

To Whom It May Concern  
Inquiry into Microeconomic Reform in Western Australia  
Economic Regulation Authority  
PO Box 8469  
Perth Business Centre  
PERTH WA 6849

Thank you for the Issues Paper and associated invitation to make a submission to the above inquiry, which was conveyed to the Director General of the Department of Lands (DoL) via letter dated 14 August 2013 from the Chair of the ERA, Mr Lyndon Rowe.

DoL notes that the Treasurer has asked the ERA to inquire (on a 4 yearly repeating cycle) into possible microeconomic reform measures that the State Govt could implement to improve the efficiency and performance of the WA economy. Your invitation in response seeks suggestions from agencies as to areas of reform that the ERA might consider for the first of these inquiries. DoL further notes ERA's first preference for suggested reforms that would be easy to implement whilst returning a large potential benefit, with a secondary preference for those offering large potential benefit but which might be more difficult to implement.

DoL has identified several potential areas of microeconomic reform that would be within the State's powers to examine ie.

1. Processes for the identification and selling/leasing of surplus government land/building assets (currently handled via DoL's Property Assets Clearing House unit, but believed to be a candidate for review/improvement, and likely to be the subject of future internal review by DoL itself)
2. Processes for the assembly of Crown land (some review work already underway within DoL, to improve efficiency and effectiveness and reduce overall turn-around)
3. State-level Native Title policy to provide greater procedural and timeline certainty for land developers and Native Title parties alike (likely to be the subject of future internal attention within DoL, subject to the recruitment of additional policy capability).

In addition, although not directly within the State's powers to address, DoL believes there are some land tenure matters within the Commonwealth *Native Title Act 1993* that would be relatively straightforward to amend, and which would improve business outcomes in much greater proportion. Whilst in practice these reforms would have to be undertaken by the Commonwealth, identification of them within the ERA's State-based inquiry might assist the State to gain momentum for such changes, adding to the earlier submission made to North Australia Taskforce Review chaired by Professor Allan Dale.

If you would like further information on any of these matters, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

DoL looks forward to a further opportunity to review the more detailed Discussion Paper which ERA proposes as a next step.

Yours sincerely

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