

AUSTRALIAN MINT REFURBISHED, REOPENED AND PAYING DIVIDENDS

The Assistant Treasurer, Senator Nick Sherry, has marked today's official opening of the refurbished Royal Australian Mint in Canberra by highlighting the economic benefits already made possible by the new high-tech facility.

"The Mint has won its first new international contract in five years as a direct result of the refurbishment," the Assistant Treasurer said.

"The upgrade has secured the Mint's economic viability and ensures it will prosper as a world leading minting facility."

"The Mint needs to be in the forefront of industrial progress in order to do carry out its important role efficiently."

"The refurbishment has automated the Materials Handling Warehouse System on the production floor and enables the Mint to work virtually 24 hours a day."

"The Mint is now able to accept contracts from other countries without encroaching significantly into its normal, day-to-day functions. This is the case with the new contract to produce coins for the Cook Islands."

The refurbished building has also rationalised space, with the Mint reducing its accommodation from 16,000m² to 13,000m² and has leased vacant areas, optimising utilisation of the Commonwealth Government building stock.

The Mint has combined many environmental policy initiatives, such as intelligent lighting systems and water recycling, to achieve an Australian Building Greenhouse rating of 4.5 stars.

"The \$65 million refurbishment has also transformed one of our top national tourist attractions into an architectural and engineering showpiece," said the Assistant Treasurer.

"The new-look Mint will host about 200,000 visitors this year and they'll take away with them a new perspective on its workings."

"Glass has replaced walls, allowing an open view into the building's interior, with visitors able to look down onto the factory floor."

"The refurbished building also allows the Mint to roll out new educational services, which will align with the national curriculum for schools."

CANBERRA
9 September 2009