



## **Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham**

Minister for Finance  
Leader of the Government in the Senate  
Senator for South Australia

REF: MS21-000135

Senator the Hon Scott Ryan  
President of the Senate  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear President

I write with regard to Senate Order 23E Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines, agreed by the Senate on 12 May 2020.

The Senate Order requires that I lay on the table by 30 April of each calendar year:

- (a) all reports and correspondence received by the Minister for Finance under paragraph 4.12 of the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017 during the preceding calendar year (noting that the Guidelines do not apply to all grant administrators, including not applying to the allocation of funding by Sports Australia under the Community Sport Infrastructure Grants program ('Sports Rorts')); and*
- (b) a summary of the decisions reported under paragraph 4.12 of the Commonwealth Grant Rules and Guidelines 2017, including the Central Budget Management System program title, sub-program, grant activity, grantee, total grant value, grant funding location, postcode, and a brief statement of reason for the decision.*

Paragraph 4.12 of the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017* requires ministers to report to the Minister for Finance annually on all instances where they have decided to approve a particular grant which the relevant official has recommended be rejected. Ministers must report by 31 March each year for the preceding calendar year.

In accordance with the Order, I enclose a copy of a letter from the Hon Jason Wood MP, Assistant Minister for Customs, Community Safety and Multicultural Affairs, dated 18 March 2021, reporting eight instances of decisions during the 2020 calendar year (Attachment A).

I also attach a copy of a letter dated 16 August 2020, from the Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development, as Chair of the Building Better Regions Fund Ministerial Panel reporting 49 instances (Attachment B). I note the Deputy Prime Minister's advice in his letter that his department did not recommend the 49 projects be rejected and no ineligible projects were funded.

Attachment A to the Deputy Prime Minister's letter is unrelated to the Senate Order and is not provided. With respect to the parts of the Deputy Prime Minister's letter and attachment that contain redactions, I claim public interest immunity on the disclosure of the redacted information. If this information was publicly disclosed, it would or could reveal the deliberations of the Cabinet, which are confidential to the Government.

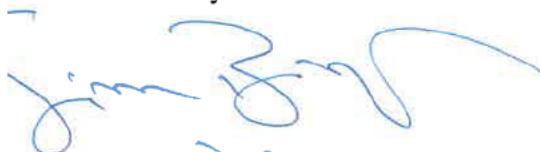
It is longstanding Westminster practice not to disclose information about the deliberations of the Cabinet and its committees. The deliberations of the Cabinet and its committees should be conducted in secrecy so that the freedom of those deliberations can be preserved. It is not in the public interest to disclose information about the Cabinet's deliberations as it would impact on the Government's ability to receive confidential information and make appropriate decisions impacting on the Australian community.

Accordingly, disclosure of the redacted information contained in the correspondence from the Deputy Prime Minister is not in the public interest as it would reveal Cabinet deliberations.

I also enclose a summary of the decisions reported under paragraph 4.12 for the 2020 calendar year (Attachment C).

I have copied this letter to the Prime Minister.

Yours sincerely



**Simon Birmingham**

29 April 2021



**THE HON JASON WOOD MP**  
**ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR CUSTOMS, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND**  
**MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS**

Ref No: MC21-008015

Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham  
Minister for Finance  
Senator for South Australia  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Minister

Thank you for your correspondence of 27 February 2021, concerning the requirement under the *Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines 2017*, to advise you of all instances where I have approved a grant that relevant agency officials recommended not be made. I note this report is due by 31 March 2021.

During the 2020 calendar year, I can confirm that I approved eight grants that fall within this category. These instances are listed at Attachment A.

In addition, under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*, I am required to advise you of all instances where I have approved a grant that a corporate Commonwealth entity recommended not be made, for the specified reporting period. I note this report is also due by 31 March 2021.

I can confirm that I did not approve any grants falling within this category.

Thank you for raising this matter.

Yours sincerely



JASON WOOD

18/3/2021

**Attachment A**

| CBIMS programme title                           | Sub-programme                       | Project title                                   | Grant recipient                                       | Total grant value | Grant funding location    | Postcode | Brief statement of reason for decision   |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|---------------------------|----------|--|
| HA 20/21 National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | GULARGAMBONE PRE SCHOOL INCORPORATED                  | \$87,525.00       | GULARGAMBONE, NSW         | 2828     | <p>Gulgambone Pre School security infrastructure upgrade is greatly needed as the local area has a large proportion of children from low-socioeconomic households, including a large portion of indigenous Australians and, sadly, many are victims of domestic violence. Local Member of Parliament, Mark Coulton MP has written strongly in support of the need for this funding given this town experiences high levels of crime, and the community's safety is imperative.</p> <p>Funding this project now will also allow for cost-savings to occur while the building is under construction and ensure value for taxpayer's money.</p>   |
| HA 20/21 National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | THE TRUSTEES OF THE SYRO-MALABAR EPARCHY OF ST THOMAS | \$442,915.20      | DANDENONG SOUTH, VICTORIA | 3175     | <p>St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Parish has been subject to a number of serious attacks by criminals including break-ins on site and vandalism causing extensive damage to the Parish. The incidents have caused a high level of insecurity among members which I have seen firsthand during my visits to the Parish. Local MP Julian Hill has written in support of the need for this project noting St Thomas has an active community with over a thousand families and the need for a safe and secure environment is paramount. This project is vital to establish a secure premises at the Church to minimise security risks faced by the community and offer its members, particularly the children, a secure environment where they can practice their faith without fear of attack.</p> |

**Attachment A**

| CBMS programme title                            | Sub-programme                       | Project title                              | Grant recipient                     | Total grant value | Grant funding location | Postcode | Brief statement of reason for decision  |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|----------|---|
| HA 20/21 National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Security Guard | AFRICAN MUSIC AND CULTURAL FESTIVAL | \$13,139.10       | MELBOURNE, VICTORIA    | 3000     | In Victoria, the African-Australian community have faced many challenges and adversity in integrating into the local community. Crime and gang-activity has been a significant issue, particularly among young people who are at-risk of engaging in criminal activity. There is a vital need to support events such as the African Music and Cultural Festival which will provide support and engagement for those who need it in a safe and secure environment. |

**Attachment A**

| CBMS programme title                            | Sub-programme                       | Project title                                   | Grant recipient                                     | Total grant value | Grant funding location | Postcode | Brief statement of reason for decision   |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|------------------------|----------|--|
| HA 20/21 National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | MAHAMEVNAWA BUDDHIST MEDITATION CENTRE LTD.         | \$365,274.00      | MOUNT EVELYN, VICTORIA | 3796     | <p>The Buddhist Meditation Centre has suffered a number break-ins, trespass, theft and damages. I have been personally informed on my visit to the Centre that their donation box has previously been stolen, leaving the Centre thousands of dollars out of pocket.</p> <p>The funding from this grant will allow the installation of CCTV, lighting and fencing to protect and secure the Buddhist monks that are living and sleeping in fear at the centre. It will also ensure those that attend the centre feel safer knowing they will be less likely to experience break-ins, theft and damage to their place if worship.</p> |
| HA 20/21 National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | TAMIL EDUCATIONAL CULTURAL & CHARITABLE ASSOCIATION | \$446,587.00      | DEANSIDE, VICTORIA     | 3336     | <p>The Kundrathu Murugan Kumaran Temple and local Tamil community which attends this temple have suffered many instances of property damage, theft of religious items and rubbish dumping.</p> <p>The funds provided to the temple will allow for members and visitors to remain safe from attacks or further instance of a car ramming the front gate. Having visited this temple, I have been informed the upgrades will allow the monks, who are living in fear at the temple to feel safer and secure knowing there is appropriate security infrastructure in place to protect them and deter criminal acts.</p>                 |

**Attachment A**

| CBIMS programme title                           | Sub-programme                       | Project title                                   | Grant recipient   | Total grant value | Grant funding location     | Postcode | Brief statement of reason for decision   |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|-------------------|----------------------------|----------|--|
| HA 20/21 National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | SRI GURU SINGH SABHA SIKH CULTURAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INCORPORATED | \$450,000.00      | CRAIGIEBURN, VICTORIA      | 3064     | The Sikh Temple in Craigieburn and local Sikh community have suffered many instances of verbal abuse, damage, and theft at the site, including their “donations box” which members contribute to from their own pocket. During my visit to the temple I was told first-hand how the current lack of security at the site has caused members much fear when attending the temple. The funding will provide safety and security to those attending the temple to worship or volunteer. Importantly, this will be vital to assist the religious leaders living in fear at the temple due to previous criminal activity such as break-in and trespass. The security upgrade will include CCTV cameras, flood lights, fencing, and electronic gate and access system which will assist in deterring future criminal acts. |
| HA 20/21 National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | THE BUDDHIST MEDITATION ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC                 | \$463,106.70      | CRANBOURNE SOUTH, VICTORIA | 3977     | This applicant has experienced a number of instances of trespass and theft of many artefacts from their premises, which is major cause for concern to members of the temple and monks that live on premises, contributing to a fear of attack or violence. During my visit to the premises, it is clear there is a great need for security upgrades such as CCTV cameras and fencing, to protect the Buddhist monks from criminals trespassing on the property and ensure that the community is safe and secure when they visit the temple.  |

**Attachment A**

| CBMS programme title                            | Sub-programme                       | Project title                                   | Grant recipient  | Total grant value | Grant funding location | Postcode | Brief statement of reason for decision  |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|-------------------|------------------------|----------|---|
| HA 20/21 National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | THE TRUSTEE FOR SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB CHARITABLE TRUST | \$324,000.00      | KEYSBOROUGH, VICTORIA  | 3173     | The applicant has suffered a number of criminal acts including trespass, vandalism and theft of their "donations box". This has led to the religious leaders that live and sleep at the Sikh Gurdwara temple to feel unsafe and live in fear of harm, in particular putting their safety, and the safety of visitors to the temple at risk. During my visit I saw first-hand the need to ensure there are upgrades to security infrastructure at the temple to assist in deterring further criminal acts, theft and damage to the premises. |





**The Hon Michael McCormack MP**

**Deputy Prime Minister  
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development  
Leader of The Nationals  
Federal Member for Riverina**

Ref: MS20-000989

16 AUG 2020

Senator the Hon Mathias Cormann  
Minister for Finance  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

*Mathias*  
Dear Minister

In my capacity as Chair of the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) Ministerial Panel, I write to inform you of funding approvals under Round Four in accordance with the requirements of Section 4.11 and 4.12 of the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Guidelines (CGRG's).

In addition to myself as Chair, the Ministerial Panel members are:

- Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment;
- the Hon Dan Tehan MP, Minister for Education;
- the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management;
- the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government;
- the Hon Nola Marino MP, Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories;
- the Hon Ben Morton MP, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet;
- the Hon Kevin Hogan MP, Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister; and
- Senator the Hon Jonathon Duniam, Assistant Minister for Regional Tourism and Forestry and Fisheries.

To satisfy the requirements of Sections 4.11(a) and (b) of the CGRGs, I am advising you that, of the 163 projects approved under Round Four of the BBRF, a total of 31 were chosen by the Ministerial Panel in the electorates of panel members:

- 3 in my electorate of Riverina;
- 12 in the electorate of Maranoa, held by the Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management;
- two in the electorate of Page, held by the Hon Kevin Hogan MP, Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister; and
- 14 in the electorate of Parkes, held by the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government.

All of these projects were assessed by the AusIndustry Business Grants Hub as meeting value with relevant money in accordance with the approved program guidelines.

Details of these projects are listed in the table at **Attachment A**.

To satisfy the requirements of Sections 4.12 of the CGRGs, I am advising you that, of the 163 projects approved under Round Four of the BBRF, a total of 49 as listed in **Attachment B** were chosen by the Ministerial Panel that were not recommend for funding by the Department. It should be noted that the Department did not specifically recommend that these projects be rejected, however for transparency these projects are listed.

The Panel provided the following statement of reasons for these selections.

- *The Ministerial Panel decision differed from the Departmental recommendation on these projects because of the regional impact of those projects listed above.*
- *The Ministerial Panel decision differed from the Departmental recommendation on these projects because they are in areas significantly impacted by drought and those projects listed demonstrated value for the broader region.*
- *The Ministerial Panel decision differed from the Departmental recommendation on these projects because of considerations made for spread of projects and funding across projects.*

Please note that although not recommended by the Department, all the projects were assessed as Value with Relevant Money and no ineligible projects were funded.

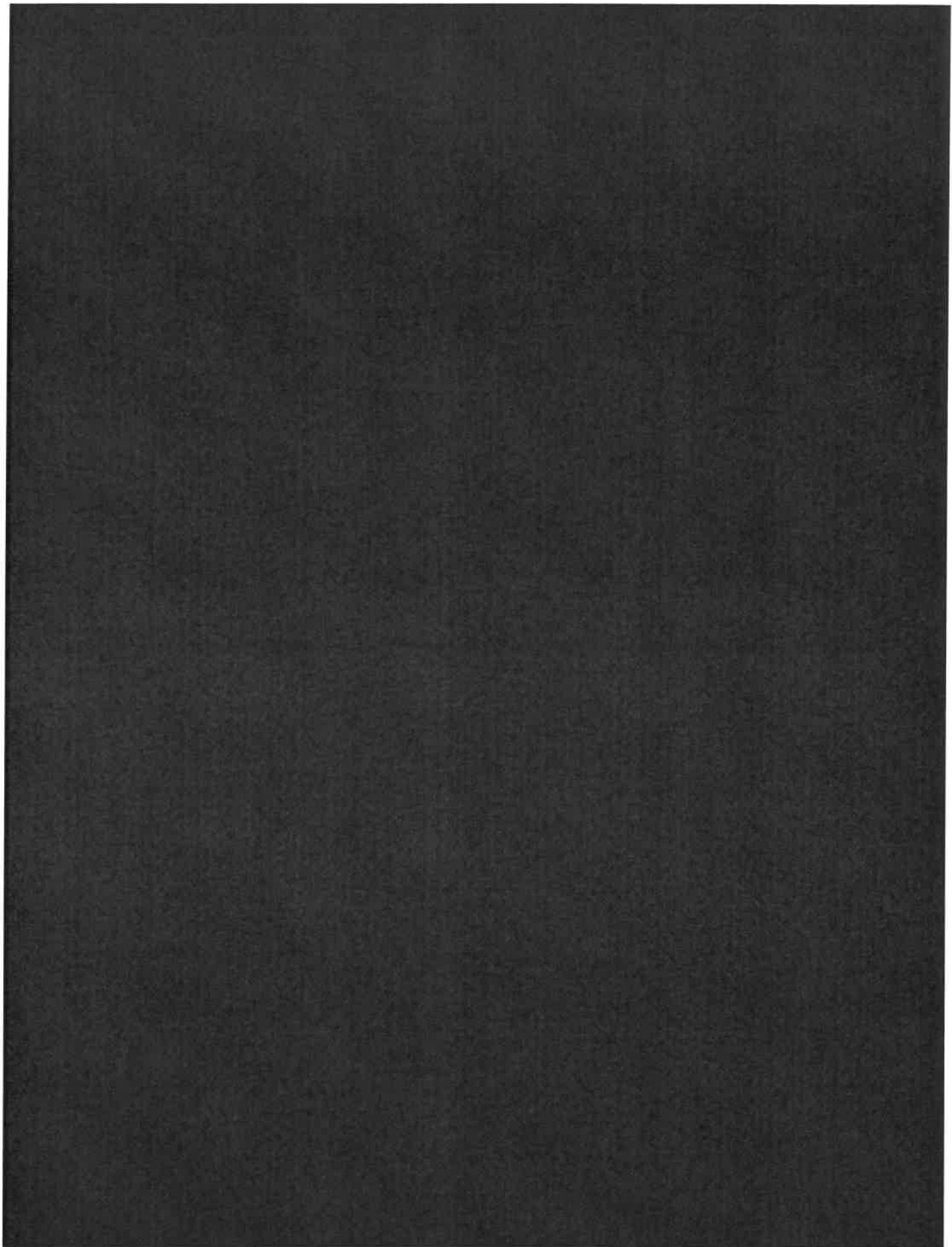
Yours sincerely

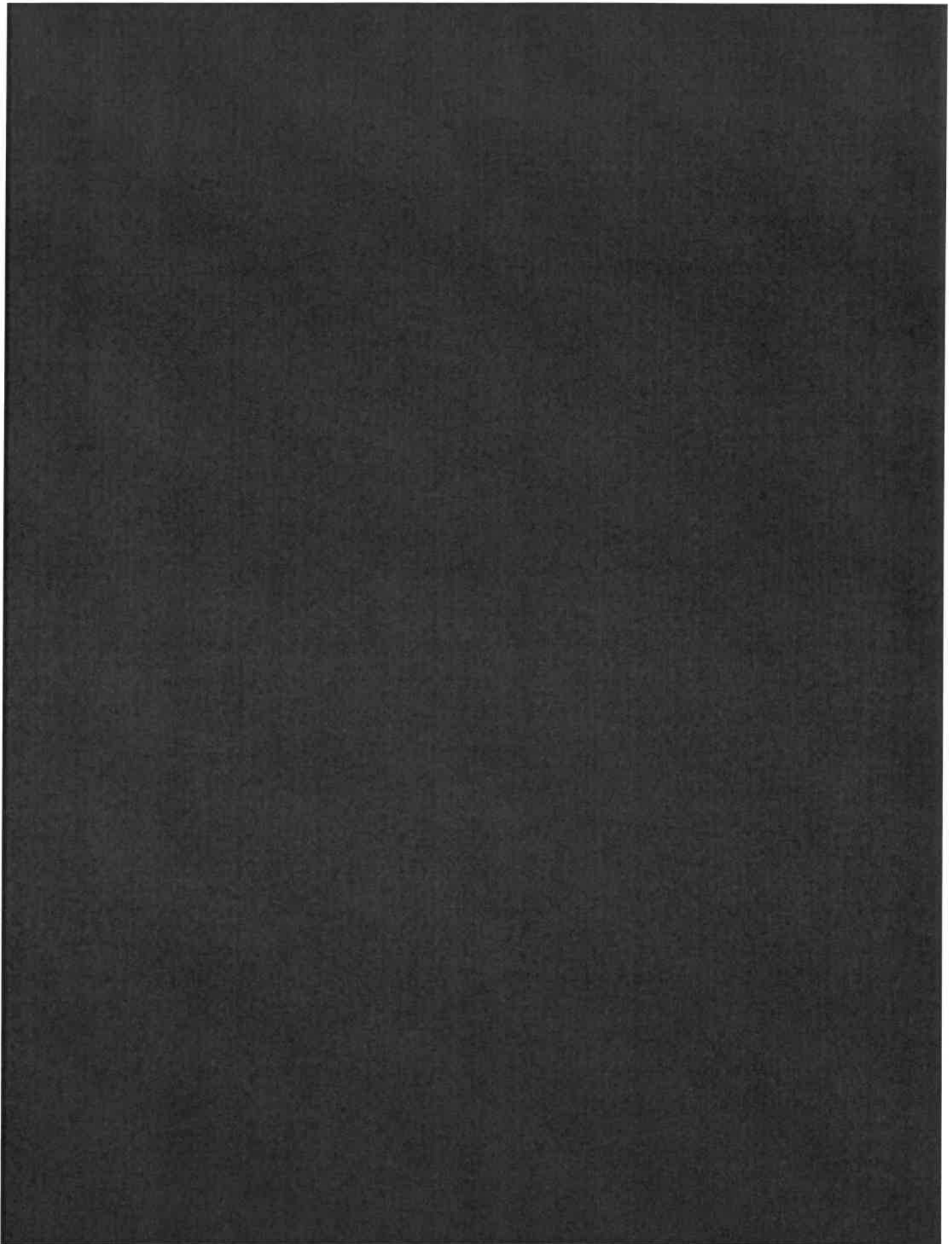


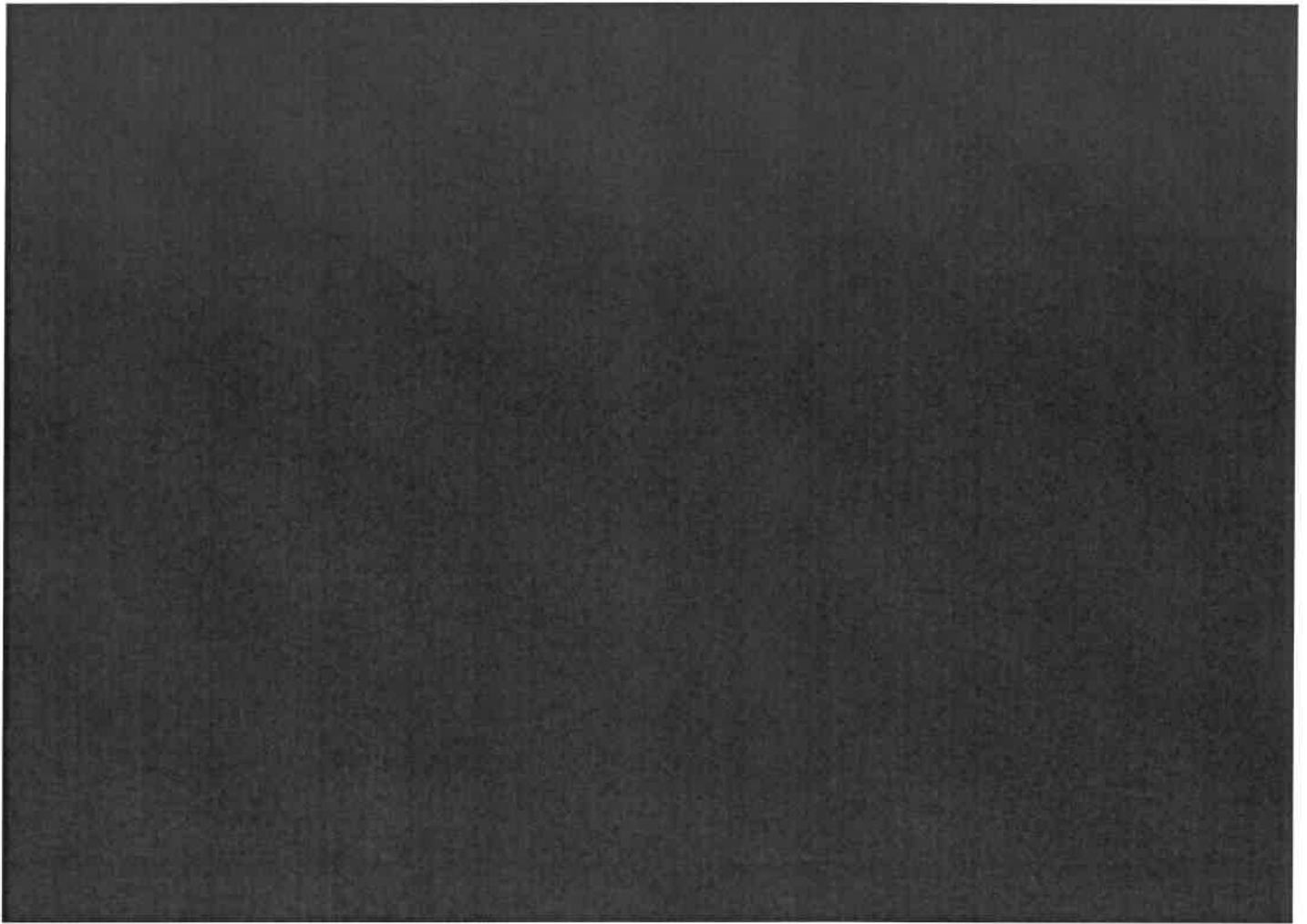
Michael McCormack

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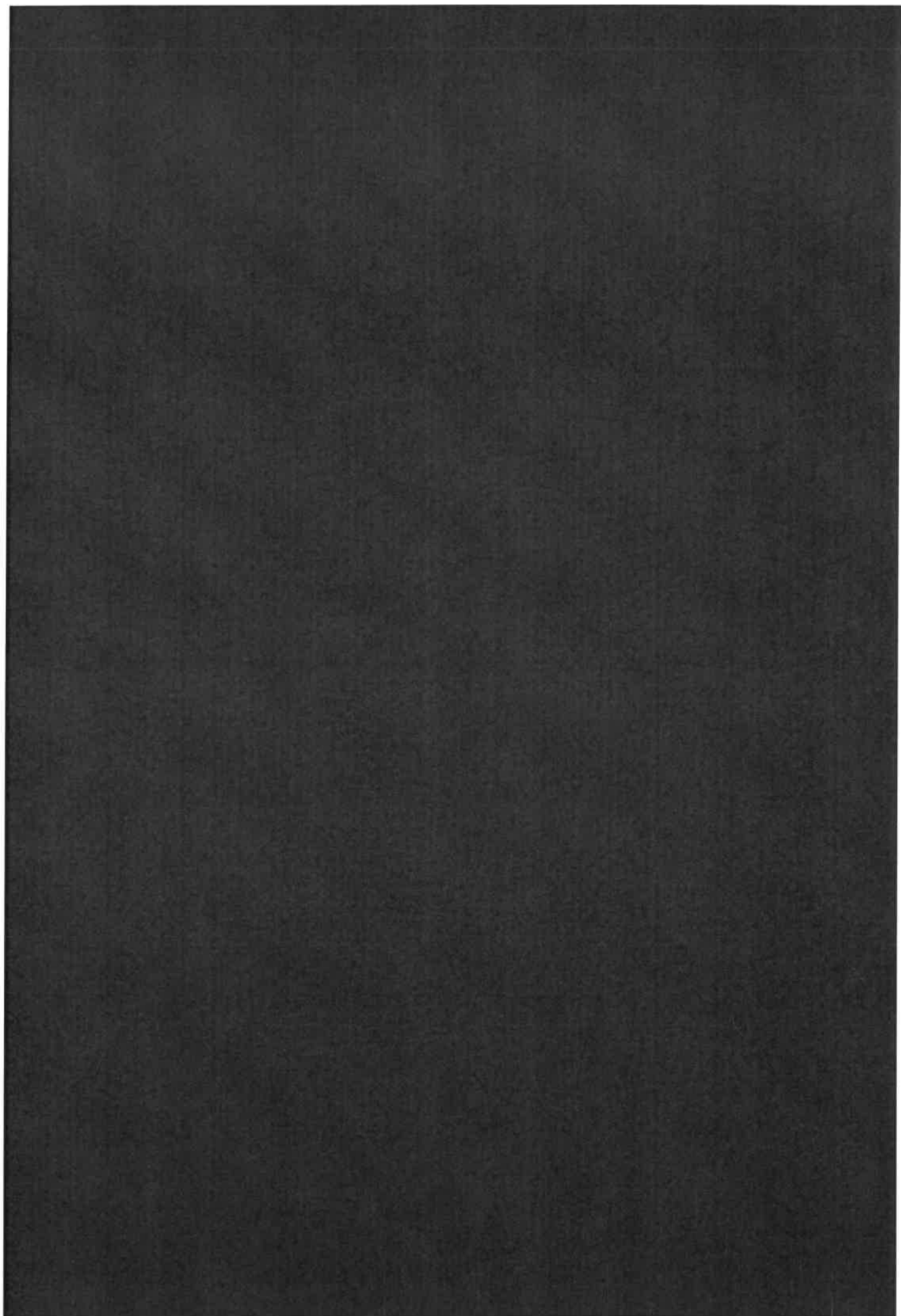
- cc The Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Agriculture, Drought and Emergency Management  
Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment  
The Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government  
The Hon Dan Tehan MP, Minister for Education  
The Hon Nola Marino MP, Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories  
The Hon Ben Morton MP, Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
Senator the Hon Jonathan Duniham, Assistant Minister for Forestry and Fisheries and Assistant Minister for Regional Tourism  
The Hon Kevin Hogan MP, Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister

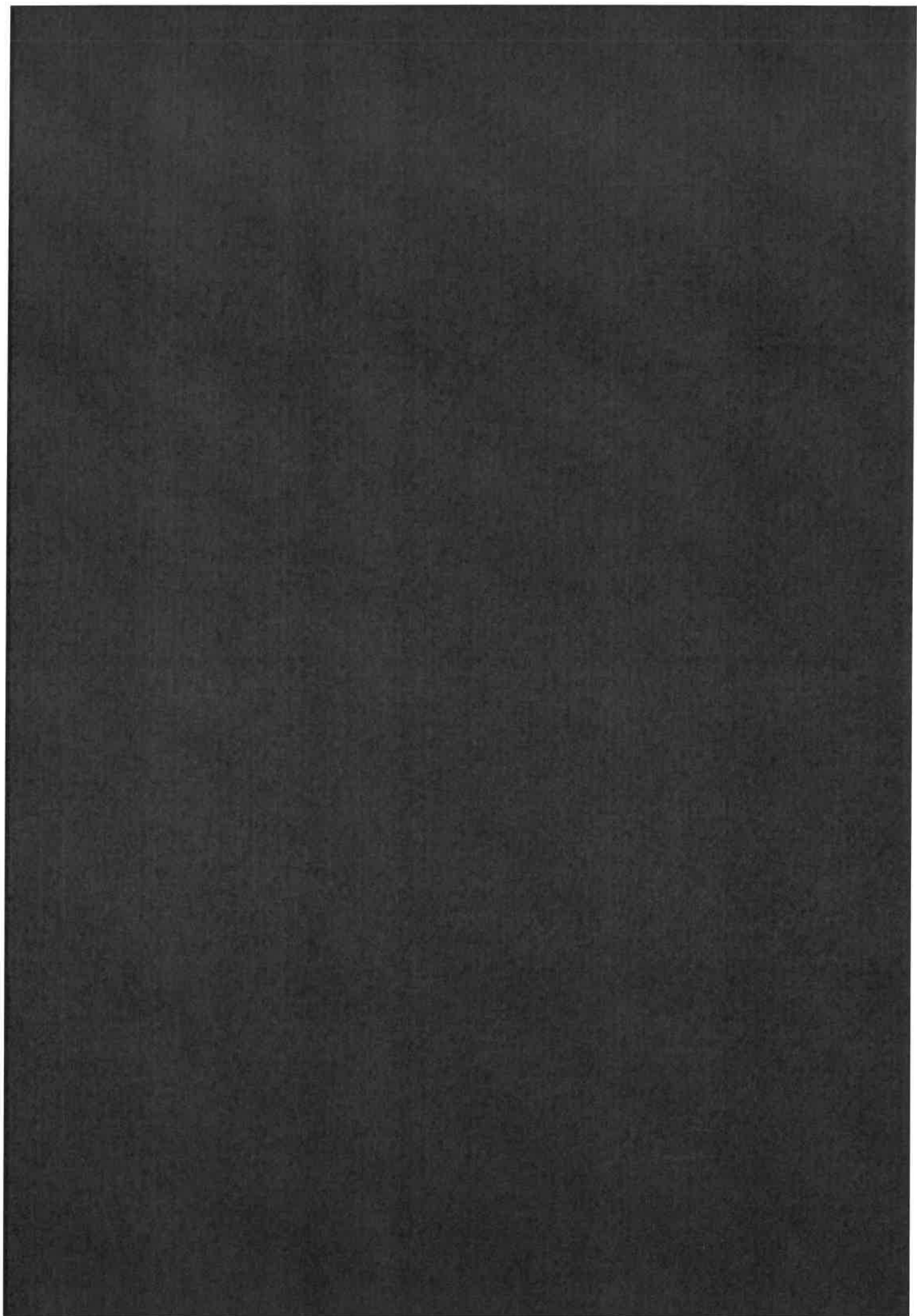


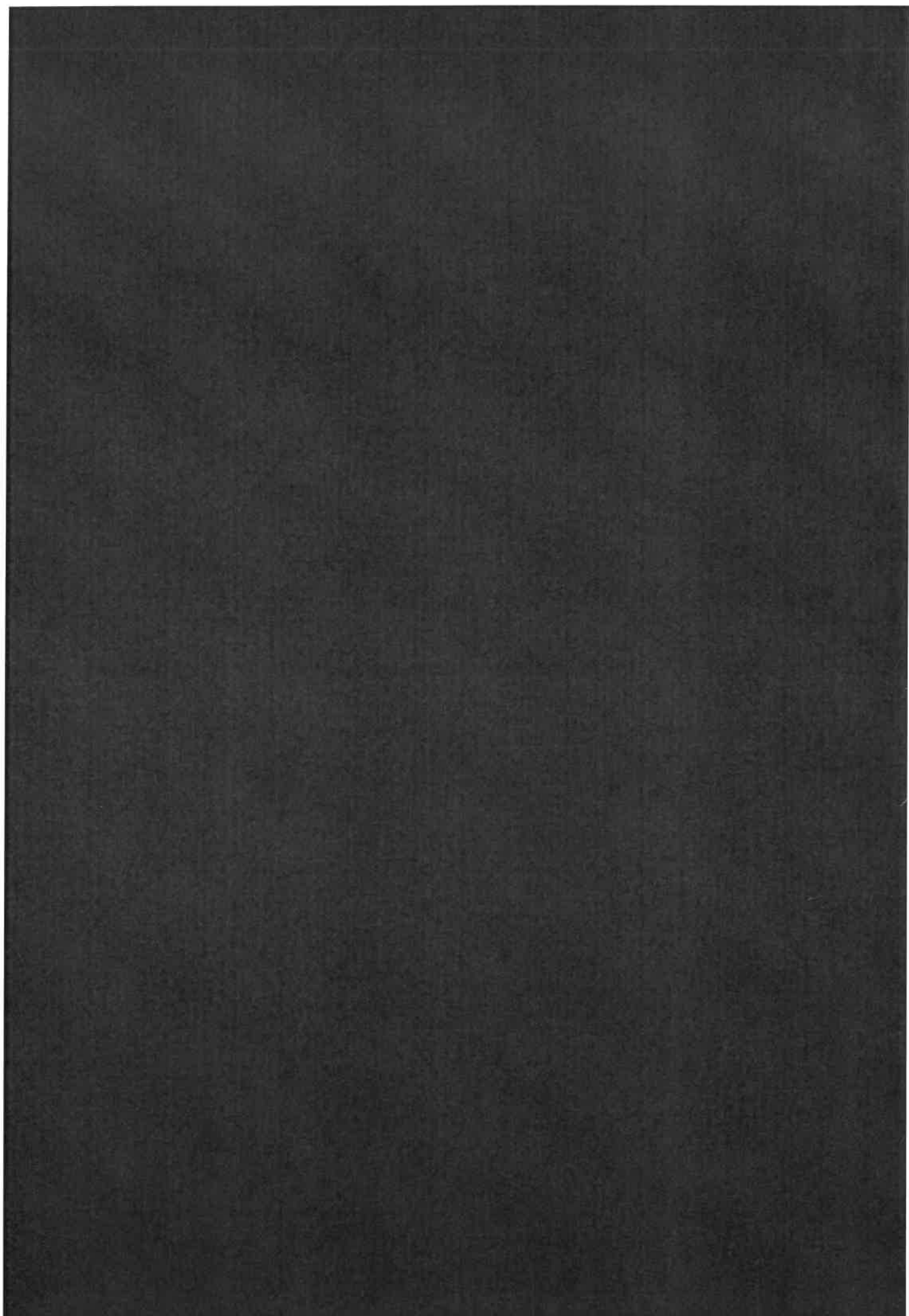




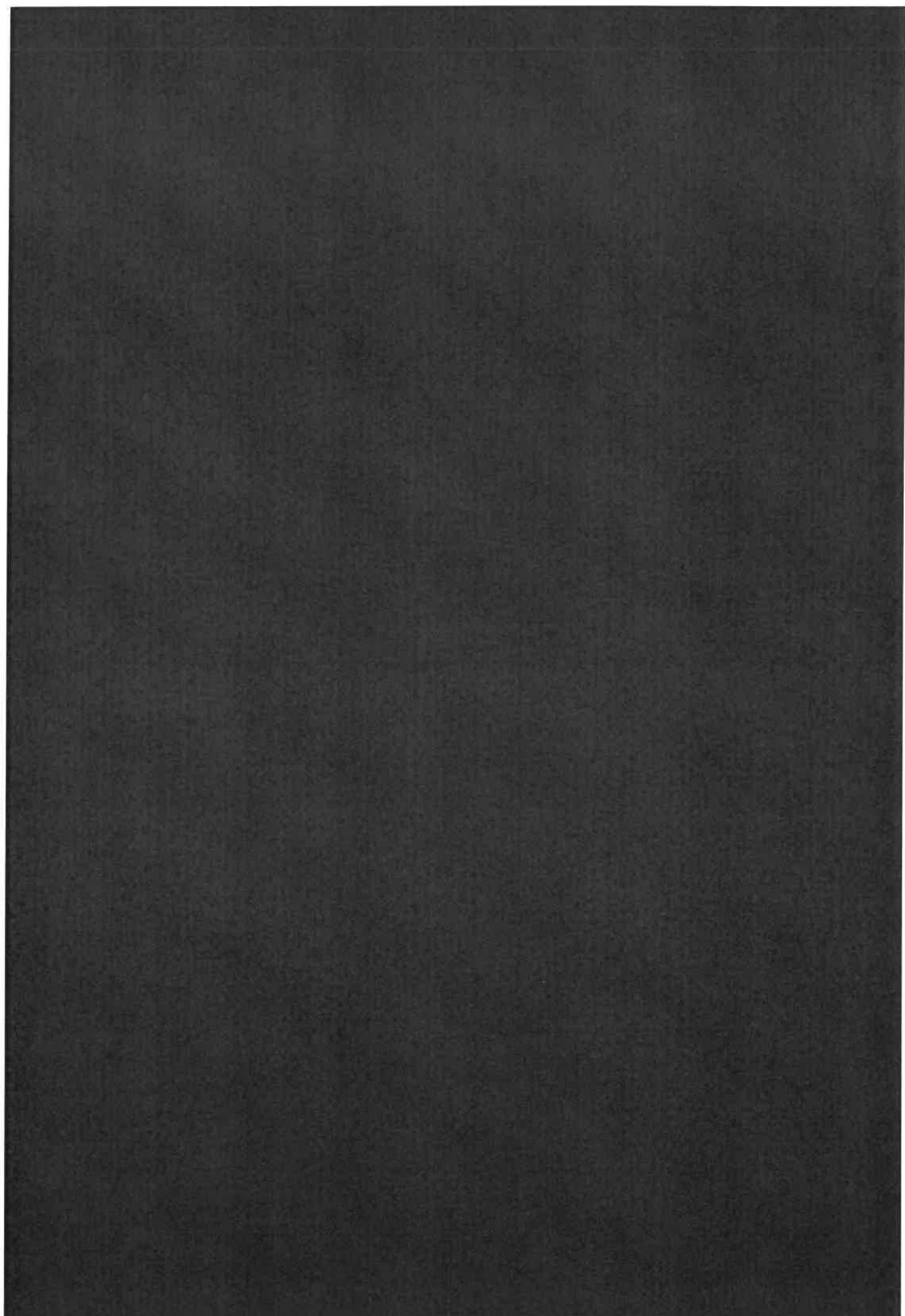
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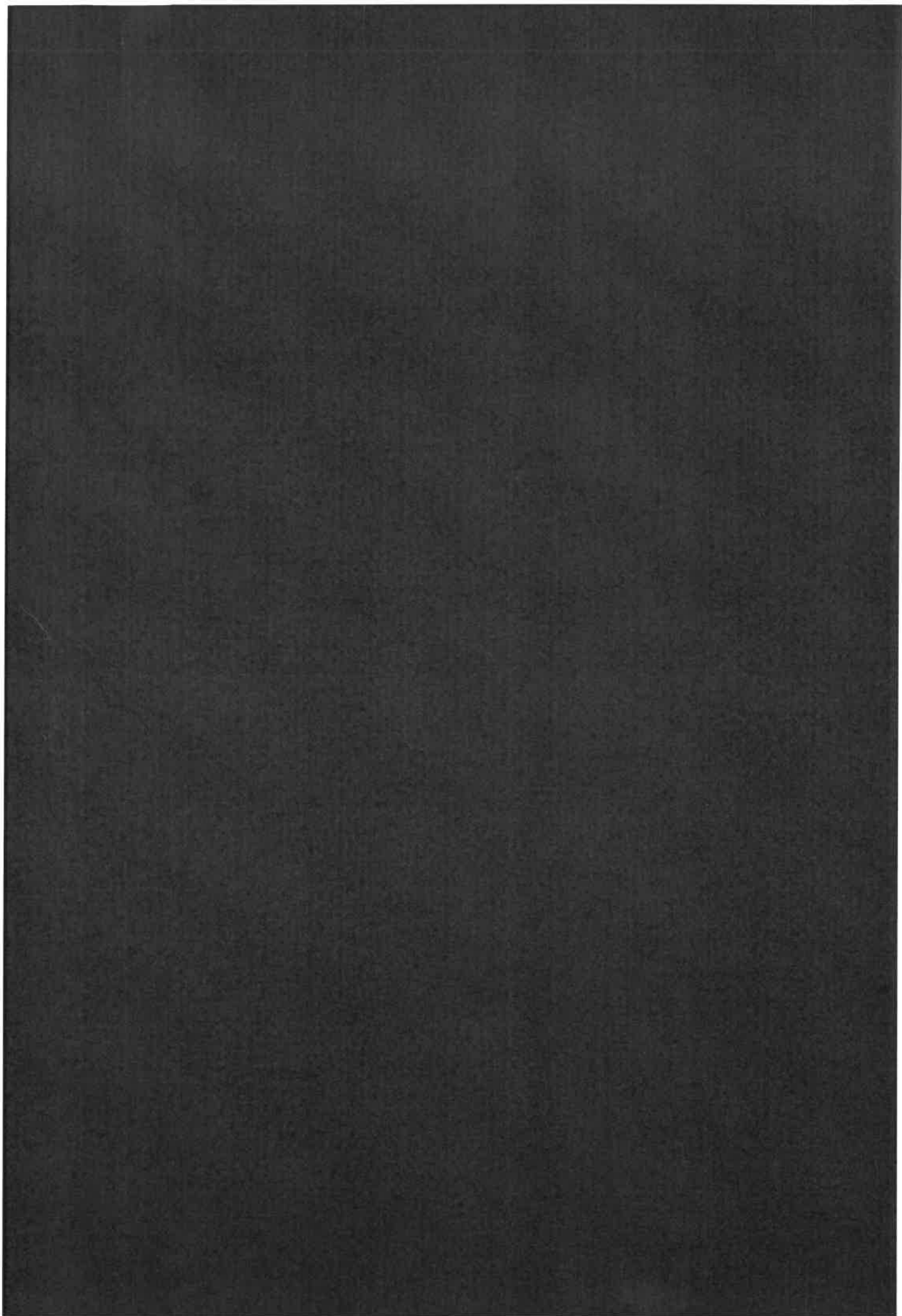












**Report – Summary of decisions**

| Minister/Department                                  | CBMS Sub Program                                   | Sub program                         | Grant activity                                  | Grant recipient                                       | Total Grant Value \$ | Grant funding location | Postcode | Brief Statement of reason for decision   |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|----------------------|------------------------|----------|--|
| The Hon Jason Wood MP<br>Department of Home Affairs  | HA 20/21<br>National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | Gulargambone Pre School Incorporated                  | \$87,525             | Gulargambone           | 2828     | Gulargambone Pre School security infrastructure upgrade is greatly needed as the local area has a large proportion of children from low-socioeconomic households, including a large portion of indigenous Australians and, sadly, many are victims of domestic violence. Local Member of Parliament, Mark Coulton MP has written strongly in support of the need for this funding given this town experiences high levels of crime and the community's safety is imperative.<br><br>Funding this project now will also allow for cost-savings to occur while the building is under construction and ensure value for taxpayer's money.   |
| The Hon Jason Wood MP<br>Department of Home Affairs  | HA 20/21<br>National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | The Trustees of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of St Thomas | \$442,915            | Dandenong              | 3175     | St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Parish has been subject to a number of serious attacks by criminals including break-ins on site and vandalism causing extensive damage to the Parish. The incidents have caused a high level of insecurity among members which I have seen first-hand during my visits to the Parish. Local MP Julian Hill has written in support of the need for this project noting St Thomas has an active community with over a thousand families and the need for a safe and secure environment is paramount. This project is vital to establish a secure premises at the Church to minimise security risks faced by the community and offer its members, particularly the children, a secure environment where they can practice their faith without fear of attack. |
| The Hon Jason Woods MP<br>Department of Home Affairs | HA 20/21<br>National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Security Guard      | African Music and Cultural Festival                   | \$13,139             | Melbourne              | 3000     | In Victoria, the African-Australian community have faced many challenges and adversity in integrating into the local community. Crime and gang-activity has been a significant issue, particularly among young people who are at-risk of engaging in criminal activity. There is a vital need to support events such as the African Music and Cultural Festival which will provide support and engagement for those who need it in a safe and secure environment.  |

| Minister/Department                                 | CBMS Sub Program                                   | Sub program                         | Grant activity                                  | Grant recipient   | Total Grant Value \$ | Grant funding location | Postcode | Brief Statement of reason for decision  |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|----------------------|------------------------|----------|---|
| The Hon Jason Wood MP<br>Department of Home Affairs | HA 20/21<br>National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | Mahamevnawa Buddhist Meditation Centre LTD                          | \$365,274            | Mount Evelyn           | 3796     | The Buddhist Meditation Centre has suffered a number break-ins, trespass, theft and damages. I have been personally informed on my visit to the Centre that their donation box has previously been stolen, leaving the Centre thousands of dollars out of pocket.<br><br>The funding from this grant will allow the installation of CCTV, lighting and fencing to protect and secure the Buddhist monks that are living and sleeping in fear at the Centre. It will also ensure those that attend the Centre feel safer knowing they will be less likely to experience break-ins, theft and damage to their place if worship.   |
| The Hon Jason Wood MP<br>Department of Home Affairs | HA 20/21<br>National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | Tamil Educational Cultural and Charitable Association               | \$446,587            | Deanside               | 3336     | The Kundrathu Murugan Kumaran Temple and local Tamil community which attends this temple have suffered many instances of property damage, theft of religious items and rubbish dumping.<br><br>The funds provided to the temple will allow for members and visitors to remain safe from attacks or further instance of a car ramming the front gate. Having visited this temple, I have been informed the upgrades will allow the monks, who are living in fear at the temple to feel safer and secure knowing there is appropriate security infrastructure in place to protect them and deter criminal acts.   |
| The Hon Jason Wood MP<br>Department of Home Affairs | HA 20/21<br>National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | Sri Guru Singh Sabha Sikh Cultural Society of Victoria Incorporated | \$450,000            | Craigieburn            | 3064     | The Sikh Temple in Craigieburn and local Sikh community have suffered many instances of verbal abuse, damage, and theft at the site, including their “donations box” which members contribute to from their own pocket. During my visit to the temple I was told first-hand how the current lack of security at the site has caused members much fear when attending the temple. The funding will provide safety and security to those attending the temple to worship or volunteer.<br><br>Importantly, this will be vital to assist the religious leaders living in fear at the temple due to previous criminal activity such as break-in and trespass. The security upgrade will include CCTV cameras, flood lights, fencing, and electronic gate and access system which will assist in deterring future criminal acts. |

| Minister/Department                                 | CBMS Sub Program                                   | Sub program                         | Grant activity                                  | Grant recipient  | Total Grant Value \$ | Grant funding location | Postcode | Brief Statement of reason for decision  |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------|------------------------|----------|---|
| The Hon Jason Wood MP<br>Department of Home Affairs | HA 20/21<br>National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | The Buddhist Meditation Association of Victoria Incorporated | \$463,106            | Cranbourne             | 3977     | This applicant has experienced a number of instances of trespass and theft of many artefacts from their premises, which is major cause for concern to members of the temple and monks that live on premises, contributing to a fear of attack or violence. During my visit to the premises, it is clear there is a great need for security upgrades such as CCTV cameras and fencing, to protect the Buddhist monks from criminals trespassing on the property and ensure that the community is safe and secure when they visit the temple. |
| The Hon Jason Wood MP<br>Department of Home Affairs | HA 20/21<br>National Security and Criminal Justice | Safer Communities Fund – Round Five | Safer Communities Project – Infrastructure Work | The Trustee for the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Charitable Trust   | \$324,000            | Keysborough            | 3173     | The applicant has suffered a number of criminal acts including trespass, vandalism and theft of their “donations box”. This has led to the religious leaders that live and sleep at the Sikh Gurdwara temple to feel unsafe and live in fear of harm, in particular putting their safety, and the safety of visitors to the temple at risk. During my visit I saw first-hand the need to ensure there are upgrades to security infrastructure at the temple to assist in deterring further criminal acts, theft and damage to the premises. |