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Submission: The application for a special rate variation is inequitable, not through any fault on the part of the Council but the allocation of resources by State Government. The manner in which resources are allocated for infrastructure and capital projects is biased heavily in favour of urban Councils. This is an evidence based assertion. In the last 5 years the overwhelming number of special rate variations have been applied for by regional Councils almost exclusively. An inference should be drawn in respect of this. Infrastructure projects overwhelmingly favour those in urban areas. Additionally, the Upper Hunter Shire bears a heavy burden in respect of the effect of the mining industry through direct costs (such as damage to its roads with heavy vehicles) and receives very little in return. Specific funding for regional projects has been made available through the Restart NSW fund. For any of the engagement requirements under the Local Government Act for a Special Rate Variation ("SRV") to be met, the Tribunal must, in my submission, be satisfied that other options for meeting funding requirements have been exhausted. To not do so would permit "cost shifting" on a massive scale.