



SOUTHERN DOWNS REGIONAL COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

Dear Councillors

Your attendance is hereby requested at the Special Meeting of Council to be held in the Council Chambers, Southern Downs Regional Council, 64 Fitzroy Street, Warwick on **Thursday, 2 July 2015 at 4.00PM.**

Notice is hereby given of the business to be transacted at the meeting.

David Keenan

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

30 June 2015

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1. ATTENDANCE
2. APOLOGIES
3. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

4. BUSINESS & COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT REPORTS

4.1 BCS - Adoption of 2015/2016 Rural Fire Service Levy

Document Information

 Southern Downs REGIONAL COUNCIL	Report To: Special Council Meeting	
	Reporting Officer:	Meeting Date: 2 July 2015
	Director Business & Community Services	File Ref: 25.03.01

Recommendation

THAT Council imposes the special charge of \$36.00 on all rateable assessments outside the former urban fire levy boundaries defined in maps by the State Fire Services in relation to 2015/2016 Rural Fire Service Levy.

Report

At its General Council Meeting held on 29 April 2014 Council imposed the special charge of \$35.00 on all rateable assessments outside the former urban fire levy boundaries defined in maps by the State Fire Services in relation to 2014/15 Rural Fire Service Levy.

Council received correspondence dated 4 May 2015 from Queensland Fire and Emergency Service (QFES)/Rural Fire Service Qld South West Region advising that a meeting of the Local Area Finance Committee (LAFC) from the Rural Operations of the Queensland Fire and Emergency Service (QFES) was held on 20 April 2015. The LAFC is requesting that the Rural Fire Service Levy imposed for the 2015/2016 financial year be increased by \$1.00 per rateable assessment, resulting in a charge of \$36.00 per property.

In preparation for the 2015/2016 financial year, the QFES, through its Southern Downs LAFC, have met to discuss the quantum of levy collection and disbursement for Rural Fire Brigades within the Council's area.

The LAFC decided that a levy of \$36.00 per rateable property would be sufficient for the 2015/2016 financial year to help cover operational expenses, maintenance, minor capital purchases and possible machinery hire costs to assist in protecting the communities of the Southern Downs Regional Council area.

Budget Implications

Adoption of the Rural Fire Service Levy will occur as part of the adoption of the Council's 2015/2016 Budget. Council collects the Levy through its rating process and forwards the revenue raised to the Rural Fire Service.

In the 2014/2015 financial year, council distributed \$262,045 to the region's rural fire brigades.

Policy Consideration

Nil.

Community Engagement

Nil.

Legislation/Local Law

Local Government Act 2009 Section 92 (3) Special Rates and Charges.

- (3) Special rates and charges are for services, facilities and activities that have special association with particular land because –
- (a) the land or its occupier
 - (i) specially benefits from the service, facility or activity; or
 - (ii) has or will have special access to the service, facility or activity; or
 - (b) the land is or will be used in a way that specially contributes to the need for the service, facility or activity; or
 - (c) the occupier of the land specially contributes to the need for the service, facility or activity.

Options

1. Impose a Rural Fire Service Levy of \$36.00 on all rateable assessments for the 2015/2016 financial year.
2. Do not impose a Rural Fire Service Levy of \$36.00 on all rateable assessments for the 2015/2016 financial year.

Attachments

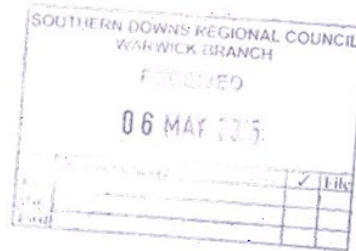
1. Correspondence from QFES/Rural Fire Service Qld South West Region [View](#)



Ph 07 4616 1946
Our Ref 390015

Date: 4th May 2015

Chief Executive Officer
Southern Downs Regional Council
PO Box 26
Warwick 4370



Dear Sir,

RE: Rural Fire Service Queensland, Rural Fire Equipment Levy – Southern Downs Local Area Finance Committee:

A meeting of the Southern Downs Local Area Finance Committee which represents the Rural Fire Brigades within the Stanthorpe and Warwick Group areas was held on Monday 20th April 2015. This meeting was also attended by Councillor Gow and Council Staff Revenue Officer Annette Steinhardt.

At this meeting a discussion was held by those present regarding the quantum of the current levy collected of \$35:00 per rateable yearly assessment. It was resolved at this meeting that Southern Downs Regional Council be approached to consider an increase in the Rural Fire Equipment Levy from the current \$35.00 per rateable assessment per year by \$1.00 to \$36.00 per year.

The Rural Fire Brigades that collect a levy within the Southern Downs Regional Council area have been very active in providing mitigation and fire protection activities to their communities.

I hereby seek Councils support in this request to ensure that these Brigades have sufficient funds to cover operational expenses, maintenance, minor capital purchases and possible machinery hire costs to assist in protecting the communities of the Southern Downs Regional Council area.

Yours sincerely,

Acting Inspector Michael Patch
Area Director Toowoomba
Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
Rural Fire Service Queensland
Ph.: 4616 1946

Southern Downs Regional Council



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5. CONSIDERATION OF CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS ITEMS

In accordance with the provisions of Section 275(1) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, a local government may resolve to close a meeting to the public and move 'into Committee' to discuss confidential items, such that its Councillors or members consider it necessary to close the meeting.

Recommendation

THAT the meeting be closed to the public and move into committee to discuss the following items, which are considered confidential in accordance with Section 275(1) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, which permits the meeting to be closed to the public for business relating to the following, as indicated:

5.1 BCS - Adoption of the Draft 2015/2016 Budget and Long Term Financial Forecast for the 10 Years to 30 June 2025

Reason for Confidentiality

This item is considered confidential in accordance with section 275(1)(c) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, as it contains information relating to the local government budget.