



MILLMERRAN SHIRE COUNCIL



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Please address all correspondence
to the Chief Executive Officer



12 September 2002

The Secretary
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Service
Room SG.64
Parliament House
CANBERRA 2600

Dear Kathleen

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of 31 July 2002 relative to the enquiry into the level of banking and financial services in rural, regional and remote areas of Australia.

Millmerran is situated in Queensland on the Darling Downs, 220 kilometres south-west of Brisbane, 80 kilometres south-west of Toowoomba and 140 kilometres north-east of Goondiwindi.

The Shire has a population of 2,900 persons and an area of 4,507 square kilometres of which Millmerran is the principal centre having a population of 1,300 persons. The Shire is basically a rural primary production area and rural industries include stud/beef cattle, poultry, pork, sheep, timber, horticulture, grain and cotton. An 840 MW Power Station and 3.4 million tonne per annum coal mine has recently commenced production in close proximity to Millmerran.

The town of Millmerran has and is suffering the same set of circumstances that appears to be quite common in rural Australia in that many services, both from the public and private sectors, continue to be withdrawn from small country centres.

This community, over the past 20 years has seen the closure of the State Government Office of the Clerk of the Court, the closure of the Railway Station and the closure of the CBC and Westpac banks. The National Australia Bank continues to operate however the signs are ominous as the NAB has sold all its assets, ie land and buildings and has significantly downsized staff presence in Millmerran to one permanent and two casuals.

Council has a concern that banking services in Millmerran will shortly disappear and is at a loss as to how this trend can be reversed. Discussion regularly ensues at Council level with respect to the enticement of alternative banking services to Millmerran and has not discounted the option of forming a community bank, should existing services be discontinued.

I thank you for your invitation and advise that the undersigned is Council's contact officer with respect to this issue.

Yours sincerely

Roy A Flynn
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER