



Mr Mal Wauchope
Director General
Department of the Premier and Cabinet
18th Floor
Governor Stirling Tower
197 St George's Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Mr Wauchope

CONSULTATION PAPER - STATE SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

The Premier is seeking public comment on *Focus on the Future: Opportunities for Sustainability in Western Australia*, a consultation paper on the proposed State Sustainability Strategy for Western Australia.

As you are aware the Physical Activity Taskforce has a long term vision to develop and sustain an increase in physical activity levels among the Western Australian community.

Whilst the consultation paper refers to a Physical Activity Taskforce recommended Action Plan (page 6) it does not illustrate the social, environmental and economic benefits that can be achieved by increasing the levels of physical activity of our community.

To respond to this shortcoming, enclosed is a suggested response to Professor Peter Newman, Director of the Sustainability Policy Unit. A summary is attached to the response that provides some information for inclusion in appropriate sections of the consultation paper.

Yours sincerely

Ron Alexander
Director General

16 April 2002
(jsherrard0484)

(Encl)

Physical Activity Taskforce

A whole of community, whole of life approach to increasing physical activity levels

Professor Peter Newman
Director, Sustainability Policy Unit
Policy Office
Department of the Premier and Cabinet
15th Floor
197 St George's Terrace
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Professor Newman

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the consultation paper entitled *Focus on the Future: Opportunities for Sustainability in Western Australia*.

As you are aware, the Premier recently launched the Physical Activity Taskforce's *Strategic Direction Report*, a copy of which is attached for your information.

The Report outlines the Government's long-term plan to increase physical activity levels among the Western Australian community and identifies the social, health, environmental, economic and transport benefits of creating and sustaining a more physically active population. The principles and outcomes areas in the report strongly support and complement those of the proposed sustainability strategy.

As a general comment it would be good to see more discussion of social policy issues related to sustainability along with the environmental factors discussed in *Focus on the Future*. As a contribution to this, please find attached a summary of key points relating to the Taskforce and its Report which you may wish to consider for incorporation into relevant sections of the State Sustainability Strategy.

The Taskforce would be pleased to provide further comment on how a whole-of-community physical activity strategy will contribute to the pursuit of sustainability in Western Australia. If required, please contact Ms 'Tricia Summerfield, A/Project Manager of the Physical Activity Taskforce on 9387 9750, to obtain further information.

Yours sincerely

M C Wauchope
CHAIRPERSON

(Encl.)

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIA

- Key reasons for increasing levels of physical activity:
 - ✓ More than one half of Australians are overweight or obese, with the prevalence of overweight or obesity steadily increasing over the past few decades. Physical activity is a principal strategy for altering this problem.
 - ✓ Physical inactivity is the second leading contributor to the overall burden of disease in Australia (behind tobacco) and the leading contributor in women.
 - ✓ Four out of 10 Western Australians are insufficiently active for good health.
 - ✓ The costs attributable to the six major diseases (heart disease, stroke, non-insulin diabetes, colon cancer, breast cancer and depression disorders) due to physical inactivity have been estimated at \$36 million in Western Australia per year.
 - ✓ There is overwhelming evidence of the physical, social, mental, environmental and economic benefits that can be achieved by increasing the levels of moderate physical activity of our community.
 - ✓ Increasing car dependency impacts on business efficiency, environmental quality, community and personal quality of life. Car use in Perth is high by world standards. Western Australians make 63% of all personal trips by car as the driver.
 - ✓ If an extra 10% of the population became physically active, potential national productivity gains of \$590 million have been estimated. Based on these figures, potential productivity gains in WA are estimated at approx. \$60 million.
- To combat the low and declining levels of physical activity in WA, the Premier established the Physical Activity Taskforce in June 2001 to develop a whole of government and community approach across a range of policy areas including transport, health, education, crime reduction, positive parenting and sport and recreation.
- A target was set of increasing physical activity by 5% over the next ten years.
- It is estimated, based on national figures, that potential savings in healthcare alone of \$44 million per year would be achieved by a 5% increase in physical activity levels in WA.
- The Physical Activity Taskforce has delivered to Government a *Strategic Direction Report*, which is a plan to get Western Australians more active. The Report involved extensive consultation with public, private and community sectors across the State.
- The five outcomes of the Report are:
 1. Government leadership and coordination through policy and planning to support community action.
 2. Education, training and support at a community and local government level.
 3. Improved physical and social environments to support physical activity.
 4. Programs and services at a community level directed at increasing physical activity.
 5. Legislation and regulation that encourages physical activity in the community.
- The strategy not only complements and supports the Government's Social Policy and proposed State Sustainability Strategy but also other policy areas such as: Healthy and positive ageing; Inter-generational involvement; Involvement of parents and others in the school community; Behaviour management and school retention; Public health and health promotion; A "back to community" approach; Greater involvement of young people in community clubs; Review of physical education in schools; and specifically, promotion of physical activity. It also offers a model to deliver some demonstrable and valuable community outcomes.