

LEADING CONSULTANTS CALL FOR BETTER CITIES

Consult Australia launched its latest report, *Tomorrow's Cities Today* in Sydney this morning at an event attended by Lucy Hughes Turnbull AO, City of Sydney Chief Executive Monica Barone and Major Cities Unit Executive Director Dorte Ekelund.

Tomorrow's Cities Today puts the spotlight firmly back on the major cities that drive our nation, calling for ambitious reform and providing a series of practical recommendations that would position cities-planning as a national priority.

The report will fuel public debate given its specific and practical recommendations, including the reconsideration of AAA credit ratings, introduction of road user-charging and call for governments to commit to sustainable funding streams.

Consult Australia Chief Executive Officer Megan Motto said *Tomorrow's Cities Today* takes a holistic approach to achieving productivity, sustainability, liveability and good governance, combining new and existing recommendations to provide a framework for national leadership.

"As we grapple with the challenges of climate change, an ageing and growing population, congestion, urban sprawl and unaffordable housing, it's critical that priorities are set and real action takes place," said Ms Motto.

"Given the links between well functioning cities and productivity, a long-term, bi-partisan commitment across all levels of government to a policy that priorities better urban centres is critical to Australia's development."

The release of *Tomorrow's Cities Today* follows the National Urban Policy and *The State of Australian Cities* 2011 report. It also coincides with the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Reform Council's consideration of capital city strategic planning systems.

The uncommissioned report was developed through consultation with leading specialists from some of Australia's top consulting firms in engineering, design, planning and project development including GHD, AECOM, Worley Parsons, SMEC Australia, URS and Norman, Disney & Young.

Further recommendations from the report include a reconsideration of good and bad debt, commencement of a trial of new road pricing mechanisms including road-user charges, the prioritisation of green skills, a review of the cities included in COAG's strategic planning framework, and the support of industry to position Australia as a centre of excellence in urban and city development.

"*Tomorrow's Cities Today* will be used to drive practical action within a number of government departments in order to support productive, sustainable, liveable and well governed Australian cities," said Ms Motto.

Ends

6 December 2011

For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact Gillian O'Young on 02 9922 4711 or gillian@consultaaustralia.com.au.

MEDIA RELEASE



Driving Business Success for Consulting Firms in the Built and Natural Environment

About Consult Australia

Consult Australia is the association for professional services firms within the built and natural environment; influencing policy, creating value and promoting excellence.

As an association, Consult Australia's primary focus is on improving the commercial environment for its members and raising standards across the industry.

Consult Australia's member firms services include, but are not limited to: design; architecture; technology; engineering; planning; landscape architecture; surveying; cost consulting (quantity surveyors); project management; and management solutions. The Association represent some of the industry's biggest players in this space with its member firms collectively employing more than 50,000 staff.