



8 March 2011

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The Honourable Patrick Conlon MP  
Minister for Infrastructure  
DX 154  
ADELAIDE SA

Dear Minister

**Strategic Infrastructure Plan for South Australia 2005/2006-2014/2015**

I refer to your letter of 29 October 2011 in which you kindly invited the Society to consider the Strategic Infrastructure Plan for South Australia.

Thank you for providing the Society with the opportunity to consider this matter. We will only comment on that part of the Plan that refers to "Justice and Emergency Services". We make the following comments

- out of a 177 page document, only 3 pages are devoted to this topic and only 1½ pages to future initiatives
- on the topic of "courts" which have been the subject of numerous submissions by interested parties there is one paragraph on page 80 without any detail or commitment
- this is again replicated under the topic of "Strategic Priorities" on page 81.
- the bald statement "• *Ensure an appropriate level of fit-for-service court facilities and associated technology to support a democratic and fair justice system*" is merely a platitude without substance.

Our overall impression of the Plan on this topic is that it is extremely deficient in any commitment in an area which has been recognised as needing attention. The delays in our courts are unacceptable and in an era of electronic delivery the inability of the Supreme and District Courts to be able to even provide an "e-filing" system is in excusable.

On an allied topic, the lack of any commitment to the provision of any adequate mental health facilities in our prisons shows a lack of understanding of the real issues that need addressing with the only commitment on this topic to be found in the section entitled "Health" with a reference to some redevelopment of James Nash House. There is a general commitment to "upgrade and expand prison

*accommodation and infrastructure at Northfield.....*" without any substantive explanation as to what is intended and no commitment to juvenile detention facilities.

The Plan fails to adopt or even address any of the issues raised by Judge Hora in her report entitled "Smart Justice: Building Safer Communities, Increasing Access to the Courts, and Elevating Trust and Confidence in the Justice System", which the Government had available it well before the publication of the Plan.

Given that in that part of the Plan entitled "Introduction" it is recognised that *"Early and effective planning, prioritisation and coordination of initiatives, based on clear, shared long term strategic directions is essential to ensure critical infrastructure is delivered where it is needed, when it is needed"*, on the topic of "justice" the Plan is deficient in not only addressing already recognised needs but also future needs.

The Society invites the Government to reconsider its priorities in these areas without appropriate planning nothing will happen.

Yours sincerely



Ralph Bönig  
**PRESIDENT**