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Proof Committee Hansard

PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
WORKS

**Reference: Enhanced Land Force stage 2 facilities project, Gallipoli Barracks,
Enoggera, Queensland and other defence bases and training areas around Australia**

WEDNESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2009

BRISBANE

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**PARLIAMENTARY STANDING
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS**

Wednesday, 4 November 2009

Members: Senator McLucas (*Chair*), Senator Troeth (*Deputy Chair*), Senator Forshaw and Mr Champion, Mr Forrest, Ms Hall, Mr Lindsay, Mr Price and Mr Slipper

Members in attendance: Senator McLucas, Mr Lindsay and Mr Slipper

Terms of reference for the inquiry:

To inquire into and report on:

Enhanced Land Force stage 2 facilities project, Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera, Queensland and other defence bases and training areas around Australia

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Committee met at 1.02 pm

CHAIR (Senator McLucas)—I declare open this public hearing of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works inquiry into the Enhanced Land Force Stage 2 proposal by the Department of Defence. Before I go into the formal part of the inquiry, I want to put on the record our thanks to Brigadier Bill Grice for not only arranging a terrific inspection of Enoggera this morning and arranging our inspection of Singleton last week but for appearing in front of this committee, I think, a massive 27 times over the last 3½ years. We call him the frequent flyer! I also put on the public record the committee's appreciation of what I understand has been extraordinary service to our committee. You are open to our questions, you are cooperative with the committee and I understand that you took your organisation to another level in dealing with the committee. So, on behalf of the secretariat and former committee members, thank you very much for your service to the parliament and to the Department of Defence.

Thank you also to all of those people involved with this morning's inspection. 'Military precision' was the phrase that came to mind in being able to get us around both Enoggera and, last week, Singleton very swiftly and to get us across the extent of the proposed works in a short period of time. I want to thank Brigadier Steve Day, Lieutenant Colonel Shaun Hoffmann, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Meacham—all from here in Enoggera—and Colonel Tony Egan from Singleton. Thanks very much for your cooperation during that time. In the course of these hearings and inspections we have come to know quite a number of people from the Infrastructure Asset Development Branch of Defence Support Group—DSG. I thank you all for the enormous amount of work that you have put into developing your submission or application to the committee and also for your ability to answer questions at the drop of a hat.

We will go into the formal part of the hearings very shortly. There are a number of people from the community who are here today. The committee intends to open the microphone for you to be able to make your comments after the submission and questioning of the Department of Defence. What I would like you to do, if you would like to speak at that point in time—I cannot tell you when that point will be because I do not yet know how many of you there are, but once I have worked out how many people want to speak I will make a decision about when that will happen—is to give your names to Mr Thomas Gregory, who is standing over there. If you could make a short statement, the committee would be grateful for your thoughts.

[1.06 pm]

DAY, Brigadier Stephen Julian, Commander, 7th Brigade, Department of Defence

GRICE, Brigadier William, Director General, Infrastructure Asset Development, Department of Defence

HOOKER, Mr Gordon John, Director, Explosive Ordnance Reform, Joint Logistics Command, Vice Chief Defence Force Group, Department of Defence

MEACHAM, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Robert, Commanding Officer, Warrant Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer Academy, Land Warfare Centre, Department of Defence

OLSEN, Mr Steve, Manager, Estate and Facilities Services, Queensland, Defence Support, Queensland, Department of Defence

PATTERSON, Mr Craig John, Assistant Director, South Queensland, Department of Defence

PULLMAN, Mr Peter Harry, Contract Administrator on behalf of Defence, Aurecon Australia Pty Ltd

TANZER, Mr Richard, Director, Enhanced Land Force Facilities, Department of Defence

ZENTELIS, Mr Rick, Director, Heritage and Biodiversity Conservation, Department of Defence

CHAIR—Moving to the formal part of the inquiry, I call representatives of the Department of Defence. Do you have anything to say about the capacity in which you appear today?

Mr Tanzer—I am from the Infrastructure Asset Development Branch in Canberra.

Mr Patterson—I am also from the Infrastructure Asset Development Branch in Canberra.

CHAIR—Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I should advise you that these hearings are formal proceedings of the parliament. Consequently they warrant the same respect as proceedings of the parliament itself. I remind witnesses that giving false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of the parliament. Brigadier Grice, for the last time would you care to make some introductory remarks?

Brig. Grice—Thank you, Madam Chair. First I have a couple of small revisions to the evidence, as was discussed with the committee members at the site inspection at Singleton on 30 October. I would like to table a revised attachment 53, which is the precinct site plan for the battle simulation centre; a revised attachment 54, which is a site perspective of the battle

simulation centre; and a revised attachment 56, which is a precinct site plan of the base entry and infantry museum.

The Department of Defence is proposing to undertake the construction of facilities for the Enhanced Land Force at Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera, Queensland, and at other defence bases and training areas. The Enhanced Land Force initiative was first announced by government in August 2006. Stage 2 of this initiative involves the establishment of the 8th/9th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, at Gallipoli Barracks as part of the 7th Brigade. It also involves the enhancement of training and logistics elements in four states and the Australian Capital Territory to support Defence's collective and career training and logistics requirements.

The need for the facilities and infrastructure is driven by the increase in the size of the Army. To sustain the larger Army, Army's collective and career training establishments will also need to increase their output. The proposed works at Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera, will provide permanent facilities for the 8th/9th Battalion as well as facilities for other 7th Brigade and 1st Division units in Gallipoli Barracks. The proposed works at Lavarack Barracks in Townsville will enhance the existing combat training centre, support increased training at the Land Warfare Centre's Warrant Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer Academy, enhance logistic support provided by the 3rd Combat Service Support Battalion, provide additional training ranges and provide a new explosives storehouse.

The proposed works at Wide Bay Training Area provide a variety of training areas and ranges to support training by the 7th Brigade and other defence units. Additional training ranges proposed are a special weapons range, assault grenade ranges, a marksmanship training range, additional camp accommodation, an upgrade to the existing vehicle refuelling point and vehicle wash point facilities, an explosive ordnance storage facility and upgrades to the engineering services infrastructure.

The proposed work at a RAAF Base Amberley is the construction of a new facility to support the relocation of headquarters of the 6th Engineer Support Regiment from Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera. The proposed works at the Greenbank Training Area provide training areas and ranges to support training by the 7th Brigade and other defence units. The works involve a new range entry point and range control facility, an additional marksmanship training range, an urban operations training facility, a method of entry training facility, an engineer mine clearance training area, a safe driver training area, training camp accommodation, a vehicle wash facility and a depot for the 25th/49th Battalion of the Royal Queensland Regiment.

The proposed works at Kokoda Barracks, Canungra provide a battle simulation facility, additional living-in accommodation for trainees, an upgrade to the existing gymnasium, camp accommodation to support visiting units and a marksmanship training range. The proposed works involve provision of facilities to support the School of Infantry at Singleton. Works in the cantonment area include upgrades of the engineering services and construction of a headquarters for the School of Infantry, additional permanent living-in accommodation for soldiers, a battle simulation centre, a weapon repair facility, a museum and a pass office. Works on the Singleton range include new and extended weapons ranges and a storage facility for explosive ordnance.

The proposed works for the primary casualty reception facility in Sydney will satisfy the need for working accommodation, training space and a central dispensing point. It is proposed to

extend building 921 at Garden Island to provide the central dispensing point facilities and adaptively reuse buildings 8 and 26 at HMAS Penguin in Balmoral in order to provide the required working accommodation and training facilities. The proposed works for the Royal Military College involve provision of living-in accommodation rooms to support the rehabilitation and transition of cadets at Duntroon in Canberra and upgrades of existing facilities at the Majura training area to support training.

The proposed works at Simpson Barracks in Melbourne involve the provision of a new technical training wing building, comprising working facilities, classrooms and associated external works and services, as well as modifications to an existing covered training area to support career training. The proposed work at Puckapunyal is to provide a storage facility for explosive ordnance. The proposed work at RAAF Base Edinburgh in Adelaide provides facilities to support the career training requirements at the land warfare centre's warrant officer and non-commissioned officer academy. The proposed works at the Cultana Training Area consist of improvements to the range facilities, including providing a storage facility for explosive ordnance, an urban operations training facility, a field firing range and training camp accommodation.

The total estimated out-turn cost of the proposal is \$1,457.836 million. This includes professional design and management fees and charges, construction, furniture, fittings and equipment, together with appropriate allowances for contingency and escalation. Subject to parliamentary clearance, construction is scheduled to commence in 2010, with the completion of all elements to be achieved by late 2014. That concludes Defence's opening statement and the Defence witnesses stand ready to answer any questions the members may have.

CHAIR—Thank you very much. There are a number of areas of interest that the committee would like to canvass, the first one being the question of consultation, and then I want to go to traffic. They are the two big issues that we need to talk through. Let us start with the question of consultation. I note in your submission that you turn us to appendix 2 for consultation. What I would like you to talk more about are the principles that underpin Defence's approach to consultation. With whom do you consult in a general sense? Then we might go to Enoggera, which is the one we want to talk about.

Brig. Grice—I will start, and then I may pass to other members of the team. Consultation is a very important part of the project development cycle. However, before a project is conceived there are ongoing forums with state governments and, within bases, with local government. There is an ongoing level of consultation. The head of infrastructure has an ongoing program of consultation with state governments, which is carried on throughout the year. At those meetings there are discussions about Defence's interests in the state and upcoming infrastructure issues. In addition, unit and formation commanders on individual bases, as well as representatives of the Defence Support Group in different bases and training areas, are involved in a range of community consultation groups depending on where they are located. I might pass to Steve—both of the Steves—in a couple of minutes to give you an idea of some of the ongoing forums and consultations.

When a project is given to Infrastructure Asset Development Branch to develop—and this one was developed within a reasonably short time frame—Defence engages project managers, contract administrators like Mr Pullman at the end of the table and a design team to undertake

the specific design of all the facilities that are going to be designed. As part of their responsibilities, they and the Defence project team undertake consultation with all the utility providers in and around a base area that is going to be affected as well as the relevant parts of the local and state governments. Attachment 2 shows the broad range of people we have consulted with.

Leading up to a public works committee hearing, Defence holds a community consultation session at each of the areas where there is a large project element to be undertaken. This is done fairly late in the process, once the specifics of the proposal that have been agreed to by the minister and referred to the committee are known. For this project we have undertaken community consultation sessions at five locations. Mr Tanzer will be able to talk to those.

That is a summary of the process. There are general ongoing links across Defence with the local communities that they are in as well as between the federal and state governments. Then there are project-specific consultations with the local and state utilities and departments that will be affected by Defence's project, which are undertaken throughout a project. Those are not complete. For some of these works we are currently at about 50 per cent design development; for others we are at less than that. Between now and the completion of the design phase there will be ongoing consultation with all of those agencies to ensure that we have agreement on the detailed specifics of Defence's proposal. Not all those are ironed out at the moment.

I will now pass to Steve Day and Steve Olsen to give an idea of the local coordination and consultation that goes on.

Mr Olsen—Apart from the project-specific and formal consultancy processes that occur throughout one of these projects, although Defence is a very large tenant it sees itself, as you heard in your briefing this morning, as part of the neighbourhood. With that view, we see that we have 300 neighbours that we would deal with over our back fence. When an issue occurs or when we know of something that is going to occur, Defence's stance is quite an integrated one under the new base accountabilities model, where Brigadier Day's team and the local base support team contact each other and make sure that they are consulting with the neighbours on the boundary. The process is more of a personalised one—that is to say, we target the people who will be affected by a change and consult with them in the form of individual phone calls, visits, letters or even leaflet drops to the wider community around the base, if something is going to occur.

A recent example of that is when we had to close the Wanimo Street gate to do an upgrade of that. We had to open an alternative gate at Bliss Street and we undertook that same process to let the community know what was going on. Some members of the community expressed some reservations about what it would do to them and the traffic in their area. We took that on board and consulted with the Queensland police, who came and monitored what was going on and suggested alternative routes. The way we approach things is the local community way; we are very receptive and, we think, responsive to their requirements.

Mr SLIPPER—Is there complete satisfaction in the community now? Have you allayed all concerns? Is the fact that we seem to have a rather larger than usual public gallery an indication that maybe there are still unresolved issues?

Mr Olsen—There are known issues to do with the larger traffic around the base that we may not ever resolve in this project. I am sure that is something that is a concern to both the community and Defence. I could not project exactly what all the concerns would be, but I do not have indications of ongoing complaints about this project; that is the gauge that I would use to answer your question.

Brig. Grice—Just to add to that, I would say it is a fact of life that wherever there is a Defence base there will be issues and there will be friction from time to time. Defence's approach to these is to put them out in the open and to try to resolve them where it can. Mr Tanzer, can you give an update on the community consultations that were conducted?

Mr Tanzer—Certainly. We conducted five community consultations. In all, 110 members of the community attended those, and most of them were during the latter half of October following the referral of the project to the committee in the middle of September.

As an indicator, we first met with Gympie Regional Council at Wide Bay on 16 October. The CEO, Mr Ken Mason was in attendance. At that meeting, the mayor, Councillor Ron Dyne, was not available. He subsequently met with us at the public consultation meeting on 20 October. That is a fairly typical pattern that occurs, where we meet with council, then meet with a councillor and then follow up with state and local members in days following that. We have also met with the Hon Warren Truss about works in his electorate, and on 27 October with the state member for Gympie, Mr David Gibson.

In all cases, our approach is to provide an information brief about the project. It is based on the Defence submission, and we canvass areas of interest to the public or the members and provide feedback that we are able to. Sometimes it is an issue that we will bring back to, perhaps, a commander, or a Defence support representative.

The other locations where we conducted the public consultations were at Singleton, here at Enoggera—just across the road—at Greenbank and also down at Canungra. Those were the five that we have conducted to date.

Brig. Grice—Madam Chair, I will pass to Craig Patterson to give you an idea of the consultations that have occurred in Enoggera with the utility providers and the state and local governments.

CHAIR—Thanks. I really do want to get to the question of the consultation around the traffic in Enoggera. Let's talk about that.

Mr Patterson—Should I focus my answer directly on traffic?

CHAIR—Yes.

Mr Patterson—Since the inception of the project discussions have been, and are continuing, with the Department of Transport and Main Roads. These are being conducted on two levels: (1) with the more executive level of the project teams and (2) more often with the working level, with our consulting engineers and also the Department of Transport and Main Road engineers.

Concerns raised during the public consultation mainly centred on the traffic around Enoggera. We are certainly aware of those particular issues, and have integrated a number of works within our project to try and ease some of the congestion around the barracks. I would highlight that the majority of the traffic in and out of Gallipoli Barracks occurs outside of the usual peak periods experienced by users of Samford Road and Wardell Street. Hence, the Defence impact on the local traffic congestion is considered minor when compared with the growth of Brisbane city and surrounding councils.

Brig. Grice—I will pass to Peter Pullman who will give some more information.

Mr Pullman—As Brigadier Grice indicated, when a consultant is appointed as a project manager, one of our responsibilities is to consult. We have taken up that responsibility through a number of avenues, some of which Mr Patterson has already spoken about.

With regard to traffic, we have been speaking to the Department of Transport and Main Roads as well as the Brisbane City Council. You would be aware that both the department and Brisbane City Council have roads that are adjacent to and used by people on the base and living past the base. As Mr Patterson has indicated, we have met with DTMR and with the Brisbane City Council at a management level. We have met with them on three minuted occasions over the last three or four months and we have met with them on a technical basis—that is, using our consultants—to provide them with information on the traffic impact assessment as well as the construction and management plan. Those consultations are ongoing.

I must say that this is not an easy area to deal with—there are a number of stakeholders—and further to that, there was a community information night. The one we held was on 26 October, which followed a letterbox drop on 19 October, plus media releases on 14 and 21 October. This issue was raised. I must say that while speaking to the local members, Councillor Andrew Wines, Mr Arch Bevis and Ms Kate Jones, they also raised these particular issues.

We do have a number of strategies in place to deal with this and I am happy to summarise those by noting that there are existing traffic control measures—maybe that might be addressed a little bit better by others here—and we are certainly supporting those. We are also improving the traffic flow within the barracks. With regard to negotiation with both DTMR and Brisbane City Council we are looking at what we can do to improve the intersections outside.

CHAIR—You may not be aware but we just agreed to publish a statement made to our committee from the Department of Transport and Main Roads. We have just passed it to you, Brigadier Grice. They indicate that they have met once on a technical level with the project team—I suppose—but you are saying that there were three other minuted meetings.

Mr Pullman—The term they are using is ‘technical’. We have actually met three times on a managerial level—an executive level and a senior level. I am aware of that one time we have met on a technical level. It is also supported by a number of emails and telephone calls and correspondence, which I suggest are not also included in that letter.

CHAIR—Would it be fair to say that the nature of the consultation between you and DTMR is collaborative, or is it simply that Defence says, ‘We expect this increase in vehicle movements and we expect these sorts of things to occur.’ What is the nature of those discussions?

Brig. Grice—A collaborative approach. We provide them with the information we have gained to look at what their future plans are and to see how we can resolve their concerns and our concerns in a mutually beneficial manner. I would undertake to provide a written response to that letter from DTMR by early next week. But, from the look of that letter, we are not at a point where their concerns have been resolved. We will give a summary of the interactions that have taken place to date and we will continue to consult with them in a cooperative and open manner and resolve any outstanding issues that we can resolve to our mutual benefit. I cannot say much more than that. We will provide a written response to that if you like.

CHAIR—In terms of how you will consult into the future with the local community, what is the nature of those consultations, how do they happen and what is Defence's desired outcome as you go through those consultations?

Brig. Grice—Firstly, with the Brisbane City Council and the Department of Main Roads, we would like to come to agreed solutions which will provide a better outcome for everybody—those who drive past Enoggera, those who live near Enoggera and those who work in Enoggera. We will continue to consult with both of those organisations in the first instance. Once we get to, say, 90 per cent of design and we have outcomes agreed on by both of those entities—perhaps some time next year—we could undertake another consultation period and show them the results of those consultations and what they have agreed they would like us to implement.

There is an ongoing issue with people coming from and going to the base which will never go away. The command and the region are continuing to manage that. Other than the main gate, those gates are not open 24 hours a day; they are only open for specific periods. There are other users of some of those roads, to access local schools or child-care centres.

As we undertake these consultations we will do it with the knowledge that, at best, we are about 10 per cent of the total traffic movements in and around this area. Ten years from now we may be back here with another project and I am sure the local residents will continue to voice concerns about traffic, just as they do around any large facility.

Mr SLIPPER—So you are telling us you personally will be back here in 10 years, Brigadier, despite the fact that you are apparently departing for greener pastures?

Brig. Grice—I will be here if you are here, Mr Slipper!

Mr SLIPPER—That is a fair comment.

CHAIR—I want to go now to the construction period and once again focus on Enoggera. What planning has Defence undertaken around the period of time those major construction works on that block of land will take and around the impact on the roads system, given there is going to be a large amount of demolition and construction? What are you doing so that that is planned through? Finally, what are you doing about consulting with your neighbours?

Brig. Grice—There has been a large amount of construction going on in the base since 2007, when Single LEAP stage 1 commenced, which was a couple of hundred million dollars worth of work. Construction continued since then as we have gone through the Enoggera redevelopment program, for which there is about \$50 million or \$60 million worth of construction a year. So for

the past 2½ years there has been construction on the base and it is proposed that the construction for this project will commence around mid-2010 and continue until 2014. There will be the staged handover of facilities. Some facilities will be complete in 2011, some in 2012 and some in 2013, and the final ones will be complete in 2014. So it is not as if there will be a large ongoing peak of construction for the entire four-year period. There will be about \$120 million to \$150 million worth of construction undertaken in each year. I may pass to Steve Olsen or Mr Pullman to talk about the arrangements that have been put in place for the current works. We would be looking to extend and amend those as we go forward. Steve or Peter could also talk about how the current arrangements to and from the base for construction traffic have been communicated to residents for the Enoggera redevelopment project.

Mr Pullman—We are working on making the most efficient construction program we are able to within the time. The brigadier is quite correct that the actual construction is due to commence in the middle of 2010 subject to parliamentary approval and working through to the end of 2014. We are anticipating that on average there will be about 350 tradespeople working throughout that period, peaking at around 500 at certain points during the construction. Strangely enough, as the brigadier has indicated there has been construction going on already and the numbers of people are not significantly higher than what was being provided under the previous projects such as MRH, the Enoggera redevelopment, Single LEAP and other regional projects.

However, we have been talking with the Department of Transport and Main Roads with regard to construction management and construction traffic. They have indicated that they would not be happy for construction traffic to come directly off Samford Road. On that basis we have agreed only to use Lloyd Street, noting that most construction traffic arrives early in the morning, in fact earlier than the current peak which occurs when the barracks personnel turn up, so we are talking five or six o'clock in the morning. Then it is generally spread later in the day with the tradesmen leaving, so it does not conflict with people picking up children from school and the like. We are looking very closely at managing our construction so that it does not impact significantly or as little as possible. Concrete trucks are a classic. They come when the concrete is ready and will come through the main gate. There will be times when there will be a number of vehicles coming through possibly at an inopportune time but we are seeking to minimise that particular aspect.

CHAIR—How are you seeking to do that, Mr Pullman?

Brig. Grice—By the scheduling of the works and the scheduling of deliveries early in the morning, later in the evening. For the current projects on the site the construction period that is allowed is from six in the morning till six in the evening, six days a week. As Peter was saying the workers are there to start work at six in the morning and they leave it when they have finished at around six o'clock in the evening. I guess the other thing to note is we are talking about the demolition of buildings. Under our ecological, sustainable development guidelines and the Defence green building requirements we are required to incorporate at least 70 per cent of the demolition debris into new works and to avoid taking them to landfill, so it is not like everything that will be demolished will be taken off site. You may recall from the Edinburgh redevelopment project, on which we had a hearing earlier in the year, and from the Hard and Networked Army project we have achieved 95 per cent recycling of building rubble into the new projects.

Mr SLIPPER—Has bureaucracy gone mad requiring 70 per cent of material from the demolished building to be reused? How much more is it costing you in dollar terms?

Brig. Grice—It is actually saving us money, Mr Slipper, especially if we are looking at subgrade and road works. We do not have to import solid fill and it minimises some of those things, so it is a win-win for the environment and a win for us. The other point to note is that once a project starts—and we have this in place now with the Enoggera redevelopment—there is a project coordination group that meets daily which includes representatives from the 7th Brigade, the Defence Support Group, the contractors delivering the works, Defence's project team and the project managers as well as representatives from all of the projects that may be going on simultaneously on the base. They look at the daily and upcoming weekly and monthly scheduling of the project. It is a daily coordination meeting and when anything comes up at it which is out of the ordinary or might have an out of the ordinary effect on the surrounding personnel, it is provided to the representative of the Defence Support Group for them to undertake some consultation, but we seek to minimise those. Steve, can you give me any idea of complaints we have had with regard to construction in the last 12 months?

Mr Olsen—I have had no reports of complaints on construction; it has really been about minor traffic issues. We have had three complaints in the last three months and they have been about individual traffic incidents.

CHAIR—We hear the term 'consultation' but in these sorts of circumstances it is more about information sharing and notification.

Brig. Grice—Yes, correct.

CHAIR—Mr Lindsay wants to talk about Greenbank.

Mr LINDSAY—Continuing with traffic matters, earlier today we discussed the entry point to the Greenbank military training area and I referred you to an article in the *Logan West Leader* this morning, which you have a copy of. Could you give us evidence on the record in relation to your consultation with the council and what you are prepared to do to ameliorate or address the apparent issues raised by the council?

Brig. Grice—I will pass to Mr Tanzer shortly to talk through the consultation that has been had with the council. But we did receive a copy of the letter from the Logan City Council, and I am prepared to table a response which goes through the things that we are prepared to do. In essence, it has never been defence's intent to have military traffic go past or near the said school. The new entry that we are looking to build will be located at least 300 metres to the west of the current school, and we have directed our consultants to conduct yet another traffic management study, which we will discuss and share with the Logan City Council and other interested parties, which will confirm the proposed location. We will seek their agreement. By moving the range entry down to the south, not only do we eliminate vehicles going past that school to the south; it will also eliminate the need for defence vehicles, as they currently do, to drive past another school on the way to the northern entrance of the base.

Mr LINDSAY—Brigadier, what is your estimate of the number of vehicles that will use that entry each day?

Brig. Grice—Our estimate is that it will be in the order of three to five vehicles a day. There will be times when there are more, but on average around three to five vehicles a day.

Mr LINDSAY—To me, that sounds like it is an insignificant issue.

Brig. Grice—When we are talking people's backyards and the safety of their children, I do not think there is anything that people would see as insignificant when it comes to traffic. We understand the concerns of the local community and we want to assuage them and let them know that we agree with them. It is not conducive to have heavy traffic going past schools, and we do not intend to do so.

Mr LINDSAY—Can I ask that you now formally table the response. Thank you.

Mr SLIPPER—Brigadier, do you think there is a belief in the community that the number of vehicles will be more than three to five?

Brig. Grice—I will pass to Mr Tanzer, but I believe the briefing that we gave down at Greenbank covered all of these issues.

Mr Tanzer—The meeting at Greenbank community centre on 21 October raised a number of issues in relation to traffic density and the frequency of traffic accessing the training area. We did confirm that the range is three to five, on average. There are occasions where a convoy of up to six vehicles in a group will enter the range. You might have two or three of those spaced over two or three kilometres. I think there may have been a perception that there were more military vehicles accessing the range, but certainly not from the people from the southern side of the range, because they do not observe it. The access at the moment comes through the northern side.

In relation to the article, I think it is headed 'Confusion over Army use of training' and I think that is probably the key message. I understand that there has been some confusion between some people within council with the councillor who has made some statements.

Mr LINDSAY—Thank you; that is all I need there.

CHAIR—For the meeting's knowledge, we have just received a submission from the Brisbane Region Environment Council and we have just published that submission. You have not had the benefit of reading it yet. I apologise for that. Mr Lindsay, I will hand over to you.

Mr LINDSAY—Mr Zentelis, the submission indicates this group's concern about the environmental management of the Greenbank Military Training Area. In other areas in Australia, Defence takes great care of its estate in terms of the environment. Do you see any difficulties with what is being proposed for GMTA in relation to destructive effects of those developments at Greenbank? What is your view on how we preserve that particular training area—and in two sentences, Sir, because we have a lot of questions.

Mr Zentelis—Defence is fully committed to maintaining the environmental values of Greenbank, and the process to date that we have employed has been designed to ensure that we will not have a significant impact on the environmental values of Greenbank.

Mr LINDSAY—So you can assure this group that Defence will continue to care for the property in its charge?

Mr Zentelis—Yes.

Mr LINDSAY—Okay. There have been some suggestions that portions of Greenbank Military Training Area may be hived off somewhere else. Do you think, as these people do, that it is important to keep all of that in globo area together as a wildlife corridor?

Mr Zentelis—I think it is important to maintain the environment on the Defence estate in accordance with the EPBC Act. Without having the benefit of reading the submission and seeing the issues, I would just like to reiterate that we will maintain the environment there and not have a significant impact on the site.

CHAIR—I have a couple more questions about traffic, so I would suggest you have a read of that and we will come back to it.

Mr Zentelis—Thank you.

CHAIR—Brigadier, I am sure you have seen the submission from Mr Ian Ferrier. Mr Ferrier has requested action in his submission. I wonder if Defence has a comment about the proposed way forward.

Brig. Grice—What I would add, Madam Chair, is that he has a suggested solution. We will continue to consult with the Brisbane City Council and the Department of Transport and Main Roads. I am sure they will be aware of this solution. I do not know what the outcome will be but this is one possible solution which might be considered.

CHAIR—In my view it seems to align with the very generous request of the Department of Transport and Main Roads for you to give them some money to assist with works that would occur on their road system which, they suggest, would be a result of the increased growth in the personnel on the base.

Brig. Grice—Madam Chair, Defence pays its way. If, as a result of the consultations, there is a solution which was required due to Defence's impact on the surrounding community then we would undertake to complete that. Perhaps we could talk about that during the confidential cost hearing.

CHAIR—Thank you. Mr Zentelis, do you have anything to offer the committee in terms of a response to that submission?

Mr Zentelis—Yes. In terms of the issues raised, the Defence environmental management system that we employ across the estate and at Greenbank addresses the majority of the concerns raised here in terms of weeds, threatened species, erosion and fire. So, again, I would just like to state that in an environmental sense we manage our estate not to have a significant impact upon it.

Mr LINDSAY—Mr Zentelis, would you be prepared to provide a written response to that submission?

Mr Zentelis—That would not be a problem at all, Mr Lindsay.

Brig. Grice—Yes, Defence will provide a response.

CHAIR—We have eight people who have suggested they would like to make a comment to the committee, so we will now move to those community members for their statements. We therefore thank Defence for your submission. Would you like to make any final comments at this point?

Brig. Grice—I have no further comment to make.

CHAIR—Thank you. Mr Lindsay has a lot of questions to ask in the open forum session. We will go through the community statements and then return to questioning the defence representatives.

[1.51 pm]

Community Statements

DANCE, Mr Ned, Private capacity

FENSOM, Mr Ted, Brisbane Region Environment Council

FERRIER, Mr Ian, Ferry Grove Neighbourhood Watch

GIBSON, Mr Howard, Private capacity

HARBECK, Mr Chris, Private capacity

JAMES, Mr Bruce, Logan City Council

SELTH, Mr David, Department of Transport and Main Roads

WATT, Mr Murray, State Member for Everton

Mr James—I am the representative for the Logan City Council. Firstly, through the process leading up to our submission, it was quite difficult for us to get sufficient information with which to offer a worthwhile and meaningful response. I am quite pleased to hear that the Defence Force have written back to us and are prepared to work with us on the issue of ingress and egress into Goodna Road from the southern end of the Greenbank facility. Regarding their willingness to do a transport safety impact assessment and to work with us on the location of the entry into Goodna Road, we would very much like to work with them on that and on completing the assessment.

I would like to add, however, that from our point of view it would be quite valuable for the Defence Force to actually consult directly with the Greenbank State School as well in order to allay some of the concerns that the school may have based on information that may not be correct. For example, we were not clear on the number of vehicles on average per day that would go in and out of the Greenbank site.

The final point I wish to make is that, while the Greenbank facility is located in its current boundary, the council is quite happy with that arrangement. However, if the Defence Force chooses to expand the part of the Greenbank facility that is in the Logan City Council area, we would very much like to be consulted on that.

CHAIR—Next we have Mr Ferrier. Thank you for your submission.

Mr Ferrier—Thank you. I am a local resident of Frasers Road and I represent a Neighbourhood Watch that has existed for about 21 years in that area. We have a substantial local traffic issue because of the Wanimo Street gate opening arrangements. It is a part-time gate that opens for an hour or two in the morning and again around lunchtime and in the afternoon. In

the mornings, traffic has been a problem for least 10 years. I have some data from when we took up this issue initially in 1998 which indicates 600-odd vehicles streaming in through that gate in the hour between 6.30 and 7.30 am. Currently traffic backs up in the Frasers Road, Taylors Road, Suez Street areas for up to one kilometre in the mornings. That is not too bad in that the traffic is in gridlock for about 20 or 30 minutes of that time. It is a problem if you are trying to access your driveway in Taylors Road, as somebody said at the recent public hearing. A chap indicated it took him about a quarter of an hour to get into his driveway in the morning.

We see that the local residents have been very patient on the issue. It was indicated when we took on the issue in 1998 that something would happen, but that it might take some years. The Army certainly did things and attempted to put lights in at Imbros Street, in the Gaythorne area. This would have taken traffic directly off the subarterial Samford Road into the base, but I think that idea was knocked out by the Department of Main Roads on the basis of insufficient sight distances et cetera. There is a pretty dangerous corner in Samford Road at the subarterial, where it crosses Sandy Creek.

My submission currently suggests an entry or flyover—which would not be cheap. I understand it would probably cost about one per cent of the monies that are earmarked for Queensland under this ELF 2 scheme. Something like one per cent would see a flyover and perhaps a slip lane alongside the Gaythorne Station parking area and across Samford Road and Sandy Creek. That idea would have the advantage, at a very dangerous exit point—from the parking area for Gaythorne Station, just under the crest of the hill in Samford Road—of access to that sliplane and therefore get across Samford Road. Most of that traffic heads outbound, so you could get across and turn round, presumably quite readily, just outside the Army area to get back into the western route of traffic on Samford Road.

Essentially, that is my plea. I am sure if we were a species of frog we would be on the endangered species list and get some joy. So all we ask is that we be ‘Kermit-ised’—and get a little bit of joy.

CHAIR—Thank you, Mr Ferrier. Mr Selth.

Mr Selth—Due to the limited consultation we have had with the Defence team—particularly from the transport and traffic engineering point of view—we have not come to any agreement with them about impacts on the roads or about access to the base. Contrary to what has been stated just now, the Department of Transport and Main Roads does accept an entrance on Samford Road for construction traffic, provided it is for permanent access and is built to the standards of the Department of Transport and Main Roads. It is interesting that today the construction personnel is forecast to be 350-500, but in the past we have based our information on a forecast of only 300. So with limited information—and we only had some information provided last week—we welcome further consultation.

There was a comment made that traffic was ‘outside of peak hour’—but there is no such thing as peak hour. The peak is spread over a three-hour period during both morning and night and is increasing, with the development in the area. That peak is going to get busier. The concern is that access into and out of the base will become a problem, and we are looking for assistance. The brigadier said he would look for this assistance, particularly for the entrance at Wardell Street, so that is welcome. There may need to be additional work on Wardell Street in other locations, and

Samford Road, to ease the congestion in the area for the community, and to increase safety in the area. There is the possibility some community streets may need additional works—or closing—and that will have to progress, but at the moment we have insufficient information to assess those needs and we look forward to the future. Wardell and Samford are two of the major arterial roads that the state controls in that area. They are getting much busier and I believe the impacts on the base are going to be a concern for the local community, the through-traffic community and the community on base.

I have provided a statement to the committee. If there is any further clarification you need, I welcome questions now if you wish.

CHAIR—Do you have any formal process of regular discussions between the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the Department of Defence? Is there some formalised structure of having these sorts of discussions?

Mr Selth—To date there have been three short meetings at managerial level, primarily focused on Defence outlining the progress of the project. There has not been an opportunity to talk about the detailed traffic and transport aspects. In fact, council and the utilities were at one of the meetings but there was no opportunity then. We have had only one meeting particularly focused on those aspects, and I have asked for more. Until we get the information to assess and therefore can meet and discuss it, there is no formal process that has been agreed or even suggested at this point in time.

CHAIR—Finally, if Defence asked DTMR for traffic count figures—information that you would have that could better inform traffic planning—would DTMR be open to providing that to Defence?

Mr Selth—Yes, we would. First, though, we would ask the Defence team for their traffic information for both construction and base traffic. The base traffic has built up over time going back many years. It will build up in the future. We have been told that the construction period is four years with a further project forecast to follow directly on from that. It is the personnel that work on base, the contractors that go to and from the base servicing the base and the contractors that go to and from the base supplying construction, as well as the construction workers. When we are given that information we will provide any information we have. At this point in time there is nothing in the state's five-year program to upgrade those two major roads. This project may be a catalyst to revise that need, but again we would look to Defence, as the prime driver of increased traffic, possibly congestion and concerns about safety, to come to the party and discuss potential contributions.

CHAIR—Thank you very much, Mr Selth. Mr Watt.

Mr Watt—Thanks, Madam Chair. I am the state member of parliament for the electorate of Everton, which starts on the other side of Samford Road from where we are sitting at the moment. I am here to represent the local residents, particularly those who live in the immediate vicinity of the barracks and those who live a little bit further afield who are regular users of Samford Road, who I suppose are particularly the people in my electorate, which does not quite go up to the barracks. I am also representing two other state members of parliament, Geoff Wilson and Kate Jones, who are unable to be here because of ministerial business.

The first thing I would like to raise is the general concept of consultation. To my knowledge—I might be incorrect about this—I have not yet been approached by Defence for a briefing on the project. It is possible that I have been and it has slipped through, but I do not think I have been. I understand that sometimes that happens, because the barracks is not directly in my electorate, but I would like to suggest that in future local members whose electorates approach the barracks be consulted, given that there are often spillover effects from the barracks onto their electorates. There certainly would be in this case.

The main thing I want to talk about is traffic concerns. I echo the comments that Ian Ferrier has already made. I cannot really add to what Ian has already said and put forward in his submission about the residents in the immediate vicinity. The existing issues of rat running, speeding and the sheer volume of traffic which emanates from the barracks into the local streets are compounded by a limited number of entry points, most of which are in residential areas. So we do have a bit of an existing issue which will potentially get worse with the expansion of the barracks.

I think that the main interest in this issue of the people who I directly represent in the electorate of Everton is the effect on Samford Road. People have already talked about the fact that traffic volume on Samford Road is already growing. It is a major arterial road into the north-west of Brisbane, which, like all areas of Brisbane, is growing. Given that we already have a high volume of traffic there, I am very concerned about any additional impact. My own experience as a local resident is that the congestion of inbound traffic pretty much begins at the barracks. Until you get to the barracks it is not too bad, but it is basically from there on, particularly at the intersection of Samford Road and Wardell Street, where things become particularly bad. The concern is that it would become worse. I have a simple view on these kinds of major developments, whether it be a defence development or something else: if you are going to add to existing traffic concerns then you have a responsibility to come to the party and assist with managing them. I would very much encourage Defence to work with the state departments to help to relieve this issue.

Ian also mentioned in his submission that we have an added dimension here in that the Brisbane City Council is currently implementing the Mitchelton neighbourhood plan. That will over the next 10 to 20 years see an additional 1,400 dwellings in the Mitchelton-Gaythorne area. The council has not finalised yet exactly where they will be, but I understand there are currently three options before council. Again, we have council about to introduce further dwellings, which will add to the traffic problem—and Enoggera barracks potentially could as well. If we do not all work collectively, we could face a real issue there.

I was a little concerned by what I felt was the defeatist tone of some of the defence comments, that whenever you have defence facilities there will be problems. I understand that, whenever you have a major development, there will be community impacts. I would hope that was a bit of a throwaway line and that we will really see some commitment from defence to try to manage these issues. I know that, as a local representative in parliament, the defence community adds a lot to our general community. It is evident in our schools and it is evident in our general community, and I would really like to ensure that that relationship stays positive. I will leave it at that because I know there are some other speakers, but thank you for your time.

CHAIR—Thank you, Mr Watt. Mr Fensom.

Mr Fensom—I could not describe the environmental values of Greenbank military training area in three minutes, I am afraid. It is now, at a state level, a bioregional corridor between Flinders Peak, Greenbank and Karawatha. The community groups have tried hard to maintain dedication of reserves outside Greenbank over about 18 years. Specifically looking at the onsite proposals: site 4 is on endangered regional ecosystems; sites 3, 5 and 6 are on protected regrowth, which was gazetted by the Queensland state government in October this year; and site 7, which is the urban operation and training facility and method of entry facility, was not identified spatially on site. Given the scope size and purposes of it, almost anywhere on the military training area would contain old growth forest. That is a rare commodity. It probably only occupies about two per cent of forest ecosystems in Queensland. Again, there are more environmental values that have not been documented. The big questions with the proposals are these. What is the offset policy for the loss of this part of the landscape? Further, reflected in community interests, what is the change in the intensity of use in moving a battalion into the area?

There are other town planning issues. We have not seen from Logan City Council what the town planning issues really were. I do empathise with defence in that for their northern entry, on Johnson Road, there should be lights. Possibly there should be lights at the new, southern entry. The irony with the southern entry is that the Commonwealth owns both sides of Goodna Road in that vicinity and we are apprehensive about whether fauna corridors and fauna infrastructure can be implemented in that area. Previously, another organisation contested the reconstruction of Goodna Road. That road construction has resulted in, unfortunately, higher crime rates and there was a huge loss of fauna initially after the construction. The perimeter fencing of Greenbank has been a contentious issue but the communities would like to see fauna infrastructure placed in the reserves in Heathwood South and at Springfield.

CHAIR—Thank you, Mr Fensom. Mr Zentelis, you might also, in your response to Mr Fensom's written comments, make some comments about his oral relevance.

Mr Zentelis—Yes.

Mr Gibson—My name is Howard Gibson. I am a local resident who lives just a few streets away from here between the RSL and the Army base. I want to add my support to what has already been said on the traffic issue. I will not repeat what has really been said; I will just make a few additional points. First of all, I just want to correct one misrepresentation that seems to have been put forward by one of the people here from the Army—I could not see who it was. They were talking about the amount that the Army traffic contributes to the local traffic. What we are talking about here is not the traffic specifically on Samford Road but the traffic within the local streets. If you look at the traffic on the local streets at seven o'clock in the morning, I think you could probably quite easily prove that something like 90 per cent of the traffic in the local streets is specifically people entering Taylors Road or the gate off Taylors Road. I just wanted to make that point.

The second point I want to make is that this issue seems to have been given a relatively low priority by both levels of government. I think the reason for this is that there is really no reason why this has to be solved by either level of government. It is not really an issue for the Army because it only worries the local people. It is not an issue for the Department of Transport and Main Roads, because it just means spending more money for them.

The third point I want to make, and it will be my last because I know time is running out, is that I think what we would like to see at this stage is an in principle solution of a gate being required off Samford Road. To all the locals here, I think this is such an obvious solution. We cannot believe that, after 10 years, all that seems to have happened is three brief meetings between the two levels of government. So we would like to see someone at least acknowledge that this is the solution, and if there are more meetings between the two levels of government then we would also like to make sure that the community is involved in those meetings—because the consultation that has gone on with this process and most other processes around this area is close to zero.

Mr Dance—I am a local resident from Ardentallen Road. I concur with most of what the last bloke said about the traffic. Why can't you incorporate it into every contract that is let that any traffic concerned with the construction of that particular project is to enter and leave via the main roads, which are Lloyd Street and Wardell Street? That is all I have to say.

Mr Harbeck—I was born and bred in the area and live in Ardentallen Road, Enoggera, which runs straight into Lloyd Street. Over the last two years the increase in construction and traffic has been quite large. My concern is that the guys who work in the Army must hate coming out every afternoon and sitting at Lloyd Street trying to turn left onto Wardell Street when it is already backed up to Ashgrove to start with. It is just ludicrous. Now with building going on and more people coming into the area, from what I can see there has been no consultation about trying to help the guys get in and out. There is all this construction in the area. We are living in the middle of it and getting covered in the mess. We are getting aggressive. The Army guys have sort of said, 'Well, that's it.' We hope that the Department of Transport and Main Roads will come on side and help us try to work it out.

I have lots of ideas. I have talked to Andrew Wine about them. I think Samford Road and Wardell Street will work. There are ways to work around this if we get together, but, by the looks of it, one has said yes and nobody really knows. Please, you are welcome to come to my place and stand there at 2.30 in the afternoon and watch the police book everyone turning left because they have nowhere to go. There were 30 cars in 15 minutes. It was not a bad effort in one afternoon. We like to work together. We are all a community. That is all I really have to say. Let us keep the doors open and get moving in the right direction.

CHAIR—Thank you, Mr Harbeck, and can I thank all those who have made a contribution at this time. I think, Mr Harbeck, your final point is one that was a good one to end on. There seems to me—and I am an observer here; I do not live in Brisbane—to be an enormous amount of goodwill between people who are trying to find a solution and not wanting to have a barney, if I can put it that way. The value of these parliamentary committees, ladies and gentlemen, is often in what we have just seen—where people have an opportunity to have their say, build relationships and then potentially move forward. I think our committee may have provided some assistance in that process this afternoon.

I propose now that we break and return at 2.25 in open session, I when will hand over to my committee member for his questions. There will be a range of questions. People from the community, you are welcome to stay at that point as well. We will see how far we get and then we will go to the in camera, confidential section. Finally, could all those witnesses who have given us evidence provide your address to Thomas, who I called 'James' a moment ago.

Proceedings suspended from 2.17 pm to 2.29 pm

DAY, Brigadier Stephen Julian, Commander, 7th Brigade, Department of Defence

GRICE, Brigadier William, Director General, Infrastructure Asset Development, Department of Defence

HOOKER, Mr Gordon John, Director, Explosive Ordnance Reform, Joint Logistics Command, Vice Chief Defence Force Group, Department of Defence

MEACHAM, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Robert, Commanding Officer, Warrant Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer Academy, Land Warfare Centre, Department of Defence

OLSEN, Mr Steve, Manager, Estate and Facilities Services, Queensland, Defence Support, Queensland, Department of Defence

PATTERSON, Mr Craig John, Assistant Director, South Queensland, Department of Defence

PULLMAN, Mr Peter Harry, Contract Administrator on behalf of Defence, Aurecon Australia Pty Ltd

TANZER, Mr Richard, Director, Enhanced Land Force Facilities, Department of Defence

ZENTELIS, Mr Rick, Director, Heritage and Biodiversity Conservation, Department of Defence

CHAIR—Welcome back. We can open proceedings again, and I will call on Mr Lindsay to start with the questioning.

Mr LINDSAY—Gentlemen, we have limited time. There are a lot of questions; we need short answers and we need to move through these. But first of all, I want to resolve this traffic issue. We have heard what the community has said in relation to traffic. We have seen the photographs and I would like, Brigadier, your response to what the community has said in relation to the need for better traffic access to the barracks and why you might not have considered that in this particular project. I would like the 7th Brigade Commander's view on what he thinks we should be doing in relation to traffic arrangements for his soldiers and his community.

Brig. Grice—Traffic remains an issue. We have done something in this project; we have reserved land for an entry on to Samford Road. It is up to the regulators to determine what we can do and where we can do it. We remain in consultation with them. I believe that over the next six to 12 months they will be able to tell us what they would agree to and then we will be able to do something.

Mr LINDSAY—Are you heartened by Main Roads' commitment today that they certainly want to work with defence to get a solution to this?

Brig. Grice—That is really no change: they have been willing to work with us and we have been willing to work with them. But it is like a pimple: sometimes it has to get ripe before it gets popped, and maybe this pimple is about ripe to be popped.

Mr LINDSAY—Brigadier Day, do you have a comment on the pimple on behalf of your soldiers and your community?

Brig. Day—I would like not to continue with that analogy, Mr Lindsay.

CHAIR—Thank you, Brigadier.

Brig. Day—I found that a very heartening display of democracy. It was great to see members of our community here take an interest. There were some real issues they wanted to raise. I thought they raised them sensibly and constructively. Community relations between the Army and the local population are paramount to our success. I must admit the greatest thing I heard was the gentleman from Main Roads saying they are really happy to look at a Samford Road entrance. In fact, he did not say ‘happy to look at’; he said, ‘We want to do it.’ That would be a great result for the base and the local community. I would encourage my good colleagues from the department and from Main Roads to work through that to deliver us an access from Samford Road into the base.

Mr LINDSAY—What is the time frame, Brigadier, on finding money to do that Samford Road access?

Brig. Grice—We can talk about that during the confidential cost discussion.

Mr LINDSAY—Okay, let us do that. Let us move on. These are in no particular order. The first question I am going to ask you is not a question of self-interest; it is a question of Defence Force policy. In relocating the 1st Division elsewhere on Gallipoli Barracks, has thought been given to relocating 1st Division to Townsville? It is not self-interest.

CHAIR—Noted.

Brig. Day—And we believe you, Mr Lindsay. I am unaware of any conversations that have looked at moving the 1st Division headquarters to Townsville. I am not too sure what pull there would be to initiate a conversation like that. The only two units that the division now commands are located here in Brisbane. I think that is right. There has been a change in command status, as you might be aware, that occurred on Monday of this week—a change that had been unchanged for the better part of half a century. A significant change, but the point I am making is that their focus now is quite different to what it had been. Sorry, it is three units they command, not two. Two of them are here; one of them is in Townsville.

Mr LINDSAY—You are not seeing any move within the Army to consider the sense of moving 1st Division to Townsville because you are saying there isn’t any sense in it. Is that right? There is no compelling argument to do it.

Brig. Day—I am unaware of any conversations, and I do not think there is a compelling argument.

Mr LINDSAY—In your headquarters this morning I asked some soldiers, ‘How’s the new headquarters?’ The reason I am asking this is because it applies to what you are proposing to construct. Their simple plea was the dividers between the various workstations are too low, that if there is a high level of conversation, a lot of people on the phone, it is hard to work. Really, Brigadier Grice, this is something for you in terms of how you fit out these offices. Are you prepared to look at that and look at how we can get a better working environment for the soldiers in the new buildings that you building?

Brig. Grice—What we have provided is an industry standard office fit-out, which is the same as I and my people work in in Canberra. It does not matter what open plan configuration you put in and how tall you make it, the noise level will not go down. Steve, you may want to comment about the situation when you deploy from barracks and you are in the field—whether what we have provided you provides good training for that eventuality.

Brig. Day—This is the first I have heard of it, Mr Lindsay. None of the soldiers have brought it to my attention. As you know, we have only been in there a week. No doubt there will be some recourse. I think it is up to me to sort out the internal arrangements, and I will look at that.

Mr LINDSAY—Thank you for that. You talk about ‘zone and precinct plans’ of the areas. What are zone and precinct plans?

Brig. Grice—Prior to some time early last year, these were called base master plans. However, Defence has transitioned from base master plans, which go into intricate detail of the proposed location of future things, to zone and precinct plans, which give more general descriptions of the functions which are to be considered appropriate for different portions of bases. That has been a change in the policy, the way Defence articulates its master planning responsibilities. You will note that on some of the older facilities, some of the facilities where there has been no zone and precinct plan prepared yet, we are still working off an extant master plan, which might be 10 years old. But, over the next few years, they will be updated.

Mr LINDSAY—In your evidence you say:

The proposed works do not impact on any of the heritage values ...

Are there in fact heritage values at Penguin, RMC and Cultana?

Brig. Grice—I will pass to Mr Zentelis to give an answer on that question.

Mr Zentelis—Thanks, Brigadier. Mr Lindsay, a number of sites are listed on the Commonwealth heritage values list, which does include Penguin and Enoggera. Cultana is not on the Commonwealth Heritage List, though. For all those sites we have heritage management plans in place or in preparation, and we are using those to guide the developments to ensure that we are not having an impact.

Mr LINDSAY—And that is why you say there will be no impact?

Mr Zentelis—Yes.

Mr LINDSAY—Turning to the 2nd Combat Engineer Regiment, I have two matters. There is what the soldiers affectionately refer to as ‘the boozier’. What is happening to that? Is it being re-provided within the 2CER precinct?

Brig. Grice—As you are aware, as part of the Enoggera redevelopment, there is a combined mess which provides an all ranks club. However, in each of the major unit areas there is a unit training facility which is being provided, with the primary focus of providing a space where they can conduct unit, subunit and troop level training. However, there is a small kitchenette in those which could be used for such an after hours ad hoc function.

Mr LINDSAY—The soldiers were telling me this morning—because they have been shown the development plans—that it is just so important to have a facility like they have at the moment because of the esprit de corps that goes on. I think you all understand that.

Brig. Grice—There is a facility. There is provision to do that in the unit training facility.

Mr LINDSAY—Okay, but it is a downsized arrangement?

Brig. Grice—I would have to have a look at the estimate and the plans and get back to you on that one. Maybe in the confidential hearing I will give you an answer on that.

Mr LINDSAY—All right, let us do that. The Duncan Oval—is it the Duncan Oval?

Brig. Grice—Yes.

Mr LINDSAY—Some of that space is being consumed by 2CER. There is additional open space being provided. Is there a net loss of open space, and, if so, is that going to have an impact on the training function and the exercise function of the brigade?

Brig. Grice—There is a net reduction of eight per cent in the current Duncan Oval. However, as we were going on the site tour this morning, we briefed you about an unapproved project for other parts of the base which might come to fruition later in the decade. If that comes to fruition then there would be the opportunity to expand the Duncan Oval so that it might be increased by up to 15 per cent above its original size. Defence understands that that oval, that open space, is very important to the commander and very important to all the units involved. There will be a short-term small loss of eight per cent of usable space, but we believe there will be a long-term increase once we redevelop other sections of the base and put them in more effective and efficient structures.

Mr LINDSAY—Commander, are you satisfied with what is being proposed to the committee today in relation to open space availability?

Brig. Day—The short answer is yes. It was one of the points I put upfront with my colleagues from the get-go. Duncan Oval is vitally important for us. It helps with that feel that I discussed earlier this morning. Of course, it is used for sport, but, more importantly, we use it for training. A 10 per cent loss—I would rather not lose any, but that will not have a significant impact on what we use it for now.

Mr LINDSAY—Perhaps we could include a recommendation to future IAD or CA people—

Brig. Grice—If you wanted to—although we are at one on this. We want to increase the green space through more efficient use of the land that we have there. It is our aspiration and we will continue to plan towards that.

Mr LINDSAY—What would your advice be on what recommendation we should make?

Brig. Grice—Perhaps the committee should be silent on the matter!

CHAIR—Never!

Brig. Grice—But whatever you would like to put in there is fine by me.

Mr LINDSAY—You won't be here! The transport command, Land 121—you are going to increase the size and asset value in the order of 166 vehicles. Will whatever it is that you are proposing handle what vehicles we are going to acquire under Land 121 without knowing what we are going to acquire?

Brig. Grice—Yes.

Mr LINDSAY—What is happening to the antenna arrays? Are they staying where they are?

Brig. Grice—No. They are no longer required, due to the improved capabilities of that unit.

Mr LINDSAY—Although Headquarters 1st Division was built in the 1970s—

Brig. Grice—Correct.

Mr LINDSAY—it has had a relatively recent refurbishment.

Brig. Grice—Fifteen years ago, I think.

Mr LINDSAY—Was it?

Brig. Grice—Yes.

Mr LINDSAY—And it is your advice that we should not save that building; we should demolish it?

Brig. Grice—That is our advice, yes, for the long-term precinct planning of the base. You will recall that with the relocated Headquarters 1st Division we are looking at using a combined facility with another element which has the same specific requirements as Headquarters 1st Division, and there is not space in the current location to be able to do that, so it would not be value for money to have two such facilities when we can better use the real estate and relocate them into one building in another location.

Mr LINDSAY—Out of left field, on the Joint Logistics Unit (South Queensland) clothing store: there is a JLU component at Bulimba, and Bulimba is heading towards closure. I am not making any announcement, but you know what I mean. Are there any components of Bulimba that ought to be transferred to Enoggera now?

Brig. Grice—No.

Brig. Day—We're full! The no vacancy sign is about to be put up!

Mr LINDSAY—That is not very good customer service! On living-in accommodation—361 rooms—I do not need to ask you the question; you can answer it.

Brig. Grice—Yes!

Mr LINDSAY—So you do want it to be a Single LEAP phase 2?

Brig. Grice—Mr Lindsay—

Mr LINDSAY—Why aren't you delivering it—

Brig. Grice—Single LEAP phase 1 delivered 500 living-in accommodation units on Enoggera. The additional living-in units that we are proposing are similar to those and could be delivered via the Single LEAP stage 1 contractor, but that is a commercial decision that Defence is yet to make. A value-for-money assessment will have to be made against the two methods of delivery: traditional or an extension to an existing contract. I do not want to prejudge that. That is something that delegates will look at during the procurement.

Mr LINDSAY—What you are saying is that the money you are allowing to be spent may not be spent and may be delivered in a different way.

Brig. Grice—No. What I am saying is that we provided a capital provision in the cost plan and if the decision was made that it would be delivered by the private public partnership—the LEAP stage 1—then the CFO would transition that capital sum into a funding stream which would provide for delivery via a PPP. So the capital provision that we have could fund either option.

Mr LINDSAY—You said it would be an extension of stage 1.

Brig. Grice—Correct.

Mr LINDSAY—Could it be part of stage 2?

Brig. Grice—No. For stage 1 there is a contractor on site who is contracted to run the current 500 units. I am unaware of who might win or what might happen in LEAP stage 2, so it would not be part of LEAP stage 2. It would have to be done as a contract amendment to LEAP stage 1. We are advising the committee now of the requirement. Subject to parliament agreeing the requirement, Defence will determine which method of delivery provides a value-for-money approach.

Mr LINDSAY—I am aware of living-in accommodation needed at Singleton. You have explained to me already why that should not be LEAP. I understand that and accept that. Is there any other accommodation anywhere in this proposal that could be LEAP.

Brig. Grice—No. LEAP stage 2 proposed 17 sites, and we are not providing LAA on any of them under this project.

Mr LINDSAY—I want to talk about high-voltage reticulation. I noticed a provision for 33 KV. But I notice that you are not proposing to underground the HV on the base. Why is that? This is modern practice. Why wouldn't we be undergrounding the HV?

Brig. Grice—We are using a combination of underground and aboveground. I think around 80 per cent of the new work will be underground, and some of it will be aboveground due to the terrain it will be traversing.

Mr LINDSAY—I do not understand that. Why cannot you be underground anywhere?

Brig. Grice—How about I take that on notice and we will give you a further response during the confidential hearing.

Mr LINDSAY—I think you should. That answer did not stack up. What is a blown fibre network? That is mentioned in your evidence. What does 'blown fibre' mean?

Mr Olsen—Blown fibre is a way of constructing and delivering

Mr LINDSAY—Oh, I know. Yes. Thanks. Lavarack Barracks has almost been completely redeveloped, but the one component that really stands out as a sore thumb is JLUNQ. Are you aware of the standard of the facilities there?

Brig. Grice—Yes.

Mr LINDSAY—Is there any move to do something about those terribly dilapidated buildings and working accommodations?

Brig. Grice—Not as a part of this project. However, there are other studies being undertaken within Defence looking at joint logistics facilities across the nation. That may be something which comes to the committee's attention in the future.

Mr LINDSAY—Is there any prospect that, if you have some dollars over, they might be applied to just to finish the job at Lavarack Barracks?

Brig. Grice—I think we should discuss that during the confidential session.

Mr LINDSAY—Do you have page 41 of the briefing papers?

CHAIR—It is page 21 of your submission.

Brig. Grice—Yes.

Mr LINDSAY—On the middle of the page, under the heading ‘RAAF Base Amberley’, it says:

- 57. The RAAF Base Amberley scope of work proposed to be delivered is summarised below ...

But there does not appear to be a summary.

Brig. Grice—That is correct.

Mr LINDSAY—What has happened?

Brig. Grice—That is a stuff-up on our part. The evidence should be amended to read, ‘The RAAF Base Amberley scope of work proposed is the delivery of accommodation for the headquarters of the 6th combat engineer support regiment and further detail is provided at attachments 29 and 30.’ Thank you, Mr Lindsay.

Mr LINDSAY—It is scary when the committee reads its briefing papers, isn’t it? The 25th/49th Battalion, RQR is a reserve unit. There is a tendency to bring reserve units together with the ARA, because things are so integrated these days. This seems to be a pulling apart. Is that right?

Brig. Day—It is preferred when we can integrate, but it is in fact not possible in the majority of cases. The 25th/49th Battalion is currently located here at Enoggera but it is not integrated with the regular brigade here. It is part of the reserve brigade headquartered in Townsville. I do not see any loss of capability or training opportunities with their relocation to Greenbank. In fact, they are going to be much healthier. At the moment both of the reserve battalions are located together at Enoggera, so they are competing for the same recruitment pool. Pushing them out to the west and enabling them to look down the southern corridor towards the Gold Coast, where there is a significant population growth and a good recruiting base for them, will in the long run be to their benefit.

Mr LINDSAY—I accept that, but the other benefit of co-locating, of course, is that the reserve soldiers feel they are part of being at the sharp end and have access to more kit and opportunities. Is that right?

Brig. Grice—The facilities that we are providing at Greenbank will provide ample training opportunities for that unit.

Mr LINDSAY—In Singleton, New South Wales, adjacent to Lone Pine Barracks are current operational coalmines. Those coalmines are following coal underneath the barracks. What future risk is there to the new infrastructure that we are building in relation to the coalmines underneath the barracks?

Brig. Grice—The first point is that I do not believe that anyone is mining under the range at present. Secondly, I do not know whether any of those mining companies have intentions to do so or, if they wish to do that, what agreements would have to be put in place with the Commonwealth in order to do it. Thirdly, if all of that was agreed by the relevant parties and

something like that did occur, I do not think there would be any impact on facilities in the training area. The facilities we have there are basically flat range civil works type facilities. They are not high-rise buildings or that kind of thing.

I note that the Australian subsurface mining industry has a good record. If you look at places like Ballarat, where we have goldmines kilometres underneath the town, there is no impact on the above-ground infrastructure. So (1) I do not believe it is happening, (2) there would need to be agreements put in place and (3) it would have no impact on our use of the range.

Mr LINDSAY—In relation to coalmining, which is not hard rock mining, which you are referring to, Ipswich tells us a different story here in the south-east corner. Should Defence be double-checking about mining underneath? It is not the training area that would be affected; it is the buildings that you are building—headquarters, museums and so on.

Brig. Grice—As I said, I am unaware of any applications to do that, but I will check with the Assistant Secretary of Property Services and we will provide a written response to the committee on whether there are currently any applications for mining companies to mine coal seams underneath the Singleton cantonment.

CHAIR—My recollection is that we were advised there were potentially subterranean coalmines not in the built-up area but out on the firing range.

Brig. Grice—You will recall that Lieutenant Colonel Egan, at the site visit on the day, mentioned that he believes there is the potential that the seam may go under the training area but not that there was any mining underway. But I will undertake to speak with the Assistant Secretary of Property Services and see if there have been any applications from any mining companies to mine underneath the cantonment or the training area and I will provide a written response to the committee in the next few days.

Mr LINDSAY—Thank you. Going to the RMC, there is provision for rehabilitation and transition accommodation. That must already exist. This is for 34 new rooms and 16 rooms. Why is that necessary if it already exists?

Brig. Grice—At the moment, there is ad hoc use of existing accommodation rooms. Additional accommodation rooms are being provided for living accommodation for other ranks, and those rooms are required long term for other ranks to live in.

Mr LINDSAY—In relation to the Defence Force School of Signals Watsonia, you will be aware that there has been talk of closing this base under base rationalisation. You will also be aware that those decisions have not been made by government—but, if you are a betting person, it may well be closed. How do you justify expenditure of a large amount of money on a base that is probably going to close?

Brig. Grice—Under the previous government's force disposition review, I do not believe Watsonia was a base that was being investigated—it was slated for long-term retention. Under the current government there has been no decision and no consideration, I believe, of any proposals from Defence at this stage. You will be aware that in 2007 we took to the committee a

proposal for \$101 million worth of redevelopment at the Defence Force School of Signals. That work is nearing completion and I am confident we will get full value from those facilities.

Mr LINDSAY—Have you seen the companion paper to the Defence white paper in relation to proposals for bases? I am not asking you what is in it, but have you seen it?

Brig. Grice—I have not read the state companion review.

Mr LINDSAY—At an earlier PWC hearing in Townsville you gave us evidence about RAAF Richmond, and I asked you a similar question about spending money and then closing the base. Senior officers in Defence tell me that the closure of Richmond is still very much on the cards. They are giving me their best advice. I worry about Watsonia because I am hearing the same thing. So your advice to the committee is that we should allow this to proceed and you do not think Watsonia is under any threat of closure?

Brig. Grice—I am unaware of any decision to do otherwise.

CHAIR—For the record, Mr Lindsay, you did say that this has the status of discussion and potentially rumour.

Mr LINDSAY—Yes, absolutely.

CHAIR—I would hate for people who read the *Hansard* to come away with the view that you are making announcements about closing things.

Mr LINDSAY—No—I can't. But I did see the brigadier shuffling a bit!

Brig. Grice—Mr Lindsay, every time you ask me a question based on rumour, I shuffle!

CHAIR—That is probably a good thing to do, Brigadier!

Mr LINDSAY—The proposal to expand Cultana has been around for more than five years with almost no progress except that, every time there is a meeting, it costs Defence \$50,000 to get the Indigenous people together. How certain are you that this matter will be resolved quickly and that we will be able to proceed with the proposal you have before us today?

Brig. Grice—From my experience, expanding a training area is a five- to seven-year process to complete the acquisition. This acquisition commenced in late 2005. There is a substantial body of work going on—by the assistant secretary property services and his personnel—to progress the land acquisition and finalise ILUAs. I would not be surprised if it was not concluded in the time frame we advised.

Mr LINDSAY—You know that in Cultana there are very special Indigenous issues about places to go and not to go and so on. In what you are proposing, have these locations been cleared as culturally appropriate to build these facilities?

Brig. Grice—I will pass to Rick Zentelis, but I will say that the final siting of some of those facilities on the proposed expanded range has not occurred. As part of our design development

process, there will be a site selection board which will meet, consider all possible sites and go through a range of issues related to each of them, including Indigenous issues. Rick, you may want to go through the process we conduct to ensure that we comply.

Mr Zentelis—Basically, with any of these projects, once we have got the information on hand we will sit down with the traditional owners and work our way through the issues. We will come up with no-go zones and have appropriate management regimes in place to respect the Indigenous values of the site. In terms of the acquisition process, we have got a baseline of data relating to the Indigenous values of the site. Once the acquisition has been finalised, we will be sitting down as part of a range-siting board to determine the most appropriate regimes and placements of the facilities proposed.

Brig. Grice—Mr Lindsay, I would like to give you the answer to the high-voltage question. All new works that we are proposing are underground, with the exception of a small high-voltage section which leaves the cantonment area and goes to the 25-metre and 100-metre ranges. The reason we are not going underground for those runs is due to the terrain, through the training area, and the cost.

Mr LINDSAY—Thank you for that. What consultation have you undertaken with DHA to ensure that each Defence location has adequate housing nearby for members of the ADF and their families?

Brig. Grice—Army provided its ELF requirements for off-base housing to the Defence Housing Authority through the relevant DSG officers in early 2008, I believe. DHA continues to action on those requirements.

Mr LINDSAY—Could you tell us how many people are in 8/9 Battalion now and when you expect to fill it completely?

Brig. Day—I should answer that. The battalion, as of last week, had 689 soldiers in it. By January next year, it will have just over 700. I anticipate that before the end of next year it will have 730, which is its end state, about a year ahead of where it should be.

Mr LINDSAY—Given the proximity of Greenbank Training Area to both Enoggera and Amberley, did you consider incorporating all the new training facilities under ELF2 at Greenbank?

Brig. Grice—All of the new facilities proposed for Enoggera?

Mr LINDSAY—All the new training facilities proposed under ELF2 at Greenbank.

Brig. Grice—No. Brigadier Day gave an answer this morning about how the brigade uses the closed training areas like Greenbank, Wide Bay and other training areas. ELF2 is there to provide for facilities on ranges to accommodate the increased collective training undertaken by all the elements provided under ELF1 and ELF2, so not all of those units are located here in South-East Queensland. Some of them are located in North Queensland or elsewhere. What has been required is to supplement a number of ranges around the country to meet the forecast increase in training demand.

Mr LINDSAY—I have one more question in the public hearing before we go to the private hearing. Knowing the very great esteem that you are held in by the ADF, will you please reconsider your decision to retire?

Brig. Grice—I will if you will! I am being flippant, Mr Lindsay. No.

CHAIR—On that note, I declare closed the public session of this hearing.

Resolved (on motion by **Mr Lindsay**):

That this committee authorises publication of the transcript of the evidence given before it at public hearing this day.

Evidence was then taken in camera—

Committee adjourned at 3.18 pm