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CENTRAL QUEENSLAND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY INCEPTION STUDY

BACKGROUND REPORT NO. 4: PRIVATE SECTOR STAKEHOLDERS SURVEY REPORT



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APPENDIX 1: Private Sector Stakeholder

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The regional economic development insights gleaned from this Region-wide Private Sector Stakeholder Survey are considered to be extremely valuable, being well-informed and based on hands-on experience.

Overall, respondents expressed the view that the Mackay/Whitsunday Area should be considered part of the CQ Region, particularly because mining and agriculture would be better served in terms of infrastructure and planning. There were several clear benefits that would derive from incorporating the Mackay/Whitsunday Area into the CQ Super-Region.

Bundaberg is perceived as being closely aligned to Southern Queensland commercially. A slight majority of respondents held the view that Bundaberg should be incorporated into the CQ Region. However, as the survey did not canvass the views of residents in the Bundaberg Area, the findings of this survey are in no way conclusive on this issue.

Infrastructure and the level of public services provided in Central Queensland are considered to be of a relatively high standard, although there is plenty of scope for improvement. Port facilities are adequate, although many respondents commented that there was a need for a containerisation facility at Gladstone.

An extension of rail electrification to Mackay was overwhelmingly supported.

The development of stronger commercial/industrial linkage between Rockhampton and Gladstone was generally favoured.

The establishment of a Regional Development Authority to cater for the needs of the CQ Region was generally favoured.

An overwhelming majority of respondents held the view that Central Queensland was poised to enter a period of sustained economic activity.

The majority of respondents considered that the supply of housing and accommodation was adequate to meet present requirements and that it could be expanded to meet future needs.

Overall, government services were considered to be adequate. The department whose services are most frequently used is the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development (DBIRD).

Generally, survey respondents were of the opinion that promotion of the CQ Region has not been spectacular. Moreover, resources of Central Queensland and the associated investment opportunities, have not been adequately promoted.

The three most important strategic considerations identified by respondents were: improvement to infrastructure and services; the development of natural resources; and the adoption of regional economic development planning.

The major perceived drawbacks/disadvantages of the CQ Region were: isolation, lack of integrated regional planning and a laid-back community attitude that was not conducive to innovation and risk-taking.

Viewpoints on issues other than those reported under the structured interview questions included:

- . considerable dissatisfaction with the manner in which the ubiquitous CQ water supply/storage problem was being addressed
- . concern with the high costs of transport
- . a lack of confidence in the manner in which the CQ Region is being promoted by the Queensland Tourism and Travel Corporation (QTTC)
- . the absence of one-stop-shop government agency facilities for business (excepting Gladstone)
- . the need for regional development planning and the disclosure of government agency plans
- . the lack of easy access to finance in the Region
- . past State Government neglect of Central Queensland.

However, most respondents felt confident that this Region had tremendous prospects for sustained growth and development.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Private Sector Stakeholder Survey was designed to elicit strategic information from leading private organisations and individuals, nominated by the Managers/Regional Development Officers (RDOs) of the various Central Queensland (CQ) Regional Development Organisations, on issues relating to the future economic development of the Region.

This survey represents the third stage of the extensive consultation process adopted in this Study. The first and second phases, documented in Background Reports 2 and 3 respectively, provided information for the design of the structured interviews used in this interview-based survey.

This in-depth interview-based survey formed part of the extended Study Brief of the Central Queensland Regional Economic Development Strategy Inception Study agreed to by the Study's Management Committee on the recommendation of the Project Manager.

Its purpose was to deepen the consultation process and provide clearer direction on specific issues that had arisen from a preliminary analysis of responses to the Needs and Opportunities (Attitudinal) Survey (BR.3). (See Appendix 1 for a copy of the Questionnaire.)

2. STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

It was decided that the strategic information required would be most effectively collected by means of an in-depth interview-based survey. The relevant RDOs/Managers from the five sub-regions were requested to provide lists of key players from a cross-section of business people and community leaders operating in their areas, which could include individuals as well as Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of private sector organisations. Additional respondents were selected by the Project Manager on a discretionary basis, the main criterion for selection being possession of a high regional profile and known to possess a definite 'bias for action'.

Experienced interviewers underwent a thorough in-house briefing on the nature and purpose of the Study and the role of this consultative phase within the overall Study design. A discursive approach was suggested for conducting in-depth interviews, which were expected to take about one hour to complete.

The interviews were to be structured around what was essentially an attitudinal questionnaire containing eighteen questions.

With the exception of the Mackay Sub-Region, interviews were arranged at least one week in advance.

Copies of the questionnaire were mailed to the Central West and Central Highlands RDOs/Managers, who distributed them to board members, who were requested to fill them out as self-administered questionnaires and return them in the postage pre-paid envelopes supplied.

Interviewers were briefed to elicit information and viewpoints on matters relating to the economic development of the CQ Region other than those canvassed in the questionnaires.

Each interviewer was de-briefed after completion of the assigned quota of interviews. Respondents were assured confidentiality. Only one potential respondent declined to cooperate.

In all, 79 interviews were conducted. These were distributed across the sub-regions as follows: Rockhampton (35); Gladstone (24); Mackay (20). Of the questionnaires mailed to the relevant RDOs in the Central Highlands and the Central West Sub-Regions, seven from the Central Highlands and four from the Central West were returned. This yielded a total of 90 responses.

The findings of the survey, which related to the CQ Region as a whole, are arranged in the same order as the questionnaire. Voluntary qualitative information and viewpoints offered on issues other than those canvassed in the questionnaire, that is, outside the structured section of the interview, are summarised in Section 4 of this Report. Some of this unsolicited information is regarded to be very valuable, being given the guarantee of confidentiality, or, more correctly, anonymity.

3. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A majority of respondents, 53 out of 90, or 59%, of respondents, took the view that the Mackay/Whitsunday Area should be considered an integral part of the CQ Region for economic development purposes. The predominant reason given in support of this amalgamation was the existence of common interests in the coal mining, beef and tourism industries (Table 1).

On the question as to whether the Bundaberg Sub-Region should be considered an integral part of the CQ Region for economic development purposes, a slight majority, 47 out of 90, or 52%, of respondents, were in favour.

However, as the Bundaberg Sub-Region was not part of the Study's target area, the above result understates the level of support that exists for the Bundaberg Sub-Region to be considered an integral part of the CQ Region. Information supplied by Bundaberg and District Tourism and Development Ltd would suggest that the Bundaberg Sub-Region strongly favours forming a closer alliance with the CQ Region as defined for the purposes of this Study (Table 2).

TABLE 1: INCLUDING MACKAY AREA AS PART OF CQ

For Regional Economic Development purposes, should the Mackay/Whitsunday area be considered as part of the Central Queensland Region? (Question 2)

	Yes	No
Rockhampton	21	14
Gladstone	12	12
Mackay/Whitsunday	13	7
Central Highlands & Central West	7	4
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	53	37
TOTAL (%)	59%	31%
	<hr/>	<hr/>

TABLE 2: INCLUDING BUNDABERG AREA AS PART OF CQ

For Regional Economic Development purposes, should the Bundaberg area be considered as part of the Central Queensland Region? (Question 3)

	Yes	No
Rockhampton	13	22
Gladstone	20	4
Mackay/Whitsunday	8	12
Central Highlands & Central West	6	5
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	47	43
TOTAL (%)	52%	48%

The vast majority of respondents, 73 out of 90 or 81%, favoured developing stronger industrial and commercial linkages between Gladstone and Rockhampton, and the adoption of a common industrial/commercial development strategy. The complementarity between the two cities was stressed (Table 3).

**TABLE 3: GREATER COMMERCIAL LINKAGE BETWEEN
GLADSTONE AND ROCKHAMPTON**

Should greater commercial/industrial linkage be developed between Gladstone and Rockhampton? (Question 4)

	Yes	No
Rockhampton	26	9
Gladstone	22	2
Mackay/Whitsunday	16	4
Central Highlands & Central West	9	2
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	73	17
TOTAL (%)	81%	19%

There was overwhelming support for an extension of rail electrification from Rockhampton to Mackay, with 85 out of 90, or 94%, in favour. Not only would this provide Mackay with an efficient freight link with Gladstone when a container terminal is established in Gladstone, but the link would also promote tourism and assist in the unification of the CQ Region (Table 4).

TABLE 4: EXTENSION OF RAIL ELECTRIFICATION TO MACKAY

Should rail electrification be extended from Rockhampton to Mackay? (Question 5)

	Yes	No
Rockhampton	35	-
Gladstone	21	3
Mackay/Whitsunday	19	1
Central Highlands & Central West	10	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	85	5
TOTAL (%)	94%	6%

A total of 58 out of 90, or 64%, of respondents expressed the view that Central Queensland should have an umbrella Regional Development Organisation that could authoritatively represent the Region as a whole. There was a clear indication that what was required was not a new layer of bureaucracy, but an organisation comprised of the RDOs of present Regional Development Organisations although, significantly, armed with clear and effective consultative arrangements with key regional government agencies (Table 5).

A total of 79 out of 90, or 88%, of respondents held the view that the CQ Region was on the verge of unprecedented growth and that the coal and mineral processing industries would provide the necessary catalysts (Table 6).

On the question of the availability of adequate reasonably priced housing in their respective areas to support the current rate of economic growth, 44 out of 90, or 49%, of respondents considered that the available accommodation was adequate and reasonably priced, while a slight majority of 51% took the opposite view. As the question was pitched at the respondent's own 'area', there was considerable variation in responses between sub-regions (Table 7).

TABLE 5: ESTABLISHING A CQ REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Should a Regional Development Authority be set up to be responsible for looking after the development needs of the Central Queensland Region? (Question 6)

	Yes	No
Rockhampton	28	7
Gladstone	10	14
Mackay/Whitsunday	15	5
Central Highlands & Central West	5	6
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	58	32
TOTAL (%)	64%	36%

TABLE 6: CQ ENTERING A PERIOD OF SUSTAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH

Is the Central Queensland Region poised to enter a period of sustained economic growth and development? (Question 7)

	Yes	No
Rockhampton	34	1
Gladstone	23	1
Mackay/Whitsunday	15	5
Central Highlands & Central West	7	4
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	79	11
TOTAL (%)	88%	12%

TABLE 7: ADEQUACY OF CQ HOUSING SUPPLY

Is there adequate reasonably priced housing in your area to provide accommodation for additional families as the workforce increases with increased economic development activity? (Question 8)

	Yes	No
Rockhampton	16	19
Gladstone	15	9
Mackay/Whitsunday	9	11
Central Highlands & Central West	4	7
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	44	46
TOTAL (%)	49%	51%

A clear majority of 59 out of 90, or 66%, of respondents stated that they use the services of government departments such as the Department of Business, Industry and Regional Development (DBIRD), the Queensland Department of Primary Industries (QDPI) and the Department of Transport in the normal course of their business activities. The breakdown of responses on a sub-regional basis indicates much heavier proportionate utilisation of these services by Gladstone and Mackay Sub-Regions than Rockhampton and combined Central Highlands and Central West Sub-Regions (Table 8).

TABLE 8: USE OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES

In the normal course of your business activities, do you use the services of government departments such as DBIRD, QDPI or the Department of Transport? (Question 9)

	Yes	No
Rockhampton	20	15
Gladstone	21	3
Mackay/Whitsunday	14	6
Central Highlands & Central West	4	7
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	59	31
TOTAL (%)	66%	34%

In general, there is a high level of satisfaction with service delivery by the main government agencies, with DBIRD rated highest at 5.7, QDPI a close second at 5.6 and the Department of Transport third, with a rating of 5.1. These are good ratings on a scale where 7 is the top rating. However, DBIRD Gladstone gets the top rating of 6.2, supported by strong statements of approval and satisfaction. (Table 9).

TABLE 9: ADEQUACY OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Please indicate how satisfactory these services are? (Scale 1 to 7) (Question 10)

	Rockhampton	Gladstone	Mackay/ Whitsunday	C/Highlands & C/West	CQ Region
DBIRD	5.3	6.2	5.0	5.5	5.7
Dept. of Transport	-	5.5	5.0	4.7	5.1
DPI	5.0	-	6.0	5.8	5.6
Other	4.8	5.1	4.3	3.7	4.5
OVERALL	4.9	5.6	4.9	4.9	5.0

There is a general perception that the CQ Region is not being well promoted, with an overall rating of only 4. There is variation in ratings between the six separate attributes canvassed. It is interesting to note how perceptions vary regarding the promotion of these different attributes, as well as how they vary between locations.

Gladstone respondents provide the highest overall ratings and Capricorn Coast (Livingstone Shire) the lowest.

Promotion of the CQ Region 'as a resource rich area' gets the top overall rating of 4.4, and promotion 'as a good manufacturing location' gets the lowest overall rating of 3.4, whilst promotion 'as a "go ahead" Region' is rated second lowest, at 3.9. This is a very forceful reminder that a lot of work needs to be done in the promotional field (Table 10).

TABLE 10: EFFECTIVENESS OF CQ PROMOTION

How effectively is the Central Queensland Region being promoted? (Scale of 1-7)
(Question 11)

	Rockhampton	Gladstone	Capricorn Coast	Mackay/ Whitsunday	C/Highlands & C/West	CQ Region
(a) as a resource rich area?	4.4	5.7	2.8	4.7	4.3	4.4
(b) as a good place to invest?	4.3	5.0	2.9	4.2	3.9	4.1
(c) as an attractive tourist venue?	4.2	4.6	3.3	4.6	3.6	4.1
(d) as a good place to live?	4.7	4.9	3.5	4.3	3.3	4.1
(e) as a good manufacturing location?	3.8	5.7	1.9	3.2	2.2	3.4
(f) as a 'go ahead' region?	4.2	6.0	2.4	4.4	2.6	3.9
OVERALL RATING	4.3	5.3	2.8	4.2	3.3	4.0

In terms of Central Queensland's basic industrial infrastructure, electricity supply gets the top rating, with 5.4, and roads the lowest, with a rating of 4.1. The overall rating of 4.8 for CQ infrastructure *in toto* is quite high.

Gladstone respondents have the highest perceptions of the overall quality of infrastructure with a rating of 5.8, and the Central Highlands and Central West combined the lowest, at 4 (Table 11).

TABLE 11: QUALITY OF CQ INFRASTRUCTURE

How would you rank the following Central Queensland infrastructure? (Scale of 1-7) (Question 12)

	Rockhampton	Gladstone	Capricorn Coast	Mackay/Whitsunday	C/Highlands & C/West	CQ Region
(a) roads	4.3	4.5	4.0	4.0	3.5	4.1
(b) rail	5.0	5.4	4.7	4.4	4.2	4.7
(c) seaports	5.2	6.4	4.7	4.6	4.5	5.1
(d) airports	4.8	5.7	4.3	5.5	4.0	4.9
(e) electricity supply	6.0	6.3	4.6	5.4	4.6	5.4
(f) natural gas supply	5.2	5.9	5.0	3.3	3.4	4.6
(g) water supply	4.2	6.5	5.7	2.8	3.6	4.6
OVERALL RATING	4.9	5.8	4.7	4.3	4.0	4.8

Improvement of infrastructure, with 36% of total points allocated, particularly transport-related infrastructure (21%), was viewed as the most important strategic consideration to ensure the sustained growth of the CQ Region.

Natural resource development was ranked second, with 17%, and regional (including tourism) promotion third, with 11% (Table 12).

Major impediments to regional economic development cited were isolation, which largely revolves around deficiencies in transport infrastructure and high transport costs (30.5%), lack of a unified promotion of the Region (13%) and bureaucratic barriers (10%) (Table 13).

Only 32, or 36%, of respondents were aware that this Regional Economic Development Strategy Study was being undertaken (Table 14)

The main beneficial outcomes expected from the Study were 'heightened awareness of CQ's potential' (29%), 'identification of the Region's needs and opportunities' (18.5%) and 'providing strategic direction' (16%) (Table 15).

Fifty-eight respondents, or 58% of the total, were aware of the publication of the *Central Queensland Journal of Regional Development* (Table 16).

TABLE 12: IMPORTANT STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

From a regional economic development standpoint, in order of importance, what are the three most important strategic considerations to ensure the balanced and sustained growth of the Central Queensland Region? (Question 13)

	Points	% Total
(1) INFRASTRUCTURE		
general improvement	25	
transport upgrade	86	
housing availability	14	
excellent industrial infrastructure	14	
community infrastructure	9	
TOTAL	148	36%
(2) NATURAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT		
general	16	
water	36	
energy	9	
light metals	6	
coal	4	
TOTAL	71	17%
(3) PROMOTION		
general regional promotion	17	
tourism development	29	
TOTAL	46	11%
OTHER		
(4) INCENTIVES		
general	6	
industry incentives	16	
cut red tape on development	10	
employment opportunities for young people	4	
attract new employment generating industry	5	
TOTAL	41	10%
(5) ADEQUATE PLANNING		
general improvement	16	
regional alliances (political/commercial)	4	
comprehensive data base	6	
TOTAL	26	7%
(6) VALUE ADDING		
general	17	
existing resources	9	
TOTAL	26	7%
(7) GOVERNMENT		
amalgamation of local government	14	
- (Mackay and Pioneer)		
State and local cooperation	9	
TOTAL	23	5%
(8) EDUCATION	15	4%
(9) HUMAN RESOURCES		
skilled labour pool	13	3%
TOTAL POINTS	409	100

TABLE 13: CQ DRAWBACKS

From a regional development standpoint, in order of importance, what are the Central Queensland Region's three major drawbacks or disadvantages? (Question 14)

	Points	% Total
(1) Tyranny of Distance	158	30.5
(2) Lack of Unified Promotion and Planning	67	12.9
(3) Government	51	9.8
- red tape	(17)	
- local government needs improvement	(9)	
- lack of representation	(25)	
(4) Lack Adequate Water	32	6.2
(5) Scarce Skilled Labour	26	5.0
(6) Problems with Support Industries (ie. quality and lack of)	23	4.5
(7) Unemployment	22	4.2
(8) Lack of Investor Confidence and Capital	21	4.0
(9) Parochialism & Lack of Initiative	35	6.7
(10) Lack of Affordable Housing	20	3.9
(11) Other (Education, Value Adding etc)	64	12.3
TOTAL POINTS	519	100.0%

TABLE 14: AWARENESS OF CQ RED STUDY

Were you aware that this Regional Economic Development Strategy Study was being undertaken? (Question 15)

	Yes	No
Rockhampton	9	26
Gladstone	15	9
Mackay/Whitsunday	5	15
Central Highlands & Central West	3	8
TOTAL	32	58
TOTAL (%)	36%	64%

**TABLE 15: EXPECTED BENEFICIAL OUTCOMES OF
CQ RED STUDY**

Nominate two beneficial outcomes the Study should generate? (Question 15a)

	Points	%Total
(1) Heightened awareness of C.Q. Potential through information feedback.	38	21
(2) Identification of Needs and Opportunities (Realistic assessment of regions potential)	33	18.5
(3) Provide Strategic Direction (Isolate areas of planning that need attention)	29	16
(4) Make Governments aware (Attract funding - Assist Govt. to decentralise - Lobbying tool)	22	12.3
(5) Provide basis for Unified Promotion	18	9.9
Other	40	22.3
TOTAL	180	100.0%

TABLE 16: AWARENESS OF CQ JOURNAL

Are you aware of the publication of the first issue of the *CQ Journal of Regional Development*? (Question 16)

	Yes	No
Rockhampton	17	18
Gladstone	17	7
Mackay/Whitsunday	10	10
Central Highlands & Central West	8	3
TOTAL	52	38
TOTAL (%)	58%	42%

The provision of 'informed comment on CQ development', with 39.3% of the points allocated, was ranked as the Journal's most beneficial outcome.

Second rated was 'promoting what the Region has to offer' (26.8%), and third providing 'better regional cohesion' (Table 17).

**TABLE 17: EXPECTED BENEFICIAL OUTCOMES OF
CQ JOURNAL**

In your view, what beneficial outcomes will the quarterly publication of this Journal, which has an exclusive focus on CQ, generate? (Question 16a)

	Points	%Total
(1) Provide informed comment on C.Q. development (Lead to better informed Business/Industry, raised public awareness)	54	39.3
(2) Promote what region has to offer (Create interest in C.Q. potential - Establish regional identity - Draw attention to strengths & weaknesses)	37	26.8
(3) Better regional cohesion (More productive mutual alliances)	15	10.7
(4) Promote positive attitude	15	10.7
Other	17	12.5
TOTAL	138	100.0%

Thirty-five respondents, that is 39% of the total, were aware of IBECQ (Table 18).

TABLE 18: AWARENESS OF IBECQ

Are you familiar with the aims of the University-driven International Business Exchange, Central Queensland (IBECQ)? (Question 17)

	Yes	No
Rockhampton	12	23
Gladstone	16	8
Mackay/Whitsunday	3	17
Central Highlands & Central West	4	5
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	35	53
TOTAL %	39%	59%

Highest ranked expected beneficial outcomes of IBECQ were 'promotion of CQ Region and attaining international recognition of CQ' (31.3%), 'presenting CQ at top government level' (18.8%) and bringing about 'better regional cohesion' (15%) (Table 19).

TABLE 19: EXPECTED BENEFICIAL OUTCOMES OF IBECQ

In your view, what beneficial outcomes for the CQ Region will this initiative generate? (Question 17a)

	Points	%Total
(1) Promotion of what C.Q. Region has to offer	10	31.3
- Internation recognition of C.Q. (5)		
- General Promotion (4)		
- Better representation at trade delegation level(1)		
(2) Present C.Q. at top Government level	6	18.8
(3) Better Regional Cohesion	5	15.6
Other (Focus on export & value-adding, give investors facts etc.)	11	34.3
TOTAL	32	100.0%

A slight majority of 46, or 51%, took the view that the CQ economy was capable of leading Australia out of the recession (Table 20).

TABLE 20: CQ: RECESSION BREAKER

In your view, is the Central Queensland economy capable of leading Australia out of recession? (Question 18)

	Yes	No
Rockhampton	14	21
Gladstone	17	7
Mackay/Whitsunday	10	10
Central Highlands & Central West	5	6
TOTAL	46	44
TOTAL %	51%	49%

4. OTHER FINDINGS OF SURVEY

4.1 Transport Costs

A majority of respondents identified high transport costs as a major problem in Central Queensland. The view was expressed repeatedly that, although the basic transport infrastructure is adequate, it is too oriented towards the coal industry and quite inefficient in terms of general cargo movement. Providing more efficient, integrated and economic transport services was singled out as the most beneficial improvement that could be made in this Region.

4.2 Water Supply/Storage

There was general concern that Central Queensland's ubiquitous water shortage problem was not being addressed within a structured planning framework. Numerous examples of piecemeal solutions, politically motivated projects and crisis-to-crisis planning were provided. Several respondents nominated water quality for domestic use in some centres as being below third-world standards. The view was expressed that water is such a vital resource for the economic diversification of this Region that it should be treated as a pure public good, not as a commodity that can be allocated on a user-pay basis. There was a widespread plea for this problem to be addressed in a holistic strategic planning sense. Mackay respondents in particular were highly critical of the local water supply situation, which they perceived as holding back development.

4.3 Adequacy of Promotion of CQ Region

The responses documented in Table 10 show how perceptions as to the adequacy with which the CQ Region is being promoted vary by attribute (six in all) and by area.

Although Rockhampton ranks second highest overall after Gladstone, several Rockhampton respondents referred to the dissension, in-fighting and fragmentation associated with the promotion of the Rockhampton Area.

Many Capricorn Coast respondents (Capricorn Coast ratings were the lowest recorded) expressed the strong view that the Capricorn Tourism and Development Organisation (CTDO) had been a hindrance rather than an asset in promoting the area. Many responses were 'coloured' by bad personal experiences with ex-CTDO managers. A number of respondents pointed out that the Queensland Tourism and Travel Corporation (QTTC) behaved as if Central Queensland did not exist and had demonstrated little or no interest in this Region.

4.4 One-Stop-Shop Business Facilities

There is a strong perception in the Rockhampton and Mackay Areas (but not in Gladstone) that unnecessary 'red tape' is still a major hindrance to business. The point was made several times that irrespective of the recent regionalisation of State Government services, some departments/service delivery agencies seem to operate as if they are competitors with other departments/divisions, to the detriment of client satisfaction.

4.5 Economic Planning a Necessity

There is a virtual consensus that economic planning at a regional level is a necessity. A number of respondents identified the need for reliable and up-to-date strategic information for decision-making purposes as being very important, and commented favourably on the usefulness of the University of Queensland's (UCQ) *Capstats*, and its successor, *Statsview-CQ*, in this regard. The message came through clearly that infrastructure and industrial development plans should be publicised widely if they were to be of any use to business people who need up-to-date strategic information.

4.6 Tremendous Growth Prospects

Most respondents expressed the view that Central Queensland had outstanding prospects for sustained economic growth and development, but there was widespread concern that there was too much expenditure leakage from the Region. Approximately twenty percent of respondents expressed the view that past State Governments had tended to neglect the CQ Region, even compared with North Queensland. Others were of the opinion that Central Queenslanders were themselves responsible for this apparent neglect, although poor political representation in the past was also a major factor. There was a general perception of an emerging proactive approach to regional development.

4.7 Lack of Finance

Approximately forty percent of respondents identified difficulty in accessing finance as a major problem. Several blamed the Federal Government's anti-recessionary high interest rate policy for lower profitability and investment cutbacks, even though that policy has been relaxed. Some small businesses claimed that they had not received any benefit from interest rate reductions and were still fearful of a return to a high interest rate regime with the threat of cash flow problems.

APPENDIX 1

PRIVATE SECTOR STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONNAIRE

THE CENTRAL QUEENSLAND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY INCEPTION STUDY

P.O. Box 2000
Rockhampton
Queensland 4700

Tel (079) 22 8144
(079) 22 8145
Fax (079) 22 8151

PRIVATE SECTOR STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Have you received a copy of the Regional Development Attitudinal Survey Questionnaire? (See Attachment 1)

☐ Yes

☐ No

- 1a. If 'yes', have you filled out and returned the questionnaire?

☐ Yes

☐ No

PLEASE NOTE

If 'no' to questions 1 or 1a, please administer the questionnaire.

2. For regional economic development purposes, should the Mackay/Whitsunday Area be considered as part of the Central Queensland Region?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comment

.....

3. For regional economic development purposes, should the Bundaberg Area be considered as part of the Central Queensland Region?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comment

4. For regional economic development purposes, should greater industrial/commercial linkage be developed between Gladstone and Rockhampton?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comment

.....

5. From a regional economic development standpoint, should rail electrification be extended from Rockhampton to Mackay?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comment

.....

6. Should a Regional Development Authority be formed to coordinate the overall economic development needs of the Central Queensland Region, that is, a body with representation from each of the present sub-regional development organisations?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comment

.....

7. In your view, is the Central Queensland Region poised to enter a period of sustained economic growth and development?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comment

.....

8. In your view, is there adequate reasonably priced housing in your area to provide accommodation for additional families as the workforce increases with increased economic development activity?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comment

.....

9. In the normal course of your business activities, do you use the services of government departments such as DBIRD, QDPI or the Department of Transport?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Nominate the Government Department whose services you use most:

.....

10. Please indicate how useful/satisfactory you consider these services to be. (Ascending merit scale of 1-7) (Note: 7 is the highest rating)

Comment

.....

11. In your view, how effectively is the Central Queensland Region being promoted? (Ascending merit scale of 1-7) (Note: 7 is the highest rating)

- (a) as a resource rich area? ☐
- (b) as a good place to invest? ☐
- (c) as an attractive tourist venue? ☐
- (d) as a good place to live? ☐
- (e) as a good manufacturing location? ☐
- (f) as a 'go ahead' region? ☐

Comment

.....

12. How would you rank the following CQ infrastructure? (Ascending merit scale of 1-7) (Note: 7 is the highest rating)

- (a) roads ☐
- (b) rail ☐
- (c) seaports ☐
- (d) airports ☐
- (e) electricity supply ☐
- (f) natural gas supply ☐
- (g) water supply ☐

Comment

.....

13. From a regional economic development standpoint, in order of importance, what, in your view, are the **three** most important strategic considerations to ensure the balanced and sustained growth of the Central Queensland Region? (Your first nomination will be valued at three points, your second at two and your third at one.)

(1)

(2)

(3)

Comment

.....

14. From a regional development standpoint, in order of importance, what, in your view, are the Central Queensland Region's three major drawbacks or disadvantages? (Your first nomination will be valued at three points, your second at two and your third at one.)

(1)

(2)

(3)

Comment

.....

15. Were you aware that this Regional Economic Development Strategy Inception Study was being undertaken?

☐ Yes

☐ No

- 15a. Nominate **two** beneficial outcomes that such a Study might be expected to generate.

(1)

(2)

16. Are you aware of the publication of the first issue of **The Central Queensland Journal of Regional Development**?

☐ Yes

☐ No

- 16a. In your view, what beneficial outcomes might a quarterly publication of this type, which has an exclusive focus on Central Queensland, be likely to generate?

(1)

(2)

17. Are you familiar with the aims of University-driven International Business Exchange, Central Queensland (IBECQ)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

- 17a. In your view, what beneficial outcomes for the Central Queensland Region might this initiative be expected to generate?

(1)

(2)

18. In your view, is the Central Queensland economy capable of leading Australia out of recession?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comment.....

.....

INTERVIEWER:

Postcode of Respondent's Address: _____

Thanks for your cooperation in completing this questionnaire.