

22 August 2009

Mr. James P Cox
Chief Executive Officer
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
PO Box Q290
QVB Post Office NSW 1230

Dear Mr. Cox

REVIEW OF THE REVENUE FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Having read your advertisement Ref No.08/ 159 19 August 2009 I make this submission under the category of "other interested parties".

I retired from my position as General Manager of Nambucca Shire Council over two years ago and now reside in a retirement village for the over 55's.

I have made submissions to the Minister for Local Government in the following matter, and also to the Halliday Shores Residents Committee who in turn made submissions including to Greater Taree City Council without success.

It is submitted that councils should not be permitted to boost general purpose revenues through "windfalls" arising from unfair charges in relation to green waste charges in relation to premises which are zoned or classified as medium density.

It is further submitted that this should be enforced by legislation, by way of amendment to the appropriate legislation as necessary.

To explain - Halliday Shores currently comprises some 60 separate villas - generally with very small gardens, the larger gardens being part of the "common property" for want of a better description. One of the attractions of a retirement village is the reduction of gardening chores. I and my fellow residents are happy to pay as users in relation to domestic waste and recycling because we recognize that individually we generate such waste. We do not, individually, generate green waste. We would be happy to pay for the number of green waste services deemed necessary for our complex. We would of course do this through what is referred to as recurrent charges.

It is submitted that appropriate charges should be introduced for medium density - can you imagine the volume of lawn clipping and pruning generated by a unit holder on say the third floor of a home unit complex.

We, as individual villa owners, already have wheelie bins for both domestic waste and recycling. Can you imagine the aesthetics of the complex if individual bins are imposed on us for green waste?

Taree Council has *offered* to reduce the impact by providing perhaps one or two skips - however, the individual charges will still apply. I think the charge is proposed at \$300 per annum (over and above the other waste charges). This is rough justice indeed.

In defending its stance, Taree Council argues that the residents use the beaches, parks, reserves and sports grounds and the waste bins at these facilities have to be attended to. This is a lame argument for the Council attended to these in previous years - utilizing the general purpose revenues.

I realize that Councils are desperate for funds - particularly when one looks at the reduction of government grants over the years. However, it is not fair that some of these funds be recovered in the manner described in this submission.

I look forward to your acknowledgement of this submission and please do not tell me that the submission falls outside the guidelines of the review.

Thomas Ralph Port

Cc Hon Nathan Rees, Premier, NSW

Mr. Barry O'Farrell, Leader of the State Opposition

Cr Hogan Mayor Greater Taree City Council

Ms Tracy Grimshaw, Current Affairs

Mr. Don Clough, Chairperson, Halliday Shores Residents Committee