



SEGRA 2011

MEDIA RELEASE

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Attention News Editors / Chief of Staff
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ANOTHER WET ON THE WAY BUT HAVE THE LESSONS BEEN LEARNED?

With another wet season looming, there are still cracks in the defenses of many exposed communities, particularly in regional areas.

Co-ordination between federal, state and local governments, adequate funding and clear and appropriate governance are barriers being flagged at the upcoming SEGRA (Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia) conference being held in Geelong, 25 – 27 October.

Rockhampton Regional Council Mayor, Councillor Brad Carter said since the January floods, Council has worked with federal and state governments and identified the investment required to improve infrastructure associated with the Bruce Highway, proposed heavy vehicle bypass, third road and rail-bridge, and the Rockhampton Airport.

"To date there has been no indication of significant financial support from the federal government in the forward estimates to resource this flood proofing issue," Cr Carter said.

Cr Carter also raises questions over the chain of command, during the January floods.

"An interesting turn of events occurred when the National Retailers Association lobbied State authorities to use military aircraft to fly supplies into Mackay which were then transported by road to Rockhampton.

"This occurred while the Local Disaster Management Group had made plans with local supermarkets and transport authorities to use a long haul road supply route that went from Brisbane through to Barcaldine, Clermont, Mackay and Rockhampton."

Cr Carter will be speaking at the conference about economic growth after extreme weather events and is hoping to put these issues on the mainstream political agenda.

"We know we are in for more extreme events, even if it is not this summer, and we need to keep pushing for appropriate forward planning and infrastructure. It is critical to the capacity of regions like Rockhampton to bounce back," said Cr Carter.

SEGRA is a national think tank dedicated to speaking up for regional Australia, and Regional Affairs Minister, Simon Crean and Shadow Minister Barnaby Joyce will attend the annual conference.

The three-day conference will debate issues confronting regional Australia as well as examine opportunities, innovations and 'best practice' that are invigorating regions across Australia.

A full conference program is available at www.segra.com.au

- ENDS -

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