



# SHIRE OF WILLIAMS

BROOKING STREET, WILLIAMS, WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

OFFICE HOURS: MONDAY TO FRIDAY: 8.30 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

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Your Ref:

Our Ref: 19.1.10

Hon Michael Mischin MLC, Chair  
Standing Committee on Legislation  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Perth WA 6000

19<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Dear Sir,

## **RE: Inquiry into Local Government Amendment (Regional Subsidiaries) Bill 2010**

The Local Government Amendment (Regional Subsidiaries) Bill was considered by the Shire of Williams at the May meeting of Council and as such I would like to make the following submission on the bill.

The Shire of Williams fully supports the intent of the bill as it will provide legislation that will enable local governments to carry out a range of services and functions that are simply not available under current legislation.

The only alternatives Local Government has at present that enables two or more to join together to provide a service or function is to:

- Form a Regional council under Division 4 of the Local Government Act 1995. While this option is fine for two or more Councils to provide services the problem with this option is that the Regional Council so formed must comply with all the requirements of the Local Government Act in relation to compliance and reporting requirements, including auditing, books of account and the like. Once again this is fine if the participating councils are involved in a major function that is economically driven however for rural local governments who may wish to provide something as simple as shared staff it is obviously not feasible to use this option due to the extra financial burden imposed to enable them to comply with the present Act.
- The only way two or more small rural Councils can provide what the Regional Subsidiaries Bill is trying to do is to have one of the participating councils act as the administrator. Generally this works but unfortunately this arrangement does not offer sufficient legal protection for the parties involved and if something does go wrong then one Council may be held liable for the responsibilities of the participating councils.

With the Minister for Local Government recently announcing that the government has “given up” on local government reform and the poor way the whole process has been handled the regional subsidiaries bill offers a genuine model that has been successful in South Australia and with the rural areas having distinct similarities here in WA it is a very positive approach to providing Local Government with a tool for increased efficiency.

I would be pleased to speak or provide further information on the merits of the bill is required.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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**R.N. Duff**  
**Chief Executive Officer**