

Motions for Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly

Motion 1 – Nillumbik Shire Council - Victoria

That this National General Assembly calls on the Australian Government to provide direct funding to assist local government to address the risks of climate change through the development of renewable energy facilities and support related community actions.

National Objective

Climate change affects all communities. The effort to reduce emissions should be supported and promoted to all communities across Australia.

Summary of Key Arguments

The economic, social and environmental prosperity of Australia is dependent on stable, competitively priced, supply of low emission energy.

In recent years, there has been very little Australian Government funding available to local government to implement mitigation actions. For many resource-constrained Councils finding funds to reduce their own fossil fuel based energy profile, through the implementation of building, lighting and fleet upgrades is extremely difficult, with many competing community needs. Significant action is required now, not in the future when the change is irreversible.

Local government in partnership with the various greenhouse action alliances are in a position to support the community directly in reducing emissions and transitioning to cost effective renewable energy solutions that best fit local community need. Seed funding to support business cases and shovel ready projects can support.

It remains critical that vulnerable sectors of the community receive assistance to ensure they are protected from the predicted impacts. Improved technologies in the energy area are increasing productivity and efficiency, and this is critical to delivering an effective service through community facilities. Such technologies are often out of the financial reach of lower economic groups in the community and support for programs that facilitate their uptake will have the multiple benefits of reducing greenhouse gases and energy costs with the latter reducing the stress on low income households. A balance between funding mitigation actions and adaptation actions must be found. We must continue to address greenhouse emissions to achieve significant reductions that will allow communities to prosper. We cannot continue to adapt indefinitely.

Motion 2 – Nillumbik Shire Council - Victoria

That this National General Assembly call on the Australian Government to take a lead in supporting and potentially establishing a domestic recycling industry to address the current market failure.

National Objective

The Australian Government to take action to develop and support the stability of the domestic recycling industry so that an uninterrupted service is provided.

Summary of Key Arguments

The message from material recycling facilities following the impact of China's National Sword Policy is that they are no longer profitable at new commodity prices and existing gate fees. Councils will need to pay more to recycle and will pass these costs onto residents in the community who will feel the impact. Local governments, particularly those that are resource constrained, require significant levels of external funding to address the market failure.

There are a number of ways that the Federal government support can help address the current market failure:

- By providing information on the supply and demand profile of waste material over its lifecycle. This will help to identify opportunities and provide an information based to make investment decisions.
- Catalyzing the development of domestic material reprocessing capacity and/or advanced waste and resource recovery technologies.
- Develop and support policy, which increase domestic demand for recyclables, especially glass and plastic. For example minimum recycled content legislation and/or standards.

Motion 3 – Nillumbik Shire Council - Victoria

That this National General Assembly call on the Australia Government to secure, further Mobile Black Spot funding to increase the safety, well-being and liveability of regional and rural communities.

National Objective

The objective is to secure multiyear government funding to remove mobile phone black spots in regional and rural communities to improve the communities' safety, wellbeing and liveability.

Background

The Mobile Black Spot Programme is an Australian Government initiative designed to fulfil a 2013 election commitment to extend mobile phone coverage and industry competition for the provision of coverage in remote, regional and outer metropolitan areas.

The Government has committed \$220 million to the Mobile Black Spot Program to invest in telecommunications infrastructure to improve mobile coverage and competition across Australia. This is supported by co-contributions from state and local governments, mobile network operators, businesses and local communities.

Under the first three rounds of the program (round 1, round 2 and the Priority Locations round), the Government's commitment has leveraged a total investment of more than \$680 million.

On 10 June 2018, the Australian Government announced it had allocated a further \$25 million of Mobile Black Spot Program. At this stage there is no further announcement planned for the Mobile Black Spot Programme.

Summary of Key Arguments

More than 10,000 sites were nominated under the Mobile Black Spot Programme as having inadequate mobile phone coverage. In 2019, communication should be a basic necessity, particularly for those living, working and travelling in regional and remote Australia.

This lack of mobile phone coverage severely impacts business, industry, health services, education and other government services and requires serious consideration and commitment to close the inequity in communication services between metropolitan and rural communities. It also poses a significant danger for communities living in regional and rural areas within a bushfire prone landscape. In Victoria, communities saw first-hand the issues created by the combination of mobile phone blackspots, power outages and bushfires. Poor mobile phone coverage in regional and rural areas potentially put people's lives at risk during the devastating bushfires.

The Mobile Black Spot Program is well over halfway complete and despite the funding committed, only 867 new base stations from more than 10,000 nominated sites have been deployed across the country. Furthermore, not all base stations funded under the first three rounds of the program are all operational.

Council is seeking a commitment to the continuation and strengthening of the Mobile Black Spot Funding to support regional and rural communities. Previous funding rounds have been insufficient to address local blackspot issues, and address this significant infrastructure issue.

Declaration

The above motions were adopted by Nillumbik Shire Council at its Ordinary Council Meeting on 26 March, 2019.