

**Submission
No 53**

**INQUIRY INTO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
IN CENTRAL WESTERN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: The Hon Kevin Humphries MP, Minister for Western New
South Wales

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The Hon. Kevin Humphries MP
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Healthy Lifestyles
Minister for Western New South Wales

23 August 2011

The Chairman
Standing Committee on State Development
Parliament House
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Rick,
Dear Chairman,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry into Economic and Social Growth in central western NSW.

There is a need for change across Western NSW, particularly in relation to how Local Government operates and how services are delivered. In 2010 the Division of Local Government undertook a Promoting Better Practice Review of Council¹. This review was subsequently released in January 2011. The review concluded that the overall poor performance of some Western NSW Councils could not be simply dealt with by securing the adoption and implementation of the recommendations alone. The structural and strategic obstacles that Councils face are such that even the most diligent Council and skilled Council staff, would find difficult to overcome.

In addition, communities currently have little or no say in the way in which services are delivered in to their town. One particular Western town, which has a population of 600 has over 50 different service providers, is a community with complex social and economic challenges, where investment in the area delivers very little return.

As the Minister for Western NSW I have been working with the Minister for Local Government, Don Page, on proposals for restructuring Local Government in Western New South Wales. One Western NSW Council are keen to be part of a pilot program which if successful could provide a model to be implemented across other parts of Western NSW.

The overall objective of a revised service delivery model for the local government areas in Western NSW are to; bring about improvement in service delivery, its coordination,

¹ <http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/DLG/Documents/PBP/PBP%20Review%20Report%20-%20Central%20Darling%20Shire%20Council.pdf>

alignment between services provided and community needs, community involvement in decision making, and a framework for governance and accountability.

There are a number of other areas that could contribute to the growth of Western NSW. There is the potential for business development through Government agency initiatives and private partners. This could include departments such as housing being locally based, employing local contractors, utilising and supporting local resources. Also, by using local services and goods (e.g. local mechanics) the Government would be contributing to the local economy.

There is also a need for new business in Western NSW so there should be incentives to make it easier for a range of businesses to establish and operate in the region.

Across the region, Government and Non-Government services, such as police, education and health require a more sophisticated and structured approach to the model of delivery so they can meet the needs of the communities and effectively overcome the challenges of operating across regional NSW.

I believe that through creative and innovative approaches such as these we can continue to advance Western NSW. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide a submission. I look forward to working with you to improve outcomes for the people of Western NSW.

Yours sincerely,

The Hon. Kevin Humphries MP

Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Healthy Lifestyles
Minister for Western NSW