



The Hon Mark Vaile MP

Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Transport and Regional Services
Leader of The Nationals

«Title» «First_Name» «Last_Name»
«Job»
«Company»
«M_1st_Address»
«Suburb» «State» «Postcode»

Dear «Title» «Last_Name»

As you will be aware, my colleague Warren Truss and I have exchanged Ministerial portfolios, and I have taken over responsibility for the Area Consultative Committee network as Minister for Transport and Regional Services.

While I spent a short period in this portfolio early in this government, ACCs were not part of my responsibilities at that time, so I thought it appropriate to introduce myself as your new Minister and let you know how much I look forward to working with the ACC network.

The partnership approach to regional services instituted by John Anderson and ably continued by Warren Truss has been an outstanding success and brought real benefits to regional communities across the country. The hard work and commitment of ACC Chairs and their committees has been an integral part of this success, and you will continue to be vital conduit between the government and the communities we seek to serve.

I already know many ACC chairs and committee members and I look forward to renewing that contact and getting to know those of you I have yet to meet.

I also need to raise with you the renewal of ACC Chairs' terms, and the appointment of ACC Deputy Chairs for the first time, both of which are to take place at the end of this year. To ensure that we all have adequate time to consider these appointments, it is appropriate that we start the process now.

I am aware that some Chairs have indicated informally they may not wish to seek another term. I would ask all of you to formally advise my office of your intentions in this regard and, if you do not intend continuing in the role, providing me with your suggestion as to a replacement Chair. I would also welcome suggestions from all Chairs for the Deputy Chair position of your ACC and would appreciate you considering issues such as ensuring appropriate representation of the region, cultural diversity and gender balance.

You may wish to discuss your suggestions with your local Members or patron Senators, as I will also be seeking their views.

With regard to Deputy Chairs, there are currently a variety of arrangements in place across the ACC networks which have been made according to individual ACC constitutions. In moving to this new approach ACCs are asked to amend their constitutions to provide for the new arrangements, including that only one Deputy Chair be appointed by the Minister. Deputy Chairs will play an important role in supporting the Chair, including filling in as Chair, and chairing of sub-committees or being assigned key roles such as project development under the *Regional Partnerships* program.

To facilitate these appointments, commencement of the process of amending your ACC's constitution will need to be addressed as a priority. You may also wish to take this opportunity to review your constitutional rules in relation to the appointment of Chairs if necessary.

Given the breadth and challenges of these roles, Chairs and Deputy Chairs should bring a diverse range of attributes, qualities and backgrounds relevant to the ACC's objectives, including:

- high level skill and knowledge in an area of regional development or a related field;
- sound communication and interpersonal skills, and the ability to effectively present community views and interests;
- high level understanding of economic, social and environmental issues within the region;
- financial management, governance and leadership skills; and
- ability to represent the diversity of the region, including gender.

An outline of the process for appointment of ACC Chairs and Deputies is at **Attachment A**.

I appreciate your assistance in providing for these new arrangements and ask that you formally advise me of your intentions and suggestions for Chair or Deputy by 30 October 2006. I also request that either a copy of your amended Constitution, or if this is not available, an outline of amendments to be made to your Constitution, be forwarded to the Minister's office by early December 2006 wherever possible.

Thank you for your continuing efforts on behalf of your community, and I look forward to a productive and co-operative relationship with you and your committee.

Yours sincerely



MARK VAILE

OUTLINE OF PROCESS FOR APPOINTMENT OF AREA CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (ACC) CHAIRS AND DEPUTY CHAIRS

Position and Process

1. The current two year terms of Area Consultative Committee (ACC) Chairs are due to expire on 31 December 2006. In Minister Truss's media release of 15 November 2005 it was announced that the Government would appoint the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of the Area Consultative Committees (ACC).
2. The Minister for Transport and Regional Services will make these appointments for a two year term commencing in January 2007.

Attributes

3. Chairs and Deputy Chairs should bring the following diverse range of attributes, qualities and backgrounds relevant to the ACC's objectives, including:
 - high level skill and knowledge in an area of regional development or a related field;
 - sound communication and interpersonal skills, and the ability to effectively present community views and interests;
 - high level understanding of economic, social and environmental issues within the region;
 - financial management, governance and leadership skills; and
 - ability to represent the diversity of the region, including gender.
4. ACC Deputy Chairs will also be appointed by the Minister for Transport and Regional Services for a two year term, following a similar process undertaken for ACC Chairs. It is the Minister's preference to only appoint one Deputy Chair per ACC.
5. *Amendments to Constitutions* – where amendments are required to be made to constitutions or rules of incorporation, these will also need to be ratified at a meeting of members. If timing does not permit this to occur at an AGM, then this may need to occur at a special meeting of members.

Process

6. The process will include advice from a range of sources, including consultation with all MPs and Senators and relevant government agencies.
7. The Minister for Transport and Regional Services will be undertaking the above consultation during October and aims to have this completed by the end of October. The Minister will then consider the potential suggestions and seek to have the appointments settled by the end of November.