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EPA Inquiry Secretariat
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30-10-2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

Lower Murray Water (LMW) appreciates this opportunity to respond to the Discussion Paper "Examining the future task of Victoria's Environment Protection Authority" (August 2015).

The water industry is a mature industry with a good track record of working with the EPA to meet our shared objectives of minimising environmental harm. We value consistent, informed and timely feedback from the EPA and, above all, a culture of trust where the emphasis is on a partnership approach to continuous improvement.

LMW commends the EPA on recent initiatives such as the Water Industry Reference Group (WIRG), and the Development Assessment Unit open panel discussions. Often the only contact regional water authorities have with the EPA is through field officers, but the WIRG has greatly increased the accessibility of senior officers, as well as improving our understanding of the developing strategic direction of the EPA.

LMW also appreciates the recent publication or revision of many EPA guidelines aimed at clarifying previously grey areas of EPA process (eg. 1560.1, 375.16, 1590, 1322.6, 1580). LMW encourages the continued development of a consistent engagement strategy with the water industry when reviewing or preparing new guidelines. The WIRG is a suitable forum but consultation with subgroups / other water corporations needs to be brought back to the WIRG so all parties can contribute. It is particularly important that regional water authorities are engaged in this process, not just the larger metro water authorities.

LMW would like to acknowledge the efforts of the current Chair and CEO of the EPA to foster cooperative relationships.

Yours sincerely,

Philip Endley
Managing Director
Lower Murray Urban and Rural Water Corporation

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