



Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

REPORT

relating to the proposed

LAVARACK BARRACKS REDEVELOPMENT STAGE 2, TOWNSVILLE

(Third Report of 1999)

PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

1999

The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works

Report relating

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**Lavarack Barracks Redevelopment
Stage 2, Townsville**

(Third Report of 1999)

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MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

(Thirty-Third Committee—appointed 8 December 1998)

The Hon Judi Moylan MP (Chair)

The Hon Janice Crosio MBE, MP (Vice-Chair)

Senate

House of Representatives

Senator Paul Calvert

Mr John Forrest MP

Senator Alan Ferguson

Mr Colin Hollis MP

Senator Shayne Murphy

Mr Peter Lindsay MP

Mr Bernard Ripoll MP

Committee Secretary:

Bjarne Nordin

Inquiry Secretary:

Michael Fetter

Administrative Officers:

Belynda Zolotto

June Murphy

EXTRACT FROM
THE VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS
OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

No. 13 dated 8 December 1998

**PUBLIC WORKS—PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE—
REFERENCE OF WORKS—LAVARACK BARRACKS
REDEVELOPMENT STAGE 2, TOWNSVILLE**

Mr Slipper (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administrative Services), by leave, pursuant to notice, moved—That, in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, the following proposed work be referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report: Lavarack Barracks Redevelopment Stage 2, Townsville.

Question—put and passed.

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS

Lavarack Barracks Redevelopment Stage 2, Townsville

On 8 December 1998, the House of Representatives referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for consideration and report the proposed Lavarack Barracks Redevelopment Stage 2, Townsville.

THE REFERENCE

1. The terms of the reference were as follows:

The Department of Defence proposes to redevelop Lavarack Barracks. The works now proposed are needed to overcome acute accommodation deficiencies, to improve efficiency and operational effectiveness, and to provide a sound infrastructure on which further development of the barracks can proceed.

The works are in nine main components consisting of accommodation and messing, operational, logistic support and infrastructure development facilities. The main components comprise new living in accommodation for 1,112 officers, senior non-commissioned officers and other ranks, associated mess complexes and a central food preparation facility

2. When referred to the Committee, the estimated out turn cost of the proposed work was \$139.3 million.

THE COMMITTEE'S INVESTIGATION

3. The reference is identical to the proposal which was referred by the House of Representatives to the former Committee on 29 June 1998.
4. The former Committee received a written submission from the Department of Defence (Defence) and took evidence from Defence officials at a public hearing held at the Townsville City Council Chambers, Townsville, on 25 August 1998. The former Committee also received a written submission from the Townsville City Council and took evidence from the Deputy Mayor. Mr Peter Lindsay MP (Federal Member for Herbert), also addressed the Committee at the public hearing.

5. Written submissions were also received from:

- Australian Heritage Commission;
- Environment Australia;
- Royal Australian Institute of Architects; and
- Townsville Chamber of Commerce.

6. Prior to the public hearing, the former Committee undertook an extensive inspection of two new Defence facilities in Townsville and the site of proposed works at Lavarack Barracks.

7. A list of witnesses who appeared at the public hearing is at APPENDIX A. The former Committee's proceedings will be printed as Minutes of Evidence.

8. The House of Representatives was dissolved on 31 August 1998 and the former Committee was unable to report on the reference. The 39th Parliament commenced on 10 November 1998. Members of the present Committee were appointed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on 8 December and the Committee met for the first time on 10 December 1998. On 11 February 1999, the Committee resolved:

That, pursuant to the provisions of section 24 of the Public Works Committee Act 1969, the evidence taken by the former Committee be considered as evidence taken by the present Committee and that a further public hearing into the proposal is not necessary.

BACKGROUND

Location

9. Lavarack Barracks is a large Army complex located on the southern outskirts of Townsville. It is the home of 3rd Brigade as well as a number of supporting units. The complex occupies a relatively large site of 400 hectares. A feature of the site is its length of five kilometres. In terms of buildings and supporting elements, the complex contains technical, logistics, training, administrative and domestic facilities, as well as areas for local field training.

Development of Lavarack Barracks

10. The first major development of Lavarack Barracks took place in 1965-66 as a result of a Government decision to locate a task force base at Townsville. Facilities provided included permanent living and working accommodation for three battalions and supporting arms and services, based on personnel and equipment establishments current at that time.

11. A second stage of development was commenced in 1980 and completed the following year. The redevelopment of working accommodation for several additional logistics units to support the Brigade were examined and reported on by the Committee in 1980 (*Committee's Eleventh Report of 1980—Parliamentary Paper 228/1980*).

12. In addition to the two major development projects, various medium and minor works projects, some of a temporary nature, were undertaken up to 1991 for other units at Lavarack Barracks. Those units included:

- 2nd Field Ambulance;
- 162nd Reconnaissance Squadron;
- Base Administrative Support Centre (BASC);
- 2nd Field Supply Battalion;
- 3rd Field Supply Company; and
- 9th Transport Squadron.

13. Some minor units were subsequently absorbed into 3rd Brigade Administrative Support Battalion (3BASB).

Upgrading of Other Ranks accommodation

14. In 1988, the Army undertook an Australia-wide program to upgrade Other Ranks (OR) living-in accommodation. This program included the upgrading of living-in accommodation at Lavarack Barracks. From an original 2,880 dormitory style bed spaces, 1,560 bedrooms were upgraded at Lavarack. In addition, 540 high-density bed spaces were retained for training, transit, pre-deployment and contingency accommodation. These works were examined and reported on by the Committee in 1988 (*Committee's Third Report of 1988—Parliamentary Paper 134/1988*).

Stage 1 redevelopment

15. In 1992, the Committee examined and reported on the first stage of the redevelopment of Lavarack Barracks. The scope of the work which the Committee recommended should proceed involved the following elements:

- permanent purpose-built accommodation for 162 Reconnaissance Squadron;
- accommodation for elements of 3BASB;
- Lavarack Barracks sick quarters; and
- kerbside refuelling facility for Townsville Logistics Company.

16. The estimated cost of this project was \$20.96 million at December 1991 prices. At the time, Defence foreshadowed that the project involved the first stage of a multi-stage proposal aimed at providing modern working and training facilities at Lavarack Barracks.

Population

17. The Barracks presently supports a population of 3,500 military and 330 civilian personnel. It is one of the Army's largest establishments.

Ready deployment force

18. 3rd Brigade is the major land component of the Ready Deployment Force. This requires all elements to be held in in a very high degree of readiness for a wide range of operational tasks. These tasks include:

- contributing forces to assist in defending Australia against attacks; this includes air mobile, amphibious and mounted operations;
- the defence of regional and global interests; this includes assisted and protected evacuations; and
- help to the civil community.

Supporting elements

19. The infantry, armour, artillery, signals, engineer and combat service support elements of the Brigade are supported by the RAAF's Operational Support Group and 5 Aviation Regiment which are based at RAAF Base Townsville.

20. The close proximity of extensive training areas and the broad infrastructure network existing at Townsville assist to sustain the Brigade's readiness requirements. Additional training cooperation can be exploited by the use of 11th Brigade and 51st Battalion Far North Queensland Regiment, headquartered at Townsville and Cairns respectively.

Organisation

21. The units currently based at Lavarack Barracks are listed below:

- **3rd Brigade**
 - Headquarters
 - B Squadron 3rd/4th Cavalry Regiment
 - 4th Field Regiment
 - 3rd Combat Engineer Regiment
 - 103rd Signals Squadron
 - 1st Battalion Royal Australian Regiment
 - 2nd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment
 - 162nd Reconnaissance Squadron
 - 3rd Brigade Administrative Support Battalion (3BASB)
 - ◇ Transport Squadron
 - ◇ Field Workshops
 - ◇ Medical Company
 - ◇ Supply Company
 - ◇ Administration Company
- **Collocated and supporting units**
 - Defence Corporate Support Centre north Queensland
 - 11th Training Group
 - 10th Force Support Battalion

Impact of recent Defence reforms

22. Defence advised the Committee that recommendations arising from the Defence Reform Program are not focused on changing the mission or broad structure of the Brigade. Support functions may, however, be subjected to further commercialisation or civilianisation.

23. The Army is continuing a program of restructuring in north Queensland. In Townsville, the part-time 11 Brigade continues to support 3 Brigade in the development of concepts for the defence of the Cape York and Gulf of

Carpentaria. The headquarters of 11 Brigade is located at Jezzine Barracks. Recommendations of the reform program identified the possible disposal of this property. Provision has been made in the Master Plan of Lavarack Barracks for consequential replacement accommodation.

24. Defence advised the Committee that in due course, Ready Deployment Force responsibilities may be shared around the Army more widely. Defence did, however, assure the Committee that the structure of 3 Brigade will remain largely unaltered, although some enhancement of ground mobility is expected.

Scales and standards for living-in accommodation

25. Defence submitted to the Committee that scales and standards for living-in accommodation have remained substantially unchanged for about the last twenty years. As a consequence, Defence adopted a 'design to cost target' approach for the provision of new accommodation. This encompassed the provision of single room accommodation with shared common rooms and ablutions for other than senior officers. Variants of the type of accommodation were provided in recent times with cost being a prime determinant. Undercover parking and increased storage space were other improvements under this scheme.

26. Defence advised the Committee that in September 1997, the Minister for Defence Industry, Science and Personnel (the Hon Bronwyn Bishop MP) approved new standards for accommodation to be constructed at Lavarack Barracks. These standards comprise:

- Other Ranks accommodation with ensuite and kitchenette—24 square metres per unit; and
- Junior Officer and Senior Non-commissioned Officer (SNCO) accommodation with ensuite and kitchenette—30 square metres per unit.

27. Senior Officer accommodation scales and standards will remain substantially unchanged at 39 square metres with provision of under cover car parking and storage facilities.

Master planning of Lavarack Barracks

28. Defence submitted that the location of some facilities at Lavarack Barracks has produced planning incompatibilities in the form of domestic facilities being interspersed with technical and administrative accommodation. These incompatibilities arose from previous planning concepts in which unit

integrity was the paramount consideration. One consequence of facilities designed to retain unit integrities is the 16 messes at Lavarack.

Review of master plan

29. Defence undertook a review of the master plan against the background of units to be located at Lavarack, their composition and a requirement to reduce the number of messes. The review also encompassed an examination of other deficiencies such as fragmentation of unit functions across the Barracks, conflict between industrial and domestic activities, and an inappropriate internal road system.

30. The review resulted in the adoption of a fundamental planning change which aimed to separate working and residential areas and maximise the sharing of support facilities such as messing and commercial outlets.

31. Various master planning options were considered and costed. Defence believes the preferred option optimises:

- functional efficiency;
- separation of living and working accommodation;
- reuse of existing buildings; and
- redevelopment cost.

32. The new master plan structures future development of the Barracks into functional zones with separation of residential and working areas and interlinks the zones with an unobstructed road network.

THE NEED AND WHAT IS PROPOSED

Basis

33. Defence submitted that facilities at Lavarack Barracks were developed in an expedient manner which has resulted in many facilities now requiring replacement. In addition, organisational changes have resulted in many facilities being inappropriately located in relation to functional groupings and linkages. Defence believes the new Master Plan provides a better framework for future development of the Barracks.

34. Individual proposals have been developed to address the current deficiencies. These are based on the new Master Plan.

35. The need to demolish some buildings or to remove redundant facilities in order to clear sites is encompassed within overall development proposals.

Establishment

36. The proposed works will not result in substantial changes to the overall establishment population of Lavarack Barracks .

LIVING-IN ACCOMMODATION

Function

37. Living-in accommodation is provided for single and unaccompanied members of all ranks. Short-term living-in accommodation is also provided for personnel undergoing training or on deployment to Townsville.

38. The Committee pointed out to Defence that in contemporary society, very few jobs are left which provide accommodation. Defence advised that a need for on-base accommodation remains. The provision of accommodation as a part of work-related entitlements or operational requirements is not restricted to Defence. It is also common in universities and hospitals.

Need

39. Defence advised that existing living-in accommodation was built during 1965-67 to scales applicable at that time. In respect of Other Ranks, these scales were the provision of bed spaces in rooms shared by four personnel. SNCO and Officer accommodation was in single rooms. Ablutions were shared and the barracks were not provided with common rooms. Sleeping quarters were not airconditioned and relied on cross-flow ventilation and fans for cooling. Defence recognised the inadequacy in the standard of that accommodation.

40. In the late 1980s, measures were taken to subdivide the shared Other Ranks rooms into single occupant rooms and to provide more living space to SNCOs and Officers. Some original accommodation, constructed during 1965-67, was retained substantially unaltered for deployment accommodation.

41. Defence pointed out that refurbishment of sleeping accommodation did not include the provision of airconditioning and, although the refurbishment provided enhanced separation and privacy, it also led to a reduction in cross-flow ventilation.

42. Table 1, below, summarises the extent of accommodation currently available at Lavarack Barracks.

Table 1—Accommodation available—all ranks

Type of Accommodation	Senior/Junior Officers	Senior non-commissioned officers	Other Ranks	Total
Permanent	180	237	1600	2017
Deployment	-	-	362	362

Acceptable standards of accommodation

43. Defence submitted to the Committee that the nature and lifestyles of single and unaccompanied military personnel has changed over the past decades. The expectations of personnel has also changed. Living-in personnel now desire quarters in which independent living styles can be pursued. As well, personnel require storage space for personal possessions and undercover accommodation for their private vehicles. Defence believes the revised scales address these issues.

Application of new standards

44. Defence will apply the new standards for accommodation for Regular personnel living-in on a prolonged and continuous basis. Accommodation for personnel requiring to live-in for short periods will be to a lesser and higher density standard. For this reason, Defence will continue the use of some of the older accommodation to meet training and deployment needs for both Regular and Reserve personnel.

Mix of accommodation at Lavarack

45. Defence envisages that up to 40 per cent of single and unaccompanied personnel will find their own accommodation off-base when new accommodation to the revised standards is provided. Defence assured the Committee that additional quarters could be constructed as part of a further redevelopment stage of the Barracks should a greater number of single personnel desire to live-in.

Present establishment numbers

46. The accommodation requirements for Lavarack Barracks are based on present establishment numbers. The proposal makes provision for living-in accommodation for about 60 per cent of the number of single and unaccompanied members of all rank groups requiring accommodation.

47. Accommodation planning figures are shown in Table 2, below.

Table 2—Accommodation planing

	Senior/Junior Officers	Senior non-commissioned officers	Other Ranks	Total
Total Posted Strength	323	565	2755	3643
Total Single and Unaccompanied	147	110	1598	1855
60% of Total Single and Unaccompanied	89	66	959	1114

48. Defence advised that a modular approach was adopted. This involves the construction of the accommodation based on fixed modules of eight rooms per module for all rank groups. Defence believes this is the most economical way of providing facilities at the scope and number required. Table 3, below shows the transposed accommodation requirement.

Table 3—Accommodation requirement

	Senior Officers		Junior Officers		Senior non-commissioned officers		Other ranks		Total Rooms
	Module	Rooms	Module	Rooms	Module	Rooms	Module	Rooms	
Total	3	24	8	64	8	64	120	960	1112

49. The above table includes accommodation requirements for support units that may be the subject of civilianisation or out-sourcing. This should not have a major effect on accommodation needs since, the new accommodation is based on only satisfying 60 per cent of the total need for single and unaccompanied personnel.

50. Short-term accommodation is required for personnel under training, visiting or deployed units, Reservists on duty with the Brigade, and for personnel living off-base brought onto the Barracks on standby. This is determined from the following requirements based on current experience:

- high density accommodation for the off-base personnel of a battalion group—about 500 personnel; and
- medium density accommodation for externally based personnel under training—about 100 personnel.

51. Defence advised that no new accommodation for short-term use would need to be built to meet the above requirement. Conversion of some existing accommodation to a high-density form is envisaged by Defence in a later stage of redevelopment.

Proposal

52. Provision of 1,112 permanent living-in accommodation rooms over the three rank groups is proposed. The accommodation is to be constructed to the new Defence standard for living-in accommodation. The accommodation will be located in residential zones to reflect the principles underlying the Master Plan.

53. Any existing living-in accommodation not required to be refurbished for deployment or transient purposes as part of the Lavarack Barracks Redevelopment Stage 3 project would be demolished.

54. Precise siting and composition of the living-in accommodation zones will be determined in the design phase by value management and detailed survey.

55. The Committee questioned Defence about the consequences of providing what amounts to kitchenettes in the single room accommodation. It was suggested to Defence that this feature may detract from the esprit de corps of the Brigade with personnel cooking and fending for themselves in their rooms and not interacting as a team. Defence advised that the potential problem could be overcome by arranging personnel in platoon and company groups, reflecting their working environment.

Standard of fitout

56. Defence provides furniture of a commercial standard which is comfortable without exuding a regimental atmosphere. Rooms will be designed to ‘feel like home’ with furniture of a relatively robust quality.

New accommodation—basis of calculations

57. The Committee questioned the basis upon which the number of new accommodation units, which total 1,112 across all ranks, was determined. Defence advised that the calculations were based largely on historical data. The first step involved an examination of the number of personnel which will be accommodated off-base in married quarters. The next step involved calculating

the number of single personnel who would elect to live off-base. From this, the percentage of personnel to be accommodated on-base was determined as follows:

- senior and junior officers (single or unaccompanied)—45 per cent;
- senior non-commissioned officers—20 per cent; and
- Other Ranks—57 per cent.

58. Defence also advised that the assumption of 60 per cent is a higher proportion than proposed in other parts of Australia. It is partly based on operational requirements as well as historical data.

59. The Committee then questioned Defence about the possibility of more than the planned number of personnel electing to live on-base, resulting in a shortfall in accommodation. Defence advised that it is planned to provide 60 per cent of the potential liability. If the trend following the upgrade of accommodation indicates that more is required, additional accommodation could be provided as part of further redevelopment of the Barracks proposed under a subsequent Stage 3.

60. Defence confirmed that personnel will be required to pay rent for on-base accommodation. Defence was asked to provide a comparison between the rental charges on and off base. Defence advised that on-base rental charges are currently low, reflecting the standard of accommodation offered to personnel electing to live-in. From mid-1999, Defence will embark on a 'user pays' program of rent whose levels will reflect the standard of accommodation to be provided. The standard of accommodation proposed for Lavarack will equate with the highest level, designated Level 5. Rent will be costed on the basis of 50 per cent of the cost of rent charged by the private sector for single bedroom units in Australian capital cities.

61. Based on these charges, the Committee asked Defence to explain the reasons for a greater percentage of personnel not electing to live on-Base. Defence explained part of the answer relates to the choice in lifestyles of individual soldiers.

Many of them [the soldiers] choose now to live out because they have lived out somewhere else and they have a large quantity of furniture that will not fit in, or they might have a girlfriend, or they do not want to be around other soldiers, or they might like to own a dog, or they are looking for some

relaxation from the military environment. The figures have been fairly consistent over time.¹

62. The Committee also asked Defence if it would be possible to provide accommodation in the form of four bedroom houses which may have the potential to be sold later should they become surplus to requirements. Defence advised the Committee that the the option of providing freestanding houses was not considered during formative planning. One factors which militated against this alternative is a perception that soldiers would prefer not to share common living areas. The cost of the living in accommodation is \$58 million, which equates to \$52,000 for an individual unit.

Committee's Conclusion

63. Provision of new airconditioned living-in accommodation should improve living standards for on-base personnel and should lift the morale of personnel.

MESSES AND FOOD PREPARATION

Messes—function

64. Messes provide dining facilities, indoor and outdoor amenities and canteens. In operational units, messes also provide a place where professional development and training takes place in a unit environment. Defence believes that messes should provide an environment conducive to fostering and developing morale, esprit de corps and unit pride.

Need

65. There are currently there are 16 messes at Lavarack Barracks comprising:

- six for officers;
- five for senior non-commisioned officers; and
- five for Other Ranks.

66. Defence advised the Committee that most messes are in need of substantial upgrading or replacement due to their age and the temporary nature of improvements that have been made to meet increased demand over the years. Some messes do not comply with current cyclone codes. The need to upgrade or replace the large number of messes prompted Defence to re-examine more cost-

¹ Minutes of Evidence, Public Hearing 25 August 1998, pp. 67-8.

effective means by which messing facilities could be provided. Clearly, rebuilding or refurbishing all 16 messes would not be prudent. It would also not be practical or functionally efficient to demolish half the total of messes and upgrade and extend the remainder.

Proposal

67. The Master Plan envisages a mess complex in each zone, designed and located to serve personnel housed in adjacent residential accommodation. The type of mess facilities envisaged would involve officer and senior non-commissioned officer dining rooms being joined. This arrangement, involving the provision of movable dividing walls, would provide a larger area for formal mess functions for either rank category. Defence believes this arrangement will optimise capital and operating costs.

68. The planning of each messing complex was based on:

- Other Ranks—twice the number of projected living-in personnel; and
- officers and senior non-commissioned officers—50 per cent more than the number of living-in personnel.

69. This formula was adopted to cater for personnel living out and under training or on standby. Additional factors such as circulation space in dining rooms, sizes of offices, extent of amenities, layout and cool room sizes were also considered in determining mess areas.

70. It is proposed that food preparation be undertaken in a central food preparation facility. Each mess will have its own finishing kitchen and servery. The size of the finishing kitchen and servery at each mess was assessed by Defence against the number of personnel to be catered for, kitchen equipment to be used and occupational health and safety factors.

Function—Food preparation

71. Defence examined industrial practices for food preparation and cooking associated with mass catering. A study, undertaken in 1994, concluded that the cook-chill system would be suitable for the provision of catering services in a barrack environment and recommended its adoption. In terms of facilities, the cook-chill process would require the provision of a centralised preparation facility which would supply satellite serveries at messes.

Cook-chill

72. Under the cook-chill process, food is prepared in the traditional manner and portioned into special containers which are blast chilled to 3°C within 90 minutes. Food preparation and cooking is carried out in a single daily shift during the working week. Chilled food is stored in a holding cool room and, when required, is distributed by refrigerated truck to receiving mess serveries where it is regenerated in special ovens before serving.

73. Defence advised the Committee that the cook-chill method has been adopted in more than 1,500 commercial installations throughout Australia and New Zealand. These range from hospitals, function centres, international hotels, retirement villages and restaurant chains to major institutions such as Parliament House.

Benefits

74. Defence believes that the benefits to be derived from the adoption of the cook-chill food preparation process include:

- consistent standards of catering throughout receiving areas;
- reduction in food wastage by 10-15 per cent;
- staff reductions especially in the number of chefs;
- increased productivity as chefs are able to cook for an entire eight hour shift during a five day, Monday to Friday, working week;
- ability to respond to increases in customer numbers without the need to increase staffing levels; and
- retention of a wide choice of menu items whilst exploiting the benefits of some commonality.

75. The cook-chill process would require messes to be equipped with refrigeration and reheating equipment, microwave ovens, and grills. Dishes, such as salads and grills, would continue to be provided in the traditional manner although some initial preparation would be undertaken at the central food preparation facility.

Proposal

76. It is proposed to construct a food preparation facility to be located in the eastern industrial zone of the Barracks complex. The scope of the facility includes working areas and catering equipment for the preparation, cooking,

packaging, chilling and storage of meals pending their distribution by refrigerated vehicle to mess serveries.

Consideration by the Committee

77. The Committee raised a number of concerns about the suitability and appropriateness of a centralised food preparation facility providing cook-chill meals for the ‘sharp end’ of Australia’s defence force.

78. It was pointed out to Defence that the types of organisations using this process are hotels and hospitals which provide meals to patrons and patients over relatively short terms. The proposal involves the construction of a facility designed to provide pre-cooked meals seven days a week for full time soldiers living in barracks. The Committee therefore asked Defence if any studies were undertaken into the reactions of consumers.

79. Defence advised that an examination was carried out into the quality and delivery of food using the cook-chill process. This examination did not, however, encompass Defence establishments. One of the best institutional examples examined by Defence was the Anglican Church in Sydney which adopted the cook-chill process after managing 13 retirement villages for many years. Defence pointed to the success of the process being reflected in the number of other organisations, not associated with the Church, being provided with cook-chilled meals from a central food processing facility. At present, 15 other organisations, which are not associated with retirement facilities, obtain cook-chilled meals from the Anglican Church’s facility.

80. The Committee suggested to Defence that the the elite of the Armed Forces require more substantial meals with higher nutritional and calorific content than meals provided by non-Government organisations. For this reason, the Committee would need to have available studies of the suitability of the cook-chill process to members of the Defence force before agreeing with the provision of a centralised food preparation facility. The Committee believes that without any evidence to the contrary being provided, there is a risk that cook-chill meals, prepared in a centralised food processing facility and reconstituted in three mess kitchens, may be rejected by Defence personnel. The Committee also believes the provision of kitchenettes in living-in accommodation may encourage personnel to prepare their own meals.

Commercialisation of catering

81. Defence foreshadowed commercialisation of catering at Lavarack Barracks in the near future and that the commercial operator selected to provide catering will have a degree of flexibility in deciding how services to the Brigade are to be provided.

82. The Committee further suggested to Defence that the village type of accommodation being provided could provide scope for a series of facilities to be rented to the general business community for the provision of food services according to Defence specifications.

83. Defence advised that the requirement for a Central Business District at Lavarack, comprising small businesses, remains to be determined. It could be provided as part of Stage 3 if there is a requirement. Defence has found from experience, however, that marginal profitabilities of small businesses involved may act as a deterrent against their establishment. By way of example, Defence pointed out that a shopping centre, with four small food outlets, has been established at Puckapunyal (Victoria). Defence has also provided concession areas at Robertson Barracks, Darwin and has experienced problems in enticing food outlets to establish there.

84. In terms of commercial viability, Defence does not believe a commercial on-base establishment would be viable. Personnel take leave extending over a six week period at Christmas and usually travel interstate. During the remainder of the year, a large number of personnel are on field deployment.

85. The practicalities of providing a facility capable of handling the public and Defence personnel was also raised by the Committee. Defence advised this would present some difficulties to the Brigade in terms of controlling the area in a predeployment situation. Defence has examined potential development of commercial food outlets along University Road but ease of access for soldiers without transport would present problems which could only be overcome by the provision of overpasses or underpasses.

Committee's Conclusions

86. There is a need for new messes, on a scale commensurate with requirements identified in Department of Defence planning studies, to be provided at Lavarack Barracks adjacent to the sites proposed for new living-in accommodation.

87. There are concerns about the appropriateness of the cook-chill method of food preparation based on its untested nature in the Australian Defence Force.

Committee's Recommendation

88. The Department of Defence should report back to the Committee on the operation of the cook-chill process after it has been fully tested at Lavarack Barracks, before its wider implementation within the Australian Defence Force.

COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE

Function

89. Communications and data processing at Lavarack Barracks are managed from a communications centre. The functions of the centre include message handling, data processing and operations co-ordination. Many of the activities are of a classified nature and special precautions need to be exercised in their performance.

Need

90. The existing Communications Centre was constructed in 1967. The facility has numerous deficiencies which inhibit functionality. It also lacks many of the features required in a secure communications centre which must function as a joint co-ordination centre. Defence advised that reconfiguration of the centre would be difficult due to the internal layout and construction. This problem would be particularly evident when new equipment is introduced and when existing equipment has to be repositioned. Defence also submitted that the centre is inappropriately located in relation to the Brigade Headquarters.

91. Defence believes that the rationalisation of functional zones within the overall Barracks area provides the opportunity to replace the Communications Centre and to use the current site for the development of domestic facilities.

Proposal

92. A new Communications Centre is proposed, located near the site of the future 3 Brigade Headquarters building. The facility will incorporate a Joint Co-ordination Centre, Communications Centre and administrative facilities. The building will be designed to operate in cyclonic conditions and provided with an uninterruptible power supply. It will also be provided with appropriate security measures.

Committee's Conclusion

93. Operational integrity, communications management and message security should be improved by the provision of the new Communications Centre.

3BASB TRANSPORT SQUADRON—SUPPORT FACILITIES

Function

94. General transport support to 3 Brigade is provided by 3BASB Transport Squadron. The Unit's functions include vehicle fleet management, provision of transport services to the Brigade and operational maintenance of its allocated vehicles.

Need

95. Defence advised the Committee that although the 1992 Stage 1 redevelopment works provided for much of 3BASB's needs, the provision of new facilities for the Transport Squadron was excluded.

96. Most of 3BASB's transport facilities are presently located in the Western Zone, a considerable distance from the workshop facilities and the 3BASB Headquarters. Defence had found that this arrangement imposes consequent management inefficiencies. Most of the transport facilities date from the initial development of the Barracks and are in a deteriorated and corroded condition. In addition, there is insufficient undercover parking to protect vehicles in the tropical environment. The lack of workshop space precludes the unit from undertaking vehicle maintenance in an efficient manner.

97. Defence believes new facilities are required to meet the following requirements:

- administrative and command facilities for the Squadron and its troops;
- a secure vehicle compound suitable for the parking of about 200 vehicles including undercover parking for about 140;
- staff amenities;
- secure storage space for vehicle running spares and schedule items; and
- field maintenance workshops.

Location

98. The siting of the new 3BASB Transport Squadron facilities was examined as part of the Master Planning process. A location contiguous with other 3BASB facilities and in proximity to logistic support units, was considered to be appropriate and various options were examined. The best solution utilises an existing carpark which presently services off-base personnel working in the area. Adoption of this option would require replacement of the carpark. Defence also indicated that additional space for workshops can be provided by refurbishing two small buildings presently used by 10 Force Support Battalion which are inadequate both in capacity and standard for current use. These buildings are located near the Transport Squadron's existing main maintenance workshops and would need to be replaced with a new paint shop and a new vehicle repair building for 10 Force Support Battalion. The new paint shop would need to conform with contemporary standards, especially those relating to occupational health and safety and environment.

Proposal

99. The proposed work include the provision of:

- a Squadron headquarters building incorporating facilities for the Headquarters Specialist Section;
- a new vehicle compound with undercover parking segregated into three components related to vehicles of the Headquarters Specialist Section, and the two Squadron Troops;
- Troop offices and amenities in the end of the central vehicle shelter;
- store rooms in the end of the other two vehicle shelters;
- refurbishment of two existing workshop buildings;
- provision of a paint shop, and a vehicle repair facility for 10 Force Support Battalion; and
- a carpark for 400 private vehicles.

Committee's Conclusion

100. Provision of new facilities for 3BASB's Transport Squadron should enable its activities to be consolidated in modern facilities, with a consequential improvement in Unit management and performance. In addition, overall management of 3BASB should improve with the co-location of its Transport Squadron with the rest of the Battalion.

COMMON WASH FACILITY

Function

101. Vehicles are washed and cleaned to remove accumulated dirt and residues when they return from field exercises, deployment and as part of routine care and maintenance. This practice is particularly important in Townsville's tropical and saline environment in order to minimise vehicle corrosion. At present Lavarack Barracks has a vehicle fleet of about 1,500 units.

Need

102. Currently, vehicles are washed at a variety of dispersed locations throughout the Barracks. Disposal of waste produced during the vehicle washing process does not reflect best environmental practice.

103. An examination, undertaken by Defence, of options to rectify the problem resulted in the proposal to construct a single common wash point where most logistics functions and most heavy vehicles are concentrated.

104. Defence identified a requirement for a facility to possess 16 discrete wash bays to handle high-demand periods, particularly following large scale exercises. Each bay would need to be equipped with high pressure spray equipment. Inspection pits are also required to permit the inspection and washing of the undersides of vehicles. The facility would also require a drainage system providing for the entrapment of grease, oil and detergents and for the treatment and recycling of wash water.

Proposal

105. The proposed works encompass the construction of a common vehicle wash facility on Lachlan Wilson Drive in the Eastern Zone. For functional reasons the facility will be located close to the proposed new Eastern Deployment and Assembly Area (described below), 3/4 Cavalry Regiment and, in the future, 3 Combat Engineer Regiment.

EASTERN DEPLOYMENT AND ASSEMBLY AREA

Function

106. Vehicles and equipment associated with deployment or off-base exercises are marshalled at a central location. Assembling vehicles and equipment in a single location facilitates their dispatch in discrete ‘convoy packets’.

Need

107. Parade grounds, vehicle hard standing areas and roadsides are currently used for the assembly and marshalling of equipment to be deployed. Defence advised that there will be no assembly area in the Eastern Zone of Lavarack Barracks as a result of the relocation of 3 BASB Transport Squadron and construction of their new facility on existing hard standing areas. This would preclude the use of hard standing areas and parade grounds for personnel preparation while roadside marshalling would impede traffic flow, often leading to acute congestion.

108. Defence therefore believes that a new assembly and deployment area is required to be located in the Eastern Zone. Land available for this purpose is restricted and Defence advised that the only available site contains a small knoll, the side of which would need to be levelled. At the same time, Defence identified a requirement for earth fill for site preparation associated with other projects at the Barracks. The opportunity will therefore be taken to use material excavated from the knoll rather than obtaining material off-base.

109. The assembly and deployment area would only have an intermittent use for its prime purpose. For this reason, it will also be used as a parade ground and, on occasion, as a helipad for helicopters, up to Chinook size, employed for movement of personnel and equipment.

Proposal

110. Construction of a hard standing area to serve as the Eastern Assembly and Deployment Area is proposed.

Committee’s Conclusions

111. The provision of the Eastern Deployment and Assembly Area would allow assembly of deployment equipment at a single location and avoid road congestion which occurs under present arrangements.

112. The Eastern Deployment and Assembly Area could also provide a large hard standing area suitable for a parade ground or as a helicopter landing area.

MAJOR TRUNK ROAD

Function

113. Major access between functional areas is provided by trunk roads capable of sustaining traffic of the heaviest vehicles operating in the area.

Need

114. Lavarack Barracks has been developed in an east-west direction and although there is a series of roads interlinking functional areas, major access in an east-west direction is often along the off-base University Road which has five entries into the Barracks. Internal access between the eastern and western areas is along Robert Towns Boulevard. This has resulted in heavy vehicles passing through domestic and administrative areas.

115. The Master Plan envisages the provision of a new internal major trunk road from east to west to provide access to the three functional zones. It is envisaged that this road would run parallel to University Road. The area between the two roads would be used as a green belt with sporting and recreational facilities and act as a buffer between the Barracks and residential areas north of University Road. Much of this major access road already exists and only some additional linkages need to be provided. Provision of the road will enhance internal access outside working hours when entry to the Barracks is restricted to a single point. The road would enable commercial vehicles accessing the Barracks to be kept away from working areas. Security would also be improved.

Proposal

116. It is proposed to:

- link sections of existing roads to provide an east-west trunk access;
- provide bridges over main watercourses; and
- upgrade existing sections of road. The road will be designed to sustain concentrated traffic of the heaviest vehicles operating at the barracks.

Committee's Conclusion

117. Provision of a new heavy vehicle east-west trunk road linking the three zones would enable heavy traffic to be kept away from residential areas, improve traffic flow with consequential savings in running costs and improve safety and security.

ENGINEERING SERVICES AND LANDSCAPING

Function

118. Facilities are linked by engineering services which provide electrical power, reticulated water for domestic and firefighting purposes, stormwater and sewage disposal, site drainage, communications, roads, paths, carpark and landscaping.

Need

119. Existing engineering services are not reticulated to all sites at which redevelopment is proposed. In addition, Defence advised that many of the existing services have deteriorated with time in the harsh tropical and saline environment, or need to be upgraded to improve their reliability and comply with contemporary codes of engineering practice. In addition, new engineering services and landscaping are required for the new facilities to be constructed.

120. Defence advised that whilst the provision of many of the services is included in the scope of works for discrete facilities, the extension of services to the site and linkages to trunk services or roads are separate entities.

121. Defence identified some of the deficiencies requiring rectification as follows:

- the existing water reticulation system cannot meet fire fighting requirements at the elevated parts of the Barracks during peak demand periods and will be unable to deliver a reliable water supply to some of the proposed new residential units on elevated sites;
- the existing high voltage electricity reticulation network is not configured in a ring main format and is unable to meet required reliability standards;
- erosion is apparent in many of the open drains;

- many of the trade waste management facilities and collection points throughout the Barracks do not meet current environmental standards;
- many roads have deteriorated, have a marginal capacity to carry traffic envisaged in the future, or lack kerbs and channels;
- portions of sewer lines have deteriorated and require replacement; and
- bare areas of the Barracks require revegetation.

Proposal

122. The following new and additional engineering services are proposed.

- water supply:
 - upgrading the existing reservoir; and
 - provision of a new inlet main.
- electrical and communications services:
 - completion of the high voltage ring main,
 - new transformers and high and low voltage cabling to new areas; and
 - extension of the fibre optic communications system to new areas.
- stormwater drainage:
 - improvements to erosion protection of open channels; and
 - construction of silt basins, on-line pollution traps, hard standing area sand filters, fuel and oil interceptors, trash racks and open drain traps.
- tradewaste treatment:
 - installation of pollution control measures in existing hazardous waste storage and handling facilities; and
 - provision of pollution control measures on the new common vehicle wash facility.

- roadworks:
 - construction of new service roads, minor roads and carparks; and
 - resurfacing and upgrading of some existing roads and carparks, including provision of kerbs and channels.
- sewerage services:
 - replacement of sections of sewer line; and
 - provision of new lines to areas to be developed.
- landscaping:
 - planting of low maintenance bushland vegetation throughout the Barracks,
 - enhancement of landscaping at focal points of the Barracks; and
 - increasing the capacity of the existing dams to reduce the demand on town water for irrigation.

Committee's Conclusion

123. Installation of waste collection facilities and the provision of the new Common Wash Facility should improve environmental management on the Barracks.

DESIGN

Standards

124. The design of new facilities will conform to the relevant sections of the Building Code of Australia, Australian Standards, State Regulations, and Defence specifications.

Principles

125. The general design principles to be adopted will comprise:

- cost effective and utilitarian facilities of energy efficient design suitable for the rigours of the climate and cyclonic conditions;
- where possible, adoption of conventional construction techniques and materials, in particular those commonly used by the construction industry in the area;
- durable materials suitable for a saline tropical environment combining long life with minimum maintenance;
- maximisation of natural cross-flow ventilation to reduce airconditioning costs; and
- consideration of the impact of aircraft and vehicle noise on the living and working environment and the occupational health and safety of occupants.

Design features

126. New buildings and workshops will be steel-framed structures placed on a stiffened concrete floor with high level footings. Generally, buildings will be masonry clad, although metal cladding will be used with 3 BASB Transport Squadron buildings.

127. Roofs will be of metal construction. Transverse joins in roofing sheets will be avoided where possible to improve strength in high wind conditions.

128. Internal partitions will be of masonry construction in accommodation, messes and the Central Food Preparation Facility. Internal partitions in other buildings will be a mixture of masonry construction or clad steel framed stud-wall construction.

129. Offices, messes and living areas will be provided with acoustic treatment to ceilings and windows to achieve noise attenuation to 60 dBA where practical.

130. Window glazing will address the issues of thermal efficiency, acoustics, control of natural lighting and screening. In some cases tinted glass will be used for sun protection. The Communications Centre will be windowless for security and operational reasons.

131. Accommodation, messes, food preparation areas and the Communications Centre will be airconditioned. All ablution areas will be mechanically ventilated.

132. Electrical power supplies will be drawn from the Barracks electrical system. Main switchboards will be separately housed and segregated. Emergency power supplies will be provided to critical operational areas and refrigeration equipment. The Communications Centre will be provided with an uninterruptible power supply.

133. Water and sewerage connections will be made to the existing systems. Fire detection devices will be connected to a central fire monitor board.

134. Engineering services will be designed to normal commercial standards. Roads and hard standing areas will be designed against assessed vehicle usage. The type of pavement surfaces will be gauged against vehicle usage, concentrations and occurrences of fuel and oil spillage.

Flooding

135. The Committee was assured that as part of the planning process, consideration was given to flood prone areas and that all sites which have been selected for development were selected on the basis of past flooding experiences. In addition, drainage works will be undertaken in the eastern residential sector.

Fire protection

136. The following principles and procedures will be adopted and followed in the design of the fire protection systems:

- all construction and fire protection requirements will, as a minimum, be in accordance with the provisions of the Building Code of Australia (BCA), the Defence Manual of Fire Protection Engineering and all other applicable Codes and Standards. Defence advised that the levels of fire protection specified are above BCA requirements and were determined by a risk assessment and risk management approach to fire protection;
- certification by a suitably qualified certifier that the design and construction meet the requirements of the relevant Codes and Standards and any additional State, Local Government and Defence requirements;
- the Queensland Fire Brigade will be invited to comment on the project, visit the site and offer comment to ensure that the Brigade's operational requirements are met;

- any recommended departures from BCA requirements in relation to the project will be technically assessed by Defence specialist fire protection staff. Agreed departures, designed to ensure an equivalent or higher level of protection than BCA requirements, will require written approval at Director General level; and
- successful tenderers will be required to produce a quality assurance plan to clearly show how relevant requirements, in relation to fire protection/fire safety, will be met and maintained.

Energy management and lighting

137. The design of all power supply, electrical and mechanical equipment will include an assessment of energy use applying life cycle costing techniques and power demand analysis. Facilities will incorporate building management systems, metering and other provisions to measure and monitor energy use and to allow regular energy audits.

138. Lighting will be controlled, where possible, by photo-electric switches in conjunction with time-switch schedules to reduce energy consumption and consequential greenhouse gas emissions. These features will include the provision of personnel sensor controlled lighting to areas occupied intermittently.

139. Lamps will be high efficiency fluorescent, compact fluorescent or discharge type.

140. External lighting will be designed to minimise glare and colour distortion.

141. Where appropriate, time switches would also be installed at airconditioner controls.

142. Solar hot water systems will be used where practical and cost effective.

143. Consideration will be given to the control and monitoring of building services through a central energy management system.

Legionella

144. As air cooled airconditioning systems are proposed, no specific precautions against the legionella bacillus are considered necessary. Potable water would be below the temperature range where legionella can breed to levels affecting health.

ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

Impact clearances

145. An Environmental Certificate of Compliance is being obtained within the Department of Defence.

Environmental management

146. Defence was preparing an environmental management plan at the time of the public hearing in August 1998.

Heritage

147. The Committee was advised by the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) that the proposed work will not affect a place entered, or nominated for entry, in the Register of the National Estate. It was pointed out, however, that Lavarack Barracks was a major base for Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. The AHC pointed to reports of evidence of this and earlier uses including archeological evidence from the 19th century. The AHC therefore recommended that sites involved for redevelopment be the subject of a heritage survey and an evaluation of the impact of the proposal on any identified heritage values.

148. Defence advised the Committee that the AHC's recommended approach was an integral part of the Environmental Impact Assessment for Stage 1 which was commissioned by Defence as a lead into the proposed Stage 2 redevelopment.

149. The Environmental Management Plan will address environmental and heritage management requirements and will be prepared by locally based subconsultants.

Environment Australia—Biodiversity Group

150. The Biodiversity Group indicated that the proposed works have the potential to impact on bird and plant species listed under the *Endangered Species Protection Act 1992* and recommended a management plan be developed to:

- survey the potential presence of vulnerable species; and
- establish a monitoring program to determine whether the development will have an adverse impact on populations of these species.

151. Defence advised that a flora and fauna survey was carried out as part of the Stage 1 environmental impact assessment.

152. Defence believes that it is essential to understand that Lavarack Barracks is a highly modified site, with the majority being landscaped with grass, isolated trees and garden beds. The principal remnant habitat is associated with the creek corridor. Results of flora and fauna surveys and management regimes proposed by Defence are that:

- no recognised rare or threatened plant species occur in the area directly surrounding Lavarack Barracks. The adjacent Mount Stuart Training Area has two species considered to be endemic to mountain crest areas (eucalypts and bottlebrush). A number of species considered to be rare locally occur at Lavarack. These will be managed by the implementation of the Environmental Management Plan;
- the majority of the redevelopment will be located in areas already disturbed. Potential impacts are minor loss of woodland habitat, displacement of fauna from these areas and potentially increased fire risk. Management of the latter is an integral part of the Environmental Management Plan; and
- further surveys of reptile and owl species will be undertaken to ensure populations are verified and habitat management is appropriate.

Impacts from construction

153. During construction of the proposed works, safeguards will be taken to minimise dust from construction sites and to prevent run-off contamination. An environmental construction management plan will be approved before construction commences.

CONSULTATION

154. The following Authorities have been or will be advised or consulted:

- Federal and State representatives for the area;
- Townsville City and Thuringowa Councils; and
- Queensland Fire Brigade.

Local support

155. Townsville City Council advised the Committee that it supports the proposed Stage 2 works. The Barracks are located on land zoned by the Council

as Special Purposes—Defence, under the City of Townsville Planning Scheme. This zone recognises use of the land for defence purposes.

156. Council does not believe that the redevelopment will have any negative environmental impacts and supports the use of an environmental management plan to ensure that any impacts are minimised. Further, Council believes the impact of the redevelopment on residential areas will be minimal. University Drive, which is a four lane highway, separates land within the Barracks area to be redeveloped from the nearest residential properties. In terms of social and economic effects, Council believes the proposed work will be positive for two reasons:

- it will reinforce the importance of Townsville as the location of several significant military establishments; and
- the construction phase will generate job opportunities ranging from the prefabrication of components, the manufacture and distribution of materials and the construction of new facilities.

LOCAL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AND WORKFORCE

Townsville Chamber of Commerce

157. The Townsville Chamber of Commerce has a membership of 600 businesses encompassing mining and agriculture, secondary and service industries. The Chamber pointed to considerable activity aimed at improving Defence facilities in the region and expressed concerns to the Committee that not all of the projects have had the desired and expected beneficial impact on Townsville businesses. The Chamber asserted that local businesses were being overlooked in favour of businesses located outside Townsville with more powerful purchasing leverage. According to the Chamber, the scope of the proposed development would be within the competence of civil and building contractors and design professionals located in Townsville to undertake. The Chamber recommended a number of measures should be implemented to involve local businesses in Defence projects. These measures and the Defence responses to them are outlined below:

- the provision of specific concessions to local business. Defence considers this request to be unreasonable because it has the potential to encourage unfair competition;
- monthly reporting of contracts. Defence advised that the reporting of contracts and supply agreements is standard practice with Gazettal of all contracts above \$2,000. Where subcontractors are involved, it is a matter between the contractor and subcontractor.

Defence nevertheless undertook to discuss with the contractor involved in the project to provide the Chamber with this information; and

- investigation of complaints by local business. Defence abides by Commonwealth purchasing guidelines and the selection of contractors is a commercial in confidence process. Unsuccessful contractors are offered a confidential debrief of their submissions. Many companies take up this offer and noticeably improve in future tender submissions.

Local involvement

158. When Defence calls for expressions of interest or tenders, value for money is a primary concern, although within that framework Defence also has a requirement to make opportunities for small and medium enterprises where possible. On some projects, some components will be broken up which are handled better by small organisations. The local Defence Estate Organisation in Townsville has a considerable amount of ongoing work throughout the year which provides work for local consultants and contractors.

159. Defence has recently requested contractors and project managers to keep records about the allocation of contracts. This has been done for a number of projects in Townsville during the past two years. The allocation of work to north Queensland contractors has varied from a worst case of 62 per cent by the number of contracts and by 96 per cent by value.

160. Defence pointed out even though a national company may be engaged to manage a project or to be the primary contractor, most of the work is nevertheless undertaken by local firms.

161. In terms of consultants and architects, it is common for Defence to commission a national consultant, again on the basis of value for money. It is, however, a routine feature for these national companies to work through a local office of their organisation or through subconsultants. The assertion that Defence does not look after local consultants or contractors is incorrect.

Construction Workforce

162. Over the envisaged construction period of about three years, an average of about 200 personnel will be directly employed on construction activities. In addition, it is anticipated that construction will generate further job opportunities off-site from the prefabrication of components and the manufacturing and distribution of materials.

COST AND TIMING

Cost

163. The out turn cost of this project is \$139.3 million. This includes construction costs, professional fees and charges, furniture and fittings, construction contingency and a predicted indexation adjustment over the construction period.

164. Defence expressed confidence in the cost estimate for two reasons. First, by way of comparison with a similar project in Darwin where, for example, living-in accommodation cost between \$60,000 to \$80,000 per room.

165. Secondly, the contingency allowance is 10 per cent of the total estimated cost. It is normal practice for Defence to allocate a contingency in the range of eight to 12 per cent. The estimate is in the middle of the range because there are uncertainties associated with the project as difficulties may be experienced in providing infrastructure in rocky sites.

Timings

166. Subject to Parliamentary approval, the works were planned to be committed in late 1998, with the aim of having them completed by the end of 2001.

167. The Committee noted that it is planned to have the project completed in three years and asked Defence if it would be possible for the new accommodation blocks to be completed in advance of the completion of the entire project. Defence advised that following approvals, it was planned to commence construction in February 1999. The project will be delivered in phases, with some accommodation being completed early in the life of the project, perhaps by the middle of 1999.

FUTURE WORKS AT LAVARACK BARRACKS

168. Further redevelopment of Lavarack Barracks, at a cost of about \$160 million, is envisaged. Those works will include:

- new facilities for 3rd Combat Engineer Regiment, 1st and 2nd Battalions Royal Australian Regiment, 4th Field Regiment and B Squadron 3/4th Cavalary Regiment;
- improvements to 10th Force Support Battalion facilities;
- refurbishment of existing accommodation to high density standard as well as general refurbishment of existing accommodation for use by deployed units;
- new facilities for 3 Brigade Headquarters; refurbishment of existing facilities for Reserve and minor Regular units; and
- improvements to recreational facilities and Barracks amenities.

169. The provision of new living in accommodation is being contemplated for RAAF Base Townsville. In view of real estate constraints at the RAAF Base, one possibility would be to construct that accommodation at Lavarack Barracks, and real estate reservation has been made on the Master Plan for a site in the Western Precinct of the Barracks where an additional messing and accommodation complex could be located.

OTHER DEFENCE WORKS AT TOWNSVILLE

170. Major projects that were completed in 1997 include:

- Military Operations in Urban Terrain Training Facility within the Townsville Field Training Area, and
- Facilities for 10th Terminal Regiment—10th Terminal Regiment has now been absorbed into 10th Force Support Battalion (*Committee's Eighteenth Report of 1995—Parliamentary Paper 167/1995*).

171. Major projects presently under construction include:

- Additional Facilities for 5th Aviation Regiment at RAAF Base Townsville (*Committee's Fourth Report of 1996—Parliamentary Paper 391/1996*); and
- Development of the Townsville Field Training Area (*Committee's Fifth Report of 1996—Parliamentary Paper 392/1996*).

172. Redevelopment of RAAF Base Townsville is proposed for progression in the 1998-99 Financial Year.

Committee's Recommendation

173. The Committee recommends the construction of Lavarack Barracks Redevelopment Stage 2, Townsville, at an estimated out turn cost of \$139.3 million.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

174. The Committee's conclusions and recommendations and the paragraphs in which they appear in the report are set out below:

1. Provision of new airconditioned living-in accommodation should improve living standards for on-base personnel and should lift the morale of personnel. (Paragraph 63)

2. There is a need for new messes, on a scale commensurate with requirements identified in Department of Defence planning studies, to be provided at Lavarack Barracks adjacent to the sites proposed for new living-in accommodation. (Paragraph 86)

3. There are concerns about the appropriateness of the cook-chill method of food preparation based on its untested nature in the Australian Defence Force. (Paragraph 87)

4. The Department of Defence should report back to the Committee on the operation of the cook-chill process after it has been fully tested at Lavarack Barracks, before its wider implementation within the Australian Defence Force. (Paragraph 88)

5. Operational integrity, communications management and message security should be improved by the provision of the new Communications Centre. (Paragraph 93)

6. Provision of new facilities for 3BASB's Transport Squadron should enable its activities to be consolidated in modern facilities, with a consequential improvement in Unit management and performance. In addition, overall management of 3BASB should improve with the co-location of its Transport Squadron with the rest of the Battalion. (Paragraph 100)

7. The provision of the Eastern Deployment and Assembly Area would allow assembly of deployment equipment at a single location and avoid road congestion which occurs under present arrangements. (Paragraph 111)

8. The Eastern Deployment and Assembly Area could also provide a large hard standing area suitable for a parade ground or as a helicopter landing area. (Paragraph 112)

9. Provision of a new heavy vehicle east-west trunk road linking the three zones would enable heavy traffic to be kept away from residential areas, improve traffic flow with consequential savings in running costs and improve safety and security. (Paragraph 117)

10. Installation of waste collection facilities and the provision of the new Common Wash Facility should improve environmental management on the Barracks. (Paragraph 123)

11. The Committee recommends the construction of Lavarack Barracks Redevelopment Stage 2, Townsville, at an estimated out turn cost of \$139.3 million. (Paragraph 173)

Judi Moylan MP
Chair

11 February 1999

APPENDIX A

WITNESSES

BUNNELL, Councillor Ann, Deputy Mayor, Townsville City Council, PO Box 1268, Townsville, QLD

CALMY, Herve Mr, Principal Planner, Hames Sharley, 300 Rokeby Road, Subiaco, WA

KELLY, Brigadier Garry, Director General Project Delivery, Department of Defence, DGPD, CP3-3-03, Canberra, ACT

LEAHY, Brigadier Peter, Commander 3rd Brigade, Department of Defence, HQ 3BDE, Lavarack Barracks, QLD

LINDSAY, Mr Peter, Federal Member for Herbert, PO Box 226, Aitkenvale, QLD

NICHOLSON, Wing Commander Allan, Project Director, Department of Defence, DGPD, CP3-3-24, Canberra, ACT

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