

**INQUIRY INTO OPPORTUNITIES TO CONSOLIDATE
TRIBUNALS IN NSW**

Organisation: Development and Environmental Professionals' Association
(DEPA)

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Submission to NSW Parliament (Legislative Council) Standing Committee on Law and Justice

Inquiry into opportunities to consolidate tribunals in NSW

What is depa?

depa is the Development and Environmental Professionals' Association, a registered organisation of employees under the *Industrial Relations Act 1996*, with members in NSW local government who are professional employees involved in environmental, public health, building, development and planning.

First, an observation about the NSW Industrial Relations Commission

The Commission has a proud history, inspirational to both the Commonwealth and other states. In local government members of the Commission have managed and overseen predominantly consensual changes to industrial instruments over at least two decades and managed industrial disputes with a primary focus on conciliation that has been to the benefit of the industry. The Commission is user-friendly and supported by both employer and employee organisations in the industry.

What is our preferred Option?

Our observations about the importance and critical role of the IRC determine that depa supports Option 1.

However, fundamental to the ability of the IRC to discharge its significant obligations and responsibilities is the requirement that it be properly resourced for those purposes. The current gradual reduction in the numbers of Judges and Commissioners through retirement, means that the Commission is under-resourced now and whatever the Government decides in relation to consolidation, the government needs to embrace and commit to proper resource in into the future.

I would be happy to provide further support our position to the Standing Committee will be questioned on our approach at your convenience.

Yours sincerely

Ian Robertson
Secretary
25 November 2011