



26 August 2008

Hon. John Pandazopoulos MP  
Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
Parliament House  
Spring Street  
East Melbourne  
Vic 3002

Dear Hon. Pandazopoulos,

**RE: Inquiry into Melbourne's Future Water Supply**

I refer to your letter dated 16 July 2008 seeking a written submission on the relative merits of a number of options to supplement Melbourne's water supply.

The North Central Catchment Management Authority (CMA) welcomes the opportunity to have input and has provided the following comments on the options outlined in your letter:

*Further water savings that can be achieved by increased conservation and efficiency efforts*

Water is a valuable and limited resource and the North Central CMA strongly encourages sustainable use through increased efficiency and water saving efforts. Education and awareness programs and the provision of grants for water saving devices should be encouraged.

*The collection of stormwater*

Stormwater management is primarily a local government responsibility. There are good examples within the North Central region where stormwater is utilised to supplement water supplies for landscaping and aesthetic purposes (e.g. Malmsbury & Castlemaine Botanical Gardens).

Much of the current management practice however is focused on reducing the amount of stormwater entering waterways to reduce pollution, rather than its reuse. The collection and reuse of stormwater is mostly confined to individual households with water tanks. Consequently, there are opportunities for local government with the provision of adequate resources, to augment their use of stormwater, as demonstrated within the North Central region.

However, the net benefits of stormwater collection and reuse should be considered carefully as the capturing of stormwater decreases the volume of water reaching nearby waterways.

*The re-use of treated wastewater*

There are a number of examples within the North Central region where treated wastewater is successfully being utilised to supplement water supplies. Coliban Water uses recycled water for the irrigation of parks and recreational areas within the city boundaries and to supply the Perseverance Mine. Coliban Water is also investigating the use of recycled water from the Castlemaine wastewater treatment plant to irrigate orchards in the Harcourt area.



**NORTH CENTRAL**  
Catchment Management Authority

PO Box 18  
(628-634 Midland Highway)  
Huntly Victoria 3551  
t: (03) 5448 7124  
f: (03) 5448 7148  
e: [info@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@nccma.vic.gov.au)  
[www.nccma.vic.gov.au](http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au)  
ABN: 739 3705 8422

The volume of recycled water available is dependent on sufficient loads entering treatment plants. Therefore, the value of recycling options will be dependent on the degree and impact of water saving within households.

*The use of groundwater*

Usage of groundwater to supplement water supplies needs to be considered in the context of the entire water resource available. It is important that the interactions between groundwater and surface water are recognised and understood. Groundwater usage needs to be within the sustainable yield designated for that particular area and comply with groundwater management plans where applicable.

*Small locally based desalination plants*

The benefits of desalination plants to supplement water supplies should be considered in an overall "net environmental benefit" context. This would take into consideration the energy requirements for operation of the plants and the long-term costs and feasibility of the enterprise.

Thank you for the opportunity to have input in this process and please don't hesitate to contact me on 03-54487124 if you require further information.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damian Wells'.

Damian Wells  
Acting CEO

