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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



**BOONAH SHIRE COUNCIL**

12 September 2002

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Our Reference:  
IF:LJ 075/01 G4.01-08/02

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

Dear Sir/Madam

**INQUIRY INTO THE LEVEL OF BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES IN  
RURAL, REGIONAL AND REMOTE AREAS OF AUSTRALIA**

I refer to the above Inquiry and advise that Council has considered the matter and submits the following comments for the Committee's consideration.

Boonah Shire is situated in South-East Queensland approximately 85 kilometres south-west of Brisbane. The Shire is predominantly rural and the major town of Boonah has a population of about 2500 and services an economic catchment area of more than 8000 residents. The main industry is primary production and recent years have seen a number of on-farm, value-adding enterprises established in the Shire.

The closure of banking facilities within Boonah Shire and other rural areas in recent years has lead to a decrease in banking services to the community. Although most closures have lead to alternative banking facilities being provided, these facilities act only in an Agency situation with limited managerial decisions being made. The community enjoys shop front banking facilities which provide a complete range of personalised services but suffers from a lack of business banking services and loan facilities.

The impact on the level of service has recently been evident in the area of credit and lending limits for rural customers.

Therefore, Council seeks a review of the institutional arrangements and lending policies of financial institutions so as to be more flexible to accommodate differences in valuations in rural areas and changing circumstances of rural landholders and to provide more localised services in rural centres.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on (07) 5463 3036.

Yours faithfully

IAN FLINT  
Chief Executive Officer