

## INQUIRY INTO THE MANAGEMENT OF THE SYDNEY HARBOUR FORESHORE AUTHORITY

**Organisation:** Sydney Harbour Foreshore Committee  
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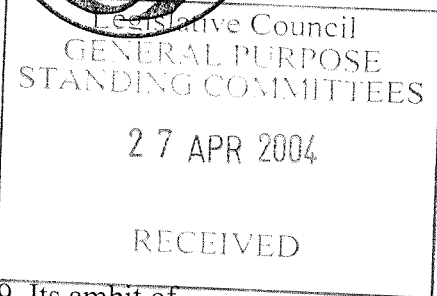
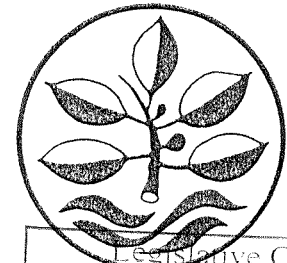
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**Subject:**

**Summary**

# Sydney Harbour and Foreshores Committee

The Director  
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4, NSW Legislative Council  
Parliament House, Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000



## **Inquiry into the Management of the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority**


The Sydney Harbour and Foreshores Committee was founded in August 1979. Its ambit of interest extends from Port Jackson to Middle Harbour and the Parramatta River. Membership includes community organisations, individuals, and a range of Harbourside Councils.

Our major interest in the Committee's inquiry relates to paragraph (f) of its terms of reference. We note the tensions that exist between the roles of the Sydney Harbour Foreshores Authority (SHFA) as landowner and as agent of /adviser to the Ministerial consent authority.

The problem of tension is not peculiar to SHFA – indeed, the problem is inherent in the application of Part V of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. However, the lands owned by SHFA have a special significance in the ethos of Sydney central area, and in the development of a metropolitan planning framework for the Sydney region. They are significant in area and extent, in location, in land use potential, and in their relationship with other lands in private and public ownership. Of particular interest is the close relationship between the SHFA estate and that of NSW Waterways in the Port Jackson area.

The 6 April 2004 announcement by Treasurer Egan that Waterways land management is to be transferred to the Department of Lands is another element that engenders concern about the SHFA role, insofar as it may affect issues of co-ordination, strategic planning, and the like. We have no insight into the operational implications of the decision, nor do we know why SHFA lands management is not also being transferred to the Department. Given that SHFA land management is to be treated differently from that of Waterways, there is a clear and urgent need for the respective organisational roles to be clearly defined, and the public understanding of each agency's responsibilities to be facilitated.

Consideration of the SHFA treatment of Pyrmont is a useful illustration of the basis of our concerns. Since the original 1990 urban strategy was published by the Department of Planning, the residential component of the re-development scheme has increased, and the commercial component has reduced. That change has rendered the original open space component signally inadequate for the enlarged residential component. To date, the SHFA has taken no publicly apparent steps to remedy the open space deficiency. As landowner, perhaps that is not surprising: it would benefit from the extra development. However, as consent authority, the community might reasonably expect the SHFA to pursue actively the environmental imperatives of the change. This is the kind of tension that needs resolution.

  
Michael Rolfe, Chairperson

24 April 2004