



Academy Graduates Association Incorporated
The graduates association of the Australian Defence Force Academy

URL: www.adfagrad.org Email: contact@adfagrad.org
PO Box 93, Curtin, ACT, 2605, AUSTRALIA
Association Number: A03939

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Committee Secretary

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

ADFA REDEVELOPMENT – ADFA GRADUATES ASSOCIATION SUBMISSION

Background

The Public Works Committee is conducting an inquiry into the proposed Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) redevelopment in Canberra, ACT. The Defence submission proposes \$98.5 million works be undertaken to redevelop and refurbish the existing ADFA site. The Defence submission outlines that the purpose of the project is to provide modern and high quality facilities to meet the needs for preparing the current and future leaders of the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Major points include: the provision of new teaching space; refurbishment of some existing teaching areas, Cadets' Mess, and accommodation areas; replacement of Adams Hall and new indoor sports centre.

The Public Works Committee has called for submissions and is conducting a public hearing to ensure the proposed works meet the needs of ADFA and represent value for money for the Commonwealth. Pending Parliamentary approval, the works will start at the end of 2011 with completion due in 2014.

The ADFA Graduates Association (AGA), which is an independent alumni association for graduates of ADFA, provides this submission on the proposed redevelopment of ADFA.

The AGA

The AGA “connects graduates and builds communities”. The AGA has close links to ADFA, with our 2000+ volunteer membership base all people with significant investment in the institution, its values and its future. The AGA attends many key ADFA events such as ANZAC Day, memorial openings, birthdays and sports events to mention just a few. The AGA contributes to the following communities:

- ADFA – attendance at significant events, assistance to the debating competition, promotion of ADFA Foster Family Scheme, fostering of links between cadets and graduates

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- Defence – numerous ADFA graduates continue to serve in the ADF
- Australian community – The AGA, in collaboration with the Podmore Foundation, provide an educational scholarship to enable an indigenous youth to attend Canberra Girls Grammar. One of the major fundraisers the AGA conducts is through members running the City to Surf each year. ADFA also contribute a number of runners.

Current facilities

The current facilities were built to provide undergraduate education and military training to the future leaders of the three Services. ADFA has experienced growth in both the undergraduate and postgraduate requirements since opening in 1986. Moreover, ab initio military training has become more diverse to encompass the complexities the modern operating environment – an environment where cadets can encounter soon after graduation from ADFA. The current facilities are over 25 years old and require some renewal to adequately cater for the training and education requirements of the modern military.

Benefits of proposed work

The Defence submission has sufficiently covered the financial, heritage and environmental value of the proposal. The submission in paragraphs 87 and 88 also deals with public value with a focus on the financial aspects of the facilities upgrade.

The AGA believes that the public value goes far beyond a financial value. Numerous Australians led by young men and women, many initially trained at ADFA, currently serve Australia and the national interest in demanding, dangerous and deadly locations. The nation – through the auspices of the Parliament – is responsible for equipping and preparing these young men and women as thoroughly and appropriately as possible for this service.

Public value; therefore, derives from the knowledge that this redevelopment contributes to preparing future leaders of the ADF for their service to the national interest. This public value is especially evident in the expansion and refurbishment of the teaching spaces, the new battle physical training area, new indoor sports centre and new 1,200 seat auditorium.

Summary

The AGA is pleased to support the redevelopment of ADFA and the associated proposed new constructions, refurbishments and infrastructure upgrades. We believe this is a timely and appropriate redevelopment given the age of the existing facility and the need to match facilities to training needs. We also believe this investment in the institution of ADFA affords future leaders of the ADF the opportunity to continue to lead and excel in the service of the nation.

Yours sincerely,

Chair
Academy Graduates Association
Email: contact@adfagrad.org