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FINANCES AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFERENCES COMMITTEE

BROOME 15 JULY 2005

BRIEFING NOTES

GENERAL

1. Since early 2004, the Kimberley Area Consultative Committee (KACC) and the Kimberley Sustainable Regions Advisory Committee (KSRAC) have continued to operate as two separate entities with the same Chair, but the Administrations have merged so that the Committees can share the same Executive Officer and Project Manager.
2. KACC, consisting of committed volunteers drawn from the community, local business and government, has focused on delivering its Charter:
 - a key facilitator of change and development;
 - the link between Government, business and the community;
 - facilitate whole of government responses to opportunities in their communities.
3. In this context, the main concentration of KACC has been on facilitation of Regional Partnerships Programme Applications.
4. KSRAC has focused on facilitating and recommending Projects under the Sustainable Regions Programme under which \$12 million excl GST has been allocated to the Kimberley.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES

5. The Regional Priorities which had originally been developed between key stakeholders in the Region are:
 - a. Regional Infrastructure;
 - b. Local Co-operative Projects;
 - c. Indigenous Enterprise and Economic Development;
 - d. Regional Marketing;
 - e. New Sustainable Industry.
6. Most projects selected in the Region would comply with at least three of these Priorities.



IMPACT

7. The Australian Government's Sustainable Regions Programme is arguably the most effective Regional and Community Development Programme to be introduced into the Kimberley Region in recent years. The Programme focuses on creating a viable economic, social and environmental foundation for the future by undertaking sustainable development projects which strengthen the economy, improve social conditions, sustain the environment and take account of cultural factors. The Programme supports community leadership in the development of local solutions, fosters new ideas, community energy, drive and self reliance. The Programme is also intended to forge partnerships between the private sector and all three spheres of government.
8. The Kimberley is benefiting from \$13.2 million on projects ranging from major infrastructure development of ports; wharves and aerodromes; co-operative projects in literature, language, art and culture; Indigenous enterprise and economic development in the pastoral and aquaculture industries; regional marketing in tourism development and primary product exports; and new sustainable industries in land and marine agriculture. Most of these projects are contractually committed and well under way.
9. The Regional Partnerships Programme, in the past year, has been used as a "back up" Programme for the Sustainable Regions Programme with various projects being transferred between Programmes in the Application stage as logic and appropriateness has dictated. The Sustainable Regions Programme has been given the priority with those projects having longer and more difficult time horizons, generally, being guided towards the Regional Partnerships Programme.

REGIONAL CAPABILITY

10. The Kimberley Region is twice the size of Victoria, with a population of about 32,000, 47% of which is Indigenous. Only 56% of the participatory population is employed and 41% of the employed population derives its income from the public purse. The Region, however, is amazingly rich in potential – it is rich in minerals, particularly diamonds, gold, lead, zinc, bauxite, iron ore, oil and natural gas. It is rich in agriculture – grazing, horticulture, irrigated crops and aquaculture. The tourism potential is enormous, as is the potential for cultural and eco-tourism.
11. The great deficiency of the Kimberley is the inability of its people to deliver on its regional potential. Whilst the "blame" could easily be laid at health, education and security, each of which has significant difficulties in the Kimberley, arguably, the real problem lies in the area of inadequate Community Capacity – particularly in respect of business capability. The Sustainable Regions Programme has shown that where projects are being managed by semi or quasi government, or by sound business corporations, they are reasonably successful. Otherwise, a different picture has emerged.
12. Many proponents under the Sustainable Regions Programme possess little business expertise and operate in remote or distant localities where relevant professional expertise is difficult or expensive to access and may not be of high quality in any event. In a culture which has been traditionally focused on

grant funded services, this may not be surprising. The transition from a “grant dependent” culture to one of “sustainability” is a challenge to Community Capacity and one which is greatly assisted by Programmes such as Sustainable Regions and Regional Partnerships.

CURRENT PROJECTS

13.	PROJECT	GRANT incl GST	PARTNER FUNDS
	SUSTAINABLE REGIONS		
	Ord Land and Water	\$151,410	301,748
	Broome Arts and Music	55,000	31,180
	DERBY Airport	660,000	900,000
	Mirima Council	127,000	210,000
	Kimberley Sustainable Dev	88,000	
	Ord Irrigation	55,000	110,000
	Broome Port	3,300,000	10,700,000
	Wunan Tourism	93,500	85,000
	Black Tiger Prawns	725,920	1,622,781
	Fitzroy Xing Family Cent	220,000	610,000
	Lake Argyle Industries	364,065	764,364
	Warlayarti Artists	670,890	497,937
	Kimberley Sus Tourism	350,000	550,000
	Broome Visitors Centre	550,000	550,000
	Mowanjum Arts Centre	1,100,000	1,056,500
	Mango Sea Freight	363,191	292,176
	KAPA	317,130	299,000
	Derby Wharf	957,000	
	Broome Visitors Centre	770,000	
	Scrivener Road	308,966	63,844
	Kununurra Child Care	825,000	1,593,900
	Kununurra Youth Centre	550,000	1,313,400
	Maritime Vessel Simulator	326,700	270,000
	Yiyilli	205,700	651,200
	Derby Mud Crabs	266,200	1,038,823
	Ringer Soak Arts Centre	319,000	313,500
	REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS		
	Recruiting Interpreters	120,000	330,000
	Halls Creek Swimming Pool	550,000	4,840,000
	Warlayarti Staff House	60,940	62,533
	Mangkaja Arts Centre	312,703	1,177,975
	Fitzroy Crossing CRC	1,320,000	
	Purnululu		
	KAPA		
	Madjulla		

KAAC		
Warmun Arts Centre		
B-N Arts Centre		
Wunan Strategic Capacity		
Doon Doon Donga		
Barge Freight	770,000	1,697,370
OrdGuard Bio Security	64,900	138,600
Halls Ck Interpretive Centre		

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

13. The greatest advantage of the Sustainable Regions Programme is that it has enabled focusing on fixed Time and Cost Targets to achieve specific Regional Priorities. The greatest advantage of the Regional Partnerships Programme, on the other hand, is its "Merits Based" "Discretionary" process which enables Regional economic Development opportunities which were not forecastable when "Guidelines" were developed to be considered when the opportunity develops.
14. The disadvantages of the Programmes, however, are the amount of work required by Applicants without reasonable expectation of return, together with the need to generate Partners and multiple Applications to a variety of different sources all with different procedures and requirements.
15. There are a number of issues which merit address including development of "Customer Focus" by Administrative Stakeholders, Timeliness of Processing, Incompatible Electronic Systems, and, in particular and MOST important, the provision of "Capacity Building" support to successful Proponents.

CONCLUSION

16. The concept of the Community itself being a major driver of its own Regional Development, using Programmes such as Sustainable Regions and Regional Partnerships, facilitated through an empowered and networked privately incorporated organization appears to have been a success. There are obvious difficulties in interfacing between the culturally driven Public Sector and the aspirations of democratically elected personnel as there are between the "silos" of the Westminster system of Government, and, indeed, the three sectors of Government in Australia, at the Regional level. But the Kimberley has shown that the model can work and should be further developed.
17. The most significant deficiency in the present system is the lack of "Capacity" support in the process for newly emerging proponents to make their mark, pursue their ideas and deliver contributions to more prosperous Regional Development.
18. The concepts of more recently developed models to achieve "Whole of Government" purpose by providing horizontal integration at the Regional Sector, such as the Indigenous Co-ordination Centres and COAG (Council of Australian Governments – trial sites), could be worth pursuing.
19. Overall, there is a preference for Sustainable Regions type of Programs over Regional Partnerships, but the concept of these Programmes being facilitated by privately incorporated bodies remains supported.