



May 12, 2006

Mr Robert Little  
Inquiry Secretary  
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
Canberra, ACT 2600

Dear Robert

### **1. Sustainability Charter and the Sustainable Cities Awards**

This note is to confirm details of relevant Keep Australia Beautiful activity and to restate the offer from Keep Australia Beautiful to assist with public participation in activities, such as the Sustainable Cities Awards, that support the objectives of the committee and of the proposed Sustainability Charter.

The Sustainable Cities Awards have been operating for over 10 years in VIC, for 12 years in NSW and are now in their second year in the ACT. The awards are intended to be made national in the near future. The awards exist to identify, acknowledge and promote excellence in grass roots projects addressing urban environmental issues. Details at [www.kab.org.au](http://www.kab.org.au)

The Sustainable Cities Awards are based on the Keep Australia Beautiful Tidy Towns Awards which were referenced in the Sustainable Cities 2025 report:

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*...encourage similar programmes at a community level, possibly emulating the Tidy Towns or Celebrate WA programmes, but focusing on sustainability...*

## **2. Comment on the terms of reference**

- 2.1 Built Environment
- 2.2 Water
- 2.3 Energy
- 2.4 Transport
- 2.5 Ecological Footprint

Built Environment, Water and Transport are each a focus of a category of the Sustainable Cities Awards.

Energy is implied in the resource efficiency category.

Ecological Footprint is the focus of Keep Australia Beautiful Week: 28 Aug – 3 September 2006.

Below are details of each of these links between a term of reference topic and a Keep Australia Beautiful activity.

In 2005 the ACT Sustainable Cities Awards acknowledged the following winners:

### **2.1 Built Environment / Sustainable Building Award**

Recognises practical, successful examples that will inspire others eg. Passive building designs, ecologically responsible building materials, sustainable construction methods etc.

Presented by Mr Simon Corbell, Minister for Planning, for the ACT Planning & Land Authority

Winner in the Sustainable Building Award was presented to Canberra International Airport for Brindabella Business Park: Brindabella Business Park is situated within the Airport Precinct and is an integrated, environmentally conscious, commercial development. From concept Brindabella Business Park embraced the green vision and set out to become a leader in its field. 8 Brindabella Circuit has achieved its environmental objectives of minimising the environmental footprint left by modern day development by creating a building comprised of recycled and innovative environmental systems used to reduce waste and find alternative means of energy efficiency, water conservation, lighting and avoidance of volatile organic compounds.

## **2.2 Water / Water Efficiency Award**

Promotes, practical, successful examples that will inspire and promote water saving practices in the ACT.

Presented by Don Chambers, Chairman, Keep Australia Beautiful National Association.

Highly Commended in the Water Efficiency Award was presented to Orana School for their waterharvesting program: Orana school has developed a water harvesting program to retain rainwater and minimise surface runoff. The system was installed in January 2005 and students completed the lawn section in term one this year. The project reduces water consumption and recycles wasted grey water in simple, pre-existing and cost effective methods. Primarily a system of subsurface creek beds is used to direct stormwater and grey water irrigation to landscape growing areas, while at the same time filtering and treating water to remove contaminants.

## **2.3 Energy / Resource Efficiency Award**

Encourages excellence in either litter reduction, recycling or waste management and is open to open to individuals and community groups only.

Presented by John Hargreaves, Minister for Urban Services.

Equal Winner in the resource efficiency Award was presented to Theodore Primary School for their wastewise program: Theodore Primary School is located in the ACT's far south: Theodore PS decided to become involved in the wastewise program as they wanted to focus on environmental education. As part of Theodore PS commitment, they undertook the Magical Garden Project and a recycling program. The Magical Garden project encouraged students to design a wastewise garden in a practical outdoor setting. The recycling program introduced recycling bins and compost bins in each class room and incorporated wastewise principles into the school curriculum.

Equal Winner in the resource efficiency Award was presented to Hawker Primary School for their wastewise program also. Hawker Primary School, situated in the ACT's North, is committed to a whole schools approach for environmental education. During 2004, Hawker Primary School made a commitment to become waste wise school and since then they have halved their amount of waste and increased the amount of materials for recycling. Organic materials have been diverted and used in the schools student garden beds and worm farms. Hawker Primary School were the first government school to be awarded the official wastewise title in the ACT.

## **2.4 Transport / Sustainable Transport Award**

This award encourages practical, successful examples that will inspire others, examples include - car pooling, public transport use, etc.

Presented by Kristen Shapely, Marketing Manager for Best Western Australia.

Equal Highly Commended in the Sustainable Transport Award was presented to ACTION for the Flexibus service: Evening bus travel in Canberra has always been a challenge to deliver effectively. Introduced in April 2005, the new flexibus on demand services operate in most areas of Canberra in the evenings, as well as a trial of an evening door to door service in Gungahlin and Kambah. Flexibus is tailored to where customers want to go. From the bus interchange, the driver plans the best route to get everyone as close to home as possible. Now fewer buses are travelling the streets empty resulting in less traffic and unnecessary vehicle emissions.

Equal Highly Commended in the Sustainable Transport Award was presented to ACT Planning and Land Authority for the Sustainable Transport Plan: The Sustainable Transport Plan released by ACT Planning and Land Authority sets the direction and policy framework to achieve a more sustainable transport system for the ACT over the next 25 years. The Sustainable Transport Plan aims at implementing the following initiatives. Bus ways and bus priority measures, real time passenger information, improved public transport interchanges, improved walking cycling facilities and Travel Demand management.

## **2.5 Ecological Footprint / Keep Australia Beautiful Week 28 Aug – 3 Sept**

In order to assist the committee to promote the concept of ecological footprinting it is important to familiarise the Australian public with this tool and its uses.

Each year Keep Australia Beautiful Week is an opportunity to remind all Australians of the need to achieve environmental improvement through individual actions.

This year Keep Australia Beautiful Week will focus on the use of an online ecological footprint calculator that enables the public to assess their household ecological footprint and is the prompt to encourage them to pledge a specific activity in support of the environment.

Robert, thank you for the chance to remind the committee of the potential role of Keep Australia Beautiful in raising public participation in issues surrounding Sustainable Cities including the Sustainability Charter.

Our National Chairman would welcome an opportunity to address the committee on the details provided above.

I am sure that each of our state and territory offices would be keen to participate in any consultation meetings that may be planned for their state or territory.

Similarly you or your committee may be interested to attend the launch of the Victorian Sustainable Cities Awards on May 26 with Greg Hunt MP attending as guest of honour. Dates of the NSW and ACT events will follow

We look forward to assisting you as the inquiry proceeds.

Yours sincerely



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