

Doug Weber
3/116 West Street,
TOOWOOMBA, QLD. 4350.
Phone: (07) 4638 0438.

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Attention: Committee Secretariat, (Ms. Fran Bailey, M.P)
Department of the House of Representatives,
Parliament House,
CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2600

Submission to the Federal Parliamentary Inquiry into “infrastructure and the development of Australia’s regional areas”.

Initially, I must impress the need for government support of regional development projects must be first priority, as without these projects, infrastructure requirements are minimal. Impedement of regional project creation automatically impedes the requirements for infrastructure development. Both go hand-in-hand.

A) Remedy Factor

- 1) Federal Government recognition, financial support and incentives for private investors and proponents of irrigation projects which selectively utilise portion of Australia’s vast idle wasted water resources to create productivity, employment and economic diversity.
- 2) Regulated diversion of tropical coastal river discharges to inland river and creek systems – drought proofing by irrigation, (Bradfield Scheme, QLD) and minimising catastrophic coastal flooding.
- 3) Fast-tracking of infrastructure projects such as the National Trunk Rail (N.T.R.) route – Melbourne to Darwin.

Note: The above factors are key elements for employment creation and the necessity for regional infrastructure development.

- B)** Enormous potential exists for regional development through selective water utilisation. (**substantiation – annexure 1**).
- C)** Regional and infrastructure development has the capability of dramatically reducing unemployment in Australia, with a flow-on effect to secondary and support industries. (**substantiation – annexure 3 (b)**).
- D)** A bi-partisan approach by federal, state and local governments is required to solve Australia’s unemployment problem. Public works programs are only a short-term solution. However, conversely, private regional development projects provide long-term sustainable employment, productivity and economic diversity all requiring infrastructure and services development. To date, tri-level

government support for proponents and investors in significant regional developments is virtually non-existent. Changes are urgently required.

- E) The economic benefits to the national economy from government support of regional and infrastructure development are considerable. Communities thrive, local governments prosper from increased land valuations, and exports assist in offsetting Australia's balance of trade problems. **(substantiation – annexure 2)**. In addition, governments needs to encourage Institutional Investors in to regional development and infrastructure projects. Considerable imbalance from superfunds exists in regional areas with little reinvested.

Summary:

All Australians must be pro-active in creating a more affluent society. One simple plan is for the immediate realisation to support the regulated utilisation of Australia's presently wasted natural water resources.

Note: Infrastructure is not required without regional development.

Yours Sincerely,

Doug Weber.

Encl. **(confidential material):**

Annexure 1, 2, & 3.

Support letters from:

McKinlay Shire (2 pages).

SMEC

Mission Employment

* Volumous additional support correspondence on hand.