

5 February 2009

Mr Patrick O'Connor  
Chairman  
Water Corporation  
PO Box 100  
LEEDERVILLE WA 6902

Dear Patrick

The Water Forever Science Panel was convened by Professor Robert Harvey, Board Member Water Corporation and Executive Dean at Edith Cowan University to provide advice on the development of the Water Forever '*Directions for Our Water Future*' the 50 year plan for sustainable water and wastewater services to Perth and surrounds.

It was my great pleasure to chair the Water Forever Science Panel and other Members of the panel were:

- Dr Tom Hatton, Director, Water for a Healthy Country, CSIRO
- Dr John Marsden, Director, Marsden Jacob & Associates
- Dr Jenny Pope, Director, Integral Sustainability

The Water Forever Science Panel met in May and December 2008 and several teleconferences were convened to discuss matters throughout the preparation of the Water Forever plan. The Water Forever Science Panel is now in a position to endorse the '*Water Forever, Directions for Our Water Future*', and recommend that it be released for community and stakeholder comment and input.

To the best of our ability the Water Forever Science Panel examined carefully all of the proposals put forward to ensure that they were robust and based on rigorous analysis of the available data.

Having been through this long term strategic planning process with Water Corporation staff I would like to draw the attention of your Board to what I believe are two critical messages that emerge from the document:

- 1 Constructing desalination plants as the only option on the supply side is not sustainable from financial and environmental perspectives and despite the vastness of the Western Australian coastline good sites for desalination plants may be constrained.
- 2 The biggest risk to '*Water Forever, Directions for Our Water Future*' not delivering its stated outcomes is in failing to meet water consumption reduction targets. Improving water efficiency really is the foundation upon which the entire document is built. In this context we urge you and your Board to monitor progress in this area closely and ensure that water efficiency programs aimed at reducing water use and increasing recycling are adequately funded to ensure the water consumption reduction targets are met.

The Water Forever Science Panel are strongly of the view that the *Water Forever, Directions for Our Water Future* is a strategic and visionary document yet well balanced and built around the creation of a portfolio of water options in order to achieve climate resilience including reducing water use, developing new water sources and increasing water recycling. The portfolio of options has been

developed in the context of community partnerships and environmental responsibility.

Based on the planning assumptions provided by Water Corporation and the methodology adopted for assessing the sustainability of options, the Water Forever Science Panel are strongly of the view that the proposals in the *Water Forever, Directions for Our Water Future* to develop new water sources, reduce water use and increase water recycling over a 50 year period are robust, and will ensure that Perth and surrounding areas will continue to enjoy reliable and sustainable water supplies. The approach adopted in the *Water Forever, Directions for Our Water Future* allows the plan to be adapted to take account of changing contexts such as climate change and population and demographic changes over the next 50 years.

The panel would also like to acknowledge the robust and open community consultation program adopted by the Water Corporation during the various stages of the '*Water Forever, Directions for Our Water Future*' project. Given that water is the quintessential social and economic commodity and the community passion and interest in water issues, it is essential that people have the opportunity to put their views forward.

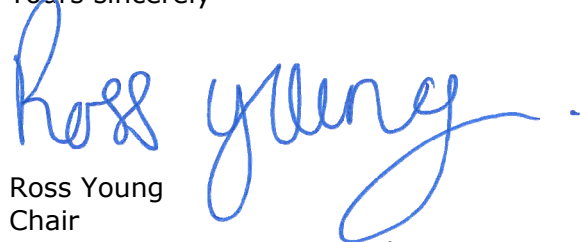
I would like to thank the Water Corporation Water Forever Team and other Water Corporation staff who were involved in the development of *Directions for Our Water Future*. All Water Corporation staff involved were thoroughly professional in the manner they conducted themselves and the way in which they supported the Water Forever Science Panel in reviewing various drafts of the document. The passion and the dedication they had for developing sustainable directions for water planning for Perth and surrounds for the next 50 years did not go unnoticed by the Water Forever Science Panel members.

Nationally, Water Corporation has a reputation of being at the forefront of urban water planning, in particular planning for the uncertainties associated with climate change and the implementation of adaptation measures for a drying climate. I believe that *Directions for Our Water Future* cements this reputation.

Finally, I would like to thank the other panel members who were always diligent in assessing options and bringing their wealth of experience to the table.

The panel commends '*Water Forever, Directions for Our Water Future*' to the Water Corporation Board for it to be released for community input.

Yours sincerely



Ross Young  
Chair  
Water Forever Science Panel