JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON AUSTRALIA'S IMMIGRATION DETENTION NETWORK

Q239

Question: When did the department first identify Scherger as a potential site for a detention centre?

Answer: As part of responsible contingency planning the department, together with the Department of Defence, looked at a range of options to determine which might be available if additional mainland accommodation was required by Government.

The department first visited the RAAF Base Scherger site on 9 July 2010 to do a due diligence inspection of the site.

This inspection identified that the site was suitable for immigration purposes.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON AUSTRALIA'S IMMIGRATION DETENTION NETWORK

Q240

Question: I am wondering when it was identified as a contingency option and when any works may have been commissioned on the site in that context?

Answer: In July 2010, RAAF Base Scherger was identified as a suitable contingency site.

No works were carried out on the site prior to the announcement on 17 September 2010.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON AUSTRALIA'S IMMIGRATION DETENTION NETWORK

Q241

Question: So the fence did not go up, and no contractor was contacted regarding the erection of that fence or any preparatory site works, prior to the announcement.

Answer: As part of contingency planning the Department of Defence spoke to its North Queensland based contracted service provider and authorised the procurement of fencing materials prior to the announcement. However, that material could have been used in the normal course of Defence operations elsewhere, if it was not required at RAAF Base Scherger.

The procured materials were delivered to RAAF Base Scherger on 3 October 2010.

No works started on the construction of the fence until 14 October 2010.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON AUSTRALIA'S IMMIGRATION DETENTION NETWORK

Q242

Question: Did DIAC procure the fence materials?

Answer: The fencing materials were procured by Department of Defence through its contracted service provider.

DIAC reimbursed Department of Defence for all costs associated with the materials and construction.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON AUSTRALIA'S IMMIGRATION DETENTION NETWORK

Q243

Question: Prior to the election last year, was there any discussion or identification of Scherger in any form by the department as a potential detention facility?

Answer: As part of responsible contingency planning the department, together with the Department of Defence, looked at a range of options to determine whether any Defence sites might be available if additional mainland accommodation was required by Government.

The department first visited the RAAF Base Scherger site on 9 July 2010 to do a due diligence inspection of the site.

This inspection identified that the site was suitable for immigration purposes.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON AUSTRALIA'S IMMIGRATION DETENTION NETWORK

Q244

Question: When was Serco first advised of the fact that they might have to prepare to run a facility at Scherger?

Answer: Discussions with Serco occurred following the Minister's announcement on 17 September 2010.