

**INQUIRY INTO NEW SOUTH WALES PLANNING
FRAMEWORK**

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The Hon Tony Catanzariti MLC
Committee Chair
Standing Committee of State Development
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

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Dear Mr Catanzariti

Submission: Inquiry into the NSW Planning Framework

I write to provide supplementary information to our original submission to the inquiry into the NSW planning framework dated 17 November 2009.

Sydney Chamber of Commerce feels prompted to respond to recent public debate concerning the use of Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act.

The global financial crisis has significantly weakened business confidence and investment. During the last quarter State Final Demand in NSW contracted 0.3 per cent, while at a national level Gross Domestic Product contracted 0.5 per cent in the first negative quarter since December 2000.¹ It is clear that all tiers of government must look at ways to stimulate economic growth.

State governments have relatively few economic levers at their disposal to stimulate economic growth. Even fewer are the number of economic levers which do not sacrifice state government revenue. Part 3A is an economic lever which on the one hand is stimulatory, and on the other, cost effective.

The Chamber would like to reaffirm its support of Part 3A as a legitimate planning instrument which overcomes red tape to generate economic activity and investment.

The suggestion that Part 3A encourages corruption is nonsense. Quite to the contrary, Part 3A enables the Minister to call-in state significant proposals to be considered above the fray of local councils and politics and determined with the input of apolitical public servants.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics

NSW must have at its disposal a planning instrument that can overcome bureaucracy to provide timely determinations. Whether it is Part 3A or some other planning instrument, is somewhat academic. So effective has Part 3A been, that the Victorian Government is seeking to emulate it.

Part 3A was the predominant form of approval for the 296 major developments approved in NSW during 2007-08, which had a capital investment value of more than \$8 billion and the potential to create more than 32,000 jobs.² Since September last year, 64 projects worth \$9 billion creating over 20,000 jobs, not including modifications to existing projects.³

Sydney Chamber of Commerce reiterates its unequivocal support of Part 3A and encourages its use at a time of unprecedented economic challenges.

Additionally, Sydney Chamber of Commerce expresses its support for streamlining the process of state agency concurrences, referrals and secondary approvals. Where concurrences and referrals are justified, they should be processed in a timely and coordinated manner. Support should be given to local councils to assist in meeting their obligations in this regard.

Yours sincerely



The Hon. Patricia Forsythe
Executive Director

² NSW Department of Planning, Major Development Monitor, 2007/2008

³ NSW Minister for Planning, March 2009.