

# Media Release – Borneo barracks Closure, major ramifications on our community and economy

**26 February 2009**

The future economic viability of the Toowoomba region will be under threat should the proposed closure of the Borneo Barracks go ahead.

In a socio-economic impact study commissioned by the Australian Department of Defence it was found that more than \$105 million would be lost from the regions annual economy if the Barracks are relocated to South Australia.

President of the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce, Shane Charles, said they were concerned with the proposal and would not support any closure of the Barracks now or in the future.

“The closure of the Borneo Barracks base would have major ramifications to our community and economy,” he said.

“Small businesses particularly in the Highfields area would be seriously affected. The paper found more than 845 jobs would vanish and 260 homes in Highfields would be empty.

“It is a submission of the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce that to conduct such a relocation of the Borneo Barracks at this time, or indeed at all, would be most foolhardy.”

Mr Charles said he was concerned with the study’s failure to conduct a comprehensive community consultation process.

“Whilst we acknowledged that some consultation was undertaken, we deny that it was extensive. Major reference groups in our community were unaware of the investigation and accordingly very few submissions were made.

“We also note that despite the massive impact this will have on our community, only 45 people attended public forums.”

Mr Charles also said the report was compiled in 2007, two years prior to the collapse of the global economy. He said that coupled with the current economic crisis this proposal would be disastrous for the region.

In its efforts to oppose the proposal The Chamber will galvanise support from the local community and business operating in the area.

The Highfields Better Business Group will host a breakfast on Tuesday 3 March at the Highfields Culture Centre. Guest speaker, Mac Stirling from local property development group Lauder Pty Ltd, will discuss the potential impact of the Barracks closure.

For more information please contact ....

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