

**Council of Mayors**

South East Queensland

11 July 2008

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The Secretary
Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Local Government
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Secretary

On behalf of the Council of Mayors (SEQ), I welcome the opportunity to provide this response to your request for submissions to the new regional development funding program by the Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

The Council of Mayors (SEQ), representing the eleven South East Queensland Councils, proactively ensures the long term viability, wellbeing and sustainability of the region's communities and together represents one in seven Australians. South East Queensland continues to attract families to this area and therefore Federal Government funding is vital for enhancing the sustainability and liveability of our region.

Regional development funding programs are particularly important for the smaller rural communities in South East Queensland. Direct investment by the Federal Government in local government, community and industry based projects greatly assists with the social and economic wellbeing of rural communities.

With respect to future regional development funding programs we strongly support:

- Improvements to the application and decision making process including:
 - Simplified application processes;
 - Clear funding criteria; and
 - Transparent decision making.
- While acknowledging the diversity of community needs and therefore individual projects, that funding is directed to development projects that provide widespread benefits or can demonstrate that they will stimulate or promote development in communities.

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- Assessment criteria that require projects to demonstrate that they are consistent with Local and Federal Government plans and objectives. In this regard, broad based community support for projects will be an important element of future funding programs.
- Funding which supports projects that provide rural and regional areas with sustainable community facilities and infrastructure.

The Council of Mayors (SEQ) looks forward to the roll-out of the improved funding model. The Council of Mayors (SEQ) considers that direct Federal funding is a critical and highly effective way of delivering tangible community benefits, including economic development and community infrastructure outcomes.

Yours sincerely



Jon Black
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR