

26 August 2022

Ms Nicole Lockwood and Mr Mike Mrdak AO
Co-Chairs
Independent Review of Infrastructure Australia

Dear Ms Lockwood and Mr Mrdak

Re: Independent Review of Infrastructure Australia

Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the independent review to rejuvenate Infrastructure Australia (IA).

GBCA's purpose is to lead the sustainable transformation of the built environment. We do this primarily through our core functions:

- We rate the sustainability of buildings, fitouts and communities through Australia's largest national, voluntary, holistic rating system – Green Star.
- We educate industry, government practitioners and decision-makers, and promote green building programs, technologies, design practices and operations.
- We advocate policies and programs that support our vision and purpose.
- We collaborate with our members and other stakeholders to achieve our mission and strategic objectives.

Green Star is Australia's most widely used sustainability rating system for the design, construction and performance of buildings – including social infrastructure – fitouts and communities. Green Star aims to transform the built environment by:

- reducing the impact of climate change
- enhancing our health and quality of life
- restoring and protecting our planet's biodiversity and ecosystems
- driving resilient outcomes for buildings, fitouts, and communities
- contributing to market transformation and a sustainable economy.

With the scale of the challenge ahead of us in meeting Australia's climate change targets for 2030, 2050 and beyond, as well as improving the resilience of the nation's infrastructure assets and networks, it is critical that IA is empowered to provide independent advice on the pipeline of projects that will deliver the best possible outcomes for the Australian community and economy.

These challenges impact every community in Australia and cannot be tackled by any jurisdiction in isolation. Harmonisation of targets and goals, and how they will be achieved, is essential if we are to meet our national climate change commitments and productivity goals.

GBCA notes that IA was created to provide expert advice to government regarding Australia's infrastructure priorities. It is appropriate that an independent review examines whether IA is able to fully deliver on its responsibilities including those relating to its core functions, governance and administration, as well as any legislative changes that may be required.

GBCA believes IA is best-placed to lead the alignment of state infrastructure bodies and other key stakeholders in progressing a net zero carbon agenda with the appropriate scope and governance structures in place. This is already recognised in some state infrastructure strategies. For example, the Queensland State Infrastructure Strategy, released earlier this year, recognises the priorities within IA's 2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan (AIP), while WA's State Infrastructure Strategy highlights Infrastructure Western Australia's close and collaborative working relationship to IA and alignment with IA's Assessment Framework.

GBCA was privileged to provide input to the 2021 AIP as well as IA's Sustainability Principles. These are just two examples of resources developed by IA in thorough consultation with leading experts and stakeholders. Both government and private sector stakeholders should be encouraged to take advantage of the guidance that the 2021 AIP, its future iterations, and other IA-developed resources have to offer.

To further highlight the critical role that IA can play as primary leader, stakeholders from the industry sector have come together to collaborate on actions that accelerate the decarbonisation of Australia's infrastructure, with the ultimate aim to meet or exceed the net-zero emissions targets set for 2030 and 2050.

The Infrastructure Net Zero Alliance recognises that climate action is valued by investors, is being prioritised by customers and changing buying decisions, and it is informing career and employment choices by many in the workforce.

With 70% of Australia's emissions enabled by infrastructure, a nationally coordinated approach across the sector is vital in order to advance this shared responsibility. This is particularly important given the current fragmented and disparate approach and complex interdependencies of infrastructure. GBCA believes IA is best-placed to take the lead in harmonising these approaches and harnessing the strengths of the stakeholders in this sector.

GBCA would welcome the opportunity to attend a meeting or workshop to provide more detailed feedback on the Terms of Reference of the Review. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact Katy Dean, Policy Adviser, via email at [REDACTED], if you require any clarifications or further information.

Yours sincerely



Davina Rooney
Chief Executive
Green Building Council of Australia