



22 Parkland Road
Herdsman Business Park
Osborne Park WA 6017
PO Box 1494
Osborne Park DC
Osborne Park WA 6916
t (08) 9492 9200
f (08) 9443 3424
hia.com.au

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Samantha Parsons
Committee Clerk
Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review
Legislative Council
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000
unileg@parliament.wa.gov.au

Inquiry into Planning and Development (Development Assessment Panels) Regulation 2011

On behalf of the Housing Industry Association (HIA) I would like to provide the Committee with the following comments in relation to the operation of *Planning and Development (Development Assessment Panels) Regulation 2011*.

It is understood that the review is being undertaken as required two years after the commencement of the Regulation. Whilst no specific terms of reference have been established, for the purposes of this submission it is presumed that the Committee is seeking to determine whether the Regulation has delivered an improved outcome in the decision making processes under the Planning and Development Act 2005 for relevant development applications.

HIA believes that the planning system should deliver three key outcomes:

- Predictability
- Affordability, and
- Flexibility

The use of planning professionals to give advice and make determinations on development applications is an important method of ensuring predictability in the planning system and the assessment process. Effectively removing the 'politics' from the decision making process where appropriate.

This approach is supported by Development Assessment Forum, a national forum for planning, which in 2005 published the *Leading Practice Model for Development Assessment*. The Model includes the use of expert panels as one of the mechanisms to include in an effective planning assessment process.

HIA has supported the introduction of Development Assessment Panels (DAPs) into the West Australian planning system as a potential way to increase consistency and transparency in decision making, to improve confidence in the planning process and most importantly, to remove the political conflict and inconsistency that at times affect planning decisions.

