



## Current Governance Arrangements

### The Outback Areas Community Development Trust

The Outback Areas Community Development Trust (the Trust) is a statutory authority constituted by the *Outback Areas Community Development Trust Act 1987*. The Trust is under the control and direction of the Minister for State/Local Government Relations. Its jurisdiction covers 65% of South Australia, and serves about 5000 people living in 36 communities.

Its functions (as set out in the existing Act) are to make grants and loans to local community organisations, to foster the development of those organisations, to exercise and carry out the functions of a local government body in relation to its area and to carry out works to improve, promote or facilitate communications within or outside the area.

A primary purpose in setting up the Trust was to provide a mechanism through which Commonwealth local government funding could be attracted to the outback areas of the State.

Local Government in its traditional form has been seen as impractical in the outback areas because of the diverse nature of localities, the small populations, and practical difficulties in holding elections and enforcing the imposition of rates. Over the years the Trust has been required to focus more on essential services and infrastructure, acting like a regional local government authority and offering flexible assistance packages to individual local community organisations.

Since its formation the Trust has contributed funds towards the development of a range of infrastructure in the outback areas including: airstrips, halls, clubrooms, recreation/sporting facilities, Royal Flying Doctor clinics, communications, electricity generation, water supply, sewerage systems, libraries, waste management and infrastructure for radio / television rebroadcast services and an extensive UHF repeater network.

The Trust has five members and two deputy members who are appointed by the Governor. The current term of the members expires on 30 June 2010. The Trust receives administrative support from the Department of Planning and Local Government, with most staff based in Port Augusta.

While the Trust has worked to the best of its ability to deal with many of the challenges it faces, it does not have sufficient powers to deal effectively with many of the problems experienced by these communities, or to raise sufficient revenues to support those efforts.

**Addressing this is the key objective of the proposed legislative changes.**



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## The Community Organisations

There are 36 community organisations (also known as progress associations) at 33 different locations throughout the region. Of these, 26 are considered by the Trust as being currently operational. With the exception of the Woomera Board, these organisations are incorporated under the *Associations Incorporations Act 1985*. They have the power, subject to the Act and the rules of the individual organisation concerned, to acquire, hold, deal with, and dispose of any personal and real property.

Generally the Trust recognises one principal organisation in each locality and requires, to the extent possible, that the organisation represent the interests of the local community as a whole. The exception to this is the recognition of co-existing Aboriginal community groups in three towns – the Marree Arabunna Peoples Committee Inc. (Marree); the Dunjiba Community Council Inc. (Oodnadatta) and the Aroona Council Inc. (Copley).

Membership of each organisation's governing body varies according to its constitution. While larger organisations such as Andamooka and Iron Knob meet regularly, small communities such as Ash, Manna Hill and Kingoonya usually meet on an as needs basis. The election of members occurs at the same time as each organisation's annual general meeting. However in some of the smaller communities elections may not occur, with the selection of office bearers taking place instead through other means. All office bearers are volunteers.

The day-to-day operations and decision-making of individual community organisations are independent from the Trust. Each organisation determines its local needs and project priorities and, where human resources allow, maintains facilities and services and undertakes town clean up and management roles.

Through the use of Community Affairs Resourcing and Management agreements, the Trust works with each community to assist with funding for these purposes and for development and infrastructure projects.

