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26 August 2002

The Committee Secretary
Federal Government Standing Committee on
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Secretary: *A. Kee*

RECEIVED

30 AUG 2002

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES
AND FORESTRY

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Inquiry into Future Water Supplies for Australia's Rural Industries
and Communities**

The District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula is located at the southern portion of Eyre Peninsula in South Australia. The Council area has a number of water lenses within it under basins which provides a reticulated water supply to many towns on Eyre Peninsula. The reticulated water is sourced from the Tod Reservoir and other ground water basins. The independent water supply for the township of Coffin Bay is sourced from the Coffin Bay lens. Recently the Council was advised that no further water allocation would be provided for future development of the township. This is a disturbing feature because Coffin Bay has been expanding due to its coastal scenery and the growing oyster industry.

The Council has a number of small seaside settlements that do not have a reticulated water supply. The settlements of Tulka, Mount Dutton Bay East and West and Farm Beach rely solely on bore water and rain water. Most dwellings at these seaside settlements have independent septic tank/sub surface soakage systems. This combination is not ideal. The Council also has rural farming settlements that are not serviced by a reticulated water supply service. Again these settlements of Wangary, Coult, Wanilla, Mount Hope, Kapinnie and others all rely on either bore water or rain water. To add to the problems, the inland settlements can and have been affected by the lack of rainfall.

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The Council has on many occasions been requested to provide a water supply or a reticulated water supply to these settlements. However, upon investigation, the Council has unfortunately been unable to provide a suitable solution due to its lack of expertise and costs in providing the necessary infrastructure or due to the lack of the water resource.

United Water Utilities, PPK and SA Water recently prepared the draft Eyre Peninsula Water Supply Master Plan and it should be completed in September 2002. The study has already shown that the many basins/lenses on Eyre Peninsula are or have already been heavily taxed and an alternative solution must be found.

The State Government has a Water Resource Act which has seen the formation of catchment water management boards, the State Water Plan and a Water Allocation Plan prepared for Eyre Peninsula.

The Eyre Peninsula Catchment Water Management Board has been formed and the Water Allocation Plan has been prepared. The Board's key functions are to:

- Prepare and implement a catchment water management plan (this has been started and will take another 18 months);
- Promote public awareness of the importance of proper water management; and
- Provide advice to the Minister and the constituent Councils.

The work being undertaken by the Board is a positive one, but will take time and will need further assistance from both the State and Federal Government.

The Council has passed the resolution that the Development Manager provide a submission to the Inquiry into Future Water Supplies for Australia's Rural Industries and Communities because financial assistance, resources and education must be provided by the Federal Government. While we are a small community, water is a valuable commodity that everybody on Eyre Peninsula relies on.

The bottom line is no water, no development, no growth and no future.

Should you require any further explanation, please contact the undersigned at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully



BOB MILIC
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

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