



PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA
Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee

MEDIA RELEASE

Challenges of rural and regional councils to be investigated

The sustainability and operational challenges of rural and regional councils in Victoria are being examined in a new public inquiry by the Victorian Parliament's Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee.

"This new inquiry will look at the ways in which local councils deliver services to their communities and how it can be done in a sustainable and effective manner," said Committee Chair Bronwyn Halfpenny.

Issues being explored by the Committee include funding and budgetary pressures, infrastructure needs, and rates policies. The inquiry's terms of reference identify flood planning and preparation, maintenance of flood mitigation infrastructure, maintenance of local road and bridge networks, as well as weed and pest animal control as key issues for the Committee to examine.

"This inquiry is an opportunity for people across Victoria to contribute their views on the services provided by rural and regional councils as well as hear from Councils," Ms Halfpenny said.

"Local knowledge of these issues and local input to our inquiry is vital if the Committee is to make meaningful recommendations," Ms Halfpenny said.

"Many of our Committee members come from rural and regional areas, so these are issues of keen interest to us.

"We encourage local councils and community groups as well as individuals with an interest in the future development of their local communities to make a submission so that their voices are heard during this review."

Public submissions are open until 12 September 2016, and the Committee will be conducting public hearings across Victoria.

"The information we collect through submissions and public hearings will help with future planning of service delivery in rural and regional Victoria," Ms Halfpenny said.

More information about the inquiry, including how to make a submission and the terms of reference, can be found on the Committee's [website](#).