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Submission:

Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal of NSW. SYDNEY

Dear Sir

Re. Special Rate Variation Proposal - Armidale Dumaresq Council

We wish to object strongly to the Special Rate Variation application of the Armidale Dumaresq Council.

As a significant rural ratepayer of Armidale Dumaresq Council we feel that we receive little benefit from payment of our existing rates. As it stands, our roads have little attention - the gravel section is seldom graded and is usually rough & corrugated. In normal wet times the cement crossing over the Boorolong Creek is often flooded. All this causes excessive deterioration of our motor vehicles and great expense.

Currently rural ratepayers are struggling to pay their rates and meet other expenses. An increase of this magnitude would be impossible to meet given the current economic climate with such low returns for our stock and produce. Added to this is the huge expense of hand feeding for the duration of the drought. Many will be forced to borrow money for stock feed to keep their animals alive. Even when the drought breaks it would be 5 to 6 years before this could be repaid.

As farmers we run a business. When times are tough it is necessary for us to curb expenditure - often putting off staff. Perhaps the Armidale Dumaresq Council should look at ways of increasing their efficiency rather than expecting the already burdened ratepayer to bear the brunt of the Council's on going mismanagement.

Please consider our situation when evaluating the Armidale Dumaresq Council's proposal.

Yours sincerely, R.E. & L.M. Coddington