

Work commences on Barton College facelift

By Terry Browne

MARKING the start of construction work at Barton College, on May 19 Mr John Hailey on behalf of the construction firm Manteena Pty Ltd handed the college flag to Commander Morrie Blaylock for safe keeping for the period of the refurbishment.

Work was approved to commence by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works on May 4 at an estimated cost of \$10.5 million.

The recommendation was based on a proposal developed by the AFP's Building and Accommodation Branch (BAAB).

Mr Frank Brown, Manager of BAAB said he was pleased to see the job finally off the drawing board.

"It has taken 30 months of planning and hard work to get the project to this stage.

"All the members of the branch have contributed to getting the job up and running and I give them my thanks," he said.

Mr George Kayaba, the BAAB project officer, has been involved from the project's concept.

He said, "I'm sure that the college staff and future course members will be delighted with the finished product.

"Manteena has delivered a plan that not only retains the inherent charm a building significant in Canberra's history, but when completed will provide the AFP with an excellent residential and training facility."



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which would also allow rehabilitating members full use of training facilities.

Refurbishment objectives

The Committee noted that among the objectives of the refurbishment was the need to find an economical response to the AFP's current and future training needs while preserving existing architectural and landscape features. There was also a need to transform the building from a hostel accommodation environment to a collegiate environment appropriate for the training and accommodation purposes of a modern police academy.

Disruption to training

As the refurbishment is expected to take 18 months to complete, training will take place at the AFP's Weston and Majura complexes and at Old Parliament House.

In addition, it is proposed to conduct more training at the regional level, in Sydney and Melbourne and other centres.

Courses reviewed

For the period of the refurbishment, Barton College's training staff have been relocated at the Weston and Majura complexes and are reviewing the courses being offered by the college.

Commander Blaylock said that when the refurbishment is complete the courses and facilities offered by Barton College will be of the highest standard available. □

Works committee report

The Public Works Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr Colin Hollis MP recommended the refurbishment and recognised that it was necessary to bring the facilities at the college up to contemporary standards and expectations.

The report said that the proposed improvement in the standard of accommodation was justifiable given the needs of the personnel attending training courses at the college and that the inclusion of a conference centre in building would be cost effective for the AFP.

The refurbishment will include access for the disabled, a feature