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NATIONAL PPP FORUM SETS AUSTRALIA IN ONE DIRECTION

Australian governments have come to recognise that both the private and public sectors have an important role to play in the delivery of public infrastructure and related services

Federal and state governments took a major step in May towards turning a stream of diverse PPPs into a \$6 billion national market reports Diana Joslin of the Victorian Department of Treasury and Finance.

The National PPP Forum draws its members from ministers and government officials across all Australian jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction has released a policy framework in the past few years for the application of PPPs in some form. In this period almost 20 projects have been contracted nationally with a further 20 projects currently in the market. The first meeting agreed on a number of actions designed to coordinate development of PPP projects across all Australian jurisdictions.

- A national infrastructure pipeline will be released that publishes current and potential PPP projects nationally in one list. This list details over \$6 billion of projects across health, education, transport, information communication technology (ICT), justice and water. It is, in effect, a government-

endorsed picture of the national market that will assist in planning and management of these projects across jurisdictions. The pipeline is available from www.partnerships.vic.gov.au.

- An open exchange of information and individuals will develop capabilities and skills across Australia's public service.
- Key issues such as efficient bidding processes and standardisation of risk allocation and contract documentation will be actioned on a national basis by project teams.

Australian governments have come to recognise that both the private and public sectors have an important role to play in the delivery of public infrastructure and related services. So the Forum's work will not be conducted in isolation from the private sector. The May Forum involved presentations directly from industry representatives about the key issues they face. This type of dialogue will continue to form an important part of the Forum's agenda.

The Forum expects the coordinated development of a national market to benefit private sector partners by increasing consistency in PPP proposals and will focus on initiatives that will streamline tender processes and reduce bidding costs, on both sides. At the same time, it expects governments to achieve improved value for money outcomes from a stronger and more competitive market, and the effective delivery of PPP projects.

The members of the Forum include:

- John Brumby, Treasurer of Victoria
- Michael Egan, Treasurer of NSW
- Tony McGrady, Minister for State Development and Innovation, Queensland
- Senator Nick Minchin, Commonwealth Minister for Finance and Administration
- Eric Ripper, Treasurer of Western Australia
- Patrick Conlon, Minister for Infrastructure, South Australia
- Syd Stirling, Treasurer of the Northern Territory
- Ted Quinlan, Deputy Chief Minister and Treasurer of the ACT
- Paul Lennon, Premier of Tasmania

The Forum meets again in November this year.

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