

From: Robert van Aalst [vanaalst.robert@rdaact.org.au]
Sent: Friday, 5 August 2011 4:21 PM
To: Salvaneschi, Samantha
Subject: Re: ACT Legislative Assembly Committee Inquiry & RDA (ACT)
Attachments: RDASI RDAACT MoU 101123.pdf

 A.C.T. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE OFFICE	
EXHIBIT	3
DATE RECEIVED	05/08/11
INQUIRY	Ing. int ecological carrying capacity of the ACT & region

Samantha,

In reply to your recent email....

- Regional Development Australia Committees were established by the Federal Government over 2008/2009 as a national approach to regional development. They are supported by partnerships with the relevant state or territory in most jurisdictions of Australia.
- You have obviously, thoroughly trawled the information of our website, so I will not repeat what is on there, however, I will note the core objectives set by the Federal Government

RDA committees have five core functions:

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

In addition RDA Committees are asked to identify and gather support around existing priorities of their region. RDA ACT's region is restricted to the ACT itself. These priorities are identified through community consultation, and reflect stakeholder input. We are currently finalising our Strategic Regional Plan for 2011/2012 - as is the RDA Committee for the Southern Inland.

You note correctly that the RDAs of ACT and Southern Inland have signed an MOU to facilitate cross regional working arrangements. I have attached a copy of the MOU for your information.

Further to your other points.

- I do not currently have access to Professor Norman's talk at the CEDA event - she was speaking there with one of her other 'hats' on, and the secretariat was not involved in preparing her notes for that presentation. Professor Norman has a range of other roles involved with climate change adaptation (especially in coastal situations), urban and regional planning and with the Dept of Regional Australia.
- Collaborations between the RDAs of the ACT and Southern Inland are still at a nebulous stage. Several areas of mutual interest have risen, and some discussed, but nothing moved into a concrete project development stage as yet. The secretariats interact informally frequently, however the committees themselves have yet to have much formal interaction.
- The RDA ACT Strategic Regional Plan is currently being re written. Significant stakeholder consultation, both formal and informal was conducted since the release of the previous version in August 2010. We are anticipating the new version will be finalised and made public by mid September. It is a requirement of our funding agreement with the Commonwealth that regional plans be refreshed annually. In some years this may not entail a re write, but merely an updating.
- The formal consultation over the first half of this year included hosting the inaugural Canberra Leaders' Consultative Forum, representation of stakeholder groups to the Committee and its three sub-committees, and informal consultation via the secretariat staff and meetings held by the Chair and/or the Executive Officer with individuals and stakeholder representatives. Additionally, the Committee members, and

secretariat staff sit on a range of other groups and reference panels from time to time. We are also seeking to build formal and informal relationships with a range of other organisations.

- Our as yet unreleased (2011/2012) Strategic Plan refresh, will likely contain the following -- described as Five Pillars of Development (Although this is yet to be confirmed by our Committee)

- A Resilient and Diverse Economy
- An Exemplar of Environmental Sustainability
- An Education Centre of Excellence
- A Connected City
- Empowered Communities

Under each of these pillars will be a number of Strategic Objectives our committee would aim to pursue. (These objectives are currently being developed)

Given the timing - ie the finalisation of the development of our SRP, if the Standing Committee would like representatives of our Committee to attend a hearing, then we could perhaps schedule for the next sitting date (after the 11th August). As I noted earlier, myself, the Chair and the Deputy Chair will all be unavailable for the whole of the day.

Please let me know if that is the desired course of action.

Regards

Robert van Aalst

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (AGREEMENT)

BETWEEN: Regional Development Australia ACT (RDA ACT)

&

Regional Development Australia Southern Inland (RDA SI)

PART 1: RDA CHARTER

Regional Development Australia is a partnership between the Australian, State, Territory & local governments to develop & strengthen the regional communities of Australia having a pivotal role in ensuring the long-term sustainability of Australia's regions.

A key focus of Regional Development Australia will be on the economic, social and environmental issues affecting communities. Regional Development Australia will be an important contributor to and driver of:

- Regional business growth plans and strategies, which will help support economic development, the creation of new jobs, skills development and business investment;
- Environmental solutions, which will support ongoing sustainability and the management of climate change (including the impact of drought, flood or bushfires); and
- Social inclusion strategies, which will bring together and support all members of the community.

Regional Development Australia, in consultation with the community, business, non profit organisations & all levels of government, will articulate local priorities, identify & align resources, engage stakeholders & promote solutions. Thus RDA will support the growth & development of regional communities across the country.

Regional Development Australia will take a leadership role in bringing together organisations to take advantage of government programs, policies & initiatives.

Regional Development Australia will be an effective conduit between governments and regional communities. It will enable all communities to provide input to governments about the strengths and weaknesses of regional Australia.

PART 2: AIMS

2.1 PURPOSE OF THIS AGREEMENT

To establish an **Agreement** between RDA ACT & RDA SI to work together to coordinate effective cross border community & economic development strategies & initiatives relevant to the ACT & Southern Inland region of NSW.

ELEMENTS

- The primary aim will be to seek to enhance the impact of the RDAs in the ACT & Southern Inland regions through a cooperative approach to common issues & those issues identified as meriting support from the other party,
- RDA ACT & RDA SI will work collaboratively on identifying relevant cross-border issues, developing relevant cross border plans & initiatives & the reporting of such issues & initiatives so that the key targets of those reports (the ACT, NSW & Commonwealth governments) gain a comprehensive regional perspective of the combined ACT & Southern Inland region,
- Regular liaison between respective Secretariats (predominantly at Executive Officer level),
- Participation & involvement in each other's meeting programs (on a by-invitation basis),
- Presentation of a united regional perspective in fora involving RDA input,
- Scheduling of joint meetings of the RDA ACT Committee & RDA SI Board, &
- Joint signing by Chairs.

AIMS

- To work cooperatively across the ACT & NSW Southern Inland border to ensure the benefits of effective community & economic development policy & initiatives are realised by all relevant stakeholders in the ACT & Southern Inland NSW.
- To identify & implement activities to influence the provision of community & economic development opportunities & then support regional stakeholders to participate in & realise the benefits of Commonwealth, NSW & ACT Government policy & programs.
- To seek synergies & areas of cooperation that will enhance the activities, projects & successful impact of RDA in the ACT & Southern Inland NSW.
- To identify initiatives relevant & mutually beneficial to the objectives of both RDA ACT & RDA SI.

2.4 DURATION

This agreement will operate for the initial term of operational funding provided by the Commonwealth of Australia – the period from the date of signing until 30 June 2012.

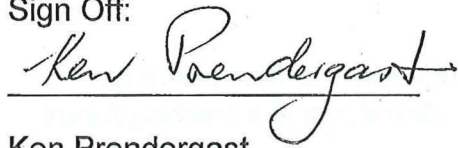
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The Memorandum of Understanding between RDA ACT & RDA SI will be reviewed annually by each Committee/Board.

2.6 CESSATION

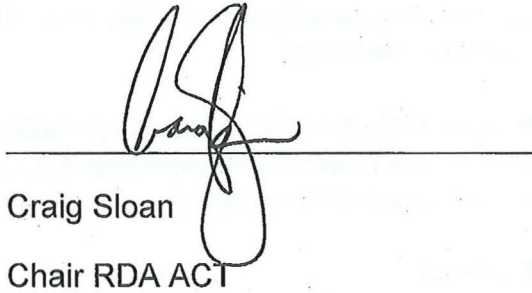
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Sign Off:



Ken Prendergast

Chair RDA SI



Craig Sloan

Chair RDA ACT

Date: 23 November 2010.

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APPENDIX 1 COMMUNICATION

1.1 ROUTINE WORKING RELATIONSHIP

The Executive Officers of RDA ACT & RDA SI will meet regularly to reinforce effective & consistent communication between the two RDAs.

Each Chair may invite the Executive Officer of the other RDA to attend Committee meetings of the respective RDA to present relevant information, discuss meeting business from the perspective of their own RDA & to make other relevant contributions to meetings.

The Executive Officers will maintain consistent communication to facilitate any projects being successfully implemented & to work on identifying & attracting funds for potential cross border projects.

1.2 MEETINGS

In addition to an initial meeting held in December 2010 or February 2011 there is agreement to hold one or more joint meetings of RDA ACT & RDA SI each year over the course of this MOU according to the following schedule:

- **May** –Preview of issues for next Business Plan & further development of Regional Plans, &
- **September**– joint Strategic Planning & review & discussion of Annual Reports/Business Plans & Regional Strategic Plans.

RDA ACT & RDA SI Committee meeting agendas will include, when applicable, an item to report on status of joint RDA ACT/SI activities.

1.3 CRITICAL DATES

RDAs must adhere to reporting timeframes to comply with Funding requirements, with the development of a Regional Strategic Plan being seen to be a core output of each RDA in each year. These reports & timeframes have significant impact on the activities of RDAs & affect the scope & timing of planning for joint activities by the two RDAs. Both RDAs will include details of any joint activities in their respective Business Plans. The following dates will have a direct relationship to the business & planning of the two RDAs during the 2010/11 & 2011/2012 financial years.

End of December 2010 submission of Half Yearly Report.

End of May 2011 Budget submission for 2011-12

End of June 2011 Business Plan, Annual Report & Regional Plan.

APPENDIX 2 AREAS OF ACTIVITY

2.1 Extracts from RDA SI Draft Regional Plan Summary

Priority Issues from community consultation

1. Economic development
2. Leadership
3. Role of ACT
4. Population change
5. Health
6. Education
7. Transport
8. Agriculture
9. Information & Communications Technologies
10. Tourism
11. Planning & Infrastructure

Strategic Priorities over next 5 years

1. Economic development, integrated with sustainable population management
2. Education
3. Transport
4. Primary Industry (Agriculture)
5. Information and Communications Technology

Strategic Framework

RDA SI will be actively pursuing two powerful engines of sustainable economic, social & environmental growth for the region;

- Significant enhancements to regional road, rail & air connectivity
- Accelerating growth of "green" industries, jobs & more sustainable business practices.

Role of ACT

"The ACT is a major influence on much of the region & an important role for RDA SI is fostering greater awareness of & integration with the region by the ACT Government & its agencies. The ACT Government needs to engage in meaningful dialogue with both the NSW LGAs & RDA SI to create a mutually beneficial set of strategies, short & long term, for the development of the region as a whole."

2.2 RDA ACT Committee priority areas

New Committee priorities were determined to be: education, environment & transport, with each to encompass an overlay of innovation:

- **Education** – five high calibre tertiary institutions in Canberra serve the local region. There is currently both a skills shortage & a labour shortage in the ACT – need to identify what skills are required by business & industry – refer to the *National Skills Shortage List* (March 2010) & link these to appropriate educational/training courses i.e. link needs to skills. The University of Canberra has proposed a new regional education network with facilities to be located in Cooma, Goulburn & South Coast.

It was noted that trades are expensive in Canberra, as trades people are often imported from Sydney. With the next building boom (West Molonglo, Googong & Tralee developments) the shortage of trades will affect building prices. There is a need to provide affordable housing for these workers e.g. through hostel developments.

- **Environment**

The ACT Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Water has announced initiatives in a bid for a carbon neutral ACT by 2060, with targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2020, & 80% by 2050 to be tabled in the *Climate Change & Greenhouse Gas Reduction Bill 2010*.

The ACT Government is providing leadership for environmentally sustainable practices through its *Clean Economy Strategy* & is advocating for the ACT & region to be a centre of excellence for sustainability through reduced energy usage (green energy, electric cars), increased use of public transport, & adopting smart housing/commercial building principles.

- **Transport**

Advocacy of currently proposed ACT transport initiatives that would attract people to Canberra include development of the Majura Parkway, Light Rail & High Speed Rail. The importance of long term strategic thinking on transport initiatives was advocated i.e. the carbon benefits that flow from environmental initiatives, & keeping options open i.e. retaining public ownership (preservation) of potential transport corridors.

(As only 2% of the Queanbeyan public uses public transport (Eastern Regional Public Transport Taskforce) there is potential for a Park'n'Ride facility in Queanbeyan & priority bus lanes.

2.3 JOINT COMMITTEES

The formation of joint committees/project teams for each of the common priority areas (Education, Transport & the Environment) is proposed. Consideration could be given to additional, more issue focussed committees including North/West Entry (Federal & Barton Highways), South/East Entry (Monaro & Kings Highways) & Communications Infrastructure (NBN).

2.4 CROSS REFERENCING & INTEGRATION OF STRATEGIC REGIONAL PLANS

Consider the prospects of agreement to the sharing of ideas, concepts for potential joint projects & Secretariat resources for developing regional plans for both RDAs or common components of the respective Regional Plans.

Consider pursuing a common approach or identifying common elements in developing regional plans for the ACT, Southern Inland NSW & the broader Capital Region.

Consider sharing the cost of a consultant or a dedicated project officer for the task of preparing selected components of each Regional Plan deemed to be common to or of mutual interest to both RDAs.

Regional Plan co-ordination is likely to commence with the review of the 1st year of RDA Regional plans to build required outcomes into following year Business Plans and expenditure budgets.

2.5 CROSS BORDER PROJECTS.

It is proposed that the two RDAs (primarily through the Executive Officers) will develop a protocol for cross border projects & how to attract funding for joint projects.

This arrangement may take the form where:

- i) *one RDA identifies opportunities to work with the other RDA on a specific project or activity in the broader region, or*
- ii) *one RDA identifies opportunities to implement a project across the broader southern inland region that will therefore have relevance to the other RDA.*

2.6 JOINT FUNDING

Consideration of this concept is expected to primarily involve RDA SI & RDA ACT but also may include neighbouring RDAs, where relevant.

- Determine the protocols for identifying projects where the two (or more) RDAs may jointly apply to NSW, Commonwealth or ACT governments for funds.

- Decide whether there will be a Prime RDA for the application – (as contracts usually require a head contractor or Prime).
- Request presentations from Commonwealth government agencies on their priorities for currently available funding - e.g. weed control, biodiversity, rivers.
- Explore areas of interest with ACT Commissioner for Sustainability & the Environment (Maxine Cooper) – e.g. Bio Regions & Bio-Security.

2.7 COLLABORATION ON REGIONAL LEADERS FORUM (RLF)

Consideration to be given to providing co-ordination & research facilities to the RLF (by RDA ACT in conjunction with RDA SI & RDA FSC, subject to their respective agreement) & to the convening of an RDA RLF Project Group, involving RDA ACT/SI/FSC if enhanced involvement by RDAs in the RLF is approved.

A decision has been deferred until all relevant RDAs have become established in the region & an assessment has been made of the scope & role of SEROC, in case duplication of proposed activities may be seen to occur. Greater clarity may emerge by the time of the next RLF (scheduled for June 2011).

2.8 EXTENT OF COLLABORATION WITH RDA FSC.

Likely aims would be:

- To convene a meeting of RDA ACT, RDA SI & RDA FSC once per year;
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APPENDIX 3 SPECIFIC PROJECTS 2010 – 2011.

It is anticipated the following Projects will be considered & attended to jointly by RDA ACT & RDA SI. The Executive Officers of the RDAs will work together on achieving required outcomes for the RDAs from these projects & will report to their Committees accordingly.

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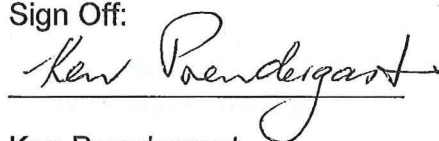
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