

The Secretary  
Standing Committee on Economics, Finance and Public Administration  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

House of representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance and Public Administration	
Submission No: .....	21
Date Received: .....	17/7/02
Secretary: .....	Burdell

Dear Sir / Madam

I am pleased to make the following submission for consideration by your committee. I hope you find my comments of some value in your deliberation on this very complex issue and I look forward to hearing your findings in due course.

My comments are made from my knowledge and observations as an elected representative in Local Government (Divisional Councillor).

### **Inquiry into local government and cost shifting**

1. Local Government has always had very clear service delivery functions, though over a number of years our scope of work has been expanded to absorb many of the state government responsibilities with little or no funding to support the works.

The old Rates, Roads and Rubbish no longer applies, we now provide so much more.

**Animal Management.**

**Environment** – Bush care groups, Parks, Wildlife Preservation, Mangroves, Weeds, Recycling, Water ways management, Environmental pollution.

**Transport** – Roads, Paths, Cycle ways

**Senior citizens** – Home assistance, Rates concessions, Many other support programs

**Library services** – Books, Internet access, Local history, General information,

**Health care** – Immunisation, Respite centre support, Day care, Fun in the park, Disability support,

**Essential services** – Water, Roads, Sewerage, Refuse collection,

**Youth** – Junior council, Children's voice council, Young citizens programs, Skate parks, BMX, Sport and Recreation facilities,

To name only a few.

2. The funding for local government comes from a variety of sources.

Primarily through rates levied against individual properties, some user pay services also apply. State government provides funding usually on a project by project arrangement (this quite often evaporates prior to delivery) it can be costly to actually fulfil all the criteria put in place by the various departments, the official version is to ensure good open and accountable government, I suspect the procedure eliminates many from even asking.

3. In South East Queensland we have 3 representative bodies under 1 umbrella group.

SEQROC South East Queensland Region Organisation of Councils (Umbrella Group) Representing councils from Tweed Heads in the south to Toowoomba in the West and Noosa in the North.

SEQROC in divided into three sub Roc's by region, South Roc, West Roc and North Roc.

This is a very successful networking group that works for the best interests of the region and unite to support each other on many issues. I believe this demonstrates an ability to function as a regional authority (formal protocols may need to be developed)

4. There has been a significant shift of responsibility to local government from state government, I am certain the trend will continue. This is not a bad thing necessarily our problems stem from the added cost to council, with little or no contribution from the state to support the shift. State government seems to want to surrender the responsibility for many things, and then stifle council by hindering and adding costly compliance regulations. Council has a charter of service delivery and has successfully delivered in most instances. Council is better positioned to continue this role and could do so far more effectively with a more professional mature relationship with the Federal Government and a more direct funding system, ie: funding directly between Federal and Local Governments.
5. No Comment.
6. No Comment

*Regards  
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P.S. This new approach can deliver far better results on the ground, due to the increased capital received here at a local level that has not been filtered, taxed or skimmed by the State Government. It also delivers to you a budget neutral outcome with better recognition at this local level.