

INTRODUCTION

The Seery partnership, which is based in Moree, is a farming partnership located in the Moree Plains Shire Council. Firstly we take this opportunity to thank the State Government for the opportunity to make a submission in relation to the proposed *Native Vegetation Regulation*.

Our production is based upon dry land crops such as wheat, barley, faber beans, chick peas and dry land cotton in addition to irrigated crops such as cotton. The partnership is also involved in the ginning and warehousing of cotton, earthmoving and transport.

Like all primary producers, we are very concerned with both the current and proposed New South Wales Native Vegetation laws. From the outset we wish to make it abundantly clear that the partnership is of the respectful opinion that the current Native Vegetation Act and Regulations make it extremely difficult for us to sufficiently adopt new technology and farming practices to improve efficiencies and productivity. We welcome the state government's review of the Regulations however we feel that the government would be well advised to review both the regulations and the Act itself.

We consider ourselves and our business to be excellent environmental stewards. Each year, we spend approximately \$20,000.00 in the management and control of environmental issues such as invasive weeds, erosion and feral pests. These costs will only continue to increase as, pests and weeds will continue to thrive in land that has been set aside for Native Vegetation. In order to properly manage these issues we should be spending more than \$20,000.00 per year however we simply cannot afford to do so. As the expected costs of managing weeds, invasive species and pests continue to rise we will simply not be able to afford the associated expenses.

We are conservation farmers who have adopted minimum till farming in order to preserve the soil and natural resources on our farms. It is our wish that through the adoption of environmentally sustainable farming practices the resources on our farms will be able to produce food and fibre for many generations to come.

Native Vegetation laws have a direct impact on our business and as such we have a vested interest in the proposed Native Vegetation regulations. For example, weeds are a problem on our properties which require ongoing and committed management. The current legislative landscape in NSW places an emphasis on the protection of groundcover which results in an inability to properly and efficiently manage invasive weeds. This in turn impacts upon both the environment and the profitability of our business. A further example of how the current Native Vegetation laws impact our business is seen in the productivity of our cropping activities. The current laws restrict productivity in that cropping is enfeebled by scattered trees and small clumps of timber in our farming paddocks. These areas harbour weeds, pests such as feral pigs and reduce moisture.

The current and proposed regulatory restrictions on the management of invasive species also pose a risk to both the environment and the viability of our business. Despite the clear and demonstrated negative environmental impacts that invasive species have we are still required to embark upon a protracted and confusing approval process in order to remove and manage invasive native weed species.

This submission will identify the major problems which from the partnerships perspective are evident in the proposed Native Vegetation Regulations and we will then seek to offer reasonable and practical options which will ensure that Native Vegetation is protected, and will also ensure the viability of continued agricultural production together with delivering positive outcomes for rural communities.

THE PROPOSED REGULATIONS

1. Property Vegetation Plans (PVP's)

The overall amendments contained in the draft regulations to the way development proposals are assessed and determined are with respect negligible. Property Vegetation Plans are incredibly difficult for the average primary producer to understand and in our experience the advice of a solicitor is required in order to actually understand what the landholder's rights and obligations actually are.

The complex nature and operation of PVP's act as a serious deterrent to producers who are considering applying for such a development proposal.

We acknowledge that there must be some mechanism to approve clearing and /or development however the form and delays associated with PVP's are of concern. The proposed and so called "stream line assessment" is not as beneficial as its description suggests. The proposed changes to assessment rules only appear to apply to applications for the clearing of relatively small areas, pasture cropping and the clearing of individual trees in cropping paddocks. Whilst we welcome the proposed streamline assessment we suggest that this assessment methodology be adopted in relation to any applications to clear invasive native scrub and/or weeds.

The streamline assessment methodology is welcomed in that producers will know sooner the outcome of any application for a PVP however it would appear that the methodology will result in the same outcomes as the current assessment processes.

A further difficulty that we have with PVP's is that they continue to apply to the title of the land despite any change of ownership. This in our experience is another strong deterrent for landholders to apply for a PVP. In our experience the existence of a PVP on the title to land is a significant impediment to a prospective purchaser of rural land. We respectfully suggest that this restrictive registration requirement be deleted from the operation of PVP's.

2. "Broadscale" Land Clearing

The new provision in the proposed Regulation at Clause 19(1)(b) is welcomed however we suggest that the exemptions are too limited to have any beneficial impact. We note that the proposed clause exempts "broadscale clearing" that is minor clearing and comprises management action or works for conservation purposes from the requirement for assessment in accordance with the Assessment methodology. In theory this new provision is a sensible addition however it is somewhat reliant on a

misleading and impractical definition. The current definition of "broadscale" land clearing is derived from s8, *Native Vegetation Act 2003*. The definition as it currently stands is as follows;

For the purposes of this Act, "broadscale clearing" of native vegetation means the clearing of any remnant native vegetation or protected regrowth.¹

The result of this definition is that the clearing or picking of one individual plant can be potentially classified as broadscale clearing. It seems completely impractical for the Regulation to be dealing with any proposed amendments to broadscale clearing when the definition of same is completely impractical. We suggest that the State Government give serious consideration to establishing a threshold in order to distinguish between minor development and actual broadscale clearing. The Regulations could address this issue by imposing a percentage threshold. We suggest for instance, that the Regulations could provide that developing 20% or less of the native vegetation on a landholding is classified as a Routine Agricultural Management Activity.

Such a provision in the Regulations will alleviate the requirement for prosecutions as a result of a flawed and misleading statutory definition. We note that this is a perfect example of why both the Act and Regulations should be amended together.

3. Routine Agricultural Management Activities (RAMAs)

We believe that the current restrictions that are placed on RAMA's by the Regulation are unnecessary and unrealistic. We are also concerned that the proposed Regulation continues the differential distances for the same activities in different parts of the state. Our ultimate submission is that the restrictions on RAMA's would all be increased to 20 meters or at the land holders' discretion, whichever is the smaller. For the purpose of this submission we will adopt the central region RAMA's.

The 10 metre allowance for both an internal and a boundary fence is restrictive and illogical. Common sense would suggest that a landholder would be permitted to clear to a width that will ensure that the fence is not damaged by falling timber. That is to say that the restriction should be amended to allow a width of 20 meters or to such a reasonable width to ensure that the fence is not damaged by falling timber, whichever is the smaller.

The Moree district is subject to violent storms throughout the summer months and the 10 metre restriction often results in damaged trees falling and ruining fences. If the restriction was increased and landholders were allowed to exercise some discretion then considerable and unnecessary costs could be avoided.

We make a similar argument in relation to fixtures such as pumps, water points and tanks. Such infrastructure is currently subject to a 3 metre restriction which is completely derisory in reality. Landholders incur considerable costs in installing infrastructure and it seems to us that it is completely unfair in the circumstances that such infrastructure can be easily damaged, again by

¹ S.8 *Native Vegetation Act 2003* (NSW)

falling timber in the common event of summer storms. We again suggest that the distance allowed to be cleared in such a circumstance be increased to 20 meters or to the land holder's discretion, whichever is the lesser.

All RAMA's across the state should be universal and to a distance of 20 meters or at the land holder's discretion, whichever is the lesser.

4. Invasive Native Species (INS)

We believe that the invasive native species provisions fail to address the essential management that is required to prevent environmental damage from INS. The proposed Regulation continues to restrict what should in fact be an obligation of land holder's to control INS on their land. The measures dealing with INS in the Regulation are confusing and complex in their nature and do not provide any clarity to land holders.

The requirement that any land cleared pursuant to a PVP on the grounds of INS be returned to native pastures is ill founded and without logic. The intention of the Act as we understand it is for any development to ultimately improve or maintain environmental outcomes. We submit that the simple removal of INS from land results in improved environmental outcomes provided the land is kept free of INS. Rotations of cropping together with native pastures would better achieve greater environmental outcomes compared to simply clearing the INS and then simply leaving the country unmanaged.

Land holders should be permitted to clear 100 % of INS at "paddock scale" with the provision that continued management of the cleared area be maintained to ensure that INS does not regrow and again take over the landscape. It seems obvious to us that once INS has been cleared and removed that the introduction of rotational cropping and native pastures would meet the legislations objective of improving environmental outcomes more so than unmanaged pastures wherein INS would presumably regrow.

Whilst we note the contents of Regulation 34 of the proposed Regulation we suggest that the Regulations should clearly specify what INS are declared as opposed to simply leaving it to the discretion of the minister. Such a list of INS would provide landholders with certainty of the species that can be cleared as RAMA. Such a list of species should be state wide to again provide certainty and the listed species could then be properly controlled to the environments benefit. The actual list of INS could be decided upon by a collaboration of CMA's and landholder groups such as NSW Farmers and other such concerned individual land holders.

5. Codes of Practice

We welcome the idea of codes of practice which are prescribed for by the proposed Regulation. In our submission, codes of practice which enable clearing for low intensity development provide a

positive approach to land management and the sensible protection of Native Vegetation. However the draft Codes of Practice for INS appears to fall short of meeting this objective.

For the purposes of this submission we have analysed the draft Code of Practice for INS Management for the Namoi CMA.

Firstly we note again that the requirement of re-establishing Native Vegetation as provided for in section 1 seems to be at odds with the intention of the Act. We repeat and adopt our submission at point four [4] above in that the intention of the Act is to maintain or improve environmental outcomes, it seems to us that purely by the removal of INS this objective is achieved.

Section 6 of the draft Code is also of some concern. The permitted clearing types are far too restrictive and are far too rigid in their operation. On occasions INS such as and in particular mimosa (*Vachellia farnesiana*) completely infest paddocks and the only way to adequately and permanently control the INS spread would be to implement clearing of the INS at a paddock scale. The proposed Codes approach to the management and clearing of INS is limited to restricted burning or the clearing of individual plants. In areas where the infestation of INS is present such an approach is far too restrictive and impractical.

It is somewhat illogical to expect that a landholder has the required time available to treat large areas of INS through the clearing / management of individual plants. As such the restrictive nature of the permitted clearing will in our submission result in reluctance of landholders to effectively manage and clear INS. This in turn will only have negative impacts on the states native vegetation management and the environment as a whole.

Landholders should be given the discretion to determine whether INS management on their land requires paddock scale clearing or alternatively whether the INS can be managed by burning or individual plant clearing / management. The Codes of practice should, in our submission vest such authority and discretion in landholders and as a safeguard the code could provide that any such clearing be done to the minimum extent necessary to control or manage INS.

Invasive Native Species are a major concern for landholders and we strongly urge the State Government to give as much discretion as is required so that landholders have the capacity to manage this continuing and escalating problem. Over 1,350 exotic plant species (weeds) have naturalised in NSW with more than 100 of these species having significant impacts on the environment.² In our experience as landholders, weeds will often out-compete native species to form stubborn monocultures which displace and subsequently eradicate indigenous species. In agricultural areas, weeds can out-compete crops and pasture species resulting in lower economic returns and the need for expensive control measures.

We submit that the problems of INS can be solved but landholders need to be given proper discretionary powers to deal with the problem. As such we strongly urge the state government to vest paddock clearing capabilities to the landholders and limit this power to dealing with listed INS and only to the minimum extent necessary.

² New South Wales Invasive Species Plan 2008 – 2015, NSW Department of Primary Industries

We have also perused the draft code of practice for the thinning to benchmark stem densities in the Namoi CMA. From the outset we suggest that this proposed code is incredibly convoluted and very difficult to understand. We respectfully suggest that many landholders will have difficulty in understanding this code of practice. It would therefore be appropriate in the circumstances for the thinning code of conduct to be simplified. We again suggest that landholders should also be given the ability to exercise their discretion in determining whether paddock clearing or thinning is more appropriate than individual tree thinning. Such discretion need not change the permissible percentages to be cleared and retained but rather will make the operations of thinning more viable for landholders. This in turn will have positive impacts for the environment as the remaining trees and groundcover will have reduced competition.

The codes of practice are welcomed and with some amendments and modifications these codes can provide certainty to landholders which can only result in positive environmental outcomes. As such we respectfully suggest that the codes also be developed for the clearing and management of small clumps of native vegetation in cropping paddocks and scattered paddock trees. In developing such codes we urge the state government to adopt a flexible yet simple approach to drafting the codes to ensure that landholders can readily understand and work within the codes of practice.

6. Grasslands Discussion Paper

It is refreshing that the NSW Government has included the grassland discussion paper in the materials accompanying the draft Regulation. The three identified options to deal with the long held concerns regarding the management of groundcover are a step in the right direction however we feel that further work needs to be undertaken in properly developing the review in order for it to adequately achieve its objectives.

For instance the current discussion paper is somewhat ambiguous in that it does not appear to permit the temporary or permanent displacement of native grasses associated with any approved removal of timber. This abstruse restriction could therefore result in the prosecution of a landholder for the temporary displacement of native grass as a result of the lawful and authorised removal of native timber.

We suggest that further consultation with industry needs to happen in order to adequately finalise the available options and the paper.

7. The Environmental Assessment Methodology (EOAM)

Our primary concern with the EOAM lies primarily with its interpretation by local Catchment Management Authorities. The draft EOAM is again a very complex document which is not easily interpretable.

CMA's in the past have interpreted EOAM's as mechanisms which allow them to prescribe farming practices to landholders through the conditions contained in PVP's. This practice is clearly contrary to the Act and as such we respectfully suggest that all CMA's be carefully appraised of and trained in relation to the final EOAM prior to it coming into operation. It should be made clear to the CMA's that there is no legal basis for the prescription of farming actions.

8. Potential penalties

In our submission the potential penalties that can be imposed on landholders are excessive and should be reduced. When landholders are investigated for potential breaches of the Act or the Regulations they are compellable to answer any questions and provide all available documentation to investigating officers. It seems disproportionate in the circumstances that in New South Wales one has a right to silence if one is alleged to have murdered someone yet one who is alleged to have cleared one single tree is compellable to answer any questions put by the investigators.

The lunacy continues in that if one does not provide answers and information to the investigators then additional and quite substantial fines will be incurred. The fact that Landholders are not privy to any of the usual common law rights that are enjoyed by alleged criminal law offenders is completely unfair and incongruous. Whilst we acknowledge that the investigative powers and restrictions are contained in the Act and not the regulation we urge the state government to return a fair and reasonable balance to the investigative process when potential breaches of the Act and / or Regulation is taking place.

Penalties for potential breaches of the Act and or Regulation can exceed \$1 million which in our submission is completely excessive and should be immediately reduced to a more reasonable figure. When you consider that the maximum financial penalty for the offence of assaulting a police officer is \$5,500.00 when dealt summarily³ it suggests that the potential penalties in relation to Native Vegetation are unfair and completely disproportionate in all of the circumstances.

9. Compensation to Landholders

Despite the legislative requirements we as landholders value both native vegetation and biodiversity. We voluntarily retain native vegetation in mosaic patterns on our land.

However the current Legislation and Regulation in NSW imposes additional and unfair obligations which result in otherwise profitable areas of land been "locked up" and therefore becoming unproductive.

It is our submission that landholders must be paid for this conservation service at a rate equivalent to the value of the lost production; this is a widely held view. For example; The Productivity Commission, in its major report, *Impacts of Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Regulations (2004)* found that native vegetation legislation imposed "unreasonable costs on farmers" and that the legislative approach was "an inefficient way of achieving public conservation outcomes in rural

³ S.60A Crimes Act NSW 1900

Australia" The productivity commission recommended proper consideration of the social and economic impacts in relation to clearing approvals⁴.

Even the Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists, a group that is not known for its fair approach to primary production has called for farmers to be paid for the provision of environmental services and for more flexible, collaborative approaches to conservation on private land⁵.

Our argument for compensation is best encapsulated in the decision of Callinan J in *Smith v ANL Ltd* [2000]. His Honour noted as follows;

*"It is unthinkable that in a democratic society, particularly in normal and peaceful times, that those who elect a government would regard with equanimity the expropriation of their, or other private property without proper compensation. What the public enjoys should be at the public, and not a private expense."*⁶

We submit that fairness and equity demand that landholders be provided with compensation where their property rights are restricted in order to achieve environmental outcomes for the public's benefit.

It is fundamentally unfair that the State Government can restrict the use of our own property without adequate compensation.

We again note that this opinion is widely held by the farming community and also by members of the Judiciary. Kirby J in *Newcrest Mining (WA) Ltd v Commonwealth of Australia*⁷ J noted that the right to due process and compensation for the deprivation of property rights;

*"is a fundamental and universal right"*⁸.

CONCLUSION

Whilst we welcome the State Governments review of the *Native Vegetation Regulation 2005* the overall changes in reality are minimal. In most cases land holders are still required to apply for a PVP through local CMA's. The streamline assessments in our submission are likely to result in the same outcomes as are delivered currently.

A summary of our submission is as follows

⁴ Australian Productivity Commission, *Impacts of Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Regulations* (2004)

⁵ The Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists Report to the Premier, *A new model for Landscape Conservation in New South Wales*, February 2003.

⁶ *Smith v ANL Ltd* (2000) HCA 58 at [156] per Callinan J

⁷ (1997) 190 CLR 513

⁸ *Ibid*, at 657 – 661.

I

The State Government should also review the Native Vegetation Act 2003. There are deep-seated problems with this legislation which continues to define broadscale clearing as the removal of one individual tree. Ultimately PVP's should be wound back and replaced with plans that allow and encourage flexible land administration.

II

The offset ratios in the Regulation remain unchanged and this should be amended. A ratio of 30 to 1 can be exceeded in some proposals which is excessive, unrealistic and unfair.

III

There needs to an assessment together with an acknowledgement in relation to the economic, national and community benefits that are associated with increased agricultural production.

IV

PVP's will continue to be subject to complicated and inflexible rules. The Regulation should drastically increase the flexibility of PVP's and CMA staff should be adequately and trained and provided with enough discretion to allow them to work with individual land holders.

V

The conditions concerning the management and clearing of INS are completely impractical and do not allow for affordable or realistic management / clearing techniques. Land Holders should be given discretion to engage in paddock clearing in order to properly control INS.

VI

The codes of practice are a step in the right direction however in their current form the codes are needlessly complex and too restrictive. The codes should allow landholders greater flexibility and new codes for the clearing of paddock trees and clumps should be developed.

VII

The penalties for breaching either the Act or the Regulation are excessive and disproportionate in the circumstances. Landholders continue to face fines of up to \$1 million for breaches of the legislation. The penalties should immediately be reduced.

VIII

Any current prosecutions under the Act or Regulation should also be stayed until the State Government has had an opportunity to peruse all submissions in relation to the proposed Regulation and also until the Act has been reviewed.

IX

Landholders deserve compensation when legislation forces them to lock up otherwise profitable areas of land which then become unproductive. Landholders must be paid for this conservation service at a rate equivalent to the lost value of the lost production

Given that national and global demand for food and fibre will only continue to increase it goes without saying that agriculture in Australia can have a very positive future. This future though is dependent upon the executive and legislature finalising and implementing flexible and realistic

policy. The national economy and indeed the world's population need Australian farmers to continue to produce food and fibre.

We are the custodians of our land, we value our land highly and we care for it. It is our wish that through the adoption of environmentally sustainable farming practices the resources on our farms will be able to produce food and fibre for many generations to come. To do this though we need both practical and flexible policies and as such we urge the State Government to carefully take note of our concerns and the concerns of other land holders across the state.

We again thank the State Government for the opportunity to make this submission.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'W J Seery'.

Mr John Seery, for and on behalf of the Seery Partnership.

Date: 23- 8- 2012

Enquiries to: Suzie Treloar
Direct Line: (02) 6757 3211
Email: suzie.treloar@mpsc.nsw.gov.au
Reference: FILE RE:DCS



14 August 2012

WJ & A Seery Partnership
[REDACTED]
MOREE NSW 2400

Dear Mr Seery

CHANGES TO FARMLAND IRRIGABLE RATING

Thank you for your correspondence dated 26th July 2012.

We are unsure why you would not have received the letter we posted to our Irrigable ratepayers of 31 May 2012 regarding the changes to our Farmland rating categories until 6th July 2012, as all letters were posted at the same time. Perhaps there might have been an issue with Australia Post.

Mr Seery, after months of review and discussion about rates, which included an opportunity for the public to view and comment about Council's proposed rate structure in the form of the Moree Plains Shire Council Delivery Program (2012-2015) and Operational Plan (2012-2013), as well as several public meetings, Council has already adopted the rating structure for the 2012/2013 rating year. This is a legal obligation that Council must adhere to. This means there will be no changes to the Farmland General and Farmland Irrigable rating categories for this year, and your rates for this rating year will stand.

In regard to your concern as to Council's right to use the sub-category of Farmland Irrigable, we refer to The Local Government Act, Chapter 15, Section 529 (Rate may be the same or different within a category).

- (1) *Before making an ordinary rate, a council may determine a sub-category or sub-categories for one or more categories of rateable land in its area.*
- (2) *A sub-category may be determined:*
 - (a) *For the category "farmland" - according to the intensity of the land use, the irrigability of the land or economic factors affecting the land"*

Council has used this clause as a factor in determining our rates for 2012/2013, with the view of only having one Farmland rate by 2014/2015. To go to one Farmland rate this year would have had too much of a financial impact on one group of ratepayers - namely Farmland General. In order to make the transition a little easier, it was decided to make the changes gradually over a three year period.

PO Box 420, Moree NSW 2400
Telephone 02) 6757 3222
Facsimile 02) 6752 3934
council@mpsc.nsw.gov.au
mpsc.nsw.gov.au

When categorising a property as 'Irrigable' we quote directly from The Department of Local Government Council Rating and Revenue Raising Manual as to how this is determined.

"Water licences and irrigated land

Where a water entitlement, under the Water Act 1912, attaches to any parcel of land the value of that entitlement has been included in the valuation of that land for rating purposes (section 6A(3) of the Valuation of Land Act). This has meant that water entitlements were rated under the farmland category.

From July 1 2005 the value of water access licences under the Water Management Act, or the right to take water under the Water Act 1912 will no longer be included in valuations of land for rating purposes provided to councils by the Valuer General.

The Water Management Act is a key component of the NSW Government's water reform agenda flowing from the 1994 Council of Australian Governments (CoAG) Strategic Water Reform Framework. It effectively converts current water entitlements to three separate licences or approvals:

- An access licence. This effectively entitles the holder to a share of a water resource as specified in a water sharing plan and does not relate to any particular parcel of land or property on which that water may be used;*
- A water use approval. This attaches to a specific piece of land and confers the right to use water for a particular purpose according to specific conditions; and*
- A water supply work approval. This also attaches to a specific piece of land. It confers the right to construct or use a water supply work for the purposes of bringing water to a specified property."*

What this also means is that when we categorise someone as Irrigable, we do not take into account how much of your property you irrigate, or how you use your licence, but rather just whether a licence or water supply work approval is held or not, which is determined by the criteria as stated above from the Department of Local Government.

Another one of your concerns was the time frame that you believed Council were on to get to one Farmland rate, and our use of Irrigation in determining our rates. Your belief is that we were to have done this by the end of 2012. Where this perception has come from is Council's ability to use Farmland valuations as a means of sub-categorisation. As a way of explanation of your perception, we quote directly from a Special Council Meeting held on the 19th June 2008:

"In May 2007 the Local Government (General) Amendment (Rates for Irrigable Land) Regulation 2007, was gazetted. The intention of this regulation was to provide Councils with transitional powers to effectively manage the impacts of the removal of water from land values following the enactment of the Water Management Act 2000. Unfortunately the final draft of the regulation had the un-intended impact of limiting those provisions for a single year to Moree Council and others on the same revaluation cycle.

The new regulation, being the Local Government (General) Amendment (Rates for Irrigable Land) Regulation 2008, has corrected this issue and provides that a Council may have regard to the percentage reduction in land value attributable to the removal of water as a means of sub-categorisation for farmland properties. This is a transitional arrangement only and will

be in effect for one valuation cycle. For Moree Council that effectively means Council has four (4) years to utilise this provision (beginning 2008/2009 ending 2011/2012). This is provided in two parts. The first being in section 120B of the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Rates for Irrigable Land) Regulation 2007* below:

"For the purpose of determining sub-categories of farmland, as referred to in section 529 of the Act, a council may have regard to any differences in the reduction of land values of irrigable land that have arisen as a consequence of the commencement of section 6A (4) of the Valuation of Land Act 1916."

The second being clause three (3) of the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Rates for Irrigable Land) Regulation 2008* as follows:

"Clause 120B does not apply to a council in respect of any year following the second occasion after 1 July 2007 that the Valuer-General gives a valuation list to the council following a general valuation carried out in respect of the council's area."
Clause two (2) of the regulation above clarifies that once a Council has received a revaluation following the removal of water, that Council is required to use those values for rating purposes"

As such, in previous years we have had 23 sub-categories of Irrigable farmland based on how much the property value decreased by when Water Licences were removed

Using your assessment number 6648 as an example, in 2003 when adjustments were done, the property was valued at \$8,444,000, and then was revalued at \$960,000 when the licence was removed. As the property value fell by \$7,484,000 your assessment fell into the category of 'Farmland Irrigable (88-89%) as this is how much the property value decreased by.

This rating year (2012/2013) we now have two Farmland rate categories - Farmland General and Farmland Irrigable. This means we are no longer using the valuations (with the water portion taken out) as an indicator to determine your rates, but rather, just whether you have a water licence attached to your property as mentioned above.

After saying all this, we have individually reviewed all the Farmland properties within the Seery connection to assess any affects our changes have had on you (though please advise us if we have missed any). Please refer to the enclosed attachment, whereby you can see that the Seery connection has actually **benefited** from the changes we have made. Despite your property values increasing on average by 24.7%, your rates have **decreased** by the amount of \$30,856.72 (or 17.67%). In one instance, even though the property's valuation (from the Valuer-General's Office) increased by 81.3%, the rates only increased by 37.5%. As you can see, Council has tried to minimise the impact of large property valuations to our ratepayers.

Ratepayers were given the opportunity to object to the valuations determined by the Valuer-General's Office when the new valuations were sent out at the end of January (which many of our ratepayers successfully did).

In reference to your comments in regard to the contribution our Farmland ratepayers make to rates and the amount spent on rural roads, we have attached a copy of a presentation Council did for some of our Farmland ratepayers.

This has some excellent information in it regarding Council revenue, rates, roads and expenditure. Here you will see that, we collect two thirds of our rates from Farmland ratepayers. It also shows that approximately two thirds of our roads expenditure is allocated specifically for rural roads.

Mr Seery, we trust that this addresses your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

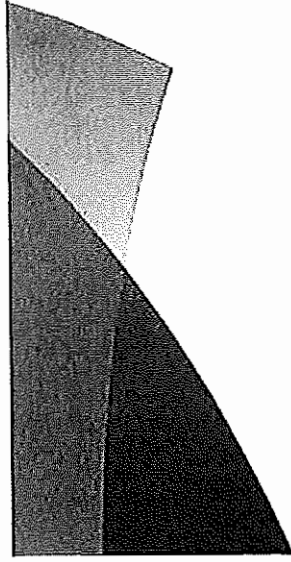
Yours sincerely

Suzie Treloar
SENIOR RATES OFFICER

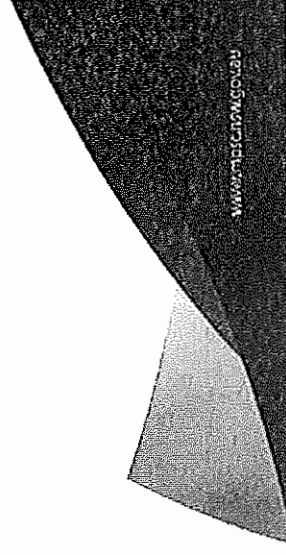
RATES COMPARISON

SEERY PROPERTIES

Assessm	Property Address	Property Description	2011/2012	2012/2013	Difference \$	Difference %	Val 2012	Val 2013	Difference \$	Difference %
6648	Bonanga Block 2	Farmland	\$20,926.50	\$14,358.95	-\$6,567.55	-31.4%	\$2,220,000	\$2,860,000	\$640,000	28.8%
7910	Brighan	Farmland	\$15,687.71	\$15,987.08	\$299.37	1.9%	\$3,230,000	\$4,130,000	\$900,000	27.9%
5122	Sappa	Farmland	\$35,746.32	\$22,521.12	-\$13,225.20	-37.0%	\$3,850,000	\$4,590,000	\$740,000	19.2%
5521	Clifton	Farmland	\$16,480.25	\$15,680.02	-\$800.23	-4.9%	\$2,300,000	\$3,140,000	\$840,000	36.5%
6649	Cambooya/Bonour	Farmland	\$27,753.67	\$19,737.50	-\$8,016.17	-28.9%	\$3,690,000	\$4,000,000	\$310,000	8.4%
7509		Farmland	\$6,942.93	\$9,546.62	\$2,603.69	37.5%	\$1,015,000	\$1,840,000	\$825,000	81.3%
5525	Terrawynia	Farmland	\$30,777.11	\$30,305.82	-\$471.29	-1.5%	\$5,210,000	\$6,240,000	\$1,030,000	19.8%
5528	Fairford	Farmland	\$20,312.18	\$15,632.84	-\$4,679.34	-23.0%	\$2,480,000	\$3,130,000	\$650,000	26.2%
TOTALS			\$174,626.67	\$143,769.95	-\$30,856.72	-17.67%	\$23,995,000	\$29,930,000	\$5,935,000	24.7%



Welcome to Moree Plains Shire Ratepayer Information Meeting

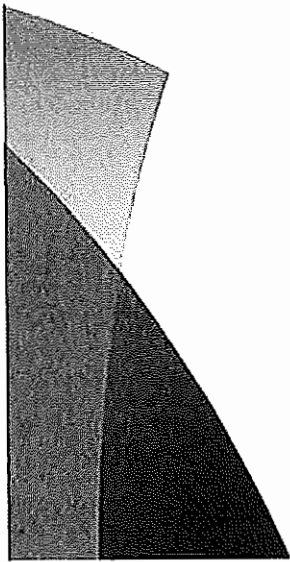




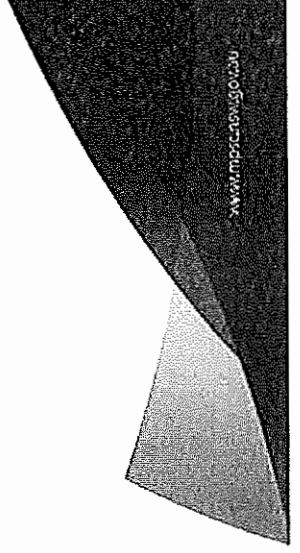
Today's Agenda

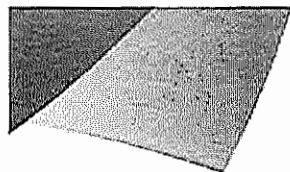


- Introduction
- General Rates – Suzie Treloar, Senior Rates Officer
- Budget Summary – Andrew Probert, Manager Financial Services
- Roads – Clancy McMahon, Works Manager
- Planning Ahead – Ross Earl, Director Corporate Services
- Questions



GENERAL RATES 2012/2013

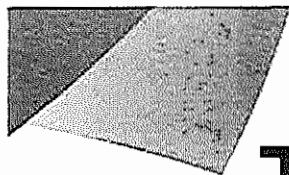




RATES

- The major component of a council's income is generated via the levying of rates.
- Moree Plains Shire Council is proactive and determined to produce a fair balance between rates levied on the shire's population and the level of services that can be provided.
- The amount that is required to be raised from rating is determined after considering Council's proposed capital works program whilst ensuring the long-term financial viability of the funds.
- An additional consideration is the limitation on rates income that is set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). This limitation is known as Rate Pegging and involves a percentage cap on the income raised from ordinary and special rates from one year to another.

Section 492 of the *Local Government Act 1993* provides two types of rates: Ordinary rates and Special rates



THE ORDINARY RATE



By virtue of section 494 of the Act, Council is required to make and levy an ordinary rate for each year on all rateable land in its area. This is a mandatory requirement. Land is rated based upon the use of that land or the zoned use of that land. There are four main rating categories, within which council can create additional sub-categories.

The four broad categories provided by Section 493 of the Act are:

- Residential
- Farmland General
- Business
- Mining

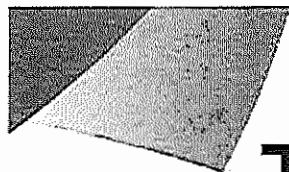
Moree Plains Shire Council utilises the first three categories only because no mining takes place within our shire. All rateable land is classed within one of the four categories unless it is deemed non-rateable, such as a church, school or similar institution.



2012/2013 RATES OVERVIEW



- Last year of special rate variation of 9.25%
- An additional 0.40% allowed for carbon price advance for 2012/2013.
- This increase will be removed from the following two years rate increases (0.10% in 2013/2014 and 0.30% in 2014/2015).
- Average general rates increase for 2012/2013 of 9.65%.
- The special variation will result in approx \$152M spent over 10 years on the road network.
- Please note that all figures used in this presentation are averages only. Individual assessments may increase by more or less than the average.



THE ORDINARY RATE



Moree Plains Shire Council will be utilising six (6) rate categories for the 2012/2013 rating year:

Residential

Residential

Residential Rural

Farmland

Farmland General

Farmland Irrigable

Business

Business

Business Moree



SPECIAL RATE



- Council has discretion to levy special rates
- Special Rates must be made pursuant to section 495 of the *Local Government Act 1993* but may be levied under section 495 or the provisions of Division 2 of Part 5 of Chapter 15 of the Act.
- In the former instance, the special rates may be levied for works or services provided or proposed to be provided by council (eg town works benefiting a specific locality, tourism promotion benefiting a particular ratepayer sector)
- Special rates are also capable of application across all ratepayers. For example, all ratepayers in a council are could be made subject to a special rate intended to finance a project that will benefit the whole of the council area.
- Moree Plains Shire Council currently levies two special rates:
 - **Business Intensive**
 - **Industrial Drive**

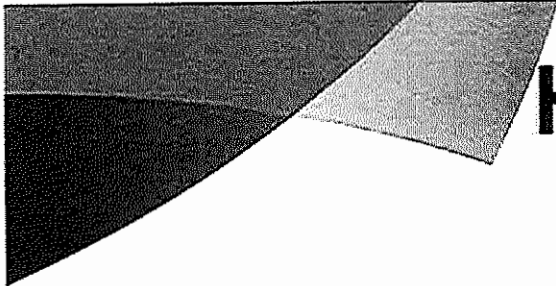


COUNCIL VALUATIONS - GENERAL



- Council received the new valuations from the Valuer General's office on 7th October 2011.
 - The valuation total as at 1st July 2011 is \$3,372,295,530.
 - Values as at 1st July 2007 were \$2,487,348,445.
 - An increase of \$884,947,085 or 35.58%.

Please note that new valuation notices were posted out by the Valuer General's Office to individual rate payers on 30th January 2012.



HOW ARE RATES CALCULATED?



- Rates are calculated as follows:-
 - Land Value x Ad Valorem Rate
 - Eg. $\$1,000,000 \times 0.0036614 = \$3,661.40$
 - Base Rate of \$750 is added
 - Waste Levy Charge of \$115.50 is added
 - Total rates would be \$4,526.90



RATE CATEGORIES AD VALOREM



RATE CATEGORY	AD VALOREM RATE
Residential	0.01151174
Residential Rural	0.0096110
Farmland General	0.0036614
Farmland Irrigable	0.0047180
Business Moree	0.0296388
Business	0.0093054
Business Intensive	0.0322863
Industrial Drive	0.0064454



FARMLAND RATING - BACKGROUND



- *Water Management Act 2000* removed the value of water from farmland properties in 2006
- Approximately \$880 Million was removed from 327 properties across the Shire
- The **goal of Moree Council has been to minimise the impact** that the removal of water will have on individual ratepayers while moving towards a single farmland category
- The intention of the Minister for Local Government was not to create a wind-fall for irrigators in terms of rate reductions
- Work is ongoing to achieve an equitable spread of the rate burden.



FARMLAND RATING - BACKGROUND



- Moree Council has utilised multiple farmland rate categories for a number of years.
- The rate structure has consisted of a 'farmland general' rate and 23 sub-categories known as 'farmland irrigable'.
- Farmland General: Contains assessments related to dryland farming activities.
- Farmland Irrigable: Contains assessments that are related to irrigated farming activities, with sub-categories pursuant to section 529 of the Act.



FARMLAND RATING 2012/2013



- The ongoing challenge has been to continue to collect the same level of rates from the farming category rate payers and ensure they do not get penalised too heavily with a change in category.
- Legislation requires Council to reduce the number of categories levied for farmland.
- Council has reduced the number of farmland categories currently being levied to:

Two farmland rates comprising

- Dryland
- Irrigable

FARMLAND VALUATIONS – GENERAL (DRYLAND)

- There are approximately 1,300 Farmland General assessments
- Values as at 1st July 2007 were \$1,438,198,320
- Values as at 1st July 2011 are \$2,054,549,510
- An increase of \$616,351,190 or 42.86%
- Farmland General Rates contribute approximately 42% of total rates revenue
- Farmland General rates in 2011/2012 were approximately \$7,467,874.
- In 2012/2013 they will be approximately \$8,408,709 (a total increase of \$940,835), applying the 9.25% increase, and the 0.4% carbon tax (a total of 9.65%).

FARMLAND VALUATIONS - IRRIGABLE

- There are approximately 330 Farmland Irrigable assessments
- Values as at 1st July 2007 were \$773,538,160
- Values as at 1st July 2011 are \$1,021,138,910
- An increase of \$773,538,160 or 32.01%
- Farmland Irrigable Rates contribute approximately 25% of total rates revenue
- Farmland Irrigable rates in 2011/2012 were approximately \$4,735,162.
- In 2012/2013 they will be approximately \$4,971,920 (a total increase of \$236,758), applying the 9.25% increase, and the 0.4% carbon tax (a total of 9.65%).



FARMLAND IRRIGABLE RATING - BACKGROUND



Farmland becomes Irrigable if it has attached to it, one or more of the following three separate licences or approvals:

An access licence. This effectively entitles the holder to a share of a water resource as specified in a water sharing plan and does not relate to any particular parcel of land or property on which that water may be used;

A water use approval. This attaches to a specific piece of land and confers the right to use water for a particular purpose according to specific conditions; and

A water supply work approval. This also attaches to a specific piece of land. It confers to the right to construct or use a water supply work for the purposes of bringing water to a specified property.

Proposed Structure for Two Farmland rates phased in over 4 years.

	% Increase 2012/13	% Increase 2013/14	% Increase 2014/15	% Increase 2015/16	% Cumulative Increase
Dry	12.60%	7.20%	7.20%	3.63%	30.63%
Irrigable	5.00%	-3.43%	-4.16%	2.43%	-0.16%
Total	9.65%	3.24%	3.24%	3.24%	19.37%

Calculation Basis:

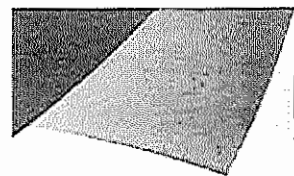
- To phase in one farmland ad valorem rate by 2015/2016.
- Dryland increased for first three years by approx 3-4% over rate peg amount.
- SRV increase of 9.65% for 2012/13 and 3.24% for each subsequent year.

FARMLAND RATES - GENERAL

Average Land Value (Old Val'n)	\$1,105,456
Average Land Value (Current Val'n)	\$1,579,208
Increase \$	\$473,752
Increase in Land Value %	42.68%
Average Rate Per Assess (2012)	\$5,740
Average Rate Per Assess (2013)	\$6,463
Increase \$	\$723
Increase in Rates%	12.60%

* Ad Valorem for 2012/2013 is 0.0036614

* Base Rate will be \$750



FARMLAND RATES - IRRIGABLE



Average Land Value (Old Val'n)	\$2,387,463
Average Land Value (Current Val'n)	\$3,151,663
Increase \$	\$764,200

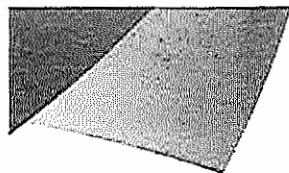
Increase in Land Value %	32.01%
---------------------------------	---------------

Average Rate Per Assess (2012)	\$14,615
Average Rate Per Assess (2013)	\$15,345
Increase \$	\$730

Increase in Rates%	5.00%
---------------------------	--------------

* Ad Valorem for 2012/2013 is 0.0047180

* Base Rate will be \$750



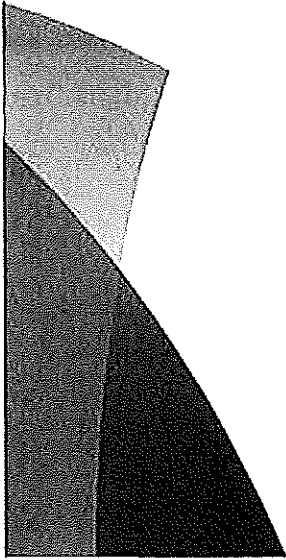
Question



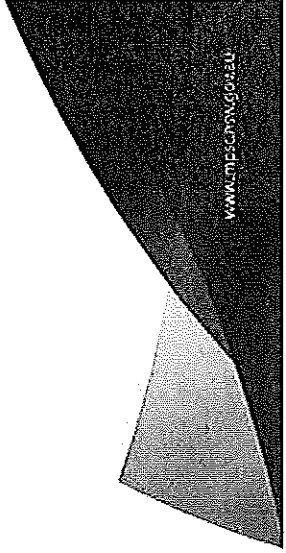
Can an individual's rates be capped if a large increase in land valuation has occurred?

No. Rates are a tax. If you feel your valuation is unfairly high, you can contact the Valuer-General's Office to ask them to reassess it.

To ease the burden, rates can be paid quarterly, or if you are having difficulty paying, you can contact us to make alternative payment arrangements, however the amount levied will not change.



Budget Summary



WWW.MOREEPLAINS.COUNCIL.NSW.AU

Rate Categories 2012/2013

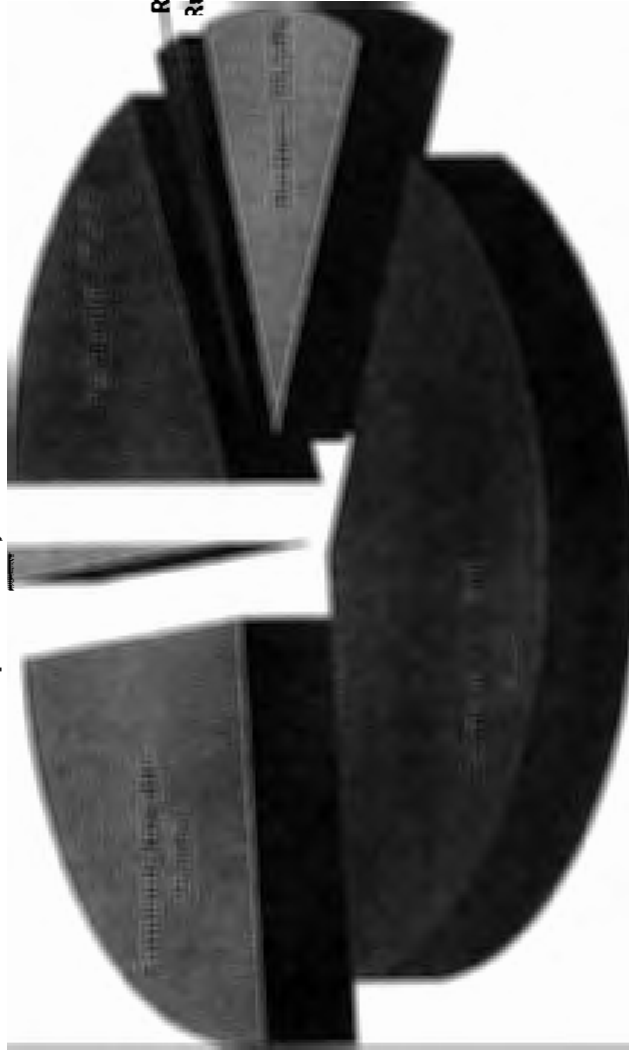


Rating Category	Levy Amount \$	Levy Amount %
Residential	\$3,577,474	17.93%
Residential Rural	\$387,711	1.94%
Farmland General (Dryland)	\$8,408,709	42.16%
Farmland Irrigable	\$4,971,920	24.93%
Business Moree	\$2,156,567	10.81%
Business	\$155,427	0.78%
Business Intensive	\$250,083	1.26%
Industrial Drive	\$37,000	0.19%
TOTAL	\$19,944,891	100.00%



RATE REVENUE BREAKDOWN

Special Rates, 1.44%



Residential
Rural, 1.94%

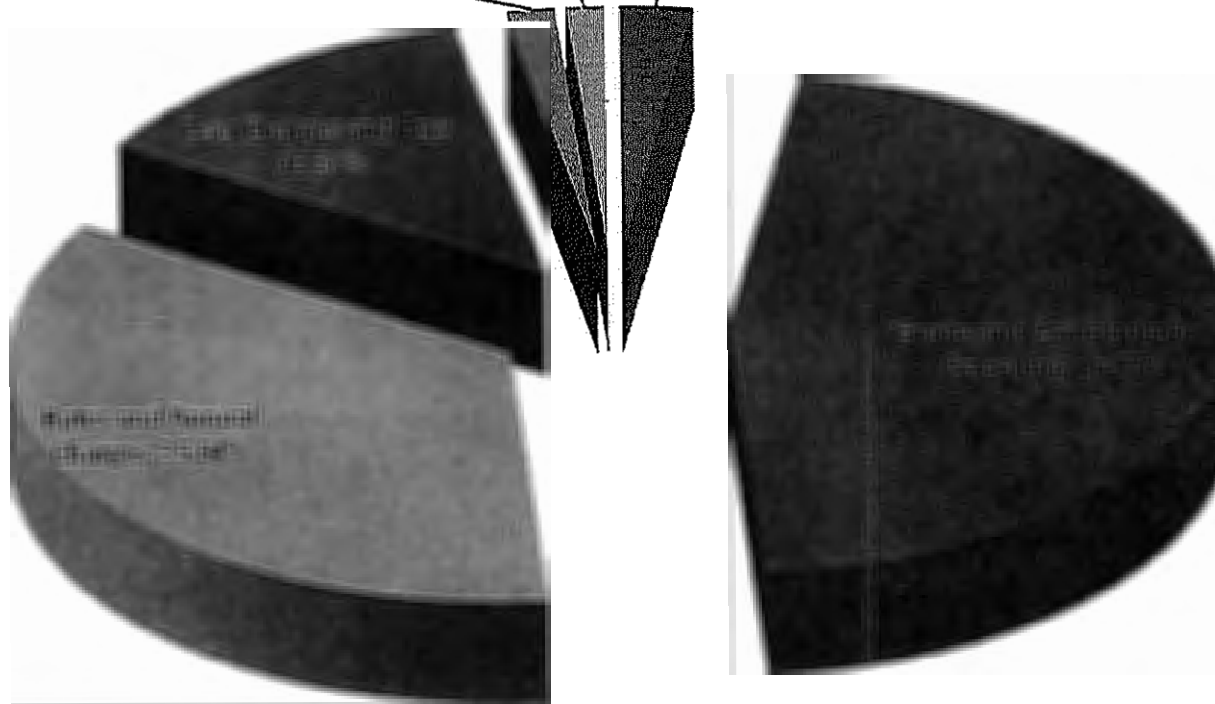
2012/2013 Budget Income Summary



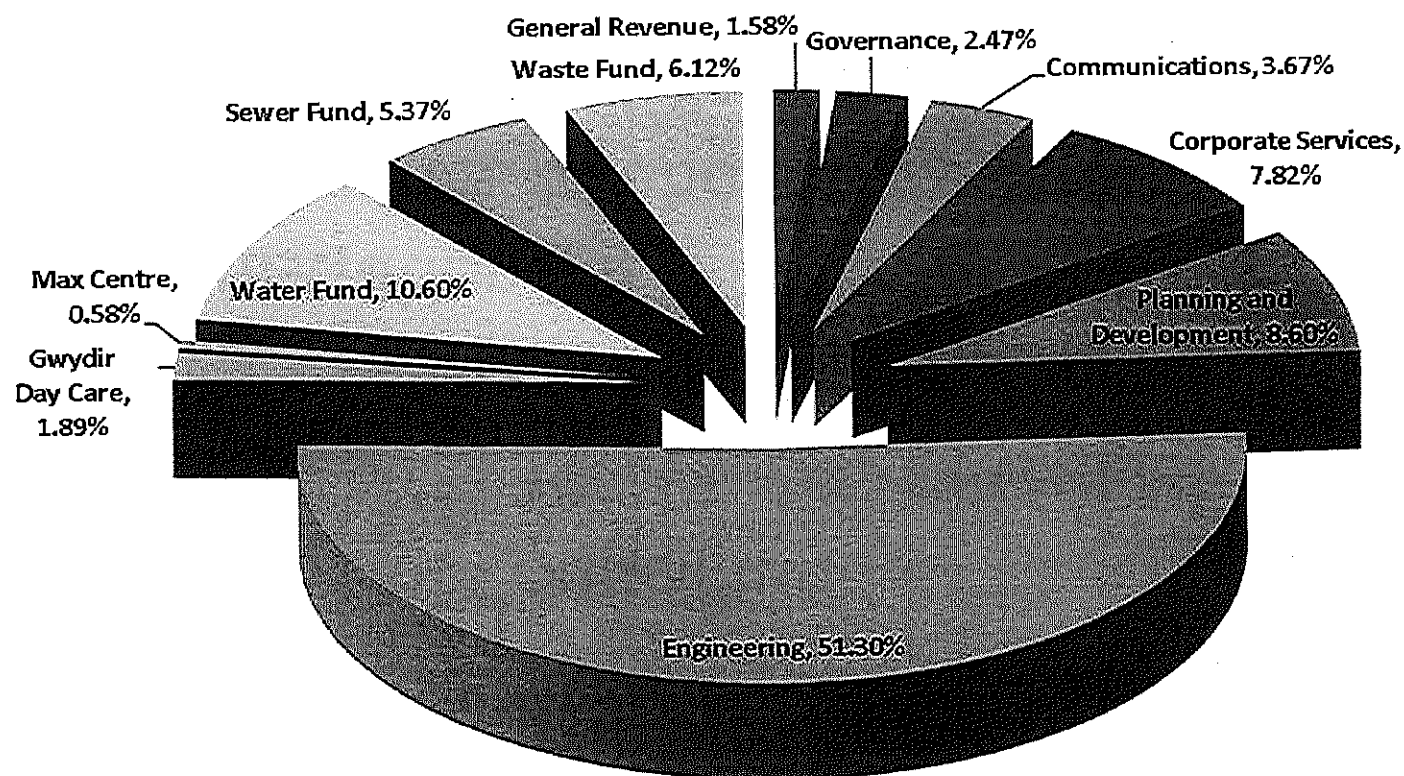
Interest and Investment
Revenue, 1.52%

Other Revenue, 1.29%

Grants and Contributions
Capital, 2.38%



2012/2013 Budget Expenditure Summary





Other budget questions



- Allocation of Council funds
 - Council budget is generally a two thirds rural / one third urban split.
- Administration costs are approximately \$5.3m which equates to about 12% of council expenditure.

Summary



Road Asset Management Funds	2011/12 (\$)	2012/13 (\$)
Total Revenue	9,732,210	10,587,491
Base (Increases assume 3% annual rate pegging limit)	6,763,535	6,444,536
SRV 508(2) (Increases assume 3% annual rate pegging limit)	932,675	957,955
SRV 508A (Assume 9.25% annual SRV Increase)	2,036,000	3,184,000
Total Rural Roads Expenditure -- Sealed Rural	4,633,853	5,113,556
Maintenance	1,040,955	1,081,110
Renewal	880,000	300,000
Reseals	1,176,898	1,228,446
Reseals -- SRV 508A	1,536,000	2,504,000
Total Rural Roads Expenditure -- Unsealed Rural	2,470,236	2,062,683
Maintenance	1,568,236	1,648,683
Maintenance -- additional	500,000	
Renewal (12km ie 0.6% of unsealed network)	402,000	414,000
Total Urban Roads Expenditure	2,628,121	3,411,252
Maintenance	971,792	1,008,804
Renewal	938,425	1,495,000
Reseals	217,904	227,448
Reseals -- SRV 508A	500,000	680,000

Road Expenditure Breakdown



Total Expenditure	\$10,600,000	
Rural Roads	\$7,200,000	68%
Urban Roads	\$3,400,000	32%
Maintenance	\$3,700,000	35%
Capital (renewal/reseal)	\$6,900,000	65%
- Rural	\$4,500,000	65%
- Urban	\$2,400,000	35%

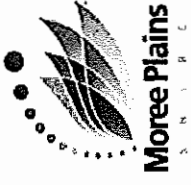
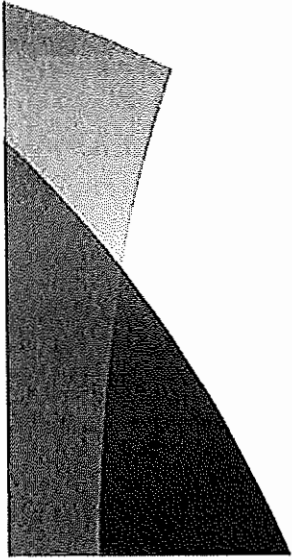
Note: Capital Expenditure on rural roads will increase to approximately 75% of capital road expenditure by 2014/2014.

Revenue Sources of Road Expenditure

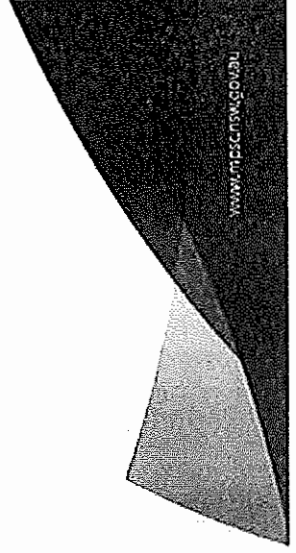


Total Expenditure	\$10,600,000	
Revenue Sources		
General Rates Revenue	\$3,000,000	28%
Financial Assistance Grants	\$2,600,000	24%
Roads to Recovery Grants	\$1,800,000	17%
Special Rate Variation	\$3,200,000	31%

Note: All money raised from the special rate variation is spent on the resealing program only. The specific projects are included each year in Council's Operational Plan / Delivery Program.



ROAD SCHEDULE OF WORKS





Capital Works 2011/12



Please note that any items listed as "Postponed" have now been listed in the 2012/13 Project List. This is as a result of the November 2011 & February 2012 floods.

Project	Budget (\$)	Status
Regional Roads		
MR 507 Bruxner Way Reconstruction (Boomi-Boggabilla)	850,000	Commencing May 2012
Unsealed Roads		
SR15 Morialta Road	402,000	Commencing May 2012
Sealed Roads		
SR101 Terry Hie Hie Road (Reconstruct Part Seg150)	500,000	Postponed
SR 110 Berrigal Creek Road (Rehab various locations)	180,000	Commencing May 2012
SR120 Rosedale Road (Reconstruct Seal Seg70)	200,000	Near Completion



Capital Works 2011/12



Please note that any items listed as "Postponed" have now been listed in the 2012/13 Project List. This is as a result of the November 2011 & February 2012 floods.

Project	Budget (\$)	Status
Urban Roads		
Wesley Lane	318,425	Postponed
Roslyn Lane (Balo to Heber)	220,000	Commencing June 2012
Roslyn Lane (Heber to Albert)	200,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Warialda Street (Alice to Adelaide)	430,000	20% Completed
Gosport Street Rehab. (Alice to Adelaide)	500,000	Commencing May 2012

2011/12 GF Reseals



Please note that any items listed as "Postponed" have now been listed in the 2012/13 Project List. This is as a result of the November 2011 & February 2012 floods.

Project	Budget (\$)	Completed
SR 101 Terry Hie Hie	213,864	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SR 105 Mosquito Creek	73,017	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SR 106 River	74,841	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SR 108 Burrington	135,374	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SR 200 Gwydirfield	42,066	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Amaroo Drive, Moree	26,045	Postponed
Anne Street, Moree	30,550	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Belgravia Street, Moree	14,594	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

2011/12 GF Reseals



Project	Budget (\$)	Completed
Benson Street, Boomi	42,674	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Boggabilla Street, Boggabilla	19,070	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Boland Drive, Moree	35,698	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Boston Street, Moree	41,021	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Boundary Street, Moree	33,932	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Brigalow Drive, Moree	14,668	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bullus Drive, Moree	8,155	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Goondiwindi Street, Mungindi	10,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wirra Street, Mungindi	10,500	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



2011/12 SRV Reseals achieved



Please note that any items listed as "Postponed" have now been listed in the 2012/13 Project List. This is as a result of the November 2011 & February 2012 floods.

Project	Budget (\$)	Status
SR 3 Goonal	140,777	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SR 12 Talmoi	104,454	Postponed
SR 14 Curragundi	7,170	Postponed
SR 15 Morialta	91,000	Postponed
SR 17 Cleveland	4,238	Postponed
SR 25 Caloona	68,723	Postponed
SR 102 Dolgelly	104,003	Postponed
SR 104 Foxes Lane	5,474	Postponed



2011/12 SRV Reseals achieved Moree Plains

Please note that any items listed as "Postponed" have now been listed in the 2012/13 Project List. This is as a result of the November 2011 & February 2012 floods.

Project	Budget (\$)	Completed
SR 106 River	144,645	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SR 110 Berrigal Creek	84,966	Postponed
SR 111 Melburra	108,910	Postponed
SR 127 Buckie	93,348	Postponed
SR 136 Tyrone	237,397	Postponed
SR 183 Romaka	332,549	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SR 205 Backspear	12,292	Postponed



2011/12 SRV Reseals achieved Moree Plains

Please note that any items listed as "Postponed" have now been listed in the 2012/13 Project List. This is as a result of the November 2011 & February 2012 floods.

Project	Budget (\$)	Completed
Carol Avenue, Moree	47,137	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Chester Street, Moree	63,358	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Clarke Avenue, Moree	5,766	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Condor Crescent, Moree	12,337	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cooee Street, Moree	10,857	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Coolibah Road, Moree	16,872	Postponed
Delander Credcent, Moree	17,712	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



2011/12 SRV Reseals



Please note that any items listed as "Postponed" have now been listed in the 2012/13 Project List. This is as a result of the November 2011 & February 2012 floods.

Project	Budget (\$)	Completed
Downer Avenue, Moree	6,767	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Edward Street, Moree	45,967	Postponed
Florence Street, Moree	15,506	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Frome Street, Moree	83,073	Postponed
Gosport Street, Moree	12,890	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gwydir Street, Moree	45,573	Postponed
Jones Avenue, Moree	37,041	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



2011/12 SRV Reseals achieved

Please note that any items listed as "Postponed" have now been listed in the 2012/13 Project List. This is as a result of the November 2011 & February 2012 floods.

Project	Budget (\$)	Completed
Julia Place, Moree	6,047	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Keperra Place, Moree	4,982	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Krui Place, Moree	2,263	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Lucksall Street, Moree	23,040	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Joyce Avenue, Moree	20,400	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

2012/13 SRV Planned Works



Renewal	\$
Unsealed Roads	
SR102 Dolgelly (Resheet)	414,000
Sealed Roads	
SR 1 Watercourse (Reseal)	112,980
SR 3 Goonal (Reseal)	250,908
SR 6 Telleraga (Reseal)	307,819
SR 12 Talmoi (Reseal)	114,716
SR 106 River (Reseal)	126,424
SR 110 Berrigal Greek (Reseal)	231,265
SR 123 Limbon (Reseal)	137,053



2012/13 SRV Planned Works



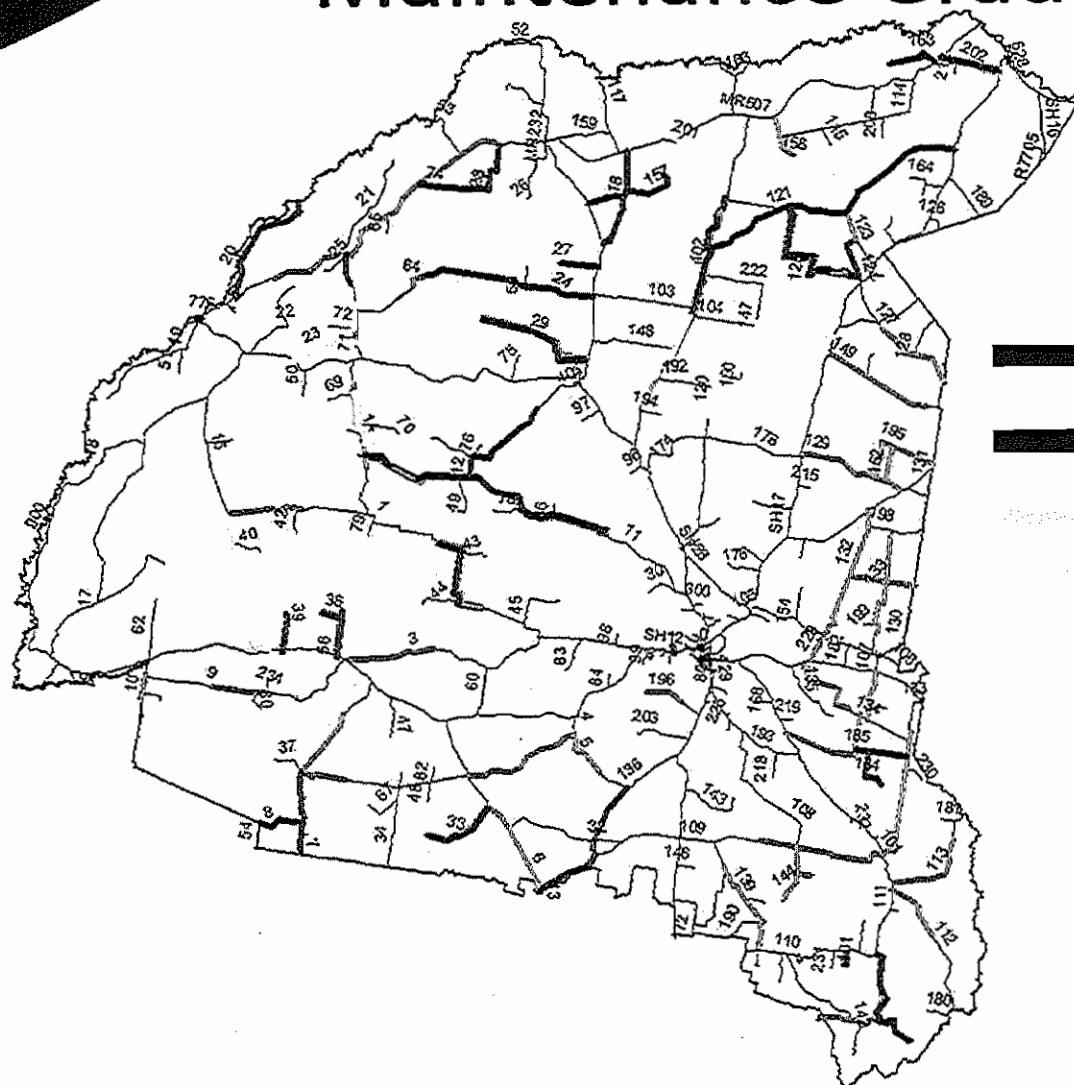
Renewal	\$
Sealed Roads (cont.)	
SR 127 Buckie (Reseal)	121,478
SR 129 Gil Gil Creek (Reseal)	128,432
SR 130 County Boundary (Reseal)	94,612
SR 136 Tyrone (Reseal)	33,011
SR 139 Boo Boo (Reseal)	181,048
SR 183 Romaka (Reseal)	38,294




Capital Works 2012/13



Renewal	\$
Sealed Road	
SR 110 Berrigal Creek Road (Rehab various locations)	100,000
SR 12 Talmoi Road (Rehab seal various locations)	200,000
Urban Roads	
Balo Street (Adelaide to Thompson) - Reconstruction	385,000
Mungindi Streets (Sealing unsealed shoulders)	100,000
Boggabilla Streets (Sealing unsealed shoulders)	100,000
Ashley Streets (Rehabilitation)	120,000

Maintenance Grading Works



-  Maintenance Grade (Mar 2012)
-  1 Lane Grade (FD) (Jan/Feb 2012)
-  2011 Flood Damage Works (to date)

Flood Damage Works

Flood damage figures are currently still being calculated.

The following is a representation of what we have so far.

Project	Grant Funding (\$) Subject to Approval
Unsealed	26,941,291.25
Moree Town Streets	4,670,000.00
Unsealed Regional Road (MR 507)	1,760,000.00
Sealed (MR 507 only)	812,000.00
SH 16 Sealed	176,000.00
Albert Street Bridge, Moree	31,420.00
MR 232 Garah to Border	1,740,000.00
TOTAL	36,130,711.25

Planning Ahead

Integrated Planning and Reporting
Delivery Program and Operational Plan
Revenue Policy/Rates/Budget
Major Projects for 2012/13



Lobbying for Road Funding



- Moree Plains was the co founder and inaugural member of the Australian Rural Roads Group. Councillor Sue Price is on the Executive of that body and will be attending the AGM this Sunday along with the General Manager.
- Moree Plains hosted the initial meeting relating to concerns over road funding that led to the “Roads to Recovery Funding” and was the basis on which the Annual National Roads Congress was established.
- Moree Plains have already made representations to the current Federal Opposition in relation to having productivity included as a factor in the determination of grant funding.
- Council is a an active member of the Shires Association of NSW, the peak body for Rural Councils in NSW, again with a strong roads focus.
- Council continues to lobby the relevant Ministers both a Federal and State Level, having recently met with Duncan Gay, the NSW Minister for Roads.

Integrated Planning and Reporting



Key components:

1. Community Strategic Plan: *Moree Plains 2030*
2. Delivery Program (2012-2015) and Operational Plan (2012-2013)
3. Regular reports - half yearly and Annual Report



Our Delivery/Operational Plan



- Delivery Program (2012-2015) and Operational Plan (2012-2013) produced and now available

Outcome S3. Sustainable services and facilities provided to residents, businesses, community groups and visitors						
Strategies 2030	Community Priorities 2010-2030 Actions 2010-2013	Responsible Agency/Officer	Measures and Targets	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Health and Safety						
S3.03 To attract, develop and retain health care providers	S3.03.1 Determine the incentives to be provided to attract health care providers to the Shire (eg subsidise education for those who go in to health services in Moree)	Barwon Division of General Practice, Council		★	★	
	S3.03.1.1 In partnership with health care agencies, investigate what incentives, and at what level, are required	Council: EDO	Report outlining incentive requirements by July 2012	★	★	★
	S3.03.1.2 Subject to budget constraints, and in partnership with the community, assist health care agencies in providing identified incentives	Council: EDO	Incentives provided			★
	S3.03.1.3 Continue to provide housing for registrars	Council: DP&D	Two units provided	★	★	★
	S3.03.1.4 Work with Barwon Division of General Practice to establish a Medical Centre in Moree	Council: GM	Medical Centre established	★	★	
	S3.03.1.5 Continue to support ventures aimed at showcasing Moree to health care providers	Council: Councillors, OE-TM	Continue to support Health Harvest	★	★	★



Sustainability



- The sustainability of a number of Councils has often been raised, and the increasing community demands and a level of cost shifting has further put pressure on sustainability.
- Sustainability effectively means the ability to be able to continue to provide and maintain the level of services and facilities expected by the community.
- The Integrated Planning and reporting requirements have increased the focus on Asset Management, Long Term Financial Planning and Work Force Planning.
- Skills shortages also impacts on Local Government as it does in most sectors.
- A theme of the Shires Conference held last week was Keep the Local in Local Government.

