

Attention: Lyndon Rowe

Dear Chairman,

The Shire of Upper Gascoyne wishes to make the following submission for the Draft Microeconomic Reform document, which we understand closes at 4.00pm today. The main issue of concern and we wish to address in our submission, is the following recommendation included within the draft Microeconomic Reform document.

4. Repeal the Royalties for Regions legislation, or restrict regional funding to an amount determined annually as part of the Budget process and guided by appropriate cost benefit analysis on a project-by-project basis.

This recommendation, if implemented, will have a significant and very negative impact on those of us who call regional WA home.

As a Local Government we consider ourselves to be very much on the “frontline” with regards to the needs and wants of our Communities and are also intimately aware of the benefits the Royalty for Region program has had on those of us living and working in Western Australia’s “Engine Room”, Regional WA.

The Royalty for Regions initiative of the National Party has significantly improved Regional Western Australia in a State which is well known and criticized for its City Centric mentality and City Centric actions over a sustained timeframe. Whilst the majority of our State’s wealth comes from Regional Western Australia, until the introduction of the Royalty for Regions program, Regional Western Australia had very little to show for this wealth generation. The Regional improvements in Western Australia have been significant and the Town site of Gascoyne Junction, situated 170kms inland from Carnarvon, and the “Gateway” to the iconic Kennedy Range and Mt Augustus National Parks has been transformed because of this initiative, a town that without this funding would like have likely been written off after the devastating December 2010 flood event.

The Royalty for Regions funding has provided the Residents, Pastoralist and Visitors to Shire with new facilities in the form of a Tourism Precinct, including Roadhouse, Tavern and Caravan Park after the existing infrastructure was destroyed in the December 2010 flood. This is essential economic and social infrastructure for any small Regional Town and is very much the Community Hub of the Shire. The recent completion of this facility and commencement in operating has been a significant boost for the Town and will have long term and permanent benefits for Tourism throughout Western Australia and the Gascoyne Region.

The construction of a new Community Resource Centre (CRC) and Tourism Information Centre has provided Residents, Pastoralists and Tourist with a dedicated venue to perform a number of important daily tasks, including Department of Transport Licensing, Australia Post Agency, Library services, Tourist Information, Centrelink booth, sale of local artefacts, including the much sought after local Indigenous art.

Whilst the Shire understands that recent times have caused for a number of Budget cutbacks, and whilst we fully understand these cutback may include Royalty for Regions Funding, to repeal the Royalty for Regions Funding would be considered a significant step backwards and slap in the face for Regional Western Australia and ultimately Western Australia.

I have attached several photos from the Shire of Upper Gascoyne, including some post flood and other more current day images of Infrastructure built using Royalty for Region funding. The transformation of this Town is considered by many to be a text book Royalties for Regions funding program, which will forever, moving forward have a positive impact on the Shire of Upper Gascoyne, the Town of Gascoyne Junction and these improvements and will complement the other similar transformations throughout the Gascoyne Region, only made possible by this essential and deserved funding source.

Should you have any questions with regards to this brief submission please don't hesitate to discuss them with me. May I suggest that prior to any decision being made with regards this matter that the Board take the time to visit the areas which have been beneficiaries from the funding to allow the Board to fully experience first-hand the positive impacts and the continued need for this essential funding into the future.

Yours faithfully

Dirk Sellenger
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



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