



2008 SEMINAR SERIES

The Role of Federal Government in Urban Affairs



NOVEMBER 5TH 4-7 PM
SYDNEY MASONIC CENTRE
NORTHCOTT ROOM
LEVEL 5,
(CNR GOULBURN AND
CASTLEREAGH STREETS)
SYDNEY NSW

Federal involvement in urban policy and practice began with the National Urban and Regional Development Authority in 1972 and reached its maximum extent with Whitlam's re-named Cities Commission and the new Department of Urban and Regional Development. There was a revival of interest with the Better Cities program of 1991-96, which as Deputy Prime Minister Brian Howe drove as an aspect of Federal-State relations. The Rudd Government's current indication of concern for the States' many urban infrastructural challenges has raised the question of how far it might contribute to urban affairs generally. Among the matters this seminar will explore is where such involvement should lead. Brian Howe, Sue Holliday, and Phillip O'Neill are well placed to answer these questions.

4.00pm
Dr Bob Solomon
Chairman AIUS (NSW)

Welcome

Brian Howe
Professorial Associate,
Centre for Public Policy,
Melbourne University

Lessons from Better Cities

The Better Cities program demonstrated important lessons which are relevant at a time when the Commonwealth is contemplating large investment in urban and regional infrastructure. It is important that capital investment effectively advances metropolitan and regional planning objectives, especially integrating land use and transport in ways consistent with environmental sustainability. The Commonwealth should resist incremental growth on the fringe of cities and encourage transit-oriented development designed to strengthen the links between new housing and labour markets, where possible reducing travel times and increasing public transport use.

Sue Holliday
Managing Director,
Strategies for Change

The Absent City: the First year of the Rudd Government

After a year in power the Rudd Government is still searching for a way to make an impact on the major urban and regional issues. Much is underway, but the structure of the government lets down its ability to tackle and solve urban challenges.

John McInerney
City of Sydney Council

A new Opening for Local Government?

Speaking for Lord Mayor Clover Moore, former City Planner and independent Councillor McInerney sees the opportunity for local government to go straight to the Federal Minister for Infrastructure, particularly in the absence of State Government initiatives. The Council of Capital City Lord Mayors and Sydney's Inner City Councils' Forum are developing plans for such approaches.

Professor Phillip O'Neill
Director, Urban Research
Centre, University of
Western Sydney

Infrastructure and Our Strangled Cities: Is There a Federal Saviour?

Examines the crisis confronting Australian cities with their inadequate infrastructure provision. Draws on new URC work showing Sydney's incapacity to cater for growth, especially in employment lands, commuting flows and freight movements. He asks whether a Federal solution is at all possible, given the revamped nature of infrastructure provision in western cities generally, global financial woes and political paralysis in State and local government.

5.30pm

Refreshment Break

Discussion

Panel of Speakers