



Australian Government

Department of Defence
Defence Support and Reform Group

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Submission No. 01.2

ao (Seahawk Romeo Facilities)

Date: 21/03/13

Ms Kirsten Livermore MP
Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms Livermore,

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION REPORT FOR THE AIR 9000 PHASE 8 MH-60
SEAHAWK ROMEO HELICOPTER FACILITIES (MH-60R) PROJECT**

The purpose of this letter is to inform the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works (PWC) about the nature and extent of community consultations undertaken as part of the MH-60R project and the issues that have been raised by stakeholders and community members.

In general, no significant issues have been raised through Defence's comprehensive and widespread community consultations. Mostly, there is support for the project as it will generate wide scale employment for local small-to-medium enterprises.

The objectives of Defence's community consultation strategy were to ensure that:

- the community was informed about the project using effective, proven communication channels; and
- the community had every opportunity to raise issues of concern so that, wherever feasible, they could be addressed by the MH-60R project program of works.

The main community consultation activities undertaken were:

- formal advice provided to stakeholders (listed in Annex A);
- advertisements in the local newspapers; and
- community information sessions covering the three project sites:
 - 25 March 2013, 1600-1830, Rockingham WA (1 attendee);
 - 28 March 2013, 1200-1430, Eden NSW (10 attendees); and
 - 2 April 2013, 1600-1830, Nowra NSW (4 attendees).

Defence is satisfied that it has taken reasonable steps to inform the community about the MH-60R project and to provide opportunities for community members to raise concerns. The reasonable turnout to the Community Information Sessions suggests that the key issues have been adequately addressed and that the benefits of the project are generally recognised and not considered contentious. The support for the project shown by the local community members who attended the information sessions is suggestive that the proposed MH-60R project is seen in a positive light in terms of investment by Defence in the regions.

A table summarizing the issues and questions raised by the community and how these have been addressed by Defence is provided for your reference at Attachment 1. A more detailed briefing on methodology, the MH-60R Stakeholder Consultation Plan and outcomes can be provided to the Committee upon request.

Yours sincerely,

D.S. NAUMANN
Brigadier
Director General
Capital Facilities and Infrastructure

16 April 2013

Annex:

A. List of Stakeholders Consulted

Attachment:

1. Summary of Issues Table

List of Stakeholders Formally Consulted

Following is a list of stakeholders consulted by the MH60R Project Team:

- (a) Mrs Joanna Gash MP, Federal Member for Gilmore;
- (b) The Honourable Gary Gray MP, Federal Member for Brand;
- (c) The Honourable Dr Mike Kelly MP, Federal Member for Eden-Monaro;
- (d) The Honourable Shelley Hancock MP, New South Wales State Member for the South Coast;
- (e) The Honourable Mark McGowan MP, Western Australian State Member for Rockingham;
- (f) The Honourable Andrew Constance MP, New South Wales State Member for Bega;
- (g) Shoalhaven City Council;
- (h) Rockingham City Council;
- (i) Bega Valley Shire Council;
- (j) Roads and Maritime Services NSW;
- (k) Rural Fire Service Bega Valley District Office;
- (l) Indigenous groups, in particular:
 - Nowra Local Aboriginal Land Council;
 - Eden Aboriginal Land Council; and
 - South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council (WA);
- (m) Service providers of Electricity, Gas, Water, Sewer and Stormwater including:
 - Shoalhaven Water, NSW;
 - Endeavour Energy, NSW;
 - Water Corporation ,WA;
 - Alinta Energy (Gas), WA; and
 - Western Power, WA.

Issue Matrix

**Issues/questions raised that have been addressed during the consultation period –
HMAS Stirling, WA**

Issue:	Discussed with:	How each issue has been addressed:
What is the estimated increase in aircraft traffic noise associated with the Project?	Mr David Waller (Rockingham Council) and HMAS Stirling Commanding Officer (CO) CAPT A. Bond RAN	The majority of AIR9000 Ph8 MH-60R aircraft movements will be flights from HMAS Stirling to vessels at sea – not over populated areas. Accordingly, there is anticipated to be little aircraft noise impact to local communities associated with the introduction of the MH-60R capability.
What is the anticipated increase in employment opportunities both during construction and in the longer term?	Mr David Waller (Rockingham Council) HMAS Stirling CO and Capital Facilities & Infrastructure (CFI) Branch project representative.	There will be some increase in local employment opportunities during the construction phase. The CFI Branch project representative advised that, subject to Parliamentary approval of the project, an average of 15-20 full-time jobs for each of the three project elements over a period of approximately 46 months, peaking at approximately 45 full-time jobs is potentially available. Currently no long term employment opportunities exist after construction is complete.
Have the Helicopters been purchased?	Mr David Waller (Rockingham Council) and CFI project representative	CFI Branch project representative confirmed that the MH-60R helicopters had been purchased and will arrive in Australia in late 2014.
When will construction commence?	Mr David Waller (Rockingham Council) and CFI project representative	CFI Branch project representative advised that, subject to Parliamentary approval, construction is scheduled to commence at HMAS Stirling in September 2013.

**Issues/Questions raised that have been addressed during the consultation period –
Twofold Bay (TFB), Eden NSW**

When is the Earth Covered Building (ECB) being built?	Mr Max Sanders, Mr John Hurst (Local Residents) and Defence Consultant (PM/CA – Point PM)	The Project Manager/ Contract Administrator (PM/CA) advised that subject to Parliamentary approval, construction is scheduled to commence at Twofold Bay in 2016.
Is there an increase in shipping activity or Defence personnel in Eden?	John Hurst (Local Resident) and Defence Consultant (PM/CA – Point PM)	The PM/CA advised that the project will not be increasing any current shipping activities and that there will not be an increase in Defence personnel in Eden as the result of the project.
Has Defence purchased any land in Eden?	John Hurst (Local Resident) and Defence Consultant (PM/CA – Point PM)	The PM/CA advised that Defence does not intend to purchase any land in Eden as part of the project, nor for any other known Defence project.
What are the employment opportunities for local residents?	Ms Lyn Atkinson (Staffer for Dr M. Kelly MP), John Davidson (Former Staffer for Robert Ray MP) and CFI Branch project representatives	CFI Branch project representative advised that there will be temporary employment opportunities for between 15 to 20 personnel during a six month construction program. The main opportunities for employment will be associated with civil works (road works, parking bay construction & earth works).

Will Defence employ the construction personnel directly?	Ms Lyn Atkinson (Staffer for Dr M. Kelly MP) and CFI Branch project representative	CFI Branch project representative advised that the Commonwealth will engage a Head Contractor through a two staged procurement process and not employ construction personnel directly. Appointment of the Head Contractor will be in accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Rules & Value For Money assessments.
What are the long term employment opportunities for local residents?	John Davidson (Former Staffer for Robert Ray MP) and Defence Consultant (Thales Twofold Bay [TFB] EO Manager)	Mr Stroud (Thales TFB Explosive Ordnance (EO) Manager) advised that no increase of permanent maintenance personnel will be required as a result of this project.
Where can the project documentation be accessed?	John Davidson (Former Staffer for Robert Ray MP) and CFI Branch project representatives	CFI Branch project representative advised that project information could be accessed on the Parliamentary Works Committee Web Site.
Are there any helicopter flights scheduled by Navy in the area?	Mr B.J Cruse (local resident) and Defence Consultant (PM/CA – Point PM)	The PM/CA advised there are no proposed flights over Eden as a result of the project.
Will the Department of Defence use the areas surrounding Eden as a Training Area for Explosive Ordnance?	Mr Peter Herd (Local Resident) and CFI Branch project representative	CFI Branch project representative advised that no areas surrounding Eden are currently being used for Explosive Ordnance (EO) training and the project will not change this.
Will all emergency and major medical facilities be re-located to Bega?	Mr Peter Herd (Local Resident) and CFI Branch project representative	CFI Branch project representative indicated that Defence was not in a position to comment on other matters unrelated to the project.
Will the new ECB result in an increase in noise pollution due to increased flights ammunitioning at TFB?	Mr Peter Herd (Local Resident) and CFI Branch project representative	CFI Branch project representative advised that there will be no ammunitioning of MH-60R aircraft at TFB. Ammunitioning of MH-60R aircraft will only occur in licensed Ordnance Loading Areas at HMAS Albatross and other Defence bases. Accordingly there will be no increase in aircraft noise pollution at TFB.
Interested in how explosives are loaded / unloaded during prevailing sea & wind Conditions.	Mr Peter Herd (Local Resident) and Defence Consultant (Thales TFB EO Manager)	Mr Stroud (Thales TFB EO Manager) advised that loading and unloading of munitions are undertaken only during acceptable weather conditions by observing strict safety processes and procedures at all times, and in accordance with best safety EO handling practices.
Issues/Questions raised that have been addressed during the consultation period – Nowra, NSW		
When will HMAS Albatross works commence?	Mr Chris Gould (Industry Association Representative) and CFI Branch project representative	CFI Branch project representative advised that HMAS Albatross works are scheduled to commence in September 2013, subject to Parliamentary approval.
Assistance sought in establishing contact with the Department of Defence for future tendering of goods and services to support	Mr Chris Gould (Industry Association Representative) and CFI Branch Project Representatives	CFI Branch project representative advised that all future HMAS Albatross works are anticipated to be advertised in the Local Press by the Head Contractor appointed for the works.

HMAS Albatross Works.		
Requested information in regards to training conducted by the Royal Australian Navy.	Mr Max Wharton (Contractor in the HMAS Albatross Seahawk Simulator Facility) and HMAS Albatross Commanding Officer CAPT Gordon Andrew RAN	CAPT Gordon Andrew advised that Recruit and Initial Training by the Royal Australian Navy are currently conducted at RAAF Base Wagga, Wagga, NSW. CAPT Andrew additionally noted that the current contract for training is scheduled to be re-competed and a new contract will be arranged in due course.
Requested information as to whether Intermediate and / or Operational Maintenance will be conducted on the Helicopters at the new MH60R facilities.	Mr Max Wharton (Contractor in the HMAS Albatross Seahawk Simulator Facility) and HMAS Albatross Commanding Officer CAPT Gordon Andrew RAN	CAPT Gordon Andrew confirmed that Intermediate and Operational Maintenance will be conducted at the new MH-60R facilities
When will 816 SQN move to the new MH-60R Facility?	Mr Max Wharton (Contractor in the HMAS Albatross Seahawk Simulator Facility) and CFI Branch project representative	CFI Branch project representative advised that Defence is targeting a move of 816 SQN to the new MH-60R Facility by December 2014 subject to Parliamentary approval
What is the intended use of the K & L Hangars currently occupied by 816 SQN following the proposed relocation to the new MH-60R Facility by December 2014?	Mr Max Wharton (Contractor in the HMAS Albatross Seahawk Simulator Facility) and CFI Branch project representative	CFI Branch project representative advised that the K & L Hangars will be considered for potential adaptive reuse by the AIR9000 Phase 7 Helicopter Aircrew Training School project, which is still subject to Government and Parliamentary consideration.
When will MH-60R training commence at HMAS Albatross.	Mr Max Wharton (Contractor in the HMAS Albatross Seahawk Simulator Facility) and CFI Branch Project Representative	CFI Branch project representative advised that MH60R training is scheduled to commence at HMAS Albatross following the set-to-work and commissioning of the Tactical Operational Flight Trainer, currently programmed for December 2014.
When will the MH-60R aircraft arrive at HMAS Albatross?	Mr Max Wharton (Contractor in the HMAS Albatross Seahawk Simulator Facility) and CFI Branch project representative	CFI Branch project representative advised that the first MH-60R aircraft is scheduled to arrive at HMAS Albatross in December 2014.
When will the S-70B-2 Seahawk Simulator be de-commissioned?	Mr Max Wharton (Contractor in the HMAS Albatross Seahawk Simulator Facility) and CFI Branch project representative	CFI Branch project representative advised that the S-70B-2 Seahawk Simulator is to be de-commissioned following the planned withdrawal of all S-70B-2 classic aircraft in 2017.
Is this a Royal Australian Navy or Royal Australian Air Force Project?	Mr Ben Jones (Local Resident) and CFI Branch project representative	CFI Branch project representative advised that the Defence sponsoring Group for the MH-60 Seahawk Romeo project is the Royal Australian Navy.

Has the AIR9000 Phase 8 MH-60R Deeper Level Maintenance Contractor been selected by the Commonwealth?	Mr Craig Mackay (Local Defence Contractor at HMAS Albatross) and CFI Branch project representative	CFI Branch project representative advised that the project is not in a position to provide details of the Deeper Level Maintenance Contractor at this time.
Issues that cannot be addressed		
No Issues were taken on notice, all questions and issues were addressed at each consultation.		