

SUBMISSION COVERSHEET

Submissions may address any key issues related to the Infrastructure Australia agenda and/or in specific response to the topics raised in the discussion papers.

Please complete and submit this form with your submission. Where possible, *Infrastructure Australia* requests submissions are submitted electronically. Contact us:

Via email Write 'Submission' in subject field of the email and send to: mail@infrastructureaustralia.gov.au	Via post Address your submission to: The Infrastructure Coordinator Infrastructure Australia GPO Box 594 Canberra ACT 2601 AUSTRALIA
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Submission title: National assessment of any desalination plan

Author(s): A Bisits

No. of pages: 1

Date: 10 X 8

Please indicate if your submission:

contains NO confidential material

contains **confidential** material and the whole submission is provided "IN CONFIDENCE"

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Please indicate which of the following your submission covers:

Issues Paper 1 — Australia's Future Infrastructure Requirements

Issues Paper 2 – Public Private Partnerships

AND/OR

General (Includes information on the following areas)

Water Infrastructure

Transport Infrastructure

Climate Change

Public Private Partnerships

Infrastructure Audit

Infrastructure Law

Other, please state:

Telecommunications Infrastructure

Energy Infrastructure

Infrastructure Investment

International issues

Infrastructure Policy

Infrastructure Planning

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- We encourage **evidence-based** submissions. We will not accept any submissions that contain defamatory statements, that is, any statements which have the effect of causing damage to a person's reputation. If you make any defamatory statements in your submission then a legal proceeding for defamation may be used against you.
- Authors of submissions are responsible for securing the appropriate right to use any third party material incorporated into their submissions.
- Submissions made by individual community members should not include any personal details other than your name, suburb, state/territory or country. For submissions made by organisations contact details may be included.

Tick Please tick to indicate that you have read and agree to the above.

**A BISITS
solicitor**

10 October 2008

Mr M Deegan
Infrastructure Coordinator
Infrastructure Australia
Sydney


Dear Mr Deegan,

Infrastructure requirements submission - desalination plants

One area where your authority could demonstrate the savings and benefits of allowing large infrastructure projects to proceed on the basis of their place in an Australian priority list is desalination plants.

The desalination plant under consideration for Wonthaggi was estimated last year to cost \$1billion. Victoria is currently examining the environmental effects of the proposed plant. Even though this examination requires consideration of national economic issues it is undeniable that the national assessment is far better done at the national level, such as by your authority.

Victoria is already committed to the plant, so any environmental/economic assessment by the state will (understandably) be biased to approval. Also Victoria will not be in a position to weigh up the alternatives of: (i) desalination plants in other parts of the country; (ii) the same money being better spent on other infrastructure projects, especially in other parts of Australia; (iii) easing migration to the state to reduce demand for water or directing migration to the bettered watered cities.

Also Victoria has already shown in the case of environmental/economic assessment of a major project, the Port Philip Bay shipping channel deepening, that outside assessment (Dr Alan Hawke and others) had to be brought in to prove the worth of the project. The time and cost of a single national assessment of the Wonthaggi plant should compare favourably with the five state assessments that Victoria conducted on the channel deepening.

I have heard that the cost of cleaning waste water in Melbourne could produce the equivalent output of the proposed desalination plant for a third of the cost of the plant, and that if the waste water cleaning were in the higher parts of the city (Dandenong ranges) the cost would be lower still.

Thus if your authority caused the Wonthaggi plant to be deferred or to be not built the state would have the waste water alternative (and possibly others). Water drinkers would not be left parched.

If your authority found the Wonthaggi plant should not get on the priority list or should take its turn on the list one would expect Victoria to abide by the result. But if necessary the listing could be backed up by import controls, although you would expect other controls would also be available.

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Another reason for testing the priority list concept on the Wonthaggi desalination plant is that desalination plants are relatively new and few, and up to date and manageable data will be available about the plants in Sydney and Perth.

Best wishes in your work.

Yours sincerely

Adam Bisits

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