

Comment by Michael C H Jones

In the period 2005/06 Chamber formulated a new policy for the promotion of the Greater Sydney Municipality. The region was divided into five (5) zones for the purpose of linking strategic Chinese cities on the Yangtze:

- A) Eastern Sydney/CBD - Nanjing
- B) Northern Sydney/Newcastle - Wuhan
- C) Southern Sydney/Wollongong - Changqing
- D) Central Sydney/Parramatta - Shanghai/Pudong
- E) Western Sydney/Lithgow - Chengdu

The first MOU signing was with the CPC Deputy General Secretary Nanjing at the Sydney Town Hall on 31st March 2006 -

<http://www.accci.com.au/Nanjing%20Chamber%20of%20Commerce.pdf>

The second with the Vice Mayor of Wuhan in Newcastle on the 11th July 2007 -

<http://www.accci.com.au/keycity/kcintro.htm>

The third with the Chongqing Vice Mayor in Sydney on 22nd February 2010

The fourth in early February 2012 with Chengdu.

The fifth, Shanghai/Pudong, has proved difficult because of the Brisbane/Queensland relationship but ACCCI is still progressing it - partly through the Sydney-Shanghai Society (SSS).

Now in a Sydney City Municipality of 43 mayors, not to mention the Greater Region from Newcastle to beyond Wollongong and the Blue Mountains, there are a lot of turf wars and personality conflicts. The Lord Mayor of Sydney, which is really the CBD, is always accused of 'grand-standing and hubris' in seeking to represent the city internationally - not only by other mayors but also by State Governments of whichever colour. Apart from the mirth of having a Sydney 'water-bubbler' mayor sit alongside great cities' mayors from the USA, EU and PRC, Chamber has always believed these situations bring NSW and Australia into contempt and most importantly underline the missed economic opportunities of peer relationships. In terms of authority and powers who would a visiting Great City Mayor speak to/negotiate with - the State Premier is at another 'provincial' level of government.

However in Australia the State Governments effectively remain supreme. That is why the December 2011 published 'NSW 2021 Baseline Report' is so important - it sets the goals and moves towards the criteria for the economic performance of New South Wales and especially Sydney over the next decade.

In this context there has been an upsurge in recent debate on the future of Sydney in part created by:

* COAG - Constitutional Recognition of Local Government

* Federal Government - Urban Policy Forum re advice on the future shape of cities

* NSW Government - new Minister for Local Government Don Page wants legislation to strengthen the role of regional organisations of councils

* Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government - Regional Development Australia (RDA) Committees

* NSW Business Chamber - Help Sydney prepare for the future by creating 10 super councils

Over at least the next 3/5 years the Chamber will be honing the work of its Policy Committees since their reorganisation/establishment around 1995. As one generation of leaders completes its contribution to Australia China Economic Relations the ACCCI legacy will include a reasonably ordered ship - and the Greater Sydney Municipality is what might be called a Key Priority.

This 'crusade' was begun by a robust contribution to a NSW Business Chamber "Turning Ideas into Action" business roundtable on 20th September 2011 at Chamber's old haunt, the Sydney Shangri-La Hotel. I went head to head with former 12 years Sydney Lord Mayor and NSW State Minister for Planning Frank Sartor and NSW Business Chamber CEO Stephen Cartwright. Stephen was confident that the recently elected Barry O'Farrell State Government would be receptive to their '10 Big Ideas to Grow NSW' campaign including council amalgamations. Frank was sceptical given his long time experience. Both were for a 'softly-softly' approach unlike myself. I argued strongly throughout the afternoon that there needed to be appointed a Minister for Greater Sydney, and if not one of the three senior ministers made responsible for bringing Sydney structurally into the 20th century at least. Asking for 21st century vision might be a little too much.

In my view the regular misfeasance identified by the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), and the damage it does to Sydney's business reputation internationally, can in part be rectified by a more structurally professional organisation of Greater Sydney Municipal Government. The State Government responsibilities are currently shared between the Premier - Minister for Western Sydney, Deputy Premier - Minister for Trade and Investment, Treasurer, and Minister for Local Government with other ministers having responsibilities for the Hunter, Central Coast and Illawarra. No minister is truly internationally focused on Sydney as one of the great cosmopolitan financial centers of the world. It has always been and remains a lack of vision concerning the implications of institutional globalism.

Perhaps ACCCI can assist the thinking and activism to free Sydney from the constraints of Federation and other State jealousies so as to permit a leading role for our city in the fora of Global Cities as regularly announced on the ACCCI Website Homepage.

To begin further research and study are required into structural change to facilitate the international relations possibilities of Councils of the Greater Sydney Municipality:

1) Greater Sydney - East (initially Nanjing but the Lord Mayor wanted Chongqing - both MOUs signed in Sydney)

a)

Council of the City of Sydney (Central Business District)

b)
Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC)

CONSTITUENT COUNCILS

Hornsby, Hunters Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, North Sydney, Ryde, Willoughby

Chair: Clr Pat Reilly

Executive Director: Ms Carolynne James

PO Box 20, Lane Cove NSW 1595

Phone: 02 9911 3595 **Fax:** 02 9911 3651 **DX:** 23307

Email: cjames@lanecove.nsw.gov.au

Web: <http://www.nsroc.org>

c)
Shore Regional Organisation of Councils (SHOROC)

CONSTITUENT COUNCILS

Manly, Mosman, Pittwater, Warringah

Chair:

Executive Director: Mr Ben Taylor

President: Clr Jean Hay

Vice President: Clr Michael Regan

PO Box 361, BROOKVALE NSW 2100

Phone: 02 9905 0095 **Fax:** 02 9939 6454

Email: admin@shoroc.nsw.gov.au

Web: <http://www.shoroc.nsw.gov.au>

d)
Sydney Coastal Councils Group Inc

CONSTITUENT COUNCILS

Botany Bay, Hornsby, Leichhardt, Manly, Mosman, North Sydney, Pittwater, Randwick, Rockdale, Sutherland, Sydney, Warringah, Waverley, Willoughby, Woollahra

Chair: Clr Wendy McMurdo

Executive Officer/Regional Coastal Environmental Officer: Mr Geoff Withycombe

Vice Chairperson (Estuarine): Clr Veronique Marchandean

Vice Chairperson (Ocean): Clr Cathy Griffin

C/- Council of the City of Sydney, GPO Box 1591, Sydney NSW 2001

Phone: 02 9246 7791 **Fax:** 02 9265 9660 **DX:** DX 1251 SYDNEY

EMail: info@sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au

Web: <http://www.sydneycoastalcouncils.com.au>

e)

Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC)

CONSTITUENT COUNCILS

Ashfield, Botany Bay, Burwood, Canada Bay, Canterbury, Hurstville, Kogarah, Leichhardt, Marrickville, Randwick, Rockdale, Sutherland, Sydney, Waverley, Woollahra

Chair: Clr Ron Hoenig

General Manager: Mr Alan Northey

President: Clr Ron Hoenig

PO Box 536, Hurstville NSW 1481

Phone: 02 9330 6455 **Fax:** 02 9330 6456

EMail: ssroc@ssroc.nsw.gov.au

Web: <http://www.ssroc.nsw.gov.au>



2) Greater Sydney - Central (Shanghai/Pudong)

a)

Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC)

CONSTITUENT COUNCILS

Auburn, Bankstown, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Fairfield, Hawkesbury, Hills, Holroyd,

Liverpool, Parramatta, Penrith

Chair:

Chief Executive Officer: Mr Kerry Bartlett

President: Clr Alison McLaren

PO Box 63, Blacktown NSW 2148

Phone: 02 9671 4333 **Fax:** 02 9621 7741

EMail: esme@wsroc.com.au

Web: <http://www.wsroc.com.au>

b)

Macarthur Regional Organisation of Councils (MACROC)

CONSTITUENT COUNCILS

Camden, Campbelltown, Wollondilly

Chair:

Executive Officer: Ms Christine Winning

President: Clr Benn Banasik

P O Box 1325, Campbelltown NSW 2560

Phone: 02 4645 4937 **Fax:** 02 4628 9205

EMail: info@macroc.nsw.gov.au

Web: <http://www.macroc.nsw.gov.au>

NOTE: There is also a well established though small SME grouping in Sydney and Shanghai called the 'Sydney Shanghai Society' designed to strengthen relationships between the two cities.

3) Greater Sydney - West (Chengdu)

a)

Central NSW Councils (CENTROC)

CONSTITUENT COUNCILS

Bathurst Regional, Blayney, Boorowa, Cabonne, Central Tablelands County, Cowra, Forbes, Harden, Lachlan, Lithgow, Oberon, Orange, Parkes, Weddin, Wellington, Young

Chair: Clr Phyllis Miller OAM

Chair of GMAC: Mrs Carissa Bywater

Executive Officer: Ms Jennifer Bennett

C/- Forbes Shire Council, PO Box 333, FORBES NSW 2871

Phone: 02 6850 2300 **Fax:** 02 6850 2399

Email: jenny.bennett@centroc.com.au

Web: www.centroc.com.au

NOTE: During February 2012 an MOU was signed in Sydney between Chengdu City and the ACBC/Mallesons

4) Greater Sydney - South (originally Chongqing but subsequently Nanjing) 


a)
Southern Councils Group

CONSTITUENT COUNCILS

Bega Valley, Eurobodalla, Kiama, Shellharbour, Shoalhaven, Wingecarribee, Wollongong

Chair: Clr Alex Darling

Executive Officer: Ms Lesley Scarlett

PO Box 148, Kiama NSW 2533

Phone: 02 4232 3200 **Fax:** 02 4232 3665

Email: info@southerncouncils.nsw.gov.au

Web: <http://www.southerncouncils.nsw.gov.au>

5) Greater Sydney - North (Wuhan)

a)

Central Coast Regional Organisation of Councils (CCROC)

CONSTITUENT COUNCILS

Gosford, Wyong

Chair: Clr Doug Eaton

Honorary Secretary: Mr Peter Wilson

PO Box 21, Gosford NSW 2250

Phone: 02 4325 8222 **Fax:** 02 4323 7220

b)

Hunter Councils Inc

CONSTITUENT COUNCILS

Cessnock, Dungog, Gloucester, Great Lakes, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Muswellbrook, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Singleton, Upper Hunter

Chair: Clr Peter T Blackmore

Chair of GMAC: Mr David Evans

Chief Executive Officer: Dr Barbara Penson

PO Box 137, THORNTON NSW 2322

Phone: 02 4978 4040 **Fax:** 02 4966 0588

Email: admin@huntercouncils.com.au

Web: <http://www.huntercouncils.com.au>

NOTE: There is a strong relationship between Newcastle University and the University of Wuhan.

References for thinking:

<http://www.smh.com.au/business/local-government-debt-a-growing-burden-for-china-20120108-1pq3c.html> - 9th January 2012

http://www.dlg.nsw.gov.au/dlg/dlghome/dlg_LocalGovDirectory.asp?index=3 - 12th December 2011

<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/high-levels-of-trust-make-local-government-most-corrupt-icac-20111028-1mn7a.html> - 28th October 2011

<http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/casual-army-beats-labors-freeze-and-liberal-cuts-20120122-1qc74.html> - 9th June 2011