

2 March 2006

Mark Dominkovich
Draft Consultation Guidelines
Economic Regulation Authority
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Perth Business Centre
PERTH WA 6849

Dear Mr Dominkovich

Economic Regulation Authority	
FILE NO:	ERA - WD/A/123/05
✓ MANAGER	✓ ACTION
✓	✓
DATE:	27 MAR 2006
BY:	Mark Dominkovich
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Draft Consultation Guidelines (March 2006)

In response to the invitation for public submissions on Draft Consultation Guidelines, United Utilities Australia (UUA) welcomes the opportunity to comment.

We would like the Authority to consider the following in drafting its guidelines.

Under the Authority's charter, it has a role in seeking out stakeholders to obtain a broad spectrum of community and industry views.

To effectively obtain a broad input into its decisions, the Authority would benefit from providing interested parties with sufficient and relevant information to allow them to make a fully informed contribution to the Authority's decision-making.

When assessing the results of its public consultation for licenses, standard form contracts and customer service charters, the Authority should take a holistic view of the benefits of a proposal.

There are a number of principles which UUA considers to be fundamental to effective public consultation:

- Identification and subsequent engagement of stakeholders and relevant parties;
- Effective communication;
- Provision of all relevant information and facts;
- Transparency;
- Clarity of requirements and objectives; and
- Reasonable process timescales, taking account of proponent and customer needs.

The Authority should assist all applicants making submissions to the consultation process. This can best be achieved by adhering to the principles of successful consultation outlined above.

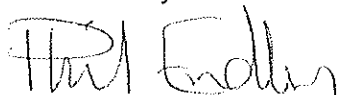
We would recommend an on-going dialogue through the process between the proponent, the Authority, and other stakeholders involved in the consultation. This would allow parties to be informed of the issues being considered during the consultation and answer issues as they arose, making the review process dynamic and efficient.

This would foster a collaborative rather than adversarial approach to consultation and allow for quicker and more inclusive decisions by the Authority.

UUA would urge the Authority to consider in its consultation processes factors such as economic development, sustainability, meeting or improving existing services, and promotion of competition.

The Authority's consultation processes should be available in an even manner to all organisations and individuals to promote the exchange of views between proponents and the community with a view to resolving misunderstandings and promoting the best outcome for the State.

Yours faithfully



Phil Endley
Project Manager Goldfields Water Supply Project