

New Sydney HQ: custom-built for Customs

There is a new Customs House in Sydney which takes its place in a long line of historical Customs buildings in the city.

The new NSW regional headquarters of Customs is at 10 Cooks River Drive at Sydney International Airport.

The move to the airport is significant in that it ends Customs presence in the CBD of Sydney that reaches back to 1800 when Governor King established the Naval Office, forerunner to the Customs Service, responsible for collecting a levy on the importation of spirits, port charges and the control of shipping in Sydney Harbour.

The new Customs House brings together 600 Customs officers who previously worked in various locations in the Sydney area.

The first group of staff relocated in December 2004 from their Pitt Street (City) home of the past 12 years that they had shared with other Federal and State government departments. The remainder moved during the first two months of 2005.

The purpose-built 10-storey building is the first to be developed by Sydney Airport Corporation Ltd on a commercial site adjacent to the international terminal.

Customs is leasing the building for 10 years with two five-year options.

Only one of the storeys is not occupied by Customs, having been leased to Australian Protective Services.

The facility is the last word in environmental and ergonomic design.

The ground floor has a public counter service area which has been designed to deal with all face-to-face public and industry inquiries.

The building consists of an open-plan office layout with meeting rooms and substantial kitchen and breakout sections. Amenities include showers, lockers, a gymnasium and aerobics area plus an outdoor balcony area with barbecue facilities on level 9. Fit-outs for special purpose areas, such as investigations evidence rooms and a border-control room, have also been included.



With this move, Customs realises a number of operational and administrative efficiencies by consolidating its activities into one site. These include a cost-effective property solution as well as efficiencies in infrastructure such as training facilities, staff amenities, conference and meeting facilities and floor layout.

The location provides better and closer access to Customs clients such as customs brokers and freight forwarders handling both air and sea cargo and consolidates public contact areas for clients into one counter.