



17 October 2017

**Jen Featherstone**

Revenue Services and Payables Officer

Via email: [jen.featherstone@colacotway.vic.gov.au](mailto:jen.featherstone@colacotway.vic.gov.au)

Dear Jen

**Submission to Colac Otway Shire 2018-2021 Rating Strategy**

The Wye River and Separation Creek Progress Association is a community organisation for residents, home owners and regular visitors in our communities. We have more than 40 years of history of working with Colac Otway Shire for the benefit of our townships. We welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the rates review.

Wye River and Separation Creek, along with other parts of the Shire along the coast and in the hinterland, have been charged 85% of the rates applicable in Colac for many years. We think this differential should continue for the following reasons:

1. Property valuations in our coastal hamlets are very high compared to the rest of the Shire and we contribute more than would be expected on a proportionate basis to the Shire's overall budget, even with the rate differential in place.
2. We do not have reasonable access to the same level of facilities and services as residents in Colac, Apollo Bay and other major settlements who can enjoy the use of COPACC, maternal health, pre-school facilities, libraries, local parks, sports ovals, netball & tennis courts etc.
3. Colac Otway rates are already set at a higher rate than in neighbouring shires of Surf Coast and Corangamite.
4. While we are very appreciative of the efforts made by the Shire on our behalf and the rate rebate following the Christmas Day 2015 bushfires, our communities are still in the process of recovery. Raising the rates beyond the capped amount would impose a significant financial hardship on those members of our community who are still struggling with the aftermath.

We urge Council to maintain the rate differential for remote and outlying communities including Wye River, Separation Creek and Kennett River.

**Juliet Le Feuvre,**

President WRSCPA

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