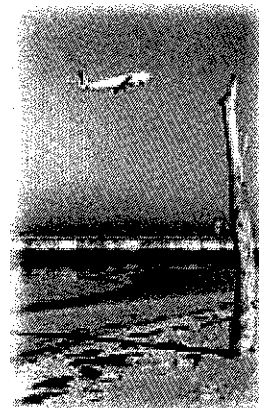


# Inquiry into Ports Infrastructure in NSW



*southern sydney regional organisation of councils*

January 2004

# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Introduction to SSROC

This submission is made by the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC), which represents eleven local government councils located around Botany Bay and along its two tributaries. The total 2001 population of these council areas was about one million. Attachment 1 shows the area covered by SSROC.

## 1.2 Structure of this Submission

Not surprisingly, SSROC's submission to this inquiry is largely focussed on the proposal to expand Port Botany. The remainder of this submission is structured as follows:

**Section 2:**

Sets out SSROC's position on Bay management and the proposal to expand Port Botany

**Section 3:**

Describes the context in which this current Inquiry is taking place

**Section 4:**

Responds specifically to the Terms of Reference

**Section 5:**

Sets out the chronology of events and statements made about Bay management and port infrastructure in the recent past

**Section 6:**

Makes some concluding comments and statements

SSROC would be happy to provide additional material to support the points raised in this submission. While the eleven member councils have provided substantial input to this submission, they may also be making individual submissions to the Inquiry.

## 2. BOTANY BAY AND PORT BOTANY

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### 2.1 Long-standing concern about Bay management

SSROC's interest in the matters which are the subject of this Inquiry arises from the Organisation's long-standing concern about the past mismanagement of the environment of Botany Bay. SSROC sees an urgent need for government to put in place a dedicated management entity for the Bay and its catchment in line with the recommendations of *The Tide is Turning* (SSROC 2001), the Healthy Rivers Commission (HRC 2001), and the subsequent commitments of Cabinet as set out in the Statement of Intent (Sol) of November 2002.

### 2.2 Deep concern about proposal to expand Port Botany

A major element of the State's port infrastructure is Port Botany, located within the northern sector of Botany Bay. According to the recently tabled NSW Ports Growth Plan, container traffic handled by the two terminals at Port Botany is likely to exceed 1.1 million TEUs (20 foot equivalent units) for the current year. The Government has received a development application and supporting Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a new terminal to be built adjacent to the existing facility on 57 ha of reclaimed land within the Bay, together with additional berthing and support infrastructure. SSROC has strong concerns about this proposal (see Attachment 2: SSROC policy position on the proposed expansion of Port Botany).

### 2.3 Definition of 'port infrastructure'

In the case of Botany Bay, it is SSROC's submission that 'port infrastructure' must be taken to include Sydney Airport which is located immediately to the west of Port Botany and which has just exhibited its draft 2020 Master Plan. To a large extent, both facilities share the same local road system. Receipt and dispatch of maritime and air freight relies in large part on that system, as does a high proportion of passenger traffic to and from the airport. It is SSROC's view that to exclude the airport from the Inquiry's considerations is to ignore the interactions, linkages, geographical relationships and security issues that are shared by the two facilities. (See Attachment 3 for SSROC's policy position on the operations of Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport).

### 2.4 Botany Bay Strategy Plan (BBSP) and the Southern Sydney Catchment Management Blueprint

Minister Knowles has recently received the final draft of the BBSP – the result of a year's work by the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR), assisted by an advisory committee, which included representatives of local government (including SSROC), the community, industry and State Government. The Southern Sydney Catchment Management Blueprint – also produced with SSROC involvement - went to government in 2002 and has since been endorsed by Cabinet. Given the direct relevance of both these documents to the future of Botany Bay it is SSROC's strongly held view that both must be given full and proper consideration by the current Inquiry. In passing, SSROC finds it extraordinary that neither document is referred to in the Ports Growth Plan or the Terms of Reference of this Inquiry.

## 2.5 The Botany Bay Program

In December 2001 SSROC released *The Tide is Turning* – the final report of the Botany Bay Program. That program was funded by the Commonwealth, and its focus was integrated Bay management. SSROC's position on the need for integrated Bay management is set out in Attachment 4.

## 2.6 To Summarise

*To summarise:* SSROC's baseline policy position on the issues of the expansion of Port Botany, airport operations, and Bay management is that all three are inextricably linked, demanding a holistic approach to their planning. More particularly, the first two are seen as core components of a metropolitan freight planning strategy for Sydney – a strategy which is understood to be currently in preparation by DIPNR. This position underpins and helps to explain the Organisation's views regarding the broader question of port infrastructure generally which is the central concern of this Inquiry. These views are set out in the following sections.

### 3. CONTEXT

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This Inquiry into port infrastructure is taking place in an environment of great confusion. We have seen a number of seemingly contradictory policy statements issued of late, resulting in extreme suspicion within the non-government and local government sectors. Evidence for this claim follows. See also the chronology in the final section of this submission.

- There is little evidence of progress towards the kind of whole-of-bay management entity envisaged in the HRC report or in *The Tide is Turning*.
- Confusion is evident regarding the sudden release of the *Ports Growth Plan*; the Commission of Inquiry (coming on the eve of the release of the long-awaited Environmental Impact Statement for the expansion of Port Botany); and the Parliamentary Inquiry into port infrastructure.
- Further work on subsequent stages of the DIPNR Botany Bay Draft Strategy (ie to cover the rivers and wider catchment as recommended by the HRC and as foreshadowed in a number of Ministerial statements) appears to be unlikely.
- The Botany Bay Strategic Advisory Committee set up by DIPNR has had what was probably its final meeting – with no evidence of it remaining in business as the sole source of external advice to government on Bay matters.
- Sydney Airports Corporation has confidently released its draft Master Plan for 2020 – adding another layer of concern about the Bay's future and raising questions about the strategic implications of possible parallel growth in both seaport and airport operations on what are virtually contiguous sites.
- For all practical purposes the Commonwealth remains at arms length, despite responsibilities in aviation, maritime trade, and environmental conservation and the urgings of the HRC.
- At the metropolitan planning level there is a policy vacuum with regard to the integration of road, rail and maritime freight transport associated with the Newcastle, Port Botany and Port Kembla. Furthermore, PlanFIRST has been abandoned, with no immediate successor in the wings to determine metropolitan planning policy.
- The community feels that there is a lack of leadership and control. Government commitments are neglected or ignored or waived. And after 4-5 years of research and investigation (by the HRC, CMB and the BBP) there is still no stand-alone Bay management body.

## 4. RESPONSE TO TERMS OF REFERENCE

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### 1. The NSW Government Ports Growth Plan, including any planned closure of shipping freight facilities in Sydney Harbour

SSROC notes that a 2-page Ports Growth Plan (Summary Sheet) has just been made available on the Ministry of Transport's web site. SSROC records its serious concern that this document was not made available earlier – at the very least to coincide with the announcement of the launch of the Inquiry. Having regard to the importance of the issue (of port planning), SSROC is also concerned about the brevity of the document and the complete absence of support material. Specific concerns are as follows.

- *Expansion of Port Botany* - SSROC is astounded that the Government has announced a Ports Growth Plan (PGP) as a virtual *fait accompli* whilst simultaneously announcing a Commission of Inquiry into the proposed expansion of Port Botany. The PGP can be interpreted as favouring such expansion. If such is the case, we wonder what is the point of a Commission of Inquiry into the matter. In effect, it could be construed that the release of the PGP has effectively pre-empted the inclusion, in the Terms of Reference of the Commission of Inquiry yet to be released, of a requirement that the Commission should examine the fundamental question as to whether or not there should be *any* expansion of Port Botany. For the subject Inquiry, it would seem that the release of the PGP has ruled out any finding that expansion of Port Botany and its related infrastructure as currently proposed might not be appropriate.
- *Implementation of the PGP* - The Government claims that it will 'work towards the implementation of the core directions of the Plan *in consultation with industry groups and the community*'. (Emphasis added). SSROC is extremely disappointed that it was not consulted in developing the core directions of the Plan. As the communities represented by local government in the southern Sydney region will bear the brunt of the impacts of any expansion to Port Botany, we strongly feel that it was our right to have input to the development of the Plan. With regard to port operations elsewhere, SSROC is keen to contribute to the debate; and is supportive of the PGP *to the extent that it proposes planned and coordinated expansion of the Ports of Newcastle and Port Kembla*.
- *Closure of Sydney Harbour facilities* - SSROC strongly supports the retention of Sydney Harbour as a working port.

### 2. The economic, social and environmental impact on the State, including on the proposed Port Botany upgrade

This term of reference is premature. Until the public release of the EIS into the proposal to expand Port Botany, it is impossible to respond in detail to this term of reference. Nevertheless, SSROC has expressed its deep concern about many aspects of the proposal to expand Port Botany, including:

- Impacts of heavy vehicle movements to and from the expanded Port, particularly as an acceptable site for an intermodal terminal is yet to be identified;
- Loss of foreshore amenity immediately adjacent to the Port site;
- Impact of reclamation works;

- Dredging and disturbance to the hydrology of the Bay;
- The impact on existing land uses and residential amenity.

Also, this term of reference makes no reference to local impacts and thereby does not draw the Inquiry to addressing the potential local economic and environmental impacts. The Inquiry only needs to address in detail the social impacts associated with road and rail infrastructure (reference point 4). This creates the opportunity for a biased approach and narrow assessment of the Port Botany development.

### **3. The employment implications for Sydney, the Hunter and the Illawarra regions**

SSROC accepts the State Government's position that "having strong growth in country centres is good for those centres and the people living there, as well as being in the state and national interest" and that Governments need "...a change in philosophy ...and target [regional centres] with specific programs."<sup>1</sup> SSROC also notes that the Lord Mayors of both Wollongong and Newcastle have expressed their communities' willingness to consider expanded port facilities in their respective cities.

### **4. Current and future infrastructure needs and social impacts including with respect to the adequacy of existing road and rail infrastructure**

SSROC suggests that there is already evidence of inadequate capacity in the existing road and rail infrastructure, which serves the sea and air ports at Botany. Any existing inadequacy will be hugely compounded if the expansion of both port and airport operations takes place as planned. The situation will be exacerbated by the advent of larger trucks – slowly replacing today's B-doubles - and all-night operations at both facilities. There would seem to be a very real prospect that the future will see suburbs surrounding the port/airport complex having to endure the prospect of 24-hour 7 -days -per –week heavy traffic on trunk and feeder roads servicing the two facilities.

The cumulative traffic and environmental impact from the Port Botany expansion, airport and air freight in the area (including the workforce) will have a negative impact on local air quality, amenity and the accessibility for residents in the area. Without major infrastructure works and expenditure good public transport accessibility (especially bus services) are likely to be compromised. Large residential developments through out the region such as at Green Square and Wolli Creek will be adversely impacted upon, further diminishing the State Government's pursuit of promoting and encouraging the benefits of medium / high density development.

The F6 should not be considered as a solution for the potential movement of freight and traffic through the Sutherland Shire and onto Port Kemba. It has been shown with the M5 and other major road corridors that the benefits are short term and that they do not resolve the medium to long-term growth in traffic congestion. On the contrary they facilitate further traffic growth and congestion and undermine the effectiveness of more sustainable public transport options such as bus and rail. By promoting the F6 as a potential freight link between Port Kembla and the Botany area will significantly diminish the advantages of having a distributed port system and the development of port facilities in the Illawarra. Alternative freight access through the completion of the Maldon

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<sup>1</sup> Rebuilding Country NSW, foreword by Minister for Regional Development

Dombarton rail line should be given greater consideration in terms of their connectivity to Sydney's key markets and freight nodes situated in south western and western Sydney.

Finally, SSROC draws the Inquiry's attention to the heavy social costs associated with adverse environmental impacts of road and air traffic. Every day, hundreds of households in the environs of Port Botany and the airport are already living with excessive noise, danger, air pollution, and community severance and general disturbance caused by the existing arrangements. This burden will worsen dramatically if the present port and airport growth plans are implemented.

**5. The future of public land at Millers Point, Glebe Island and White Bay on which shipping freights operations are currently located.**

SSROC's position on this issue is that foreshore land in public ownership should remain in public ownership. If redevelopment or change of use is being contemplated, such action should be in the context of control plans prepared by an appropriate public agency, with community input and full transparency throughout the planning process.



## 5. CHRONOLOGY

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1. On 14 November 2001, Minister Debus announced that the State Government intended to develop a 'single, coordinated Botany Bay management plan', which would incorporate new planning rules specific to the catchment.
2. Simultaneously with Minister Debus' announcement, the Healthy Rivers Commission released its final report on the Georges River – Botany Bay system with a recommendation that the Bay be subject to "an integrated decision-making framework...that provides the context against which decisions of the three levels of government are made."
3. In December 2001 the Botany Bay Program released its report "*The Tide is Turning*" which called (amongst other things) for a dedicated Bay management entity within government, to be responsible for research and policy formulation. The report also called for Cabinet recognition of the need for Bay science and Bay planning to be placed within the portfolio of a senior minister.
4. In November 2002, the Government released its *Statement of Intent* in response to the Healthy Rivers Commission final report. That Statement revealed the Government's commitment "*to integrate the strategies and actions required for the achievement of improved administrative, social and economic outcomes for the river and bay system*". For the Bay, specific declarations in the Statement of Intent included:
 

"3.1A new management and planning framework is to be established to provide the strategic context within which whole-of-bay goals can be formulated..."

*"Comprehensive assessment of the impact of specific proposals on the whole Botany bay system, including assessment of cumulative impacts, is to be a pre-condition for any approvals of significant activities within the bay and surrounds..."*

There was emphasis in the S o I on the need for all three levels of government to be involved in its implementation.
5. On 3 September 2002 the Deputy Premier announced 'a major environmental study into the entire Botany Bay catchment' to ensure 'development is not allowed to harm the environmental and social values... any developer will now have to meet the strict requirements formulated in the regional strategy...'
6. On 5 October 2003 a media release from the Premier's office announced the appointment of a commission of inquiry into port expansion. No reference was made to the work of the HRC or to the S o I referred to above. There was reference to a so-called *Port Growth Plan*, which made an appearance for the first time on the Department of Transport's website in early December 2003. The PGP appears to have been prepared in great haste and with little or no consultation with stakeholders.
7. Last month (November 2003) saw the completion of the final draft of a Botany Bay Strategy, which was prepared by DIPNR officers with guidance from stakeholders' committee. The

strategy covers the Bay only – not the wider catchment (river and bay system). Its future is uncertain – as is that of the advisory committee.

8. The Sutherland Shire Environment Centre, with the strong support of the Mayor of Sutherland Shire Council, convened a public forum on 9 December 2003 to consider the proposed expansion of Port Botany. Members of the local community, councillors of Sutherland Shire Council, the Federal Member and a number of State Members of Parliament representing the Sutherland Shire attended that meeting. The meeting unanimously resolved:

*THAT this meeting held in the Environment Centre, Sutherland records its thanks to the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC) for actions to date in defence of Botany Bay and of the traffic interests of the residents of the Bay's catchment, and calls upon SSROC to make strong submissions to the pending Legislative Council Inquiry and State Commission of Inquiry:*

1. *To oppose expansion of Port Botany and*
2. *To support retention of Sydney Harbour as a working port*
3. *To urge the State Government to draft for public exhibition a long-term statewide freight transport policy with particular reference to using the ports of Newcastle and Wollongong (Port Kembla) to promote regional development in the Hunter and Illawarra regions, supported by appropriate transport infrastructure.*

## 6. CONCLUSION

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SSROC, its member councils and the residents of the Bay catchment have had a long standing interest in and concern for the management of Botany Bay. SSROC is deeply concerned about the proposal to expand Port Botany, particularly in light of the apparent eagerness of the Illawarra and Hunter communities to attract port infrastructure to their areas.

SSROC'S submission is summarised thus:

- In the case of Botany Bay, SSROC favours a broader definition of "port infrastructure" to ensure that the Inquiry terms of reference encompass Sydney airport and Port Botany - the two are inextricably linked.
- The Inquiry must give full and proper consideration to the recently completed Botany Bay Strategy Plan and the Southern Sydney Catchment Blueprint.
- Botany Bay has suffered from decades of haphazard management, and SSROC is keen to see evidence of the Governments various commitments to a holistic approach to Bay management.
- The Inquiry is taking place in an environment of great confusion and in the face of a number of seemingly contradictory policy statements relating to Botany Bay and its management.
- The Ports Growth Plan (which purports to provide the framework within which the Government will plan growth and development of port capacity in NSW) is flimsy and inadequate, and appears to have been completed in isolation of the community and industry.
- SSROC is deeply concerned about the social and environmental impacts of port operations in local areas, and the Inquiry terms of reference appear to focus solely on impacts on the State of New South Wales.
- SSROC supports State Government moves to target regional centres with infrastructure growth as a means of promoting regional development.
- SSROC believes that the current road and rail infrastructure is inadequate and therefore incapable of supporting expansion of port and airport operations in the vicinity of Botany Bay.
- SSROC supports the retention of Sydney Harbour as a working port.

## Attachments

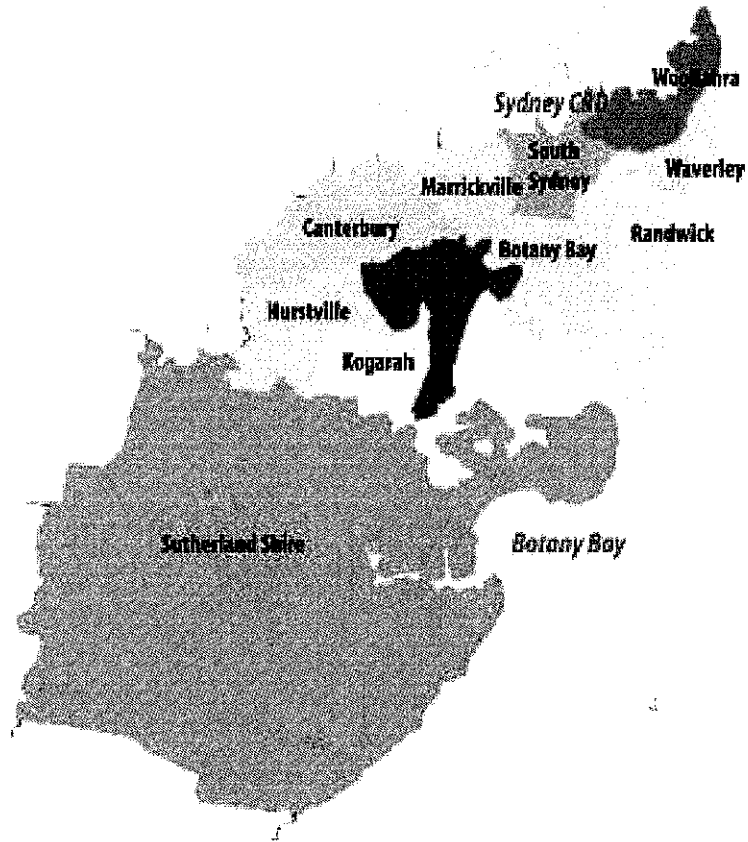
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1. Map of the area represented by SSROC
2. SSROC's policy position on the proposed expansion of Port Botany
3. SSROC's policy position on the operations of Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport
4. SSROC's policy position on the need for integrated Bay management

# Attachment 1

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Map of the area represented by SSROC



## Attachment 2

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### SSROC's Policy Position on the Proposed Expansion of Port Botany

In October 2002, SSROC convened a Summit of local government and community representatives to form a position on the proposal to expand Port Botany. The outcomes of the Summit have been adopted as SSROC's policy position on the proposed expansion of Port Botany.

#### Summit Outcomes

1. This Summit of Local Government representatives from Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong:
  - a. Notes the Deputy Premier's statement of 3 September 2002 in relation to the Botany Bay catchment, that his Government is committed to ensuring "...once and for all – that development is not allowed to harm the environmental and social values of this important area."<sup>2</sup>
  - b. Accepts State Government's position that "...having strong growth in country centres is good for those centres and the people living there, as well as being in the state and national interest" and that Governments need "...a change in philosophy...and target [regional centres] with specific programs."<sup>3</sup>
  - c. Notes that the Lord Mayors of both Wollongong and Newcastle have expressed their communities' willingness to consider expanded port facilities in their area.
2. This Summit notes community and council concerns about many aspects of the proposal to expand Port Botany, including:
  - a. Impacts of heavy vehicle movements from the expanded Port, particularly as an acceptable site for an intermodal terminal is yet to be identified;
  - b. Loss of foreshore amenity immediately adjacent to the Port site;
  - c. Impact of reclamation works;
  - d. Dredging and hydrology of the Bay.
  - e. The impact on existing land uses and residential amenity.
3. In view of the foregoing, it is the position of this Summit that Sydney Ports Corporation's proposal to expand Port Botany:
  - a. Appears to have been made without regard for strategic planning considerations of NSW as a whole;
  - b. Ignores the State Government's stated position that it wants to protect Botany Bay from over-development;

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<sup>2</sup> Dr Andrew Refshauge Media Release, 3 September 2002

<sup>3</sup> Rebuilding Country NSW, Foreword by Minister for Regional Development

- c. In no way addresses the State Government's commitment to bolster the economies of regional centres (such as Newcastle and Wollongong) by government investment in economic infrastructure.
4. Accordingly, this Summit calls on the Minister for Transport to:
- a. Commission an independent assessment of the freight transport needs of the State, including an assessment of the economic benefits that would flow to regional communities from expanded port facilities at Wollongong and Newcastle, and a strategy for siting intermodal facilities in Sydney.
- b. Instruct the Sydney the Sydney Ports Corporation to immediately stop further work on the EIS for the proposal to expand Port Botany, until:
- the findings of the independent assessment (referred to above) have been determined;
  - an appropriate site for an intermodal terminal in Sydney has been identified;
  - the strategic framework for the Botany Bay catchment currently being undertaken by PlanningNSW (and announced in the Deputy Premier's 3 September media statement) has been completed and approved by Cabinet.
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## Attachment 3

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### SSROC's Policy Position on the Operations of Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport

- SSROC supports the current cap and curfews.
  - Airport development proposals must comply with the imminent planning framework for Botany Bay.
  - Planning for a second Sydney airport should commence immediately.
  - Regular monitoring must be undertaken by SACL, with results published, and that any noise-affected properties receive adequate compensation.
  - The Commonwealth and SACL should commit to funding necessary improvements to road and public transport infrastructure.
  - Due to the additional pressures on councils generated by the proposed development, appropriate compensation must be given to councils.
  - The State Government's parking space levy should be extended to the airport to avoid any unfair competitive advantage to airport car park operators.
  - Airside heritage items should be preserved in situ in such a way that any adjacent development takes the opportunity to showcase these aspects of local history.
  - SSROC does not support development solely dedicated to non-aviation commercial uses within the airport.
  - The mixed business concept planned adjacent to the end of the parallel runway should be abandoned due to major public safety and security risks.
  - SSROC does not support the marginalising of general aviation to off-peak slots as this particularly disadvantages country NSW and business.
  - SSROC does not support any rise in total aircraft movements until noise mitigation strategies are in place.
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## Attachment 4

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### SSROC's Policy Position on the Need for Integrated Bay Management –

#### ARGUMENTS FAVOURING A NEW STRATEGIC APPROACH TO BAY MANAGEMENT

1. Past efforts at managing the Bay have been piecemeal, unsuccessfully addressing Bay ecosystems.
2. Community expectations are higher than ever before; there is a popular mandate for reform
3. Locally and globally, ESD principles are now expected to underpin development and environmental management decisions; and are embodied in the Charter for local government in New South Wales
4. Despite some success, the Bay's natural environment continues to deteriorate
5. Ecosystems cannot be managed by traditional sectoral arrangements
6. The current system fails to recognise the importance of science as a vital management resource; and fails to offer a mechanism for scientific research to influence decision-making
7. Within State Government, specific Ministerial responsibility for Bay environmental quality is non-existent
8. The Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils has taken a lead in proposing a regional or catchment basis for Botany Bay management
9. There is inadequate official concern for indigenous culture

#### FUTURE BAY MANAGEMENT – ORGANISATION, RESPONSIBILITIES, CONCERNS

##### 1. Generally

Analysis of local and overseas counterpart Bay management programs, complemented by an extensive program of local consultations, suggests that if community aspirations are to be satisfied, there are several basic requirements which should be considered for adoption within a new Bay management system. Translated into a local or New South Wales context, these requirements are presented below.

Of direct importance to the Botany Bay Program (BBP) is the 14 November 2001 announcement by Minister Debus that the NSW Government was going to develop a "single, co-ordinated Botany Bay management plan" as an early response to the release of the final report of the Healthy Rivers Commission (HRC). That announcement appears to provide sure evidence that for the first time the State has accepted the need to assign a special priority to halting the further environmental degradation of the Bay system.

## 2. Management charter and structure

The following ideas for a possible management model have been gathered from submissions to the draft BBP Discussion Paper, and are offered for further debate.

Some form of "management charter" will be necessary, spelling out terms of reference. It could include making surveys and plans for the Bay and its hydrological catchment as may be necessary to guide and control development with particular reference to the specific matters including but not restricted to the following:

- Achieving the highest possible level of water and biota quality for the bay and its tributaries
- Conservation and enhancement of the natural environment
- Application of ESD principles across the development process
- Controlling and managing cumulative impacts of industrial development
- Protection of heritage sites (Aboriginal and other)
- Protection and enhancement of natural habitats
- Optimising the recreational potential of the Bay area, consistent with ESD principles.

### *Management area*

This should ideally be the whole of the catchment. For management and scientific purposes, the Bay must be taken to include Botany Bay and the two rivers. Smaller geographic units, sub-catchments or specific localities could be identified for particular purposes when necessary.

### *Organisational structure*

A two-tier arrangement is a workable option, consisting of:

- A full-time executive arm (CEO plus program leaders having expertise in each of, say, four disciplines relevant to the needs of Bay management)
- An advisory body with a broad base of representation drawn from the Botany Bay community, conservation NGOs, the indigenous community, government (all levels), industry, and academia; responsible for furnishing advice to the executive as may be requested by that body; tendering advice to the executive as it may see fit or as may be requested by outside bodies; and furnishing advice to the relevant Minister
- Ad hoc research and advisory committees as may be appropriate from time to time.

### *Annual or biennial forum or conference*

To review progress, identify future avenues of work, etc.

### *Overall function*

- A co-ordinator, manager, watchdog, facilitator, or Bay advocate
- A support resource for DUAP as it develops regional plans under PlanFirst
- Perhaps a concurrence role for development in sensitive locations
- A "one-stop-shop" for Bay information and data
- A source of ideas and action programs in research, community education, outreach programs
- A member of advisory body for the UNSW Botany Bay Studies Unit.

*Cabinet recognition*

Formal Cabinet recognition of a need for – and commitment to – Bay science and Bay planning should be evident, reflected in the inclusion of primary responsibility for the Botany Bay system as a named element in the portfolio of the Premier or senior Minister. Final decision-making powers would reside with that Minister. Whole-of-catchment management powers need to be in place from the outset to ensure that decisions made by agencies acting for local interests do not run counter to the needs of the Bay and catchment seen in overall terms.

*Dedicated management unit*

See above. At the operational level, responsibility for research and policy formulation should be assigned to the management unit, appropriately funded and empowered; facilitation and negotiation would be key activities in this area of work.

*Independence*

The management entity should have a degree of independence such that its primary focus – ie. The delivery of holistic resource management processes – is not seen to be part of the jurisdictional territory of a particular agency; with the opportunity – endorsed at ministerial level – to play a proactive facilitation role in its dealings with agencies and public bodies.

*Policy group*

Policy issues should be drafted by the advisory group, described above.

**3. A Botany Bay Studies Unit at the University of New South Wales**

Early work within the Botany Bay Program focussed on a search for mechanisms which might have the potential to contribute to an improvement in the health of the Bay and its catchment – regardless of administrative arrangements which might be in place at a particular time.

In essence, work sought to identify an “entity” which could successfully build on the efforts of the BBP in encouraging the improvement of the knowledge base surrounding Bay management, leading to better decisions and an improvement in Bay health over time regardless of which management model was in place at a particular time. The proposition was that science and management should henceforth go hand in hand, with research being co-ordinated and targeted towards issues raised by the community at large.

To answer the above need, the University of New South Wales announced in July 2001 a proposal to create a unit for Botany Bay studies on the Kensington campus. The campus is in close proximity to major bayside industry, developments and infrastructure.

The new unit would act as an independent resource to support whatever Bay management entity might be in place at a particular time. The unit would be responsible for tasks assigned to it by its governing body after appropriate consultation with partners and stakeholders.