

30 September 2008

Trade Sub-Committee  
Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

Attention: Mr Tas Luttrell  
Principal Research Officer  
Trade Sub-Committee, Room R1-120  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House CANBERRA ACT 2600

**INQUIRY INTO WAYS OF EXPANDING AUSTRALIA'S TRADE AND INVESTMENT RELATIONS WITH ASIA, THE PACIFIC AND LATIN AMERICA - TRADE SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE**

The Central Queensland Local Government Association (CQLGA) is the peak regional organisation for councils in the Central Queensland region and membership includes the Banana Shire Council, and the Central Highlands, Gladstone, Isaac, and Rockhampton Regional Councils. The five councils have a combined population of approximately 210,970 people living in an area of 147,400 square kilometres. (Refer to Map 1)

The CQLGA submits information on the following elements of the Terms of Reference:

- The nature of existing trade and investment relations; and,
- Likely future trends in these relations;
- The role of the Government in identifying opportunities and assisting Australian companies especially those in rural and regional areas, to maximise opportunities in these regions.

## 1 The Nature of Existing Trade and Investment Relations

The CQLGA is the custodian of a Cooperation Agreement between the Northern Provinces of the Territory of New Caledonia and Central Queensland ( \* represented by the former Central Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils)

The following paragraphs are extracts from the Agreement

### Article 2

*'The agreement is aimed at further developing and strengthening the existing friendly relations between institutions and the people of the two regions in order to increase mutual understanding.....Building on existing similarities, especially in terms of climate, the Agreement aims at developing cooperative projects in specific sectors such as mining, agriculture, food and industrial processing, tourism, education and training, health, investment, technology transfer and cultural exchanges.'*

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\* The former Central Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils merged with the Central Queensland Local Government Association in 2003 to become the 'new' CQLGA

### Article 3

*'Building on the existing similarities between the two regions, especially in terms of climate, the Agreement aims at developing cooperative projects in specific sectors such as mining, agriculture, food and industrial processing, tourism, education and training, health, investment, technology transfers and cultural exchanges.'*

### Article 4

*'To this end, the two parties agree to meet at least once a year, either in the Northern Province, or in Central Queensland to assess periodically actions undertaken and to discuss possible further initiatives. The composition of the delegations is left to the discretion of each party.'*

### Article 5

*Within the framework of this Agreement, each of the parties will facilitate the exchange of trade and business missions, and the development of closer links and twinning between institutional, administrative or other bodies of a similar nature.'*

The agreement has lapsed and the CQLGA Management Committee at a recent meeting endorsed its revival.

There is other associated activity in the region related to this agreement. The Banana Shire Council has been actively involved in a 'Sister City' program with regular delegations from the Northern Provinces. Please find attached a copy of the Twinning Agreement between the City of Boulouparis and Banana Shire Council.

The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) is involved in a beef breeding program with the Northern Provinces.

## 2 Likely Future Trends in these Relations

There is great potential to expand this existing agreement with the Northern Provinces of the Territory of New Caledonia. Central Queensland has a viable and very competitive beef industry and every three years hold a Beef Expo. The activities already developed through the Agreement are in the beef industry and there are further opportunities to build on the initial activities and expand out into the Central Highlands and Isaac areas.

This agreement incorporates a wide range of activities that have yet to be investigated and established (refer to Articles 3 & 5).


The example provided is for only part country in the Pacific and related to only the beef industry. The Inquiry's Terms of Reference includes the countries of Asia, the Pacific and Latin America. The Central Queensland region is a diverse and buoyant region with a rapidly expanding coal mining industry, a range of high quality educational institutions and health facilities and a vibrant business sector. The potential trade and investment opportunities are very promising in the Central Queensland region.

**3 The Role of the Government in Identifying Opportunities and Assisting Australian Companies Especially those in Rural and Regional Areas, to Maximise Opportunities in these Regions.**

The CQLGA is aware of a number of State and Federal government agencies that have a responsibility for identifying and developing trade opportunities. The role of the Federal Government is to continue to the appropriate agencies undertaking trade and investment work, but with a more regional presence - have field officers based in the regions. If this was implemented then these officers could also coordinate with the relevant State government agencies and local government to further enhance existing trade and investment activities and establish new ones.

This concludes the CQLGA's submission. Please contact the CQLGA Executive Officer, Ms Jenny Moore, if any further information is required by the Trade Sub-Committee.

Yours sincerely



Cr Cedric Marshall  
President





**Letter of Intent  
between  
the Town of Boulouparis  
and  
Banana Shire  
regarding  
the development of a Twinning Agreement between  
the Town of Boulouparis and Banana Shire**

We the undersigned agree that, following a meeting held at Biloela on the 14 August 1997, we will continue to work toward the development of a Twinning Agreement between Banana Shire and Boulouparis.

The basis of the Agreement will be that of helping to promote the further development of bilateral economic relations, tourism, education and training, and cultural exchanges between Boulouparis and Banana Shire.

The development of such an Agreement will consolidate the existing and growing friendly relationship between our regions of the Territory of New Caledonia and of the Australian State of Queensland. The Agreement will recognise the fact that our regions share many similarities in terms of climate, the desire for regional and economic development, and the commitment to agricultural diversification.

We shall assist each other in the exploration of co-operative projects in specific sectors such as agriculture, aquaculture, food processing, manufacturing, education and training, tourism, investment, technology transfer and culture.

The Agreement will be compatible with the objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Territory of New Caledonia and the Government of Queensland in Noumea on 20 November 1996 and again in Brisbane on 29 November 1996.

FOR THE TOWN OF BOULOUPARIS

  
ALAIN LAZARE  
Mayor of Boulouparis

FOR BANANA SHIRE

  
BARRY RIDEOUT  
Mayor of Banana Shire Council

14 August 1997

