

## IA Review

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**From:** Col Murray <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 10 August 2022 1:22 PM  
**To:** IA Review  
**Subject:** Response from Col Murray re questions

Wednesday, 10 August 2022  
11:36 AM

Response from Col Murray.

Question one.

-I consider IA best placed to provide advice to Government on nationally significant projects.

-NA.

-NA.

- I believe simply that appropriate Statements of Expectation from the Government of the day describing clearly what advice they expect from IA will suffice. It is my view that the senior staff from the Ministers office need a much closer relationship with IA management team to articulate more clearly what the Government priorities actually are.

A national investment plan could be beneficial in guiding proponents' of nationally significant projects, keeping in mind that currently it is not IA that normally puts forward infrastructure projects.

No.

2

I believe that generally the products generated by IA are beneficial but are very resource heavy and a more nimble process led by Government in consultation with IA management team could drive reform in a much more dynamic way that more closely aligns with current demands.

It is pointless IA and its partners attempting to play an innovative and productive role in Dynamic investment advice if the support and input from the Ministers office is not available.

The separation of independent advice needs to be only with respect to project assessment and not as currently assumed to be overall.

It is counter productive and divisive if the strategic advice and direction from IA doesn't align with the strategic direction of the Government.

3

Generally I believe the assessment process is very sound and has bi-partisan support. The application of independence is appropriate.

The threshold for Regional projects should be revised down to say \$150m,, maybe also Northern Australian projects.

There will need to be a climate change overlay introduced to the assessment process.

A much closer and more collaborative approach to planning and strategic direction with senior departmental staff and advisers will significantly improve the relevance and quality of output.

4

There is a very simple fix to the independence role of IA. The independence needs only to apply to the assessment role, not the strategic advice role, this is currently hugely destabilising to staff of IA, and must

be changed. I believe this situation has compromised the smooth and efficient function of IA, and caused significant turnover of valuable staff attempting to remain independent of Government.

6

I believe the need for and the current relationship with state I bodies is productive and necessary, the dominant change required is the clarification of independence. A more appropriate change will see IA working much more closely with departmental advisers almost on a day to day basis whilst maintaining separation and independence with the assessment role.

7

With regard to the structure of the board, I strongly believe that each state and territory should have one representative (approved by the Minister of the day) and a chair appointed by the Minister.

There will always be a need for a board to enhance Governance and critical and experienced oversight.

8

This is a matter for Government.

I believe there becomes an impossible conflict of skills and experience to integrate social consideration to the role of IA. I believe there should be another body set up to deliver this important role.

10

I believe the makeup of IA in close consultation with departmental staff has the potential to deliver a valuable role in providing strategic recommendation to Government on innovative and strategic direction with regard to future infrastructure direction and international trend.

11

I see a real opportunity for IA to assist Government in the future challenges of climate change consideration, but it can only deliver optimum outcomes walking hand in hand into the future.

The natural collective skills and knowledge and experience of IA staff and Board should provide valuable input into future decisions of Government with regard to the changes in priority and direction that will be necessary to achieve the Governments vision.

The most effective way to achieve optimum output is through collaboration with Government. The status quo of clouded independence will derail any attempt.

Yours,

Col Murray

Chair (retiring) Infrastructure Australia.