



Australian Government

Department of Defence

Defence Support Group

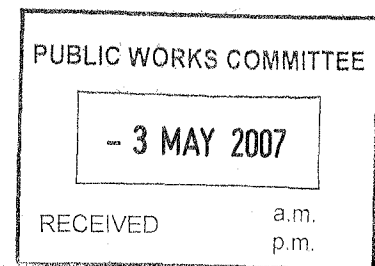
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SUBMISSION5.....

The Hon Judi Moylan MP

The Chair
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
Department of House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Ms Moylan,

Re: PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR PROJECT SINGLE LEAP – PHASE 2

I am writing in response to Submission No. 2 from the Independent Member for Nelson, Gerry Wood, MLA, in relation to the proposed Project Single LEAP Phase 2 project.

Background

The Committee's Research Officer forwarded a copy of Submission No.2 to Defence by facsimile on 27 April 2007. In Submission No.2, Mr Wood raises some important issues relating to the impact of the proposed provision of permanent living in accommodation at Robertson Barracks on the surrounding rural residential areas.

Supplementary Submission

Defence acknowledges the supportive relationship that currently exists between Robertson Barracks and the Litchfield Shire Council. Consultation with the Palmerston City Council instead of the Litchfield Shire Council was an administrative oversight and a letter has subsequently been sent by Defence to the Litchfield Shire Council, offering a separate briefing on the Project.

In response to specific issues raised by Mr Wood, Defence offers the following comments:

- Project Single LEAP originates from a 2003 Defence review of living in accommodation (LIA) which sought to address the sub-standard nature of existing living in accommodation, provide a long term strategy for the future provision of LIA and present funding options to improve LIA.
- In the 2004-05 Budget, the Federal Government agreed to provide \$113.2m over the following four years for Project Single LEAP, with an annual ongoing funding

commitment, to provide modern accommodation to Australian Defence Force members without dependants, potentially through Public Private Partnership arrangements. Government funding for this project has been allocated specifically for accommodation and surrounding precinct amenities only.

- The standard of LIA is a key contributor to enhancing recruitment and retention of Australian Defence Force (ADF) members.
- An accommodation service for 686 units is to be delivered at Robertson Barracks as part of Phase 2 Single LEAP, with delivery expected to be complete by the end of 2012. 586 of these LIA will be provided to replace existing sub-standard accommodation, aligning ADF members' accommodation standards with Defence Personnel policy entitlements. The total net increase for Robertson Barracks will be 100 rooms which are to accommodate additional Army personnel posted to Robertson Barracks under the Government's recently announced Hardened and Networked Army initiative.
- The standard of LIA to be provided under Single LEAP is for those ADF members required to live on base for operational or 'duty of care' reasons. These future residents, many of whom are currently living in the surrounding residential areas due to a shortage of on base accommodation, are not expected to affect traffic congestion in the Knuckey Lagoon rural residential area, as they will work and reside within Robertson Barracks. It is more likely that traffic flows may decrease, particularly during peak business hours, as a result of retaining these personnel on base.
- The issue of traffic congestion and road access to Robertson Barracks has been the subject of correspondence between Senator Nigel Scullion, Senator for the Northern Territory on behalf of Mr Gerry Wood MLA, Member for Nelson and the Minister for Defence, the Hon Dr Brendan Nelson, MP, most recently in April 2006. The Minister for Defence advised Senator Scullion that Defence is undertaking a review of the long term plans for Robertson Barracks, including access to the Barracks. As part of the broader development of the Master Plan (expected to be completed by the end of 2007), Defence will continue to consult with the Northern Territory Government and Litchfield Shire Council regarding road and traffic considerations.

Yours sincerely,



W.T.B. SOWRY

Brigadier

Director General Strategic Infrastructure Projects

3 May 2007