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Mr Rob O'Neill
General Manager
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
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HAYMARKET POST SHOP NSW 1240
Email: compliance@ipart.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr O'Neill

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal's review of the Hunter Water Corporation (Hunter Water) operating licence.

As you will be aware the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has the lead role in determining and regulating the environmental performance of Hunter Water's sewage reticulation systems and treatment processes. The EPA has issued Environment Protection Licences to Hunter Water for each of its sewerage treatment systems. Conditions of these licences set site-specific limits on the quality and quantity of wastewater that can be discharged to the environment.

I note that the current operating licence issued by IPART to Hunter Water requires it to develop and implement an environmental management system to manage risks to the environment from its operations. While the EPA does not review or approve such systems, it encourages their use to help licensees achieve the objectives set out in their Environment Protection Licences.

The EPA has also negotiated a large number of Pollution Reduction Programs with Hunter Water that aim to enhance the level of environmental protection, through upgraded treatment processes and infrastructure improvements to reduce sewage surcharges. These licences and the associated Pollution Reduction Programs are available on the EPA's public register at <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/prpoeoapp/>.

The EPA encourages IPART to review these licences as part of the review of the IPART operating licence to ensure that both licences operate in a consistent and streamlined manner.

If you have any further questions about this issue, please contact Mr Mitchell Bennett, Head, Regional Operations Unit – Hunter Region, on [REDACTED] or at mitchell.bennett@epa.nsw.gov.au .

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

BARRY BUFFIER AM
Chair and CEO
Environment Protection Authority