

7 February 2024

Productivity Commission

Dear Sir / Madam

Re Submission regarding Philanthropy and proposed changes to remove tax deductibility of donations for religious charities

The Bush Church Aid Society of Australia (BCA) is an organisation that started in 1919. The core purpose of BCA is to support people in rural regional and remote parts of Australia by sending people to work in churches, medical facilities and related institutions. Since its inception, hundreds of workers have been sent to support the people of the bush. BCA has an active supporter base of approximately 20,000 supporters, many of whom regularly contribute to supporting Special Religious Education.

The DGR status of Special Religious Education has enabled BCA to raise additional funds and send additional workers to rural regional and remote parts of Australia that badly need support and pastoral care. Special Religious Education (SRE) in Government Schools provides well-researched benefits for social cohesion and key psychological benefits for young people. Faith communities bring community benefits, and the DGR status of Special Religious Education is a valuable part of supporting faith communities.

BCA considers it essential to maintain the DGR status of special religious education in government schools, religious charities, and school building funds.

Yours faithfully

Greg Bridge  
Chief Operating Officer

**The Bush Church Aid Society of Australia**

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