

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND FLOOD MITIGATION

1. Background

Since the last meeting of the Forum in February 2004, the major areas of activity under this item have been:

- the conduct of the *Metropolitan Adelaide Stormwater Management Study* by Kellogg Brown and Root (KBR) Consultants;
- the work by the Metropolitan Chief Executive Officers' Association and the LGA on seeking to further develop a coordinated Local Government approach to stormwater management (including re-use) and flood mitigation; and,
- the work of the Urban Stormwater Initiative (USI) group in developing a joint State and Local Government approach to stormwater management and flood mitigation, including initiating development of a paper dealing with State Government policy issues providing a framework for collaborative ongoing management.

Progress on the three areas of activity is dealt with separately below.

2. Metropolitan Adelaide Stormwater Management Study

Due to the late delivery of draft reports by KBR (and, in some aspects, significant further work to be undertaken by the consultants) it was not possible to lodge a final report and recommendations from this major study, as was envisaged at the February 2004 meeting.

While this is disappointing, the Steering Committee (State and Local Government) for the *Metropolitan Adelaide Stormwater Management Study* believes that it is vital to ensure that the final product is both credible and robust, with expert supporting comment and substantiation from an independent peer review team.

Peter Lockett (CEO, City of Charles Sturt), Chair of the Steering Committee, will provide a verbal presentation of the preliminary findings from the study at the meeting on 2 June 2004. A brief written summary of these preliminary findings will also be tabled at the meeting.

3. Local Government Activities

The Metropolitan CEOs Association continues to play a key role in the process of developing a coordinated metropolitan area approach by Local Government to stormwater management and flood mitigation issues, in anticipation of the specific findings and recommendations of the KBR study. The Association has conducted two recent workshops on this topic.

At the LGA Metropolitan Local Government Group (Mayors and CEOs of all metropolitan councils) meeting held on 12 May 2004 it was resolved to:

1. *Support the following five key outcomes presented by the Metropolitan CEOs Association:*
 - (a) *The objective is to achieve effective stormwater management in the context of water systems management across metropolitan Adelaide to significantly reduce the risk of flooding and maximize opportunities for re-use;*
 - (b) *The current governance arrangements with respect to stormwater management are not optimal and can be improved upon;*
 - (c) *A joint approach by State and Local Government is required to achieve optimum stormwater management including re-use across metropolitan Adelaide;*
 - (d) *A new form of partnership arrangement between State and Local Government is required to effectively address the strategic and operational issues/opportunities of stormwater and reuse across metropolitan Adelaide; and*
 - (e) *Local Government is committed to progressing a joint agreement between State and Local Government to provide a strategic level framework to progress the objective in (a) above.*
2. *Seek that these key outcomes be endorsed by the State Executive Committee and presented to the Minister's Local Government Forum meeting to be held on 2 June 2004; and*
3. *Propose that the LGA undertake further work in consultation with all metropolitan councils and the State Government in relation to the preparation of an action plan that clearly defines the required next steps to progress a joint agreement on stormwater management between State and Local Government. The action plan should specify tasks, target dates for completion and identify responsibilities (who will do what).*

This resolution was approved by the State Executive Committee of the LGA at its meeting on 20 May 2004.

4. Urban Stormwater Initiative (USI) Executive Group Report

One of the roles of the USI Executive Group is to provide integrated advice to State agencies, the LGA and the Forum on the various projects, initiatives and policies impacting on stormwater management and flood mitigation, including (2) and (3) above. In this capacity the USI Executive Group has been kept informed of progress and has provided guidance where needed. More importantly, it continues to make linkages and address gaps across State Government portfolios and between State

and Local Government. Some of the activities of the Executive Group in this regard have been:

- facilitating the further development of a possible governance framework for Urban Stormwater Management incorporating legislation, policy, planning, funding and delivery responsibilities of State and Local Government (See Attachment 1 for current version of the framework);
- identifying the components for developing a well articulated State Government policy on stormwater management and flood mitigation, through the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation;
- ensuring that the Chief Executive of SA Water is kept well briefed on developments; and,
- initiating development of a draft policy for submission to the June meeting of the USI Executive Group for consideration, with the aim of having a negotiated policy document for consideration by the Ministers of Environment and Conservation and State/Local Government Relations in August and thence to Cabinet with a submission from both ministers before the end of October 2004.

5. Next Steps

The crucial threads impinging on achieving significant outcomes from this referral to the Forum are all now converging:

- the findings and recommendations of the Metropolitan Adelaide Stormwater Management Study;
- development of an agreed framework between State and metropolitan Local Government for urban stormwater management; and,
- articulating the State Government's policies in relation to stormwater management and flood mitigation.

Development of the draft policy on stormwater management will need to take into account:

- recommendations from the *Metropolitan Adelaide Stormwater Management Study*
- recommendations from current "Thinker in Residence", Professor Peter Cullen;
- the emerging findings of the Waterproofing Adelaide study; and,
- the State Government's Green City Program 2004 – 2007 and deliberations from the Premier's Sustainability Roundtable are also relevant.

A series of actions (to be oversighted by the USI Executive Group) are required to ensure that progress thus far is driven through to outcomes for State and Local Government to consider at the political level. The problems remain complex, difficult and prone to distractions that can delay the reaching of important decisions. It is expected that the strong support and direction of the Minister's Local Government Forum will be necessary to drive the process to deliver the necessary major reforms in the second half of the 2004 calendar year. Therefore, the Forum may wish to signal to the USI Executive Group that it expects that the major outstanding "directional" matters will be resolved (subject to final approvals) by the time of the next planned Forum meeting in mid August 2004.

5. Recommendation

That the Forum:

- 1 Receive the verbal report on the preliminary findings of the *Metropolitan Adelaide Stormwater Management* and provide comment for consideration of the USI Executive Group.**
- 2 Endorse the resolutions of the LGA State Executive and:**
 - commend all metropolitan Councils for reaching a common position; and,**
 - note that it is vital that this common position be maintained through to the implementation stage.**
- 3 Support the importance of clarification of the State Government's policies on stormwater management and flood mitigation, in particular for metropolitan Adelaide, with emphasis on the importance of continuing a State/Local government collaborative approach.**
- 4 Request that the USI Executive Group make sure it takes into account the three recommendations above to enable the August meeting of the Forum to be in a position to adopt a final position on metropolitan stormwater management (subject to external approvals that may need to be obtained).**

Attachment:

Possible Framework for Urban Stormwater Management