

To the Secretary,
Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and
External Territories.

Dear Sir,

Before I address the Terms of Reference in a chronological order, I would really like to suggest that the NCA changes its title ~~to~~ "The National Planning & Infrastructure Authority" or (NPIA) and that it be attached to the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development & Local Government for four reasons:

1. To be involved in the planning of the overall national interest and NOT with the 'mickey mouse' local ACT planning functions as well as some tourism and promotion of ACT events.

2. To have a stronger voice with the Commonwealth Grants Commission so that proposed 'national interest' developments of infrastructure, transport, etc. are given due consideration, priority and finance it deserves.

Remember the millions of dollars spend many years ago by the National Capital Development Commission on planning an 'International Airport' for the ACT, the John Dedman drive aka Gungahlin drive, the Queanbeyan city by-pass to join the Kings Hwy (hence the now Defence HQ) and the Malonglo freeway from the Glenloch interchange to TUMUT, hence the Hume Hwy to Ent transport miles from Canberra to Melbourne.

I keep repeating myself but the people who did not want self-government for the ACT are now paying for it.

3. To desist the sparing, red tape and constraints the ACT Planning & Land Authority are subjected to by the now NCA.

4. To free the States and Territories from this dichotomy of duplication in planning, finance, etc.

Remember the various State railway gauges, the various Arditected regulations/ordinances, etc.

In answer to the Terms of reference:

(a) The administration and jurisdiction of ACT planning policies should definitely be with the ACT Planning and Land Authority;

(b) The NPIA to be independent as a national authority, but to consult properly with States and Territories regarding planning and priorities and be totally accountable for its operations;

(c) Once planning decisions have been made, for the NPIA to be responsible for the design and oversight for projects of national significance;

(d) see (b);

(e) Provide an effective demarcation between the NPIA and the ACT Planning & Land Authority and once and for all delineate their individual roles, particularly with emphasis on the development of a distinctive character of the National Capital.

P.S.: Bearing in mind that the latter may already be too late.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Carlos Smitz (Retired)

24 March 2008