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Thursday, 6 March 2014

Committee Secretary
Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
Email: jscna@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Members

THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

Weipa Town Authority welcomes the opportunity to lodge submissions with respect to the development of northern Australia. Please find below Weipa Town Authorities submissions.

The need for a strategic approach

Weipa Town Authority submits that a strategic approach needs to be developed and implemented. It is essential that the proper consultation with remote and regional communities are undertaken to take advantage of the wealth of local knowledge that exists in the region.

Regional opportunities

- The expansion of live cattle export and the promotion of international markets
- Opening up of the Bertiehaugh Road will be of significant assist and benefit to the Weipa economy boosting tourism for the town especially after recently losing in excess of 10 million per annum with the demobilisation of DIAC out of Scherger
- There are many nature based tourism opportunities in our unique area that could thrive with the sufficient funding and a promotional body established to assist coordinating responsibilities.
- Regional science and education centre opportunities exist in the northern regions and incentives to encourage universities to be involved with the centres for research.
- A base centre for State and Federal Government Department branches

- Ensure the Salad Bowl East of Weipa is protected against mining

- RAAF base at Scherger

The provision of essential services

- More reliable telecommunications in cyclonic and wet conditions is essential for remote northern regional areas
- Deregulation of regional air services will pose significant social health and economic disadvantage for local communities
- The CYRP with their SEA's (Wild Rivers) are intent on locking up the Cape for future development of agriculture, tourism, mining and energy exploration. All of this is seen as a major impediment for the future of Cape York
- Strengthening of biosecurity management in Cape York as it is the stepping stone from Asia, Papua New Guinea and Torres Strait Islands to Australia

Incentives

- Increased employer support with incentives to hire apprentices and trainees, recognising the need to boost youth employment in the northern region
- It has become apparent through dealings with businesses that systems with more incentives from government are required to retain current businesses, to also attract and encourage new business to continue to invest in northern Australian
- Taxation, research and development incentives.
- Increasing fuel and freight costs limit industry capabilities in the region, subsidies and incentives will encourage investment.
- Emerging and current industries require a more simplified process to access support they need to prosper and grow.

The Weipa Town Authority would wish to thank the committee for the opportunity to make a submission.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Weipa Town Authority Chief Executive Officer should you have any queries or if any supporting information is required to the above submissions

Regards,

Warren Seen
Interim Chief Executive Officer
Weipa Town Authority

