Re: Opening SA Water Land and Reservoirs for Leisure and Recreation

Dear Minister

On behalf of Parks and Leisure Australia (PLA), we write to congratulate you and your Government on your recent election win and you personally on following through with your pre-election promise to open some of our States reservoirs for leisure and recreation.

As the peak national body for ‘the people behind the places’ that plan, design and manage parks and leisure assets across Australia, PLA comprises five regions including QLD, NSW/ACT, VIC/TAS, WA and SA/NT. Coincidentally, the national office, organisation and myself as the CEO is based in South Australia and support the five regions.

Parks and Leisure Australia has been following the recent movements regarding opening of the States reservoirs with interest and support this in a sustainable and managed manner. Some of our members have worked with and advised agencies such as SA Water and local authorities on the sustainable management for recreational access to our water sources including the Tod Reservoir on the Eyre Peninsula, the Warren Reservoir for Recreational fishing and a draft policy framework for SA Water themselves regarding the subject matter.

Our members have also had considerable experience in master planning and developing policies for many other water bodies across Australia and in some instances the world, and therefore as the Peak Industry body for parks and leisure we are keen to be involved in the planning and directions relating to our States reservoirs for leisure and recreation.

We understand that ‘a cross government working group’ with government departments has been established and we are keen for Parks and Leisure Australia to also be involved or at least consulted by the Working Group. PLA would like to offer the professional support of our regional council and national board members that have considerable experience in open space planning and the subject matter locally and globally.

Our regional President for South Australia, Suzanne Suter, will make contact with your office to seek involvement in this important project and also request a meeting with yourself so that we can explain the focus and potential role of Parks and Leisure Australia. As the National PLA CEO and given I am located in Adelaide, I would also attend this meeting.

Also, for your information, PLA runs an annual national conference which this year is partnered with the World Urban Parks (WUP). PLA was successful in its bid to host the World Congress in Australia (Please refer to the attached media release for further information or visit our congress website www.ipic2018.com or click here.)
The theme for the world congress is the Future of Spaces and Places in our Cities and has a focus on urban growth and development. This is particularly relevant for access to water bodies as Australia’s population and density increases which will provide even greater pressure on land managers to ensure optimal access and sustainable management of public land and waterways.

As the National CEO, I invite you as a guest of myself to the world congress to be held in Melbourne from the 14th – 17th October 2018. In the meantime, both myself and our PLA SA/NT President would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how PLA can contribute to and support initiatives such as recreation access to the States valuable water assets.

We thank you for your time and look forward to your response.

Kind Regards

Mark Band
National CEO
Parks and Leisure Australia