


# Regional Development *Australia*

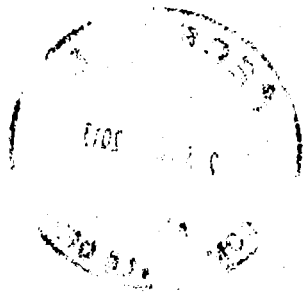
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



**Submission to the**

**ACT Assembly Select Committee on Regional Development**

	A.C.T. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE OFFICE
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## Terms of Reference

The ACT Legislative Assembly has convened a Select Committee on Regional Development. The Terms of Reference are as follows:

*The Committee is interested to receive contributions about the ACT's relationship with the surrounding region, including, but not limited to:*

- a) the identification of opportunities and supporting governance structures to coordinate economic development, including tourism and transport across the region;*
- b) the coordination of service planning and service delivery, particularly in the areas of health and education;*
- c) the opportunities for collaborative procurement by ACT Government with surrounding local governments;*
- d) further cooperation at the local government level on environmental and conservation matters and building community resilience to deal with natural disasters, extreme weather events and climate change; and*
- e) any other relevant matter.*

*The Select Committee invites submissions to its inquiry into regional development.*

## **Overview of the Regional Development Australia Program**

The Regional Development Australia (RDA) program was initiated in 2009, driven by the desire of the Australian Government to 'join up' and make consistent the diverse array of regional development organisations operating across Australia supported by all levels of government.

Regional Development Australia ACT (RDA ACT) is part of the nation-wide network of 55 RDA Committees; a network that represents all of Australia, and includes remote, rural, regional and metropolitan regions. RDA has a broad set of objectives aimed at enhancing the economic, social and sustainable development of Australian communities.

Each RDA Committee is comprised of Members who are local leaders with broad and diverse skills and experience, as well as demonstrated networks within their region. Committee Members are appointed jointly by the Australian Minister for Regional Australia and their State/Territory counterparts. Appointments to RDA Committees are made utilising an open and public 'Expression of Interest' process. Committee membership is refreshed on a cyclical basis - currently four year terms with a half Committee renewal every two years. The current membership of the RDA ACT Committee is at [Attachment A](#).

Committee Members are appointed on the basis that collectively they understand the challenges, opportunities and priorities of their local community.

The RDA ACT Committee is supported by a partnership between the Australian and ACT Governments (in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding) which provides financial and in-government support. A copy of that MoU is at [Attachment B](#).

The Commonwealth, through an Operational Funding Contract with RDA Committees, asks that RDA Committees undertake five core functions:

- Consult and engage with the community;
- Support informed regional planning – overseeing the development of a strategic regional plan;
- Promote whole-of-government activities;
- Promote government programs; and
- Facilitate community and economic development.

In addition to these five core functions, RDAs variously become involved in activities that help to pursue sustainable development priorities in their region, including undertaking specific requirements linked to funding agreements with the relevant State or Territory.

RDA Committees also have a significant role in prioritising applications to the Commonwealth's Regional Development Australia Fund (RDAF).

RDA Committees can also act as catalysts to link regional stakeholders into a range of other relevant government funding programs that will assist the development of their region.

## Background/Overview

### *Introduction*

As a regional development organisation, RDA ACT will primarily focus its comments in this submission to point *a)* of the Select Committee's *Terms of Reference*.

We will however also touch on issues relevant to service delivery in education (*in b)*), and on regional collaboration in the area of sustainability and environmental action (*relating to point d)*). Several other topics and themes discussed may also fall under the category *e) any other relevant matter*.

### *The ACT region defined*

Prior to tackling regional development issues, the 'region' as it pertains to the ACT would benefit from geographical definition. Such a definition could be used holistically, not only for regional engagement and regional development purposes, but to also provide a brand that can be used both to identify and promote this region.

Regional descriptors in current use are: the *SEROC Region* (including the ACT and 12 LGAs), the *C+1 Region* (the ACT plus 6 LGAs), the *Capital Region*, and *Greater Capital Region*. In the past, the *Australian Capital Region* was also utilised.

Although a region is *defined by its shared sense of place, or a common purpose or destiny*, and thus has a pervious and fluid border, for the purposes of *development* the region would benefit from a consistent name, a brand that is succinct, descriptive and unique.

In this document, we will refer generally to the *Capital Region* – a region that includes the ACT plus the surrounding fourteen local government areas.

### *ACT Government support for the RDA ACT*

As well as financial support provided by the nation-wide Commonwealth RDA program, the RDA ACT Committee is also supported through a *Deed of Grant* with the ACT Government.

RDA ACT also benefits from the regional engagement and development work undertaken by the ACT Government, centrally coordinated through the Chief Minister and Treasury Directorate.

The ACT Government's agenda for RDA ACT is that, as well as undertaking the role defined in the Commonwealth's *Operational Funding Agreement*, it assists the ACT Government with its regional engagement agenda - to progress initiatives and activities that align with the *MoU on Regional Collaboration* between the ACT and NSW First Ministers, and assist with regional engagement and interaction with local governments through the South East Region of Councils (SEROC) forum.

The 'Funded Activities' under the ACT Government's *Deed of Grant* with the RDA ACT Committee are listed at [Attachment C](#).

### ***The ACT and its relationship to the Region***

The ACT community - across a diverse array of sectors - has a wide range of relationships and engagements with the surrounding 'Capital Region' of south east NSW additional to those at various government levels.

- **The ACT Government**

Since providing support for RDA ACT in 2009, the ACT Government has increased its engagement with its surrounding NSW region. Formal arrangements now include:

- An MoU on *Regional Collaboration* between the ACT Chief Minister and the NSW Premier (a copy of the *Objectives and Priority Actions* from the MoU is at Attachment D);
- Membership of the South East Regional Organisation of Councils (SEROC) and active involvement with the General Managers' Advisory Council (GMAC) and a range of working groups;
- Ongoing bilateral engagements with the local governments that directly abut the Territory: Queanbeyan, Cooma-Monaro, Palerang and Yass;
- The *C+1 Regional Working Group* which includes the ACT Government and representatives from the six local governments that are within one hour's drive from Canberra.
- Contributions to the work on the federally supported *Greater Capital Region Strategy*.

- **Institutions**

A wide range of ACT institutions (including the RDA) have ongoing engagement and interaction with the region. For example:

- The Medical and Health faculties of both the ANU and UC regularly utilise regional health service providers for internships and clinical placements.
- Research and Development organisations and their spin-out companies operate both in the ACT and in Capital Region.
- The CIT and Illawarra Institute of TAFE recently signed an MoU aimed at encouraging a closer working relationship in respect of training delivery and activity in the Capital Region.
- RDA ACT and RDA Southern Inland signed a refreshed MoU in May 2011, recommitting to continuing to develop a collaborative relationship between the two RDAs.

- **The Private Sector**

- Private sector operations continually cross the jurisdictional border to conduct their business, and whilst there may be a range of red tape issues, the vast majority of cross-border commerce is conducted as if the border was non-existent.

- However, opportunities do exist to remove existing barriers that hinder the free flow of economic activity across the border in an attempt to develop a 'unified' regional market. Significant co-ordination and will is required of both the ACT and NSW governments and their agencies in this respect.
- **The Not-for-Profit (NFP) sector**
  - Increasingly opportunities are arising for organisations operating in the not-for-profit sector to undertake their work across jurisdictional boundaries. Many of these operate in the social services sector and rely on project or activity-based funding from State/Territory or Australian Government sources.
  - It is noted that many local governments across NSW - and Australia generally - are examining how to better deliver some of the (federal and state funded) social service programs in their local government area. Opportunities may open for entrepreneurial not-for-profits in this sector.
- **The Community**
  - The general population of the ACT has a strong relationship with the surrounding region. Many local residents enjoy the natural resources of the region for holidays (short and long) to the south coast beaches, national parks and snowy mountains for example.
  - Many individuals have a strong economic tie to parts of the Capital Region, including for example the very high proportion of rate payers in the Eurobodalla Shire that have mailing addresses in the ACT.
  - Many youth from the region (and further afield) come to the ACT to complete their education (Y11/Y12 and tertiary) and often stay to take up employment opportunities.
  - The local community also has a strong connection with regional towns and cities including particularly Goulburn, Yass, Cooma and Batemans Bay.
  - A high proportion of 'lifestyle' rural residential blocks surrounding Canberra are located in NSW resulting in a significant number of cross-border commutes to work and school every weekday.

### ***The Region's relationship with the ACT***

The ACT is the hub of the surrounding region that includes some 600,000 residents who rely on Canberra for a range of services and opportunities. Surrounding NSW residents come to the ACT to access its centralised services – health and education, facilities – recreation, retail and cultural, major airport and employment opportunities. Additionally:

- The population of the nearby local government areas (especially in Queanbeyan, Palerang and Yass Valley) is highly impacted by Australian Government employment patterns and increases with growth in the Canberra workforce.
- A wider range of services is delivered from the ACT than from regional centres, most particularly high level health services and tertiary education, but also retail, arts, entertainment and culture, and sport (both grass roots and elite).

- The ACT / South East NSW region provides a good example of cross-jurisdictional synergies where the surrounding region population helps to build the economies of scale that allow for the continuing growth in the provision of high level services, facilities and opportunities.

This may be viewed as having adverse effects on surrounding regional towns. By way of example, a city the size of Queanbeyan (approximate population 42,000) – were it not for its proximity to Canberra – would be expected to have a much larger and more diverse retail sector, more entertainment options and opportunities, and a greater number of sporting and cultural facilities.

Similarly the SE region of NSW would have greater self-sufficiency in health and education services were these services not provided from the ACT.

Whilst regional residents appreciate access to the levels of service that Canberra provides, they would often prefer to have these opportunities within their own towns and local government areas to allow for more convenient accessibility.

#### ***RDA ACT - Current initiatives and engagements***

The RDA ACT Committee and Secretariat undertake a range of activities as part of day-to-day operations including activities that support a set of deliverables that are tied to the Australian Government's *Operational Funding Contract (OFC)* and the ACT Government's *Deed of Grant*.

One of the most visible of these activities is the production of a Strategic Regional Plan, which is developed subsequent to consultation with a broad range of regional stakeholders across the business and industry, education, training and research, environment and community sectors. In late 2011, RDA ACT produced the *ACT Strategic Regional Plan 2011-12*, and in the second half of 2012, an update to that plan to carry over into 2012-13. The inaugural RDA Strategic Regional Plan was produced in 2010.

The RDA ACT Strategic Regional Plans (2011-12 and 2012-13) note five Pillars of development for the ACT. These include:

- A Resilient and Diverse Economy
- An Exemplar of Environmental Sustainability
- Strengthened Opportunities through Education
- A Connected Canberra
- Empowered Communities

The strategic actions and examples of projects and activities that the RDA ACT would support against each Pillar are included at [Attachment E](#).

- **South East Region of Renewable Energy Excellence (SERREE)**

RDA ACT has taken a lead role in forming the SERREE initiative that is bringing together a network of the region's renewable energy stakeholders to explore opportunities and synergies that will develop the region as a national exemplar of Renewable Energy Excellence.

RDA ACT also leads the federally funded consortium of the regions' RDAs - that also includes Southern Inland and Far South Coast, supported by the ACT (EDD), NSW (OEH) and Australian (DIICCSRTE) Governments, to undertake the SERREE Project: Greater Capital Region Renewable Energy Sector Needs and Capability Mapping.

Some 200 stakeholders are now included in the SERREE network, and these will be consulted to inform the Project's work, and Final Report (due June 2014).

Further information is included in the section: Industry Development Opportunities.

- **The Greater Capital Region Strategy**

The Commonwealth Department of Regional Australia has provided project funding to develop a cross-regional Economic Development Strategy. The contributing stakeholders in this work are the three RDAs of the region (ACT, Southern Inland and Far South Coast) as well as the ACT and NSW Governments and the Commonwealth Department of Regional Australia. Local governments of the region participate via the South East Regional Organisation of Councils (SERO). This project is currently in the process of undertaking a number of actions and activities that will further examine the potential for development of regional economic activity. Many of these potential actions and activities are included in this paper.

- **Broadband Readiness Program (Telework Hubs)**

RDA ACT, in partnership with RDA Southern Inland has received project funding to undertake feasibility work on the development of Smart Work Hubs in a number of regional centres around the ACT (within the C+1 region). Concurrently, a number of the regional local governments are looking at the opportunity to invest in facilities which might include a Smart Work Hub.

Further information is included in the section: Industry Development Opportunities.

- **High Speed Rail Advocacy**

RDA ACT has previously been involved in a range of events and activities that have highlighted the potential benefits that an East Coast High Speed Rail (HSR) might bring to the country as a whole; and to this region specifically.

In 2011 – in conjunction with the Canberra Business Council - RDA ACT hosted a *HSR Forum* which included a range of expert speakers (including international) who highlighted the positive attributes and significant benefits of HSR. This event attracted over 120 attendees from local business and industry and from regional areas from Goulburn to Shepparton.

In April 2013, the Australian Government released its Stage 2 Report on an East Coast HSR, and whilst the headline issues were noted as its high cost, its complexity and length of construction period, the report also noted the vast array of positive benefits that would accrue.

Importantly the study noted that if Government was to support the construction of an East Coast HSR network, then it should start with the Sydney to Canberra leg – being one of the least expensive legs (in total and in cost per kilometre) with a shorter construction time, and

being the first stage of a Sydney to Melbourne segment which the Report identified as providing the highest benefit/cost ratio.

RDA ACT, along with other RDAs along the proposed HSR route (as well as other local and regional organisations), continue to advocate the benefits of HSR as an efficient, environmentally sound, and economical long distance rapid transit solution for Australia that has the potential to not only assist the development of regional Australia, but also to help relieve pressures in a range of other areas including urban congestion.

## Opportunities

Whilst the Strategic Regional Plan developed by RDA ACT is broad in its conceptual thinking and encompasses a wide range of areas and activities that, if pursued, would deliver benefit to the ACT, international definitions for *Regional Development* generally focus on a need to develop regions that suffer some form of 'comparative disadvantage'.

In the case of the ACT however, it is difficult on many fronts to argue comparative disadvantage. Even when considering the surrounding region, social and economic measures indicate that most suffer little disadvantage (see [Attachment F](#)) – or certainly less relative disadvantage than many other regions of Australia.

In broad terms, across the Capital Region, the geographical proximity of a community to the ACT is a strong determinant as to its level of disadvantage, with the region referred to as 'C+1' – within an hour's commute of Canberra - more closely sharing in the ACT's comparative advantages.

Venture further out from the ACT, and it becomes more apparent that communities – especially smaller communities - have access to lower level of services, have smaller employment markets from which to obtain meaningful employment, and generally have reduced levels of income, education and social connectedness.

From information provided on the ACT Government CMTD website, statistics indicate that in the SEROC region, the LGAs with the larger populations generally recorded higher rates of population growth and are consolidating, while those with smaller populations continue to decline. This is a trend which is occurring across the whole country.

Population growth across the region averaged 1.5% per annum over the four years ending June 2011, with the ACT accounting for over 80% of the growth.

Over the decade to 2011, Queanbeyan was the fastest growing LGA (after the ACT), followed by Palerang, Yass Valley and Eurobodalla. However across the seven smaller LGAs, only Boorowa and Young grew in each of the last four years, while the other five experienced low growth or population decline, including Bombala, Cooma-Monaro, Harden, Snowy River and Upper Lachlan.

Results from the 2011 Census show that within the SEROC region, the largest increases in the number of high income earners occurred in the Queanbeyan, Palerang and Yass Valley LGAs.

In 2011 there were 28,876 people living in the SEROC region whose personal incomes were in the lowest category – earning between \$1 - \$199 per week. The largest increases in the number of low income earners occurred in the Eurobodalla, Cooma-Monaro and Goulburn-Mulwaree LGAs.

## *Comparative Advantage* Canberra and the ACT

Perhaps a better way to look at Regional Development in the ACT and Capital Region is to look at *comparative advantage*, and seek ways to improve on these, and to provide greater benefit to those parts of the Capital Region that currently see little or no advantage from being in reasonably close proximity to the ACT.

The ACT benefits from having a large and well-paid public sector employment base which accounts for around 50% of the workforce – and a vibrant and flexible private sector that supports public administration, and provides services to the residents of the territory.

Canberrans have significantly higher than (Australian) average incomes – both individual and household.

ACT residents are more likely to have a higher educational qualification resulting in higher than (Australian) average educational attainment. The ACT – as a jurisdiction – benefits from having two high quality universities that attract significant numbers of international students each year. The ACT has a primary and secondary education system that compares very favourably with the rest of the country.

The ACT also has:

- High levels of online engagement, participation and digital literacy;
- Higher levels of active participation in sports and social activities;
- Higher levels of attendance at cultural events – on the back of a range of significant National Cultural and Collecting Institutions;
- Ten percent of the country's public sector research and development spend – and as a result many highly capable researchers – including from overseas; and
- A high level of social tolerance and acceptance.

The ACT of course, does also have a range of areas of economic, environmental and social concerns, including a narrowly based private sector, an economy susceptible to downturn on the whim of the Australian Government of the day, a large ecological footprint, and growing numbers of 'below poverty line' residents and indeed increasing homelessness.

It is however from the comparative advantages and significant assets of the ACT that we should seek to draw future opportunities and to build on the uniqueness of the Territory. And incorporating the region as a whole may provide opportunity to overcome some of the weaknesses. For this to occur however there needs to be acceptance that the region surrounding the ACT is a significant asset that can assist the ACT overcome its weaknesses and shortcomings rather than merely being assumed as a drain on ACT resources.

***The challenge lies in the potential to extend the relative advantage of the ACT further out into the regional areas that are currently suffering from relative disadvantage and for the ACT to better utilise the assets of the region for its own, and the region's benefit.***

## **The Capital Region**

The SE NSW region that surrounds the ACT comprises a number of localities, towns, and cities that are located within a range of quite different and distinct local government areas. They can be broadly categorised as follows:

- **The Capital Core**

In general terms, the closer the locality is to the ACT, the more its demography takes on the attributes of the ACT. For example, residents in Queanbeyan, Palerang and Yass Valley are more likely to work in the ACT, and have similar levels of educational attainment, individual and household incomes and participate in activities as a Canberra resident would.

However, the local government areas that are further away from the ACT have a quite different, but distinct set of characteristics.

- **The Snowy Monaro**

This area of the region relies heavily on a few vital sectors, tourism and agriculture being prominent. Cooma has a wide range of businesses and sectors, and the rural lands provide good grazing for beef cattle, however without the mountain-based tourism, the Snowy-Monaro would be less vibrant.

Due to geographical constraints, the Monaro sub region is highly dependent upon the ACT for a wide range of services.

- **The Coast**

The South Coast of NSW also relies heavily on tourism, but is developing a growing niche in quality aged care and retirement lifestyle. Agricultural production (dairy cattle) and value adding processing in the Bega Valley is significant. Traditionally the coastal strip has suffered from a high level of unemployment. This is less true in recent times.

Of the coastal LGAs, the Eurobodalla is most closely linked to the ACT, with Shoalhaven and LGAs to the north being more closely linked to Wollongong and the Illawarra, and the Bega Valley Shire having also a strong shared interest in the western Gippsland in Victoria.

- **The Agricultural Tablelands and Slopes**

The lands to the north and north-west of the ACT are productive and fertile and have quality agricultural production capabilities. From wine (grapes), canola and wheat, grazing merinos and cattle to cherries, poultry and pork in the Young district, this sub-region has a significant agricultural output.

This agricultural sub-region has strong connections to the Riverina and to the Central West agricultural producing regions, as well as to the ACT.

- **The Sydney Corridor**

The areas surrounding Goulburn and northwards along the Hume Highway towards Sydney are being impacted by the growth of Sydney to the south-west. Freight, logistics, manufacturing and value adding industries are growing in this corridor. There is also the potential for significant population growth for the towns and communities to the north east of Goulburn.

Over time, and with the combination of further development of South West Sydney and improved commuting times, this sub-region will have increased connectivity with the north and north east, whilst retaining connection with the ACT – although connections with Canberra could be weakened over time..

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This is a very quick snapshot of the sub-regions of the SE NSW area surrounding the ACT and does not do justice to the diversity of the communities and economic segments. More comprehensive analysis and details are provided in the Strategic Regional Plans of the RDAs (Southern Inland and Far South Coast) as well as in planning documents of the relevant Local Governments and regional plans of the NSW Government.

#### *Strategic Partnership Opportunities*

There exists a range of opportunities for the ACT (across Government and other sectors) to partner with regional communities, governments and organisations to progress development opportunities across a range of sectors, including economic, social and environmental.

These opportunities need to be focussed on providing benefit to both ACT and regional stakeholders alike.

As a lead organisation in this space, the RDA ACT endeavours to set an example by working in **partnership** with like and complementary organisations. RDA ACT has a range of active and productive working relationships with:

- The Australian Department of Regional Australia;
- The ACT Government through a number of agencies and directorates, including CMTD, Economic Development (EDD) and Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (ESDD);
- Educational institutions including the ANU, UC and CIT;
- Canberra Urban and Regional Futures (CURF);
- The nearby RDAs of Southern Inland and Far South Coast (and Illawarra);
- Regional local governments through SEROC;
- The business community through organisations such as the Canberra Business Council;
- A range of social sector stakeholders; and
- A range of environmental sector groups.

### **Delivery of Government services**

A co-ordinated approach to the delivery of government services appears to be a priority for the ACT Government and it is an area where the relevant government agencies need to have ongoing discussions regarding potential opportunities for collaboration.

The primary areas of collaboration in the first instance appear to be across the health and education sectors, and much work appears to have been done already – especially in the provision of cross-border regional health services – there is much more that can be done.

There is scope to include other areas of government service delivery, and the ACT Government's stronger regional engagements, especially with SEROC and the MoU with the NSW Government, are a good base point at which to start exploring opportunities. Noting though, that cross jurisdictional service delivery is a complex activity that requires significant due diligence by all parties.

This activity is seen primarily as one between the relevant governments and their agencies and there appears little value add the RDAs can provide in this area.

It is also an area though where governments can lead by example and set a 'regional engagement' example to other sectors.

### **Procurement**

Government procurement has been recognised as an area where the local governments in the Capital Region can benefit from combining buying power not only across the SEROC local governments (which is already being undertaken), but also including the ACT Government.

### **Public Transport**

Given that over 20,000 people cross the border each week day to work in the ACT, cross-border transport (including public transport) is identified as a major issue.

The inability for bus and taxi operators to freely provide cross-border services is a major issue which should be addressed.

The quality and capacity of the roads into the ACT from NSW is also a significant issue. For example, the Monaro Highway from Cooma/Royalla/Burra/Michelago, The Kings Highway from Braidwood and Bungendore to both Queanbeyan and Canberra (via Macs Reef Rd), the Barton Highway from Yass and Murrumbateman all remain inadequate to cope with the current and increasing traffic flows.

The Federal/Hume Highway connection to Goulburn is recognised as the standard quality that major roads into, and out of, the ACT should all be built.

### **Planning (Land and Infrastructure)**

A co-ordinated sub-regional planning regime is desirable. Especially in the case of the settlements that are close commuter distance to Canberra (eg Queanbeyan, Wamboin, Royalla/Burra). There has often been significant argument and angst between governments on

developments that may, or may not, impact on flight paths out of the Canberra Airport. A cross-border regional planning regime would provide an opportunity for development projects impacting on the border region to be planned and executed as part of a single, holistic land use and planning strategy.

### **A Regional Approach to Prioritising Infrastructure Projects**

Much of today's large infrastructure investment is made by the Commonwealth Government, or by the Commonwealth in partnerships with local and state/territory governments.

Increasingly Federal infrastructure programs are seeking a regional approach to prioritisation and to needs assessment. Adopting a regional approach to infrastructure planning and prioritisation could increase the range of Commonwealth funding opportunities.

### **Emergency Management Response Coordination**

There is already increasing coordination in the area of regional emergency management and the coordination of responses. The stimulus for bringing closer together these activities lies in recent disaster recovery activities including the bushfire emergencies in 2003 (and since), and the severe drought and water supply issues over the past decade. This regional coordination needs to continue to best address disaster management and importantly preparation and risk minimisation.

An exemplar of regional coordination in this area is the regional aero medical rescue service, Snowy Hydro Southcare, which operates out of Canberra and provides a service across a wide area of South East and South West NSW. This service operates with financial support from the NSW and ACT Governments, as well as significant financial contributions from regional local governments, regional and local communities and service groups.

### **Improved Utilisation of Regional Assets (by the ACT)**

There are significant opportunities to better utilise the assets across the Capital Region, by the whole region, including the ACT. For example on the Far South Coast there is a developing expertise in coastal and marine education and research in Eden. Also in Eden is a significant port asset that if developed could service a large portion of the South East (including Canberra).

In Cooma, there is significant engineering expertise (on the back of SMEC and Snowy Hydro), and an airfield with a high quality runway that is underutilised for most of the year. And across the region there are pockets of leading edge innovation in agricultural production.

There are significant renewable energy production facilities around the region that could provide nearby operational evidence for the ACT's research and development opportunities.

## ***Industry Development Opportunities***

### **Renewable Energy**

The ACT Government's updated Climate Change policy AP2 commits to three actions with regard to transitioning to large-scale renewable energy including: developing large-scale renewable energy generation capacity, determining a new renewable electricity consumption target of 90% renewables by 2020, and developing a detailed mapping of the ACT electricity distribution network.

The ACT Government has also made a significant commitment to solar energy generation and is committed to developing 40MW of solar farm facilities within the ACT. There is also significant research and development being undertaken at the ANU in a range of discrete areas of solar technology (eg in solar PV, solar thermal [trough], solar thermal [parabolic dish]).

The NSW-ACT Border Region particularly has one of NSW's largest and most competitive wind resources, with a large number of new wind farms to be developed in coming years. This Region also hosts around half of NSW's current hydro capacity – as part of the Snowy Hydro Scheme. It is estimated that the NSW-ACT Border Region could produce over 5,370 MW of renewable energy.

Additional value is added through the significant number of job opportunities being created in the region by this burgeoning industry, plus the direct expenditure that can be made in a local region from a wind farm development. A landholder can expect to make approximately \$10,000 per turbine per annum, particularly valuable given a turbine's capacity to co-exist with the more traditional agricultural enterprises.

Recognising the regional synergies of a renewable energy industry in the Capital Region, RDA ACT has, over the past eighteen months, been leading a coalition of regional stakeholders – that include the three RDAs – ACT, Southern Inland and Far South Coast, the ACT, NSW and Australian Governments, and including the industry, business, education and training, research and community sectors, to progress the renewable energy agenda across the ACT and SE NSW region.

In December 2012, this network of the region's renewable energy stakeholders, SERREE (South East Region of Renewable Energy Excellence) was successful in obtaining federal funding for an 18 month project to map the Greater Capital Region's renewable energy sector needs and capability with a view to further developing the capability of the industry.

### **Waste Management**

The ACT Government has a good track record in the area of waste reduction and maximising recycling – especially in the area of domestic waste.

There are also emerging opportunities arising for the conversion of organic waste to energy.

Co-ordination is required across governments to be able to best maximise regional recycling opportunities and to better utilise non-recyclable organic waste for (biomass) energy generation. There are also job creation opportunities in recycling waste and in the conversion of waste to energy.

It is understood that discussions have commenced between local governments and the ACT Government in order to pursue this opportunity.

### **Freight and Logistics**

The vast majority of stakeholders across the Capital Region see the Canberra Airport as a major asset, not only for domestic passenger movement, but also future international passenger movements (both in and out).

There is also a significant potential to increase the freight capacity of the airport. This potential would be further enabled as the airport operates on a fully international scale.

Along with an increasing role for air freight at the airport, would be a growing need for further road transport infrastructure out of a freight and logistics hub that would be created. The construction of the Majura Parkway is a positive step in this regard, allowing easier access to both the Federal/Hume corridor to the north and the Monaro Highway to the south.

The demand for air freight is most often in time critical goods, which are light (in weight), not bulky (in size) and not heavily processed. It is critical that connecting local freight networks allow for quick and efficient distribution or on forwarding.

### **Tourism**

Historically the tourism marketing efforts of the ACT and Canberra have been separate efforts from those of the surrounding *Capital Country* – which have been aligned with and financially supported by the NSW Government.

In recent years however, funding to inland NSW regional tourism groups has been reduced and consolidated to larger regions, and some argue they have become less effective at developing and implementing marketing strategies for local tourism regions.

An opportunity exists for the ACT tourism body – Australian Capital Tourism – to start taking responsibility for the 'ACT and (Capital) Region' tourism strategy and product development as well as marketing. The two tourism 'offerings' complement each other and already the Canberra visitors centre is branded as the Canberra and Region Visitor and Information Centre.

This change could be implemented with minimal effort noting though that the areas of the South Coast and Snowy Mountains are distinct and vibrant tourism destinations in their own right and should continue to operate independently, as they currently do.

### **Sport**

Both the governments of NSW and of ACT support sporting organisations - community-based and elite alike. One of the unique characteristics of the Capital Region is that there is a strong

regional affiliation across a wide range of sporting organisations in both community based and elite levels.

By way of example, the ACT's community sporting organisations that cover cricket, football (soccer), rugby league and union, AFL, basketball, tennis and others have catchment areas that extend across the border into not only the SE NSW region, but at times to the south west out to Wagga Wagga.

Additionally, there is strong support for many of the ACT's elite sporting teams – the Raiders, Brumbies, Capitals, Canberra Utd etc, from across the broader region – and indeed these elite sporting teams often include elite players from regional areas.

The NSW supported South East Regional Academy of Sport (SERAS), is accommodated on the UC campus at Bruce, and utilises many of the University's facilities, as well as those of the nearby AIS. The ACT Academy of Sport (ACTAS) often includes young participants that have come from the region.

Supporting sport is seen as worthwhile by governments as it assists in promoting healthy lifestyles, providing entertainment opportunities and enhancing community engagement. A regionally co-operative approach by governments, to supporting regional sporting organisations that cross the broader region, could result in significant benefit across a range of areas.

Elite sporting events, can also contribute significantly to tourism visitations.

### **Agriculture**

Opportunities exist to better link the agricultural production across the region to customers in the ACT.

Whilst the agricultural production region around the ACT would not rank as one of the most productive in the country, there are many examples of leading edge production; for example, in beef cattle on the Monaro, dairy in the Bega Valley, merino wool production in the Goulburn region, wheat and canola production to the north west, as well as cherries, poultry and pork production in the Young area.

Additionally, there is growing niche production and localised processing across a range of sectors.

And of course there is a significant wine producing region that encompasses the ACT and the surrounding region.

Opportunities exist to better integrate these regional agricultural production capabilities with the demands of the 400,000 plus Canberra/Queanbeyan marketplace.

A focus on high value, time critical produce from around the region would support the development of the airport as a major air freight hub and allow for exports to a wider range of markets.

### ***Telework***

The Australian Government has set a national target of 12% of public sector workers undertaking some form of teleworking each week (up from the most recently recorded 6%) by 2020.

With its high proportion of knowledge and service sector workers, and a large number of employees travelling great distances from rural lifestyle communities each day, the ACT and near region present a significant opportunity to showcase the potential of telework to reduce travel time, decrease transport congestion, reduce carbon emissions whilst at the same time adding to the viability of regional communities.

The RDAs of Southern Inland and ACT were recently awarded a small grant (under the NBN Readiness Program) from the Department of Regional Australia to undertake feasibility work on the potential of establishing Smart Work Hubs in regional communities around the ACT.

Concurrently, many local governments see the benefit of investment in local facilities that would encourage local residents to remain in the community to work – enabling expenditure on local services such as child care, food and beverage, as well as reducing the peak hour congestion on the roads that lead into the ACT each day. There are as many as six local governments that are at early stages of examining the possibility of creating a Smart Work Hub in their town/city.

More needs to be done to prove the viability of Smart Work Hubs in the Capital Region and local governments need to better understand costs and benefits before significant infrastructure investments can be made.

There is an opportunity for innovative local governments to combine Smart Work Hubs with other council facilities, or perhaps with remote educational or health facilities, that might link to Canberra-based providers.

### ***Education and Skills***

The ACT is well served by educational institutions and has a high quality primary and secondary schooling system across both the public and private sectors.

The vocational sector has a large number of private providers and includes the government supported TAFE – the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT).

Additionally the ACT is advantaged in having a range of University education providers including being the home of the world ranked Australian National University (ANU), the University of Canberra (UC) and having campuses of three other institutions; University of NSW (UNSW) at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA), an Australian Catholic University (ACU) campus in Watson, as well as a small Charles Sturt University (CSU) footprint.

### ***Primary/Secondary***

Many school aged children cross the border each day to attend schools in Canberra, with the majority of them attending private schools. This cross-border daily migration indicates a high level of demand for private schooling (and the ACT secondary college system) from residents of Queanbeyan and the rural lifestyle settlements.

## **Tertiary**

One of the ACT's natural comparative advantages is its level and quality of tertiary education providers. Not only are there up to five Universities offering courses across a wide range of disciplines, there are the two government supported vocational education institutions across the region. In addition there are a large number of private and industry specific providers that service the market.

- **Vocational**

Across the ACT and Capital Region there are two primary providers of vocational education and training – the ACT based CIT (Canberra Institute of Technology) and the NSW Illawarra Institute of TAFE (which is headquartered in Wollongong). Recently these two institutions signed an MoU aimed at fostering collaboration in the provision of educational offerings across the Capital Region.

There remains the potential for this relationship to develop further and to provide significant efficiencies in courses offered, and to remove areas of duplication.

There is also ongoing opportunity to better link in the training and skills development offerings of these institutions more closely and flexibly with the needs of the regional industry base.

- **University**

The two major universities in the ACT see the Capital Region as part of their catchment area and are at times keen to explore opportunities to better serve students across the broader region.

Many students already enrol and attend Canberra campuses from the region. There are also a large number of students from the Capital Region who attend universities elsewhere, such as Wollongong, Wagga Wagga, Sydney and Melbourne.

The progressive roll out of faster broadband technologies and the ongoing development of online teaching methodologies (MOOCs and the like) should be harnessed to provide an increasing range of educational services to regional students, and should be able to better link the physical universities with remote partners. These improving online methodologies provide significant opportunities, making it easier to deliver education remotely, however they also present a significant challenge in increasing significantly the number of educational competitors that are able to offer services to Canberra and the region.

Previous efforts at building significant university infrastructure in regional centres have been less than successful. However, opportunities still remain to better link these ACT based learning institutions with potential students and a larger footprint community of interest.

## Attachment A

### *Current Membership of the RDA ACT Committee*

<b>Chair</b>	Craig Sloan
<b>Deputy Chair</b>	Barbara Norman
<b>Member</b>	Jean McIntyre
<b>Member</b>	Des Walsh
<b>Member</b>	Kris Macauley
<b>Member</b>	Gary Chapman
<b>Member</b>	Peter Elford
<b>Member</b>	Vicki Still
<b>Member</b>	Adrian Best

*MOU between Commonwealth and ACT Government*

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**between**

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF  
AUSTRALIA**

**and**

**THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL  
TERRITORY**

**with respect to**

**THE CREATION AND OPERATION  
OF THE  
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
AUSTRALIA - AUSTRALIAN  
CAPITAL TERRITORY  
COMMITTEE**

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR  
THE CREATION AND OPERATION OF  
THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL  
TERRITORY COMMITTEE**

**PARTIES**

The Commonwealth of Australia, represented by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government

and

The Australian Capital Territory, the body politic established by section 7 of the *Australian Capital Territory (Self-Government) Act 1988* ("ACT"), represented by the Chief Minister's Department

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Memorandum is to record the arrangements between, and intentions of, the Australian Government and the ACT Government in relation to the creation and operation of the Regional Development Australia Australian Capital Territory (RDA ACT) Committee. The RDA ACT Committee will:

- cooperate to improve the coordination and delivery of regional development initiatives;
- deliver strategic input into national programs and help coordinate development initiatives at the regional and local level;
- work with all levels of government as a key linking organisation to empower communities in regional development activity;
- provide independent advice to both governments on the efficacy of the delivery of policies and programs; and
- consult and provide advice on issues confronting regional Australia.

**PREAMBLE**

- A. The Australian Government established a network of Area Consultative Committees (ACCs) in 1994. Since that time their role has evolved from providing advice and generating support for labour market programs to include playing a major role in working with their communities to develop projects that would be successful in attracting funding.
- B. The Capital Region ACC covered the area including the ACT and the five local government areas of Goulburn Mulwaree, Queanbeyan City, Palerang, Upper Lachlan and Yass Valley. The Capital Region ACC covered an area totalling 21,813.5sq km and had a combined population of 440,375 people at June 2008.
- C. The Capital Region Development Board, a joint initiative of the ACT Government and the NSW Government, was formed in 1994 to facilitate economic, employment and investment growth in the South East Region of NSW and the ACT. The Capital Region comprises the ACT and the 14 NSW Local government areas of Bega Valley, Bombala, Cooma-Monaro, Eurobodalla, Goulburn

Mulwaree, Harden, Palerang, Queanbeyan City, Snowy River, Tumut, Upper Lachlan, Yass Valley and Young.

- D. On 20 March 2008, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Australian Government Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, announced that the ACC network would transition to become local Regional Development Australia committees.
- E. On 30 July 2008 in Broome, the Regional Development Council met and approved a core set of principles for aligning the operations of Australian state and territory government regional development organisations.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- F. The following principles were agreed by the Regional Development Council meeting held in Broome on 30 July 2008. These principles guide the establishment and ongoing operation of the RDA network and individual committees. The Parties recognise that, given jurisdictional differences, these principles will be applied to this MOU as appropriate to the circumstances of the ACT.
  - 1. Integrated arrangements: the Australian, State, Territory and Local Governments will continue to work towards the adoption of more integrated and aligned arrangements for regional engagement and economic development, recognising that alignment is necessarily a long term process;
  - 2. Commitment to collaboration: where possible, the three levels of government collaborate at the regional level;
  - 3. Common boundaries: review existing boundaries to align ACCs, RDOs and local government boundaries wherever possible;
  - 4. Acknowledge the differences: regional engagement and economic development structures vary across the Australian Government and States and Territories;
  - 5. Tripartite arrangements: local regional development structures to involve the three levels of government, including joint membership of committees and governing bodies;
  - 6. Sharing of information: improve information sharing on regional development activities and outcomes;
  - 7. Purpose and role of ACCs and RDOs: work towards a shared purpose;
  - 8. Cross membership: as opportunities arise, work towards a degree of cross membership of committees;
  - 9. Joint funding: where possible collaborate through joint funding of regional development bodies to increase in the scope of their activities; and
  - 10. Co-location: where possible co-locate regional development offices to improve communication and minimise duplication of facilities.

- G.** This Memorandum is not intended to create legally enforceable obligations on the part of the Parties. This Memorandum is a statement of intent and does not seek to limit the operational independence of the participating organisations.

## **ARTICLES**

### **1. Definition and Interpretation**

**1.1** In this Memorandum, unless the contrary intention appears:

**ACC** means an Australian Government Area Consultative Committee;

**ACT** means the Australian Capital Territory

**Chair** means Chairperson of the RDA ACT committee;

**CMD** means the Australian Capital Territory Government Chief Minister's Department;

**CRDB** means the Capital Region Development Board;

**DITRDLG** means the Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport Regional Development and Local Government;

**Memorandum** means Memorandum of Understanding;

**Ministers** means the Australian Government Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Development and Northern Australia and the Chief Minister for the ACT;

**NSW** means New South Wales;

**Parties** means parties to this Memorandum of Understanding;

**RDA** means Regional Development Australia; and

**RDO** means State/Territory government regional development organisation.

### **2. Key Outcomes**

**2.1** The creation of the RDA ACT Committee within and focusing on the ACT providing the opportunity to:

**2.1.1** provide strategic advice to the Australian and ACT Governments on issues confronting regional Australia;

**2.1.2** reduce service duplication;

**2.1.3** develop a cooperative culture with improved information sharing;

**2.1.4** maximise the impact of funding provided through resource sharing;

**2.1.5** implement a nationally coordinated approach to developing Australia's regions;

**2.1.6** provide a more coordinated service to the community; and

**2.1.7** contribute to developing stronger regional communities through a strong Australian economy, improved infrastructure, a whole of government approach and closer cooperation between levels of government.

## **IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT**

### **3. The Ministers**

**3.1** The Ministers will:

- 3.1.1 develop policy to establish the RDA ACT Committee, which will be part of the National RDA Network;
- 3.1.2 agree on joint projects and activities for the RDA network; and
- 3.1.3 inform each other of work programs, funding agreements, outcomes and audits from jointly funded activities.

**4. Administration Agencies**

**4.1 The Parties agree that:**

- 4.1.1 DITRDLG and CMD will be the administration agencies for the RDA ACT Committee.
- 4.1.2 DITRDLG will be responsible for providing direction and oversight to the RDA network with respect to Commonwealth Government funding agreements. The responsible contact officer is identified in article 16.1;
- 4.1.3 CMD will be responsible for providing direction and oversight to the RDA ACT Committee with respect to activities undertaken pursuant to funding agreements between the RDA ACT and the Territory. The responsible contact officer is identified in article 16.2;
- 4.1.4 Arrangements for overseeing jointly funded projects by agencies will be set out in funding agreements with the RDA ACT Committee; and
- 4.1.5 the Administrative agencies will co-operate in supporting the RDA ACT Committee to develop a strategic regional plan.

**5. Implementation**

**5.1** The Parties will consult with the Transitional RDA Committee to formulate a plan for the establishment of the RDA ACT Committee. The plan is to be implemented by or before 30 June 2009.

**5.2** The implementation plan will include but not be limited to:

- 5.2.1 Timing of bi-annual consultation meetings between the Parties;
- 5.2.2 Location of the RDA ACT Committee's premises;
- 5.2.3 Development of an RDA ACT Committee constitution and code of conduct;
- 5.2.4 Transition arrangements (including developing procedures for site closures, relocations, funding and amalgamations);
- 5.2.5 Development of an RDA ACT charter;
- 5.2.6 A risk mitigation strategy outlining options, should any of the above tasks not be achievable by or before 30 June 2009; and
- 5.2.7 Guidelines for the operation of the RDA ACT Committee including reporting and due diligence requirements.

**5.3** The Parties will keep each other informed of progress with implementing the agreed plan.

## **6. Funding**

- 6.1 The parties understand funding will be provided for the new RDA ACT Committee by way of separate funding agreements for the implementation and ongoing operation of RDA Committees.

## **7. Incorporation**

- 7.1 The RDA ACT Committee will be incorporated in the ACT under the Associations Incorporation Act (1991).

## **8. RDA Committee appointments**

- 8.1 Members of the committee of the RDA ACT Committee will be appointed by the Minister.
- 8.2 It is intended that the members of the Transitional RDA Committees will be the first members of the RDA ACT.
- 8.3 All subsequent appointments to the committee of the RDA ACT Committee will be made by the Ministers following a publicly advertised EOI.
- 8.4 The Chair and Deputy Chair are to be leading members of the community. They and the other committee members are to be drawn from the community, business and government to reflect the economic, social and cultural diversity of the region. The committee members will collectively have a strong understanding of the economic, social and environmental opportunities and challenges facing regional communities.
- 8.5 In making appointments, the Ministers may take into account gender and skills balances.

## **9. RDA Committee activities**

- 9.1 The Parties intend that the RDA ACT Committee will
- 9.1.1 provide advice to both Governments about regional issues;
  - 9.1.2 provide strategic input into Australian and ACT government programs;
  - 9.1.3 provide information to regional communities on National and ACT government initiatives;
  - 9.1.4 help to coordinate regional planning and regional development initiatives; and
  - 9.1.5 establish links and cooperative alliances as appropriate by closely working with other regional development organisations and neighbouring NSW RDA committees and local governments to promote regional development.

## **10. Identifying and Promoting RDA**

**10.1** The Parties agree that:

- 10.1.1** DITRDLG will take the lead in developing RDA national branding and a RDA logo to be used by the RDA ACT Committee;
- 10.1.2** DITRDLG will trademark the name and associated logo of Regional Development Australia (RDA) and maintain continuing ownership of that name and logo.
- 10.1.3** RDA ACT Committee signage will acknowledge both parties and be jointly agreed by the Parties;
- 10.1.4** the RDA ACT Committee office will display in a clear and visible place, at the public entrance of the RDA ACT Committee premises, RDA signage as prepared and supplied by the Australian Government;
- 10.1.5** they will nominate the RDA ACT Committee, to parties external to this Memorandum, as a key advisor to the Australian and ACT Governments and the key community-based organisation in progressing regional development initiatives in the ACT; and
- 10.1.6** they will acknowledge, in any printed or electronic correspondence or promotional material, the contributions made by the Australian and ACT Governments toward the establishment and ongoing operation of RDA ACT and any services that RDA ACT may deliver

## **11. Cooperative Resource and Workload Management**

**11.1** The Parties will:

- 11.1.1** consult where appropriate and keep each other informed of their intent to engage the RDA ACT Committee in activities and the likely resource and workload impacts that the engagement will have on the operations of the RDA ACT Committee; and
- 11.1.2** not enter into contracts that may compromise the capacity of the RDA ACT Committee to deliver Ministerially agreed regional development activities as specified in approved operational plans and funding agreements.

## **12. Joint Projects**

- 12.1** The Parties agree that the RDA ACT Committee may develop and undertake collaborative projects with a regional development focus, subject to resources being available.
- 12.2** Each Party understands that the RDA ACT Committee may share and provide feedback on all relevant information regarding the status of joint projects with the other Party, when requested in writing (including email correspondence) by contact officers listed in this Memorandum.

## **13. Annual Conference**

- 13.1** It is intended that DITRDLG will organise and fund an annual national RDA Conference.

## **GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **14. Dispute Resolution**

- 14.1** In the event of a dispute under this Memorandum, the Contact Officers listed at article 16 will each use their best endeavours to resolve the dispute between them at an operational level
- 14.2** If the matter is not resolved through negotiations under article 14.1, the dispute will be referred by the senior officers nominated under article 16 to the Secretary of DITRDLG and to the Chief Executive, CMD for resolution.

### **15. Variation or Termination of Memorandum**

- 15.1** This Memorandum will remain in force until it is terminated by either Party to this Memorandum upon giving three months written notice to the other party.
- 15.2** Either of the Parties to this Memorandum may, at any time by written notice, agree to vary this Memorandum. Any variation to this Memorandum must be in writing and signed by all Parties to this Memorandum.

### **16. Contact Officers**

- 16.1** Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government:

Marcus James  
General Manager  
Regional Development Policy Branch  
Local Government and Regional Development Division  
GPO Box 594 Canberra ACT 2601  
Telephone – 02 6274 7234  
Fax - 02 6274 7780  
Mobile – 0434 566 734  
Email - [marcus.james@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:marcus.james@infrastructure.gov.au)

- 16.2** Chief Minister's Department:

Ian Cox  
Director  
Business and Industry Development Branch  
Chief Minister's Department  
GPO Box 158  
Canberra ACT 2601  
Telephone – 02 6207 2004  
Fax – 02 6207 0033  
Email – [ian.cox@act.gov.au](mailto:ian.cox@act.gov.au)

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF this Memorandum has been signed on behalf of the Parties on the dates below.**

**SIGNED for and on behalf of THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA**

by )  
the )  
  
of the )

The Hon Gary Gray AO MP  
Parliamentary Secretary for  
Regional Development and  
Northern Australia  
Australian Government

Signed

.....  
Date

In the Presence of:

.....[WITNESS' SIGNATURE]

.....[PRINTED NAME OF WITNESS]

**SIGNED for and on behalf of THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

by )  
the )  
of the )

Jon Stanhope  
Chief Minister  
Australian Capital Territory

.....  
Signed

.....  
Date

In the Presence of:

.....[WITNESS' SIGNATURE]

.....[PRINTED NAME OF WITNESS]

*Extract from ACT Government Funding Deed*

**SCHEDULE 2**

**THE FUNDED ACTIVITY**

**Item 1. Funded Activity**

- (1) The Funded Activity of the Recipient includes:
- (a) Advice, consultation and community engagement
    - (i) Consult with regional stakeholders on needs and priorities;
    - (ii) 2-way conduit for information and advice between communities and government; and
    - (iii) Engage with all levels of government, regional stakeholders and communities in developing solutions to regional needs and priorities (solution brokers).
  - (b) Regional planning
    - (i) Develop Strategic regional plans (or other plans as determined by the Territory) in collaboration with Australian, State/Territory and local governments;
    - (ii) Annual reporting against milestones/performance indicators; and
    - (iii) Annual analysis against a different area of Government policy each year.
  - (c) Whole of government activities
    - (i) First point of contact for Territory consultations;
    - (ii) First-stop-shop for government services/programs;
    - (iii) Contribute to other national agendas from a regional perspective (e.g. social inclusion, climate change); and
    - (iv) Administer third party contracts for Territory Departments as appropriate.
  - (d) Promotion of Territory programs
    - (i) Provide information to regional stakeholders about Territory government programs, particularly regional;
    - (ii) Identify and assist in the development of regional projects;

- (iii) Provide advice/assistance with leveraging additional funding towards regional projects; and
  - (iv) Provide relevant advice on applications/applicants to Territory Departments (as required).
- (e) Community development
- (i) Regional advocacy;
  - (ii) Support and training;
  - (iii) Network building and leadership development;
  - (iv) Solution brokers; and
  - (v) Partnership brokers.
- (f) Other activities requested by Territory

**Item 2. Priority Areas for the ACT**

- 1) The Priority Areas for the ACT are:
- a) Supporting the development of the ACT and the region, including:
    - i) identifying economic development opportunities;
    - ii) investigating issues and supporting activities associated with the development of an economic, social and environmentally sustainable and resilience region; and
    - iii) developing proposals for collaborative projects between Regional Development Australia ACT and stakeholders, including other Regional Development Australia Committees.
  - b) Supporting the terms, objectives and priorities of the ACT-NSW Memorandum of Understanding for Regional Collaboration.
  - c) Supporting the ACT Government activities and policies relating to:
    - i) the further development of the ACT; and
    - ii) engagement with the region, including participation in the Southeast Regional Organisation of Councils (SEROC).

### *Extract from MOU between ACT and NSW Governments*

#### **Objectives**

The MoU is based on the following objectives for the ACT and NSW Governments:

- fostering a closer working environment between the two governments;
- advancing issues within the broader South East Region and improving policy development and service delivery in both jurisdictions;
- establishing adequate consultation and notification mechanisms between the State, Territory and local governments within the Region;
- developing a process for identifying and dealing with impediments to coordination;
- establishing mechanisms to identify and address potential issues before they escalate; and
- developing a methodology for a new long term model of strategic regional management and cooperation.

#### **Priority Actions**

The ACT and NSW Governments agree that the priority actions under this MoU in the first instance include:

##### *Strategic Regional Direction and Priorities*

- develop a Strategic Regional Direction Statement that articulates the opportunities and priorities for maximising economic development;
- consider the establishment of an alliance with key regional development stakeholders, including the Regional Development Australia Boards and Regional Organisation of Councils operating within the broader South East Region, along with the Canberra Urban and Regional Futures; and
- identify a mechanism to engage such an alliance in the preparation of a joint regional economic development plan.

##### *Landuse Planning and Infrastructure*

- identify a mechanism to deliver collaborative strategic land use and growth related infrastructure planning across the broader South East Region; and
- once agreed by the First Ministers, develop a new strategic plan for land use and infrastructure requirements reflecting the unique characteristics of the region and taking into account the Draft ACT Planning Strategy and the review of Sydney-Canberra Corridor Regional Strategy.

##### *Integrated Service Planning, initially focussing on the health and education sectors:*

- establish a common information base on the trends in demographics and population for the South East region of NSW and the ACT;
- map current and anticipated future service demand;

- support discussions about where future services should be located;
- identify appropriate sequencing of strategic infrastructure; and
- examine cost sharing arrangements.

*RDA ACT Strategic Regional Plan – Five Pillars of Development*

**Pillar 1. A Resilient and Diverse Economy**

<b>Pillar</b>	<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b><i>RDA ACT will support projects and activities that will ...</i></b>
A Resilient and Diverse Economy	To develop a strong, stable and growing ACT economy that provides meaningful employment and financial reward for all its residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop business opportunities, with a focus on those adopting a sustainable and regional approach;</li> <li>• Build on the existing ACT economic strengths in public service delivery, education services, and knowledge and wealth creation through research and development;</li> <li>• Increase the ACT’s national and global business competitiveness; and</li> <li>• Address the on-going need for skilled workers to address labour shortages and support a diversifying economy.</li> </ul>

**Pillar 2. An Exemplar of Environmental Sustainability**

<b>Pillar</b>	<b>Strategic Objective</b>	<b><i>RDA ACT will support projects and activities that will ...</i></b>
An Exemplar of Environmental Sustainability	To generate prominence for the ACT in the innovative creation of sustainable communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist the ACT Government to achieve its greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060;</li> <li>• Create ecologically sustainable development in the built and natural environments by promoting energy efficiency measures and the uptake of renewable energy;</li> <li>• Facilitate the creation of more low carbon jobs, research and training opportunities; and</li> <li>• Protect and leverage the natural assets of the ACT and region – its biodiversity, soils, landscapes, water and air quality.</li> </ul>

### Pillar 3. Education and Opportunity

Pillar	Strategic Objective	<i>RDA ACT will support projects and activities that will ...</i>
Education and Opportunity	To strengthen the ACT's education institutions to advance economic growth and community development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop links between education institutions, national cultural institutions and professional organisations to create opportunities for professional learning in identified growth sectors such as health care and Information and Communications Technology (ICT);</li> <li>• Engage residents locally, nationally and globally in science education and innovation; and</li> <li>• Create pathways for individuals that allow them to take up learning opportunities that enhance their productive engagement in the economy, and in society more generally.</li> </ul>

### Pillar 4. A Connected Canberra

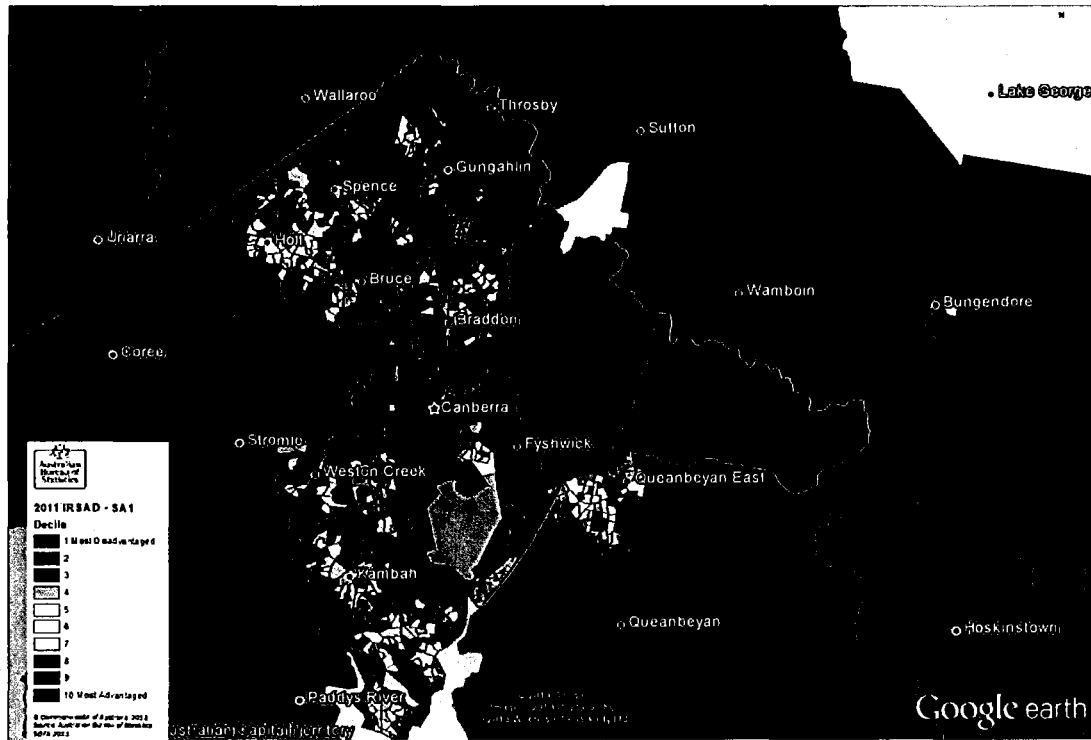
Pillar	Strategic Objective	<i>RDA ACT will support projects and activities that will ...</i>
A Connected Canberra	To enhance the social and economic advantage of the community by offering economically viable and innovative transport and communications solutions to overcome current barriers and challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capitalise on current initiatives to increase the use of public transport and active transport modes within the ACT;</li> <li>• Improve the efficiency of regional commuting through the development of integrated transport options;</li> <li>• Improve transport connections between the ACT and its region – nationally and internationally, providing benefits for its residents and businesses; and</li> <li>• Capitalise on the National Broadband Network roll-out by better linking the community through the provision of access to ICT technology that enables improved connections.</li> </ul>

5. Empowered Communities

Pillar	Strategic Objective	<i>RDA ACT will support projects and activities that will ...</i>
Empowered Communities	To empower individuals within the ACT to have the confidence and capacity to shape their own and their community's destinies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote social inclusion and address disadvantage through stimulating community engagement and participatory planning;</li> <li>• Support effective planning for population growth and ageing that facilitates improved connections within and between communities;</li> <li>• Support the equitable provision of regional health services with increasing focus on e-health, preventative health and consumer empowerment; and</li> <li>• Provide housing choices to meet the needs of the growing population and its changing demographic.</li> </ul>

# Attachment F

## Indices of Relative Advantage and Disadvantage - ACT



*Indices of Relative Advantage and Disadvantage - SENSW*

