



Christmas Island Detention Centre under parliamentary scrutiny

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works will receive a briefing from the departments of Finance and Deregulation & Immigration and Citizenship on the development of the Christmas Island Detention Centre. The Committee will focus on the increase in the cost of the work from an estimated \$276 million in 2003 to \$396 million today.

Committee Chair, Mark Butler MP, noted the significance of the briefing. "In 2003 the Committee examined the proposal for the purpose built detention centre at Christmas Island with respect to its need, cost, scope, purpose and value for money. Five years down the track, it is important to take stock of how the development has been implemented and consider the reasons for the \$120 million increase in the cost to the Australian taxpayers".

The details of the detention centre briefing are as follows:

Place:	Committee Room 1R4 Parliament House Canberra
Date:	Thursday 26 June 2008
Time:	8:15am – 9:00am (approx)

Background

In 2001 temporary facilities were established on Christmas Island to accommodate people attempting to enter Australia without immigration authorisation. The temporary facilities proved inadequate and by 2002 the Australian Government announced its intention to develop a purpose built detention centre on the island. The Public Works Committee examined a detailed proposal for the detention centre in 2003. That proposal provided for an accommodation capacity of 800 people with approximately 50% housed in purpose-designed accommodation with the remainder in more basic contingency accommodation. The 2003 proposal was estimated to cost \$276.2 million, made up of contributions by the then departments of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Transport and Regional Services, and Finance and Administration.

The progress of the Christmas Island Detention Centre project and the reasons for the 43% cost increase will be the main subject of the briefing.

The briefing will be open to the public. A live audio webcast of the briefing will be available at: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/> A transcript of the proceedings will also be placed on the Committee website after the event.

For media comment: Public Works Committee Chair, Mr Mark Butler MP, 02 6277 4414

For further information: including the Committee's original report into the Detention Centre, transcripts and copies of submissions, please visit the Committee website: <http://www.aph.gov.au/pwc> or contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4636.