

Office of Rural Affairs

The Office of Rural Affairs provides support to the Minister for Rural Affairs and Government to achieve the Government's objectives and commitments to the people of New South Wales.

The Office of Rural Affairs undertakes this role by providing secretariat and policy support to the Regional Consultative Communities Council (RCCC), which is New South Wales' peak rural community advisory body.

The RCCC is an independent body, providing advice on a wide range of community matters and reports to the Premier and the Minister for Rural Affairs.

The Office of Rural Affairs has developed close links with stakeholders and communities across the state. Working within the framework of Government objectives, the Office assists in the identification of issues, policy gaps and opportunities and develops solutions that enhance service provision to the people and communities in country New South Wales.

Senior Manager

Fran Schonberg, Manager, Office of Rural Affairs

Management Strategy and performance review Financial

The Office of Rural Affairs, Department of Lands budget allocation includes funds related to the operation of the Regional Communities Consultative Committee (\$150,000) and employee and related operating costs of the Office itself (\$265,000).

No capital works funding was allocated to the Office in 2004/2005.

The Regional Communities Consultative Council (RCCC)

Established in August 1996, the RCCC is a standing advisory body comprised of thirteen members representing community interests, with an independent Chair and Deputy Chair.

A new Council was appointed in March 2005 for a two year term.

Member and their role or interest on the Council	No. of Meetings attended
Diana Gibbs, Chair	3
Lynda Summers, Deputy Chair & Health Sector Interests	3
John Ainsworth, representing Farmers' Interests	3
Fr Tim Carhill, representing Religious Interests	2
Michael Schultz, representing Environmental Interests	2
Rashmere Bahatti, representing Ethnic Community Interests	3
Dr Jock Fletcher, representing Health interests	3
Iris White, representing Aboriginal Community Interests	2
Michael Madden, representing Trade Union Interests	2
Simon Davies, representing Youth Interests	3
Tim Sheed, representing Business and Industry interests	2
Peter Quarmbly, representing Social Services Interests -resigned 2004	2
Ruth Shanks, representing Women's Interests	2
Jenny Bonfield, representing Local Government Interests	2
Lyall Wilkinson, representing Education Interests	3

Some Highlights in 2004/2005

- **State Government inquiry distribution network**

Establishing a network with Non-Government Organisations to distribute State Government inquiry information to communities, groups and individuals across rural NSW. Through quicker distribution of inquiry information rural communities, groups and individuals have more time to develop submissions and provide their input into vital issues that affect their communities.

- **NSW Rural Fire Service - Secondary Schools Cadet Program**

In partnership with the NSW Fire Service a program was developed that allows young people in any country town to undertake rural fire service training. The program provides volunteer training as an alternate option within the schools sports curricula. Bathurst, Parkes, Bingara and Moree are some of the communities participating in the pilot program.