

LOCAL GOVERNMENT
ASSOCIATION
OF QUEENSLAND INC.

ABN 11 010 883 293



Local Government House
25 Evelyn Street Newstead Qld 4006
PO Box 2230 Fortitude Valley BC Qld 4006
Phone (07) 3000 2222 Fax (07) 3252 4473
www.lgaq.asn.au

7 October 2004

Mr Tony Hinton *2/10*
Commissioner
Productivity Commission
PO Box 80
Cnr Emu Bank & Benjamin Way
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

Dear Mr Hinton

Productivity Commission Draft Research Report into Reform of Building Regulation

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the Productivity Commission Draft research report '*Reform of Building Regulation*'.

The major concern that the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) has with the draft Research Report is the failure of the Commission in understanding the role that Local Government plays in its community and within the three spheres of government.

In Queensland, the *Local Government Act 1993* states that Local Government is to:

- provide an effective, efficient and accountable system of Local Government;
- take autonomous responsibility for the good government of their areas; and
- provide for community participation.

As a result, Local Governments are a key connection between people and government and a reliable conduit to reflect new and growing aspirations of the local community. Councils are increasingly tackling complex issues and there is an increasing demand on Local Government to lead and encourage sustainable solutions to local issues.

It is by Local Government implementing plans and policies to address community concerns that State and National authorities become aware of new issues. In brief, changing policy and legislation does not always commence from the State and National government levels. In Queensland policy change does start at local level as community consultation is encouraged under the Queensland Local Government Act and Integrated Planning Act and is an essential part of Local Government decision making processes and implementation of plans and policies. The Draft Research Report fails to recognise this relationship between the Queensland State and Local Governments.

In criticising Local Government for undermining national consistency, the draft Report fails to recognise the role of Local Government and that it takes time to align the three levels of government in policy and legislation. The report also fails to recognise that Local Governments will react to the introduction of state and national standards by amending their plans and policies.

Restrictions placed on Local Governments ability to impose controls may not allow a Council to identify Local needs or issues. This has the potential to add unnecessary costs onto Local and State Governments. Further changes to nationalise the qualification requirements for Building Certifiers may restrict the number of Building Certifiers entering the industry. In regional Queensland significant difficulties are being experienced in obtaining and keeping Building Certifiers and any added difficulties in qualification requirements will only exacerbate the current situation.



The remaining concerns of this Association are expressed succinctly in the Australian Local Government Association submission on the draft research report. (copy attached)

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission and I look forward to a positive response on the issues raised. Please have no hesitation in contacting Ms Janet Frost, Planning and Development Policy Adviser on 07 3000 2294 if you wish to discuss further.

Yours sincerely,

Greg Hoffman PSM
DIRECTOR
POLICY AND REPRESENTATION

jf:dp