

## **Late Submission to the Government Productivity Commission on the Not For Profit Sector**

Apologies for making a late submission that I hope will be accepted and considered. I did not become aware that this enquiry was being held until after submissions closed and have not read the white paper so I hope I am addressing relevant issues..

I wish to address one particular issue and this is Tax Deductibility Gift Recipient status. I have many parts to my life. In one part I am a ministerial appointed trustee of an cultural organization with DGR status, in another part I am the executive officer of the Convict Trail Project whose objectives are the care protection and promotion of the Great North Road, the 1826-1836 convict built road which is basically a free open air museum built by convict labour which does not qualify for DGR status under the current legislation. In a third part I am a committee member of a local historical society.

To preserve the Great North Road for future generations we need to spend lots of money on conservation, for which the only source of funds is at present state and federal government grants. As a heritage organization we fall through the cracks of all the cultural organizations and do not qualify as an environmental organization even though most of the road where conservation is needed is surrounded by but not part of the National Parks.

Part of the road, the section managed by the National Parks is included in the World Heritage nomination for convict sites. The sections that fall under my care are built by the same men at the same time under the same control and of the same quality as the section that is nominated for world heritage listing but not yet conserved.

The grants the Convict Trail project receive often have to be matched dollar for dollar and we have no funds for this and no way of raising funds so it takes a lot of begging and voluntary work to match a grant for \$75,000. (The current conservation grant)

I also belong to a local history society and know how many voluntary hours are put into the management and protection of our heritage by small local groups.

Whilst there is gift deductibility for the donation of objects to museums, in general that usually only applies to large museums. Organizations like the Convict Trail Project and local historical societies have the potential to benefit and do a better at what they do if they could have GDR status for gifts of money and in kind donations of goods and services. When begging for assistance it would be much easier if it was possible to say, we don't have the funds to pay you for this but we have tax deductibility gift status that would apply for the value of the services we are asking for or the value of the material we are asking for .

One of the parts of the Great North Road that funds are currently needed to conserve is the oldest functioning bridge on mainland Australia that sits within the buffer zone of the

proposed world heritage area. It is managed by a local government that has no hope of finding funds from within their budget for the conservation work needed.

Currently the only way we could obtain tax deductible status would be to find an interested federal politician and convince them to write an extension to the tax act to include us, as used to happen with environmental organizations before they got blanket legislation provided they met certain criteria.

Please consider recommending an extension of the Not for Profit tax Gift Recipient status to not for profit cultural organizations that are established for the care and protection of Australia's history and heritage.

As a trustee of an organization that has DGR status I know how valuable it is. It is difficult enough as an organization with DGR status to raise funds from donations, without it, it is impossible.

I am submitting this as a private submission as I have not had time to consult with my executive

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