MEDIA RELEASE

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Chair: Mal Washer MP

Deputy Chair: Jennie George MP

Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage

Managing the flow

Regulating plumbing product quality to save water

Improving the water efficiency of plumbing products by better enforcement of mandatory labelling laws has been recommended in a new parliamentary report released yesterday.

The *Managing the Flow* report by the House of Representatives Environment and Heritage Committee stems from an inquiry into the regulation of plumbing product quality in Australia.

Committee Chair Dr Mal Washer said the *Managing the Flow* report is a "timely examination of an area of regulation that performs the crucial functions of conserving precious water resources and safeguarding public health from avoidable contamination of these resources".

The report explores a number of deficiencies in the current regulatory arrangements for controlling plumbing product quality.

"Overall, the Committee found there is a pressing need for improvements to be made to the cohesion, consistency, understanding and enforcement of the current regulatory arrangements," Dr Washer said.

The Chair stated that there are a number of actions that the federal government can, and should, take to improve the way in which plumbing product quality is managed in Australia. Accordingly, the report made recommendations to:

- improve coordination between the state/territory jurisdictions and the national mandatory Water Efficiency Labelling Standards (WELS) and Water Mark Schemes:
- establish minimum water efficiency standards for all WELS products; and
- review and improve upon current enforcement practices for the mandatory schemes.

"This has been an expeditious inquiry for the Committee, which I hope will help to direct Australian Government action to address some of the problems that the industry and consumers are experiencing," Dr Washer said.

For **media comment**, contact: Dr Mal Washer, House Environment Committee Chair, on (02) 6277 2114

The report is available on the Committee's website:

http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/environ/regulation/report.htm, or from the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4580 or environment.reps@aph.gov.au.

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