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Submission: Please find below Council's submission on the Methodology for Assessment of Council Fit for the Future Proposals.

1. Page 17 - Table 2.1 - The report Revitalising Local Governments has the recommendations for D and E groupings as 'Council in a JO or merge'. The IPART document has turned the recommendation around to say 'merge or Council in a JO'. IPART document should be changed to accurately reflect the recommendations of the Independent Panel.
2. Scale and Capacity - Council should be able to demonstrate scale and capacity through participation in a ROC/JO if that particular ROC has a strong record in achieving scale and capacity for their constituent Councils.
3. Page 21 - Is there a target number of Councils for regional areas and if so this undermines the process. In there is no target in regional areas then the IPART document should be amended accordingly.
4. Page 29 - Financial Assistance Grants (FAGs) provide a stable source of income for all Councils not just those Councils identified as 'rural councils' in the report Revitalising Local Government therefore all Councils (and particularly all Councils outside the Sydney, Newcatle, Wollongong area) should be able to include FAGs as own source revenue.
5. Page 30 - Table 3.3 - All comments by the Minister to date have indicated that Councils needed to work towards achieving the benchmarks within a reasonable period of time. The IPART document states that for the Operating Performance Ratio and Own Source Revenue it is a must meet within 5 years. This should be amended to Meet or Improve within 5 years for all Councils. Why should Greater Hume be treated any differently to our neighbouring Councils Lockhart, Tumbarumba or Urana just because GHSC has a higher population.

Greater Hume Shire has many of the characteristics of a rural council (e.g. Population spread amongst multiple towns and villages over a wide geographical area) and therefore this should be taken into account where appropriate and not just for the small number of Councils identified as Rural Councils by the Review Panel.

6. Page 32 - Ensure OLG and IPART benchmark criteria are the same and relevant e.g. Asset Maintenance IPART indicate than 100% average over 3 years. If you spend 100% then you fail this benchmark on OLG Self Audit document.