



Regional
Development
Australia

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RDA NETWORK NEWS



Local people developing local solutions to local issues across WA and the NT



An Australian Government Initiative



Regional
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Australia

The RDA Network News is a collaborative initiative between nine of the Regional Development Australia Committee’s in Western Australia and Regional Development Australia Northern Territory. For further information on any of the articles published in this newsletter, please note the contact details for the respective Executive Officer on **Page 20** (back page).

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Front cover: **RDA Goldfields Esperance** Opening Ceremony at Regional Arts Australia Summit (photo credit: Travis Anderson)
Back cover: **Geoscience Australia** Map

Opposite
Position?: **RDA ??? ???**

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THE RDA NETWORK... COLLABORATION BEYOND BORDERS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Bottom left: RDA Mid West Gascoyne Plugging the water supply leaks in the WA Midwest and Gascoyne
Centre right: RDA Kimberley Aerial photo of Kununurra

Plugging the supply leaks RDA MIDWEST GASCOYNE

Late last year RDA Mid West Gascoyne, commissioned the services of PRACSYS consultants to develop a Local Supplier Survey: Plugging the Leaks, to determine where supply 'leaks' occur in the region.

The report summarises the results of the survey and how some of these 'leaks' could be 'plugged' locally to keep Geraldton's economy vibrant.

A number of Geraldton companies were asked a series of supplier related questions with many interviewed face-to-face by RDA MWG Regional Coordinator, Barbara Thompson. Some of the one-on-one interviews drew some quite candid responses.

The mission of this survey is to help connect local businesses, so they can all work together to see where they can help 'plug the leaks' from Geraldton, identify opportunities to supply each other to retain more wealth and social capital in the local economy, and become more resilient in a changing environment.

Ms Thompson said many local operators are so busy working in their business that they don't have time to work 'on' their business.

"This was quite apparent," she said.



"A lot of operators were unaware there is often a local alternative to their supply need but they are too time poor to explore that avenue. This report also offers some practical tips on how businesses could network better between each other and help keep local money in the community."

Barbara Thompson
Regional Development Coordinator, RDA MWG

The report was presented to the RDA MWG Board on Friday 27 February.



Kimberley Economic Forum 2014: Positioning for the Future RDA KIMBERLEY

The Kimberley Economic Forum is held on alternative years between Broome, Derby and Kununurra. In 2014, Kununurra Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCC&I) proudly hosted the event titled "Positioning for the Future". The Forum was held on the 28th & 29th August 2014 and was sponsored by RDA Kimberley.

The Forum's focus was to:

- Raise awareness of opportunities, challenges and issues relating to Economic Development in the Kimberley Region.
- Provide an opportunity for Kimberley Businesses and Communities to engage with each other and with interested stakeholders from outside the region.
- Provide a unique opportunity for organisations to engage the Regional Business Community and in doing so outline their vision, management approach and the economic benefits their development will provide to the region.

These objectives were addressed throughout the program and a range of topics were discussed including Agriculture Food and Aquaculture; Business Development; Tourism; and Resources and Housing. These topics were presented by guest speakers representing both the public and private sector.

RDA Kimberley's Executive Officer, Chris Mitchell also presented at the Forum and discussed the role of RDA's; outlined the National Stronger Regions Fund; and summarised the structure and role of the RDA Northern Alliance.

The Kununurra Chamber hosted a very successful Forum with over 100 attendees and an excellent range of guest speakers presenting over the two days on a wide range of topics.

Chris Mitchell
Executive Officer, RDA Kimberley

Chris added "I must acknowledge and thank the organisers for a very well run event which highlighted the future growth potential of the region".

Cue rallies to address economic downturn

RDA MIDWEST GASCOYNE

The Shire of Cue's Community Resource Centre invited RDAMWG Regional Development Coordinator, Barbara Thompson, to facilitate a business breakfast for local operators in the historic town of Cue last month. The recent economic dip in the resource sector has impacted on the small community in the heart of the Murchison and Ms Thompson said the response to, and attendance at the breakfast was incredible.

Local business operators, Shire of Cue CEO, John McCleary, and Shire President, Roger Lemaitre, attended the breakfast at the Queen of the Murchison Bed and Breakfast on Sunday 8th February.

"The strength of this rural and remote community is very encouraging," said Ms Thompson. "It is not uncommon to see a 'see-saw' effect on the community with the mining industry, but this time the community has rallied to work together." The most important outcome from the breakfast meeting was the understanding that Cue needs to form a business association and businesses were encouraged to work together to identify opportunities to grow the economy and community.

This step of uniting and forming a business association is an important step forward and was supported by the Shire, it will open up new doors and opportunities to promote networks

Barbara Thompson
Regional Development Coordinator, RDAMWG

She advised operators to consider leveraging off events such as Cue Parliament, to create an iconic event of their own, for example something like the previously successful QFest - Cue Outback Festival in the early 2000s, and to investigate leveraging off events that are held in surrounding communities, such as Geraldton.

"Often events in Geraldton could have a spin off in Cue, it's just a matter of identifying possibilities," said Ms Thompson. Ms Thompson will make a follow up visit to Cue in early March to assist in the formation of a suitable structure to support this local initiative.



Bottom: RDA Mid West Gascoyne Austin St Post Office in Cue

Insurance and Banking Study RDA PILBARA

RDA Pilbara has commissioned an independent study of insurance and banking in the Pilbara. The aim is to gain a comparative understanding of how the insurance industry and banks offer and price their products relative to the specific market. It will also assess the likely impact of any differential pricing on the businesses and communities in the Pilbara.



Some of the topics to be covered include:

- Insurance costs and the ability to obtain insurance in the Pilbara.
- Bank lending criteria for first home buyers and mortgage conditions.
- Bank lending criteria for commercial loans
- How does your location impact on these decisions.
- Comparing pricing offerings and product range with other locations in Australia.

As part of the research a survey will be conducted with businesses across the Pilbara as well as with businesses in selected regional centres in WA and other states to get their input on the above topics.

Watch this space for the final report release date. www.rdapilbara.org.au

Wheatbelt leaders tackle economic development RDA WHEATBELT

This year, the Wheatbelt Workshop brought together key decision makers in the region to learn and discuss how to create and leverage opportunity for economic development. The format differed from previous years' two day Wheatbelt Conferences, and instead jam-packed an impressive line-up of presentations and workshops into one day.

Over 90 attendees from Local Government, various industries and Departments, local businesses and community members converged in Kellerberrin from right across the Wheatbelt.

Alexandra Gartmann from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) and Professor Matthew Tonts from the University of Western Australia (UWA) delivered keynote presentations and correlating workshops on leveraging local assets and economic resilience. Andrew Outhwaite of Pollinators in Geraldton led a workshop on how to spot an entrepreneur whilst Wheatbelt Workshop MC, Gerry Gannon, facilitated a concurrent discussion on 'where to from here' and building a positive image for the Wheatbelt.

In the final 'movers and shakers' session at the conclusion of the event, Wheatbelt Workshop delegates learnt about FORM WA's exciting 'Art in the Wheatbelt' project from Wheatbelt local, Elizabeth Brennan, and heard from Cr Lynne Craigie, Deputy President of WA Local Government, about the role of Local Government in economic development.

RDA Wheatbelt were once again a major sponsor and key contributor to the organisation of the Wheatbelt Workshop, reinforcing the commitment to the economic development of the region.

Driving change in our cities

RDA PERTH & RDA PEEL

In a bold initiative Regional Development Australia (RDA) for Perth and Peel together with Economic Development Australia (EDA) are creating a collaborative plan for infrastructure development in the regions of Perth and Peel.

Initial funding for the Economic Development Strategy and Infrastructure Priorities Plan (EDSIPP) has already come from the Federal Government Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development and contributions from local governments within Perth and Peel. The State Government is supportive of the initiative with the Department of Planning providing access to research it carried out over the last two years.

The unprecedented development and economic growth of Western Australia over the last decade is well documented and while state and local government departments and agencies are highly influential to the economy and prosperity of our regions, there is a lack of cross discussion and collaboration between them.

An outcome of this growth is the investment and development landscape comprises agencies and departments all with a part to play in how projects are chosen and funded but driven by different sets of investment priorities or regulatory changes. The private sector has been campaigning for greater consistency and open and frank discussion between all levels of governments and RDA and EDA are now tackling this hot topic.

Chairman of RDA Perth, Keith Ellis, said “The EDSIPP will assist to align priorities identified by local, state and federal governments and target initiatives that bring the greatest contribution to the economy and the businesses which create the jobs and growth.”

EDA Chairman, Mark Holdsworth, Economic Development Manager at the City of Canning said: “The investment plan will not just emphasise major projects but it will also build the capacity, locally and regionally to underpin future, local, regional and state prosperity”.

It is about building partnerships that pursue shared economies of interest and achieve efficient use of public resources

Mark Holdsworth
Economic Development Manager, City of Canning

This plan was launched at a half day forum at the University Club, UWA on March 10th. Titled, “Driving Change in Our Cities”. Bernard Salt, renowned advocate and champion for integrated and long term planning was the key note speaker. A panel of representatives of leading organisations from across Perth also accepted the challenge to field questions and to promote their list of priorities to secure the future prosperity of this region.



Esperance Waterfront Opening

RDA GOLDFIELDS ESPERANCE

Hundreds of people flocked to the official opening of the Esperance Waterfront and enjoyed festivities including market stalls, live music, free exercise classes and a children’s treasure hunt. The opening took place on Sunday 30th November 2014, with the Federal Member for O’Connor, Rick Wilson, and several other State and Federal government members attending the festivities.

Work on the revitalisation of the Esperance Waterfront Project began in June 2012 and was completed in October 2014. A sea wall was constructed using local granite from the Esperance quarry and a new headland was constructed and linked to the old tanker jetty. Funding for the \$24 million dollar project came from many sources including Royalties for Regions, the Shire of Esperance, the Regional Development Australia Fund, Lotterywest and the Magellan Fund. Work on the project included the construction of new footpaths and cycle-ways, extensive landscaping with coastal native plants, extension to car parks, the building of new picnic and barbeque shelters, and a new children’s adventure playground on the headland. A fantastic piece of public art, the Whale Tail sculpture, was also installed at the James Street Precinct.

The Esperance Waterfront project was constructed by many local contractors and will continue to deliver local economic benefits by bringing tourists to the town and connecting the Central Business District with all activities and events that take place on the foreshore.

Top right: RDA Great Southern The Esperance foreshore

PARTNERSHIPS AND PLANNING

Top left: RDA Great Southern The Katanning Noongar Community Centre
Centre right: RDA Great Southern Signing of the MOU - RDA Great Southern Deputy Chair Sue Bennett-NG,
Katanning Aboriginal Corporation Chair Kathleen Farmer, RDA Great Southern Chair Milton Evans (2009- Dec 2014),
and KAC Vice-Chair Hazel Hansen
Bottom right: RDA Wheatbelt NSRF Workshop in Moora



Building key regional partnerships RDA GREAT SOUTHERN

In October 2014 RDA Great Southern and the Katanning Aboriginal Corporation signed a Memorandum of Understanding to work together on future projects and initiatives in the Great Southern region through the assets of their organisations. Together they will develop a shared Vision and work toward implementing collaborative programs and projects.

Through recent research in the region, RDA Great Southern identified capacity building of regional Registered Indigenous Organisations as an important community development opportunity. Discussions with Aboriginal Corporations and relevant government agencies commenced and the partners agreed the best way forward was to share information, resources, and expertise to support projects and activities that promote the objectives of both organizations, and in particular sustainable and culturally appropriate Indigenous community and economic development.

Katanning Aboriginal Corporation has recently regrouped in order to set a new strategic direction and action plan, with assistance from Shire of Katanning and the Katanning Interagency Action Forum. The reinvigorated Corporation seeks to facilitate activities and projects in Katanning and surrounding districts. By working together during 2015 and 2016 the partners aspire to share skills and research to maximise outcomes that will bring longer term benefits to the region and build the planning and management capacity of the Corporation over years to come. This will include professional mentoring and support.

One of the first priorities the Corporation identified was the upgrade of the Katanning Noongar Community Centre, so that it can become the home and operational base for the Corporation moving forward. In early

February 2015, the Corporation was successful in their Great Southern Development Commission Community Chest funding application and awarded \$14,000 in order to commence works on the building's interior fit-out.

Katanning Aboriginal Corporation Chair Kathleen Farmer was delighted to hear of their successful application and looks forward to commencing works and forging ahead. The Community Chest grant round has been seen as a quick success and an example of how the partners can actively deliver together to instigate change. The work is expected to take up to three months to complete.

Mrs Farmer has been supported throughout by her able and loyal Corporation Vice-Chair Hazel Hansen, and together they aim to re-establish their Corporation as a viable service provider in the upper Great Southern and southern Wheatbelt zone.



National Stronger Regions Fund WA RDA NETWORK

RDA Perth, Wheatbelt and Great Southern partnered to deliver workshops on the National Stronger Regions Fund. Eight workshops were held across the regions of Perth, Wheatbelt and Great Southern outlining the process for applying and providing insights into how to deliver on the essential criteria. Basic advice on grant application writing, included: business plans/business cases; statistics and addressing criterion; cost benefit analysis; economic and regional development.



PARTNERSHIPS AND PLANNING

Top right: RDA South West Mandurah Harbour Master Neill Carroll wants to see other regions develop marinas to create 'destinations' and boost the sector.

Joint Partnership Project RDA PILBARA

RDA Pilbara in partnership with Pilbara Development Commission will develop a 10 Year Community Plan. This plan will provide strategic direction for the NGO sector over the next 10 years and to provide guidance around service delivery to alleviate duplication and gaps.

The overall aim of the 10 Year Community Plan for the NGO sector in the Pilbara is to provide a strategic framework that:

- Presents a clear strategic direction to inform the sustainability of the NGO sector across the Pilbara.
- Articulates the likely requirement for expanded and new social and human services and programmes to meet the current and expected growth in the Pilbara.
- Reduces pressure on non NGO organisations.
- Improves coordination and reduce overlaps and gaps within the NGO sector.
- Builds on the work already undertaken by RDA Pilbara and the PDC through the development of the Non-Government Organisations Sector Map and Gap Analysis Report.

In achieving this overall aim the plan will provide a strategic framework to support the current and ongoing sustainability of the NGO sector and assist it in providing services and programmes in accordance with increased demand as a 10 Year Community Plan for the Pilbara that includes the following outcomes:

- Accurate overview of services and programmes currently being delivered by the NGO sector across the Pilbara.
- Overview of gaps in relation to service and programme delivery that could or should be provided by the NGO sector.
- Overview of other services and programmes that could or should be delivered to the Pilbara in line with the aims of the Pilbara Cities vision.
- Opportunities for providing services through a collaborative and coordinated approach.
- An in-depth consultation process that provides a 'bottom up' approach to project delivery.
- An understanding of funding bodies and mechanisms.

- A comprehensive understanding of growth projections, low, medium and high.
- Strategic approach.



A question of planning RDA SOUTH WEST

Cat-herding is an obligatory skill required for regional development work and good part of that is ensuring that regional stakeholders stay on message with the Blueprint. It is therefore a joy to see so many interested parties getting on board with the regional plan and working towards common goals.

RDASW and the South West Development Commission (SWDC) worked together to produce a joint regional plan with the buy-in of local government and State bodies. That work is translating to a regional investment rationale and broader understanding that strategic approaches are needed to underpin funding support. On that basis, RDA-SW is involved in tourism work, infrastructure planning and discrete projects including the development work for a whole new suburb and involvement with plans to create a marina in Bunbury.

Headed by WA's John Castrilli MP and organised by SWDC, a party toured marinas in Mandurah and Perth to learn first-hand what works and what are the pitfalls in planning a new marina. A key take home message for regional developers is that it is possible to create demand, new industries and significant employment from almost nothing if you have sufficient population.

Another water project is just as important – using non-potable water to meet watering needs for public open spaces. RDASW is a part of a group led by the Water Corporation which is looking at recycling to reduce impact on the aquifer. There might also be commercial applications with water used for agriculture ... but that's another story.

Inter-regional Transport Corridor RDA GOLDFIELDS ESPERANCE

A group of inter-regional stakeholders gathered in Geraldton in October 2014 to discuss the development of a transport corridor from the Musgrave Ranges near Wingellina in the Goldfields Esperance region to the port of Geraldton in the Mid-West region. The concept of the 'Midwest-Musgrave Initiative' envisages a transport corridor from the Central Lands linking to road and rail pathways through the Goldfields Esperance region to Geraldton in the Mid West.

The meeting engaged a diverse group of key stakeholders and collected input from the respective regions. Contributing vital information to the workshop were RDA Goldfields Esperance and RDA Mid West Gascoyne, together with other State and Local Government organisations including Main Roads and Geraldton Port.

The stakeholder group hopes to develop a transport corridor which will ultimately link mining projects in WA's remote Musgrave Ranges region to the port in Geraldton. Several mining companies have interests in the Musgrave region on the WA, SA and NT border. Proponents of the Midwest-Musgrave corridor say development in the region will provide economic benefit to various projects along the route.

The workshop was the initial step in a process to address infrastructure needs and drive economic development in the Central Lands. The Initiative aims to develop a strategic infrastructure investment proposal to stimulate productivity and diversification in the resources sector and deliver on social development outcomes for local communities across the two regions.

A steering committee has been formed to develop a stakeholder engagement and management plan. The committee will meet again in 2015 to identify other milestones and actions.



Over the Horizon 2015 RDA GOLDFIELDS ESPERANCE

Over the Horizon 2015 was held in Esperance on 5th March and detailed plenty of exciting opportunities for businesses within the Esperance region. The forum which is conducted by the Esperance Chamber of Commerce and Industry in conjunction with the Goldfields Esperance Development Commission, was once again sponsored by RDA Goldfields Esperance in support of business and industry in the south of the region.

120 attendees listened to 18 presenters outline what was 'over the horizon' within their industries, including the growth of tourism, new mining operations opening up, the progress of the wood-chipping industry and the upcoming projects of local organisations including the Port of Esperance and the Shires of Esperance and Ravensthorpe. The Minister for Small Business, Hon Joe Francis MLA, was the forum's keynote speaker, and talked about the strength and positivity of Esperance's small business community.

Other speakers included:

- John Nicolaou from the **Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA**, who provided a snapshot of the State's economy and forecast trends for 2015
- Julie Hill from the **Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA**, who gave an overview of the mining industry in the South East region
- Brett Thorp from the **Real Estate Institute of WA**, who discussed real estate trends and predictions for Esperance
- Veronica Bertola from the **South East Premium Wheatgrower's Association**, who outlined SEPWA's community wi-fi plans
- Roban-Lynne Clarke from **AusIndustry**, who provided information about Industry grants and assistance available from the Federal government
- David English from **Sirius Resources**, who gave an update on the Fraser Range and Nova projects and opportunities this will bring to Esperance and the South East region
- Michael Rodriguez from **Poseidon Nickel**, who discussed the progress of their Lake Johnson mine and the flow on effects for Esperance
- CEO's from the **Shires of Esperance and Ravensthorpe**, who provided a snapshot of activities in their Shires and upcoming projects.

Edwin Zhuang (front left) introduces Chinese visitors to one of the locals.



Linking with China RDA SOUTH WEST

RDA-South West is an increasingly active member of the Bunbury-Jiaxing Business Office and is currently working to achieve a complete revamp of its structures. This work underpins the aims of the business office to boost cultural and trade links with China which will be realised through growing membership and increasing visibility.

The office employs a Chinese national, Chenxi Zhuang, who studied business at ECU in Bunbury and who has led a number of South West trade missions to Jiaying, facilitating deals and providing Australian entrepreneurs with a soft landing.

While the big industries take care of themselves, the potential of the Bunbury-Jiaxing office to support small and medium enterprises is tremendous. Already a number of deals have been struck and the links between China and the South West are deepening.

This year a Chinese film will be made in the region and there are plans for many more to follow. It is hoped that the general goodwill and respect between the trading partners will flourish in new areas.

In this the Year of the Goat, Chinese astrologers warn us to be wary of issues with dry places and tension in the Middle East. However, they also say it should be largely a year of happiness which ties in with the City of Bunbury's 15th anniversary of Sister City relations with Jiaying. The celebrations will be hosted here in Australia.

Innovative Future Program RDA PERTH

Perth is where Western Australia's business, financial and human capital is concentrated. There is a need to increase Perth's capacity as a primary driver of growth and innovation. Population growth is forcing Perth to face many environmental, spatial and social problems requiring the consideration of new models for development that could help regenerate and diversify our economies. Economic activity will require specific interventions and catalysts for improved outcomes. The Innovative Futures Program invite speakers highlighting global best practice forms in urban consolidation in creating healthy communities across the Perth Region to influence decision makers towards more sustainable forms of development.

Our March speaker is Larry Beasley, urban planner. Larry Beasley is the retired Chief Planning for the City of Vancouver and is responsible for the 'Vancouver Model' that led the transformation of Vancouver's downtown into one of the world's most liveable cities.

April brings Michael Buxton, a peri-urban specialist from RMIT. Michael heads a research team carrying out extensive research into peri-urban regions, including a national study titled *Change and Continuity in Peri-Urban Australia*. This team's national and Victorian studies have investigated the nature and extent of contemporary peri-urban regions in Australia; identified future patterns of socio-economic, environmental change in peri-urban landscapes; and developed scenarios for future land use and management based on 'business as usual', interventionist and deregulated options. *Change and Continuity in Peri-Urban Australia* was a collaborative project between RMIT and Griffith Universities, funded by Land and Water Australia.

May is expected to bring a world-class leader in regional marketing.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Top: RDA Peel Front area of Make Place in which co-working desks will be placed
Centre left: RDA Peel Street view of Make Place on the Opening Night



“Make Place” RDA PEEL

In 2014 RDA Peel partnered with The Makers (formerly Community Solutions Inc.) to respond to the ongoing challenge of retaining and advancing young entrepreneurs and leaders within the Peel Region.

It had been identified by The Makers that many young entrepreneurs and leaders in regional and remote areas, such as Peel, were not provided with opportunities to develop their skills, ideas and networks. It was in response to this that The Makers developed the “Make Place” concept.



Make Place is a purpose built facility designed to identify and develop young entrepreneurs and leaders and link them into other social innovators through collaboration and co-working.

RDA Peel joined the Make Place project as anchor tenants in the new facility, and have worked alongside The Makers on the concept development, planning stages, and financial sustainability of the project, contributing heavily to funding and sourcing other project partners and tenants.

Make Place has partnered with key local stakeholders including NGO’s, universities, TAFEs and high schools. These connections are key to the success of the co-working and networking spaces within the facility as it engages a wide audience and brings similar minds into the space.

Rhys Williams, CEO of The Makers, hopes to include a wide range of training and events within the facilities including mentoring programs, leadership development focusing on women, civil leadership development for 12 to 30 year olds, entrepreneurial competitions between local schools, formal training programs and informal gatherings aimed at strengthening networks within the region.

RDA Peel hopes to use the space to further its network development of the Arts and Culture Sector as well as capacity building workshops for the sector and initiatives aimed at implementing the Peel Digital Futures Strategy.

Make Place will include: permanent offices for Department of Industry, The Makers, and RDA Peel; semi-permanent office desks for NGO’s and social enterprises; hot desks; a communal kitchen; large board room that community groups will be invited to hire; and open spaces for event and training.

“ We hope Make Place will facilitate interaction between young entrepreneurs, leaders and social enterprises and help the Peel Region retain its bright and promising young people. ”

Rhys Williams
CEO of The Makers

SUSTAINABILITY AND PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

Bottom left: RDA Mid West Gascoyne
RIRDC Rural Women's Award finalist, Leonie Noble
(photo credit: Kerry Faulkner)

RDAMWG Deputy Chair is prestigious award finalist

RDA MIDWEST GASCOYNE

Leonie Noble, Deputy Chair of RDA Mid West Gascoyne, has been named a finalist in the 2015 Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation's (RIRDC) Rural Women's Award.

The prestigious Award focuses on women's leadership capacity to effect change and influence through networking and collaborating. It is designed to create opportunities for women to drive innovation and build resilience. Mrs Noble has many years' experience in Geraldton's Rock Lobster industry, including a stint with the Department of Fisheries where she was involved in Abrolhos Island management. She is a passionate advocate for greater women's representation in the industry.

As well as Deputy Chair of RDAMWG, she wears many other hats including Western Australian Director and Vice president for the Women's Industry Network Seafood Community (WINSOC) board, a national body of industry women passionate about their industries and communities, and is the WINSOC delegate on the Board of National Rural Women's Coalition (NRWC). Mrs Noble is the past Chair of Western Australia's Rural Remote and Regional Women's Network (RRR) that aims to recognise, promote and expand the contribution women make to their communities.



The RIRDC Award carries a bursary of \$10,000 for each state and territory winner to implement their Award vision - in Mrs Noble's case, 100 Women in Seafood - and the opportunity to participate in the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD)

Company Directors Course and support them to develop an individual integrated leadership plan.

The 100 women in Seafood concept was developed to provide a platform to recognise, share and celebrate the outstanding contributions women are making to the seafood industry in Australia. RDAMWG congratulates Mrs Noble on being a finalist and wishes her luck for the announcement of the national winner later in the year.

Agriculture action plan

RDA SOUTH WEST

It's been a long-time coming but the South West has the first, wholly independent regional agriculture action plan in Western Australia.

Jointly funded by RDASW and the South West Development Commission, with support from DAFWA, the Action plan for transforming agriculture in South West Western Australia highlights five key areas of focus that will boost the sector: market structure, skills and technology, biosecurity, red tape reduction, and, tackling water issues.

Deloitte Access Economics was engaged to review the region's agriculture sector and whole supply chain, noting opportunities, obstacles and developing an action plan. The project involved very broad consultation and a reference group of the sector's leaders was formed to validate the decisions reached in dairy, red meat and horticulture.

Creating a SW Agriculture Hub combining research, a business incubator and agribusiness accelerator was highlighted an innovative way forward so the regional sector can better understand markets, speak with a united voice, develop products, branding and act as a focal point for agriculture.

The work is not shy at confronting the status quo. Export orders cannot be met due to limitations on growth so the document challenges internal biosecurity arrangements that put the brakes on growing herds. Red tape and streamlining regulatory processes are also put under scrutiny and there is an examination of water markets in a drying climate.

ARTS AND CULTURE

Bottom left: RDA Goldfields Regional Arts Australia (RAA) Opening ceremony (photo credit: Travis Anderson)

Top right: RDA Northern Territory Beads, seeds and more for the Central Australia Art Trail experience (photo credit: Tourism Central Australia)

Centre right: RDA Northern Territory Creating art and community (photo credit: Tourism Central Australia)

Bottom right: RDA Northern Territory Detail of woven basket, Gunbalunya region



Developing Arts and Culture RDA GOLDFIELDS ESPERANCE

Following on from the success of the national Regional Arts Australia (RAA) Summit held in Kalgoorlie in October 2014, RDA Goldfields Esperance (RDAGE) has joined forces with Country Arts WA (CAWA) to develop a long term vision and framework for arts and culture in the Goldfields Esperance region. This will include developing a program for a public arts festival to be held in Kalgoorlie in 2015, with the long term aim of extending the region's reputation and appeal as a cultural tourism destination.

In November 2014, RDAGE and Country Arts WA released a survey inviting feedback from people across the region on the RAA Summit. The survey revealed respondents were keen to participate in planning for future public arts events and to provide further input to an arts and culture framework for the Goldfields Esperance region.

RDAGE and Country Arts WA also conducted planning forums in Kalgoorlie and Esperance in February. The forums asked participants what they would like to see included in an arts and cultural framework for the Goldfields Esperance region and gave people the opportunity to provide input into the development of future arts and cultural events.



Central Australia Art Trail Experience RDA NORTHERN TERRITORY

Continuing on a creative artistic theme, RDA NT has partnered with Tourism Central Australia to develop an Art Trail Experience in Central Australia. Building on two related but slightly different concepts, the result is a collaborative project that will highlight the region's rich artistic traditions, artists and their work as well as associated Indigenous and historic sites across the southern half of the NT with positive flow-on economic and employment benefits.



It aims to include artists working in both traditional and contemporary genres including painting, drawing, sculpture, textile design, weaving, photography, jewellery-making and other crafts. Visitors will have the opportunity to explore up to four trails: out along the West Macdonnell Ranges to Papunya, north along the Stuart Highway to Tennant Creek; south-west to Uluru and in and around Alice Springs. A key part of the project is to facilitate opportunities for visitors to engage with local artists and create their own masterpiece.

Getting creative RDA SOUTH WEST

There is no doubt that one of the most exciting industry growth areas in the South West is the burgeoning creative sector which is more your movie-maker and less your glass-blower. The creative sector has grown out of nothing to be worth more than \$300m in less than a decade – and it's still growing in size and reputation.

RDA-SW has committed to seed funding for a Creative Hub which will act as a focal point for film, music, digital media and software development. The hub will facilitate business networking, knowledge sharing, educational links and capacity building. Some work has already been achieved through the Emergence Festival and the creative sector is being well served by AusTrade and AusIndustry.

Industry and Science Minister Ian Macfarlane visited the region and was briefed on the sector's potential and the importance of NBN roll-out was flagged as well as the region's China trade links through Bunbury's Vue Group and Shanghai Hippo Animation. Those companies have already engaged in business worth more than \$50m and the Chinese are making two films here this year.

RDA-SW is also engaged with Screen West and CinéfestOz which are partnering in FilmSW to capitalise on growing interest in the region. Scouts have been checking out locations for filming Craig Silvey's Jasper Jones and FilmSW is keen to help.

That's a wrap for now but watch this space ...



NT Creative Economy RDA NORTHERN TERRITORY

Creative industries are frequently referred to as the 'creative economy' and comprise a set of inter-locking knowledge intensive industry sectors that focus on the creation and exploitation of intellectual property. These industries include (but are not necessarily limited to) the following sectors:

- Arts and craft
- Fashion design
- Architecture and design
- Film, theatre and the performing arts
- Publishing
- Broadcast media and recorded music
- Advertising
- Software development
- Digital media
- Computer services
- Museums and galleries
- Libraries and archives and other cultural heritage activities

RDA NT has been working on a document which sets the NT's creative economy within the broader Australian and global context. This includes providing a snapshot of the NT's creative industries, overview of existing research, and examining the potential for the creative industries to provide pathways for sustainable economic and social development across the NT.

It will also facilitate RDA NT's provision of advice to a wide range of stakeholders including all three tiers of government, the NFP and private sectors regarding strategic outcomes and investment priorities as well as options to grow the region's economic and employment prospects whilst also improving community resilience and cohesion.

Some of our early findings include:

- The three top creative industries in the NT when ranked by employment and business counts, are Internet and Digital Services, Design, and Music and Performing Arts
- 77% of all Visual Arts and Crafts Professionals in the NT are Indigenous
- Alice Springs and the Daly River regions are visual arts and crafts hotspots
- The NT has one of the highest attendance rates (expressed as a percentage of the population aged 15 years and over) at cultural venues or events in the country (91%), second only to the ACT 3%).

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

Centre right: RDA Wheatbelt Packed venue for the Wheatbelt Early Years Conference #WheatbeltEYC

West Pilbara Communities for Children RDA PILBARA

RDA Pilbara is the Facilitating Partner of the West Pilbara Communities Initiative, funded through the Department of Social Services. The programmes delivered through this evidence based approach have resulted in improved social outcomes for isolated and vulnerable children and their families. This Initiative is, however, only funded for the West Pilbara and it is the view of RDA Pilbara that the extension of this Initiative across the East Pilbara will benefit children and their families and will achieve similar outcomes as is reported for the West Pilbara.

RDA Pilbara submitted a report to Honourable Terry Redman requesting funding to expand Communities for Children to East Pilbara.

An extension of the programme to include the 13 to 18 years cohort would provide a balanced coverage for young people across the region. The delivery of these services that cater for young people is an important contribution in a remote location that seeks to ensure that children and their families are supported and connected.



Wheatbelt Early Years Conference connecting dots across the region RDA WHEATBELT

There was a packed House for the inaugural Wheatbelt Early Years Conference held in Kellerberrin on March 12th. The Conference was a key component of the Wheatbelt's Regional Children's Services Planning Project. There are nine regions, including RDAs in Great Southern and Pilbara, involved in the state program funded by the Department of Local Government and Communities.

RDA Wheatbelt was delighted to work in partnership with the South West WA Medicare

Local and the outstanding organising committee to bring such a wonderful opportunity to Kellerberrin.

Kellerberrin helps service the outlying areas of the Eastern Wheatbelt and is located 200kms from Perth with a community population of nearly 900. The Shire has over 1200 and is located next door to the Sub-regional Centre Merredin. Quite often the smaller but vitally important towns that service outlying areas miss out on opportunities. Not this time!

The Conference put both Kellerberrin and the Early Years on the map!

The WEYC was attended by over 120 enthusiastic participants who travelled long distances from across the region as well as from Perth. An outside Broadcast was supported by Radio West and helped to share messages further afield as the Conference itself was oversubscribed.

An outstanding line-up of talented speakers from across the early years, health, early childhood education and care, playgroups, regional groups and Local Government provided key messages. This included the need to plan for the whole of community and synergies in valuing and providing infrastructure and activities for all ages and capacities.

A special guest was Bobbi Wheeler, winner of National ECEC 2014 Director of the year for her work at the Milly Molly Mandy's ECEC – an integral part of the small town of Brookton further south in the region. Local Elder Tom Hayden welcomed everyone to Ballardong country.

The Conference also highlighted issues faced by many small centres in the Wheatbelt and across rural and regional Australia in trying to provide Early Childhood Education and Care (Childcare). The Services are needed to underpin economic and community growth and a high level of commitment often including fundraising, developing and then managing them is required.

The Great Southern region will also be hosting an Early Years Conference in 2015. It will be held in Albany on July 19th and 20th July at the Albany Entertainment Centre. The theme is "Growing our Children together" and RDA Great Southern are proud sponsors.



The Kimberley on (Royal) Show!
RDA KIMBERLEY

Broome and the Kimberley region received excellent exposure at the 2014 Royal Show in Perth as Broome was invited to exhibit as Guest Town. The Shire of Broome led a big contingent of community volunteers, business representatives and entertainers', who showcased everything that makes Broome and the Kimberley such a wonderful place to live, work, holiday and invest.

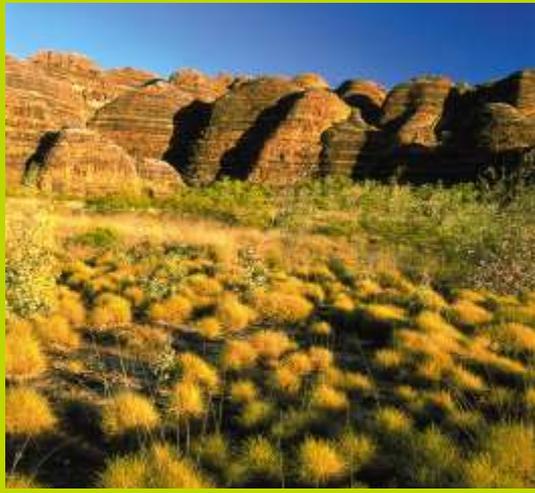
RDA Kimberley supported the guest town exhibit as it was an excellent opportunity to promote the region, its liveability, employment opportunities, tourism potential and many other attractions that make Broome and the Kimberley a huge drawcard.

The Perth Royal Show was held over seven days. The Guest town exhibit was manned by volunteers from Broome (and ex locals now living in Perth) daily and was extremely successful and enjoyable. Local produce including Matsos Brewery products, Pearl



Oyster shell, meat and pearls were showcased to visitors. In addition, a number of Kimberley locals including snakes, crocodiles and camels made the trip to Perth to greet visitors to the exhibit and around the showgrounds.

The exhibit won the Commercial Exhibitors Award for Excellence, and an estimated 35,000 people visited the Guest Town exhibition. The response was greater than anticipated and it is expected that the flow on effects for the region should be extremely beneficial.



Top right: RDA Kimberley Attracting crowds to the regional display
Bottom left: RDA Kimberley The inner workings of a pearl on display
Top : RDA Kimberley Camels in Broome
Top : RDA Kimberley Purnululu National Park



Digital capacity and capacity in Remote and Very Remote Workplaces RDA NORTHERN TERRITORY

In 2014 RDA NT developed a Digital Workplace Assessment Tool (DWAT) which was used to gauge the existing digital capacity and capability of NT workplaces.

A total of 160 individuals chose to participate in the survey, and came from Government, Not-for-profit/community groups and the Business sectors across a wide range of industries but predominately from the Other Services, Healthcare and Social Services, Arts and Recreation, Public Administration and Safety, Education and Training industries. Most of the participants were from Remote or Very Remote areas (as defined by the ABS), which distinguishes this survey from many other studies.

Early findings include:

- 95% of participants said that they used the internet in their workplace.
- Around 63% of participants' workplaces provided goods and/or services to remote areas.
- Nearly 14% of participants worked in Indigenous owned/run organisations;
- The majority of participants (24%) used wireless, followed by ADSL2/ADSL2+ (22.7%).

Just under 71% said that their workplace utilised teleworking

- Almost 12% relied on satellite for internet connectivity and for those situated outside of the four main urban areas this rose to 32.7%.
- 84% of participants said their workplace used mobile technologies and devices to access and transfer data.

- Cloud computing was used by just over half (51%) the participants.
- 58% of participants said that their workplace undertakes on-line training but only about 39% undertake digital training.
- Around three-quarters of participants said that their workplaces used the internet in their recruitment processes.
- About two-thirds (67%) said that their workplace used technology to identify new markets, products and services. In terms of innovative use of technology, of the top five industries included in the DWAT, the Other Services sector led the way, followed by Arts and Recreation Services and Public Administration and Safety, then Education and Training, Healthcare and Social Services sectors.
- Only 55% of participants said that the use of technology in their workplace had reduced their operational costs, with estimates (as a percentage of savings) ranging from 2% up to 80% with a median of 15%.
- Except for those participants reliant on satellite connectivity, a majority of users of all other types of internet connectivity (ADSL2/2+, Wireless, Cable/Fibre, CITRIX, 3G/4G), said that the use of technology in their workplace had reduced their operational costs. In contrast, the overwhelming majority of satellite users (66.7%) said that use of technology in their workplace had not reduced their operational costs.
- While 74.2% of participants said that their workplace had the internal resources to manage the digital aspects of their business, only 52.3% said that their workplace had a strategy to build their digital presence.

The report including policy implications and recommendations, particularly as we move towards a global digital economy and what that means for workplaces in the NT, will be placed on the RDA NT website once complete.



Bringing free Wifi to the Wheatbelt

RDA WHEATBELT

Northam will be the first Wheatbelt town to install free public Wifi for local community, businesses and tourists. As the largest town with the highest amount of through traffic in the region, Northam was identified as a Wifi trial site for the Wheatbelt.

The free public Wifi trial was prioritised as a key project by the regional Implementation Committee overseeing the Wheatbelt Digital Action Plan. Connectivity and access is one of the five focus areas within the Plan and it is hoped that other Wheatbelt communities can learn from Northam's trial and explore opportunities to create other free Wifi access points across the region.

Free public Wifi attracts and retains traffic in key areas such as retail, learning institutions, public parks and recreation facilities. This has a positive flow-on effect to local businesses and creates a vibrant atmosphere to community spaces.

The four locations identified as potential areas for free public Wifi in Northam are:

- The Tourism Centre, river foreshore, playground and Music Bowl park area
- The mall area across from the Boulevard Shopping Centre
- The Library and surrounding lawn area
- The Sport and Recreation Centre



Unlocking the (Digital) Potential of the Bush

RDA NORTHERN TERRITORY

The 2015 Broadband for the Bush Forum RDANT is a member of the Broadband for the Bush Alliance and is involved in planning for the 2015 Broadband for the Bush Forum, which will be held in Darwin 15-16th July. An Indigenous Focus Day (14 July) will precede the Forum.

This year's theme "Unlocking the Digital Potential of the Bush" will explore the role of ICT and broadband as an enabler of economic and social development in rural, regional and remote areas.



Participants in this year's Forum will have the opportunity to engage with industry and government experts at a national level, hear the latest communications and digital economy developments and work towards developing solutions to overcome the challenges of living and working in rural, regional and remote Australia. Across the two days four streams will focus on a positive strength-based approach: Local Connected Communities, Strong and Sustainable Economy, Breakthrough Innovations and Technology, and Engaged Government.

The Broadband for the Bush Alliance is a group of organisations that are committed to the digital inclusion of remote and rural Australia. The Alliance brings together a range of stakeholders with expertise in communications, remote service delivery, and community engagement.

For more information about the 2015 Forum or becoming a member of the Alliance, visit broadbandforthebush.com.au or telephone Robin at RDA NT on 0417 781 272.

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