



PHOSPHATE RESOURCES
LIMITED

Luke Simpkins MP
Chairman
The Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Simpkins

CHRISTMAS ISLAND WATER MAPPING

I refer to the evidence given to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories by government officers Ms Robyn Fleming and Mrs Karen Lindsay about geological and water mapping on Christmas Island.

The question and answer session between Committee members and government officers revealed there were two interpretations of the need for the Government to undertake thorough water mapping of Christmas Island. On the one hand it was thought that such mapping had been proposed to ascertain if there was enough water for the island community. On the other hand it was pointed out that such mapping needed to be undertaken to enable informed decisions to be made about land that may be allocated for economic development purposes.

We agree the mapping of the basalt is vitally important for the latter reason. Indeed in our last meeting with Robyn Fleming we discussed this very matter and were pleased that she undertook to have her office prepare a paper scoping out the information required by the Australian Government, the Shire and ourselves for the purpose of obtaining an indication of the cost of this work.

The Shire of Christmas Island has previously observed-

“Economic diversification will not be able to materialise adequately on Christmas Island until the knowledge about the deep geology of the island is established. This requires accurate radar investigation of the basalt layer and cave systems in order to define the underground fresh water aquifer in its extent and capacity and provide information about structural risk areas in the upper limestone formation.

Mapping the limestone and the basalt beneath to assist in tracking the underground water supply of CI is a critical issue. Continuing uncertainty about the risks associated with the limestone structure and how the water flows over the basalt layer are fundamentally restraining planning and development of social and economic infrastructure.”

PERTH

6 Thorogood St, Burswood
PO Box 401, Victoria Park
Western Australia 6979
P +61 8 6250 4900
F +61 8 6250 4901

CHRISTMAS ISLAND

PO Box 104
Christmas Island
Indian Ocean 6798
P +61 8 9164 8400
F +61 8 9164 8404

SINGAPORE

8 Liang Seah Street
#02-06 Liang Seah Court
Singapore 189029
P +65 6332 0961
F +65 6332 0962

MALAYSIA

209 Block A, Kelana Business Centre
97 Jalan SS7/2, Kelana Jaya, 47301
Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia
P +60 3 7880 4911
F +65 3 7880 5877

www.cirp.com

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We are aware that the cost of carrying out a proper study might be significant and to that end wish to advise that we would be willing to make a contribution if the scope of the study is agreed with us and undertaken in a timely manner.

There is no doubt a proper study has the capacity to make an important contribution to the potential economic development on Christmas Island. As Ms Fleming observed 'the government's position is that there should be, as I understand it, a sustainable, economically viable community on Christmas Island, to the extent that is driven by the private sector rather than the government sector'.

We agree with that view and believe a well planned and executed geological and water mapping study as described above will be a central aspect of being able to realise that objective.

Yours faithfully

Clive Brown
Chairman

14 Oct. 2015

Cc Warren Snowdon – Member for Lingjari (local member)