

**Submission
No 30**

INQUIRY INTO INTEGRITY, EFFICACY AND VALUE FOR MONEY OF NSW GOVERNMENT GRANT PROGRAMS

Organisation: Cabonne Council

Date Received: 21 August 2020

Committee Chair
Public Accountability Committee
Legislative Council
Parliament Of New South Wales

Re: Inquiry into the integrity, efficacy and value for money of NSW Government grant programs

Dear Chair

I write on behalf of Cabonne Council to provide a view on NSW Government grant programs, from the perspective of a small regional organisation.

Cabonne is an LGA with an overall population split across a number of towns and villages, which presents a challenge to the provision and management of community facilities. The very nature of the Cabonne LGA means that duplication of certain community infrastructure is inevitable to a large degree. In order to provide some level of equity across the shire and manage to meet community needs grant funding opportunities become a key option for our organisation.

The increased opportunities for funding, specific to regional areas, over the past few years has been of great benefit to Cabonne in achieving significant outcomes for our communities. Through this process, the needs and limited resources of smaller Councils have been taken into consideration and the chances of successfully funding key projects has been greatly increased, with this dedicated stream of funding.

Cabonne has had direct interaction with funds including:

- Stronger Country Communities Fund – round 1 to 3
- Regional Cultural Fund
- Drought Stimulus Package
- Resources for Regions Fund
- Fixing Country Roads
- Fixing Local Roads

Not all applications Cabonne have made have resulted in success, however this serves to illustrate that there is a robust eligibility, assessment and reporting process in place through the funding GMO's. The evolution and improvement of fund structures over consecutive rounds has been welcomed, for example:

- Stronger Country Communities Fund:
 - Change from Councils having to take on community projects to communities being able to apply and manage projects directly, without the onus of reporting and acquitting on Councils
 - Extension of application windows
- Resources for Regions Fund
 - Change to a funding allocation basis – this allows for better planning of infrastructure and programs by Councils
 - From round 7, inclusion of community infrastructure and programs as eligible projects

Cabonne has been successful with funding under several programs for key community infrastructure including:

- Significant expansion of 2 of the Shire's community childcare/preschool facilities
- Major improvements of small village sporting infrastructure
- A large amount of shared footpath installations or upgrades across the shire
- Electrical upgrades to a key showground
- Showground pavilion extension
- Road safety upgrades to three key mining-related roads
- Safety and quality improvements to a large amount of our local roads (Cabonne maintains over 2,000km of roads)
- A range of sustainability and maintenance improvements to community halls/buildings across the shire
- LED sports lighting upgrades

The delivery of this key infrastructure has been able to take place many years sooner than otherwise would be possible through the support of grant funding. I hope this information assists the Committee with its current inquiry.

Kind Regards

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