



Your ref: PLH0415-2017A/01
Our ref: DWERDG158/19
Enquiries: Sarah McEvoy, Ph 6364 7038

Ms Gail McGowan
Director General
Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
Locked Bag 2506
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Ms McGowan

REVIEW OF THE ABORIGINAL HERITAGE ACT 1972

Thank you for your letter dated 11 March 2018 inviting input from the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) on the review of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* (AH Act).

DWER supports the proposals to modernise the AH Act to ensure it recognises, protects and celebrates the cultural heritage of Aboriginal Western Australians.

I note the proposed amendments to the AH Act to introduce a referral mechanism to facilitate tiered assessments and approvals of proposed land uses. I understand this may be modelled around the process under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). This proposal is likely to improve alignment, and reduce duplication and administrative burden for both industry and Government.

DWER and Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage (DPLH) are working to align information requirements for assessment under the EP Act and AH Act to provide for a more streamlined process.

DWER supports the proposal to provide early advice to proponents, noting that this will assist the Environmental Protection Authority in the assessment of proposals under the EP Act.

DWER will work with DPLH in the drafting of the new legislation to ensure consistency across our respective legislation in relation to Aboriginal heritage.

Yours sincerely

Mike Rowe
DIRECTOR GENERAL

28 May 2019