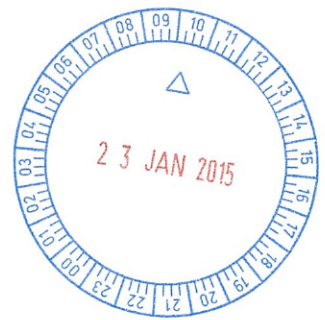




**E-MAILED**  
23/01/15



## **SUBMISSION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON UNIFORM LEGISLATION AND STATUTES REVIEW**

### **INQUIRY INTO PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT (DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT PANELS) REGULATIONS 2011.**

#### **Introduction**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Standing Committee's review. This submission will draw on the considerable research undertaken by the Association and WALGA since the introduction of Development Assessment Panels (DAPs) in July 2011. It is the Association's view that DAPs were introduced without proper research and justification and have not only failed to achieve their original objectives but are increasingly proving to be a liability to the State Government. This submission firstly draws broad conclusions concerning DAPs and then comments on the Regulations.

#### **Background to the establishment of DAPs**

The first mention of Development Assessment Panels (DAPs) in a publication in Western Australia was in the document *Building a Better Planning System*, Consultation Paper, March 2009, Department of Planning and Infrastructure. On page 15 it was stated:

*In cases of major projects that are likely to face significant approval delays and may be highly contentious, and in cases where major projects are proposed but there is limited local government technical capacity to undertake an appropriate level of assessment, Development Assessment Panels are being considered.*

This description of DAPs would not and did not attract criticism or concern, but it turned out to be totally misleading as the model adopted bore little relationship to the March 2009 model (resulting in universal mandatory DAPs irrespective of local government capacity or any assessment of contentiousness or likely delays).

The subsequent report (*Planning Makes it Happen, a blueprint for planning reform*, September 2009, WAPC/Department of Planning (DoP)) indicated that a strategic priority was DAPs which were proposed to "expedite the approval of significant developments across the State" (page 3). Again, this did not reflect the model that was implemented which resulted in the taking away of decision-making from competent local governments.

The specific September 2009 DoP Discussion Paper titled *Implementing Development Assessment Panels in Western Australia*, placed emphasis on the timeliness of decision making, (page 1). The purpose was to establish DAPs for "applications for significant land and housing projects" (page 1). In

