



Wamboin Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade
112 Bingley Way
Wamboin
New South Wales 2620
Telephone: 02 6238 3358
ABN: 34 370 321 987

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

Inquiry into a New Regional Development Funding Program

Dear Sir,

As a past recipient of the Regional Partnerships Program I wish to make the following comments on behalf of the Wamboin Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade.


The Wamboin Fire Brigade received a grant of \$17,000 in 2004 to assist in the much needed extension of our Fire Station. This was an \$80,000 project with the remainder of the funding raised by the Brigade with the assistance of the local communities and Community Associations and a small grant from the local Shire Council. 95% of the construction work was carried out by volunteer labour from Brigade members.

- The Regional Partnerships program, as a major grants program, was of great value to small rural communities particularly for self help local projects. The program provided vital funding for genuine community projects that had very little scope for other major fund raising. The outcomes provided excellent value for money for the community and the Government.
- I would hope that the Rudd Government's Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program will continue this vital assistance to small rural communities not able to enjoy the facilities provided in large towns and cities.
- Whilst the applicants must provide accurate and genuine applications, the paperwork should be simplified. Regional Partnerships paperwork was a huge and tedious task. Obviously full accountability must be maintained and audited.

- Projects must demonstrate a need in the community and the selection criteria MUST be merit based. It should be remembered however, that communities do look to their elected representatives for assistance and support and they should be able to provide some influence or comment in the final selection process.
- The Capital Region Area Consultative Committee staff were courteous and helpful and in my own experience did not seem influenced by politics. The professionalism shown was of great assistance to progress the grant application for submission to the Regional Partnerships Program for assessment.
- Any new scheme would need to continue to be flexible to cope with the varying needs of diversified communities. It should recognize the capacity and skills of applicant groups to make an application and carry out and administer a project. It should be particularly aimed at not-for-profit organizations which support local community groups.
- The Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program should continue to be administered by local committees who know and understand those needs of the local rural and regional communities.

I thank the Standing Committee for the opportunity to pass on some real experiences as a past grant recipient, and trust that the new program will continue to be an important assistance package to communities.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Greenwood!', written in a cursive style.

Peter Greenwood
President
Wamboin Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade,
204 Poppet Rd.,
Wamboin NSW 2620
02 6238 3358

11 July 2008