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29 April 2019

Remote Area Tax Concessions and Payments study
Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
Canberra City ACT 2601

Online submission: www.pc.gov.au/remote-tax

Dear Sir/ Madam

Submission in response to the Productivity Commission's Issues Paper -Remote Area Tax Concessions and Payments

Whitsunday Regional Council welcome the opportunity to make submission in response to the Issues Paper, as part of the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Australia's zone tax offset and related remote area tax concessions and payments.

Whitsunday Regional Council provides local government to a strong and relatively diverse economy in Northern Queensland. With a population of approximately 35,000, the Whitsunday Region encompasses a total land area of almost 24,000 square kilometres. The region includes major townships of Airlie Beach, Bowen, Collinsville and Proserpine, as well as other rural and coastal communities and residential areas including the 74 Whitsunday islands. The Whitsunday Region has a labour force of approximately 19,500 and accommodates approximately 15,000 jobs. The major industries in the Whitsunday region are tourism, mining and agriculture which provide further supply chain opportunities and local services.

Through recent discussion with local business groups and businesses within our region and also as a large employer in the region with over 300 staff, we would like to provide some summary points in comment towards this issue item.

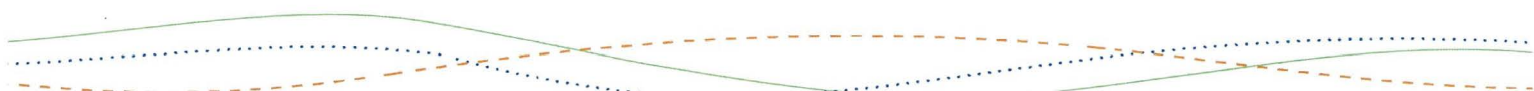
- Remote Area Tax Concessions and Payments are relevant and considered important to support individuals and businesses in the Whitsunday region.
- Higher costs of living and lower levels of access to essential services compared to major cities continue to exist for the local population supporting the intent for which the Remote Area Tax Concessions and Payments was created.
- There is an identified need to provide further support to enable the development of Northern Australia and provide enhanced incentive to workers and businesses to develop the potential of areas such as the Whitsunday region.

Bowen
Cnr Herbert & Powell Streets
Bowen QLD 4805

Proserpine
83-85 Main Street
Proserpine QLD 4800

Collinsville
Cnr Stanley & Conway Streets
Collinsville QLD 4804

Cannonvale
Shop 23, Whitsunday Plaza
Shute Harbour Road, Cannonvale QLD 4802



- It has been identified that Remote area tax concessions, particularly Remote Area Allowance are an important benefit to skilled jobseekers in recruitment and attraction conducted by Whitsunday Regional Council and other local business.
- Consultation with local stakeholders has identified that Remote Area Tax concessions and payments should be enhanced further to account for the above-mentioned factors with improved weighting toward remote areas that may be difficult to access or provide services to and to smaller regional areas with lower populations.

We thank you again for the opportunity to offer comment toward this Issue paper and look forward to the Productivity Commissions' further review.

Bruce Davidson
Acting Chief Executive Officer