



The Hon Don Page MP
Minister for Local Government
Minister for the North Coast



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Ms Ronda Miller
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
NSW Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
MACQUARIE STREET
SYDNEY NSW 2000



27 FEB 2013

Ronda,
Dear Ms Miller

I am writing in relation to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Environment and Regulation Report into the *Regulation of Domestic Wastewater* (report number 1/55) and your letter of 27 November 2012, requesting a Government response to the Committee's recommendations.

At the outset, let me commend the Committee for its consideration of this issue. I think the Committee's report provides valuable insight into the management of this increasingly important resource.

As the committee will have identified through its work, the current regulatory framework for water is complicated and involves several State Government agencies with varying responsibilities, including the Metropolitan Water Directorate, the Ministry of Health, the Office of Water, the Office of Environment and Heritage, the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, and the Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Currently there are two simultaneous reviews, which at least in part, address some of the matters raised by the Committee. These are the Metropolitan Water Directorate's Urban Water Regulatory Review and the Local Government Acts Taskforce review. This work provides an opportunity to address some of the regulatory gaps and complexity in the management of water. Initial discussions have been held between the Office for Water and the Local Government Acts Taskforce to explore possible options, including the removal of all water related functions from the *Local Government Act* and transferring these functions to the Office of Water. This option would have implications for which agency is most appropriate to implement the Committee's recommendations.

The reviews are not expected to be completed until mid to late 2013. Once these reviews are finalised the Government should be able to respond to the Committee's recommendations in detail.

If you would like further information on this matter, you or your staff can contact Mr Darren Bark, Policy and Parliamentary Advisor, in my Office on (02) 9228 3403.

Yours sincerely

Don Page MP
Minister