

6 March 2017

Mr Hugo Harmstorf
Chief Executive Officer
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
P O Box K35
HAYMARKET POST SHOP NSW 2000

Dear Mr Harmstorf

HUNTER WATER CORPORATION'S DRAFT OPERATING LICENCE 2017 - 2022

NSW Health is satisfied that the draft Operating Licence provides for adequate protection of public health.

NSW Health supports the retention of obligations relating to water quality, and the Memorandum of Understanding in the Operating Licence. NSW Health considers the Licence to be the most appropriate mechanism to set out key Government requirements of public interest in a succinct and accessible form. The Draft Reporting Manual has been reviewed and is considered to meet requirements.

IPART's Draft Report notes that current water quality arrangements work well for NSW Health and also for Hunter Water Corporation. The organisations maintain a Memorandum of Understanding that provides the basis for communication and cooperation, with a focus on protecting public health. NSW Health does not object to the removal of the requirement for Hunter Water Corporation to seek NSW Health approval for significant changes to the drinking water or recycled water management systems. The consideration of any significant changes should form part of the implementation of the respective management systems, which must be to the satisfaction of NSW Health.

NSW Health considers that risks associated with non-potable water are best managed through clear and concise information and agreement with customers, consistent with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines Framework.

For many years, the Operating Licence has required risk-based drinking water management. IPART's process to audit this requirement is well established and well regarded. NSW Health recommends that the drinking water management obligation be retained.

To address duplication between the Operating Licence and the *Public Health Act 2010*, the Chief Health Officer has exempted Hunter Water Corporation from the requirement for

a Quality Assurance Program for the duration of the current Operating Licence. I am advised that NSW Health intends to grant a similar exemption for the duration of the new licence.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission. Should officers of IPART require further information, please contact Mr Philippe Porigneaux, Environmental Health Manager on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



~~Professor David Durrheim~~
Service Director - Health Protection
Hunter New England Population Health