

Department eyes new site

Council concerned about loss of staff

By Meredith Clisby

TUGGERANONG could lose hundreds of public servants following a decision by the largest federal department in the area to search for a new office site.

But the community council is confident the town centre would provide the best option in hand and accommodation.

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs is looking to upgrade to a larger site when its lease at the Tuggeranong Office Park ends in 2016.

A department spokeswoman said no decision would be made on FAHCSIA's future accommodation requirements until late this year.

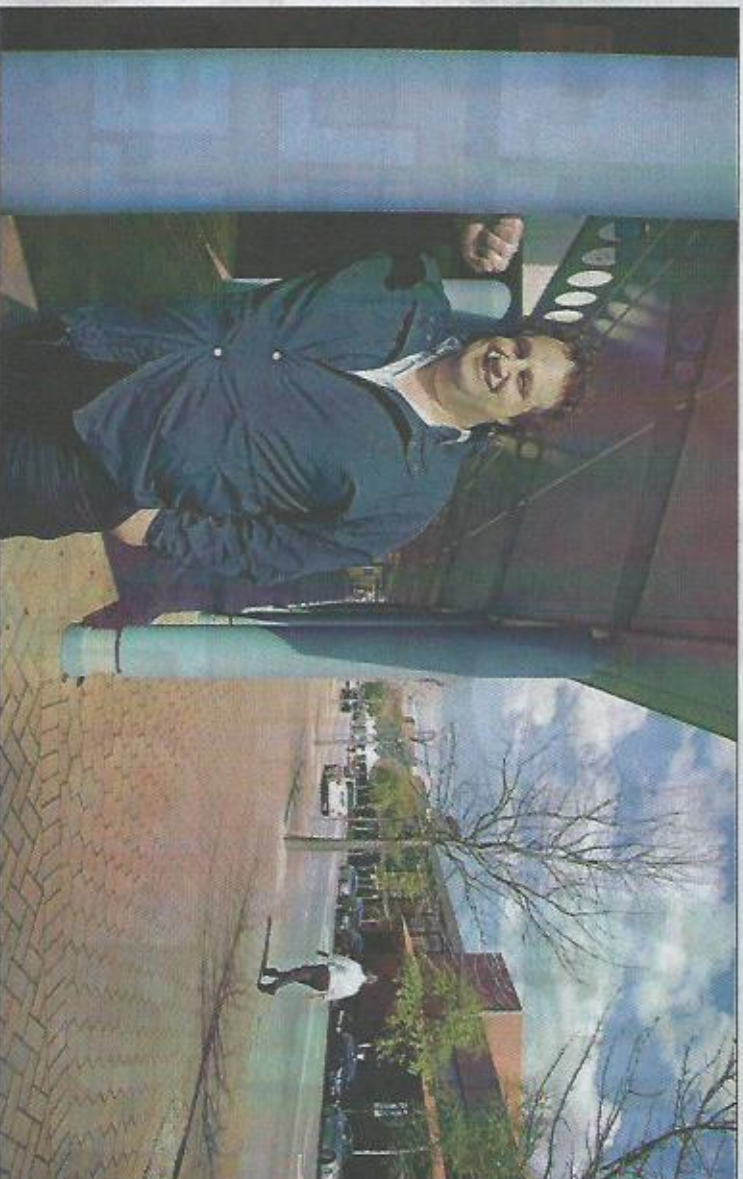
The department's national office comprises more than 2700 staff in six sites across Tuggeranong and Woden.

The office park location is the largest of these sites.

FAHCSIA is looking for about 40,000-42,000 square metres of office accommodation in either existing buildings, new buildings, or a combination of both.

The preferred location is for a site to be within close proximity to the Woden or Tuggeranong Town Centres.

"At this stage no decision has been made on the department's future accommodation requirements, and we



Tuggeranong Community Council president Nick Tsoulas said residents hoped to keep Commonwealth public servants near the town centre.

will not make a decision until late 2013," the spokeswoman said. "This process is part of the department's long-term plan to consolidate national office staff into one or two buildings."

Tuggeranong Community Council president Nick Tsoulas said while he was concerned the public servants could leave the area, he was confident

Tuggeranong would house the best solution for the department.

Attracting more public servants to Tuggeranong would help to reinvigorate the town centre and help the population reverse the decline it had been experiencing.

"A rejuvenation of Tuggeranong

would need to see relocation of public service jobs," Mr Tsoulas said. "If we don't see these jobs here in Tuggeranong then the government's going to have to think about other options."

The council will launch a petition along with the Tuggeranong Hypermone this week to advocate for the staff to remain in Tuggeranong.

Picture: Eissa Leo