

**Submission  
No 33**

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

**Organisation:** Parkes Shire Council

**Date received:** 1/09/2011

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# PARKES SHIRE COUNCIL

*Progress, opportunities and a quality lifestyle for our residents*

## Office of the Mayor

26 August 2011

The Director  
Standing Committee on State Development  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam

### **INQUIRY INTO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL WESTERN NSW**

Thank you for the invitation to make a submission to this very welcome inquiry. I understand that project was discussed by your Chairman (The Hon. Rick Colless MLC) with Council's Economic Development Manager (Michael Greenwood) during the Country Regional & Living Expo at Rosehill in early August.

Council appreciates the opportunity to provide input into some key issues which are seen as important to ensuring that Central Western NSW remains commercially competitive.

Council believes that with the support of the NSW State Government many of the issues that are perceived as restricting economic and social development within the Central West can be overcome.

Please find attached Council's submission to the Standing Committee which addresses many of the issue and barriers that Council and the Community of Parkes Shire have identified as restricting growth economically and socially. Many of these issues are not unique to Parkes and are reflected throughout central western New South Wales.

In July 2008 Parkes Shire Council hosted the then State Government's Cabinet meeting and while Council remains mindful of the commitments and priorities of the Standing Committee, I am pleased to extend an invitation for the group to hold a public hearing in Parkes to become fully conversant with the Parkes National Logistics Hub, and to develop an increased understanding of issues emanating from the Inquiry.

Should additional information be required Council's General Manager (Kent Boyd) and/or Economic Development Manager (Michael Greenwood) would be pleased to oblige.

I look forward to your response to Council's invitation to convene a public hearing in Parkes.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Ken Keith  
**MAYOR**



# **Parkes Shire Council**

**Submission to**

**The Standing Committee on State Development**

**Inquiry into economic and social development in  
central western New South Wales**

## Executive Summary

In July 2001 the New South Wales Legislative Council initiated an inquiry by the Standing Committee on State Development into the economic and social development in central western New South Wales. The inquiry set out terms of reference which focused on factors which were restricting economic and social development in central western NSW.

Parkes Shire Council thanks the Standing Committee on State Development for the opportunity to address issues raised by the inquiry's terms of reference. Council believes that its submission (which is in essence a case study of Parkes) address' many of the issues and highlights where Council has been able to overcome some of the factors restricting economic and social development. Council is also mindful that there are many issues facing the Parkes Shire and the central western NSW which they may need State Government support to overcome. Council believes that many of these issues are not unique to Parkes but are reflected throughout the central western NSW.

Access to reliable basic health care is a major concern not only to the people of Parkes Shire but within the Central West. Parkes Shire works hard to attract and retain GP's each year the community holds fund raising events such as the GP Cup to raise money to attract GPs to the Parkes Shire, but even with amazing community support the Shire still lack an accurate number of doctors. There is also a major concern within Parkes and central western NSW about the lacks of a 24 hour emergency helicopter based in orange, over 3000 Parkes residents recently signed a petition to have the matter tabled in State Parliament. Inadequate health services are seen as a major restrictive factor in economic and social development.

Education is another issue that Council and the community of Parkes Shire feel strongly about. There is a concern within the community and the Council that the children of Parkes and central western NSW are falling behind national standards and averages. This fact is supported by the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) figures and the local schools Naplan results. This submission addresses a number of the concerns that the community has regarding these results. The Council is working hard on initiatives to provide lifelong learning opportunities in Parkes to help address some of the concerns the local community has about accessing education. In May 2010 the Council signed memorandum of understanding with Charles Sturt University and TAFE Western to set up a University Study Centre at the Parkes Campus of TAFE Western.

In recent years Parkes Shire has been working hard to develop its cultural and recreational facilities. Including the recently opened Henry Parkes Centre, which acts as the visitor information centre and houses several major cultural collections. Like many Council's in central western NSW Parkes Shire Council is finding it very expensive to maintain some of their recreational facilities such as the local swimming pools and will have to look to State Government for support to maintain them. Council has also been working closely with the local Aboriginal Community and has recently helped to secured funding for an Aboriginal Project Officer to do a Gap analysis of services and to look at ways to overcome some of the challenges identified by the local aboriginal community.

Council believes that expansion projects like Rio Tinto's Northparkes Mines Step Change project and the expansion of the Parkes Transport and Logistics Hub will lead to an increase in the population. Council has already commissioned a report into the retail capacity of the Shire and is currently seeking State Government support to develop an Economic Development Strategy to take advantage of the population growth and to address issues such as the Transport Hub and the expansion of the Parkes airport.

Parkes is well established as a National Transport Hub and believes that it plays an important element in keeping NSW and central western NSW competitive. This submission paper looks at several of the key issues that are restricting the further development of this import transport and freight link. These issues include the progression of the Inland Rail project, the completion of the upgrade of the Western Rail corridor between Parkes and Broken Hill, expansion of the Parkes Regional Airport and the importance of the Bells Line project over the Great Divide to enhance access to central Western NSW.

Council once again would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to present their submission and while Council remains mindful of the commitments and priorities of the Standing Committee, it would be pleased to extend an invitation for the group to hold a public hearing in Parkes to develop an increased understanding of issues emanating from the Inquiry.

Council is also supportive of the Centroc Group of Councils submission to this inquiry.

# Introduction

Parkes is an active Shire located within the Central West of New South Wales. It is literally the cross roads of the Nation with the Newell Highway, connecting Brisbane and Melbourne, and the transcontinental railway linking the eastern seaboard to Perth meeting in Parkes to form the logistics centre of Australia. This unique characteristic has made Parkes one of the most strategically significant locations in the future of transport and logistics in Australia, which is important for Parkes but also the nation.

Parkes is a modern, relaxed, friendly community, which offers a country way of life whilst still providing a full range of services and facilities including:

- Strong sporting base
- Recreation
- Vibrant commercial and industry base
- Strong tourism
- Stable rural economy which is underpinned by manufacturing, mining and agriculture
- Competitively priced land.

The Parkes Shire covers an area of 5,191 square kilometres and comprises of Parkes and the smaller communities of Peak Hill, Tullamore, Bogan Gate and Trundle.

The population of Parkes township according to the 2006 Census was 11,793 which had increased from 9,434 in the 2001 Census. The total shire population of 15,192 (ABS 2010) is set to continue growing with investment in mining, transport and logistics and agriculture.

According to the 2006 Census 7.2% of Parkes Shire citizens are Aboriginal compared to a national average 2.3%. The Parkes Shire Council has begun to work closely with the local Aboriginal community to address many of their issues and concerns, many of which will be discussed later in the submission.

Originally Parkes was settled in 1862 for its potential for gold but soon agriculture became king and underwrote the Shires economic consolidation and focused the direction on which the commercial, communal and civic life of Parkes and district were built.

Even though Council contends that the Parkes Shire is a vibrant community, there are social and economic issues that are restricting growth. These issues are not unique to Parkes and are reflected through many communities within the Central West, but by developing models to overcome these challenges which may be replicated through the Central West will help the region obtain economic and social stability and growth.

In September 2006 the Council consulted members of the community to develop a community plan. During October 2010 representatives from the community came together again to check that the Strategic plan was still on track and to set the vision and aspirations of the community going forward. The 2010 Community Strategic Plan will set the direction of Parkes Shire for the next 10 years. The Plan sets out 8 strategic objectives many of which are reflected in the Standing Committee's terms of reference

1. Develop Lifelong Learning Opportunities
2. Improve Health and Wellbeing
3. Promote, Support and Grow our Community
4. Grow and Diversify the Economic Base
5. Develop Parkes as a National Logistics Hub
6. Enhance Recreation and Culture
7. Care for the Environment in a Changing Climate and
8. Maintain and Improve the Shire's Assets and Infrastructure

# Terms of Reference

## ***Factors Restricting Economic and Social Development in central western NSW:***

### **a) The provision of health, education and cultural facilities,**

#### **Health Facilities**

As in all rural and regional communities' health, is an important issue and is reflected in the Parkes Shire 2010 Community Plans objectives. Within the Parkes Shire it is difficult to access basic health care; even general appointments with GPs can sometimes take up to 6 weeks. Parents are forced to present to emergency with sick children who would generally just need to be seen by a GP. This can result in long waits, unhappy patients and also put added pressure on an emergency department that should not be dealing with day to day common illnesses. Although the Council provides a \$12,000 assistance program for new GP's and Parkes community comes together for fund raising events such as the GP Cup, where annually the community raises about \$20,000 to pay recruitment costs for new GP's, there is still a shortage in the community. Regional Australia and in particular Central Western NSW needs government support to attract and retain GP's in country areas. The need for these incentives places an untenable cost burden on Councils.

We would ask that the State Government lobby the Federal Government to support Charles Sturt University's push to open a medical school in Orange which would start to address the shortage of doctors in the Central West. Its is now factually substantiated that rural trained students have a much greater propensity to stay in rural areas once they have completed their education. It is critical that rural based training opportunities be developed.

There is a strong push within the Parkes Shire for a 24 hour medical retrieval helicopter with over 3,000 Parkes residents signing a petition which required 10,000 signatures so that the issue is tabled for discussion in State Parliament. It is believed that issues, like fast access to health care in an emergency, not only has an effect on the lives of people in the Central West but also has an economic impact in that people looking to relocate want fast and reliable access to emergency medical services.

The Parkes Shire has welcomed the NSW State Government commitment to build a new hospital in Parkes. It is hoped the new hospital will provide state of the art technology which will take advantage of the National Broadband network and will link residents to medical services that once required travel of hundreds of kilometres to access. The Parkes Shire is very keen for this project to commence as soon as possible, as good health services is a significant factor for pending new residents decision to move to rural areas. Similarly the residents of Peak Hill are serviced by a hospital which is over 100 years old.

Without strong health care facilities a community's growth can be stunted both socially and economically. Strong promotion of health care and health care programs within communities helps to promote fitness and health and attracts new population to the Central West. At the moment there are several layers of health care not provided in the Parkes Shire.



## Education Facilities

The first Objective of the Parkes Shire Council Community Plan is to “Develop Lifelong Learning Opportunities”. The Plan States “Education, learning and skill development are the foundation stones for maximising the Shire’ potential and opportunities. If quality education through to tertiary level is available students can remain in the Shire supported by their families and community. Specific skills will also be needed to support the future agriculture, mining, transport, health, tourism and retail sectors. Actively promoting and encouraging skill development and education participation will in turn help business growth and expansion. Parkes Shire should develop a reputation as a learning Community”

Parkes Shire is proud of its young people and of its education system. Within Parkes there are 3 pre-schools (and 2 part-time pre-schools set up at Middleton Public School and Parkes East Public School), 4 primary schools (three public and one catholic) and 1 High School and a Christian School which goes from Kindergarten to year 10 (which is looking to expand to year 12 within the next few years). All of the smaller communities in the Shire also boast progressive Central Schools.

However, despite ground breaking initiatives such as Birth to Kindergarten program which encourages parents to **Talk, Read and Sing** to their children, local children continue to fall behind. According to the 2010 Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) figures [http://www.rch.org.au/aedi/index.cfm?doc\\_id=13051](http://www.rch.org.au/aedi/index.cfm?doc_id=13051) which was an Australian wide survey into children’s development at the approximate age of 5 and 8 months in the first year of school. The survey looked at 5 developmental indicators including:

- Physical health and wellbeing
- Social Competence
- Emotional maturity
- Language & cognitive skills
- Communication skills and general knowledge

It looked at whether children were on track (above the 25th percentile) or children developmentally vulnerable (below the 10th percentile). What the survey showed was that many of the children in the Parkes Shire were developmentally vulnerable, 34.9% of our children were vulnerable in one domain compared to a National average of 23.6%. What is more worrying is that 21.1% of Children are vulnerable in two or more domains compared to 11.8% nationally. Although these results are not reflected through the Central West they are reflected in the smaller communities.

These results are a concern as children are struggling before they even start school and are continuing to struggle all the way through, hence leading to social and economic issues later on such as, illiteracy, anti social behaviours, leaving school early and not being able to meet their full social and economic potential. Governments and local communities need to work closely together to overcome these problems early so that children of the Central West and Parkes Shire are able to reach their potential economically and socially.

Despite the challenges that the Parkes Shire has in terms of education, Council is working hard to find innovative ways to provide lifelong learning opportunities for the people of the Parkes Shire and the wider Central West, such as the Parkes University Study Centre. On the 28th May 2010 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Parkes Shire Council, TAFE Western and CSU. The aim of the Memorandum of Understanding is to actively participate and cooperate in support for the broader planning and growth of Parkes, by developing opportunities for higher education for Parkes and the Central West.

It is based on a model which has been successfully offered in Griffith since 2004 and which was highlighted in the 2008 Bradley Report as being as an innovative way of providing tertiary education to regional Australia. The report called for more “higher education service points to be established”

The aim of the University Study Centre is to:

- Increasing skills within the local community;
- Creating more local educational opportunities;
- Helping to reduce skill drain;
- Adding to the attraction of relocating to Parkes;
- Reducing the cost of studying (relocating and actual course costs);
- Increasing educational opportunities for mature age students;
- Supporting people studying via distance education.

The Parkes University Study Centre is not only important to the Parkes Shire but to rural and regional Australia. Council believes that it is a model that maybe emulated to deliver tertiary education to the regional Australian centres. Council also believes that it will help achieve the initiatives put forward in the 2008 Bradley Report into Higher Education in Australia which called for 40% of 25-34 yr olds by 2020 to have a degree or greater qualification and for 20% of this group to represent low socio economic backgrounds which including, students from regional areas.

CSU research indicated that 74% of their students who have a regional or rural experience whilst studying go onto work regionally. This figure is very important when considering investment in education in regional and rural Australia where there is an acknowledged large shortage of professionals. It is also one of the reasons that CSU is pushing so hard for a school of medicine in Orange and Bathurst and is therefore, so supportive of projects like the Parkes University Study Centre.

In order to achieve and sustain the model of the Parkes University Study Centre as a centre of excellence in education in regional Australia with the latest technology to support distance education students at some stage, the project will need access to funding. Currently Charles Sturt University has a submission into the Federal Governments Structural Adjustment Fund to request funding for Centres like the Parkes Study Centre. Although it has progressed to the second round and discussions have been held with the Federal Minister for Education’s office regarding the importance of the project, we are not confidence there is any willingness to support small communities with such innovative initiatives.

By having a University presence in Parkes, Council believes that it will help break down barriers and make the concept of going to university achievable to local people who may not have considered the option in the past. In 2004 the Western Research Institute was commissioned by Parkes Shire Council and Mid Lachlan Alliance Councils to investigate Higher Education participation with the Mid Lachlan area and found that it was under represented in terms of university participation.

The Parkes University Study Centre aims to help overcome this under representation by not only developing and delivering courses locally but, by supporting the ever growing market of people studying via distance education and to help those who want to make the step from TAFE to University.

All three consortium partners Parkes Shire Council, TAFE Western and Charles Sturt University are committed to the success of the Parkes University Study Centre. Council firmly believes it is developing a model of higher education which will be able to be replicated throughout regional and rural Australia. Council has already been approached by several other Shires and Universities about the model.

Council believes within the next five years it will deliver a Study Centre that will utilise the latest technology to help regional and rural people gain access to tertiary education. But to achieve funding and government support will be required. Initiatives like the Parkes University Study Centre are very important to the future social and economic development of the Central Western region.

## **Cultural Facilities**

Parkes Shire Council recognises that by enhancing not only cultural facilities but also recreational facilities it will attract people to the area to enjoy the benefits of the lifestyle on offer. The Community Strategic Plan states "It is recognised that by enhancing recreation and culture, Parkes Shire will attract people to the area to enjoy the benefits of the lifestyle on offer" ..

One of the challenges that the Council currently faces is the ongoing improvements of its aquatic facilities. Over the next few years Council will be:

- Looking for funding in the form of either a loan or grant to upgrade pool facilities; and
- Looking at the cost of maintaining Peak Hill, Trundle and Tullamore pool, and seeking funds to maintain them.

The Henry Parkes Centre is not only just a visitor information centre but is home to some major collections which have a cultural focus, such as the:

- The Kings Castle Elvis Museum
- Parkes Motor Museum
- Parkes Local History Museum &
- Pioneer Park Antique Machinery Museum

Cultural facilities like the Henry Parkes Centre, Parkes Little Theatre and Library and Cultural Centre and events like Parkes' annual Elvis Festival, held in January each year which attracts around 12,000 visitors and inputs \$7 million into the economy, are very important to communities like Parkes. They help substantial spending into the local economy, attract people to the area and provide the community a sense of pride.

Council has been working closely with the local Aboriginal community and has been active on a steering committee to set up a working group into Aboriginal Engagement.

Council also helped to secure funding for an Aboriginal Liaison Officer through the ICC (Indigenous Coordination Centre) in Wagga. The role of Aboriginal Liaison Officer to was to map Aboriginal services available in Parkes and undertake a Gap analysis. From there a series of community meetings were organised to discuss challenges faces members of the local Parkes aboriginal community, Issues identified at the meeting included:

- Transport to and from services and for employment & training
- Lack of driver licences in community
- Education - Truancy, Culturally appropriate support for students in schools
- Cultural appreciation and respect within broader community - cultural awareness in education system / school curriculum.
- Housing / Homelessness - access to suitable affordable housing and emergency accommodation.
- Health - access to GPs and bulk billing. Local Drs signing up to Closing the Gap Chronic Health Care Program
- Access Aboriginal Medical Service including dentists and oral health
- Need for a central meeting place with access to services (outreach centre).
- Need for more identified Aboriginal positions with employers (e.g. Council).
- Community rifts and nepotism within community.
- More signage identifying places of Aboriginal heritage and Wiradjuri language.
- Better communication and collaboration amongst service providers and community - greater awareness of available services.
- Full time Aboriginal Project Officer position for Parkes Shire
- Youth Services Coordinator - Aboriginal Youth Workers
- Grants Officer to help source funding for projects
- Access to Local Land Council
- Identification of Aboriginality - getting confirmation locally
- Community Garden
- Aboriginal services directory - website link

Council are more and more frequently becoming the front line funder for these activities.

## **b) The Reason for Population Decline or Growth in different areas**

Over the last 40 years the population in the Parkes Shire has remained relatively stable. As at June 2010 the population was 15,192 (ABS 2010) over the past 10 year according the ABS, the population increase of over 0.5%. Council believes that the population of Parkes is about to start increasing underpinned by projects such as Northparkes Mines expansion project – Step Change and the expansion of the Transport and Logistics Hub.

Although the Council welcomes initiatives like the State Government's \$7000 relocation incentive it also agrees with Associate Professor Phil McManus from the University of Sydney's, analysis that pragmatic decision about relocating to the country are influenced by key factors such as:

- Stage of life
- Affordable housing
- Educational opportunities/ facilities
- Health services
- Sense of Community
- Close to family and friends: and
- Full time employment

Although Parkes Shire ticks many of these boxes there are still areas such as health and education where it falls behind, creating barriers in attracting people to the community. Council believes that population growth and decline have a major impact on local regional economies. Growth means that there is investment in the community and retention of essential services such as hospitals and teachers. It also makes the community a more attractive place to relocate and a decline in population can have the opposite effect where a community can lose essential services and people venture outside the community to spend money.

Even though Council and the community we have been working hard to find ways of reducing these barriers State Governments support to reduce them is a prerequisite to their retention.

## **c) The adequacy of transport and road infrastructure**

Given Parkes' well established profile as a National Transport Logistics Hub, Council appreciates the opportunity of input into some key issues which are seen as important to ensure NSW remains commercially competitive. These include:

- the importance of introducing high performance freight vehicles to achieve transport efficiencies along and west of the Newell Highway, the national inland freight and motoring corridor linking Victoria and Queensland through central NSW;
- The importance of progressing the Inland Rail project, a nation building project valued at \$4.7 billion and due for completion in 10 years. Parkes has been nominated as one of the key beneficiaries in terms of new employment and economic opportunity;
- completion of the \$235 million upgrade of the western rail corridor between Parkes and Broken Hill, supplementing the \$93 million invested last year on the Parkes - Cootamundra route, consolidating the key role of Parkes on the national rail network;
- the potential of Parkes Regional Airport, currently a key passenger port within the Regional Express network, which has undergone planning for its expansion with the potential to integrate with the National Logistics Hub;
- the strategic importance and recognition of the Bells Line project over the great Divide to enhance access to central western NSW; and

- The importance of the current \$115 million feasibility study for the Step Change project at Northparkes Mines, designed to expand the Mine labour force from 600 to 930 with an additional construction workforce of approximately 1500 and increase longevity of the operation beyond 2024.

Parkes Shire Council, with the approval from the State Government, has rezoned 516 hectares of agricultural and industrial land on the western edge of the town for the development of the Parkes National Logistics Hub with an additional reserve of over 100 hectares. The site has been specifically designed for the 24 hour, 7 days per week operation of the multi-modal transport facility.

This Hub has received interest from several of Australia's largest and most successful transport and logistics companies which have recognised the immense strategic importance of the development. Transport companies with significant landholdings and operations in the Hub include SCT Logistics, Asciano and Linfox.

In the case of SCT Logistics, 6,000 tonnes of freight are transported weekly from Parkes to Perth, consolidating that company's influence on the transcontinental freight haulage network.

The growth in Parkes of ARTC, Pacific National and other transport related operations have served to effectively position Parkes as a logistics centre of national importance.

Major investment opportunities are available to businesses looking to take advantage of what Parkes has to offer as there is significant potential for logistics, manufacturing and distributing companies to relocate to the Hub to centralise their national warehousing and distribution operations.

Along with this Submission Council has included information on a range of promotional material on the Parkes National Logistics Hub, partly funded by NSW Industry and Investment through the former Central Western Regional Development Board. Council believes it reflects the importance of the Parkes Hub within the national transport network and its potential for expansion and development. (More information can be found at <http://www.parkeshub.com.au/>)

Of critical importance is the potential change of thinking in the national transport system. To continually mix freight and passengers on the highly populated eastern seaboard is fraught with disaster. The inland rail has the potential to significantly separate freight and passengers.

#### **d) Ways to encourage development of local enterprises and the potential of the region overall,**

Despite severe drought over the last decade Parkes has remained an attractive investment location. Compared to other similar sized regional areas in Australia Parkes has a strong diverse economy the Community Strategic Plan states “that we should be looking for opportunities for growth in transport, mining, agriculture, industry, tourism, government services, broadband technology and retail.”

Parkes currently boasts several major retailers including

- Furniture One
- Harvey Norman
- Cols
- Woolworths
- Target and
- Big W

Parkes Shire Council recently commissioned AEC Group to do a report into the capacity of Parkes’ retail market to expand and to analysis Parkes’ catchment base. AEC estimated as at July 2011 the total number of people within Parkes retail catchment which extends into other local government areas was 56,971 with an estimated total spending capacity of \$288.9 million annually.

AEC group analysis predicted that due to projects like Northparkes Mine Step Change Project and the Parkes Logistics Hub new residents would be moving to Parkes. They estimated that by 2020 the retail catchment of Parkes will have grown to 59,682 with an estimated total spending capacity of \$338.9 million annually. The AEC report identified that there was an undersupply of home improvement stores in Parkes, AEC estimated that with population growth and increases in spending Parkes will require an additional 12,000 square metres of retail space.

Council is using this information to start planning to accommodate the extra demand for retail space in the future and to discuss ways of attracting business to Parkes. Council is making sure that there is available land for expansion of the retail market in Parkes to ensure a vibrant, attractive and growing retail sector.

In conjunction with the retail expansion plan Council is also in the process of putting together an Economic Development Strategy for Parkes, which will include items such as retail Parkes land use, the Transport Hub and the expansion of Parkes Airport. Council is currently seeking a State Government co-contribution for the funding of this Strategy. Council believes this Strategy will be a driving force in setting the future economic direction of Parkes Shire and provide a stable financial future.

### **e) The comparative level of government business activity located within the region**

Parkes has a strong labour force participation rate. According to ABS Census (2006) it is 61.4% of the population over 15 years were either actively employed or looking for work, this is pleasing result compared to the regional average of 59.1%.

According to a Western Research Institute (WRI) report government businesses contribute significantly to this figure. WRI estimated that locally:

- RTA Western Region employs – 120 people
- DoCs employs - 35 people
- Centrelink – 80 people

In addition Parkes Shire Council employs around 170 full and part time staff. According to ABS census figures (2007) regarding “People Place of work”, 700 people in Parkes were employed in health care and social assistance and 441 in Education and training, with the majority of these jobs being Government jobs. Almost one in three people in Parkes are employed within a government agency or service. Government jobs contribute over \$100 million to the local economy. Parkes Shire requires State Government support to maintain this level of business and services in Parkes as they contribute to the economic stability of the region.

### **f) Methodologies for local government to collectively cooperate to achieve increased infrastructure funding and economic growth**

We refer to the Centroc Group of councils submission in relation to this issue.



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