

Media Release

Spotlight on Co-operatives

Co-operatives WA has welcomed the Senate Economics Reference Committee report on the role, importance, and overall performance of the co-operative and mutual sector in the Australian economy.

According to Mr Chris Enright, Chairman of Co-operatives WA, the State's peak industry body, "The Committee's recommendations provide important guidance on how the member-owned enterprises sector could perform at a higher level and make an even greater contribution to Australia's market based economy."

"The report has identified an overall lack of awareness and understanding of the co-operative and mutual sector outside practitioners directly involved in the day-to-day operations of their own member-owned business."

The Report recommendations address a number of concerns the sector has been endeavouring to overcome so the merit of co-operative and mutual business models can come to the fore and be assessed against other business structures.

"For too long, the focus of educators, business advisers and governments has been directed away from member-owned enterprise models, not because of the model itself which can take many forms, but because they simply aren't properly informed" said Mr Enright.

Whilst the Report noted that the majority of the issues raised were done so by relatively large co-operatives, or national mutual organisations and the concerns generally reflected the interests of organisations of that scale, Mr Enright congratulated the Business Council of Co-operatives and Mutuals on their contribution to the inquiry on behalf of everyone in the sector from the very small local co-operative to the very large.

"The role of the BCCM at the national level has been of great assistance in getting the sector's profile to where it is today, and Co-operatives WA as a BCCM Member, is looking forward to working with all concerned to take things to the next level and ensure the recommendations are actioned. We need to knock down barriers to growth, innovation and competition and the Report has given us renewed enthusiasm and energy to have greater recognition given to the value of member-owned business models" concluded Chris Enright. (end)

Authorised and Issued by Chris Enright

Issued on 20 March 2016

For follow-up media comment contact Chris on 0427 541 046