

Issues and Conclusions

Works at Fishermans Bend

- 3.1 In its main submission Defence states that this project includes works in Melbourne to provide office accommodation and laboratory facilities for the Incident Response Regiment at the DSTO establishment at Fishermans Bend.¹ The Committee sought further information on the facilities at Fishermans Bend and clarification on its inclusion as part of the Holsworthy works.
- 3.2 Defence confirmed that the Fishermans Bend component is included in the total project cost estimate, adding that works at Fishermans Bend comprise a small extension to the existing DSTO facilities to support the specific technical and analytical requirements of the Incident Response Regiment.²
- 3.3 Defence reported that twenty staff will be accommodated at the Fishermans Bend DSTO facility. This figure includes ten fulltime staff from DSTO and Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel, and a further ten staff on a regular basis from the Incident Response Regiment.

1 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 13

2 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 2

Building/Barracks Services

Air-conditioning

3.4 In its main submission Defence states that the type of air-conditioning system to be used in the project is yet to be determined.³ The Committee enquired as to whether the air-conditioning system had been determined and the reasons for selecting the particular system.

3.5 Defence replied that the air-conditioning system to be used comprises:

...centrally located air cooled condensers providing refrigerant to ceiling mounted cassette units...⁴

Defence added that a building management system would monitor air-conditioning to ensure ecologically sustainable development targets being met, a reduction in energy costs, and the use of natural ventilation where possible being maximised.

3.6 Specific information on the air-conditioning system was not included in Defence's main submission as the type of system was not determined at the time Defence submitted its evidence. By the time of the public hearing, Defence had determined that air cooled condensers would be used for the project.⁵

Child Care Facilities

3.7 Defence states in its main submission that the existing 40 place child care facility, 'the Little Diggers Centre', will be replaced under a separate project with a 90 place child care/day care facility within the next two years.⁶ The Committee sought clarification as to why new child care facilities, planned to be built within two years, were not included as part of the current project. In response, Defence informed the Committee that the replacement of the on-base Holsworthy child care facility is part of a separate national Defence child care initiative.⁷

3 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 41

4 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 3

5 *ibid*, page 4

6 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 61

7 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 8

Provision for People with Disabilities

- 3.8 Defence states in its main submission that facilities will be provided for most buildings in accordance with current codes and policies. However Defence later states that for some workshops and external training structures:

...dispensation for non-compliance with Building Code of Australia [BCA] disabled access requirements will be sought.⁸

The Committee sought further information regarding the process of receiving dispensation for non-compliance with the BCA disabled access requirements.

- 3.9 Defence explained that all Commonwealth agencies have a designated officer who can assess and provide the dispensation. For Defence projects, dispensation is assessed on specific project-by-project basis.⁹ Defence added that in general, all buildings will be compliant with the exception of the logistic workshops. The building certifier, who also assesses fire protection of the project, will alert Defence of any non-compliant areas that may require dispensation.¹⁰

Fire Protection System

- 3.10 Given the bushfire threat of the area Defence explained that, where possible, a 100 metre buffer-zone is to be established around buildings. In areas where the full buffer-zone can not be achieved Defence will incorporate design features to reduce exposure to bushfire. Furthermore, after consultation with the local rural bushfire service, filling points on the new ring main have been installed.¹¹

Fire Codes and Standards

- 3.11 In its main submission Defence states that the project requires design and construction certification in accordance with the BCA, Defence Manual of Fire Protection Engineering, and relevant State and departmental codes

8 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 52

9 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 9

10 *ibid*, page 10

11 *ibid*, page 6

and standards.¹² The Committee enquired as to whether Defence had yet attained the appropriate fire protection certification.

- 3.12 Defence assured the Committee that the project would meet requirements of the BCA and the Defence Manual of Fire Protection. Certification from appropriate authorities would be carried out at the end of the design process and again at the completion of construction. Defence stated that upon completion of the project, the NSW Fire Brigade and the Rural Fire Service would have an opportunity to visit the site. Furthermore, Defence will look to satisfy specific industrial and military fire protection requirements which extend beyond the BCA and Defence Fire Manual.¹³

Fire Hydrants and Sprinklers

- 3.13 Defence states in its main submission that the existing site fire hydrant and sprinkler system does not meet current Australian standards.¹⁴ The Committee sought reassurance that after base redevelopment, the fire hydrant and sprinkler system would meet current Australian standards and that the site would be adequately protected.
- 3.14 Committee was assured by Defence that all construction with the project, including the fire hydrant and sprinkler system, will meet current Australian standards. However, Defence could only guarantee that these standards of fire protection will be achieved in areas identified as part of this project.¹⁵
- 3.15 In the event of a fire within the barracks, Defence reported that the NSW Fire Brigade would respond as with any other regular fire alarm instance. In addition, the Emergency Response Squadron, from within the Incident Response Regiment, has the capability to handle fire threats if required, however NSW Fire Brigade would act as first response to fires at the barracks.

Consultation

- 3.16 In its main submission Defence lists a number of authorities and organisations to be consulted during development of the project.¹⁶ The
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12 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 53b

13 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 5

14 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 29a

15 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 5

16 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 62

Committee was interested to know what level and types of consultation had been undertaken to date, and what feedback had been received.

- 3.17 Defence stated that authorities and organisations consulted were informed of the plans to construct facilities, with limited feedback regarding the project. Furthermore, Defence provided briefs to the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) in Canberra on 31 May 2005 and the Liverpool City Council on 17 June 2005. No significant issues relating to this project were identified at either brief.

Australian Defence Force Personnel

- 3.18 The Committee was interested to know what level of consultation Defence had undertaken with ADF personnel in respect of the project. Defence explained that there had been extensive consultation with ADF personnel, who had discussed issues and concerns with the project manager to ensure user requirements are addressed. A representative of the project manager group acknowledged the significant level of input provided by ADF representatives in the design of the project.¹⁷

Liverpool City Council

- 3.19 Given that Holsworthy Barracks is located within the Liverpool Military Area (LMA) and this project being a part of the draft LMA Master Plan, the Committee enquired as to what consultation had been undertaken with the Liverpool City Council. Defence was unable to comment in detail about consultation specific to this project, but stated that:

...as a normal process with all Defence bases, particularly Holsworthy and other sites, the local community and the councils are engaged on a variety of occasions to address any of the issues what we [Defence] might be doing or what the council proposes.¹⁸

Integral Energy

- 3.20 According to its submission, Integral Energy is currently in negotiations with Defence with respect to:
- securing additional real estate adjacent to the existing substation to permit the installation of extra capacity to the site; and

17 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 12

18 *ibid*, page 7

- identifying a site to establish a new zone substation in a location to be agreed in order to secure supply available to the subject location.¹⁹

The Committee sought further information on the negotiation process between Defence and Integral Energy, and what stage negotiations have reached.

- 3.21 Defence informed the Committee that Integral Energy operates a substation on Defence land, and is required to give priority power to the Holsworthy base, with any spare capacity used in the local area. There are currently two feeder lines from the existing substation at 4.5 MvA each (providing a total of 9 MvA) which can accommodate the current base peak demand capacity of 6.8 MvA. Defence continued that any expansion in capacity by Integral Energy may be for commercial purposes and that negotiations are in still in progress.²⁰

Environmental Considerations

Water Usage

- 3.22 The Committee was interested to learn what water usage considerations Defence had incorporated into the project, considering the current water supply situation. At the public hearing Defence explained that rainwater would be channelled and collected, through surface and subsurface means, in detention basins and wetlands. Water would be recycled for irrigation of landscaping.²¹
- 3.23 Defence informed the Committee that water for the base is drawn from Sydney Water, which is also responsible for handling the waste water. As water from the detention basins would not be reused as grey water, dual reticulation would be provided within buildings with the possibility of a future connection of a grey water system by Sydney Water.
- 3.24 Defence intend to sub-meter individual buildings, which would enable the identification of any specific water usage issues. Water efficient fittings and fixtures, with AAA or higher rating, would be installed to further address water usage concerns.²²

19 *Volume of Submissions*, Submission No 2, Integral Energy, page 1

20 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 9

21 *ibid*, page 10

22 *ibid*

Removal of Hazardous Materials

- 3.25 Given the size of the project, the Committee was concerned with the removal of any hazardous materials. Defence confirmed that there was asbestos on site and a program to identify all asbestos, and other such hazardous materials, had been undertaken. The project manager would ensure that specialist subcontractors, who deal with the removal of asbestos, appropriately handle and remove hazardous materials.²³

Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) Initiatives

- 3.26 The Committee asked Defence for a more detailed list of ESD Initiatives that will be implemented with the Holsworthy project. Subsequent to the hearing, Defence supplied supplementary information to the Committee on the ESD initiatives. The Committee was satisfied that Defence have addressed environmental concerns through the implementation of ESD initiatives as explained to the Committee.²⁴

Options Considered

- 3.27 The Committee sought more detail on the selection of Holsworthy Barracks (and Tobruk Lines) as the preferred redevelopment option. Defence responded that once the Government announced the intention to establish special operations capability in the Sydney region, Holsworthy (and Tobruk Lines) identified as most suitable for the following reasons:
- Holsworthy has the capacity to accommodate Defence requirements;
 - training space is immediately available;
 - there are sufficient buffer zones between Holsworthy and the community; and
 - it is the most cost-effective option.²⁵

23 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 14

24 Letter from Brigadier Peter Hutchinson, Director General, Infrastructure Asset Development, 21 June 2005

25 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 13

Project Delivery

- 3.28 Defence's main submission states that the project will be delivered using a proven management approach through a traditional process of detailed design and documentation by a number of design consultants, and construction by a number of head contracts.²⁶ The Committee sought more detail on the project delivery process and who would be responsible for the overall management of the project.
- 3.29 Defence responded that the Infrastructure Asset Development Section of the Department of Defence holds the overall responsibility for management this project, as well as new capital works facilities across Australia. The contracted project manager, as per the proven project management approach, is the Carson Group, which has been involved in supervising the design of the project and will supervise the construction.²⁷
- 3.30 In addition to the contracted project manager Defence would seek to use a number of head contracts to deliver individual components of the project. Having the components separated would enable contractors to control a particular site and not interfere with the work of other contractors. Defence stated that this project delivery method allows for more control over project costs and scheduling.

Local Impact

- 3.31 Defence estimates that over a proposed construction period of approximately three years, an average of 250 people will be directly employed on construction activities with further job opportunities off site.²⁸ The Committee wished to know how Defence would provide job opportunities for the local community.
- 3.32 Defence responded that the works would be publicised to ensure that local people are aware of opportunities. The head contractor would be encouraged to explore local options with respect to the works. Furthermore, any correspondence with Defence regarding employment opportunities for project would be passed on to the head contractor via the project manager.²⁹

26 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 72

27 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 11

28 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 58

29 Appendix D, Official Transcript of Evidence, page 12

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends that the proposed Holsworthy Program - Special Operations Working Accommodation and Base Redevelopment Stage 1, proceed at the estimated cost of \$207.7 million.

Hon Judi Moylan MP

Chair

17 August 2005

