JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

SHARON BIRD MP
Federal Member for Cunningham

STEPHEN JONES MP
Federal Member for Throsby

$62 million SMART Infrastructure Facility open for inspection

A new four-storey building worth $62 million is being delivered on time and on budget as part of a major Commonwealth Government investment at the University of Wollongong.

Federal Labor MPs Sharon Bird and Stephen Jones took the opportunity today to formally inspect the University of Wollongong’s SMART Infrastructure Facility, which the Government invested $35 million towards, not only as local MPs but also as members of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications. Ms Bird is the Chair and Mr Jones is a member of the Committee.

“I am absolutely delighted to see first hand how the University of Wollongong has invested the $35 million the Commonwealth Government has contributed towards this major project.

“I turned the first sod here in May 2009 and since that time building and construction workers have been going full pelt to construct a significant new four-storey building.

“It is so exciting that in this building ground breaking nationally significant research into infrastructure will be done right here in Wollongong”, Ms Bird said.

Member for Throsby, Stephen Jones, was also impressed by the size and functionality of the SMART Infrastructure Facility, which will accommodate up to 200 high degree research students and features 30 state-of-the-art laboratories for research and teaching.

“Up to 200 high degree research students will be located in this one building, looking into different areas of infrastructure research, and collaborating on solutions.
“Infrastructure professionals need to look at infrastructure solutions in a holistic way, and I am sure that the SMART Infrastructure Facility will lead important research on infrastructure which will be nationally significant”, Mr Jones said.

SMART Infrastructure Facility Diector and Chief Executive Officer, Garry Bowditch, said the purpose designed facility is one of the largest infrastructure research institutions in the world.

“SMART draws on the University’s proven research track record and academic strengths in engineering, commerce, informatics, law and science to holistically assess infrastructure projects and develop best practice solutions to potential problems”, he said.

The Commonwealth Government’s investment in the University of Wollongong over the last 24-months is worth $179.6 million, including research funding.

Apart from the $35 million invested by the Government in the SMART Infrastructure Facility, the Commonwealth has also invested in the construction of two other new buildings at the University of Wollongong's Innovation Campus:

- $43.8 million on the Australian Institute of Innovative Materials, and
- $25.1 million on the Retrofitting for Resilient and Sustainable Buildings Facility.

An official opening date for the SMART Infrastructure Facility is expected by mid-year.

14 February 2011

Contact:
Sharon Bird MP  4228 5899
Stephen Jones MP  4262 6122