

Introduction

Referral of Work

- 1.1 On 16 June 2005 the proposal for the Proposed Refurbishment of the Royal Australian Mint, Canberra, ACT, was referred to the Public Works Committee for consideration and report to the Parliament in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Works Committee Act 1969* (the Act).¹ The proponent agency for this work is the Department of Finance and Administration (DoFA).
- 1.2 The Hon Dr Sharman Stone MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and Administration, advised the House that the estimated cost of the proposed refurbishment was \$41.2 million. Subject to parliamentary approval, works are planned to commence in July 2006, and be completed by February 2009.

Background

Royal Australian Mint

- 1.3 The Royal Australian Mint was built in 1965 and is responsible, and purpose built, for meeting the coin circulation and numismatic needs of Australia. The Mint is viewed as a tourist destination of Canberra,

¹ Extract from the *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives*, No. 6, Thursday 16 June 2005

attracting approximately 200,000 visitors per annum, the majority of which are school children.

Site of Proposed Works

- 1.4 The site of the proposed works is Commonwealth land, managed by Finance identified as Block 1 Section 65 Deakin, ACT and has a total site area of 3.58 hectares.²
- 1.5 There is no requirement for the acquisition of any land, with all proposed works on Commonwealth land, designated Urban Areas under the National Capital Plan and zoned for use by the Royal Australian Mint.³

Inquiry Process

- 1.6 The Committee is required by the Act to consider public works over \$6 million⁴ and report to Parliament on:
- the purpose of the work and its suitability for that purpose;
 - the need for, or the advisability of, carrying out the work;
 - whether the money to be expended on the work is being spent in the most cost effective manner;
 - the amount of revenue the work will generate for the Commonwealth, if that is its purpose; and
 - the present and prospective public value of the work.⁵
- 1.7 The Committee called for submissions by advertising the inquiry in *The Canberra Times* on Saturday, 16 July 2005. The Committee also sought submissions from relevant government agencies, local government, private organisations and individuals, who may be materially affected by or have an interest in the proposed work. The Committee subsequently placed submissions and other information relating to the inquiry on its web site in order to encourage further public participation.

2 Appendix C, Submission No. 1, paragraph 2.2.1

3 *ibid*, paragraph 2.2.3

4 *Public Works Committee Act 1969*, Part III, Section 18 (8)

5 *ibid*, Section 17

Inspection and Public Hearing

- 1.8 On 19 August 2005 the Committee visited the Royal Australian Mint and inspected the site and environs of the proposed works. A confidential briefing from DoFA and a public hearing were held at Parliament House, Canberra, later that day.⁶

⁶ See Appendix D for the official Hansard transcript of the evidence taken by the Committee at the public hearing on Friday, 19 August 2005 in Parliament House, Canberra.

