



**Australian Government**  
**National Water Commission**

**COPY**

**Acting Chief Executive Officer**

Dr Mark O'Donohue  
National Centre of Excellence for Water Recycling  
Level 2, 95 North Quay  
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Dr O'Donohue

I am writing in support of the Centres' Expression of Interest for work under "Goal 3: Reclaimed water is viewed as an acceptable alternative for augmenting drinking water supplies". I understand the work program for Goal 3 will seek to:

- Provide a demonstration of water production performance and operation reliability of recycled water
- Provide an evaluation of the social, economic and governance challenges on potable re-use
- Design and implement a national demonstration and engagement program

The Commission encourages efforts to diversify urban water supplies and acknowledges the need for further effort to ensure reclaimed water is assessed fairly and objectively as an alternative to augmenting drinking water supplies. The Centres' work should provide valuable insights into reforms required to ensure communities and governments have confidence in recycling as an alternative supply option, including for drinking purposes.

As advised previously, the Commission is unable to provide financial support for the project, but can offer our involvement to support the transfer of knowledge generated into policy outcomes. The Commission thinks it is important that detailed research findings are effectively translated into policy and I particularly appreciate your efforts in collaborating with other research bodies, industry and government agencies in this regard.

The Commission has a number of projects looking at measures to ensure efficient, effective and safe implementation of recycling schemes in Australia. These projects offer valuable insights into the objectives of your work program and I welcome your offer for the Commission to engage with the Centre during the delivery of your research program. The Commission will facilitate access by the Centre to relevant reference groups and inter-jurisdictional committees to support the effective transfer of research outcomes into regulation and policy and to inform broader national reform activities.

The Commission has recently commenced the project *A review of urban water quality regulation in Australia*. The project seeks to account for existing and planned research and provide a best practice framework and reform road map for improving the regulatory settings across all urban water quality institutions. National consultation with urban water research and management groups has commenced and is due to be complete during December 2010. It will be important that the Commission's review includes consideration of the work being delivered under the Centre's "Goal 3 – Reclaimed water" program.

In summary the Commission believes the Centre's program will make a timely and valuable contribution to the needs of communities, policy makers, regulators, practitioners and researchers involved in the management of urban water.

If you have any questions regarding how the Commission can further support your proposal or in relation to the Commission project *A review of urban water quality regulation*, please contact Paul Smith on (02) 6102 6045 or at [paul.smith@nwc.gov.au](mailto:paul.smith@nwc.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



James Cameron

2 November 2010