

Other Activities

Building and Construction Sector Industry Liaison Visit

- 3.1 On 30 August 2002, Committee members attended a building and construction sector industry liaison visit in Melbourne, organised by the Association of Consulting Engineers Australia. Attending on behalf of the Committee were the Chair, Hon Judi Moylan MP; Vice-Chair, Mr Brendan O'Connor MP; Mr Jim Lloyd MP and Senator Michael Forshaw.
- 3.2 The program covered a range of issues of particular interest to the Committee and provided valuable insight into the operations of, and issues confronting, the building and construction sector.
- 3.3 The program commenced with a visit to the design office of GHD. Following a tour of the office, members were taken through the project development process, using the example of the Sorrell Causeway Bridge, Tasmania.
- 3.4 The next session of the program was a visit to the Docklands development, hosted by the Docklands Authority and project participants Arup, Connell Wagner and Bovis Lend Lease. Members toured the site and were guided through the process of site development from initial rehabilitation, infrastructure development, building construction and finishing touches, including landscaping and incorporation of public artworks.

- 3.5 Session three of the visit comprised a working lunch at the offices of Maunsell Australia. Lunch was followed by a presentation by Dr Raphael Arndt, Associate, Hastings Fund Management, on *Financial and Investment Arrangements in the Building and Construction Industry*. The discussion following the presentation was particularly valuable and stimulating.
- 3.6 The fourth session of the industry liaison visit was an issues and discussion session hosted by the Association of Consulting Engineers Australia and the Institute of Engineers Australia. Topics covered in this session were:
- *Life Cycle/Green Buildings*, presented by Professor John Wilson, Director Victoria, Institute of Engineers;
 - *Government Outsourcing, Risk Allocation and Public Indemnity Insurance*, presented by Mr Brendan McCarthy, Company Secretary and Legal Manager, Connell Wagner; and
 - *Project Delivery Options including Alliancing*, presented by Dr Robert Care, Group Knowledge Director, Arup Group.
- 3.7 The visit concluded with a VIP Dinner held at the Marriott Hotel and sponsored by Smorgon Reinforcing. Guest speakers at the dinner were Mr David Singleton, Chair Elect of the Australian Construction Industry Forum, President of the Association of Consulting Engineers Australia, Chairman and Chief Executive of Arup Australia and the Hon Judi Moylan MP, Chair of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works. The Chair's speech highlighted the important links between industry and government and the timeliness of the industry liaison visit, in addition to explaining the role and functions of the Public Works Committee. The Chair also thanked the industry representatives and the Association of Consulting Engineers Australia for their efforts in making the visit a success. The dinner gave members a valuable opportunity for informal discussion with industry representatives.

National Conference of Parliamentary Public Works and Environment Committees

- 3.8 The 2002 National Conference of Parliamentary Public Works and Environment Committees was hosted by the Parliament of South Australia. It was held in Adelaide from 30 September to 2 October 2002.
- 3.9 The conference was attended by delegates from the relevant parliamentary committees of the Commonwealth, and of all Australian States and Territories, except for the Northern Territory. International

delegates included members of the New Zealand Local Government and Environment Committee.

3.10 The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works was represented at the conference by Vice-Chair Mr Brendan O'Connor MP and Senator Richard Colbeck.

3.11 The theme of the 2002 national conference was *Water – Engineering Solutions and Environmental Consequences*. The programme included addresses by:

- Dr Graham Harris, Chair, CSIRO Flagship Programs, who spoke on *Water – the need for systems thinking and new paradigms*;
- Graham Dooley, Managing Director, United Utilities Australia, discussing *Water as a Finite Resource – Price, Infrastructure and Who Pays for it?*,
- Professor Mike Young, Director, CSIRO Policy and Economic Research Unit, speaking on *Water Rights: A New Definition*,
- Hon John Hill, MHA, Minister for Environment and Conservation, South Australia;
- Tim Fisher, Coordinator, Land and Water Ecosystems Program, Australian Conservation Foundation, addressing the topic *Water: The Gap between Policy Perception and Reality*; and
- Dr Peter Cullen, 2001 Prime Minister's Prize for Environmentalist of the Year, speaking on *The River Murray: Government Infrastructure and Environmental Needs*.

3.12 In addition to the addresses listed above, the programme included a lunchtime 'hypothetical' in which a panel of distinguished experts contemplated the consequences of Australia's water use policies and engineering solutions in the year 2050. On the final day of the conference, two more expert panels provided thought-provoking discussions on: *Public Private Partnerships – Provision of Infrastructure and the Delivery of Environmental Services* and "What Governments can do and how to do it.

3.13 A feature of the conference was a tour of several successful water conservation and reuse schemes operating in the Adelaide region. Delegates visited the City of Salisbury to inspect The Paddocks Wetlands and Parafield Stormwater Reuse Scheme, which harvest and purify urban run-off in a wetlands system. The water is then recycled for irrigation and industrial use, or stored in underground aquifers. The tour also incorporated the Mawson Lakes housing development, an example of

water-sensitive urban design in which treated stormwater and wastewater are used to create ornamental lakes and to irrigate gardens and parklands.

- 3.14 Delegates were given the opportunity to present papers outlining the work of their respective committees through 2002.
- 3.15 At the conclusion of the conference, delegates expressed their gratitude to the Parliament of South Australia for hosting a highly informative and successful event. There was a general agreement that, following next year's conference, delegates should issue some form of joint statement or communiqué based on the conference outcomes¹.
- 3.16 Next year's conference will be hosted by the Parliament of Western Australia.
- 3.17 The complete transcript of conference proceedings is available on the web site of the Parliament of South Australia at www.parliament.sa.gov.au/committees/nwc.shtm.

¹ National Conference of Parliamentary Public Works and Environment Committees, Transcript of Proceedings, Wednesday, 2 October, 2002, p 149