

AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE HEADQUARTERS

ALL UNDER ONE ROOF

The Australian Federal Police (AFP) have new headquarters in the heritage listed Edmund Barton Building in Canberra. The top federal body has been hampered until now by having its operations spread over ten Canberra locations. Finally it is all coming together under one roof.

St Hilliers, a leading property and construction services group, has had overall responsibility for the fitout of the heritage sensitive building. With its team of design managers and construction engineers, it has been busy since it won the tender in March 2009 making this possible.

Situated prominently on the edge of the Parliamentary triangle and Lake Burley Griffin, the Edmund Barton Building was designed by famed architect Harry Seidler and built between 1970 and 1974.

It is an imposing five floors of concrete terraces constructed around two large internal courtyards. Heritage listed on the National Estate, the building is a significant Australian landmark.

From a base level refurbishment by Boulderstone a couple of years ago to the complete fitout undertaken by St Hilliers, the building has been subject to close heritage scrutiny. St Hilliers, which has received many commendations from heritage organisations for the sensitivity of its approach, was careful to ensure that all issues were successfully negotiated and solutions implemented to everybody's satisfaction.

The \$100 million project fulfills long term plans by the AFP to find a suitable home.



MAIN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY : St Hilliers Construction
PROJECT MANAGER : Xact Project Consultants
STRUCTURAL ENGINEER : Taylor Thomson Whitting (TTW)
BUILDING CERTIFIERS : BCA Certifiers
PROJECT END VALUE : \$100 million
HEIGHT : 5 Levels

The AFP began the hunt for a new Canberra headquarters seven years ago when, in the wake of the international terrorist threat, its workforce began to grow. It first set its sights on the 1960s-era office block known as Anzac Park West (which was also refurbished by St Hilliers) at the foot of Canberra's iconic Anzac Parade and began a refurbishment. But as the organisation grew the AFP realised that the building would be too small to house their expanding service.

The Edmund Barton Building meets the AFP's requirements and the selection of the building has worked out well for the AFP, and they began moving into their new premises in May.

Commenting on the expected benefits of the move, a spokesman for the AFP said: "The building is "A Grade" office accommodation and has a National Australian Built Energy Rating of 4.5 stars. The building is situated near other key government agencies such as the Attorney-General's Department and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. The most important benefit to the AFP is bringing together its approximately 2000 staff into a single building. A single building for AFP Headquarters will achieve business and cost efficiencies through centralisation, and provide better accommodation for the large number of AFP people now working in Canberra."

St Hilliers is also pleased with the outcome. And pleased also to enhance its own considerable reputation. With more than 370 employees St Hilliers provides high quality, cost effective contracting services and has enjoyed a strong record of performance and growth since it was established in 1989.

St Hilliers has a broad geographic reach through its operations in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Canberra and has achieved wide recognition for its commitment to deliver projects that set benchmarks for quality in design, construction and finishes.

St Hilliers brings to each project substantial construction expertise and knowledge gained from completing major projects for corporate, institutional and government clients and business partners. This is reflected in its ability to develop innovative construction solutions that provide sound outcomes for all stakeholders.

The company is currently involved in development projects close to half a billion dollars and in completing construction projects worth more than \$500 million across the industrial, commercial, retail, residential and government sectors of the industry.

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JOINING THE FORCE

Capital Veneering, based in Queanbeyan, was responsible for all joinery, timber screens and wall panelling in the new AFP Headquarters. Capital Veneering specialises in executive fitouts as well as commercial and domestic joinery, including custom made furniture. It has over thirty employees. All worked on the AFP project.

The job was complicated by the massive scale of the building and the logistics of getting materials into and around the building. "For a joinery fitout package, this is as big as it gets; in Canberra anyway," said Ben Madden, one of the partners.

Ben and his fellow partner Markus Kohler are both experienced tradesmen and bring complementary skills to a successful enterprise. Before joining forces in 2000 Markus Kohler had his own furniture restoration and manufacturing business. Ben Madden was then the manager of a large joinery establishment. Just prior to that he spent a year in the UK on a cabinetmaking scholarship.

Capital Veneering began as a boutique veneer pressing and furniture making workshop. It has evolved in a short time into a large enterprise, working on sites like the Canberra school of music and Parliament House.

Another high profile project recently completed by Capital Veneering was the Attorney-General's Department, just a block away from the Edmund Barton building – this was also a large government fitout that needed the same kind of attention as the new AFP offices.

Ben puts at least some of their success down to high end design software which allows them to produce high quality shop drawings, including 3d rendered images, and to their veneer pressing facilities which he says are unique in Canberra.

Capital Veneering are focused on maintaining and improving their OH&S and Quality Assurance systems to provide a safe work environment and high quality products. Capital Veneering uses materials compliant with Green Star building code, including the use of a zero formaldehyde emissions board and plantation timber.



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SKM FIT THE BILL

Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM) was selected by the Australian Federal Police (AFP) to undertake the fit out design for the new AFP Headquarters at the Edmund Barton building in Canberra. The building was designed in 1970 by iconic Australian architect Harry Seidler and presented unique and exciting challenges for SKM's fit out design team. SKM's team of project managers, in-house architects, building services and specialist security designers carried out the design of all elements of the building fit out and building perimeter.

Given the national significance of this heritage listed building, it was important to ensure that all work reflected and where possible enhanced its aesthetic values and technical attributes. SKM worked closely with the AFP, planning authorities, and in consultation with the Seidler Foundation, to achieve a modern fit out that reinforced the buildings' architectural style while providing the AFP with a modern flexible new office environment.

New life was injected into the building, situated on the edge of Canberra's parliamentary triangle. Because it was designed around very different building technologies, the SKM team needed to encompass a more sustainable and holistic approach to modern building services design. The extensive use of post tensioned concrete elements in the original heritage building and limited floor to ceiling height posed other unique design challenges in coordinated services design.

Through the coordination of all design disciplines and attention to detail, these constraints were overcome. Through collaboration and

consultation at all stages of design and construction SKM has delivered a fit out which responds to the needs of the AFP now and into the future and considers the entire property asset lifecycle.

The result is a high quality working environment. It provides an integrated solution that is energy efficient, light and open with flexible accommodation. It truly addressed the requirement of providing the AFP with a world class, innovative headquarters facility.

SKM is a leading engineering, sciences and project delivery firm. Its purpose is to deliver a positive and enduring impact on the world. In support of this goal, SKM has 42 major offices across Australia, New Zealand, Europe, the Middle East, South America and Asia. SKM work in close partnership with key clients in the public and private sectors, providing independent technical, strategic and commercial advice to deliver a wide range of projects in the communities in which we live.

SKM employs approximately 6,500 people who come from a diverse range of disciplines including engineers, planners, architects, economists, scientists, project managers, technicians and administrative staff.

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OUT OF THE BLUE

Fusca Painting Services run by Tory Fusca and his partner, Steven Salafia operates out of Canberra. They work only in the A.C.T. and specialise in high rise apartments. They have also done office blocks for the Department of Defence and their most prestigious contract was for painting the National Museum.

Tory got a call a couple of years ago from St. Hilliers, "out of the blue", he said, asking him to quote on a new Centrelink building in Canberra. Since then he has worked with St. Hilliers on other sites including the refurbishment of the Federal Mint.

The present job is the fourth with St. Hilliers. Tory Fusca and his crew have been busy for almost four months painting the five floors of the new AFP headquarters.

"It's been a very good relationship with St. Hilliers. We seem to work well together. It's been a pleasure working for them," said Tory Fusca.

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