



MINGENEW SHIRE COUNCIL

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

07 August 2002	
House of representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance and Public Administration	
Submission No:	228
Date Received:	
Secretary:	Bardell

Dear Sir or Madam:

ENQUIRY INTO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND COST SHIFTING

The Shire of Mingenew fully support the submission prepared on behalf of the North Midlands Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils dated 25 July 2002 and duly submitted by that organization of which Mingenew is a member.

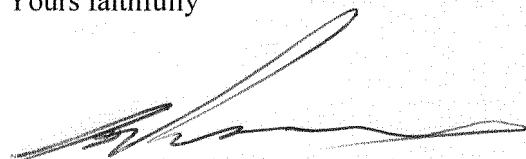
Council would also like to advise the Committee of the following areas where it considers the State Government has been lacking and has resulted in cost shifting onto local governments. These items are not listed in the order of preference or priority.

- **Public Sector Housing** - The State Government appears to have changed its policy in relation to the provision of low-cost public housing for low socio-economic disabled persons. Within the townsite of Mingenew, Homeswest being a State Government body responsible for public housing has sold off its vast majority of its previous assets and now has only remaining two houses available for low-income families. Within the townsite of Mingenew there is presently zero rental housing available and there are numerous request to Council for the provision of such housing. Homeswest as a government body no longer provides this although they are willing to enter into a joint venture arrangement with local government. The joint venture arrangement requires the local government to provide upfront capital of \$10,000 per bedroom for a basic standard house plus the Council is responsible for the provision of land and earthworks. For a moderate house this entails a contribution from council in the order of \$30,000 to \$40,000 per unit. This type of facility is beyond resources of Council to provide.

- **Reduction of State Government Grant** – The incumbent State Government since its election into office has reduced the grants available for infrastructure assets construction. A simple grant such as the grant which was available to country councils for the provision of dual use footpath seems to have dwindled to zero dollars and particular in relation to small rural councils. Regional local governments seem to be able to still acquire a small amount of funding from the source but the small rural local authorities have particularly zero. The same could be said for the Safer WA Grants. Council was successful in a number of years ago in obtaining a \$10,000 grant to conduct a Safety Audit however, funding to implement any recommendations from the Safety Audit is non-existent. One then needs to question why council was afforded the opportunity to have a safety audit conducted when none of the recommendations can be implemented.
- **Street Lighting** – Western Power as a State Government body seems to be changing the rules in regards to the provision of its services. The Western Power now requires the local authority to do an inspection of street lightings and report to that organization of any lighting, which is inoperative. In addition the quality of the street lighting, which has been in existence for numerous years, is totally inadequate in comparison with today's standards, however council is required to pay Western Power at commercial rates for the upgrading of street lighting.

Council again endorses the submissions as compiled by the North Midlands Voluntary Regional Organisation of Councils and wishes the Committee to include the points listed as above as part of the submission for the Shire of Mingenew.

Yours faithfully



HENRY VANDER ENDE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
HVE:LP