



Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency

Mr Geoff Lake
President
Australian Local Government Association
8 Geils Court
DEAKIN ACT 2600

ALGA MAIL	
ITEM No:	768
DATE RECEIVED:	24 NOV 10
FILE No:	

Dear Mr Lake 

Thank you for your letter of 1 October 2010 concerning resolutions passed at the 2010 Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly. I welcome your interest and the interest of local government generally in the challenges of climate mitigation and adaptation.

With regard to motion 31 seeking support from the Council of Australian Governments to a nationally consistent approach to predicting sea level rises, the Australian Government recognises the need for national leadership and cooperation between all levels of government to develop an integrated, cohesive and effective national approach for the management of Australia's coastal zone. There are significant benefits for governments, businesses and communities in considering the adoption of a nationally consistent sea-level rise planning benchmark.

There are a number of options for achieving a common standard, including agreement across jurisdictions of a common methodology for developing a sea-level rise planning benchmark. This issue was discussed at the National Coastal Climate Change Forum, held in Adelaide in February 2010, and is the subject of on-going discussions between the Australian Government and state/territory jurisdictions as part of the development of a national coastal adaptation strategy.

This consultation strategy will enable councils across the country to have input into the determination of a national approach which will facilitate the development of local and regional strategies for management of coastal communities and coastal development.

With regard to motion 32.1 seeking financial assistance for the roll out of energy efficient street lighting, although the Australian Government is not directly involved in the provision of street lighting, the Government is involved in national policy setting on lighting efficiency in consultation with stakeholders. In taking action the Government has developed a suite of strategies and initiatives to improve the efficiency of lighting in Australia.

The National Strategy on Energy Efficiency (NSEE) recognises that street lighting is of variable efficiency across the country and presents opportunities for improved efficiency. The NSEE includes a measure to identify barriers to the uptake of more efficient street lighting and develop strategies to address any identified problems. Responsibility for the implementation of this measure rests with the Equipment Energy Efficiency Committee under the National Framework on Energy Efficiency, with leadership by South Australia.

The objectives under NSEE are to implement actions to accelerate improvements in the energy efficiency of street lighting in Australia.

Key elements of the measure include:

- Identify barriers to the uptake of more efficient street lighting and develop strategies to address any identified problems, including considering introduction of mandatory standards for lighting energy efficiency while considering related cost implications for local government;
- Collect and make available to street lighting service providers and local governments nation-wide information on energy efficient street lighting technologies and operational practices; and
- Consider whether an incentive mechanism for distributors to install efficient equipment is needed to give effect to this measure.

As a first step in progressing these measures, a consultation forum for key stakeholders was held on 16 March 2010 in Canberra. Stakeholders who took part in the forum provided feedback on numerous issues including barriers to the uptake of energy efficient street lighting, current activities to improve energy efficiency and proposed pathways to implement these measures. Further consultations are ongoing. For more information concerning the consultation forum, please visit: www.energyrating.gov.au/2010-03streetlightmeeting.html

Street lighting energy efficiency measures will also be taken into consideration in the revised Greenlight Strategy 2005-2015 for improving efficiency of lighting in Australia.

Through these measures, the Australian Government is assisting stakeholders to identify the barriers to the uptake of more efficient street lighting and facilitating the development of strategies to address those barriers. This process is ongoing and will feed into the government's broader energy efficiency policy as a key component of climate mitigation policy and preparing business and the community for the introduction of a carbon price.

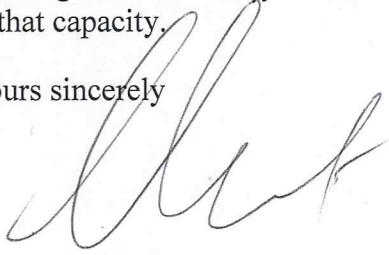
In addition to the NSEE, the Government has announced the Low Carbon Communities initiative to leverage investment in community level energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

The Low Carbon Communities initiative will provide \$80 million over four years to help local councils and communities cut pollution and reduce their energy costs through energy efficient upgrades to street lighting, community facilities and council buildings. My department is currently developing guidelines for the program, and will provide a copy to your office once they are finalised.

Unfortunately matters relating to water supply and water security are outside my portfolio responsibilities. Motions 33 and 33.2 are better directed to the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, the Hon Tony Burke MP.

Thank you for bringing the motions from ALGA's General Assembly to my attention and for the continuing interest of local government in climate mitigation and adaptation policy. I note that you have agreed to participate in the Non-Government Organisation Roundtable advising the Multi-Party Climate Change Committee. I look forward to working with you in that capacity.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Combet', written over the 'Yours sincerely' text.

GREG COMBET

22 NOV 2010