From: Infrastructure Australia
To: Brennan Rory;
Subject: FW: Regional Towns Water Quality and Security Review - Comment [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Date: Thursday, 17 March 2011 09:16:24

From: penport1@bigpond.com [mailto:penport1@bigpond.com]
Sent: Thursday, 17 March 2011 12:37 AM
To: Infrastructure Australia
Subject: Regional Towns Water Quality and Security Review - Comment

Dear Madam/Sir,

Having reviewed the Report along with many comments and submissions I am very pleased with all the discussion thus far. I am convinced that the right actions shall be taken to ensure the future of the reservoirs, catchments and waterways throughout Australia. I would however like to make the following comments and observations which might also be considered.

1. I am concerned at the number of Managements there are, for the amount of resources we have. I could go into lengthy discussion on this point but to make things more simple, which Water Management is not, there are far too many Entities involved in the management area. I believe that such a precious resource needs to be under Federal control. Strong Legislation, Policies and Regulations need to be set in place.

2. There is an abundance of water beneath the ground which can be used, if done so wisely. We need to be sure that these can be replenished without restrictions or impurities entering these areas. Maintenance and Strong Management need to be exercised in this area. We have the ability to increase our farming areas inland through the use of these systems which will flow on into Industry, Freight, and National Development. This will secure the future of this country. (Yes, we need to expand and develop for our economic future.)

3. Our Catchments and Reservoirs need to be properly maintained and managed. Where pipelines are required to link some areas and share resources, such funds should be made available. The Report and associated discussions have covered this area quite thoroughly and I can rest assured that these water ways will get the attention they deserve.

4. I have no problem with the need for Desalination. With an increasing population there is bound to be a requirement for further resources. I believe however, that we need to do this in a “Smarter” way. Reverse Osmosis is the preferred method for desalinating large volumes of water over a short period of time. This is not necessarily a cost effective method of production. I would suggest that Cold Vaporisation would provide a very high quality of water, which, if operated by Solar Power, would provide a smaller yield of a longer time but at a far more cost effective manner. If Solar Pumps were used to draw Sea Water, Bore Water, Ground Water, River Water or any other form or water, including Waste Water, the High Quality water generated could be used and re-used as required. This would allow Regional Development as well as Urban Spread.

5. A further source of water catchment is the Rainwater Tank. In Regional areas these are widely used as the Primary source of Drinking Water. This needs to be far more widely Explored, Discussed, Regulated (to prevent people from harming themselves) and viewed as a large provider of Domestic water requirements. This needs ever more attention in Urban areas. Although some "Incentives" are available to install such storages it should be made a requirement of all new homes and Developments to incorporate such facilities. There is no need to "flush" High Quality drinking water from our limited resources. Industry can also assist in this area. With the right business "incentives", those large warehouse (which are now very common) could easily provide sufficient water to allow sporting grounds, parks and gardens to be properly watered without any need of water from our precious supplies. The Quality of this water also does not need to be drinkable.

6. The Government needs to make Legislation and Regulations to all new Developments, both Housing and Industrial, for Developers to make provision for Water Catchment and Storage, as well as Recycling of Grey Water. Some consideration should also be made for existing homes and industrial buildings.

7. We need to exercise "Smart" Water policies, or, be Water Wise. Water restrictions should always apply to prevent careless wastage of this valuable resource. We need to continue to educate people, with proper usage strategies. People need also be educated as to the use of tank water as this is often Poor Quality, particularly in urban areas. People need to be aware that Water is Precious. I remember when a Permit was required to have a rainwater tank in suburban Melbourne. Times have changed since then.

8. Discussion should be held with regard to the possibility of "subsidised" water filtration or purification to be used in kitchen areas where poor quality may be common. This might be the case in Rural or Regional areas in particular. Such systems may be more cost effective than some infrastructure projects. There are some cases where users have a change over valve which allows "Tank", or "Town", water to be used throughout the house. The quality of Drinking water can therefore Not be assured. A further item for discussion would be the possibility of either "Home Testing Equipment" being used to test the quality of Drinking Water, or access to local facilities for such purposes. This would require an awareness campaign.

I would be happy to expand on, or discuss, any of the items above if asked or allowed to do so. I look forward with confidence to the preservation of our Water Systems and the future of this great country.

Neil Nicholas