



Australian Government
**Cotton Research and
Development Corporation**

The Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP
Chair
Select Committee on Regional Development and Decentralisation
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

23 August, 2017

Dear Dr McVeigh,

On behalf of the Cotton Research and Development Corporation (CRDC), please accept this letter as our submission to the Select Committee on Regional Development and Decentralisation's inquiry into regional development and decentralisation.

As a corporate Commonwealth entity, this inquiry is relevant to CRDC. CRDC was established in October 1990 and operates under the *Primary Industries Research and Development Act 1989* (PIRD Act). CRDC exists to enhance the performance of the Australian cotton industry through investment in, and delivery of, cotton research, development and extension (RD&E).

CRDC is an example of a corporate Commonwealth entity that was established in – and continues to serve – a regional community. CRDC is based in Narrabri, NSW: the heart of one of Australia's major cotton-growing regions and home to the Australian Cotton Research Institute, run by two of our major cotton research partners, NSW DPI and CSIRO.

The Australian cotton industry is internationally recognised as innovative, dynamic and hugely successful – due in part to the willingness of the industry to invest in world-class results and rapidly adopt the emerging science, innovations and technology. Research and development continues to be at the forefront of driving our industry's remarkable productivity growth.

CRDC's location in a major cotton growing region has enabled strong relationships to be formed with cotton growers and researchers over the past 27 years. During this time, the cotton industry has grown, with CRDC-supported research now benefiting cotton growers from central Queensland to northern Victoria.

Narrabri remains a central location for CRDC's operations, and we continue to receive strong support from the cotton industry and the local community. Importantly, we invest strategically to ensure that our research is relevant to, and benefits all, cotton growers, irrespective of location.

A recent survey of CRDC's key stakeholders – including growers and their representative bodies, the Government, and key industry partners – found that stakeholders are highly satisfied with CRDC as an organisation to trust. CRDC achieved a score of 8.7 out of 10 for this metric: a strong result achieved through our close collaboration, relationships and partnerships with the cotton industry.

There is little doubt that our location within a cotton growing region has assisted with building this level of trust over time, as we understand, as local residents, the challenges and opportunities cotton growers and rural communities face.

Narrabri has proven to be an ideal home for CRDC over the past 27 years, and we look forward to continuing our relationship with the local community. Narrabri has emerged as a research centre of excellence over many years – not only for the cotton industry, but also industries such as grains and astronomy, with both the University of Sydney I.A. Watson Wheat Research Centre and the CSIRO Australia Telescope National Facility Paul Wild Observatory based here.

We would be very pleased to appear before the Committee to discuss the benefits of CRDC's location as you consider submissions to this inquiry. We would also like to invite interested members of the Committee to Narrabri to see our RD&E investment in action – be it at the research institute, or in a cotton field.

Kind regards,

Bruce Finney
Executive Director
Cotton Research and Development Corporation

