



ABN:75 266 051 838

Telephone: (08) 8410 7233

Facsimile: (08) 8211 7303

Level 1 / 67 South Terrace,  
Adelaide, SA 5000  
Postal Address: PO Box 6014  
Halifax Street, SA 5000

Email: [info@saff.com.au](mailto:info@saff.com.au)

Website: [www.saff.com.au](http://www.saff.com.au)

28 February 2011

Sustainable Population Strategy Taskforce  
Department of Sustainability, Environment,  
Water, Population and Communities  
PO Box 787  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir / Madam

**Re: A sustainable population strategy for Australia**

The following brief comments are provided by the South Australian Farmers Federation (SAFF) on the Issues paper for "A sustainable population strategy for Australia."

As part of any sustainable population strategy for Australia, consideration needs to be given to ensuring that regional Australia is included within the strategy. In particular, there needs to be incentives to attract and retain people in regional areas.

Zone allowances should be introduced to not only encourage people to remain in rural areas but to encourage others to consider moving to these areas including teachers, doctors, mechanics and other professional and skilled people. It would assist rural communities including small businesses by encouraging people to remain in the district and not to move elsewhere for employment, hence assisting in maintaining the local rural communities. There needs to be more programs similar to the General Practice Rural Incentives Program.

### **Agriculture**

In the case of agriculture, as there are difficulties in attracting people to work in agriculture industries, there needs to be tax incentives for employing labour and to encourage people to consider agricultural-related careers. Agriculture can not compete with mining industries. Straight out taxation incentives are required to encourage selected employment, such as to encourage young people into shearing and other farm work.

If the importance of agriculture to the Australian economy is to be maintained, it is necessary to ensure that younger people become involved in farming either as owner-farmers or working in agricultural-related industries. The taxation system should be used to encourage this, or at least not to create a barrier.

Current farmers need to be able to easily pass their business onto younger generations, without any hindrance from the taxation system so as to ensure these farms remain viable without the threat of the imposition of such taxes as capital gains taxes and stamp duties.

As a first step, and for equity with other young people buying their first home in cities and towns, the first home owners grant needs to be extended to people buying their first farm.

## **Education**

Recently the Federal Government has been examining the best way to fund sustainable regional higher education. More funding in this area is required to provide adequate rural tertiary studies, particularly as part of the process to attract students to not only study in rural areas but ultimately hopefully to live and work in the country.

## **Evocities**

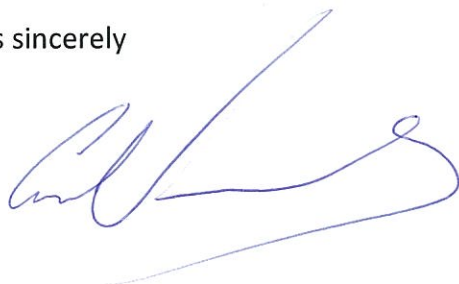
Seven of NSW's leading regional cities have united to form the Evocities campaign and encourage people to live, work and invest in an Evocity. The seven Evocities are Albury, Armidale, Bathurst, Dubbo, Orange, Tamworth and Wagga Wagga. Each of the seven cities has dedicated resources and funding to the campaign, and has in turn secured Australian Government funding, as well as support from the NSW State Government and corporate sponsors.

The main objective of the campaign is to encourage capital city residents to make the move to an Evocity and invest in the opportunities the regional cities have to offer.

Consideration now needs to be given to extending this campaign to other States, and to also include larger regional towns as well as regional cities.

The Australian Government is to be congratulated on appointing a Minister for Regional Australia, establishing the Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government, and for developing a Sustainable Population Strategy.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Carol Vincent', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Carol Vincent**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**