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14th January 2005

Department of the Senate
Finance and Public Administration References Committee
Fpa.sen@aph.gov.au

Re: Inquiry into the Regional Partnerships Program

CPR Group understands that the Finance and Public Administration References Committee is conducting an inquiry into the Regional Partnerships Program and the Sustainable Regions Program, with particular focus on the process by which projects are proposed, considered and approved for funding.

Our organisation has completed two applications to the Department of Transport and Regional Services under the Regional Partnerships Program on behalf of clients in Queensland.

We write to the Committee in order to make comment on two aspects of the Regional Partnerships Program.

1. Comment regarding the application form

As the Committee is examining the criteria, transparency and accountability of the selection process, we feel it is important that we provide comment on the application form.

The Regional Partnerships application form unlike those used by, for example, the Department of Health and Ageing (Residential Care Places) cannot be 'unlocked'.

An application to the Regional Partnerships program, with its focus on funding not-for-profit community organisations, requires input from various members of the applicant organisation. Input on the application is also required from other stakeholders including the applicant's partners and referees.

With numerous people needing to contribute to the application it must be emailed between those providing input. Because the form cannot be unlocked it is necessary to cut and paste answers from the form to a Microsoft Word document, edit answers and then cut and paste edited content back into the form.

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The budget section of the form does not allow for entering multiple items under headings.

The difficulties caused by the form's design have delayed the submission of both applications which CPR Group prepared.

2. Comment regarding the value for money that the Area Consultative Committees represent

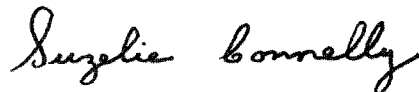
CPR Group has dealt with the Area Consultative Committees in Greater Brisbane and on the Sunshine Coast. Although ACC officers are keen to assist the process, their expertise is sometimes not directly relevant to the program.

We thank the Finance and Public Administration References Committee for the opportunity to comment on the Regional Partnerships Program and trust that our submission will be considered.

If you require clarification please contact me on:

(07) 5448 8870 or 0412 022 702

Regards



Suzelie Connelly
Managing Director
CPR Group