

31 May 2006

Committee Secretary  
Environment and Heritage Committee  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Committee Secretary

It is with pleasure that I make this submission to the Inquiry into a Sustainability Charter being conducted by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage. The attached paper considers issues from a public policy perspective and is submitted on behalf of the Cooperative Research Centre for *Construction Innovation* (hereafter *Construction Innovation*). This submission has been prepared in conjunction with CSIRO, a research partner of *Construction Innovation*. While the focus of CSIRO's submission is primarily on technical issues, this paper will approach the establishment of a sustainability charter from a public policy perspective.

This paper identifies a number of challenges to the establishment of a national sustainability charter, such as:

- o Achieving policy coordination in a federal system of government
- o Gaining the attention and support of government(s)
- o Establishing national values, objectives and indicators
- o Cost to government and industry
- o The utility of current ratings systems.

Rationales for these hindrances and possible ways a Sustainability Commission might respond to them are articulated.

This paper draws on preliminary findings from *Construction Innovation's* research project: *Construction Industry Business Environment*, which is exploring ways of enhancing coordination of construction related policy and regulations across Australian jurisdictions. One of the public policy areas this project is examining relates to sustainability and the built environment.

I would value the opportunity of discussing our research further with the Committee, particularly as it seeks to develop and implement a Sustainability Charter in Australia.

Yours faithfully



Dr Keith Hampson  
**Chief Executive Officer**