

**Submission
No 47**

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

Organisation: Association of Consulting Surveyors NSW Inc.

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The Hon Richard Colless MLC
Chairman
Standing Committee on State Development
Deputy Government Whip
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Colless

**Inquiry into economic and social development in Central Western NSW
Letter of Intent**

On behalf of the Association of Consulting Surveyors NSW representing some 200 plus private survey firms across NSW, I am writing to advise that we intend to provide a submission to the Standing Committee on State Development for the above inquiry. Further to the Committees Terms of Reference our intent is outlined below.

a) the provision of health, education and cultural facilities

A major limitation to education is that the level of effort to get talented children to major centres is enormous and beyond the ability of many families.

b) the reasons for population decline or growth in different areas

The mining industry is having a beneficial impact on the local economy. However there has been a major change in the work culture with a detrimental effect on peoples' lives through shift work, increased traffic and housing costs. In some sectors the rise in housing prices has been seen as a positive factor but it can only be a short term impact and a problem deferred to the future.

Population movements are difficult to control in this region due to natural events such as droughts which have a huge impact in terms of available employment. However the ability for the displaced workers to remain in the area is limited due to the lack of other available employment.

c) the adequacy of transport and road infrastructure

Transport is a major limitation for the area. In particular the road over the mountains is very poor. Infrastructure development that could reduce travel by 1-2 hours would benefit the region immensely and there is a need for a 100 k/h road to join the M2 or M4.

Trains run at the wrong time of the day but an East/West train joining a North/South link would be of enormous benefit in opening up central NSW.

There is a lack of competition for air fares and therefore low usage. Examples like Port Macquarie indicate that better facilities and improved competition could improve usage.

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d) ways to encourage development of local enterprises and the potential of the region overall

Business development very much relates to the catchment area and the small population. There are few natural advantages in this area that do not apply to all rural areas.

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

Government business activity is at a reasonable level given the need for it to be accessible to everyone. However Local Government is good at talking change but is hamstrung by the needs of people to protect their own patch which can often be in conflict with the community benefit

f) methodologies for local government to collectively cooperate to achieve increased infrastructure funding and economic growth

An external agency needs to force change, with cooperation. It needs to provide a clear indication of what is planned to take place and be firm that this change will take place with or without the participants. Positive policy education to gain support from the community would be very useful.

Rural communities are often very conservative so they view change with suspicion, particularly change coming from the cities so they will resist it. Local champions are critical.

In reality the broader community can focus on improving its quality of life which does not necessarily mean focusing on economic issues. Social, cultural and environmental improvement needs to be factored into any assessment of improvement and growth.

g) other factors restricting economic and social development in central western NSW

I look forward to providing a full submission but should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact our CEO, Veronica Bondarew on

Yours faithfully

Daryl Bath
Chairman