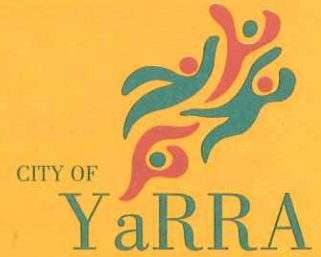
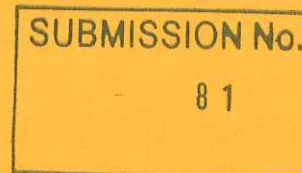


In reply please quote: D08/29947  
Our ref: D08/29948  
Contact: Silvana Predebon, 9205 5753



29 August 2008



The Hon. John Pandazopoulos MP  
Environment and Natural Resources Committee  
Parliament House  
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Dear Mr Pandazopoulos

### **Parliamentary Inquiry into Melbourne's Future Water Supply**

Thank you for your letter dated 16 July 2008 in relation to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Melbourne's Future Water Supply and the invitation to comment on the proposed terms of reference for the inquiry.

The City of Yarra is an inner-city municipality of Melbourne, located near the base of the Yarra River catchment. Its mixture of high and medium density residential development, commercial sectors and industrial precincts, along with its 3 swimming pools and many parks and sports grounds, demand high volumes of water to sustain the municipality.

The City of Yarra has undertaken several programs aimed to reduce consumption, such as the successful residential WaterSavers program; the installation of tanks at community buildings; and the introduction of drought tolerant turf at sports grounds. There are also investigations into treating backwash water from swimming pools and industry to water parks and gardens. From this perspective and our experience, the City of Yarra strongly supports the first 3 points in the proposed terms of reference.

However, the City of Yarra has concerns with points 4, 5 and 6. In regard to groundwater harvesting, the natural hydrological cycle means that any disturbance to groundwater will impact on water being fed to surface waterways to one degree or another. The establishment of a small, locally-based desalination plant is resource intensive and will not change the usage patterns of potable water, which is required for long term sustainability. Further to, "any other optional water source" is too vague to be supported, when no criteria for what might be deemed "appropriate" are provided.

An extra term of reference that should guide the Parliamentary Inquiry is in regard to regulatory works for new developments. In particular the Inquiry should consider timelines for introducing regulations for mandatory installation of rainwater tanks and grey water treatment measures to service bathroom/laundry and outdoor areas respectively.

In addition to the specific concerns above, the City of Yarra is concerned about the already degraded state and poor ecological health of waterways and recommends an additional term of reference to guide the Inquiry, namely:

- that supplementing Melbourne's water supply does not adversely affect the ecological health of or environmental flows to waterways.

Should you require further information please feel free to contact Silvana Predebon, Coordinator Environmental sustainability Unit, on phone 9205 5753.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Diamond', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andi Diamond  
Chief Executive Officer