



DISTRICT COUNCIL OF COOPER PEDY

"Opal Capital of the World"

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6 January 2026

Ref: OCO2354260106

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development,
Infrastructure and Transport
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Email: rdit.reps@aph.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability Inquiry

Council has received a letter from Hon Kristy McBain MP Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories and Member for Eden-Monaro, dated 21 November 2025, inviting Council to make a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport (**Committee**) regarding Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability.

The letter and the Committee's Terms of Reference were presented to Council and at the Meeting of Council held on 16 December 2025, Council resolved unanimously:

"That Council's Chief Executive Officer, on behalf of Council, makes a submission regarding the Federal Government's House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport in line with the information provided in the Background section of the Notice of Motion from Supporting Administrator Mr John Moyle titled "Review of Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability" and dated 16 December 2025."

I therefore offer the following points as Council's submission regarding local government funding and fiscal sustainability:

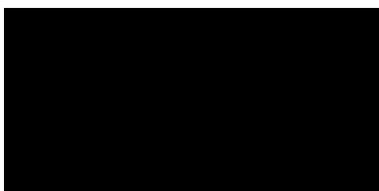
1. The higher cost of goods and services experienced by remote regional councils due to the high transport costs, reliability of transport to remote regions and time delays in receiving essential goods and services in a timely manner all adding to project costs.
2. The lack of appropriately qualified and experienced personnel to fill important employment positions in remote regional councils. These skilled workers are

not always readily available in remote regional councils, nor are appropriate personnel always prepared to move into the regions to fill vacancies. This often leads to either higher salaries needing to be paid compared to comparative positions in metropolitan or near metropolitan councils or remote regional councils having to use consultants and contractors to fill vacancies often on a semi-permanent basis adding to the cost of services.

3. Economies of scale. The remote regional councils almost always are made up of small populations so the cost of services (a wider range of Services) is spread over a smaller rate base and they are unable to benefit from economies of scale experienced by the much larger councils in the metropolitan areas. Council's additional services required by being a remote council compared to metro councils include Child Care, Airports and Essential Services such as electricity and potable water supply.
4. High cost of infrastructure provision (Remote high cost of goods and services see item 1) and suitable housing for Fly In – Fly Out (**FIFO**) and Drive In Drive Out (**DIDO**) workers. FIFO require facilities, housing and services. Airports are often provided by Regional and Remote Councils to support Government and Not-For-Profit Services employees that provide an array of State and Federal services. Emergency Services, Education, Community Services, Health, Medical and Police form a high proportion of FIFO/DIDO workers in regional and remote councils.
5. The impact of being remote often means that remote regional councils must own and maintain plant and equipment that is not regularly utilized. Due to the lack of local contractors and the inability to use hired equipment at short notice. The high cost of transporting and time to access equipment is extremely prohibitive.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this submission on local government funding and fiscal sustainability given the extreme disadvantages that the District Council of Coober Pedy experiences as a regional remote local government body.

Yours sincerely



Garry Herdegen
Chief Executive Officer