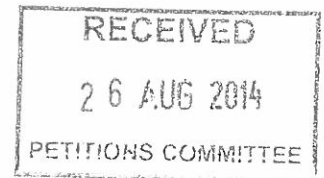




## The Hon Jamie Briggs MP

Assistant Minister for Infrastructure  
and Regional Development  
Member for Mayo



11 AUG 2014

*Reference: MC14-001654*

Dr Dennis Jensen MP  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Petitions  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Jensen

Thank you for your letter dated 23 June 2014 about the petition submitted to the Standing Committee by the people of Manning Valley, New South Wales.

The petitioners requested that funding be restored for the Greater Taree City Council's Roads and Bridges Package, the allocation of additional funding for Council's Roads and Bridges Replacement Programme and that a funding structure be established to provide direct funding to rural Local Government Authorities for roads and bridges.

The Australian Government has announced that it will provide funding of \$10 million towards the Greater Taree City Council's Roads and Bridges Package under the Community Development Grants Programme. This funding is contingent on partner funding of \$1.4 million and Council signing a Funding Agreement with the Australian Government before 30 November 2014. The project will be subject to an assessment by my Department to ensure each component represents value with relevant money.

Funding for Council's roads and bridges continues to be available through the Roads to Recovery Programme and the new Bridges Renewal Programme.

The Australian Government will continue the Roads to Recovery Programme until at least 2019. In addition to its commitment to maintain Roads to Recovery funding at the current level of \$350 million per annum, the Government announced in the 2014 Budget a further commitment of \$350 million to be provided in 2015-16. This brings total funding for the programme to \$2.1 billion over the five years to 2019.

Following the amendment of the *Nation Building Program (National Land Transport) Act 2009* to provide for this extension, the Government will determine new council allocations and new funding conditions for the Programme. The additional funding in 2015-16 means that each council will receive the equivalent of one extra year's Roads to Recovery funding.

The Australian Government has also committed \$300 million over the next 5 years to a Bridges Renewal Programme. This project will provide up to 50% of the cost for bridge projects focusing on improvements in productivity and/or community access. Projects will be selected as part of a competitive merit-based process. The proposal period opened on 1 July 2014 and closes on 28 August 2014. The Greater Taree City Council has registered its interest and has received the Programme Criteria and Proposal Form.

I trust this information will be of assistance.

Yours sincerely

**7 Jamie Briggs**