



ACS

Australian Coastal Society Ltd

PO Box 65, Flinders University, Bedford Park SA 5041

21 August 2014

The Hon Ian Hunter, MLC
Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Government of South Australia
GPO Box 1047

Dear Minister Hunter

Re: Potential abolition of the Coast Protection Board, South Australia

The South Australian Chapter of the Australian Coastal Society Ltd (ACS) is concerned about the South Australian Premier's recent announcement at a CEDA lunch on 8 July that *every State Government board and committee would be abolished unless they could demonstrate that they have an essential purpose that cannot be fulfilled in an alternative way*. The ACS is specifically concerned about the potential abolition of the Coast Protection Board.

In 2007 the State government's own ERD Committee produced a report on 'Coastal Development', noting that; *problems in Queensland and NSW after the removal of the Queensland Beach Protection Authority and the NSW Coastal Council respectively, ... left a significant void in coastal management in both states. There is no longer an agency that sees one of its specific roles being to provide advice to local governments. In the absence of any direct involvement from the state government local councils have joined together to discuss common coastal issues but lack the critical mass or dedicated resources to fully address them* (ERD Committee 2007, p 16).

Recommendation 8 of the ERD Committee report was that;

the Government ensures that a suitably empowered state authority whose primary focus is the coast is retained in any review of the Coast Protection Act.

Although this ERD report is seven years old and the fact that the *Coast Protection Act* is the oldest piece of coastal legislation (42 years) in Australia does not change the issues. While a review of the *Coast Protection Act* no longer appears to be a government priority, there is still a need to keep the Coast Protection Board as an independent statutory authority, which can provide expert advice on coastal matters to the Environment Minister. Given the need for integrated coastal management expressed in the report of the recent bi-partisan federal parliamentary inquiry (2009) in the context of climate change and coastal population pressure, the ACS believes it is critical that South Australia maintains the independent Coast Protection Board.

Yours sincerely

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