

# Local Government Association of NSW



Shires Association of NSW

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1 May 2009

The Hon Jennie George  
Chairperson  
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Climate Change, Water, Environment and the Arts  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Ms George

Thank you for the opportunity for representatives of the Local Government and Shires Associations (the Associations) to appear at the public hearing for the Inquiry into Climate Change and Environmental Impacts on Coastal Communities on Wednesday 25 March 2009. We are writing to follow up on the points raised by the Associations regarding funding for Local Government action on climate change.

Local Government plays a key role in assisting communities to adapt to climate change. However, local governments are often constrained in their capacity to address adaptation to climate change impacts due to limited resources. Further funding for adaptation to climate change is needed by Local Government and needs to be provided in a timely yet strategic manner.

Ideally, funding for adaptation action plans should be delivered in such a way as to promote dissemination of the learning and experiences gained from preparing the plans and to promote a regional approach to adaptation planning. The Local Adaptation Pathways grant application required applicants to 'Demonstrate a commitment to provide and share information relevant to the process.' We respectfully suggest that such information sharing should involve a formal, organised dissemination of the outputs and outcomes of the grant funded projects and the sharing of experiences with processes employed during the projects.

One avenue for doing so would be to publish case studies on the Department of Climate Change website alongside the details on the Local Adaptation Pathways Program. The Associations publish case studies of Local Government action on climate change on the Climate Change Action Pack website ([www.lgsa-plus.net.au/www/html/1890-case-studies.asp](http://www.lgsa-plus.net.au/www/html/1890-case-studies.asp)) and have noted recurring demand for case studies of adaptation planning. Without such dissemination there is a danger of duplication of effort, and sub-optimal use of time and resources across councils and communities and a risk that key areas for attention could be overlooked. Conversely, sharing information and insights can lead to more effective, efficient and innovative outcomes for other projects.

Further funding should also encourage regional approaches to adaptation, particularly through Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCs). ROCs are partnerships between groups of councils that agree to collaborate on matters of common interest. ROCs play a pivotal role in a cost effective regional delivery model to address the emerging issues of climate change.

We trust that this input will assist the Commonwealth Government in building upon the existing support provided to Local Government for adaptation to climate change. We would be happy to liaise with you further to ensure that the Commonwealth Government's programs best support the needs of Local Government.

Yours sincerely

Cr Genia McCaffery

**President**  
Local Government Association of NSW

Cr Bruce Miller  
**President**  
Shires Association of NSW

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