

Election 2013

Coalition Campaign Headquarters



Media Release

The Hon Tony Abbott MP

Leader of the Opposition

The Hon Warren Truss MP

Leader of The Nationals

Shadow Minister for Infrastructure and Transport

Thursday 29 August 2013

Coalition announces *National Stronger Regions Fund*

An incoming Coalition Government will establish a *National Stronger Regions Fund* to help communities struggling with high unemployment.

The fund will invest \$200 million each year in local capital works projects to improve local communities.

We want to build a stronger economy and stronger communities across Australia – and leave nobody behind.

Building a stronger economy with more jobs, high wages and better services is at the heart of Our Real Solutions Plan.

That's why we are going to scrap the carbon tax and mining tax, cut the company tax rate, restore the Australian Building and Construction Commission and cut \$1 billion a year in red tape

However, we recognise that some communities across the country are going backwards at a rate of knots. More has to be done for those communities.

The *National Stronger Regions Fund* will help communities with poor socio-economic circumstances and higher than average unemployment, by improving local facilities, creating local jobs and building needed infrastructure.

A strong economy is not an end in itself, but the means by which people can get ahead and build stronger communities. The *National Stronger Regions Fund* is a practical way of ensuring that communities facing economic uncertainty don't get left behind.

From 2015, councils and community groups will be able to apply for grants between \$20,000 and \$10 million, to meet half the cost of community building projects. Disadvantaged regions with a higher than average unemployment rate will receive priority for funds.

We will work with local communities by backing successful projects and contributing up to 50 per cent of the funds needed to construct them. The remaining funds for the projects will come from local government, state governments, the community and the private sector.

The Coalition understands it is people, not processes that make strong communities. Local people are best placed to know their own needs. Successful projects will emerge from local communities.

Annual funding of \$200 million will support projects with the highest community benefit and value for money. Applications will need to set out how the project is:

- meeting an identified and pressing community need;
- improving community connections;
- supported broadly within the community;
- representing value for money investment;
- managed and delivered within the organisation's or the communities resources; and
- leveraging funding from additional sources including state governments, local councils and local businesses.

The programme will be subject to the current Commonwealth Grant Guidelines.

The *National Stronger Regions Fund* is another way that a Coalition Government will build a stronger Australia and a better future – for all Australians.

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