

IPART Report Review of Funding Framework for Local Lands Services (LLS)

The key focus of Bega Valley Shire Council's submission is in response to the Local Lands Services Board of Chairs response to this review.

Bega Valley Shire Council strongly objects to a proposal by the LLS Board of Chairs that Councils be required to collect LLS rates in respect of land below 2 hectares. Bega Valley Shire objects to the proposal to make Council land holdings subject to LLS rates.

Bega Valley Shire Council is funded by rates levied on privately owned property to cover infrastructure requirements for the local community, fees and charges for services and grants for specific services. Collection of rates for another body would bring with it costs to all ratepayers, with no outcome to ratepayers.

Rates paid to the LLS on Council owned lands would be paid by all ratepayers within the Shire. This is effectively a transfer of funds from one level of government to another at a local level with no net benefit to the community.

Bega Valley Shire Council has concerns about the framework for the LLS establishment and the ongoing operation and management of the service. As a local government authority we have had little information about the services that will be provided and how the local community would benefit from any involvement with the LLS.

Historically as a land manager, Council has had a close and productive relationship with the Department of Primary Industries (DPI), the Catchment Management Authority (CMA) and the Livestock Health and Pest Authority (LHPA). At this late stage it is not at all clear what the future relationship with LLS will be. It is critical that a strong relationship with LLS is fostered as soon as possible.