

27 July 2010



**Regional  
Development**

Regional Development Australia  
and Regional Development Victoria

BARWON SOUTH WEST

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Select Committee on the Reform of the Australian Federation  
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## **SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE REFORM OF THE AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION**

On behalf of the Barwon South West Regional Development Australia (RDA) Committee I would like to thank the Select Committee for the invitation to make a submission.

Given the subject matter as important as the reform of the Australian Federation, the RDA Committee is concerned at the short timeframe provided for submissions.

The RDA Committee has elected not to provide a substantive submission in this case. However the RDA Committee believes that local councils and other bodies in the Barwon South West region may have an interest in the Select Committee's activities, and it has encouraged them to provide a submission.

The RDA Committee would, however, like to provide a brief comment in relation to part (b)(v) - strategies for strengthening Australia's regions and the delivery of services through regional development committees and regional grant programs.

The Barwon South West RDA Committee believes that Regional Development Australia is good model and Regional Development Australia committees have great potential to facilitate collaborative activity across local, state and Australian governments. However, for the RDA committees to be more effective and achieve their objectives, they require more open access to Australian government guidance and advice. Currently, there does not appear to be a clear mechanism by which RDA committees can develop or progress projects with Australian government agencies, nor influence Australian government policy. The experience of the Barwon South West RDA Committee in Victoria is that the establishment of an agency dedicated supporting regional and rural Victoria - Regional Development Victoria - has provided regions with a clear access point to Government, and a pathway by which regions can influence Government. The RDA Committee encourages the Select Committee to consider the merits of establishing a similar dedicated agency within the Australian Government.

Please don't hesitate to contact me on 03 5559 4814 or [ceo@warrnambool.vic.gov.au](mailto:ceo@warrnambool.vic.gov.au) should you wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely,

Bruce Anson  
Chair



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