

SEPTEMBER 2016

# The Far West Initiative

Improving outcomes for the people of Far Western NSW

## About the Far West

The region is made up of **eight local government areas** and the Unincorporated Area of NSW. While it covers **40 per cent of NSW**, its combined **population of around 48,000** is less than one per cent of the State's overall population.



### Strengths

A remarkable region with magnificent landscapes of significant historical and spiritual importance; a unique environment supporting agriculture, tourism and recreation; and creative and proud communities.



### Challenges

Remote, fragmented communities with small, declining populations facing significant environmental, financial and social challenges, including coordinated delivery of government services and infrastructure.

## Challenges identified by local organisations



## A whole-of-government response

Recognising that solutions to such complex issues cannot lie with local government alone, the NSW Government:



Developed the Far West Initiative, bringing together local councils, non-government organisations and State and Commonwealth government agencies to develop a whole-of-government response.



Established the Far West Initiative Advisory Committee with representatives from each Far West local council, the regional Aboriginal assembly, service providers and government agencies to oversee the Far West Initiative and consider strengths and weaknesses of different regional governance approaches.

## A proposed approach: Far West organisation

The Far West Initiative Advisory Committee explored a number of regional governance options and identified a **Far West organisation** with a governing board as its **preferred approach**.

This approach recognises and supports the important role performed by local councils while offering a more coordinated and strategic approach to governance, service delivery and infrastructure development.

### Potential benefits would include:



A big picture, regional approach for better delivery of local

priorities like land use planning and transport and freight links; community engagement and participation mechanisms; and economic, community and environmental initiatives.



A regional body focused on developing regional partnerships

to drive economic opportunity and growth, and local councils focused on community priorities like essential services, cultural and community activities, and support to vulnerable groups.



Being in a stronger position to apply for grants and funding,

coordinate tourism, planning and development, and enter into partnerships and contracts with government and non-government organisations for the betterment of the region.



## We want your feedback!

Your views on this proposed approach to regional governance will help shape the next steps in developing the Far West Initiative.

We'll be holding consultation sessions across the Far West and are keen to hear from community members, community groups and organisations, local councils and service delivery agencies.

For more information about consultation sessions, to read the full Far West Initiative Background Paper, fill out an online or hard copy submission, or provide feedback:



Visit [www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au) and follow the link to the Far West Initiative for a full list of consultation sessions, background information and to make a submission



Visit the NSW Government's Have Your Say website at [www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au)



For more information, call **02 4228 4100**



**Written submissions can be mailed to:**  
Office of Local Government – Far West Initiative  
Locked Bag 3015, Nowra NSW 2541

**Submissions close at 5pm on Friday 14 October 2016!**



Go to the NSW Government's Have Your Say website at [www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au)



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