

Author name: J. McKee

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Submission: IPART Question seeking feedback:

How should the key elements of strategic capacity influence our assessment of scale and capacity? Are there any improvements we can make to how we propose to assess the scale and capacity criterion, consistent with OLG guidance material?

Response:

- Strategic capacity should not be based on population size or by reducing councils to an arbitrary number within regions. The broader context for strategic capacity to be assessed should be whether an individual council is sustainable to meet the needs of its community both now and into the future and to effectively and efficiently deliver services, programs and infrastructure in alignment with the objectives and targets of the NSW Government's strategies and plans.
- The measure of population or the reduction of the number of councils within a region does not determine how well councils effectively and efficiently deliver services, or advocate on behalf of their communities and work in partnership with State and Federal governments to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes whilst retaining a sense of place and ownership.
- Councils that can demonstrate they meet the key elements of strategic capacity, as listed in Box 3.1 of the IPART Consultation Paper - April 2015, should be considered to meet the requirements for scale and capacity, regardless of population or other size criteria.