

# SCARBOROUGH & DISTRICTS PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

Meetings 1st Thursday of  
each month at 7.45.p.m.

Scarborough Community Centre  
Gildercliffe St. Scarborough.

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Hon. Sec. Mrs. Ann Williams  
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25th July 2002

The Secretary,  
House of Representatives,  
Standing Committee on Economics,  
Finance and Public Administration,  
Parliament House,  
CANBERRA. A.C.T. 2600

House of representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance and Public Administration.	
Submission No:	65
Date Received:	26/7/02
Secretary:	<i>Ba dell</i>

Dear Sir/Madam.

## INQUIRY INTO COST SHIFTING ONTO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

As a community group of volunteers we see and experience the impact of the end result of Local Government services and expenditure.

We have noted over the years the increased impact on Local Government as their resources have been stretched to cover additional services previously under the jurisdiction of the State or Federal authorities.

We understand quite often a project has to be sourced by Grant money and has a limited time span. Sometimes a particular project may prove very good but comes to an end prematurely when the Grant finishes. This can also mean the personnel used are contracted for the time of the project and have no continuation of service. The short term contracts do not give employees a loyalty ethos and can be counter productive.

Currently in W. A. the collection of the Fire Services Levy is being transferred to Local Government and will appear as an item on our Rate Assessment. Concerns are being expressed that these levies will be higher than those being paid through household insurance. It is appreciated that not all rateable properties are insured for various reasons and this move is one method of making all ratepayers share the cost equitably, however those who already contribute through various insurance policies should not have to pay more under the new system. In this case Local Government do not seem to benefit unless they are to get a commission for the levy collection.

With expanding social welfare through Local Government it is hoped that they receive additional funds from the Federal Government to service the growing needs of an aging population. Meals on Wheels is a responsibility taken on by

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Local Government and at a cost to ratepayers as well as the provision of services through Autumn Clubs.

Welfare services generally are expanding so that Staff are now employed to advise citizens on such matters as balancing their personal budgets.

We have been concerned that Youth services are insufficient. There should be more programmes to entertain and educate. Facilities cost a lot of money for activities like Basketball and Skateboarding but should be supplied and serviced with funding primarily from all Government sources. It is essential that the youth have occupation and if jobs are scarce then alternatives must be made available to encourage social skills and responsibility.

Some Local Governments in W.A. have taken on private security services at a charge to their ratepayers. In general extra eyes on the road and properties are an advantage but this should not be looked upon as a substitute for the Police who are the only personnel with authority to arrest.

It is also being proposed that the Security Service Staff of the City of Stirling be on call to respond to heart attack victims cutting delays in the response time of the St. John Ambulance Service. It is a worthy cause but instead of the Security Service being trained in their original work they are now being saddled with duties outside the prime and original objective of their employment and the concept of the levy on ratepayers. It would be better for the Ambulance Service to be reviewed to ascertain why they are unable to provide a more efficient service. Do they need more staff? Do they need more ambulances? etc.

There are probably many more areas where Local Government is expanding into areas usually accepted as the responsibility of State or Commonwealth Governments and this is acceptable providing adequate funding is provided by the respective Governments and this transfer is not used as a method of increasing taxation or levies at the Local Government level.

We hope these observations will be of assistance in determining your decisions.

Yours faithfully,

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(Mrs) Ann Williams  
Hon. Secretary