

Our Ref: 19902/01/100/20/15

21 July 2008



Committee Secretary
 Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport,
 Regional Development and Local Government
 House of Representatives
 PO Box 6021
 Parliament House
 Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Inquiry into a new Regional Development Funding Program

I write in response to the call for submissions into your Committee's inquiry into the above proposed new funding program.

Cardinia Shire Council considers that any new funding program should not disadvantage the rural communities existing within the Shire and other 'Interface' Council's across the country. Cardinia Shire is at the rural urban interface of metropolitan Melbourne and regional and rural Victoria. The municipality is not completely metropolitan or completely rural. However State and Federal funding programs categorise the whole of the Shire as metropolitan therefore excluding the Shire and its farming communities from any rural or regional funding programs.

To illustrate the inequity of Cardinia's metropolitan classification I have included a map of Melbourne and surrounds showing the location of Cardinia Shire and its rural Townships relative to other locations to the west and north of Melbourne that are considered to be rural communities and therefore eligible for regional funding programs. Broadford, Kyneton and Woodend are eligible for regional funds however Bunyip and Lang Lang - a similar distance of 70 to 75 kilometres from Melbourne - are not.

Council is seeking to be considered urban for that part of the municipality that is urban, predominantly the designated Urban Growth Boundary established by the Victorian Government's Melbourne 2030 Policy and considered rural for that part that is rural, those parts of the shire devoted to primary production.

I suggest to your Committee that you consider a definition for eligibility under the new program that does not use the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) classification of the Melbourne Statistical Division (MSD) as the basis for classification of metropolitan or rural. Classifying the entire municipality as metropolitan severely disadvantages the rural communities within the Shire. As an example local primary producers within the Shire are



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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 Initial Level

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not eligible for funds under the Sustainable Regions program or Farm Smart program as they are located in a metropolitan municipality.

At a State Government level Cardinia is not eligible for funds under the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund as the Shire is not listed in the schedule to the Act. This has excluded local farmers from applying for funds under several initiatives such as Local Road Dairy Farm Gate Access Scheme, Stock Over/Underpasses Road Safety Program, Local Roads to Market Farm Gate Access Scheme, On Farm Energy Infrastructure, Water for Industry Infrastructure, Rural Showgrounds Infrastructure and Small Towns Development Infrastructure.

It is hoped that the new Regional Development Funding Program does not disadvantage rural communities within 'Interface' Council's and that a definition of rural and regional NOT be based on the definition of the entire municipal area. A definition using the Melbourne Urban Growth Boundary as the divide between metropolitan Melbourne and rural and regional Victoria would be a more appropriate classification.

I trust that you will consider the Council's suggestions contained above and that this information will be of assistance to your committee in its deliberations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. McQuillan', written in a cursive style.

Garry McQuillan
Chief Executive officer

