

MEDIA RELEASE

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Approved by: Cr Bill West, Chair of Centroc and Mayor of Cowra Shire Council

Cities worldwide reject water privatisation after years of failed promises, poor services & high prices

Recommendations in the recently released Infrastructure Australia 15 Year Plan that consideration are given to more sustainable models for the delivery of drinking water in regional NSW, including privatising water where commercially viable, fly in the face of a global trend towards the municipalisation of water supply and waste water services.

“The number of cities reversing privatisation and taking back public control of water supply and sewerage services is accelerating dramatically across the world,” said Councillor Bill West, Mayor of Cowra and Chair of Centroc.

According to research by the Public Services International Research Unit published by the University of Greenwich in 2015 there have been at least 180 cases of water remunicipalisation in 35 countries including high profile cases in Europe, the Americas, Asia and Africa over the last 15 years.

“Worldwide research is showing a backlash against private operators and their failure to put the needs of communities before profit,” said Cr West

“In the United States there is evidence that Local Governments have saved millions of dollars and improved the quality of their water services through locally accountable public management”.

“A survey of 18 communities in the United States where water or sewer services were remunicipalised between 2007 and 2010 found that public operations cut costs in these communities by an average of 21%. Added to this are frightening cases of poor water quality, inadequate maintenance and unresponsive customer service.”

“Centroc is a staunch advocate for Local Government retaining ownership and management of Local Water Utilities in regional NSW ensuring the provision of best practice compliant quality drinking water and sewerage services at an affordable cost for our communities,” said Cr West.

“We are already feeling the effects of the loss of local management of our electricity. It is to be hoped that the State and Federal Government are watching this global trend closely to ensure the same mistakes are not made with essential water and sewerage services in regional NSW.”

For more - <http://www.psir.org/sites/default/files/2015-04-W-OurPublicWaterFutureFINAL.pdf>

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