



# MEDIA RELEASE

Date of Release: 20 May 2019

Approved by: Approved by Chair of Central NSW Councils, Cr John Medcalf, Mayor of Lachlan Shire Council

## Central NSW Councils seek some common sense in the emergency services levy

“Councils across Central NSW are hurting as the Emergency Services Levy comes in. Year after year the price increases are well about CPI and often in double digits. Councils in Central NSW are reporting increases in the levy of up to 25% and costs rising over \$100,000 for some members,” said Cr John Medcalf Chair of Central NSW Councils and Mayor of Lachlan Shire.

“Councils are rate capped and have prepared budgets for the year. These will now have to be reworked and funding go to other programs likes roads or services,” said Cr John Medcalf.

“The Mayors of the region appreciate that the increase is for workers’ compensation relating to cancers, the issue is that we need work with the government on a fairer way to divide up what is in reality a runaway unknown expense every year,” said Cr John Medcalf.

“We have asked time and time again for some common sense – CPI increases and much earlier advice on costs so we can budget responsibly. In reality this is just cost shifting gone rampant. Every year we are ignored and it is so disappointing that for all the rhetoric around working with regional communities, the reality is more of the same lip service,” said Cr John Medcalf.

“We would like the State government to accept responsibility for this increase and then talk to us about a more transparent and accountable way to administer the Emergency Services Levy,” said Cr John Medcalf.

“The Mayors of the region will be meeting with Ministers in Sydney 30 May and we will be raising this issue with them. We will also be meeting with the President of Local Government NSW who advise this is a serious issue across all of NSW that they are taking up to the State Government,” said Cr John Medcalf.

**ENDS**

**For comment please contact Executive Officer Jenny Bennett 0428 690 935**