

Council's Reference:
WH/AP

Telephone Enquiries to:
Wayne Halcrow

27 June 2008



The Secretary
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional
Development and Local Government Committee
House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

Submission - Inquiry into New Regional Development Funding Program

Richmond Valley Council is located on the Far North Coast of NSW with its headquarters at Casino and wishes to make the following submission in relation to the above.

Under the previous Regional Partnership Program, Council made a number of grant applications which were unsuccessful.

In particular, Council felt it was poorly treated in the manner that the criteria of the program dealt with National Competition Policy and an application that the Council had made.

Council operates a concrete prestressing yard which manufactures bridge girder piles and a range of concrete products as well as bridge construction. This enterprise operates as a business of the Council and is the only operation of this type between Newcastle and Brisbane and has been successful in tendering to provide product and expertise in both the local region of the Far North Coast of NSW, the Gold Coast, Brisbane, South East Queensland and the Pacific Highway upgrade.

Council wished to expand its operation due to the growth being experienced and made application for assistance to the Local ACC representing its area.

The application was unsuccessful as Council was advised that it would be breaching National Competition Guidelines. This was on the basis that it would be competing against companies that produce similar products.

All correspondence should be addressed to:


**The General Manager,
RICHMOND VALLEY COUNCIL**

Administration Office: Cnr. Walker St. & Graham Place (Locked Bag 10) CASINO NSW 2470

Council felt this was unfair as its operation is only comparatively small in nature (turnover of \$2.4 million in 2007/2008) and would not indicate a competitive advantage over other companies as there are none in the area or region who manufacture the product.

Council would suggest that the Inquiry seriously consider the application of National Competition Policy Principles in the future and ensure that such guidelines are applied in an appropriate manner.

Yours faithfully



Brian Wilkinson
GENERAL MANAGER

