

11 June 2004

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No5
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Email: gpscno5@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir

**Submission to Inquiry into the
Murrumbidgee College of Agriculture (MCA)**

I am writing on behalf of the members of the Riverina Area Consultative Committee (RACC) to support the submission lodged by the Riverina Regional Development Board in relation to the cessation of residential full and part-time courses at the MCA.

The RACC is funded by the Federal Government, through the Department of Transport and Regional Services, and focuses on regional development. RACC Members wish to stress that in a growing knowledge economy, the effective delivery of training in any region, is the backbone of regional development into the future.

It is essential that in a climate of changing environmental and farming practices, students have access to appropriate training delivered in the Riverina, including:

- Pastoral property management
- Environmental management
- Broad acre farming practices
- Irrigation and water management
- Succession planning

It is also imperative that in equipping Indigenous people for work, ongoing support be given to Indigenous residential training programs operating at the MCA.

To ensure the next generation of farm workers are afforded the opportunity of flexible and locally based training, the State Government must examine current and emerging training needs and delivery methods, in order to develop relevant solutions. The RACC supports the concept of the Murrumbidgee Education and Training Precinct outlined in the Riverina Regional Development Board's Submission to this Inquiry, as a mechanism to deliver regionally appropriate training.

Yours sincerely



Tom Watson
Chairperson