

D00378PML1/9

Director General
NSW Department of Planning
GPO 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attention: Dinuka McKenzie

Dear Madam

Hunter Expressway – Proposed modification to Condition 60 of the project approval

As you may be aware, the RTA is currently constructing the Hunter Expressway following the announcement of \$1.7 billion in funding by the Australian Government. The project is due for completion in 2013.

As per discussions with DoP representatives on the 24th and 25th of February 2011, the RTA proposes an administrative modification to Condition 60 of the project approval. By way of background, Condition 60 places a numerical limit on native vegetation clearing. This numerical limit was based on ground-truthed Lower Hunter Central Coast Regional Environmental Management Strategy vegetation mapping. Although the construction footprint of the project remains generally consistent with the project approval documentation, the extent of regrowth vegetation within the road corridor since 2007 makes the numerical limit prescribed in this condition practically difficult to comply with.

Accordingly, the RTA proposes to modify this condition to incorporate the following elements:

- i. Clearing of native vegetation must be generally consistent with the documents referred to in Condition 1iii of the project approval (ie the 2007 concept design),
- ii. A native vegetation condition survey must be completed prior to clearing to determine the quantity and condition of native vegetation that remains to be cleared,
- iii. Where the total amount of native vegetation to be cleared exceeds the amount identified in the documents referred to in Condition 1iii, additional mitigation and/or offsets must be provided and take into account the quantity and condition of that native vegetation,
- iv. Additional mitigation and/or offsets required by Condition 60(iii) must be approved in writing by the Director-General and the DECCW before opening the Hunter Expressway.

The specifics of the modification are outlined in the attachments to this letter. This includes a completed *Request to modify a major project form* and the *Hunter Expressway Proposed Modification to Condition 60 of the Project Approval Report* which provides background information in relation to the proposed modification.

Please do not hesitate to call Mr David Ledlin (0411 126 989) should you have any questions or queries in relation to this matter. The RTA would be pleased to make available any information to assist in the consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mr Tony Gant
A/Implementation Manager – Hunter Expressway

Roads and Traffic Authority of New South Wales

