



Tuesday, 24 March 2009

Stephanie Mikac,  
Inquiry Secretary,  
Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Stephanie,

Please find attached the written submission of Immigration Bridge Australia to the Inquiry into the Immigration Bridge Australia Proposal. A hard copy will be forwarded to you in the post.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laurie O'Donnell".

Laurie O'Donnell  
Chairman  
Immigration Bridge Australia



JSCNCET Review of Building an Immigration Bridge over Canberra Lake  
Submission by Immigration Bridge Australia

Executive Summary

1. Immigration Bridge Australia (IBA), a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, was incorporated in Canberra, in October 2005. The Objects for which the company was established are to:
  - a. Provide permanent recognition of the contributions made and continuing to be made to Australia by migrants;
  - b. Promote and strengthen the bonds established by seeking information from migrants and their families to provide a record of the migration experience;
  - c. Raise funds to finance the construction of a pedestrian bridge across Lake Burley Griffin in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), from the vicinity of the National Museum of Australia (NMA) to the vicinity of Lennox Gardens, in keeping with the vision of Walter Burley Griffin;
  - d. Facilitate the construction of a monument, 'Immigration Bridge Australia' and make it a 'Gift to the Nation;
  - e. Provide facilities for genealogical research within the bridge and adjacent areas that are compatible with the Company's Objects;
  - f. Undertake other activities, incidental, or conducive to recognizing the contribution of migrants to Australia's culture and commerce; and
  - g. Establish a public fund for the achievement of the above Objects.
2. IBA evolved from a Steering Committee formed in 2001, in the Cooma district of NSW, to create a national monument to recognize the role that migrants played in the development of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme.
3. In June 2002, the proposal was presented to the Australian Parliament by the federal member for Eden Monaro, debated and enthusiastically supported by the major political parties in the House of Representatives. Hansard dated 24 June 2002, pps 3521–3527 records the Private Member's Business: 'National Monument to Immigration Fund'.



4. Also in June 2002, NCA in correspondence to the Steering Committee acknowledged that: ‘A national monument to honour the contributions and to celebrate the diversity of migrants is proposed to be constructed in Canberra, Australia’s National Capital.’ It went on to outline the form of the proposed monument stating that:
  - a. ‘The monument may be constructed as a:
    - Bridge connecting the NMA to the Parliamentary Zone (PZ);
    - An individual sculpture or monument sited within the PZ or King’s Park;
    - A parkland with interpretive material describing the diversity and contribution of Australia’s migrants.
  - b. Alternative sites for the immigration monument included:
    - Lake Burley Griffin from the NMA to Lennox Park;
    - Section 27 Parkes – Adjacent to Peace Park; or
    - King’s Park.’
5. In July 2002, the Steering Committee informed the NCA that their ‘first preference was for the monument to immigration to be a Bridge to Immigration across Lake Burley Griffin between the NMA and Lennox Park.’
6. The IBA Statement of Principles indicates that the bridge will be a significant commemorative work in the National Capital and be a national monument to immigration as well as a major national infrastructure community project with significant benefits to Australian tourism that will contribute to the broad public interest.

In summary the bridge is designed to:

- Recognise the immense contribution made to Australia by migrants from all over the world since 1788;
- Complete a significant element of the recreational plans of the Griffin Legacy identified by the NCA, and significant element of the National Capital Plan;
- Link the major tourist and study attractions of the Parliamentary Triangle with the NMA and the Australian National University (ANU);



- Contribute to the awareness in the Australian community of the need to record their personal and family history and provide them with a unique opportunity to have that shown in perpetuity on a national monument in Australia's capital. It is proposed that the stories of migration will be recorded in a migration book and the names of migrants, their year of arrival and their country of origin will be recorded on the stainless steel History Handrail;
- Showcase leading edge technology in its design; be
- Disabled people and cyclist friendly; and
- Achieve recognition as a national monument commemorating the contributions made by migrants to Australia.
- The completed bridge is planned to coincide with the centenary of Canberra in 2013 and become a 'Gift to the Nation'.

### Review Item One

7. The process adopted by IBA to settle the design for the bridge recognizes that consultation throughout the process is a key imperative. Consequently numerous meetings, discussions and briefings have been held with the Federal and ACT Governments and their opposition counterparts as well as the NCA who: 'supports the principle of a bridge in the proposed location and the commemorative intent of the current proposal.' The NMA, the ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA), ANU, the Lake Users Group, Canberra Yacht Club, ActewAGL, Bendigo Bank and others including architects Bligh Voller Neild, engineers ARUP Australia, Engineers Australia Canberra Division and numerous multicultural, ethnic and genealogical societies have and will continue to be consulted.
8. Following recent discussions with NCA a detailed design brief is in the process of being prepared by IBA in conjunction with NCA, for final approval by NCA. The criteria in the design brief will include, for example, siting and planning, lake and bridge usage requirements, environmental and heritage aspects, visual impact,

functional and iconic nature, emergency access, linkage to landing points and their associated treatment, maintenance requirements and the like.

9. The design process and ultimate submission of a development application to NCA for works approval will be managed by IBA with the appointment of a suitable consultant team which can answer the requirements of the Approved Design Brief. The achievement of a final design solution will require a staged process of preliminary design, consultation with NCA, lake users and the like, settling on a design suitable for public presentation and feedback.
10. Final design and development application documentation will then be prepared as required by NCA. It will include environmental, heritage and visual statements, construction methodology, construction period and continuous lake usage provisions.

#### Review Item Two

11. The process adopted by IBA to raise funds for construction of the bridge involves both 'cash' and 'in kind' fundraising; both are critical for success of the Project. The IBA target is to raise \$30m.
12. Bendigo Bank is the principal sponsor, ActewAGL a capital sponsor, SBS a media sponsor and with migrant families originating from 123 different countries so far represented on the history handrail the Project already has a solid funding commitment. In addition, IBA has been granted tax exemption and is pursuing deductible gift recipient (DGR) status with the Federal Government.
13. A large number of eminent Australians have accepted invitations to become Honorary Ambassadors for the Bridge and the Project has received significant support from Australians in every State and Territory.
14. In August 2006, the ACT Government declared its strong support for the Project and announced its intention to contribute land for the southern footing of the bridge to facilitate its construction and allow for the structure to be managed by one government administration.



15. The IBA website at [www.immigrationbridge.com.au](http://www.immigrationbridge.com.au) inter alia, gives access to the list of Ambassadors, a host of migration stories, the IBA newsletter and some of the many letters of support for the Project.

### Review Item Three

16. IBA assumes that the approval process required under the ACT (Planning and Land Management) Act 1988 would be the concern of NCA regarding any submission made by IBA. However, it should be noted that IBA has had discussions with NCA in reference to the likely approval process when a final application is made and in addition, members of the IBA Board have previous experience in these matters.

March 2009