



MAYOR'S REPORT

9th August 2005

MM1	SEA CHANGE TASKFORCE SUMMIT
	FILE: * CLR JACH

SUMMARY:

Outlining the proceedings of the Sea Change Taskforce Summit held 17 – 18 July 2005.



On the 17 and 18 July the General Manager and I attended the National Sea Change Taskforce Summit along with fifty-five other delegates from regional coastal councils Australia wide.

The Taskforce is a lobby group established in 2004 as a national body to represent the interests of coastal councils and communities experiencing the effects of rapid population and tourism growth.

The role of the National Sea Change Taskforce is to provide national leadership in addressing the impact of the 'Sea Change' phenomenon and to provide support and guidance to coastal councils attempting to manage the impact of rapid growth. In this regard the Taskforce commissioned the University of Sydney to prepare a comprehensive report to highlight the issues and examine how existing coastal policy and planning frameworks in Australia are responding to them. The report titled, "Meeting The Sea Change Challenge" is tabled for Councillors perusal.

The Summit was addressed by Senator Santo Santoro, a Queensland Coalition Senator, The Hon. Mal Brough, Queensland Minister for Revenue and Assistant Treasurer and The Hon. Jim Lloyd, Commonwealth Minister for Local Government. Workshops on issues affecting coastal councils and on the University of Sydney report were held.

The Taskforce has been very successful in its short history in bringing to both State and Commonwealth Governments' attention the plight of Coastal Councils in struggling to plan strategically for the future, delivering urban infrastructure to meet population and tourism growth, achieving sustainable growth and smart growth

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management, protecting resources and creating vibrant business and employment areas.

The Hon. Jim Lloyd is appreciative of the problems being faced and is chairing a meeting of all State Local Government and Planning Ministers on the 4 August. At this meeting he will be attempting to get a co-ordinated approach by the States to funding and planning coastal development.

At the Summit a National Sea Change Sustainability Charter, framework was prepared, to be the basis for initiating a collaborative response to the challenge of population growth and tourism in coastal communities.

The focus of the charter will include:

- Integration of social, environment and economic factors.
- Promotion of coordinated regional planning as a means of providing greater certainty about the extent and rate of growth in coastal communities.
- Linking effective planning to the timely provision of infrastructure and services.
- The management of tourism and its impact on local communities.
- The impact of climate change.

All spheres of government will be asked to endorse the charter and support its implementation.

In addition to the charter the Taskforce is requesting the Australian and State Governments to provide support including:

- A specific reference to Sea Change issues be included in the terms of reference for the Local Government and Planning Ministers' Council
- An increase in the FAGS allocations to a minimum 1% of total Australian taxation revenue.
- A review of the disability factors that are taken into account in allocating FAGS.
- A review of tourism related data to provide accurate and comprehensive information for planning and funding purposes.
- That the Productivity Commission in its investigation of Local Government financing specifically consider the circumstances and options for Sea Change Councils to meet the challenges of population and tourism growth in coastal communities.
- As assessment of Local Governments' ability to raise capital and operational revenue (e.g. developer contributions, rates) to meet their community and visitor needs.
- That the Roads to Recovery program be used as a model for development of specific infrastructure funding arrangements to support Sea Change Councils.

- The establishment of a body to communicate and disseminate research of relevance to coastal communities.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

- *Environmental – Social - Economic*

Any additional funding and support received by other levels of government will increase the environmental, social and economic well being of the community.

- *Policy or Statutory*

Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the information be noted.
2. That Kempsey Shire Council encourages the few remaining Councils on the Mid and North Coast to become members of the National Seachange Taskforce.

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J A C Hayes
MAYOR