



Developing the long term sustainability of our region

Update from the CEO



Welcome to Issue 101!

Drought Communities Programme Extension (DCP)

Drought continues to be a major challenge for parts of our region— especially Boulia, Flinders, McKinlay and Richmond. For those affected, we hope these programs will be of assistance. DCP is targeted at local governments in affected areas. For more information please see <https://www.business.gov.au/assistance/drought-communities-programme>

Regional Employment Trials Program (RETP)

In November—December the RDA Committee judging panel assessed and recommended four projects to the Department of Jobs and Small Business in Canberra. We look forward to new applications early in 2019! For more information: <https://www.jobs.gov.au/regional-employment-trials-program>

Changes in Canberra

Since our last newsletter we have had a new Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister—the Hon Andrew Broad MP appointed to oversee the national RDA program, but he has since resigned from the Cabinet and we await advice on who will be appointed to oversee the portfolio.

End of year thanks

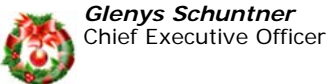
I wish to take this opportunity to thank you and all economic development “allies” and stakeholders for your support of the RDA Committee and team and our region’s projects over the last year.

I would also like to publicly thank: our Committee members who are volunteers, providing their expertise, regional knowledge and time generously to RDA for the benefit of our region; our outgoing Committee members Mr Jeff Jimmieson (2009 – 18), Professor David Low (2015 - 18) and Ms Kari Arbouin (2015 - 18) for their contributions over many years; Chair Frank Beveridge for his support in the first half of 2018 followed by David Donohue as the Acting Chair while Frank has stepped down from his position to be a candidate in the next federal election; Ms Ellie Edmonds, who resigned from the Executive Assistant position in October and Ms Kerry Dean as the new Executive Assistant, Ms Niki Lyons and Ms Sarah Byrne in their part-time roles in marketing and accounting respectively.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

On behalf of the Committee and team, I wish you and your family a safe and happy festive season, and hope that 2019 is a fabulous year for you.

RDA will be closed from 1:00pm on Friday 21 December and will open again at 8:30am on Monday 7 January, 2019. We look forward to working on regional economic development with you and colleagues in 2019.



RDA Committee

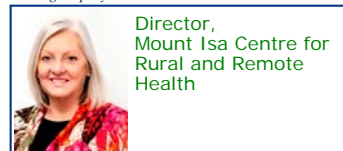
Mr David Donohue

Acting Chair



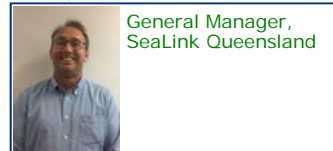
Prof. Sabina Knight

Acting Deputy Chair



Mr Chris Briggs

Secretary



Cr Mary Brown

Treasurer



Cr June Kuhl



Cr Greg Campbell



Cr Jack Bawden



Cr John Woods



If you are interested in joining the Committee, please visit <https://rda.gov.au/join-your-rda/> and for further information specific to our RDA please call 07 4410 3655.

RDA's Highlights of 2018

As a small not-for-profit incorporated association, we are proud of our achievements in advocating and facilitating for economic development across the 15 local government areas in our region, and also in our work on cross-regional projects. Today we share with you just a few of the highlights from the past year.

Inland Queensland Roads Action Project (IQ-RAP)

RDA has continued to provide the Secretariat services and be the project manager for IQ-RAP, working with all 34 funding partners, including 28 local governments that cover 73% of Queensland, five RDA committees and RACQ. From 2016 to 2018, more than \$600 million has been allocated (as committed or "indicative" funding) by the Australian and Queensland governments into the prioritised roads identified in the first Inland Queensland Roads Action Plan.

In 2018, we updated this planning tool with the release of the new Inland Queensland Road Network Strategy and continued advocating for inland Queensland strategic road and bridge upgrades with federal and state parliamentarians, industry and community stakeholders. We have welcomed the Federal Australian Labor Party's commitment of \$500 million into upgrading Queensland's inland road network if elected at the next election. The IQ-RAP partners are also advocating for the IQ-RAP to fit within the Australian Government's 10 year \$3.5 billion Roads of Strategic Importance (ROSI) initiative and has made multiple representations to support this case. For more background on the project, please visit <http://rdanwq.org.au/iq-rap>

Regional Employment Trials Program (RETP)

We welcomed the announcement of the Australian Government's new Regional Employment Trials program, with our RDA and region chosen as one of the 10 trial locations across the country. The program will allow our region to trial local approaches to identifying employment challenges and tailoring solutions that take into account our labour market. As RDA has a judging role on applications, a sub-committee of the RDA Committee has been formed and so far over two sessions has judged four applications and made recommendations to the Department of Jobs and Small Business in Canberra and is looking forward to more applications in the new year. For more information, please see page 3.

Regional funding

As we know, a lot of small community projects would not be able to get off the ground without the support of government funding, such as the Australian Government's Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF). RDA was pleased to see many successful applicants in our region receive funding under BBRF Round 2 this year.

Four projects in our region shared in more than \$1.4 million under the Infrastructure Stream, which included funding to Townsville City Council to create a new entry to the Townsville Airport and funding to Ronald McDonald House to improve facilities in Townsville for regional patients and families. Other recipients included Towers Players Inc and Townsville Astronomy Group.

Eleven local projects shared in more than \$670,000 under the Community Investment Stream, which included the development of strategies, plans and events across the region. Recipients included Burke Shire Council, Cloncurry Shire Council, Gulf Savannah Development, Hinchinbrook Shire Council, McKinlay shire Council, Mount Isa Chamber of Commerce (Commerce North West), Prospect Community Services, Southern Gulf NRM, Stage Queensland, Steps Group Australia and Townsville Enterprise.

In October, RDA delivered BBRF Round 3 workshops to 39 people in Townsville, Mount Isa and by webinar, 13 one-on-one sessions in-person or by phone, and approximately 100 emails to support councils and not-for-profits in making stronger applications for this new round. Six letters of support were provided; and successful applicants will be announced in 2019.

RDA also supported the roll-out of the Regional Growth Fund and welcomed the Australian Government's announcement that the Townsville Marine Tourism Precinct project was successful in their Expression of Interest submission, with the lead project proponent Honeycombes Property Group now preparing a full business case to secure their grant.

Regional voice

We have continued to raise issues of importance to our region in Australian Government inquiries, in the form of submissions and appearing as a witness at public hearings and attending consultation sessions, including; the Inquiry into the development of Cities, Inquiry into the Indicators of and impact of regional inequality in regional Australia, the Regional Telecommunications Review, the Roads of Strategic Importance consultation and National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy consultation. RDA also provided input to several other regional engagement processes.

Regional collaboration through the Northern Regional Development Australia Alliance (NRDAA)

RDA has continued to support policy development and to prioritise investment opportunities, as part of its collaboration in the NRDAA, which comprises of eight RDA committees from across Northern Australia. The NRDAA also collaborates closely with the Office of Northern Australia, the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF) and the CRC for Northern Australia to promote opportunities for regional economic development in the north.



RDA Committee partnering with the Queensland Major Contractors' Association and Infrastructure Association of Queensland to host the Major Project Pipeline Breakfast in Townsville—June, 2018



Northern RDA Alliance meeting with Deputy Prime Minister the Hon Michael McCormack MP - May, 2018