe that their actions have the support of the armed forces of Australia.

To put some context and some past to our concerns, in 1991 the Dili massacre presented to all Australians clear evidence of the Indonesian forces and officers being involved in frightening human rights abuses. Despite this, in 1993, this facility—and I refer to *Hansard* question No. 1752 on 31 January 1995—provided military assistance to 36 Indonesian military personnel. In 1994—and I refer to question No. 2331 of *Hansard* on 28 August 1995—the facility also provided military assistance to 46 Indonesian military personnel despite clear evidence, as I said, that Indonesian forces were involved in human rights abuses. In 1997 over 100 people protested under the leadership of the Catholic Worker at this facility, including a priest, a professor of ethics and the leader of the Queensland Greens, about the use of this training facility.

In 1999 the Indonesian forces did indeed initiate a conspiracy of terror against the East Timorese people. Prior to this, we had been told by officers of this base that this military assistance and training would have a 'democratising effect' on the Indonesian armed forces. Subsequently, we have seen in 1999 that these forces were involved in a conspiracy of terror against the East Timorese people—terror which the Australian Defence Force was forced to engage and to stop, placing at risk the lives of thousands of Australians. Looking at the present: Indonesian forces continue campaigns of terror in West Papua and campaigns against the democratisation process of Indonesia. Not having learned the lessons of the past, there are still

those in Australia who are arguing that the accommodation and the training of these forces will encourage professionalism in their ranks.

We would like to argue to the contrary, that such training encourages and rewards a lack of professionalism and supports the immoral interests of these forces, making us complicit in their crimes. As long as the Indonesian forces occupy West Papua, Australia must protect herself against complicity with violations of the international law and treaties. I am no international law expert, but I would give passing reference to some very important documents in the history of this country. For example, the Atlantic Treaty says that all nations should respect the rights of people to choose the form of government in which they live and that they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them—just as West Papuans have been forcibly deprived of this right.

The Human Rights Charter says that people have the right to take part in government—and the West Papuans certainly are struggling to even maintain any control and any say in their country at the moment; and this is well documented by international bodies. Indeed, at the moment, the Indonesian forces are under review for crimes against humanity, in the eyes of the international community—which makes us question whether principle 7 of the Nuremberg principles, which suggests that complicity in the commission of a crime against peace, a war crime or a crime against humanity—as set forth in principle 6—is a crime under international law.

To put it simply, this facility is building further accommodation. Building a house might not seem to be much of a crime but, when you look at the purpose that the house is intended to be used for, you must consider whether that house should be built at all. For example, would the innocent huts that were built in Nazi Germany to basically act as concentration camps be seen by a public works committee as just an innocent building? Should we also look at the idea that any expansion of ability to accommodate further armed forces, without a complete review of our past actions, must basically ask whether we are actually accommodating human rights abuses? So we are asking that no further support for the upgrading of this facility be allowed, until the public is told whom in the near it will accommodate and we are assured that it will not accommodate the Indonesian armed forces.

**CHAIR**—Thank you. I now invite the committee's questions.

**Senator MURPHY**—Taking account of what you have said, with regard to this particular training centre, would you acknowledge that it is important for the security of our own country to at least have some form of intelligence?

**Mr le GOULLON**—If that intelligence is supporting the human rights of our regional nations, yes, it is in the interests of our own country. But if that military intelligence is supporting people who are averse to the principles which belie our Constitution and our commitments to international treaties, then it is against our security as a nation.

**Senator MURPHY**—I accept that. I was asking whether it was important to have intelligence for the protection of our own nation.

**Mr le GOULLON**—As long as that intelligence is accountable to the Australian people and is to serve the interests of the Australian people. The last couple of years mean you have to question whether our security has been put at risk by the activities of secrecy and support of the Indonesian armed forces. It is a very clear historical case that this country's security is put at risk by allowing those Indonesian forces the feeling, and the cultural illusion, that they are not responsible to their obligations under international treaties.

**Senator MURPHY**—I do not want to have a long debate about it, but we are dealing with a human rights issue on the one hand and an intelligence issue on the other.

**Mr le GOULLON**—Intelligence is very connected to human rights. Intelligence skills most certainly affect—

**Senator MURPHY**—I am thinking about Australian human rights and about whether they are being adequately protected. I have got to say that it might also be in the interests of people in West Papua in the longer term. You could go around the world and look at all of the arguments about human rights—and there are plenty of them; I agree with that—but not all of them are being fixed up overnight. It may well serve the interests of this country, in terms of the long-term objectives of human rights, to have some strategic intelligence about how people are working in defence forces elsewhere in the world.

**Mr le GOULLON**—I put it to you that it does not serve the interests of Australia.

**Senator MURPHY**—That is a matter of opinion.

**Mr le Goullon**—It does not serve the moral interests of Australia. It may serve certain interests in the Australian economic community, but it does not serve the interests of Australia to support human rights abuses globally.

**Senator MURPHY**—I was not suggesting that. I do not think that anyone here is suggesting that.

**Mr le Goullon**—Well, military training is—

**Senator MURPHY**—What I would suggest to you is that it is in our interests—

**Mrs CROSIO**—Actually, I find it obscene to have in evidence here at a public meeting that you believe that our forces are supporting human rights abuses. I will follow my questions up after my Senate colleague.

**Mr le Goullon**—I put it to you, Janice, that I am putting the case that, in the past, the hospitality we have given Indonesian armed forces has been seen as a green light of support to those forces for their actions.

**Senator MURPHY**—It is an interesting thing that in a democracy like ours we are able to have variances of opinions. I guess that is where we are at the moment.

**Mr le Goullon**—Absolutely.

**CHAIR**—And public discussion like this is about this issue. I do not think that the green light has been given to any such thing but, again, we are able to have this open and public discussion about this issue in this country.

**Mr le Goullon**—The point is: can we take the risk that we may be complicit? Can we put ourselves at that risk?

**Mrs CROSIO**—Can I put to you the question—and I should not be here to question that risk rate—of whether we can also take the risk, as the fourth largest continent in the world, and an island continent at that, of becoming isolated in the long run because we have, in our Defence Forces, a lack of intelligence and expertise and training? If we are going to close our doors to everything, people are not going to know what is going on in the rest of the world. I also put it to you that I did find it rather offensive—and I put it on the public record—that we, in the Public Works Committee, would build a house with Nazi Germany thinking it was going to be a gas chamber.

**Mr le Goullon**—I did not suggest that the Public Works Committee—

**Mrs CROSIO**—Well, it was almost implicit—

**Mr le Goullon**—I was using it as a metaphor to highlight the concern that just a simple building or accommodation may have many moral issues surrounding it and to present the relevance of my submission.

**Mrs CROSIO**—I see what you are saying, but can I also take it then—on account of what you have said and what is in the submission that your association has supplied to us—that, basically, you are objecting to Indonesians being trained.

**Mr le Goullon**—No, Indonesian military personnel. Look, I would be happy for Indonesian children to be taught some subjects at school here. We are concerned about Indonesian military personnel.

**Senator FERGUSON**—What about Philippine military personnel?

**Mr le Goullon**—At one time—in 1989—we had grave concerns. We heard evidence and felt that it would be inappropriate, given the human rights record of the Philippines under the Marcos regime, to undertake that training. We have to be realistic that times do change. We are hoping for the democratisation of Indonesia in the future, but we cannot accept that democracy lives unless West Papuans are given active self-determination.

**CHAIR**—Excuse me, I must vacate the chair and ask my colleague Mrs Crosio to deputise for me.

**Senator MURPHY**—I did not think that there would be too many in the Indonesian army currently that would think that Australia's hospitality has extended any benefit to them.

**Mr le Goullon**—We are in contact with the East Timorese community, who quite openly claim that Indonesian armed forces boast of their time in Australia.

**VICE-CHAIR(Mrs Crosio)**—That would be in the past.

**Mr le Goullon**—In the past.

**Senator MURPHY**—They may well have done that, but I do not think that there are too many now—I do not see too many handshakes going on.

**VICE CHAIR**—No, we are not the most popular nation in Indonesia—fortunately or unfortunately. We could go on and have a foreign affairs debate here, but this is not what our charter is as far as public works are concerned. As you realise, we have an obligation to look at the costing and also the structure going on. Does your organisation actually feel that the role of training of foreign intelligence personnel at Canungra should continue in any shape or form?

**Mr le Goullon**—I feel that it should not continue until it is fixed to a set of principles that include the public being regularly informed about which military personnel are to be trained and that allow for community consultation and the ability of experts such as Amnesty International to give the government advice as to the human rights consequences of the military aid in the countries involved. Amnesty International has at times clearly and quite publicly not supported the training of Indonesian military personnel.

**Senator FERGUSON**—I must say, it is very interesting to have a policy debate on foreign affairs when we are trying to determine public expenditure of money on the facilities here. We have been assured by the people here that we are only replacing existing dysfunctional facilities, overcrowded accommodation and purpose built facilities. There is no introduction of any new capability at Kokoda Barracks.

**Mr le Goullon**—I think it is pretty clear from my reading of the Army submission that there will be an increased capacity to accommodate personnel.

**Senator FERGUSON**—There will be an increased capacity, but it does not say anything about an increased capacity to accommodate foreign people. It does not say anything about that at all. To the best of my knowledge, there have been no Indonesians trained here for at least two years. We, as the Public Works Committee, cannot commit future governments; we do not have a role to commit future governments. Our role is to determine whether the expenditure of public money in this facility is justified. In fact, those are the issues that we should be talking about. If you want to debate the issues of Irian Jaya or West Papua—whatever you choose to call it—or those other things, they are for a different forum, not the Public Works Committee. Our job is to make sure that the taxpayers' dollars that we are using here in this facility are used for the purpose for which they are designed and that they are justified. Other foreign policy matters are for another debate, but not here.

**Mr le Goullon**—I put it to you, Senator, that this expenditure of public money is basically part and parcel of AusAID's commitment to military support. I feel that for any military assistance there is a set of guidelining principles, which include concerns about human rights within AusAID's guidelines, which are available for public comment.

**Senator FERGUSON**—How do you commit AusAID to the spending that is proposed here at Kokoda Barracks?

**Mr le Goullon**—Defence cooperation and military training are, in a sense, a form of aid and assistance to these countries and, therefore, facilities which are made available to them are also accountable to our general guidelines of assistance and aid to other countries.

**Senator FERGUSON**—I think we are travelling down different tracks, Mr le Goullon. I am not sure that yours is the majority view in Australia. I think that we will just have to take into account what you have said when we are making our final deliberations on these proposed works.

**Mr le Goullon**—Yes, we would hope that you could make a recommendation which will ensure the public concern over this issue.

**Senator FERGUSON**—It is your concern; it not necessarily a major public concern.

**Mr le Goullon**—I think it is fairly clear that Australians are incredibly concerned about our relations with Indonesia. Historically, I think I can speak with confidence in saying that.

**Senator FERGUSON**—I do not think we will debate the issue here.

**VICE CHAIR**—Nevertheless, I think you will have to agree. We can always supply you with a copy of our act. It is one of the oldest acts of the parliament. I think the Public Works Committee was set up in 1913 to make sure that the taxpayers' dollar is being spent wisely and well. Regarding some of our definitions, even though we refer to houses being built and we do not know how they are going to be used in the future, it is a pertinent point. At least it allows the public access to bring their grievances forward, as you have done today, and this is what our committees are all about.

**Mr le Goullon**—Yes.

**VICE CHAIR**—But, as my senator colleagues have said, this is a bit wide of the mark. We did hear from our committees earlier today, too, regarding the environmental aspects of it. Again, it is a bit wide of the mark, but it gave at least a public forum so that all of this can be taken on board for reference in years to come. I think that is part of your referral to us. Reading your submission when it was supplied to us—and I come from New South Wales, not Queensland—what is the 'Catholic Worker'? I know you say it is a community group, but is it an association, a committee of people or a group of people?

**Mr le Goullon**—It is very difficult to define, as I said, because we are not—

**VICE CHAIR**—Do you have a committee of 10, 20 or 50 people?

**Mr le Goullon**—No, we are not an incorporated body and we do not see ourselves as having a systemic structure, because under our faith we believe that people who speak with a prophetic voice to the moral conscience of the nation are, in a sense, in community with us. Therefore,

there were 90 people who decided to come into community with us to do actions of protest to the point of arrest at this military facility, including a priest and a professor of ethics. As I say, we see the Catholic Worker as people who are in community with our concerns.

**Senator FERGUSON**—Although this is not your submission why, after a very short letter written by Jim Dowling, did we then proceed to have a response to a final report from the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee?

**Mr le Goullon**—Could you repeat the question?

**Senator FERGUSON**—Yes. We have a hearing of the Public Works Committee and we received a very short letter from Jim Dowling—

**Mr le Goullon**—Yes.

**Senator FERGUSON**—which raised issues about foreign troops, but the rest of the submission is just a response to a final report of the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee which talks about things which have absolutely nothing to do with the Army world.

**Mr le Goullon**—In a sense, Jim provided that as evidence. He is seeking a public forum for his concerns and he has felt, up to this point, that his concerns have not been dealt with adequately and that they continue. I suppose he is presenting that as evidence that he has continuing concerns. He has raised them in a responsible public fashion and he will continue to do that.

**Senator FERGUSON**—I suggest that he finds another public forum because those are not issues that we can address.

**Mr le Goullon**—I think that this Public Works Committee has a direct connection to the issues.

**VICE CHAIR**—We thank you for your submission and we will take your comments on board.



[1.17 p.m.]

**DOWSE, Lieutenant Colonel Simon Richard, Commandant, Defence Intelligence Training Centre, Department of Defence**

**FERRARIS, Mr Diego Felice, Director Project Delivery, Department of Defence**

**KELLY, Brigadier Garry Ross, Director General Capital Infrastructure, Department of Defence**

**RUSSELL, Mr Peter, Project Consultant, May and Russell Architects**

**VICE CHAIR**—I recall the representatives from the Department of Defence. I remind you that you are still under oath. I invite you to make supplementary statements in support of your submission and to comment on the evidence that has been given to us today. We will then proceed to further questions.

**Brig. Kelly**—I would like to respond to clarify some points and to expand on our view in respect of other points. I acknowledge that, if we had identified the location of the field training facility, much of the discussion this afternoon may not have taken place. However, we considered at that stage that it was not a significant issue. The relocation into the bush of four demountables, which became available when we were no longer using them at the main facility, did not seem to be a huge issue. We simply identified in the evidence that it would be adjacent to or near the cantonment area. As a result of the submissions, we identified a likely spot and indicated where it would be in general terms. However, because we did it quickly, we had not identified the impact that it might have on the range templates in future. We reviewed that and came up with the final location that we showed yesterday. I acknowledge that we did not identify the location initially, and if we had done so, we may not have had some of these discussions.

The issue of the Back Creek listing needs to be addressed. We simply identified that the whole of the Canungra area other than the cantonment area was on the Register of the National Estate. The Back Creek listing overlaps the Canungra Land Warfare Centre Training Area listing, but we had not specifically identified that because, from the point of view of it being listed on the RNE, it did not seem to be particularly relevant. However, we note that one part of the training area is covered by two registrations on the RNE.

Much has been made of the fact that Defence has not been recognising the cultural and social values. As I have been involved in this for only the last couple of days, I can only comment that Defence is entitled to refer only to the natural values because the Register of the National Estate database lists only the natural values. The two documents that we have taken from the Internet, which I am happy to provide and table, list under ‘class’ for both registrations that the class is ‘natural.’ That is all that is said. That seems to be supported by the response from the Australian Heritage Commission which simply says, ‘Canungra Land Warfare Training Centre, a place listed on the Register of the National Estate for natural values.’

There are some other comments within the three or so pages of each of these documents that indicate that, for example, 'It is possible that indigenous cultural values may exist in this place. As yet the AHC has not identified, documented nor assessed these values.' And there is also a comment that says that the 'Back Creek River area is a spectacular river gorge and rainforest landscape that is held in high esteem by the South-East Queensland community for its scenic and recreational values.' I do not think that is in dispute at all but that does not relate to the way it is classed; that seems to be some sort of amplification of the description of the area. So from the point of view of Defence denying that cultural and social values exist, I think it is irrelevant. If the official classification is for natural values, we are entitled to simply refer to it in those terms.

I should make the observation that the incident that occurred on 13 July is being taken seriously. It was eventually reported and it is being taken seriously. It is being investigated. I understand that the Back Creek area has been available for backpackers, bushwalkers or whatever you like for virtually all of this year, except for a total of about 6½ weeks. I understand that the intent of the local agreements that it will be available when it is not required for military training is being met.

I must place on the record that I cannot state categorically that there never ever will be some impact on the area; that would simply be inappropriate. All I can say is that there is no plan to do any development in the Back Creek area and that this project has no impact whatsoever on the Back Creek area. I cannot judge what might happen in 20 years time. I would make the comment that joint management does not seem to be an appropriate way ahead for a part of the Defence estate which is owned by Defence. Consultation, advice and cooperation probably is appropriate. I would advise the committee that Lieutenant Colonel Thorburn, the Manager of Infrastructure in South-East Queensland, has written to the Back Creek Gorge Association advising them that he intends to establish an environmental advisory committee by the end of this year and advising them that a conservation group will be one of the participants in that committee. I have seen these environmental advisory groups, or committees, established in a number of areas, including at Shoalwater Bay and at the Mount Bundy training area in the Northern Territory, and they are very successful.

In terms of some of the comments made from the Beechmont Community Association, I would simply make a personal observation—but I think it would be backed up by experience around the country—that tourism, even ecotourism, would have a much bigger impact on the environmental values of the area we are talking about than a few soldiers occasionally walking around it. I would also make a comment on the observation that Army does not realise the importance of the gorge to local people. I would make the observation that many of the local people are Army. My experience would be that the Army, as a group, probably has a higher percentage of people involved in bushwalking or similar activities. I am unable to comment on any of the observations made by the Catholic Worker. I think that the decision as to who trains at this facility is a government one. That will change with international circumstances over the years.

**VICE CHAIR**—Are there any other further comments?

**Lt Col Dowse**—If I may just read on to the record, for the record, that the last Indonesians trained at the Defence Intelligence Training Centre were three members of the Indonesian Armed Forces, trained in 1997.

**Senator FERGUSON**—It is now four years since.

**Lt Col Dowse**—That is correct.

**VICE CHAIR**—In the statement you have just given, Brigadier, you stated that the mishap that occurred when the gates were left open was eventually reported.

**Brig. Kelly**—I understand that it was not reported immediately, in which case it may have been able to have been investigated immediately and solved immediately.

**VICE CHAIR**—Thank you. You have just said that letters have been sent with regard to establishing an advisory committee.

**Brig. Kelly**—Yes, an environmental advisory committee.

**VICE CHAIR**—When was that correspondence entered into?

**Brig. Kelly**—My advice is that it was sent several months ago. We will obtain a copy of the letter.

**VICE CHAIR**—I will take that on board. Statements have been made that it has not been received, and I feel sure that further correspondence will be entered into. Rather than writing, could I advise—I may not be backed up in this—that it would not hurt to sit down and talk with people and perhaps establish a committee that way and bring them together.

**Senator FERGUSON**—Colonel Dowse, you said there had been no Indonesians trained in the last four years. Have you had other foreign nationals trained here?

**Lt Col. Dowse**—If I may, I would refer to my earlier response today concerning the overseas trainees who have come to DIntTC since 1999. If you wish, I can read those figures back into the record. However, we have had, by my quick reckoning, in the order of 65 trainees over the last three years, excluding those that we go overseas to train, and I mention specifically the Republic of the Philippines and Thailand in that regard.

**Senator FERGUSON**—And, in response to the witnesses from the Catholic Worker, to the best of your knowledge there is no proposal current to train any Indonesians in this facility?

**Lt Col. Dowse**—That is correct, and I can say further that my understanding of the intent being demonstrated by both the Department of Defence and higher is that that is unlikely to happen.

**Senator MURPHY**—With regard to the breach of the access process, I understand the mechanism that operates is that when the facility or the area spoken about is closed there is signage put up to give effect to that.

**Lt Col. Dowse**—If I may, I will just go briefly through the process and that will include the answer to your question. Essentially what happens is that once a training requirement is confirmed as requiring use of that particular area then a number of things start to happen. The range itself is booked and, as soon as that range booking is confirmed, the signage you talk about is notified and the people who are concerned with the process are also notified. The three signs that we use are: a sign at the cemetery—which was referred to by a previous witness—at the three-way intersection slightly to the north; a sign up at Beechmont; and a sign at Killarney Glen itself. Faxes are sent to the stakeholders, including Mr Lea and Ms Nelson, in response to the range booking, indicating to them that the Killarney Glen area will be closed for military training at a particular time. Faxes are also sent to the Canungra Information Centre and to the Queensland Federation of Bushwalking Clubs. If there is a short notice requirement, then telephone calls are made to establish this information. I would also point out that the default setting for Killarney Glen is ‘open’, and that there is written commitment being made that Killarney Glen will be open during Queensland school holidays, public holidays and at any other time not required for military training.

**Senator MURPHY**—Protection of the register of National Estate values: I ask a question with regard to the letter from the Australian Heritage Commission in which they said that a review of documentation appeared to indicate that it was not possible to assess whether or not the proposal was likely to have an adverse impact on the National Estate values of the Canungra area. It went on to talk about the remote facilities, saying it was unclear what the impacts of the new remote facilities would be, if any, as no information was provided in the referral regarding the proposed relocation sites of the demountable building or associated access infrastructure. In your response to that, you say the decision about the location has only been finalised in the last two weeks. Have you advised the Heritage Commission of the area proposed and whether or not there are any likely impacts on the register of National Estate values?

**Mr Ferraris**—We have not advised them as yet, but we do intend to do so.

**Senator MURPHY**—Would you please advise the committee at what point in time you have done that? We may also wish to contact the Heritage Commission for a further view on their part.

**Mr Ferraris**—Certainly.

**Senator MURPHY**—On the issue of rubbish, as you would have heard there is an accusation against the Department of Defence and its members for littering the area used. It has been suggested by the committee that perhaps, if the people then finding the rubbish were to bag the rubbish up, you would be able to identify it as defence rubbish? In some instances defence rations et cetera, if they are utilised, are identifiable as defence rubbish. I assume that you would take that issue up with the members of the forces, if that were the case.

**Brig. Kelly**—It may be that it is possible to identify that the rubbish originated from a Defence source; in which case it could become part of an investigation.

**Senator MURPHY**—Yes, that is just an issue. I understand fully the fact that it may not be and that, of course, there are plenty of other people who can also litter. In terms of the mechanism that is in place and the consultation process—in so far as you, Brigadier Kelly, mentioned the establishment of an advisory committee—are you aware of what process will be used to appoint an environmental representative? You may not be aware of it, but will there be a consultation process with local groups?

**Brig. Kelly**—I cannot advise what the intent is, because I have just been informed of that intent. I can only tell you what has been the norm in other places. It has been for a committee to be set up with an appropriate Defence person as chair. That is generally someone from the Defence Infrastructure Organisation. Other key members appear on the committee; for example, from within Defence representatives of range control organisations and, potentially, users. It generally includes, for example, a representative from conservation groups—one representative for however many groups might be interested in the area, if that is appropriate; and a representative from traditional—

**Senator MURPHY**—How is that representative—

**Brig. Kelly**—That would be decided by the conservation groups, generally.

**Senator MURPHY**—That is all I wanted to know. Thank you.

**VICE CHAIR**—Further to Senator Murphy's question, you did say, Brigadier, that Lieutenant Colonel Thorburn wrote to the Environment Advisory Committee—

**Brig. Kelly**—No, he wrote to the Back Creek Gorge Association.

**VICE CHAIR**—I thought it was to the Environment Advisory Committee.

**Brig. Kelly**—No. It was to advise of the setting up—

**VICE CHAIR**—For the Back Creek group; I am sorry. For the evidence of this committee, could we have a copy of that letter?

**Brig. Kelly**—Yes.

**VICE CHAIR**—Could I suggest that both groups that appeared here before us today—Back Creek Gorge and Beechmont Community Association—as an exercise be forwarded a copy of that letter as well?

**Brig. Kelly**—The letter, from what I am advised was, in fact, forwarded to the Back Creek Gorge Association.

**VICE CHAIR**—Perhaps that is something to be followed up. I would like a copy of it for our committee.

**Brig. Kelly**—Yes. The indication is that it was not received.

**VICE CHAIR**—That information was just from the gallery; but, if indications were that it has not been received, could that be followed up, so that both of those groups who are concerned could at least have a copy of it? As there are no further questions, I would like to thank the witnesses who have appeared before the committee today, and I thank those witnesses most sincerely on behalf of the committee: the Back Creek Gorge Conservation Association, Beechmont Community Association and Catholic Worker. I think a committee hearing such as this today, even though we are a public works committee, showed really that democracy does work in this country by allowing people to appear. Perhaps using a thin wedge to put their submissions forward, nevertheless they have been able to do that. We appreciate, on behalf of the committee, the time, effort and trouble that has been taken and we are particularly thankful for the opportunity extended to this committee this morning to have inspections and a private briefing. That is something that we, as a committee, do on a regular basis prior to a hearing; and it certainly was very beneficial.

Resolved (on motion by **Senator Ferguson**):

That, pursuant to the power conferred by section 2(2) of the Parliamentary Papers Act 1908, this sectional committee authorises publication of the evidence given before it, and submissions presented, at public hearing this day.

**Committee adjourned at 1.35 p.m.**