



Department of
Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources



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Mr M Gentleman
Chair
Standing Committee on Planning and Environment
Legislative Assembly for the ACT
GPO Box 1020
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Our ref: D05/3169

	A.C.T. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE OFFICE
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Dear Mr Gentleman

Urban vegetation and wildlife Corridors and the integration of biodiversity conservation in land use planning.

I refer to your letter to the Hon Craig Knowles MP, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning and Minister for Natural Resources, concerning your Committee's inquiry into urban vegetation and wildlife corridors, and the integration of biodiversity conservation in land use planning in the ACT and sub-regions. The Minister has asked me to reply on his behalf.

The NSW Government is implementing major reforms to the planning system centred on legislative changes to how planning works. One of the major initiatives is for State natural resources agencies to have their input at the strategic planning level. As part of this reform, threatened species matters will be increasingly implemented at the planning stage, where the Minister for the environment will certify local environmental plans as adequately protecting threatened species through protection zones or specific provisions.

Specifically relevant to the ACT sub-region is the development of the Sydney-Canberra Corridor Regional Strategy which covers the local government areas of Queanbeyan City, Yass Valley and Palerang. The Department has been working with the ACT Planning and Land Authority in the development of this Regional Strategy, particularly in regards to future settlement. This cooperative approach is a result of a meeting between the NSW Premier, Mr Bob Carr and the ACT Chief Minister, Mr Jon Stanhope on 30 January 2004, at which it was agreed that NSW and the ACT would develop a Regional Management Framework (RMF) within 12 months.

The agreed Terms of Reference for the RMF are:

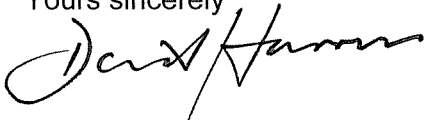
"The Management Framework has been established following an agreement by the NSW Premier and ACT Chief Minister. The Framework will provide a basis for collaborative policy development and service delivery between the two jurisdictions.

The aims of the Framework are:

- to advance cross border issues and improve policy development and service delivery in both jurisdictions;*
- develop and evolve a methodology for a new, long term model for strategic regional management and cooperation;*
- establish the policy, legislative, administrative and cost basis for cross border service delivery;*
- establish, where appropriate, financial arrangement to enhance efficient and effective resource allocations; and*
- ensure the long term viability of the region's natural resources and environmental quality while supporting community and economic development".*

Prior to the introduction of this RMF, NSW National Park and Wildlife Service, Environment ACT, the Housing Industry Association and this Department jointly commissioned *The Planning Framework for Natural Ecosystems of the ACT and NSW Southern Tablelands Planning, 2002*. This document provides a regional planning framework for effective planning for biodiversity conservation. It is a valuable resource for the ACT and the 7 surrounding local government areas for strategic planning and development assessment. This Department would suggest that this document would be a valuable resource for your current inquiry.

Yours sincerely

 21.7.05

DAVID HARRISS

Regional Director

Murray/Murrumbidgee Region