

**Submission
No 19**

ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

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Legislative Assembly
Committee on Economic Development
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Elliott

Inquiry into the Establishment of Special Economic Zones

On behalf of the Regional Development Australia (RDA) Murray Committee, please find attached RDA Murray's submission into the Inquiry into the Establishment of Special Economic Zones.

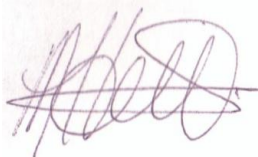
RDA Murray has identified within its 2010 – 2015 Regional Plan as key priorities the following goals

- Economic
 - Industry Futures
 - A Smart Future
 - Foundations for Growth
- Social
 - Sustaining Communities

A copy of the 2010 – 2015 Regional Plan is attached (Attachment A) to this submission for the Committee's review. RDA Murray actively encourages the promotion of economic growth, employment and investment into regional NSW.

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the writer on 02 6058 0600.

Yours sincerely



Barbara Hull
Chief Executive Officer



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SUBMISSION TO THE PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

In order to sustain the long term growth and viability of NSW and to make NSW the “state of choice”, it is imperative that the NSW Government consider harnessing the potential of regional areas as a viable option to that of metropolitan areas such as Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong.

Incentives for Businesses/Industries

Businesses need to be actively encouraged to established themselves in NSW with financial incentives such as rate rebates, stamp duty concessions and reductions in other taxes applicable to NSW residents and businesses, such as vehicle registrations, payroll tax to name but a few. These incentives need to be on a sliding scale and based on where businesses establish their operations. Larger incentives to be offered to businesses that relocate further away from metropolitan areas and incentives of lesser value provided to businesses that decide to establish within metropolitan areas. The life of the incentives need to be over a long period of time such as ten years or more to allow businesses to fully establish and entrench themselves within their region. Incentives need to be offered over a longer term to show potential businesses that the NSW Government means business and “is for real”, not just offering political spin.

An investigation into viable industries for NSW and its regions needs to be undertaken with the key focus on the necessity for long term and sustainable industries setting up within NSW. Industries that are able to utilize the resources of a particular region would be at an advantage and need to be encouraged to set up. If businesses commence operations within regional areas, there would be a flow on effect for communities located around the business, i.e. increased employment, purchase of resources etc.

In light of the Murray Darling Basin Plan and the Federal Government’s Clean Energy Future initiative, industries that produce water saving products and clean energy (i.e. solar, wind, bio mass etc) need to also be strongly encouraged to set up with incentives far and above what other states are offering. Other



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Australian states and territories would be vying for businesses and industries to establish and/or to relocate to their respective regions.

Relocation Incentives

Whilst the NSW Government has identified the need for high value migration to play a role in lifting productivity in NSW and to address the skills shortage, the need to utilize NSW residents located in either metropolitan areas or regional areas needs to be addressed. The relocation grant administered by the Office of State Revenue, whilst good in theory, is an insufficient incentive to encourage metro-based residents to relocate to regional areas. The amount of \$7,000 does not cover removal costs let alone other costs involved with relocation. The take up of the grant as it stands is evidence enough that the incentive is too small and limited.

The grant requires adjustment to encompass more than just homeowners located in metropolitan areas. Potentially the grant could be offered to people wanting to make a “tree change” and who meet certain eligibility criteria such as requisite skills that are greatly needed in regional areas. Strong eligibility criteria needs to be put in place to ensure that the grant is not abused, yet criteria should not be too stringent that interested parties are put off.

The introduction of other incentives needs to be offered to encourage skilled workers to relocate to regional areas. Tax concessions need to be considered, such as the implementation of taxation zone rebates – a form of income tax concession that recognizes the disadvantages to residents in specific areas, such as isolation and the high cost of living in comparison to other parts of the state.

Taxation zone rebates do not have to be just applicable to PAYG taxation, but to other forms of taxation significant to businesses and individuals. The reduction in taxes could have the potential to increase investment in regional areas and assist with increased population growth. It is well known that towns within regional/rural areas are shrinking and it is vital that this shrinkage is either contained or reversed.



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A comprehensive review of countries such as, but not limited to, the United Kingdom and the United States of America who have put in place special economic zones should be reviewed to see how well these countries' respective zones have prospered and to ascertain what has worked and what hasn't.

Tax concessions for self funded retirees require deliberation also. Please refer to Attachment B - a proposal put forward by Balranald Inc. that would encourage self funded retirees to relocate to regional areas. This proposal not only has merits for Balranald, but for other small communities throughout NSW. If such a scheme was considered viable, it would be worthwhile considering Balranald as the pilot for the scheme before full implementation.

Collaboration between tiers of government

It is obvious that the NSW Government cannot alter PAYG taxation as it is a Federal tax, but the State needs to consider lobbying the Commonwealth Government to examine the adoption of such rebates. Collaboration between the two tiers of government is paramount as increased productivity and growth is beneficial to both the State and Commonwealth. In addition, the NSW Government alone cannot provide every incentive to encourage people and/or industries and businesses to relocate to regional areas of NSW, but it must be seen that the NSW Government is actively encouraging the promotion of economic growth and employment. Strong collaboration between the two tiers of government is vital to achieve a common goal.

There is also the need for collaboration between local governments and the NSW Government. Incentives need to be offered to LGAs to actively promote their areas to interested individuals, businesses and industries. There are many small councils are that not financially in a position to offer large incentives or rebates to individuals, business and industries interested in setting up within their LGA. These LGAs need support from the NSW Government to encourage people, industries and businesses alike to consider relocating to their LGA. Funding from the NSW Government to assist with rate subsidies needs urgent examination.



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Cross Border Anomalies

The immediate examination of the cross border anomalies occurring between NSW and Victoria is required. Businesses and industries located in Victoria are in a better position than that of their counterparts in NSW in so far as taxes and excises, with NSW businesses and industries incurring higher taxes than Victorian businesses/industries. NSW is losing valuable income and skills to our Southern neighbour and this needs to be urgently rectified if NSW is to be seen as the “state of choice”.

The appointment of Mr Steve Toms as the Cross Border Commissioner is greatly welcomed by NSW businesses and industries alike and it is hoped that positive changes will be implemented to ensure that cross border anomalies are promptly resolved.



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REGIONAL PLAN 2010 – 2015



Regional
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M U R R A Y

www.rdamurray.org.au

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1. Executive Summary

The Commonwealth Government is seeking to drive enhanced engagement with local communities through a revitalised Regional Development Australia network and to kick start the revitalization process. In March 2011 it introduced the Regional Development Australia Fund (RDAF). Regional Australia will inject \$1 billion dollars to support infrastructure projects which will significantly improve economic and social outcomes and build on unique regional capabilities, capacity and potential. RDA Committees and their regional plans are integral to RDAF with proponents required to ensure that applications are aligned with their respective RDA's regional plan. In addition, proponents need to seek endorsement from their RDA by way of a letter, to accompany their application. Regional Development Australia Murray (RDA Murray) welcomes this funding initiative.

The RDA Murray Regional Plan is devised as a motivator in driving key regional development objectives in the Murray Region for the term 2010 to 2015. The key drivers identified are strong leadership and collaboration with whole of government, its businesses, its people, its industries and its communities.

Our Vision is for Murray regional communities to feel empowered, informed and encouraged to be prosperous, vibrant, excited by their potential and optimistic for their future.

Our Mission is to develop and strengthen the Murray region by working in partnership with government and our communities to foster innovative solutions to economic growth, environmental sustainability, and inclusion of all members of the community.

Our Values are Leadership, Perseverance, Respect, Resourcefulness, Accountability, Responsiveness, Innovation, Equality and Integrity

This Plan is intended to outline our objectives; our assessment of the long term issues facing the Murray region and our identification of opportunities, challenges and key priorities.

Ultimately, it will assist stakeholders and economic and community practitioners to easily identify and embrace the roles and key functions of RDA Murray, enabling development and implementation of new regional programs and initiatives.

The priorities contained in this Plan are a result of extensive consultation with the community, local government, business and stakeholder groups. The challenges identified by these groups were categorised into economic, environmental and social issues.

Communities identified job creation and youth retention as high priorities and would like to see an enhanced diversification of regional economies and business incentives.

Improved access to specialist health services and attraction of skilled medical professionals was also a priority. There was significant interest in renewable resources and clean energy, with the view to investing in energy innovation and efficiency.

The greatest focus is how to plan and build for a secure water future and how the Murray Darling Basin Plan and its' proposed amendments will provide farmers and communities with more confidence to plan for a future with less water.

Social inclusion was also highlighted, with a need to engage disadvantaged and marginalised communities with improved linkages to services. The priority groups included young people, the elderly, people with a disability or mental illness, the homeless and Aboriginal and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) groups.

RDA Murray is taking a leadership role in assisting people who are homeless and helping them break the cycle of homelessness by actioning the Riverina Murray NSW Homelessness Action Plan (HAP), administered on behalf of the NSW Community Services. As a new player in the field of regional homelessness, RDA Murray will build positive relationships across the region that will assist with the successful implementation of this initiative.

By working collaboratively with the Victorian RDAs of Loddon Mallee and Hume, we'll ensure that communities on both sides of the border will overcome barriers to state regulations, services and other border anomalies. RDA Murray also collaborates extensively with RDA Riverina on cross regional issues.

The RDA Murray Committee and team members are excited at the prospects of what can be achieved under the RDA banner and will continually review and update this 'living' Plan to meet its ever changing economic and social landscape.

2. Highlights



Overview of the Murray Region

The Murray region is of a scale unlike any other in Australia. Covering 85,897 square kilometres, it extends along 1,400 kilometres of the Murray River, a distance larger than Sydney to Brisbane. The Murray region is diverse and strategically placed, giving it distinct economic advantages.

The eastern and central parts of the region are just three hours drive from Melbourne. The regional centre of Albury-Wodonga is located on the Hume Freeway, the main transport route between Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra. The western fringes of the region benefit from good connections to

Adelaide. The region is dominated by three major regional centres, Albury-Wodonga in the east, Echuca-Moama in the central sub-region and Wentworth-Mildura in the west. In addition, there are a number of major towns including Deniliquin and Corowa.

Most towns and villages are within two hours drive of a major regional centre, offering residents access to a broad range of services, shops and facilities.

The economy features a broad mix of industry sectors such as manufacturing, construction, tourism, education, health, retail, information technology and agriculture. Transport and distribution is also a focus, with the region home to two of Australia's largest interstate road freight carriers and an expanding road-rail container handling facility.

The Murray region - an attractive place to invest, live and work

- Beautiful natural and built environments with cultural & recreational opportunities
- Proximity to a capital city, other regional cities & a network of surrounding townships
- Access to Port of Melbourne services for export/import
- Extensive transport infrastructure of airports, railways & national highways
- Access to quality health & educational services
- A range of housing opportunities & affordable land
- Presence of universities or places of higher learning
- A range of employment options providing opportunities for changing careers and jobs for partners

Key Issues & Challenges

Economic

- Drought, flood and fire; and lack of capital in the agribusiness sector (exceptional circumstances)
- Impact of 'water buy back' programs on existing & future industry development
- Lack of broadband services
- Lack of public investment leading to border communities being unable to effectively compete against Victoria for private investment opportunities
- Skill shortages (professional and technical)
- Job retention & growth in smaller communities
- Ongoing viability of smaller rural & regional townships (and councils)
- Large industry closures & no capacity to manage in smaller communities
- Heavy reliance on a small number of key employers
- Increasing energy costs
- The ageing & shortage of infrastructure especially transport (bridges & roads)
- Increasing financial pressure on local communities
- Lack of awareness of regional attributes
- Sustainability of local industry in increasingly competitive markets

Environmental

- Competing interests for diminished water flows & availability
- Restoration & maintenance of environmental assets within the Murray region
- Establishment of National Parks - social and employment issues
- Reliance on fossil fuel energy

Social

- Impact of extended drought & water access on social resilience & community capacity
- Water security for communities
- Access to affordable housing, mental health services & health support services in rural & remote communities
- Limited programs/outcomes for education & employment for Indigenous youth
- Ageing population
- Population decline
- Loss of youth to capital cities
 - Lack of tertiary education
 - Lack of career opportunities
- Isolation

Key Goals and Priorities

RDA Murray has developed goals for eight Key Priority Sectors, clustered into four categories – economic, environmental, social and integration. Each of these sectors provides the structure around which projects and annual Business Plans will be developed progressively.

Key Sectors	Priorities
Economic Goals	
1. <i>Industry futures</i>	Sustainable growth: existing and emerging sectors, industry clusters, market development, business attraction.
2. <i>A smart future</i>	Knowledge, skills, education/training, research and innovation, education/industry linkages, Information Communication Technology - telecommuting, NBN, e-commerce, e-health, online education.
3. <i>Foundations for growth</i>	Infrastructure; roads/bridges, utilities; regulation changes
Environmental Goals	
4. <i>Maintaining balance</i>	Environmental issues: water; natural resource management; energy; including renewable; R&D programs
Social Goals	
5. <i>Sustaining communities</i>	Resident attraction and retention; small town development; city/town linkages; a sense of community; cultural heritage; youth retention; social networking
6. <i>Health and wellbeing</i>	Health services; aged services; community services; homelessness
Integration Goals	
7. <i>Linking the region</i>	Regional cooperation; cross border linkages, a unified voice, a regional brand
8. <i>Providing Leadership</i>	Providing local leadership on key regional issues, developing community leaders

Key Sector - Economic

1. Industry Futures

- Initiatives to support business growth in agribusiness, processing and services
- Encouragement of emerging sectors in the region, including knowledge based services and advanced manufacturing and environmental services and technologies
- Development of industry clusters and networks in the region to build on new opportunities
- Attraction of new investment and new enterprises to the region, where this requires cross border and cross regions cooperation

RDA Murray will support organisation and government in developing existing and new industry investment.

2. A Smart Future

- Knowledge industries – the identification of opportunities for growth in sectors that are knowledge intensive, provide sustainable employment, that can be based in the region
- Skills – the development of the skills that are required for growth including resolving current skill shortages and skill gaps
- Education and Training – ensuring that the Murray region remains well serviced with higher education and vocational training capability that is located in the region
- Research and Innovation – the creation of stronger innovation links between research institutes, universities and TAFE institutes and businesses in the region
- ICT – the strengthening of the ICT foundations, this includes ensuring regional broadband access and delivery of the National Broadband Network (NBN), supply chain linkages, e-commerce, e-health and online education initiatives
- Support the roll out of the NSW Community Broadband Development Program to complement and leverage federal initiatives and the NBN. This will ensure that telecommunications services are accessible on a reasonably equal basis and meet community and business needs

RDA Murray will work in partnership with organisations in the region on Smart Futures initiatives in Information Communication Technologies, NBN, Community Broadband Development Program, skills development, education and training.

3. Foundations for Growth

- Future regional growth is dependent on having the right infrastructure in place, this includes: roads, bridges, rail and utilities infrastructure that will link city infrastructure services for industry, business and community. Local governments within the Murray are facing recognised difficulties in funding the maintenance of existing infrastructure and securing the necessary capital funding for new infrastructure
- Creating the foundations for growth also includes the reform of regulations which may impede growth. Despite intergovernmental processes and a focus on regulation reform, there are still cross border differences in regulations and licensing which affect the labour force and occupational flexibility and impact on development opportunities
- The Murray River crossings between New South Wales and Victoria are important for the movement of people and products and are part of the national transport system. Long term asset management by New South Wales, Victorian and Commonwealth governments in the planning for all bridge crossings is vital not only for national freight movements, but for local rural communities sustainability

RDA Murray will support efforts in developing long term asset management of Murray River crossings.

RDA Murray will support the identification of regional infrastructure requirements and future funding options in partnership with whole of government & stakeholders.

Key Sector – Environmental

4. Maintaining Balance

- In a region that is critically dependent on agribusiness and irrigation, water is now the fundamental environmental management issue. The Murray Darling Basin Plan has been developed to manage water resources, with an undertaking to ensure there is sufficient water available to make sure key environmental assets and functions of the Basin are not compromised, while seeking to optimise social and economic outcomes

RDA Murray will review, research and work in partnership with key stakeholders in addressing regional environmental issues including water, resource and energy management.

With the fundamental importance of water to the future of the Murray region, water must be a priority issue. RDA Murray will play a leadership role in ensuring that a region wide view can be put forward, as the government moves forward on implementing the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

Key Sector – Social

5. Sustaining Communities

- The retention and attraction of residents to the region
- Recognition of the development pressures on small towns and the need to plan their future
- Greater attention to the current and potential future linkages between the larger cities and smaller satellite towns
- Support the delivery of Homelessness Programs
- Developing a sense of community among residents in the Murray
- Potential to develop Cultural Heritage & Indigenous programs within communities
- Potential to develop Youth Retention programs within smaller communities
- Support local government authorities with the Strengthening Basin Communities program
- Support the Evocities campaign to encourage new residents to Albury and regional communities

RDA Murray will work with communities and local governments on the future of small towns and their links to larger centres when considering regional planning decisions

6. Health and Wellbeing

- With an ageing population, the demand for both health services and aged care services is increasing
- Delivery of these services creates major challenges in dispersed regional communities. These sectors are reliant on government funding and ongoing funding pressures are impacting on delivery to regional populations
- The quality of health services is also important in attracting new residents to the region
- Recognise the medical profession skill shortages i.e. Doctors, Specialists, Nurses and Pathologists.

- Support the establishment of a digital e-health rural and remote healthcare centre to be located within the region

RDA Murray will take a region wide view of health issues and skill shortages and work with regional health services in identifying funding options and services for the Murray region.

Key Sector - Integration

7. Linking the Region

- Regional cooperation – ensuring that there is cooperation among business, government and the community on strategic region-wide issues that affect economic and social development
- Cross-border linkages – encouraging engagement, involvement and linkages to deliver solutions
- Regional brand for the Murray - supporting the Murray Now cross-border brand which provides a vehicle to unify the region via investment and job attraction
- A unified voice – on delivery of economic, environmental and social issues
- Support the (cross-border) Murray Region Tourism Product Gap Analysis and Tourism Development Plan
- Innovation – embrace social networking
- Support the roll out of the NSW Community Broadband Development Program throughout the Murray Darling Basin communities

RDA Murray will establish advisory working groups to address cross-border cooperation and solutions inclusive of investment, tourism and job attraction.

8. Providing Leadership

- This involves bringing together recognised leaders from all sections of the region (business, local government, services & community groups) to provide regional leadership in sustainable economic and community development

RDA Murray will harness community leadership in sustainable development projects for the benefit of the Murray Region, while also creating initiatives to develop and mentor the next generation of community and business leaders.

Refer to pages 69-72 for detailed information about RDA Murray's priority actions.

3. Introduction & Background

Regional Development Australia (RDA) is a partnership between the Australian, state and territory and local governments to support the growth and development of Australia's regions. RDA Committees build partnerships between governments, regional development organisations, local businesses; community groups and key regional stakeholders to provide strategic and targeted responses to economic, environmental and social issues affecting the regions of Australia. RDA is delivered through a network of 55 committees.

Regional Development Australia's Charter contains five (5) roles and responsibilities that have been captured within this Regional Plan:

1. *Consultation and Engagement with the Community*
2. *Informed Regional planning*
3. *Whole-of-Government Activities*
4. *Promotion of Government Programs*
5. *Community and Economic Development*

What is RDA Murray?

- RDA Murray is a non-profit community-based organisation
- RDA Murray comprises of committee members representing the region's community, business and local government.
- RDA Murray has a broad and diverse skills base and demonstrated networks and alliances.
- RDA Murray reduces duplication and overlap in regional activities.
- RDA Murray encourages working collaboratively with stakeholders on projects and other activities where all parties have common interests and common boundaries.

Further information about RDA Murray can be sourced from its website – www.rdamurray.org.au. The website is constantly updated with relevant and useful information for the Murray communities that RDA Murray serves.

Why the need for a regional plan?

RDA Murray's Regional Plan will highlight its strategies over a five year period and will capture the challenges, opportunities and key priorities for the Murray region. This plan will be a public document to not only be utilised by all levels of government, but to assist economic and community practitioners to easily identify and embrace the roles and key functions of RDA Murray. This plan will be a living document that the RDA Murray Committee will regularly review and update. Reviews will assess RDA Murray's progress and its achievements, along with the ongoing effectiveness and relevance of the plan.

4. The Region – What is It?

Geographic coverage

RDA Murray encompasses the following twelve (12) local government areas (LGA):



The Murray River, Australia's largest river, is a significant environmental and economic asset. The river, which forms the border between NSW and Victoria, sustains a \$3 billion agricultural industry.

The region's economy is dominated by agriculture and agricultural industries with an emphasis on irrigated crops. The region is the third largest vegetable growing area in NSW; it produces a third of the state's grapes, a quarter of its citrus fruit, and over half of Australia's rice crop¹.

The region's location provides some areas with strategic and economic advantages. The eastern and central parts of the region are just three hours drive from Melbourne. The city of Albury has the advantage of being on the Hume Highway – the main transport route between Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra, creating opportunities in transport and distribution. The western fringes of the region benefit from good connections to Adelaide. As a result of good access to Melbourne, Adelaide and other major regional centres, the Murray region is experiencing strong growth and pressure for tourism and lifestyle development.

The Murray region has a number of significant environmental values beyond the Murray River, such as the Barmah-Millewa and Gunbower wetlands, the Koondrook-Pericoota forests, the heritage listed Willandra Lakes area and the extensive network of River Red Gum forests.

¹ NSW Government Planning – Draft Murray Regional Strategy Paper (2009)

The region is one of the richest sources of Aboriginal history within Australia and is the traditional home of eight Aboriginal nations – the Barkindji, Muthi Muthi, Wadi Wadi, Wamba Wamba, Barapa Barapa, Yorta Yorta, Dhadaroa and Wiradjuri peoples. There is evidence of Indigenous human occupation at Lake Mungo, while Lake Victoria is one of the largest early Indigenous burial sites. The region is also associated with the early exploration of Australia by Hume, Hovell and Sturt².

Access to water is a fundamental issue. It drives the rural economy primarily through water trading and agricultural use. It is also vital for tourism and urban development. There has been growing concern from tourist operators about the real or perceived impacts of the drought on recreational opportunities along the Murray River.

Regional Snapshot and profile

The Murray region includes the major centres of Albury, Deniliquin, Moama and Corowa. As at June, 2010 the region's population was 114,805, an increase of 1.2% from 2009. As noted, the main industries within the region are manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, tourism, textile, transport and retail. Growth opportunities are occurring in manufacturing (e.g. plastics, farm machinery and high technology components), bio-fuels, transport and logistics, defence and value-adding to fibre and agricultural production³.

The Murray region features diverse communities (in particular, those communities close to the rivers) experiencing levels of growth while other areas are experiencing low growth or population decline⁴.

Settlement patterns in the region are dominated by the three major regional centres:-

- Albury-Wodonga in the east
- Echuca-Moama in the central sub-region
- Mildura-Wentworth in the west

² NSW Government Planning – Draft Murray Regional Strategy Paper (2009)

³ NSW Government Industry and Investment – Murray Regional Business Growth Plan (March 2010)

⁴ NSW Government Planning – Fact Sheet: Draft Murray Regional Strategy (October 2009)

Demographics – Population Profile & Social Profiles

Population (by age structure, percentage of females and growth percentage)

	Albury	Balranald	Berrigan	Conargo	Corowa	Deniliquin	Greater Hume	Jerilderie	Murray	Urana	Wakool	Wentworth	Total Category
Under 15	9,643	521	1,529	375	2,082	1,518	2,098	338	1,241	289	756	1,428	21,818
15 - 29	11,658	421	1,137	272	1,786	1,289	1,659	218	1,081	140	659	1,242	21,562
30 - 44	9,671	477	1,398	357	1,930	1,313	1,776	272	1,239	211	730	1,337	20,711
45 - 64	12,612	716	2,533	484	3,208	2,034	3,167	516	2,119	388	1,385	2,037	31,199
65 - 79	4,878	244	1,462	166	1,986	1,094	1,262	237	1,195	184	673	803	14,184
Over 80	2,060	100	532	46	693	445	438	95	361	57	224	280	5,331
Total	50,522	2,479	8,591	1,700	11,685	7,693	10,400	1,676	7,236	1,269	4,427	7,127	114,805

% of Females	51%	48%	50%	46%	50%	50%	49%	47%	49%	48%	48%	47%
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% of Pop Growth between 2001 & 2009	10.7%	-10.6%	5.6%	-6.7%	8.3%	-7.7%	-1.3%	-12.8%	17.5%	-11.3%	-10.2%	-1.2%
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Source: Statistical Profiles of the 21 Local Government Areas that make up the MurrayNow region (Western Research Institute Limited - November 2010)

Income by Local Government Area

	Albury	Balranald	Berrigan	Conargo	Corowa	Deniliquin	Greater Hume	Jerilderie	Murray	Urana	Wakool	Wentworth
Managers & Administrators	\$ 55,626	\$ 28,224	\$ 34,027	\$ 45,229	\$ 39,980	\$ 43,005	\$ 37,548	\$ 30,294	\$ 41,688	\$ 36,718	\$ 33,455	\$ 41,009
Professionals	\$ 50,857	\$ 44,774	\$ 43,625	\$ 44,415	\$ 44,653	\$ 45,634	\$ 42,505	\$ 50,522	\$ 41,407	\$ 47,226	\$ 41,594	\$ 43,050
Associate Professionals	\$ 44,484	\$ 43,008	\$ 36,651	\$ 32,603	\$ 39,600	\$ 38,970	\$ 44,896	\$ 41,925	\$ 38,807	\$ 39,478	\$ 37,462	\$ 44,108
Tradespeople & Related Workers	\$ 40,680	\$ 36,625	\$ 33,831	\$ 38,617	\$ 38,828	\$ 36,819	\$ 34,416	\$ 33,229	\$ 36,833	\$ 34,232	\$ 31,520	\$ 34,813
Advanced Clerical & Service Workers	\$ 32,689	\$ 34,451	\$ 23,390	\$ 21,142	\$ 26,435	\$ 26,242	\$ 24,284	\$ 36,400	\$ 26,849	\$ 15,749	\$ 33,055	\$ 29,559
Intermediate Clerical & Service Workers	\$ 29,530	\$ 23,461	\$ 23,328	\$ 25,616	\$ 27,081	\$ 26,955	\$ 24,512	\$ 22,322	\$ 27,385	\$ 22,427	\$ 23,431	\$ 25,803
Intermediate Production & Transport Workers	\$ 43,386	\$ 42,406	\$ 41,343	\$ 40,977	\$ 44,688	\$ 42,341	\$ 42,361	\$ 41,330	\$ 40,170	\$ 41,748	\$ 39,386	\$ 41,184
Elementary Clerical, Sales & Service Workers	\$ 19,730	\$ 17,734	\$ 18,978	\$ 16,958	\$ 19,215	\$ 19,728	\$ 19,013	\$ 20,082	\$ 18,370	\$ 20,159	\$ 19,957	\$ 16,855
Labourers and Related Workers	\$ 29,290	\$ 23,946	\$ 27,270	\$ 26,562	\$ 31,895	\$ 25,773	\$ 23,360	\$ 26,614	\$ 26,518	\$ 27,718	\$ 22,008	\$ 24,346
Overall Average	\$ 37,675	\$ 30,655	\$ 30,846	\$ 32,617	\$ 34,100	\$ 32,698	\$ 31,495	\$ 30,611	\$ 32,310	\$ 31,464	\$ 28,944	\$ 31,452

Source: Statistical Profiles of the 21 Local Government Areas that make up the MurrayNow region (Western Research Institute Limited - November 2010)

Median House Prices

- no house prices available for Balranald, Conargo, Jerilderie or Urana Shires

	2010	Change from 2009	2009	Change from 2008	2008	Change from 2007	2007	Change from 2006	2006
Albury	\$ 250,000	6.4%	\$ 235,000	3.5%	\$ 227,000	-5.4%	\$ 240,000	2.1%	\$ 235,000
Berrigan	\$ 150,000	-6.3%	\$ 160,000	-4.9%	\$ 168,300	-25.2%	\$ 225,000	17.2%	\$ 192,000
Corowa	\$ 229,800	4.5%	\$ 220,000	2.3%	\$ 215,000	-2.3%	\$ 220,000	4.8%	\$ 210,000
Deniliquin	\$ 195,000	25.8%	\$ 155,000	-6.1%	\$ 165,000	-2.1%	\$ 167,000	7.7%	\$ 155,000
Greater Hume	\$ 410,000	36.7%	\$ 300,000	-14.8%	\$ 352,000	13.5%	\$ 310,000	3.3%	\$ 300,000
Murray	\$ 265,000	-12.4%	\$ 302,500	-2.1%	\$ 309,000	31.5%	\$ 235,000	-2.1%	\$ 240,000
Wakool	\$ 241,500	62.6%	\$ 148,500	-30.3%	\$ 213,000	48.1%	\$ 143,800	-20.8%	\$ 181,500
Wentworth	\$ 185,000	38.6%	\$ 133,500	-28.8%	\$ 187,500	10.0%	\$ 170,500	-6.0%	\$ 181,300

Source: Statistical Profiles of the 21 Local Government Areas that make up the MurrayNow region (Western Research Institute Limited - November 2010)

Demographics – Issues

Population Growth and/or Decline

Areas within the region have experienced strong population growth as well as there being areas with little growth or a declining population (refer to the population chart on page 15). Since 2001, the Murray Shire has grown by 14.9% (well above the state average). The Albury and Corowa LGAs have also experienced above average growth. Areas, particularly in the western half of the region, have experienced population decline. This decline is shared with many other parts of Western NSW as these communities are facing ongoing drought, changes to rural industries as well as outward migration of younger generations⁵.

Ageing Population

As noted in the NSW Government Planning Fact Sheet: Draft Murray Regional Strategy (2009), the region's population is ageing (31% of the population will be 65 years or older by 2036). The drivers behind the significant increase include the gradual ageing of the existing population, increased life expectancy, outward migration of younger people along with the increase in migration of retirees and other older people seeking a lifestyle change. These changes will increase the demand for smaller and more accessible housing as well as for local services and amenities such as secure water supply, public transport, health care and recreational facilities.



As individuals get older, their likelihood of deteriorating health status increases and their subsequent utilization of health resources generally increases. People aged 65 and over tend to be higher users of the public health system than most other age groups, so the larger this segment of the population becomes, the more demand it creates. NSW has a higher proportion of its population aged 65 and over than the national average, at 13.9% compared to 13.2% nationally. Recent population trends show that this age group is increasing as a proportion of the total population in Australia⁶.

Housing

As noted above, with the increase of the ageing population, a different mix of housing sizes and types will be required (including smaller low-maintenance dwellings). This trend will be strongest in the Corowa, Berrigan and Murray LGAs.

It is predicted that in the Upper Murray region, there will be strong growth requiring an additional 10,100 dwellings. The majority of this growth will occur around Albury, but there is also strong potential for growth in Howlong, Corowa and Mulwala. The Central Murray sub-region will require an additional 3,400 homes with Moama having experienced strong growth in recent years and is expected to be the location

⁵ NSW Government Planning – Draft Murray Regional Strategy Paper (2009)

⁶ NSW Department of Health – Annual Report 2009-2010

for the majority of growth in the Central Murray region. The Lower Murray sub-region is projected to have a small decline in population over the period to 2036.

A significant challenge for councils, particularly within commuting distance of larger towns and major regional centres will be to maintain the supply of sufficient land in appropriate locations for rural lifestyle development in a manner that safeguards agricultural land, respects environmental values and encourages the economically efficient use of infrastructure⁷.

Health



Far West Local Health Network



Murrumbidgee Local Health Network

The health system within NSW has changed. The Murray region is now predominately covered by the Murrumbidgee Local Health Network and Far West Local Health Network. With the introduction of local health networks, this will allow greater involvement in health planning and decision making by clinicians and the local community. Each network is led by a Chief Executive and a government appointed governing council.

The Murrumbidgee Local Health Network (one of two networks that make up Greater Southern Area Health Service) formally came into being on January 1, 2011 and covers 125,248 square kilometres and has a population of approximately 238,083 persons (2006). There is a projected population for 2016 of approximately 244,560 persons. There are four main areas of population density at Albury, Deniliquin, Griffith and Wagga Wagga, which is the largest population of about 59,000 persons. The Murrumbidgee Local Health Network comprises of 28 local government areas and 30 hospitals.

People living in rural and remote areas have worse health generally than those living in metropolitan areas. Many factors contribute to this differential, including geographic isolation, socio-economic disadvantage, shortage of health care providers, lower levels of access to health services, greater

⁷ NSW Government Planning – Draft Murray Regional Strategy Paper (2009)

exposure to injury risks, and poorer health among Aboriginal people who comprise a significant proportion of the population in rural and remote areas.

Compared with people who live in 'major cities', people who live in 'remote' or 'very remote' areas:

- Can expect to live approximately five fewer years in 'remote' areas and eight fewer years in 'very remote' areas.
- Are more likely to die prematurely, and from causes classified as 'potentially avoidable'.
- Report greater difficulties in getting health care when they need it.
- Are more likely to be hospitalised for conditions for which hospitalization can be avoided through prevention and early management.
- Are more likely to be overweight and obese.
- Are more like to die in motor vehicle crashes.
- Are more likely to be hospitalised for heart disease⁸.

According to the Rural Doctors Association Australia, regional Australia (in total) currently has a shortfall of 1,800 rural doctors. The National Health Workforce Taskforce estimates that Australia needs 356 new medical student places per annum up to 2025 to educate around 6,000 new doctors to meet current and future national demand. Professor Nick Klomp (Charles Sturt University) has advised that Charles Sturt University has a proven track record in providing health professionals to suit the needs and challenges of regional Australia⁹.

Waiting lists within the public health system in Albury Wodonga have hit crisis point. Over 3,700 patients are waiting to elective surgery in the region, up 1700 patients from less than a year ago¹⁰. Albury Wodonga Health's Albury campus has four operating theatres, yet one is not in commission. The ICU at the Albury campus is also under utilised with only three ventilator beds operational (from five), this is due to the difficulty in attracting specialist medical and nursing staff to allow the unit to run at full capacity. It is preferred that the ICU has six beds to allow for complex operations to be performed.

NSW Health is committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal people and other government agencies to improve the health outcomes for Aboriginal people¹¹. Compared with rates for non-Aboriginal people, hospitalization rates for Aboriginal people in NSW are

- 200% higher for diabetes
- 70% higher for cardiovascular diseases
- 100% higher for chronic respiratory diseases
- 60% higher for injury and poisoning

There are numerous Indigenous health facilities throughout the region including (but not limited to):

- Balranald Aboriginal Health Service Incorporated
- Yarkuwa Community Support Service

⁸ NSW Health The Health of the people of New South Wales – Summary Report

⁹ Charles Sturt University - Rural people die unnecessarily with fewer rural doctors – 5 May 2011

¹⁰ The Border Mail 27 May 2011

¹¹ NSW Health – Two Ways Together – Aboriginal Affairs Plan 2003 - 2012

- Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service
- Cumeragunja Aboriginal Medical Service (Moama)
- Coomealla Aboriginal Medical Service (Dareton)

Health care sites across rural areas are facing significant challenges in recruiting and retaining highly skilled health professionals and technicians needed to deliver health care to rural people. Taskforces have been established to encourage general practitioners and specialist health professionals to relocate to regional areas. In 2007, the severity of problems within the health services of Albury Wodonga was identified. The twin cities lacked adequate numbers of GPs and specialists. This was having a major impact in the community not only with patients, but in a broader sense, the potential negative economic development impact. For communities to survive and develop, the two most important areas considered for growth are excellent health services and education. The Border Medical Recruitment Taskforce has seen in excess of fifty medical professionals relocate to the region to take up various medical positions. The taskforce is now seeking substantial funding to continue to encourage medical professionals to relocate.¹² There are significant relative differences across the region in relation to the availability of health care professionals with Albury having more health professional living in the locality than Murray and regional NSW and also more than Sydney in some categories. Conversely, Jerilderie's health professionals are restricted to registered nurses.

On 2 May 2011, the Commonwealth Government announced that it would provide \$65 million to build the Regional Integrated Cancer Care Centre to be located at the Albury Campus of Albury Wodonga Health. The centre will consolidate and expand existing cancer services provided by members of the Border/East Hume Cancer Network for a catchment population which includes residents of north-eastern Victoria and southern New South Wales. The centre will include:

- Radiotherapy services comprising three bunkers and three linear accelerators; the design will allow space for a future fourth bunker.
- Medical oncology services including inpatient and ambulatory haematology and oncology services.
- Support services, including a wellness centre, allied health, support and information services.
- Research, education and e-health facilities, linked with external research, education and information networks and with the clinical school operated in Albury Wodonga by University of New South Wales.
- Paediatric ambulatory chemotherapy services.
- Flexible consultation rooms for visiting specialists and multidisciplinary teams including allied health, care coordinators, palliative care and Aboriginal services.
- Office space for the administrative and clinical staff of the clinical cancer network.

As part of the Integrated Cancer Centre, an outreach service will be established at Deniliquin Hospital. Patients will have their initial treatment at the Albury centre, but once on regular medication can continue their treatment at the Deniliquin facility. This reduces the burden on patients and their families having to travel for ongoing treatment.

¹² Border Medical Recruitment Taskforce Fundraising Campaign

Health – Cross Border Collaboration

a) Albury Wodonga Health

Albury Wodonga Health (AWH) is unique. Established on the 1st of July 2009, it is the first cross border public health service to ever exist in Australia. Under an inter-governmental agreement between the NSW and Victorian governments, the Albury Base Hospital and Wodonga Regional Health Service merged to create one of the largest regional health services between Sydney and Melbourne, other than in the ACT.

Integration of Albury and Wodonga’s public health services has long been seen as a logical step to achieving a number of benefits for the residents of the Murray region, including:

- an improved model of healthcare;
- ready access to one of the largest health services between Sydney and Melbourne;
- improved continuity of care and more equitable access to service types for the whole community regardless of their residential location;
- more effective health service delivery;
- better training opportunities for clinical staff;
- greater recognition and visibility of the combined health service, leading to improved recruitment and retention of the health workforce;
- greater “critical mass” assisting in attracting a greater range of specialist services to the region;
- provision of a strong foundation for service growth to match population growth in the region.

AWH provides a comprehensive and growing range of health services spanning the primary, sub-acute and acute needs of regional residents. With its significant increase in size, the future is expected to see the health services provided to the Murray region by AWH exponentially expand. The organisation is already planning new initiatives to improve cancer and cardiology services for people suffering from stroke and further development of mental health services across North East Victoria and Southern New South Wales.

b) Echuca Regional Health

The Victorian Government has committed \$40 million in its 2011 budget towards the redevelopment of Echuca Regional Health¹³. The development would enhance Echuca Regional Health’s (ERH) capacity to provide complex and responsive acute, sub-acute and ambulatory services for an extended catchment including both Victorian and New South Wales residents. The health service plays an important role in the integrated health service system with a key contribution to sub-acute, cancer and maternity service delivery.

The forecast expanded population within the area, plus the forecast increase in the proportion of people aged over 60 will place significant demands on this health service. With its current infrastructure and capacity shortcomings, the health service is not equipped to meet current demand, and is unable to respond to the forecast increases in demand. Further, ERH is not able to implement its preferred and more up to date models of care.

¹³ Victorian Government – Department of Health Media Release – Achieving the best health and wellbeing for all Victorians.

The objectives of the redevelopment are:

- To improve the amenity of the hospital for patients, staff and visitors.
- To provide people living within the hospital catchment with better access to a wider range of services.
- To allow ERH to service its growing demand by increasing bed numbers and emergency department treatment facilities.
- To support ERH to achieve its designated service delivery role.
- To support ERH to attract and retain a professional workforce.
- To reduce the costs associated with the maintenance of old and inefficient infrastructure and services.

Aside from the flow on benefits of a major capital investment into the broader community and likely additional health jobs that will undoubtedly flow, this is a key regional livability project, vital to ensuring accessibility to health services in the broader region and attracting and retaining population. Investments in health and education are a recognised economic and community development strategy to build sustainable communities. Investments such as this also provide economic diversification projects, through the ability to attract new residents¹⁴.

Cross border and regional collaboration throughout the Murray Region

RDA Murray seeks to work collaboratively with both RDA Loddon Mallee and RDA Hume to ensure that communities that border each of these RDAs are able to overcome barriers to state regulations, services and other anomalies.

RDA Murray also works collaboratively with the eleven RDAs that share the Murray Darling Basin region. Supported by the NSW government, RDA Murray and RDA Riverina conducted a study titled, *Scenario Planning for an Innovative Response to the Water Challenges in the Murray and Riverina regions*¹⁵. The study focused on how the potential loss of water from the Murray and Murrumbidgee region for human and business activity may significantly impact local communities, economic development and industry and business productivity. Outcomes identified industry and business diversification options to support the regions' capacity to grow sustainable communities in light of a future with less water.

RDA Southern Inland and RDA Murray are both actively involved with the Softwoods Working Group (SWG). This working group was formed in 1987 and consists of representatives from local government, regional development boards, Forests NSW and all the major plantation growing and processing industries in the south west slopes region of NSW. Recognising the importance of a co-operative and co-ordinated approach to the issue of road funding, the SWG was formed to plan for the future needs of this essential road network as the local timber industry continued to grow. The major focus is on securing funding for the major defined regional arterials that service the needs for both log and finished products. In recent years the activities of the SWG have expanded to include involvement in matters of other forest-industry related issues.

¹⁴ RDA Loddon Mallee – Echuca Regional Health redevelopment

¹⁵ Sinclair Knight Merz – Scenario Planning for an Innovative Response to the Water Challenges in the Murray and Riverina regions

The NSW State Government announced on 30 May 2011, it is seeking to introduce a cross border commissioner, armed with the job of tackling the differences between NSW and surrounding states, by the end of 2011. The role of the commissioner will be to identify and remedy anomalies¹⁶. This measure is vital to enable the sustainability and long term growth of businesses and residents currently affected by cross border differences.

Industry Base

Agriculture, manufacturing, construction, government and administration, health services and transport/warehousing underpin the region's economic base. Ensuring an appropriate balance in the management of the region's rural landscapes is critical to the ongoing protection and development of agriculture and its associated industries.

There are obvious sub-regional distinctions between various economic activities. The western part of the region has a strong emphasis on fruit, nut, vegetable and wine production. Whereas the central part of the region has some of the most significant irrigated agriculture districts and a strong food processing sector. In the eastern part of the region, manufacturing is the largest employer.

The following industry profiles confirm the current status supporting the fabric of the Murray economy.

a) Manufacturing & Engineering

Provisions of major infrastructure into the region include natural gas, potable water, telecommunications and high voltage power. A stable workforce of semi skilled labour and professional business support services ensures manufacturing businesses receive ongoing support and can grow their potential. The availability of affordable serviced industrial land makes the decision to establish profitable manufacturing operations a reality.

The Murray region is the prime location of choice for hundreds of companies in the manufacturing sector. In fact, manufacturing employs the second largest workforce or 17,664 employees across the region¹⁷.

The manufacturing sector supports a range of complementary businesses including engineering companies that specialise in manufacturing, packaging, transport, logistics and warehousing.

Manufacturing enjoys the benefits of location. Mid way to major markets of Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Adelaide, the Murray region has main transport routes linking directly to 80% of Australia's population.

b) Agribusiness

The Murray region is dependent on agribusiness and irrigation to produce milk, fruit, vegetables, cereal crops, livestock and wine. Irrigation water from the Murray River is the fundamental environmental resource which keeps the region's economy vibrant and produces an abundance of food for domestic and export markets.

¹⁶ The Border Mail - 1 June 2011

¹⁷ Murray Now 2011 Regional Profile

The Murray River system sustains a one billion dollar agriculture and agricultural processing industry. The region contains the third largest vegetable growing area in NSW and produces a third of the State's grapes, quarter of its citrus and over half of Australia's rice crop.

Agriculture is the dominant industry sector both in employment and gross domestic product across the local government areas of Balranald, Berrigan, Conargo, Greater Hume, Jerilderie, Wakool, Wentworth, Deniliquin, Murray, Corowa and Urana.

The Murray region has strength in the agricultural processing industry; this is a result of its proximity to agricultural products that are processed for domestic consumption and export. Breakfast cereals, pet foods, tomato, vegetable, orange and cheese processing, bio fuel and canola oil refining, beef and pork production and bakery products are all significant agricultural processing industries that draw on produce grown in the Murray region.

The agricultural processing industry supports a range of complementary businesses including engineering companies that specialise in food manufacturing, packaging, transport, logistics and warehousing.

The Murray region boasts affordable land, fertile soils, a temperate climate, irrigation infrastructure, a good workforce and corresponding rail and road transport which supports agribusiness and agricultural processing industry investments¹⁸.

The weather is still firmly placed in the driver's seat of market pricing. Tight physical supplies of most traded agricultural commodities means that markets remain on a knife's-edge, with any significant production disappointments likely to cause another step-up in prices from very high levels.

c) Transport & Warehousing

Albury is the traditional transport hub and changeover point on the Hume Highway, and in recent times the importance of the region for transport, warehousing and logistics has grown significantly. The region is the base for two of Australia's largest interstate carriers, and with recent expansions in the manufacturing sector, this growth looks set to continue.

The \$22 million Ettamogah Rail Hub is regarded as a leading edge transport facility for eastern Australia and is increasing its capacity to handle over 100,000 tonnes of freight annually¹⁹. Strategically located on the Melbourne-Sydney rail line, the Hub offers exceptional access to the eastern seaboard, essentially linking freight from the Murray region to almost any part of eastern Australia. The Griffith – Melbourne freight train currently services the Hub five days a week. There is potential for other rail operators to use the Hub as demand and container volumes increase. The Hub's aim is to reinvent regional rail as a sustainable supply chain by introducing new technology and providing a professional service to its clientele. This will be achieved by:

- investing in technology and innovation to ensure regional rail is able to offer an efficient, viable and reliable service;

¹⁸ Murray Now 2011 Regional Profile

¹⁹ Albury City Council – Plug Straight In

- setting up a training facility for rail operations, logistics and general education for people already involved with rail or for those seeking a career in the rail and logistics industry;
- working with local, state and federal governments to unlock regional rail's full potential in the freight task;
- having a commitment to build harmonisation between rail and road;
- provision of customs and quarantine services (subject to approval)²⁰.

The Tocumwal intermodal facility is a key transport asset that provides a competitive advantage to its users through cost advantages and direct port access. The on-site container terminal is the second largest container terminal in Victoria (whilst in NSW it is controlled by Victoria). The land in this area is in various ownerships and has broadly developed into an intermodal facility since the re-opening of the railway between Strathmerton and Tocumwal in the mid 1990s. The existing site operators have operated successfully in the period since the rail re-opening and now with drought conditions abated it is expected that grain tonnages will be in the vicinity of 450,000 per annum.

It has become clear through work related to the proposed inland rail project, that the tonnages and product range presently moving through the Tocumwal intermodal facility are in fact the most significant on the route and in effect provide the backbone to the entire freight load. It is this point that really raises the question of future development in the area and whether existing freight effort can be expanded or value adding opportunities established to both sustain its future operations and expand the economic benefits to the region in general, and the Berrigan Shire in particular.

Access to and from the site is via road transport with approval to use up to roadtrain capacity vehicles. This access is significant as roadtrains cannot access Victoria and Tocumwal, therefore providing the last access point in the region that allows complete roadtrains to load/unload without the need to break down vehicles to smaller configurations for products that will ultimately export through the Port of Melbourne²¹.

Albury Industrial Hub

Albury City Council is currently developing more than 477 hectares of industrial land on the outskirts of Albury. The precinct has the capacity to be expanded by a further 770 hectares and incorporates the Ettamogah Rail Hub. Two of Albury's largest and most progressive businesses, Overall Forge and Norske Skog operate from the precinct, collectively employing more than 340 people.

The objectives for the precinct include:

- Maximise the development potential of the land for large scale industrial use.
- Support the attraction of new investment to the City (\$500m by 2020) and stimulate new employment.
- Integrate urban and environmental design, landscape, transport, economics, water sensitive urban design and sustainability principles.
- Encourage utilization of the Ettamogah Rail Hub and leverage off the opportunities it presents.

²⁰ Murray Now 2010 Regional Profile

²¹ Berrigan Shire Council - Tocumwal Intermodal Facility

The industrial hub will stimulate major investment in Albury's local economy and create new and secure existing jobs in transport and logistics, manufacturing, technology and innovation, and value adding to ensure a healthy and vibrant local economy.

d) Mining

The Campaspe-Atlas Project

Bemax commenced exploration in the Murray Basin in 1997 and soon had success in the Pooncarie region with discovery of the Ginkgo and Snapper deposits in 1998 and 1999 respectively. Bemax has significant further resources in the Murray Basin and has a strong intention of expanding its operations. The Campaspe deposit, along with the neighbouring Atlas deposit, have emerged as two of the more prospective in its resource base and a decision has been made to proceed with the Campaspe-Atlas Project as the next major development.

The Campaspe Project is located in the north eastern extents of Willandra East, approximately 140 kilometres north east of Wentworth and 270 kilometres south east of Broken Hill. Willandra East is bounded to the western side of the tenement by the Mungo National Park. Access into the area is via a series of unsealed roads. The project areas is approximately 120 kilometres south of the Trans Australian Railway line and approximately 370 kilometres by road from Broken Hill.

Bemax intends to advance this project as quickly as possible to allow it to be a third mine in conjunction with Ginkgo and Snapper. A significant component of this process is engaging all stakeholders including Local Shire Councils, the community and landowners²².

West Balranald Deposit

The West Balranald deposit is a significant asset in the Iluka Resources Limited inventory. The heavy mineral deposit is located approximately 20 kilometres to the north-west of Balranald and forms part of the total Murray Basin resource inventory of 44 million tonnes of heavy mineral²³. Iluka Resources advise that the deposit represents the single largest in-situ heavy mineral resource discovered in the Murray Basin by Iluka to date. Exploration drilling on Iluka's tenement holdings suggests extensions to the deposit with an additional eight kilometres to the north and four kilometres to the south. These explorations (2011) will assist in a better understanding of the hydrology and depth of deposits; ground water flows and characteristics; the impacts of the reaction of sulphide deposits to air and water; and the impacts of these reactions in the wider environment.

e) Professional Services

Business and industry across the Murray region are supported by nationally recognised organisations that provide professional and business services. The domination of manufacturing, agriculture, retailing and construction industry sectors across the region provides an overwhelming demand for professional and business services to support all elements of business including finance, insurance, legal and all regulatory requirements.

²² Bemax - The Campaspe-Atlas Project

²³ Iluka Resources Limited – Extensions to the Major West Balranald Deposit (2007)

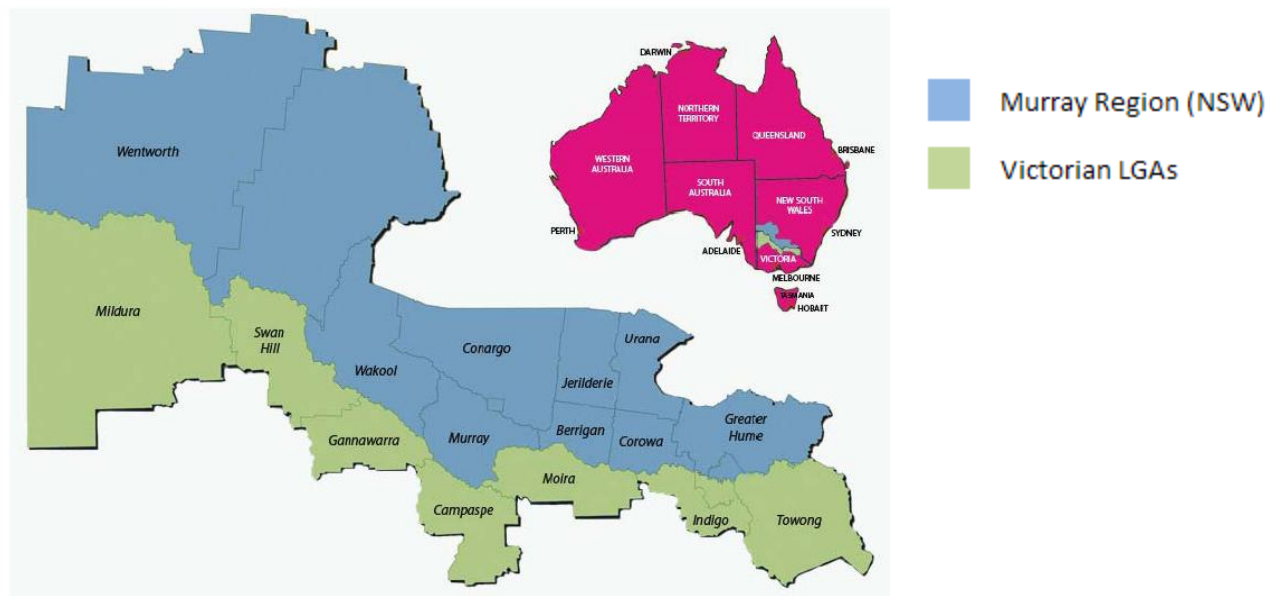
The professional and business service sector has 2,584 businesses offering finance and insurance, 4,719 offering professional, scientific and technical services and 3,497 offering administration and support services. A combination of these business sectors reveals that the professional and business service sector accounts for the fifth largest industry sector in the Murray region²⁴.

The diversity and calibre of skill provided by the professional and business services sector demonstrates a high standard of service, an understanding of the local conditions and is equivalent in knowledge to the expertise of their city counterparts.

Micro businesses are one of the fastest growing sectors in the NSW economy, making up 88% of the State's small businesses²⁵. Micro businesses include home based enterprises along with small companies employing less than five employees. As at June 2009, there were 7,369 non employing businesses and 2,814 businesses that hire less than five employees within the Murray region²⁶.

Murray Shift Share Analysis

The following information is supplied by Western Research Institute and provides an overview of the performance of 53 sub-industries within the Murray Region and provides a comprehensive comparison of local factors with state and industry growth. It must be noted that this information also incorporates several local government areas that do not fall under the umbrella of RDA Murray.



²⁴ Murray Now 2011 Regional Profile

²⁵ NSW Government Industry & Investment – Small Business NSW website (www.smallbiz.nsw.gov.au)

²⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics – Councils of Australian Businesses (June 2007 to June 2009)

Methodology

a) Shift Share Analysis

Shift-share analysis examines employment growth in a region by industry. Employment growth is attributed to the state economy, industry growth or local factors. This allows the comparison of local employment growth with state and industry averages.

Employment growth is determined by comparing employment data for a region from two consecutive ABS Census collection periods. The Murray Region Shift-Share utilised data from the two most recent census collection periods - 2001 and 2006. Employment data was extracted at the industry subdivision level (two digit 1993 ANZSIC code).

Many data sources are currently changing from 1993 ANZSIC coding to 2006 ANZSIC coding. This means more recent, sample based data is not comparable with historical census based data. Further, one of the key features of shift-share analysis is the ability to isolate and examine the impact of local factors on industry. Therefore no value is gained by updating unique local data with industry-wide or state-wide growth figures.

The Murray region was defined as including local government areas in both New South Wales and Victoria.

New South Wales	Victoria
• Albury City	• Campaspe Shire
• Balranald Shire	• Gannawarra Shire
• Berrigan Shire	• Indigo Shire
• Conargo Shire	• Mildura Rural City Council
• Corowa Shire	• Moira Shire
• Deniliquin Council	• Swan Hill Rural City Council
• Greater Hume Shire	• Towong Shire
• Jerilderie Shire	• Wodonga Shire
• Murray Shire	
• Tumbarumba Shire	
• Urana Shire	
• Wakool Shire	
• Wentworth Shire	

As shift-share analysis compares local data with state averages, the data for the Murray region was compared with regional data aggregated from both New South Wales and Victoria.

A detailed explanation of how the shift-share technique is applied is included on page 33.

b) Reporting Shift-Share Results

Shift-share analysis assesses employment growth in a region by industry, and differentiates between the growth attributable to the State economy, the industry mix and local factors. Results allow industries to be classified into one of four types, as outlined in Table 1.

Each industry type can be described as follows:

- Type I – Local firms outperforming in a high growth industry

These local industries are growing at a faster rate than state and industry averages. Type I industries are likely to encounter problems of rapid growth such as bottlenecks in production, skill shortages, inadequate infrastructure and lack of support services. Risk management strategies to protect the industry should be investigated and attempts made to attract regional investment into the industry.

Table 1: Four Types of Industries

Industry Type	Regional State Employment Growth	Industry Employment Growth	Local Employment Growth
Type I	Positive	Positive	Positive
Type II	Positive	Positive	Negative
Type III	Positive	Negative	Negative
Type IV	Positive	Negative	Positive

- Type II – Local firms underperforming in a high growth industry

These local industries are showing slower growth in employment than the average for that industry across regional New South Wales and Victoria. Type II industries may need additional support to improve their performance such as sourcing required skill areas, assistance with the commercialization of new products, management advice and initiatives to strengthen the local industry as a whole (for example: networking or clustering).

- Type III – Local firms underperforming in a low growth industry

These industries are showing slower employment growth than the average recorded across regional New South Wales and Victoria. Type III industries may be mature or declining industries and there may be few opportunities for growth. Organisations should focus on the development of new growth opportunities such as development of new products or accessing new markets.

- Type IV – Local firms outperforming in a low growth industry

These industries are recording higher employment growth in the local area, despite lower than average employment growth in the industry across the rest of the state. Type IV industries are likely to be mature or declining industries, however, there may be relatively better opportunities in the Murray region. Efforts should be made to attract more investment in that industry in the local area.

Murray Region Shift-Share

Key results of the Murray region shift-share indicated:

- the combined regional state economies of New South Wales and Victoria had the effect of increasing employment in the Murray region by 10,294 jobs;
- local factors served to increase employment in the Murray region by 4,115 jobs;
- the industry mix in the Murray region had the effect of reducing employment in the region by 3,063 jobs

Table 2: Employment Change in Industry Division 2001–2006

	Regional State Growth Component	Industry Mix Component	Local Factor Component	Net Employment Change	Industry Type
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,832	-4,423	661	-1,930	Type IV
Mining	23	86	-68	40	Type II
Manufacturing	1,381	-1,449	750	682	Type VI
Electricity, gas and water supply	93	53	-28	118	Type II
Construction	590	1,177	929	2,697	Type I
Wholesale trade	525	-1,251	3	-722	Type IV
Retail trade	1,512	-158	812	2,166	Type IV
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	550	-260	510	800	Type IV
Transport and storage	369	202	398	970	Type I
Communication services	95	-202	0	-106	Type IV
Finance and insurance	181	29	139	350	Type I
Property and business services	607	-65	254	797	Type IV
Government administration and defence	409	1,385	187	1,981	Type I
Education	688	416	-42	1,062	Type II
Healthy and community services	1,002	1,499	-280	2,221	Type II
Cultural and recreation services	150	-117	-101	-69	Type III
Personal and other services	286	14	-11	289	Type II

At the industry division level (one digit ANZSIC code), 13 industries showed positive employment growth, while 4 industries showed negative growth. *Table 2: Employment Change in Industry Division 2001 – 2006* shows the breakdown between growth attributable to the state economies, industry mix and local factors. *Figure 1: Employment Change in Industry Division 2001 – 2006* illustrates the figures as a graph.

Industry Types

Industry types were determined at the industry subdivision level (two digit ANZSIC code). There are 53 industries at the sub-division level, and of these:

- Twelve (23%) were Type I industries;
- Twelve (23%) were Type II industries;
- Ten (19%) were Type III industries;
- Eighteen (35%) were Type IV industries.

One industry – private households employing staff – did not return sufficient data to assign an industry type.

i) Industry Type I

There are 12 industry subdivisions that can be categorised as Type I industries. That is, where the local industry is growing at a faster rate than state and industry averages. These industries are shown below in *Table 3: Industry Type I*.

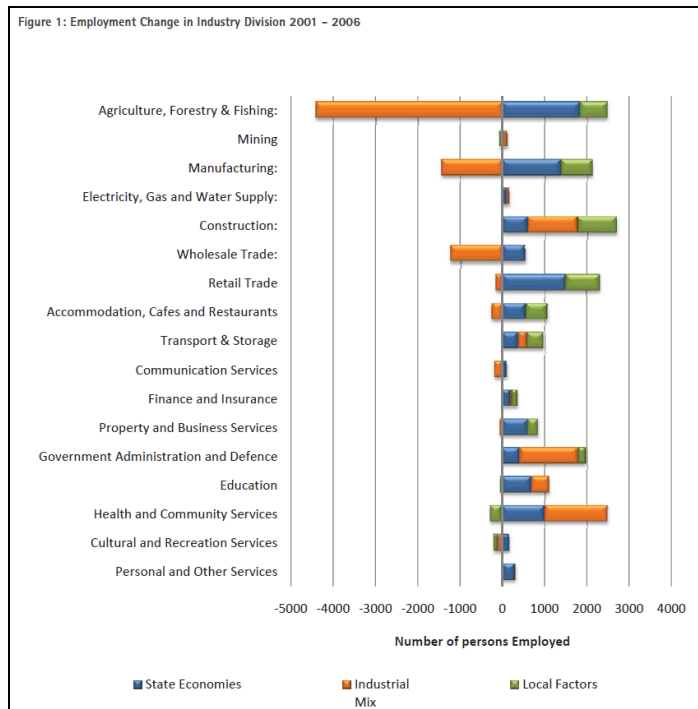


Table 3: Industry Type I

Industry Subdivision	Murray 2001 Employment	Regional State Growth Component	Industry Mix Component	Local Factor Component	Murray 2006 Employment
Electricity and gas supply	365	29	34	36	465
General construction	2,605	210	565	559	3,938
Construction trade services	4,730	381	599	384	6,094
Food retailing	7,364	593	129	559	8,645
Personal and household good retailing	7,408	596	274	149	8,427
Road transport	3,615	291	187	413	4,505
Services to transport	338	27	40	16	421
Storage	261	21	52	8	342
Services to finance and insurance	414	33	109	83	639
Property services	1,059	85	82	78	1,304
Government administration	3,778	304	1,319	324	5,726
Other mining	103	8	3	38	152

- Local factors had the strongest positive influence on road transport employment growth (46%), followed by food retailing (44%) and general construction (42%).
- Over half (58%) of all employment growth in personal and household good retailing was attributable to the regional state economies of New South Wales and Victoria.

- Government administration experienced the greatest employment growth of all Type I industries, recording an increase of 1,948 jobs. Sixty-eight percent of this growth was attributable to industry growth across regional New South Wales and Victoria, 17% to local factors and 16% to the regional state economy.

ii) Industry Type II

Twelve industry subdivisions were classed as Type II industries. That is, local factors had a negative impact on employment despite strong industry performance across the rest of regional New South Wales and Victoria. *Table 4: Industry Type II* shows the Type II industries in the Murray region:

Table 4: Industry Type II

Industry Subdivision	Murray 2001 Employment	Regional State Growth Component	Industry Mix Component	Local Factor Component	Murray 2006 Employment
Coal mining	7	1	1	-5	4
Oil and gas extraction	13	1	11	-17	8
Metal ore mining	113	9	52	-67	107
Services to mining	47	4	70	-69	52
Rail transport	113	9	15	-28	109
Other transport	14	1	1	-9	6
Finance	1,387	112	11	-3	1,508
Education	8,550	688	416	-42	9,612
Health services	8,870	714	538	-279	9,843
Community services	3,573	288	1,015	-55	4,821
Sport and recreation	1,037	83	47	-89	1,078
Other Personal Services	1,532	123	95	-36	1,715

- In the education, finance, health services, services to mining, community services, sports and recreation and other personal services industries the negative impact of local factors was offset by positive growth across industry and state economies, resulting in new positive employment growth in the sector.
- In the remaining industries, poor local performance resulted in a net decline in the local industry despite positive performance across state and industry averages.

As these industries in regional New South Wales and Victoria are growing faster than the overall state average, they have the potential to contribute substantially to employment growth locally. Identification of factors influencing the underperformance locally could assist in improving the performance in this sector. Such factors should include a shortage of required skills, limited transport infrastructure or limited industry linkages.

iii) Industry Type III

In the Murray region, ten industry subdivisions were categorised as Type III industries. That is, industries recording slower than average employment growth both locally and across regional New South Wales and Victoria. The Type III industries are shown in *Table 5: Industry Type III*:

Table 5: Industry Type III

Industry Subdivision	Murray 2001 Employment	Regional State Growth Component	Industry Mix Component	Local Factor Component	Murray 2006 Employment
Forestry and logging	238	19	-44	-15	199
Commercial fishing	67	5	-20	-31	22
Food, beverages and tobacco	7,754	624	-83	-190	8,106
Textile, clothing, footwear and leather	706	57	-273	-14	475
Petroleum, coal, chemical and associated products	966	78	-109	-124	810
Machinery and equipment	2,551	205	-236	-64	2,456
Water supply, sewerage and drainage services	787	63	-36	-9	805
Personal and household good wholesaling	2,904	234	-845	-107	2,186
Air and space transport	190	15	-55	-42	109
Libraries, museums and the arts	494	40	-108	-39	386

All Type III industries except food, beverages and tobacco manufacturing and water supply, sewerage and drainage services recorded net negative employment change between 2001 and 2006.

- The greatest absolute decline in employment occurred in the personal and household good wholesaling sector with 718 job losses – an overall decrease of 33%. This loss accounted for almost two-thirds (65%) of all jobs lost in Type III industries.

Type III industries are typically found to be mature or declining industries in the region, and there may be restricted opportunities for growth. Organisations in these industries should focus on the development of new growth opportunities such as development of new products or accessing new markets.

iv) Industry Type IV

In terms of both industry and overall employment figures, Type IV industries represented the single largest industry type present in the Murray region. These industries are showing strong employment growth in the Murray region, despite lower than average industry growth recorded across regional New South Wales and Victoria. *Table 6: Industry Type IV* lists the Type IV industries in the Murray region.

- Twelve of the 18 Type IV industries recorded a net positive employment change between 2001 and 2006 in the Murray region.
- The greatest absolute increase in employment occurred in the accommodation, cafes and restaurants sector, which increased by 800 jobs. This was followed by business services (552), metal products (528) and wood and paper products (206).

Type IV industries tend to be mature industries that, despite lower than average employment growth elsewhere in the state, are performing well in the local area. Industry investment in the area should be encouraged by highlighting favourable local factors influencing above average growth.

Table 6: Industry Type IV

Industry Subdivision	Murray 2001 Employment	Regional State Growth Component	Industry Mix Component	Local Factor Component	Murray 2006 Employment
Agriculture	21,425	1,725	-4,143	491	19,498
Services to agriculture, hunting and trapping	1,027	83	-182	182	1,110
Wood and paper products	1,218	98	-121	229	1,424
Printing, publishing and recorded media	1,012	81	-118	1	976
Non-metallic mineral products	495	40	-43	112	604
Metal products	1,858	150	-23	401	2,386
Other manufacturing	594	48	-113	70	598
Basic material wholesaling	1,780	143	-314	125	1,735
Machinery and motor vehicle wholesaling	1,843	148	-129	22	1,884
Motor vehicle retailing and services	4,015	323	-604	146	3,880
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	6,829	550	-260	510	7,629
Water transport	59	5	-10	13	67
Communication services	1,185	95	-202	0	1,079
Insurance	450	36	-70	39	455
Business services	6,484	522	-161	191	7,036
Defence	1,303	105	-76	5	1,336
Motion picture, radio and television services	336	27	-52	23	333
Personal services	2,022	163	-94	37	2,129

Conclusion

Over three-quarters (76%) of industry in the Murray region recorded positive employment growth between 2001 and 2006. The overall employment growth of regional New South Wales and Victoria contributed 91% of employment increases in the Murray region, while factors unique to the Murray region contributed 36% of employment growth. These increases were counteracted by a 27% decline in employment attributable to state-wide employment changes in each industry.

As a whole, the construction industry received the greatest benefit from being located in the Murray region, increasing by 929 jobs as a result of local factors. This was followed closely by retail trade (812) and manufacturing (750).

Type I industries in the Murray region, such as food retailing, require physical and human infrastructure support to maintain growth. Type II industries in the region, such as education, are performing well across the rest of the state and have a high potential for growth in the local region if local factors provide adequate support. Despite below average growth state-wide, Type IV industries such as accommodation, cafes and restaurants are growing faster than industry averages, and investment in the region could be encouraged by highlighting favourable local factors. Finally, Type III industries like machinery and equipment manufacturing are experiencing lower than average growth across both the

states and local area, and would benefit from the development of new growth opportunities – potentially in the development of new products, services or markets.

Overall, industry in the Murray region is generally performing well compared with state and industry averages. Growth can be encouraged by examining areas where local factors may be restricting industry growth, and capitalizing where local factors provide a unique benefit to industry.

Shift-Share Summary

Employment in the Murray region increased by a net 11,346 jobs, or 9%, between the 2001 and 2006 census periods. Over three-quarters of industries increased positions in the local region, with strong growth being recorded by the government and administration sector (39%), followed by construction (37%) and transport and storage (21%).

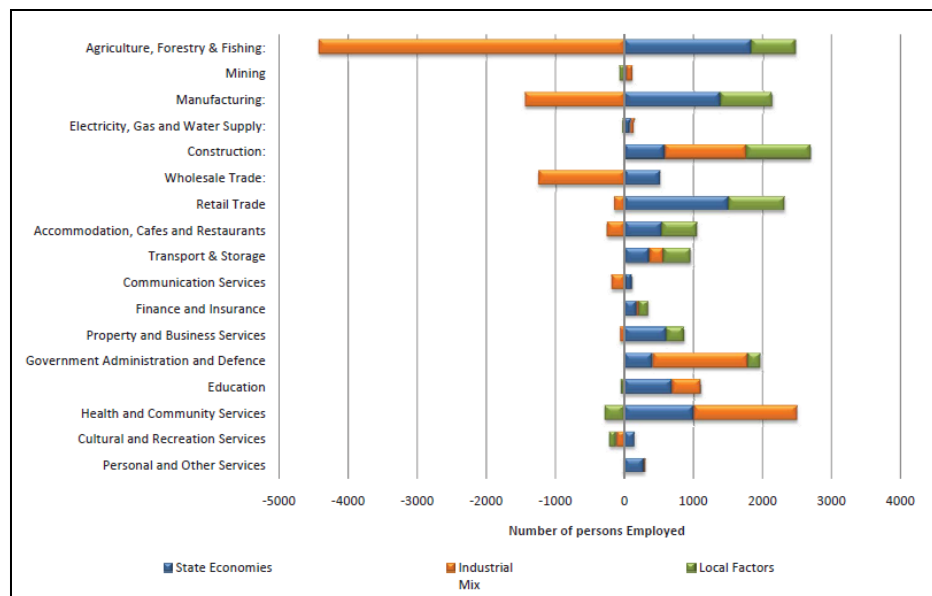
Growth across the regional NSW and Victorian economies was the major contributor to this growth in the Murray region, accounting for an increase of 10,294 jobs.

Individual industries grow at different rates to the regional state economy, so the mix of industries present in the Murray region also affects the rate of employment growth. The industry mix of the Murray region had a negative effect overall, reducing employment by 3,036 jobs.

When growth attributable to regional state economies and the local industry mix are removed, what remains is growth that occurs solely as a result of being located in the Murray region. This can be due to a range of factors including the competitive nature of local industry, an attractive economic environment, or access to resources and infrastructure.

Local factors served to increase employment in the Murray region by 4,115 jobs, accounting for 36% of employment growth in the Murray region. Local factors had the greatest positive influence on construction (929 jobs), followed by retail trade (812 jobs), manufacturing (750 jobs) and agriculture, forestry and fisheries (661 jobs).

The graph to the right illustrates the influence of local factors on all seventeen industry categories, compared with the influence of state and industry factors.



Shift-Share Methodology

The shift-share methodology is useful as it provides some explanation of the past employment growth performance of a region. It is a mathematical technique that separates employment growth between the state economy, industry mix and local components. In addition, shift-share analysis identifies industries that have grown at a faster rate than state and industry averages. For each component of the shift-share analysis (state economy, industry mix and local factors) the result is either shown as a positive or negative change in employment.

a) State Economy

The Murray region is part of the larger New South Wales and Victorian economies and is affected by state wide economic conditions such as changes in state government policy and levels of economic activity. It is therefore reasonable to expect that part of the employment growth in the region could be attributable to the overall growth of the New South Wales and Victorian economies. This has been assessed as growth in the state regional economies i.e. excluding growth in the Sydney and Melbourne statistical divisions.

Calculated as average regional employment growth for New South Wales and Victoria multiplied by the 2001 employment in the Murray region.

b) Industry Mix

Industries grow at different rates to the average for the economy as a whole. Growth may be rapid in some industries and slow or stable in others. Thus, the mix of industries in the Murray region will affect the overall level of employment growth in the region.

Calculated as the average growth of each industry at the combined regional state level less the average growth of regional New South Wales and Victoria overall, multiplied by the 2001 employment in the Murray region.

c) Local Component

It could be expected that each industry in the Murray region will reflect the characteristics of that industry at the state level, however there will also be differences in the growth rates compared to the average rate of growth for that industry in regional New South Wales and Victoria. Such differences can occur for a range of reasons, including: the competitive advantage of local industry; an attractive economic environment; or access to resources and infrastructure. The local component of employment growth is attributable to the relative performance of organisations in the region compared to the state average.

A positive local component for an industry indicates that organisations from that industry in the Murray region performed better than the combined state average in that industry, in terms of employment growth. Conversely, if the Murray region shows a negative local component for an industry, the firms in that industry are performing poorly in comparison to the state average for that industry.

Calculated as the growth of each industry in the Murray region less the average growth of each industry at the regional state level, multiplied by the 2001 employment in the Murray region.

Shift-share analysis, like all analytical techniques, has some limitations. The main limitations of shift-share analysis include:

- It does not offer a definitive explanation of why the various effects were positive or negative;
- In some cases the use of averages is not representative of the employment performance of individual industries or regions; and
- It may not be a reliable indicator of future employment performance.

Tourism

Tourism is strongly connected to the natural assets of the region, particularly the Murray River, as well as the history and culture of places throughout the wider region. The region boasts a diverse range of tourist attractions, including the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area, the riverboat fleet at Mildura and Echuca-Moama, the Deniliquin Ute Muster, the Henty Machinery Field Days, and historic towns such as Corowa, Deniliquin and Wentworth.

Tourism Establishments												
	Albury	Balranald	Berrigan	Conargo	Corowa	Deniliquin	Greater Hume	Jerilderie	Murray	Urana	Wakool	Wentworth
March Qtr 2010	38	9	28		23	10	8	5	15		12	12
March Qtr 2009	39	9	28	No Tourism data available	23	10	8	5	15	No Tourism data available	12	12
March Qtr 2008	39	8	28		24	10	9	5	15		11	12
March Qtr 2007	39	8	28		24	10	9	5	15		11	12
March Qtr 2006	39	7	28		24	10	10	5	15		11	12

Source: Statistical Profiles of the 21 Local Government Areas that make up the MurrayNow region (Western Research Institute Limited - November 2010)

Tourism will strengthen the economic vitality of the region. It will build on the environmental assets and the social and cultural identity of the region. Tourism will be sustainable and not deplete or degrade the environment of the region. Tourist development on the Murray River and other associated waterways will protect the natural and scenic values of the rivertine environment, including native vegetation. Tourist development that is permanently fixed within the waterway will be discouraged. Large scale tourist development will generally be integrated with existing towns and villages.

Tourist development in the region will help to make towns and villages more sustainable. They will not place inappropriate pressure on urban services (including water) and other infrastructure by being located in appropriate sites²⁷.

Tourism is expected to grow given the region’s accessibility to Melbourne, and the attractions of its cultural heritage, environmental assets and historic character. Councils will need to plan strategically for tourism development in their local land use strategies, ensuring that the natural and built assets that support tourism are protected. Councils’ local



²⁷ NSW Government Planning – Draft Murray Regional Strategy Paper (2009)

environmental plans will have to ensure that sufficient lands are zoned and protected to accommodate industry and business activities including suitably located agriculture-based activities.

Murray Regional Tourism Board

The Murray Regional Tourism Board (established in November 2010) was established to manage the “holistic development of tourism” across the region. This new board replaced the existing Marketing Committees which operated within the region for many years. The CEO of the board will work with Tourism Managers in each of the sub-destinations within the region to ensure a united approach to tourism development.

A project group has been formed to develop a Tourism Destination Management Plan for the region with a focus on a product gap analysis to identify investment opportunities, particularly in the nature based area. The specific aims of the project are:

- The development of a better understanding across all levels of government and the wider community of the economic contribution of the tourism sector in the region, at both state and national level.
- The identification of the opportunities for the development of tourism in the region with a focus on nature based experiences which meet the needs of future visitors expectations and demand.
- The identification of issues that require detailed planning, design or management solutions with a focus on cross-border issues.
- To engage with key stakeholders to provide an agreed overarching five year strategy for the development of tourism and in particular tourism infrastructure within the region.

The Board has set its strategic objectives and has committed to leading and facilitating tourism industry growth and development in the Murray region (the area is covered by 14 Councils from Albury Wodonga to Mildura on both sides of the Murray River) by working with and serving its member councils and the region’s tourism industry with energetic, cohesive leadership to:

- Improve supply and quality of tourism experiences;
- Increase awareness of destinations, products, experiences and events;
- Enhance skills and capacity of tourism industry members; and
- Facilitate and where appropriate coordinate tourism activities within the region.

In developing the strategic direction of the organization, the Board has stated its vision for tourism in the Murray Region is:

Vision for the region By the year 2020, the Murray region will take its rightful place as one of Australia’s most vibrant and iconic tourism destinations featuring the legendary Murray River, stunning National Parks and gateway to the Outback – a “must see” for local and international visitors, and conference markets. From Albury Wodonga to Mildura, the region will provide dynamic tourism experiences, including Aboriginal heritage, Australia’s pioneering past, eco-tourism and adventure tourism experiences, water sports, golf, arts, culture, and food and wine in its many vibrant regional centres, distinctive river towns and settlements.

In order to facilitate the achievement of this vision for the region, the Board, in conjunction with Tourism NSW and Tourism Victoria has determined that it needs to work closely with local councils, land and water management authorities, regional development authorities, the tourism industry, and the Aboriginal groups that are the traditional owners of the land in the region. Whilst there are a number of significant tourism infrastructure projects that are currently underway, the Board has set itself to lead the process for the next stage of tourism product development.

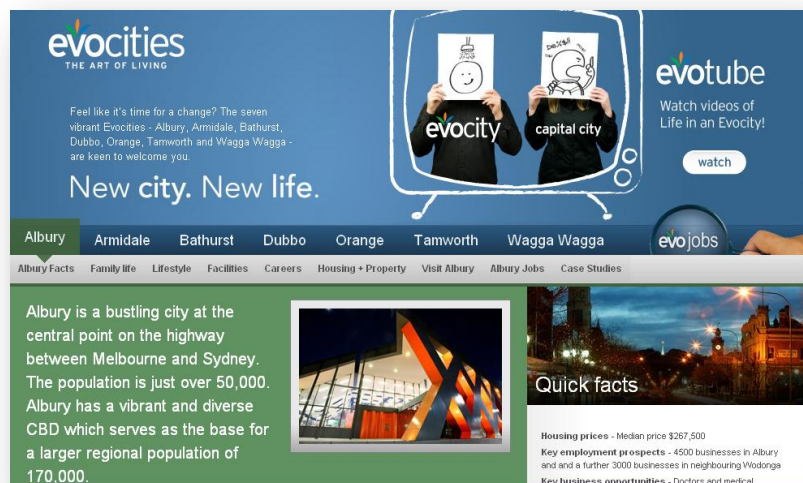
The Board will undertake a research project (supported by Victorian and NSW State funding) to identify the markets' perceptions of gaps in the Murray region's product, to enable the prioritization of investment projects, and the encouragement of service providers to add, and/or improve/enhance the array of products for the attraction and satisfaction of tourists/visitors throughout the region. RDA Hume, RDA Loddon Mallee and RDA Murray support the Product Gap Analysis²⁸.

The new board has the support of 14 local government councils (members) representing both Victoria and New South Wales.

Evocities²⁹

In an Australian first, seven of NSW's leading regional cities have united to form the Evocities campaign and encourage Sydneysiders to live, work and invest in an Evocity.

The seven Evocities are Albury, Armidale, Bathurst, Dubbo, Orange, Tamworth and Wagga Wagga and the Evocity name was coined because the cities are centres of Energy, Vision and Opportunity. The campaign was created to combat the general lack of awareness of the existence of "regional cities" and to highlight them as vibrant, thriving locations that offer employment, financial rewards and increased lifestyle opportunities.



The first phase of the campaign commenced in September 2010 with each of the seven cities dedicating resources and funding to the campaign. Australian Government funding, as well as support from the NSW State Government and corporate sponsors was also vital in the campaign's success. In February this year Evocities welcomed the announcement of a further \$500,000 of funding from the Australian Government, with the second phase of the campaign commencing in May 2011.

²⁸ Murray Region Tourism Product Gap Analysis and Tourism Development Plan

²⁹ Evocities – The Art of Living Summary – May 2011 (www.evocities.com.au)

Results from the Evocities Index Survey finalised in February 2011 confirmed that the allure of life in a regional city continues to grow, with nearly four in ten Sydneysiders saying they would consider a move to one of the seven Evocities. Survey results also indicated that Evocity residents spend less money getting to work, less time travelling to work, at work, stressing about work and thinking about work once they have left it for the day.

On top of this, more than three-quarters of Evocity residents believed they had a good work/life balance and the majority thought that lifestyle was the best thing about their Evocity. Sydneysiders nominated lifestyle as the main reason they would consider leaving the city.

Several of the Evocities reported receiving over 200 direct enquiries from Sydney residents in the first ten weeks of the campaign, which equated to what they would normally receive in a 12-18 month period. Over 800 pieces of media coverage, reaching 8 million people with an advertising value of \$2.5+ million has worked successfully, in conjunction with the campaign's media buying, to launch the Evocities brand with a "bang!"

Since the campaign kicked off there have been 65,000 visits to the evocities.com.au website by people interested in the Evocities campaign. The fact that 75% of visitors to the website are from Sydney is strong validation that the campaign is hitting the mark in terms of reaching the target audience. The market response rate has far exceeded campaign expectations with the original website estimate of 2,000 visits per month reached in the first week of the campaign.

The enormous interest in the campaign has already been converted into successful relocations in all of the Evocities. Research indicates that moving to a new city is a long-term decision that takes an average of around 12 months, so to have attracted new residents after just six months shows the strength of what the Evocities are offering to Sydneysiders.

Just as encouraging is the variety of career and job roles that have been taken up by the new Evocities residents. So far the Evocities have welcomed relocators in diverse careers such law, financial services, franchising, health and office administration, and with over 250 positions currently listed on EvoJobs (the Evocities job website), there is the potential for Sydneysiders from a myriad of fields to find a new home in an Evocity.

After well and truly hitting the ground running last year, Phase 2 of the Evocities campaign aims to continue to build upon the interest amongst Sydneysiders who are looking for an alternative to capital city living and communicating the key message that a move to an Evocity is a move to a quality life where a wide range of opportunities exist for personal and professional growth.

Local Government – Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

The framework has been developed as part of the NSW State Government's Local Government Reform Program and proposed changes to the *Local Government Act 1993* to improve council's long term community, financial and asset planning.

The framework opens the way for councils to identify and plan for funding priorities and service levels in consultation with their community, while preserving local identity and planning for a more sustainable future. The framework is essentially a set of tools for each council to create integrated plans for the future of the community which can be implemented in a meaningful way. The key benefits include:

- Improved sustainability of the local community by encouraging councils, state agencies and the community to work together on long term plans
- Improved connection between councils and community vision
- A strengthened strategic focus for councils and the community
- A more detailed understanding of the regional context within which councils operate
- Integration of planning processes and their implementation
- Reduced red tape and streamlined reporting

By 2012, all councils will have in place the following planning processes:

- A Community Strategic Plan – which must include a community vision statement, a series of strategic objectives for the community, strategies for achieving each objective and assessment methods for determining whether the objectives are being achieved
- A community engagement strategy that sets out how each council will engage its community when developing its Community Strategic Plan
- A Resourcing Strategy that includes a long term financial plan, a workforce management strategy and an asset management policy, strategy and plans
- A Delivery Program
- An Operational Plan, including a statement of revenue policy, and a detailed annual budget

A snapshot of current plans:

LGA	Strategy
Albury City www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au	Albury 2030 The community's vision for the long-term social, economic & environmental wellbeing of the city. A key feature of Albury 2030 is that it is owned by the Albury community. While it guides Council decision making, it is not a Council plan. Rather, AlburyCity has accepted responsibility for adopting the plan, overseeing its implementation and reporting back to the community on progress. The plan, which was reviewed and updated in 2010, is based on four specific themes. They are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A growing economy • An enhanced natural environment • A caring community • A leading community Development of the updated plan involved extensive community consultation, including workshops, focus groups & one-on-one interviews.

LGA	Strategy
<p>Wakool Shire www.wakool.nsw.gov.au</p>	<p>Vision 2022 Council has worked directly with the Wakool Shire community throughout the development of Vision 2022 to ensure public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. Council wants to address current issues and new potentials and obtained feedback on levels of service that the community wants, plus suggestions, opinions and other relevant information. The community has been encouraged – through a variety of forums – to tell the council where it would like to be in ten years and experiment with new ideas and approaches. It is expected that the community will also work with council to develop strategies for Vision 2022 and the subsequent resourcing implications, and ultimately be involved in the ongoing delivery and monitoring of the plan.</p> <p>Delivering Vision 2022 - Vision 2022 will be supported by a four year delivery program and a one year operational plan. While the Vision 2022 document contains the community's aspirations for the ten year period, the Delivery Program will contain what activities will be done by Council over a four year period to meet these goals. The Operations Plan narrows these plans down further again into a yearly action map. Council, community groups and other agencies will work in collaboration to see that the deliverables for each period are met.</p>
<p>Wentworth Shire www.wentworth.nsw.gov.au</p>	<p>Community engagement was undertaken allowing the community to work with Council to identify priorities, objectives, strategies and levels of service. Effective community engagement results from a strong partnership between Council and the community. The Council is engaging with people to introduce them to the new Community Strategic Plan process and to formulate the plan itself. Engagement is also an essential component of implementing the Community Strategic Plan, and the Council will continue to engage with the community to monitor and evaluate the levels of service delivery. In order to formulate the Community Strategic Plan, the Council will hold community discussions and information sessions as well as meetings with stakeholder groups and government agencies. The Community Engagement Strategy fully explains how Council will undertake community engagement.</p>

Employment

As previously mentioned, economic activity varies from sub-region to sub-region. The Upper Murray has a strong emphasis on manufacturing with major engineering, plastics, textiles, paper and food processing industries. The Central Murray sub-region includes some of Australia's most significant irrigated agricultural districts and associated food-processing industries. The Lower Murray has a strong emphasis on irrigated citrus, dried fruits, nuts and wine production as well as extensive grazing and a growing interest in mining of mineral sands.

Primary and secondary industry sectors are key drivers of rural and regional economies as witnessed in the region. However, economic growth in these industries is not necessarily reflected in the sustained population increases. The creation of jobs in retail, business and financial services, tourism and hospitality, and health and community services is much more likely to lead to population growth³⁰.

The region's reliance on the primary and secondary sectors as a basis for employment and population growth will continue to cause ongoing issues for many communities. The potential variability of commodity prices and the unknown impact of ongoing economic restructuring, climate change and other environmental impacts will create uncertainty for many industries.

Workers in regional areas are less likely to have studied after they have left school indicating there are real advantages for workers in these areas to gain post-school qualifications to meet the skill needs of local employers. It is interesting to note, that employment growth in New South Wales has been stronger in regional areas over the past five years than it has been in Sydney highlighting the demand for workers in those areas. The workforce also tends to be older in regional areas than in metropolitan areas. This suggests there will be strong demand for workers in these areas to replace those who retire over the next decade³¹.

Skills Shortage – Murray Region

The shortage of skilled workers is a well-established issue. Many employers are having trouble filling vacancies and a large proportion of vacancies remain unfilled for long periods. Key occupations experiencing shortages are health-care professionals, teachers, trades, agricultural labourers to name but a few.

The Australian government on 17 May 2010 amended its Skilled Occupation List from more than 400 occupations down to 181. The government's intention is to deliver a general skilled migration program more tightly focused on delivering high-value national building skills and focusing more on targeting specialised occupations that require a long lead time of formal education and training. The removal of occupations such as chefs is in direct contrast to what LGAs, industry, business, chambers of commerce,

Total employed persons	
Four Quarter Average to March 2010	
Albury	24,116
Balranald	1,286
Berrigan	3,968
Conargo	961
Corowa	5,284
Deniliquin	3,573
Greater Hume	5,199
Jerilderie	899
Murray	3,250
Urana	614
Wakool	2,190
Wentworth	3,318

Source: DEEWR Small Area Labour Markets, March 2010

³⁰ NSW Government Planning - Draft Murray Regional Strategy 2009

³¹ Dept of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations - Australian Jobs 2011

recruitment agencies and communities within the Murray region are advising they are in dire need of. RDA Murray is a Regional Certifying Body as appointed by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) and is authorised to provide certification of applications for visas in accordance with one migration category, namely, the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) that leads to permanent residency in Australia. Additionally, RDA Murray is authorised by the State Government to provide sponsorship to applicants under the Skilled Regional Sponsored (Provisional Visa) category.

The positions most difficult to fill by Local Government Area are as follows:

LGA	Positions
Albury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Professionals (including doctors, specialists & nurses) Accountants Architects Ophthalmologists Orthoptists Engineers Motor/Diesel Mechanics Boilermakers/Welders Fabricators Machinists Transport Drivers Town Planners Building Surveyors Aged Care Workers
Balranald	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trades People Engineers Medical Practitioners Nurses Builders Transport Drivers Shearers Agricultural Professional
Berrigan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dairy Workers Metal trades Civil Engineers Electrical Engineers Doctors Nurses Other allied health professionals (i.e. podiatrists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, etc) Truck Drivers Qualified Child Care Workers
Deniliquin/ Conargo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Professionals Trades People Dentists Chefs Health & Building Surveyors Bricklayers Electricians Skilled Metal Workers Accountants Town Planners
Corowa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doctors and other medical professionals Truck Drivers Farming (dairy and pig) Aged Care Health/Building Inspectors Welders Social Workers
Greater Hume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motor Mechanics Engineers (Civil, Mechanical etc) Medical Professionals Agricultural Workers
Jerilderie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical professionals (including doctors and nurses) Podiatrists Plumbers Builders (including builders with a heritage background)
Murray	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Professionals Chefs Carpenters Plumbers Bricklayers Engineers Professionals Agricultural
Urana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineers (and Assistants) Environmental Planners Doctors Nurses Shearers Health & Building Surveyors Grader Drivers Police Finance Professionals Teachers Trades People Hospitality
Wakool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builders Trades People Horticultural Workers Medical Professionals Town Planners Engineers Transport Drivers

LGA	Positions
Wentworth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist Nursing • Medical Practitioners • Diesel and other mechanics • All Building Trades • Middle Management • Allied Health Workers • Engineering Trade • Town Planners • Social Workers • Specialist Education Teachers

Source: Regional Development Australia Murray – Regional Communities

Indigenous Employment Opportunities

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) has recently reformed its Indigenous Employment Program (IEP). The Australian Government has committed more than \$770 million over five years for IEP. The objective of the program is to increase Indigenous Australians' employment outcomes and participation in economic activities, contributing to the Government's commitment to halving the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous employment outcomes within the decade. The reformed IEP:

- is designed to be more flexible and responsive
- supports a broader range of activities
- has new elements involving voluntary mobility assistance, language, literacy and numeracy and aspiration building
- has new simplified contracting arrangements
- is easier to access
- has reduced red tape

Under the reformed IEP, support is available for activities that increase employment opportunities and participation for Indigenous Australians and that will offer value for money. This could include activities that:

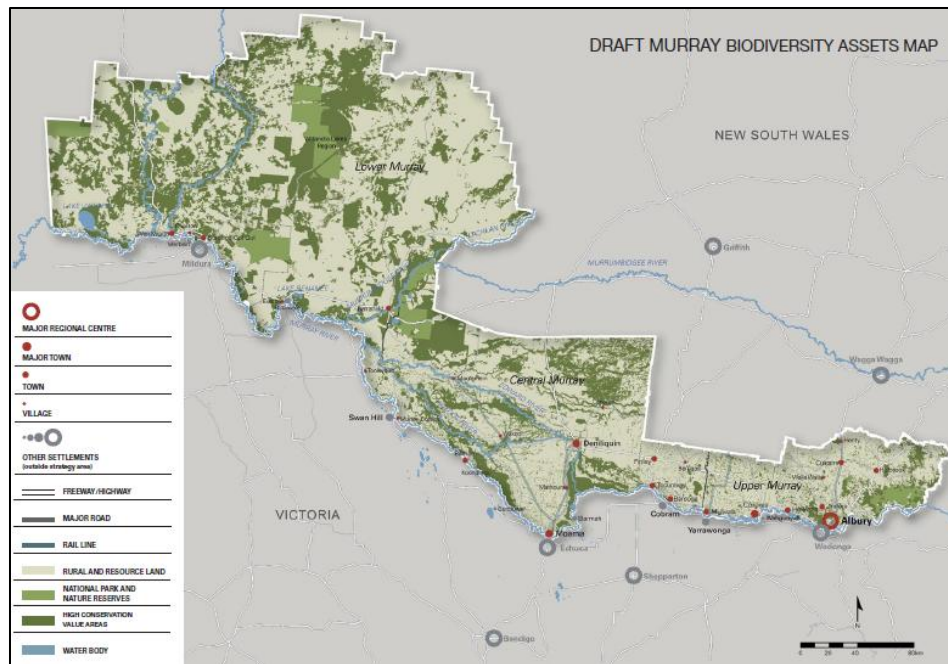
- encourage and support employers to provide sustainable employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians
- encourage, prepare and support Indigenous Australians to take up training and employment opportunities, stay in jobs and enhance their future employment prospects
- help Indigenous communities, industry bodies and groups of employers to develop Indigenous workforce and economic development strategies that support local and regional economic growth
- help Indigenous Australians to develop sustainable businesses and economic opportunities in urban, regional and remote areas.

RDA Murray will support and partner organisations throughout the region to assist Indigenous Australians to gain the necessary training and ultimately employment. Organisations such as (but not limited to):

- Balranald Inc. Indigenous Sub Committee
- The Personnel Group
- Wodonga TAFE
- Riverina TAFE
- Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre

Environmental Features

The Murray region sits wholly within the Murray-Darling Basin, Australia's largest river catchment basin. Australia's three longest rivers run through the region: the Murray, Murrumbidgee and Darling. All have important cultural, economic and environmental significance.



Source: NSW Government Planning website (www.planning.nsw.gov.au)

The Murray River is known in Australia for its significant European and Aboriginal cultural heritage, as well as its role in sustaining one of the most important agricultural areas in Australia. In addition to the three rivers, there are a number of other waterways and water bodies wholly within or flowing through the region, such as the Edward, Wakool, the Great Anabranche of the Darling River, Billabong Creek and the Mulwala Creek, to name but a few.

The region has a diverse range of landscapes from the foothills of the Great Dividing Range supporting intensive forestry in the east, to vast floodplains with significant River Red Gum forests and wetlands, highly regulated irrigation areas, through to the flat, semi-arid environment of the west.

The wetlands within the region are some of most significant ecological environments and home to numerous threatened species of flora and fauna, including the Superb Parrot, Silver Perch, Murray Cod, Murray Hardyhead, as well as a number of migratory bird species protected by international agreements.

There are many activities that place pressure on the health of the wetlands, such as:

- river regulation (i.e. water flow and changes to the water regime)
- floodplain development (e.g. levees, supply channels and roads)
- inflow of poor quality water (e.g. irrigation drainage)
- sedimentation
- irrigation

- urban development
- overgrazing
- introduced pests

The region has some of Australia's most significant natural and cultural assets including Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area (which also takes in Mungo National Park). The area contains over ten national parks including the Yanga National Park and Mallee Cliffs National Park. To further this, the region also includes four of the six significant ecological assets identified under the joint Commonwealth and States' Living Murray Initiative. These include the Barmah-Millewa Forest, the Gunbower and Koondrook-Pericoota forests, the Chowilla Floodplain and the River Murray Channel. The Living Murray Initiative intends to return significant flows of water to the Murray region, focusing primarily on the six sites identified. This will have implications for other water users along the Murray River and highlights the need to use water efficiently³².

Pressures on the Environment

The significant environmental, social and economic values that the natural environment provides the region is potentially threatened by a wide range of development pressures that need to be carefully managed. Agriculture and lifestyle amenity have played an important role in the development of the region, and the productivity of these activities continues to rely on the availability of high quality natural resources as well as defining the character, sense of place and livability of the region.

Parts of the region have been significantly degraded due to prior farming practices (e.g. clearing of land and over-use of water). These practices together with the general geology of the region have resulted in a major salinity issue for some areas.

Water for the Future

Water for the Future is the Australian Government's long-term initiative to better balance the water needs of communities, farmers and the environment. It contains a suite of urban and rural policies and programs, including significant funding for water purchasing, irrigation modernization, desalination, recycling and storm water capture.

The greatest focus is on the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, with the intent to provide farmers and communities with more confidence to plan for a future with less water, to put water use on a sustainable footing, to enhance irrigation productivity, and to improve river and wetland health.

Water for the Future is built on four key priorities:

- Taking action on climate change
- Using water wisely
- Securing water supplies, and
- Supporting healthy rivers and wetlands

³² NSW Government Planning – Draft Murray Regional Strategy 2009

Murray Darling Basin Plan

The Murray Darling Basin Plan's purpose³³ in its current form will deliver:

- integrated management of Basin water resources;
- enforceable environmentally sustainable limits on surface water & groundwater use;
- gives effect to relevant international agreements;
- sets basin-wide environmental objectives for water dependent ecosystems, water quality & salinity;
- develops efficient water trading regimes;
- use & management of water in a way that optimises economic, social & environmental outcomes;
- improved water security for all users of the Basin's water resources.

Given the demographic changes and social and economic influences on the region, the Murray environment is expected to continue to attract significant tourism, residential and other development in the future. This pressure, if not appropriately controlled, can have major individual and cumulative impacts on the Murray environment such as³⁴:

- increased flood hazards and flood risks;
- conflicts among recreational users (e.g. powers boats versus houseboats) & boating congestion;
- loss of riparian vegetation and wildlife habitat;
- removal of snags and other fish habitat;
- visual impacts;
- declining water quality;
- risk of contamination from onsite effluent disposal
- declining availability of water
- destabilised banks

Feedback was sought by the Basin Authority upon the draft plan being released through consultations throughout the Murray Darling Basin. Grave concerns were raised by primary producers, local government authorities and relevant state government bodies alike about the impacts that the proposed plan would prompt. Concerns ranged from:

- Balancing environmental, social and economic outcomes
- Transitional arrangements
- Efficiency through infrastructure improvements
- Interstate equity
- Basin State implementation and costs
- Lack of access to the Authority's modeling and other information to make informed decisions and analysis.

The issues raised through the consultations prompted the Commonwealth Government to instigate a parliamentary inquiry steered by Independent MP, the Hon. Tony Windsor on the proposed plan. The

³³ Murray-Darling Basin Authority – Introduction to the Basin Plan

³⁴ NSW Government Planning – Draft Murray Regional Strategy 2009

terms of reference for the inquiry specifically focus on the socio-economic impact of the plan with particular reference to:

- The direct and indirect impact of the proposed plan on regional communities, including agricultural industries, local business activity and community wellbeing;
- Options for water saving measures or water return on a region by region basis with consideration given to an analysis of actual usage versus licence entitlement over the preceding fifteen years;
- The role of governments, the agricultural industry and the research sector in developing and delivering infrastructure and technologies aimed at supporting water efficiency within the Murray Darling Basin³⁵.

The Standing Committee heard through its consultations with affected communities that water needed to be returned to sustain the environment and Basin communities. The Committee heard that a Basin Plan is an appropriate way to achieve this, but not a Basin Plan as set out in the Guide. The community recognises that without a healthy river there are no healthy communities³⁶. On 2 June 2011, the Standing Committee provided the Commonwealth Government with 21 recommendations. These recommendations have the support of the NSW Farmers' Federation, in particular the recommendation to stall all non-strategic water purchases in the Basin, and only buy water in cases where the impact on communities is minimal³⁷.

Strengthening Basin Communities program

Under the *Water for the Future* initiative, there has been an allocation of \$200 million for grants for local governments in the Murray Darling Basin to help community-wide planning for a future with less water as well as water savings initiatives. Projects will enable Murray local government authorities and urban water service providers to improve water security and reduce demand on potable water supplies.

Communities in the Murray Darling Basin will benefit by understanding the implications associated with climate change on water availability, identifying strategies to adjust to a future with less water and securing water supply through the introduction of water saving initiatives. Local governments in the Murray Darling Basin have an important role to play in helping their communities understand and plan for the changes that reduced water availability will bring. With this funding they will be better able to plan for change and to identify and implement local water efficiency measures.

There are two components to the program:

1. The Planning component - enables local government bodies in the Murray Darling Basin to apply, either as an individual local government, a consortium of local governments or an established regional organisation of councils, for grants through funding rounds designed to systematically assess the risks and implications associated with climate change, with a particular focus on water availability, and then to review existing plans or develop new plans to take account of these risks and implications.

³⁵ Parliament of Australia - Murray Darling Basin Plan comes under Parliamentary scrutiny

³⁶ Parliament of Australia - Of drought and flooding rains – Inquiry into the impact of the Guide to the Murray Darling Basin Plan – May 2011

³⁷ Sydney Morning Herald (2 June 2011)

It is expected that the updating or development of plans may identify a range of potential adaptation initiatives. Funding could be used to prepare plans and business cases for adaptation initiatives which may be eligible for future funding under the Water Saving Initiatives component of the Strengthening Basin Communities program.

2. The Water Saving Initiatives component supports projects to improve urban water security through water saving initiatives that reduce demand on potable supplies in the Murray Darling Basin. The Water Saving Initiatives component enables individual local governments, consortiums of local governments, established regional organisations of councils and urban water service providers located within or intersecting the Murray Darling Basin to apply³⁸.

The local government authorities, throughout the Murray and Riverina regions have formed four cluster groups to work collaboratively to formulate initiatives and plans to deal with the climatic changes and water issues.

Cluster 1

Albury City
Corowa Shire
Greater Hume Shire
Urana Shire

Cluster 2

Berrigan Shire
Conargo Shire
Deniliquin
Jerilderie Shire
Murray Shire
Wakool Shire

Cluster 3

Carathool Shire
Griffith City
Leeton Shire
Murrumbidgee Shire
Narrandera Shire

Cluster 4

Balranald Shire
Hay Shire
Wentworth Shire

Water and wastewater services in non metropolitan NSW are owned and operated by some Council or County Councils as local water utilities in accordance with various state legislations.

A review was conducted into non metropolitan water and sewerage services of which the outcomes are still under consideration by the NSW Government.

Sustainable management and use of natural resources

Murray region's businesses, farmers and individuals are increasingly showing innovation and versatility in striving for quality natural resource management to ensure the sustainable production of food and fibre. The environmental resources of the Murray Catchment support a highly developed agriculture sector that is critical to Australia's agricultural sector and national economy. Many industries and farms that have traditionally relied on specific forms of agriculture are showing diversity in meeting changes in climate, reduced access to water and a commitment to improving land management.

Farmers, land managers and community groups work in partnership with industry and government agencies in tackling a range of natural resource management (NRM) issues related to water quality, soil health, salinity, biodiversity and native vegetation. The Murray Catchment Management Authority (CMA) invests over \$5.8 million annually across the Murray Catchment to conserve, repair and renew natural resources and achieve a balance between agriculture, people and the environment. Murray CMA offers incentive funding to land managers for natural resource management projects, undertakes community engagement programs, including workshops and field days to facilitate the exchange of ideas and new

³⁸ Water for the Future – Strengthening Basin Communities Fact Sheet

technology in sustainable agriculture and natural resource management, as well as delivering collaborative research and development programs with peak industry and educational institutions.

In addition to its objectives of improving the natural assets of the Murray Catchment, Murray CMA actively works to assist the community in the areas of: sustainable food and fibre production; economic sustainability and social well-being; developing resilience and supporting transformational change brought about by social, economic and climatic pressures.

There is a shift occurring in how the populace think about and manage natural resources. The theory and practice of NRM is moving away from the conservation-based thinking of restoring landscapes to pre-1750 conditions, and there is a growing understanding that landscapes are made up of human communities and biophysical processes that interact and shape each other and are constantly changing.

CMAs are trialling resilience thinking as a new frame for helping communities understand how their catchments are working and where and how they should intervene to keep landscape systems operating in harmony. Resilience thinking aims to identify the few most important things that influence how complex landscape systems are behaving and how they can best be managed to support increased environmental, economic and social values over the longer term. This fresh thinking has the potential to better inform; how to reconcile social, economic and environmental values across landscapes in upgraded Catchment Action Plans; where to target interventions to make our landscapes more resilient; and what should be monitored to demonstrate results and test assumptions about how natural systems will react to management.

The experience over the last six years shows the value of giving local communities a more direct say in how natural resources are managed. Environmental, social and economic challenges that frustrate national and international policy efforts are being addressed and solved at the local and regional scale. The lessons from these new methods can be shared to inform how to design policy settings from the local through to the international level in ways that better harness the inherent creativity of citizens, land managers, non-government organisations, industry and governments. Given sufficient flexibility, all these parts of the community can contribute to reconciling the needs and expectations of society with the biophysical realities of our natural systems. These lessons inform five priorities for government to build more cohesive and collaborative landscape management across all of government and the community:

1. **Implement whole of government and community catchment planning** – to make sure that the left and right hands of government-funded investment programs are all targeted at the key issues in specific landscapes.
2. **Improve science and knowledge base to better inform decisions** – to cut through the complexity of linked natural and socio-economic systems so different natural resource managers understand where they sit in those systems and how to collaborate on multi-scale problems.
3. **Implement whole of government adaptive management** – to build on and share what is working and avoid re-inventing the wheel.
4. **Match funding to landscape need** – to invest in the maintenance of landscapes at a scale commensurate with the value of the services they provide, such as clean water and air, food and biodiversity.

5. **Design sound policy to complement stewardship** – to make sure that laws don't create perverse incentives that undermine communities' efforts to voluntarily steward natural resources³⁹.

The Murray CMA works collaboratively with Wakool Shire in developing a detailed resilience assessment of the Shire, to become a major source of information for the wider Wakool community to assess, plan and work towards more sustainable and resilient futures. As part of Wakool Shire's Community Strategic Plan (under the State Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework for Local Government), the Shire must decide and develop strategic directions for the next ten years along with plans of action to implement those directions. Wakool Shire has already undertaken consultation with its community on some of the directions. However, before getting too far into that process of establishing strategic directions it is important for the whole community and for Council to understand the processes and facts (past and present) that are shaping landscapes, livelihoods and community life in the Wakool Shire and how change to these factors might potentially shape Wakool Shire into the future. Looking at the Shire and how it works from a resilience perspective is one way to develop and share that understanding.

Murray Land and Water Management Plans

The Murray Land and Water Management Plans (LWMPs) were established in 1995 to address the environmental threat of salinity from rising water tables and to improve water quality to the Murray River and its tributaries.

In the 1980s, water tables in the region were rising at a rate likely to salinise 50% of the region within 30 years. The community and government spent five years developing the Plans. The result was an integrated environmental plan addressing the full spectrum of natural resource management issues. The program officially began in 1995 with signing of a "Heads of Agreement" with the NSW Government committing funding for 15 years and the community contributing for over 30 years.

The Murray Plans are divided into the sub-regions of Berriquin, Cadell, Denimein and Wakool. The total area is 948,000ha covering 2,765 properties, including the floodplain and tributaries of the Murray River.

Murray Irrigation is the implementation authority for the LWMPs. Partners include the Murray CMA, Local, State and Commonwealth Governments and farmers. The latest review and release of the LWMPs was conducted in June 2011⁴⁰.

³⁹ National Resource Commission - Progress towards Healthy Resilient Landscapes – Implementing the Standard, Targets and Catchment Action Plans

⁴⁰ Murray Irrigation Limited Murray Land and Water Management Plans – Celebration of Achievements – June 2011

Educational institutions

There are a diverse range of tertiary educational facilities located throughout the Murray region including (but not limited to):

- Charles Sturt University (Albury)
- La Trobe University (campuses in Wodonga and Mildura)
- TAFE NSW (Riverina Institute) – Albury, Corowa, Coomealla, Deniliquin, Finley
- Wodonga TAFE
- Sunraysia TAFE (Mildura)
- National Environment Centre (Thurgoona)
- University of NSW Rural Clinical School (situated at the Albury Base Hospital)

The region has in excess of 70 government and private primary and secondary education facilities. As well as three specialist schools in the Murray region catering for children with special needs. Additionally there are alternate education offerings such as the Flying Fruit Fly Circus, The Yori Program and Multiple Pathways⁴¹.

The tertiary education sector in the region is particularly strong with the presence of TAFE NSW (Riverina Institute) and Charles Sturt University. The university delivers a wide range of teaching across the education, business, arts, health and environmental science disciplines. The university has the capacity to add value to local initiatives particularly through research.

TAFE is active in the delivery of high quality vocational education and training in traditional and new apprenticeship disciplines and is also particularly active in delivering training to industry, recognising local skills issues. TAFE NSW Albury Campus has developed a partnership with La Trobe to deliver a TVET course in nursing which will provide students with an alternative pathway into a nursing degree and save on HECS fees.

There are in excess of 30 private training organisations providing educational opportunities in the region including (but not limited to):

- Murray Hume Business Enterprise Centre
- Australian Industry Group
- Australian Business Limited
- ATEL Employment Services (Apprenticeships)
- CVGT - Employment and Training Specialists (Apprenticeships)
- Albury Wodonga Continuing Education Centre

The Australian Government has recognised the need to address disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students' educational outcomes. Specific government policy objectives in relation to Indigenous education are set out in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy. This policy has been endorsed by the Commonwealth, state and territory governments and forms the foundation of all government Indigenous education programs.

⁴¹ MICEEP - Region 18 Data

In line with the Australian Government's target of reducing Indigenous disadvantage, Charles Sturt University actively engages in providing services to the Indigenous community. Indigenous Student Services have been operating at CSU since 1991. During that time, activities have focused on the provision of academic, personal and cultural support of Indigenous students⁴². The Riverina Institute of TAFE also provides an Aboriginal Coordination Officer located in Deniliquin and Finley along with a manager of Aboriginal services based out of Wagga Wagga. Other Indigenous organisations, which assist with training and education, throughout the Murray region are as follows:

- Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation
- Woomera Aboriginal Corporation
- The NSW Aboriginal Educational Consultative Group
- Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre Aboriginal Corporation

Access to high quality education is important to attract and retain professional and skilled people into and within the region. This includes providing opportunities for appropriate professional development and lifelong learning opportunities for themselves and opportunities for their children. Research shows that students who are educated and trained in a regional area are more likely to stay in the region.

Provision of a range of post secondary education is important in enhancing the professional skills and development of the regional population, leading to greater capability and higher likelihood of skilled people remaining in the region.

Access to cost effective post secondary education and training is important to provide equality of educational opportunity for regional students and in providing practical opportunities for young people to stay in the region to continue their education when they leave school⁴³.

Infrastructure

Extensive cross border and cross region collaboration between RDA Murray, RDA Riverina, RDA Loddon Mallee and RDA Hume has occurred to identify the infrastructure needs of the region, in light of the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

The Federal Government called the eleven Basin RDAs to a joint meeting in February 2011 to discuss the needs and priorities of their respective regions.

RDA Murray sought from its respective local government areas and Riverina & Murray Regional Organisation of Councils (RAMROC) their particular key infrastructure projects. The projects include, but are not limited to, items such as telecommunications, water and sewerage, roads and tourism.

⁴² Charles Sturt University – “Sharing Learning in Wiradjuri Country”

⁴³ Sinclair Knight Merz - Scenario Planning for an Innovative Response to the Water Challenge in the Murray Riverina Region – Education (June 2011)

LGA	Key Infrastructure Requirement
Albury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Albury Industrial Hub Albury Wodonga Regional Cancer Centre Albury Art Gallery Redevelopment Wagirra Trail (Murray River Experience) Albury Airport development
Balranald	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sealing of the Wool Track Linking Mungo & Yanga National Parks Balranald Interpretive Centre & Stopping Place Main Street Revitalisation and Renewal
Berrigan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tocumwal Intermodal Facility expansion Key Tourism infrastructure in Tocumwal Freehold development at Tocumwal Aerodrome Berrigan Shire Sport & Leisure Industry Facility enhancement
Conargo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maude Road Regional Link upgrade Pretty Pine Road upgrade
Corowa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Precinct Replacement sewerage treatment plant Replacement swimming pool Melbourne Street redevelopment (Mulwala) Corowa to Mulwala Bicycle Trail Corowa Riverfront Master Plan Corowa Airport development Provision of potable water (Balldale)
Deniliquin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deniliquin National Digital Rural & Remote Healthcare Centre (Stages 1 to 7) Deniliquin Airport upgrade
Greater Hume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gerogery Sewerage Augmentation Holbrook Industrial Park Woomargama Sewerage Augmentation South West Slopes Industry Access (Coppabella Road Upgrade)
Jerilderie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restoration of the iconic Ned Kelly sites Jerilderie Town Water Supply security enhancement Restoration of the Jerilderie Town 25m swimming pool Emergency water supply for Jerilderie Township
Murray	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Echuca/Moama Bridge Mathoura Sporting Centre of Excellence
Urana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federation Way reconstruction Replacement of bridges to modern standards Modernise community halls
Wakool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Murray River Bridges Barham Flood Levee Barham & District Recreation Reserve Development
Wentworth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpretive Centre All weather road to Mungo National Park Upgrade to Wentworth Showground Complex Wentworth Aerodrome redevelopment Buronga Midway Centre

Disclaimer: The infrastructure proposals identified in the above tables are a snapshot only of key local government requirements

Other	Key Infrastructure Requirement
Strengthening Basin Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks & Sporting Fields • Best Practice Water Use for Councils • Securing Water Supplies • Future Water Allocation Impact Analysis • Economic Development Planning • Water Impact Transition Support • Private Sector Best Practice Water Use • Water Capture, Reuse & Recycle Opportunities • Tourism Strategy • West Corugan Private Irrigation District Review
The Murray region (as a whole)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of the NSW Community Broadband Development Program • Tri State Rail Corridor • Climate Variability Adaption Centre (Dookie Agricultural Centre) • Murray Data Centre • Murray Region Air Services (Deniliquin) • Upgrade of road infrastructure used by timber industry • Natural Gas link

Road

The region has important regional and national road infrastructure. It is crossed by three interstate truck routes:

- Hume Highway (Sydney to Melbourne)
- Newell Highway (Melbourne to Brisbane)
- Sturt Highway (Sydney to Adelaide)

Only the Melbourne to Sydney route has an equivalent rail route. An inland rail route from Melbourne to Brisbane is being considered by the Commonwealth. The Sydney-Melbourne corridor is vital to Australia's economy as the Hume Highway carries 40% of long distance road freight. Interstate freight is expected to increase between Sydney and Melbourne by over 70% within the next 20 years⁴⁴.

There are 30 road and/or rail bridges across the Murray River with approximately 100,000 vehicle crossings per day and 20 million tonnes of freight with the equivalent value of \$29 billion crossing the river each year⁴⁵. Many of the towns on the NSW side of the border are disadvantaged by low quality bridges as the majority of the infrastructure and markets are Melbourne focused. Issues such as weight restrictions and the narrowness of some bridges, raises concerns about attracting industry to the region. Even though work has been done on improving bridges (i.e. duplication, upgrades or new construction) along the Murray, a large proportion of bridges still need to be upgraded.

Road infrastructure is the most important means of transport in the region.

Rail

RDA Murray will actively support the following tri-state corridor initiative of RDA Loddon Mallee:

⁴⁴ NSW Government Planning – Draft Murray Regional Strategy 2009

⁴⁵ NSW Government Planning – Draft Murray Regional Strategy 2009

The Melbourne to Broken Hill Link

The Melbourne to Mildura corridor is defined as part of the AusLink National Network, but at present, the rail has no direct connection to any part of the National Interstate Rail Network. The current unsatisfactory situation is that the Melbourne to Mildura rail corridor comes to a dead end in Mildura, the centre of one of Australia's most productive regions, the tri-state Riverland/Wentworth/Sunraysia Mallee region.

Completion of the corridor by implementing the link would also provide important "relief" for the currently constrained Melbourne to Adelaide route (the Adelaide Hills bottleneck) for traffic travelling to/from Perth and Darwin.

Broken Hill to and from Port of Melbourne – improved access for industry

Due to the region's growing mineral sands sector, as well as the more established mining industry in and around Broken Hill, there are significant volumes of general mining supplies and industrial equipment being transported north from Melbourne to Broken Hill, often via Adelaide.

Direct access to and from the Port of Melbourne would also become possible with the link in place. This would open up a significant new option for the logistic approach taken by Broken Hill companies and industries. The mineral sands province in the belt north of Mildura (Murray NSW communities) is being progressively opened up by companies. Industries which have never used rail would have the possibility of using rail as a long haul option. In addition, the link would assist in developing greater tourism potential in the Murray region if the proposed "Outback Express" were to proceed. The international attractions of national parks (Mungo and Yanga) in the Murray region would complement such a development.⁴⁶

Air

Albury airport is the main regional airport with smaller airports located in Balranald, Deniliquin, Tocumwal, Wentworth and Corowa.

Mildura airport plays a significant role within the region. Currently a master plan for the airport is under revision. The Plan looks at the predictable needs of the airport to 2015 with an assessment of the likely direction of the Airport as far out as 2030⁴⁷.

Deniliquin Council - Marketing to Regional Airlines to conduct Regular Public Transport Air Services

There are no regular public transport (RPT) air services operating from Deniliquin Airport. The nearest RPT services operate out of Albury to the east, Mildura to the west, Narrandera to the north-east and Melbourne to the south.

Findings from a Market Assessment study in 2011 nominated Deniliquin Airport as a preferred location for government and business travel linkages to Albury, Canberra and Sydney. From a perspective of

⁴⁶ The Case for Connectivity : The Barkindji Corridor

⁴⁷ Mildura Airport Newsletter Issue 4 – May 2010

aerodrome land area, ability to lengthen the runway and development costs, Deniliquin would be the strongly favoured airport over comparable locations such as Echuca.

The amount of travel generated would depend greatly on a business friendly service with good frequency. Business and government agencies with links to Sydney (and Canberra) would benefit most by a Deniliquin over Albury connection, and would not be as fare sensitive as leisure travel.

Telecommunications

Telecommunication infrastructure and access to high speed broadband is vital to support existing business expansion and for new businesses to relocate to the region. The importance of regional Australia and its industries to our overall national wellbeing underscores the importance of adequate telecommunication services to regional, rural and remote parts of Australia.

RDA Murray identified ICT infrastructure as a key priority of economic development. Activities of RDA Murray have included:

- developing and implementing a trial of wireless broadband in Albury and neighbouring shires;
- delivery of the first Australian public broadband summit (Darling Harbour, Sydney).
- developing the economic development model for high capacity broadband infrastructure based on next generation wireless broadband and a fibre to the premise core, operated as an open access wholesale network, with global standards based technology. These principles are reflected in the National Broadband Network proposal announced by the Australian Government in 2009;
- advocating to and working with the Australian Communications Media Authority for access by regional communities to global standard spectrum to enable wireless broadband deployments;
- developing a community engagement model for ICT deployment to leverage public assets and accelerate digital uptake and reduce the digital divide in regional communities.

Building on the above activities, RDA Murray in partnership with the Department of Lands Office of Rural Affairs, and more recently the Department of Primary Industry and appointed contractors, engaged with a number of eligible NSW communities (within and outside the Murray region) as a first step in developing business cases and technical plans for the building of a high speed wireless network.

This work was a precursor for the implementation of the NSW Community Broadband Development Program (CBDP) which is based on the regional economic development telecommunications model, i.e. the Murray/CountryTell deployment model.

The model delivers information technology and broadband services through a not-for-profit governance structure which enables deployment into smaller and remote communities where traditional 'for profit' business models do not work due to their reliance on population. The CBDP network is built in each town to the requirements determined through a community engagement process with business, industry and service providers to identify community telecommunications needs and develop a technical solution plan.

The program will deliver highly robust, carrier grade broadband telecommunications services, by installing local access or last mile infrastructure and broadband backhaul services within and around the communities receiving the program. The telecommunications infrastructure is designed and supplied

specifically, but not exclusively, for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements in accordance with the primary aims of the Building the Country - Community Broadband Development program.

The fund provides \$11.6 million over five years to deliver high speed broadband services to rural and regional communities. The program is intended for those communities that are unable to obtain a competitive and high speed broadband service to support their local business and industry in their expansion, diversification or sustainability requirements. It will be built to specifications to operate as an open access network consistent with the federal government's national broadband network.

The business model for the CBD program is designed to foster competition, drive innovation and provide a platform for local internet service provider (ISP) service delivery.

The CBD program's delivery four guiding principles:

1. Open access to infrastructure
2. Carrier grade and open standards based infrastructure development
3. High scalable broadband service delivery platform
4. Open and independent architecture.

Implicit in these principles and requirements is the need for internet services to have the following essential elements:

- functionality – a service that provides a consistent 'easy to use' experience
- reliability – a service that provides a robust and reliable 'always on' experience
- scalability – a service that can be readily expanded to cater for new and future applications and locations
- supportability – a service that is not only reliable but is easily re-configurable to meet emerging needs and quickly restored in the event of service failure, and
- value for money – a service that maximises the investment by the NSW government and the community

Program Objectives

Objective 1 Enable strategic use of broadband to deliver business and community benefits by supporting the use of broadband to improve access to online services and information and to assist the delivery of government services with flow-on benefits to the broader community.

Objective 2 Support market solutions for broadband service delivery by encouraging commercial solutions to address problems with broadband access and affordability.

Objective 3 Complimenting and leveraging federal initiatives and the national broadband network to ensure that telecommunications services are accessible on a reasonably equal basis and meet community and business needs.

Telstra Australia

Information provided by Telstra Australia⁴⁸ advises that the following broadband is available in the Murray region:

- 46 Towns enabled for ADSL available from a multitude of retail providers;
- 41 Towns with ADSL 2+ available from a multitude of retail providers;
- competitively priced BigPond Wireless high speed broadband available to 99% of the population at capital city equivalent rates. (This service was recently declared Metro Equivalent in price and download capacity by the Australian Communications and Media Authority);
- wireless broadband available at capital city rates to a very large percentage of the population from a number of other national mobile carriers;
- satellite Internet available from a myriad of providers to the entire region (Government subsidies available in some situations).

Town	ADSL	ADSL 2+	Town	ADSL	ADSL 2+
Albury	✓	✓	Jerilderie	✓	✓
Arumpo	✓		Lavington	✓	✓
Balranald	✓	✓	Mathoura	✓	
Barham	✓	✓	Merbein	✓	✓
Berrigan	✓	✓	Moama	✓	✓
Burrumbuttock	✓	✓	Moulamein	✓	✓
Corowa	✓	✓	Oaklands	✓	
Culcairn	✓	✓	Piangil	✓	
Curlwaa	✓	✓	Red Cliffs	✓	✓
Dareton	✓	✓	Robinvale	✓	✓
Deniliquin	✓	✓	Table Top	✓	
Ebden	✓	✓	Thurgoona	✓	✓
Finley	✓	✓	Tocumwal	✓	✓
Henty	✓	✓	Urana	✓	✓
Holbrook	✓	✓	Walla Walla	✓	✓
Howlong	✓	✓	Wentworth	✓	✓

Source: Telstra CountryWide Riverina Murray

Employment Land

There is a desire to see greater economic development and self-reliance in the region, whilst acknowledging the links with towns in Victoria are still important. It is good strategic planning to ensure adequate amounts of employment land are available to attract business to the region and to also enable existing businesses to expand.

The townships of Corowa, Barham, Moama and Deniliquin, along with areas of Buronga-Gol Gol may require additional employment land.

There is also a strong need for employment land at Tocumwal in the vicinity of the rail terminal and industrial estate to facilitate future development.

⁴⁸ Telstra Countrywide - Broadband availability in the region

LGA	Availability of employment land
Albury	Most of the vacant land located in Albury is owned by Albury City Council, the Albury Wodonga Corporation or is encompassed within the Albury Industrial Hub at Ettamogah. With the release of land for large and heavy industry at the new industrial hub, Albury City believes that it will have sufficient industrial zoned land to meet the demands of all markets for the foreseeable future.
Balranald	There is a current shortage of employment land within Balranald Shire. The Council will address this issue in their new Development Control Plan.
Berrigan	Each town within the shire has sufficient available employment lands for industrial purposes at present, except for Barooga. There is sufficient commercial land available in the shire, except for Tocumwal, which is somewhat restricted.
Conargo	There is no employment land in the shire, and at this stage, there has been no demand for such land.
Corowa	Corowa Shire has available employment land. Currently there are three lots remaining within the industrial estate at Howlong. Stage two of the Mulwala Business Park also has only three lots remaining. The newly developed Corowa Industrial Estate has 23 blocks available for purchase.
Deniliquin	The Council has over 230 hectares of employment land along with over 590 hectares under private ownership available.
Greater Hume	Greater Hume Council has commenced development of Stage 1 of its Holbrook Industrial Estate (10 lots). There is the potential for a further 20 lots within the estate. The Council also has access to 34 hectares of land in Jindera and will commence development of this land in early 2012.
Jerilderie	Jerilderie has approximately 40 hectares of employment land that is serviced and/or has access to power and water.
Murray	There are currently four lots available for sale within Murray Shire's industrial park. The Council is currently constructing a 52 lot expansion of this park that would satisfy demand for the approximately ten years. This expansion will be ready by the end of 2011. There is also private employment land also available.
Urana	All villages within Urana Shire are zoned Village and there is no industrial zoning. Within the village zoning, a wide range of commercial/business and light industrial uses are permissible. Land marked rural also allows a relatively broad range of land uses and it would be possible to set up manufacturing type industries within rural zones.
Wakool	Wakool Shire has two areas zoned for employment/industrial needs. These are located in Barham and Murray Downs. There are no shortages within either locations.
Wentworth	The draft LEP for Wentworth Shire outlines additional zoned land for industrial purposes and the Buronga & Gol Gol Structure Plan recommends an increase of 46ha of industrial land at Buronga adjoining existing industrial land. The growth of the precinct is modest and will build upon a subdivision of 19 lots ⁴⁹ .

⁴⁹ Draft Wentworth Shire Council Local Environmental Plan 2010 – Wentworth Shire Council

5. Stakeholders

Who are they?

Stakeholders to RDA Murray are (but not limited to):

- Albury City Council
- Balranald Shire Council
- Berrigan Shire Council
- Conargo Shire Council
- Corowa Shire Council
- Deniliquin Council
- Greater Hume Shire Council
- Jerilderie Shire Council
- Murray Shire Council
- Urana Shire Council
- Wakool Shire Council
- Wentworth Shire Council
- RAMROC
- Balranald Inc.
- The communities within the Murray region
- The Indigenous communities and organisation within the Murray region
- Chambers of Commerce
- Education and training providers
- Infrastructure and Utility providers (e.g. Essential Energy, Origin Energy & Telstra)
- Murray Catchment Management Authority
- Lower Murray Catchment Management Authority
- Industry and Investment NSW
- Human Services - Housing NSW
- Service agencies dealing with homelessness
- Community youth councils
- Intereach
- Business Enterprise Centres
- Softwoods Working Group
- Infrastructure & Renewables Working Group
- Murray Now Limited
- NSW Office of Water
- Murray Region Tourism Board
- West Corugan Private Irrigation District
- Murray Irrigation Limited
- Albury Wodonga Health
- Not for profit incorporated associations within the Murray region
- MICEEP
- Department of Immigration & Citizenship
- Employment agencies throughout the Murray region
- Medical Providers/Services
- Cross border and cross region RDAs

Consultative Mechanisms

RDA Murray works in conjunction with its stakeholders by providing the following mechanisms:

- Housing forums
- Community forums
- Balranald Inc. Indigenous Working Group
- Regional Plan Workshops
- Community and After Hours Networking Groups
- Chamber of Commerce presentations and electronic surveys
- Infrastructure Working Groups
- RDA Murray Committee Member and Employee Workshops
- Western Research Institute presentations

- Monthly RDA Murray eNewsletters
- Monthly FYI Grants newsletters
- Grant writing workshops

Contribution to Plan

Stakeholder involvement in developing the regional plan has been vital. RDA Murray has drawn and built upon already established networks, local knowledge and expertise to assist with the preparation of this regional plan. The Committee has sought input from the following organisations to identify issues and opportunities, articulate priorities and seek feedback, along with discovering these organisation's visions for the future:

- Albury City Council
- Balranald Shire Council
- Berrigan Shire Council
- Conargo Shire Council
- Corowa Shire Council
- Deniliquin Council
- Greater Hume Shire Council
- Jerilderie Shire Council
- Murray Shire Council
- Urana Shire Council
- Wakool Shire Council
- Wentworth Shire Council
- RAMROC
- Murray Catchment Management Authority
- Industry and Investment NSW
- RDA Loddon Mallee
- RDA Riverina
- RDA Hume
- Murray Now Limited
- MICEEP
- Riverina Murray Telstra Countrywide
- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- Western Research Institute
- RDA Murray Committee members
- RDA Murray Executive and staff
- Regional Chambers of Commerce
- Balranald Inc.
- Ettamogah Rail Hub
- Wodonga TAFE
- Riverina Institute of TAFE
- Albury Wodonga Health
- Murrumbidgee Local Area Health Network
- Tourism NSW
- Softwoods Working Group
- Murray Regional Tourism Board

Government (levels, agencies, interactions)

RDA Murray works in conjunction with the following government agencies:

- Centrelink (www.centrelink.gov.au)
- Communities NSW (www.communities.nsw.gov.au)
- Human Services - Housing NSW (www.housing.nsw.gov.au)
- Industry and Investment NSW (www.industry.nsw.gov.au)
- Murray Catchment Management Authority (www.murray.cma.nsw.gov.au)
- Department of Education and Training (www.det.nsw.edu.au)
- Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (www.workplace.gov.au)
- Department of Immigration and Citizenship (www.immi.gov.au)

- Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government (www.regional.gov.au)
- Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (www.deccw.gov.au)
- Lands and Property Management Authority NSW (www.lands.nsw.gov.au)
- Aboriginal Affairs NSW (www.daa.nsw.gov.au)
- Rural Communities Consultative Council NSW (www.lands.nsw.gov.au/about_us/office_of_rural_affairs)
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (www.abs.gov.au)
- Bureau of Metrology (www.bom.gov.au)
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (www.aihw.gov.au)
- Office of Water
- RAMROC
- RDA Hume
- RDA Loddon Mallee
- RDA Riverland & Murrayland

Partnerships and collaborations (existing and opportunities)

RDA Murray works with the following organisations (but not limited to) in partnership:

Existing

- Intereach
- Murray Catchment Management Authority
- Local Governments within the Murray region
- RAMROC
- Balranald Inc.
- Chambers of Commerce
- Centrelink
- The communities within the Local Government Areas
- The Indigenous communities within the Local Government Areas
- Education providers
- Infrastructure & Utility providers
- Industry and Investment NSW
- Parks and Wildlife Services
- Housing NSW
- Business Enterprise Centres
- Softwoods Working Group
- North East Greenhouse Alliance
- Infrastructure and Renewables Working Group
- Murray Now
- Multicultural and refugee agencies
- Department of Immigration & Citizenship
- DECCW
- The Personnel Group
- Evocities
- Employment Agencies

Opportunities

- Businesses
- Industries (including Agri)
- Educational providers
- Registered Training Organisations
- Utilities providers
- Women's Rural Network Groups
- Community and Charity Organisations
- Tourism organisations throughout the Murray
- Arts and Cultural Heritage organisation
- Community Youth Organisation
- Agencies assisting the Homelessness
- Tourism NSW – Regional Tourism Offices (RTO)
- NSW Business Chamber Working Groups

6. Strategic Framework

The following SWOT analysis was developed in consultation with stakeholders, local government, regional workshops, extensive pre and post e-surveys, RDA Murray committee and employee forums:

Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- Water
- Tourism events expertise
- Irrigation (agriculture opportunistic)
- Sporting facilities
- Diversity of crops
- Capable people
- The river, forests, wetlands & eco-tourism
- Food bowl
- Organisations/service providers across the region
- Exporters
- Major towns and cities
- Secure water for residential & industry
- Major industries
- Drought preparedness
- Military installations
- Employment lands
- Strong participation in employment
- Low crime rates
- Education & partnerships
- Proximity to highways & capital cities.
- Affordable housing
- Lifestyle
- Recreation
- Efficient agribusiness and industry
- Resilience of committees
- Collaboration
- Agricultural management systems
- Environmental credentials
- Diversity of land use capabilities
- Comparatively low land costs
- Local Government unity (oh please!)
- Opportunity for wide variety of industries to relocate
- Central position – highway and port access
- Land available for development
- Community capacity
- Cross border/region RDA relationships
- Reputation of region – clean and green
- Education providers (Universities & TAFEs)

Weaknesses

- Lack of public transport
- Infrastructure – rail, renewables
- Water uncertainty
- Single industry communities
- Vulnerable small towns
- Range of skills taught/lack of education/ access to education
- Density of population spread out (population decreasing)
- Youth retention
- Telecommunications
- Cross border issues
- Access to energy/gas etc
- Planning process
- Remoteness to Sydney
- Fractured region/lack of regional focus
- Average incomes in communities
- Diversity/lack of business ties
- Distance to services
- Waiting lists/access to health
- Flooding and its impacts (i.e. reduction in land capability)
- Loss of local knowledge and skills due to loss of population
- Lower resourced Councils (population and area)
- Aging population
- Under-utilisation of rail infrastructure
- Aging infrastructure
- Climate extremes – drought and flood
- Skills shortages
- Cross border issues – regulations
- Smaller councils finding difficulties sustaining services
- Lack of good economic development officers in smaller councils
- Vulnerable small towns
- Loss of agricultural land
- Sydney centric focus for government services
- Difficulty in attracting professionals
- Rail– lack of passenger & freight services
- Political relevance
- Public transport
- Succession Planning/Leadership
- Sustainability of small LGAs (capacity of smaller LGAs)

Gaps and opportunities

Gaps (and Threats)

- Drought/climate change
- Amalgamation of forms
- Absentee ownership/itinerant workers
- Political apathy (NSW)/loss of government services – isolation from decision makers
- Policy changes
- Decrease in food production
- Buy back water
- Green movement
- ETS
- Cross border government regulations & inequities
- Murray Darling Basin Plan
- Federal Funding
- Small Business
- Attracting professionals
- Economic downturns/global market uncertainty
- Fire protection in high catchments
- Energy costs
- Climate variability
- Aging population and medical services
- Global marketing
- Erosion of funding to LGAs

Opportunities

- Indigenous enterprises
- Energy industry – solar/wind/bio-fuels
- Farming - forestry/plantations
- Water saving industry/expertise
- Utilise unused land/business sites
- Decentralisation of government departments
- Social inclusion agenda
- Small/home based businesses
- Lifestyle
- Niche marketing
- Reputation of region – clean & green
- Partnerships
- Small business clusters
- Transport
- Collaborative projects
- Public/Private Partnerships
- Intermodal development
- Tourism
- Rail infrastructure
- Collaborative approach to opportunities
- Local food processing
- Medical
- Micro business/home based business development
- RDA Fund
- Murray Regional Tourism Board
- Collaborative approach to business infrastructure
- Strategic vision for the region in 20, 40, 60 years
- RDA Youth Committee
- Leadership courses for local community leaders
- Irrigation infrastructure upgrade
- New focus on regional development
- Upgrade Murray River crossings
- Renewable energy (nuclear, solar)
- Urban planning – local autonomy
- Readily available and serviced industrial lands
- Flexible and available workforce

Relationship to existing documents

In preparing this regional plan, the following reports/plans were extensively used to take into account the strategies and plans that these agencies have developed for the Murray region:

- State Plan NSW Murray Region: Regional Business Growth Plan NSW March 2010
- Draft Murray Regional Strategy NSW – Planning
- Industry and Investment NSW Corporate Plan 2010 - 13
- Keep Australia Working – Federal
- Social Inclusion Principles for Australia – Federal
- Top 10 Big Ideas - NSW Business Chamber
- Destination Visitor Survey – Strategic Regional Research Report NSW, Vic & SA - Department of Resources, Energy & Tourism
- Regional Profile 2011 – Murray Now
- NSW Community Broadband Development Program
- Murray Region Shift Share – Western Research Institute Limited
- Statistical profiles for the 21 Local Government Areas that make up the Murray Now region – Western Research Institute Limited
- Introduction to the Basin Plan (April 2010) – Murray Darling Basin Authority
- Sharing Learning in Wiradjuri Country – Charles Sturt University website (www.csu.edu.au)
- Plug Straight In – Albury City Council
- Tocumwal Intermodal Facility documentation provided by Berrigan Shire Council
- Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits (June 2009) – Australian Bureau of Statistics
- The Campaspe-Atlas Project – Bemax
- Extensions to Major West Balranald Project – Notice to the ASX – Iluka Resources Limited
- Broadband availability in the region (Summary provided by Telstra Countrywide Riverina Murray)
- Murray Land and Water Management Plans – Celebration of Achievements – June 2011 – Murray Irrigation Ltd
- Education data for Region 18 (provided by MICEEP)
- Echuca Regional Health Redevelopment (Summary provided by RDA Loddon Mallee)
- Seasonal Outlook – April 2011 - Rabobank
- Regional Population Growth Australia 2009-2010 – Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Albury Wodonga Health Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015
- Murrumbidgee Local Area Health Network – Media Releases
- Annual Report 2009–2010 - NSW Department of Health
- The health of the people of New South Wales Summary Report (Report of the Chief Health Officer) 2010 – NSW Department of Health
- Evocities – The Art of Living – Summary – May 2011
- Central Murray Cluster Group 2 – Strengthening Basin Communities – Stage 2 Milestone Report (31 March 2011) – Hyder Consulting
- Murray Region Tourism Product Gap Analysis & Tourism Development Plan – Murray Region Tourism Board
- Progress Towards Healthy Resilient Landscapes – December 2010 – Natural Resources Commission
- Wakool Shire Resilience Assessment Workshop Report (June 2010)
- Indigenous Employment Program 2009 – 2012 Program Guidelines – Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- Australian Jobs 2011 - Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
- Draft Wentworth Shire Council Local Environmental Plan 20110 – Wentworth Shire

These reports/plans contain key economic, environmental and social issues affecting communities & will be utilised by RDA Murray in determining project opportunities.

Vision & Goals

Vision

Murray regional communities that feel empowered informed and encouraged to be prosperous, vibrant, excited by their potential and optimistic for their future.

Mission

To develop and strengthen the Murray region by working in partnership with government and our communities to foster innovative solutions to economic growth, environmental sustainability, and inclusion of all members of the community.

Values

Leadership, Perseverance, Respect,
Resourcefulness, Accountability,
Responsiveness, Innovation, Equality, Integrity

Priorities

RDA Murray has identified the priority actions for each of the eight key priority areas:

Key Sector	Priority Actions	Time line
Economic Goals		
1. Industry Futures	Identification of new opportunities in advanced manufacturing and knowledge based services	ongoing
	Encourage sustainable growth and development of industry clusters, networks and market development.	ongoing
	Establish, lead and implement Working & Advisory Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure Working Group • Green Economy & Job Creation Strategy Advisory Group • Softwoods Working Group; • Murray Valley Industry Working Group 	ongoing
	Working Groups to identify and implement initiatives to assist industry and business sectors to embrace innovation increase productivity and global competitiveness	ongoing
	Work with whole of government agencies to attract overseas investment prospects to where the region demonstrates a competitive advantage	ongoing
	Coordinate the implementation of business case scenarios re: Scenario Planning for an Innovative Response to the Water Challenges in the Murray and Riverina regions.	2011 - 2015
2. A Smart Future	Skills in demand; work with industry and the education sector on future skills development that meets the needs of Murray industry and services	ongoing
	Roll out of Grant Writing Workshops specifically tailored for community groups, local government, business, and not for profit incorporated associations.	ongoing
	Advocate the expansion of regional education and training for indigenous youth. Initiate up-skilling into Green Jobs	ongoing
	Work with business and the education sector on stronger innovation links between businesses, research institutes, universities and TAFE Institutes	ongoing
	Murray Valley Industry Park Working Group to initiate Research and Development of new farm, water and renewable technologies.	ongoing

Key Sector	Priority Actions	Time line
Economic Goals		
2. A Smart Future (continued)	Support the NSW Community Broadband Development Program community engagement model for ICT infrastructure deployment to leverage public assets and accelerate digital uptake and reduce the digital divide in regional communities and towns.	ongoing
	Support and advocate the roll-out of the National Broadband Network (NBN) to benefit Murray communities	ongoing
3. Foundations for Growth	Support the cross border <i>Murray River Crossings Group</i> , to advocate for upgrade and replacement of bridges and roads.	ongoing
	Support the NSW Cross Border Commissioner in addressing utilities and regulation anomalies.	2012 - ongoing
	Regional Development Australia Fund - liaise with councils, RAMROC, not for profit incorporated associations and eligible consortiums on regional infrastructure gaps and options for future funding	2011 - 2016

Key Sector	Priority Actions	Time line
Environmental Goals		
4. Maintaining Balance	Work with whole of government, RAMROC, industry and agricultural groups on future water issues	ongoing
	Support the implementation of water re-use schemes to support existing and future industrial development purposes as an alternate supply	ongoing
	Lead the Murray Valley Industry Park Working Group in attracting new agricultural business, job creation and R & D programs in support of transformational change and resilience	ongoing
	Work collaboratively with the Murray Catchment Management Authority in the promotion and delivery of Natural Resource Management related to water, soil quality, salinity, biodiversity and native vegetation.	ongoing
	Review the 21 recommendations handed down by the Standing Committee on Regional Development with regard to the inquiry to the impact of the Murray Darling Basin Plan Guide.	2011 ongoing

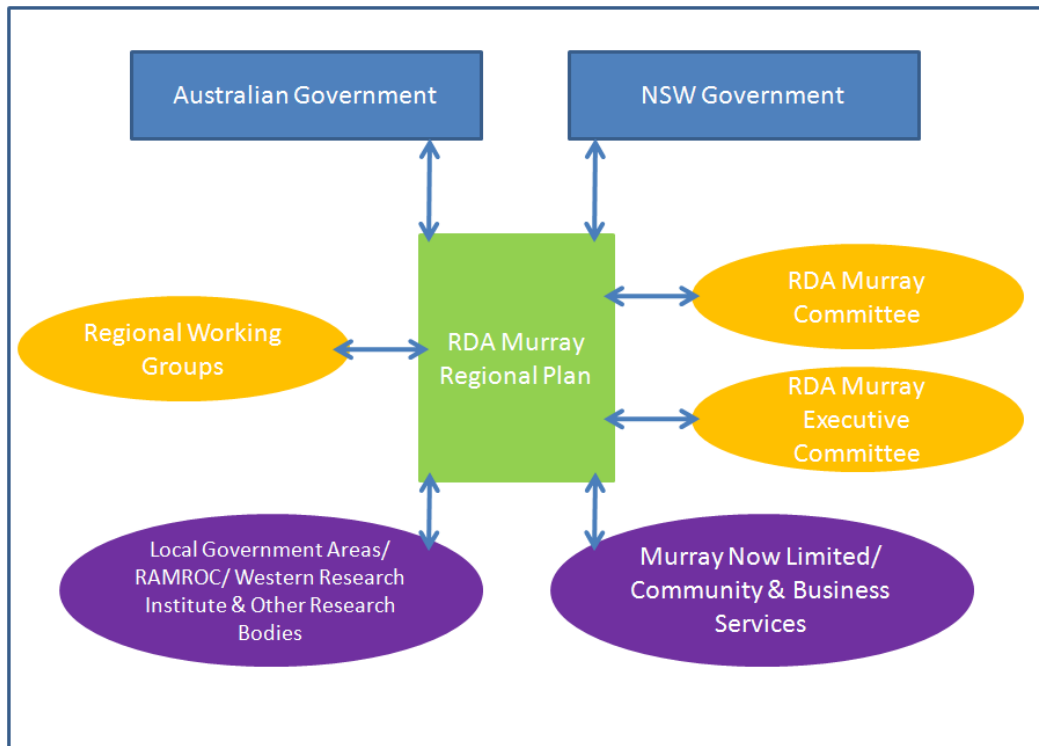
Key Sector	Priority Actions	Time line
Environmental Goals		
4. Maintaining Balance (continued)	Development of Green Economy and Job Creation Strategy - Advisory Working Group	2011 - 2013

Key Sector	Priority Actions	Time line
Social Goals		
5. Sustaining Communities	Support the future of small towns/communities with resident attraction and retention, and their links with major centres in retaining and growing services via RDA Murray business offices in Deniliquin and Balranald	ongoing
	Support cultural and Indigenous programs and events.	ongoing
6. Health and Wellbeing	Work with the health sector in supporting the attraction of specific skill shortages to smaller towns & communities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> targeting General Practitioners (GPs) and Allied Health Workers, Aged Care workers & infrastructure 	ongoing
	Work with smaller communities in developing health strategies to promote innovative service delivery options & funding streams	ongoing
	Digital e-Health - To scope a viable, cost-effective, simple and consumer-friendly digital service network that can initially (manage) chronic diseases and other acute lifestyle conditions among significantly dispersed populations	2011 - 2012
	Delivery of the Riverina Murray NSW Homelessness Action Plan (HAP)	2011 - 2012

Key Sector	Priority Actions	Time line
Integration Goals		
7. Linking the Region	Link and build on relationships with Councils and RAMROC and key regional groups and networks to develop programs and initiatives that will attract resources, funding and benefits for 'whole of region'	2011 ongoing

Key Sector	Priority Actions	Time line
Integration Goals		
7. Linking the Region (continued)	Support the (cross-border) Murray Regional Tourism Product Gap Analysis and Tourism Development Plan	2011 - 2013
	Conduct regional forums throughout the Murray Region to promote the activities of RDA Murray and it's Regional Plan priorities and actions	2011 - 2015
	Partner Murray Now Ltd as the regional brand and investment attraction organization, linking regional businesses and communities that share Victorian and New South Wales Murray borders.	2011 ongoing
8. Providing Leadership	Bring together leaders from all businesses, LGAs, services and community groups to develop sustainable regional projects.	2011 ongoing

How to make it happen



7. Immediate Priorities

Green Economy & Job Creation Strategy

RDA Murray has identified economic development in the green sector as one of the potential adaptation responses to both the financial downturn, the impacts of climate change and *proposed* forms of Carbon Pollution Reduction schemes. The project aims to identify which industries are most at risk, how those industries could be “greened” to ensure they continue to thrive under the new climatic conditions (these industries would include agriculture), what is the current state of play in the region in terms of existing green industries and jobs, what current green skills exist and what are the knowledge gaps within local industries, what green education is available both at university and vocational education levels and what are the educational gaps for the region and develop a series of case studies to explore the green economic development potential (for example solar industry including power generation, solar hot water and photovoltaic cells and associated trade). Case studies are also to explore potential business development opportunities that may be available in the green sector for the existing industry sectors (for example the establishment of Carbon Sinks for the agricultural sector).

Green Jobs

‘Green jobs’, also known as ‘green-collar jobs’, are jobs that contribute to better environmental outcomes or increased sustainability. They arise from attempts to mitigate the causes and effects of environmental threats. Green jobs contribute substantially to preserving or restoring environmental quality by:

- Protecting and restoring eco-systems, biodiversity and environmental services
- Decreasing consumption of energy, materials or water
- De-carbonizing the economy i.e. avoiding greenhouse gas emissions
- Minimizing the generation of waste and pollution

Green-collar jobs range from low-skill, entry-level positions to high-skilled, higher-paid jobs and include opportunities for advancement in both skills and wages. Green jobs were originally considered ‘niche’ because they filled specific roles such as eco-tourism or recycling. As we move to a low carbon economy all workplaces will become cleaner and greener and most jobs will need to become a ‘shade of green’.

There are great opportunities for green jobs and industries in a booming clean economy, in particular in the area of solar, green buildings and smarter use of energy and resources. According to CSIRO economic modeling, 2.7 million new jobs can be created in Australia by 2025 if the country was to become carbon neutral by 2050. Most of these new jobs will be green jobs.

Workers in carbon intensive industries will need re-skilling (and re-tooling) to adapt to greener production practices. Green jobs are set to emerge in the following manner:

- Additional jobs such as manufacturing devices to be attached to existing equipment for measurement and abatement, and accounting jobs for carbon tax
- Substitute jobs where, for example, jobs are lost from fossil fuels but substituted to renewable or substitution from trucks to rail
- Jobs eliminated in industries such as packaging

- Existing jobs transformed such as plumbers, electricians, metal and construction workers through transformation of skills sets and work methods
- Green jobs will radiate across all sectors of the economy

Australia's green economy is currently estimated at \$15.5 billion, employing 112,000 people. Australian industry is best positioned to succeed in six key market, renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable water systems, biomaterials, green buildings and waste and recycling (as identified in the 'Green Gold Rush' report).

Project Summary

The project is designed to provide RDA Murray with all critical information needed to develop a 'green economy' strategy for the Murray region.

The initial stage of the project aims to define what 'green' jobs and 'green' economy means and use these definitions to establish the current status for the local green industry as well as the 'greening' of other industries. The project will also outline current funding streams and grants that are available to local businesses and industries to become 'greener' or to establish new 'green' operations, existing and upcoming government legislation in the field both at the federal and state level and existing and proposed government incentive schemes and programs.

The second stage of the project will conduct a vulnerability assessment of local industries to climate change impacts, in consultation with relevant stakeholders. Awareness of climate change impacts will also be evaluated as well as individual sectors capacity to adapt. It is anticipated that one of the possible adaptation responses reside with 'greening' established industries and developing new 'green' opportunities.

The third stage of the project will conduct a gap analysis exercise both at the local skills and at the 'green' education levels. A current status of the 'green' education will be established prior to the 'green' education gap analysis.

The fourth stage will consist in the development of relevant case studies for the Murray region. The case studies for development will be identified as part of stage 2 and 3 of the project and will concentrate on the industries where the greening potential is the highest. It is anticipated that these studies will include a mix of 'greening' existing established industries and of emerging 'green' industries.

The project concept features a number of feedback mechanisms to ensure that reports are generated in the appropriate sequence and that information is used to produce subsequent reports.

Project Aims and Objectives

The project aims will be to provide RDA Murray with the information needed to develop a strategy for the development of the new green economy and for the greening of the existing economy in the Murray region. It is anticipated that the project will include and address the following:

Establish the 'green jobs' state of play in the region:

- Identify what industries currently operate solely or partly in the green sector and how many jobs are considered green within each industries, whether considered green or not
- Identify which funding streams are currently available that relates to green jobs and green economy development
- Identify government incentive programs and schemes currently operating in the field that can stimulate green development (Renewable energy alternatives – Solar and Wind)
- Identify existing and forthcoming government legislation in which the green economy operates (i.e. Australian Government Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS), Renewable Energy Target (RET) and Nation Building and Jobs Plan and how this can affect green economies development

Consider the Threats and Opportunities:

- Identify which industries are most sensitive to Climate Change and associated forthcoming legislation in the Murray region, in both negative and positive impacts
- Identify which industries (green or not) would thrive in the new climatic, financial and political environment

Undergo a Risk Analysis

- Form a judgment on whether climate change, financial conditions and new legislations are a significant risk to these industries relative to other sources of risk (prioritise the risks)

Build Awareness and Capacity

- Determine the level of awareness of climate change, financial and political threats and opportunities that exists within the industries and communities, their drivers and barriers to change and their capacity to adapt.
- Identify knowledge gaps and where further work is needed
- Identify key vulnerability issues within industries to ensure that mitigation measures are focused targeted and in clear language.

Identify skills and learning shortages

- Identify which skills are in demand in the region in the 'green field' area
- Identify the current learning landscape that applies to the green economy and identify where gaps exist (units to be developed or units not currently on the scope)

Identify Communication Channels and Methods

- Scope out strategic directions and identify appropriate communication channels to deliver 'effective' communication within industries to achieve awareness of threats and opportunities of climate change, financial and political risks and options for adaptation.
- Incorporate Climate Change, financial and political Risk Management plans into the industries overall Risk Management Plan to ensure Climate Change, financial and political Risks are built into the forward planning of the industries, business, communities and local government areas.

Other activities or initiatives

Social Inclusion

RDA Murray is engaging in the *Social Inclusion Principles for Australia* as set down by the Commonwealth Government. The principles are as follows:

<p><i>Aspirational Principles</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reducing Disadvantage – Making sure people in need benefit from access to good health, education and other services. 2. Increasing social, civil and economic participation – Helping everyone get the skills and support they need so they can work and connect with community, even during hard times. 3. A greater voice, combined with greater responsibility – Governments and other organisations giving people a say in what services they need and how they work, and people taking responsibility to make the best use of the opportunities available.
<p><i>Principles Of Approach</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Building on individual and community strengths – Making the most of people's strengths, including the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and peoples from other cultures. 5. Building partnerships with key stakeholders – Governments, organisations and communities working together to get the best results for people in need. 6. Developing tailored services – Services working together in new and flexible ways to meet each person's different needs. 7. Giving a high priority to early intervention and prevention – Heading off problems by understanding the root causes and intervening early. 8. Building joined-up services and whole of government(s) solutions – Getting different parts and different levels of government to work together in new and flexible ways to get better outcomes and services for people in need. 9. Using evidence and integrated data to inform policy – Finding out what programs and services work well and understanding why, so can share good ideas, keep making improvements and put effort into the things that work. 10. Using locational approaches – Working in places where is a lot of disadvantage to get to people most in need and to understand how different problems are connected. 11. Planning for sustainability – Doing things that will help people and communities deal better with problems in the future, as well as solving the problems they face now.

Riverina Murray NSW Homelessness Action Plan

The Riverina Murray NSW Homelessness Action Plan (HAP) is being administered on behalf of the NSW Community Services by RDA Murray. As a new player in the field of regional homelessness, RDA Murray is building strong networks across the region that is assisting with the successful implementation of this initiative:

1. Background

The NSW Homeless Action Plan – a way home: reducing homelessness in NSW sets the direction for state-wide reform of the homelessness service system. Through realignment of existing effort, the focus will be on prevention and long term support. This program commenced on 1 January 2010 and will end on 31 December 2012.

2. Client Group

The target group is “people who are homeless”. This includes “people who are at imminent risk of becoming homeless”. There are 30 Housing Intensive Support Packages, and 50 Early Intervention Packages for each year. The client group for this service is:

Single adults or families experiencing primary homelessness, who may be repeat users of crisis accommodation services or who are/or at risk of chronic homelessness or who are rough sleepers (at the time of referral).

Single adults, families or young people aged 16-25 years, who are not currently in supported accommodation, who are at risk of homelessness and who may be disengaged or at risk of disengaging from family, school/education, training or employment.

3. Geographic coverage

The following local government areas where the services are delivered:

Albury	Corowa	Junee	Tumbarumba
Balranald	Deniliquin	Leeton	Tumut
Berrigan	Greater Hume	Lockhart	Urana
Carathool	Griffith	Murrumbidgee	Wagga Wagga
Conargo	Gundagai	Murray	Wakool
Coolamon	Hay	Narrandera	
Cootamundra	Jerilderie	Temora	

8. Review

Process to review and update the Plan

This regional plan provides the structure to develop an annual business plan with results monitored and reported on a quarterly basis to the state and federal governments. The Committee will meet on a regular basis to review progress against targets and milestones that have been agreed in the development of the Regional and Business plans. Progress reviews take place at three different levels:

1. Strategic Reviews

Strategic reviews take place at two monthly intervals and are directed at assessing progress towards targets that have been detailed in the regional plan. Where these targets are numerical, an agreed and consistent form of measurement will be used throughout the life of the regional plan. The regional plan will be reviewed for relevance and progress every year.

2. Special Reviews

Special reviews may be needed when:

- Unexpected demands or issues arise; or
- The Committee is able to identify additional sources of funds; or
- The Committee decides to undertake a special project (such as hosting a regional conference).

These reviews should be separate from the regular meeting schedule to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for regular reviews while still allowing the opportunity for the Committee to undertake additional activities.

3. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPIs are quantifiable measurements that have agreed value and reflect critical success factors of an organisation. The Committee will report against specific activities within its Business Plan that indicate it is observing approved systems of governance and operational management.



PO Box 33
Balranald NSW 2715
ABN 34 006 570 433

XXXXXXXXXXXX
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XXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXX

Dear xxxxxxxxx,

We are writing to you in regard to the issue of decentralisation of heavily populated areas such as the metropolitan cities to areas with low population densities such as regional and rural small communities.

Such a movement of population would provide the dual benefit of reducing pressures for housing, service infrastructure and lifestyle capital in the densely populated metropolitan areas while providing a large economic and social stimulus to regional and rural areas.

We are seeking the introduction of a scheme to stimulate decentralisation of population and we are seeking your advocacy for this scheme.

Our proposal involves introducing a taxation concession via a zoning mechanism to allow self funded retirees living in metropolitan areas the opportunity to take advantage of the large capital differential in housing prices between metropolitan areas and rural communities.

The difference between the average cost of housing of metropolitan areas and our town we estimate to be in the order of \$400,000 per house (based on average metropolitan house prices of around \$550,000 and a new, large, fully service house costing around \$150,000 erected in our community).

If self funded retirees could invest this capital difference in their superannuation funds without any entry tax, we believe this would be a strong inducement to encourage some to make the transition to a small rural town; with sufficient encouragement in the form of promotional activities.

We believe that our small community could cope with a population increase from its existing 1,500 to a level of 2,000 or more over a 5 to 8 year period. This would provide a tremendous economical and social stimulus to our town after years of drought and economic hardship and also underpin recent investments made in medical and community services.

Similarly we believe relatively small population transfers on a national scale under this scheme would have significant benefits to the nation.

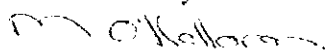
- A population transfer of 10,000 households could generate somewhere in the order of a 3 to 4 billion dollar increase to the superannuation savings pool.
- This scheme could be used by recent retirees who have suffered major losses under the Global Financial Crisis to lift their superannuation savings pool.
- Such relatively small population transfers should also have some effect in dampening house price pressures in metropolitan areas by reducing the difference between housing availability and demand. We believe the difference between supply and demand in the Sydney metropolitan area to be in the order of 60,000 houses per annum.
- This scheme should also provide some relief to the future infrastructure pressures on metropolitan areas.
- We also consider that this taxation concession would have little impact on the existing taxation base of the Australian Government as this activity is not currently occurring.
- Under such a scheme new housing built to the required standards could also assist in meeting future energy saving targets.

Rural communities such as ours have few comparative advantages to entice new industries to relocate. However, we do believe that we have a significant comparative advantage in the price of housing compared to metropolitan areas. This combined with our community's friendly and inclusive nature and our town's quality amenities and service infrastructure and the fact that our community is free of many of the less attractive aspects of metropolitan living, has led us to feel we are well situated to provide an industry based on catering for retirees and the aged.

A systematic and comprehensive scheme or policy is needed to enable self funded retirees to capitalise on the large price differential of housing in metropolitan centres compared to that of small rural communities.

We are asking the Federal Government to introduce taxation zones for rural communities that enable those around retirement age to invest the excess capital (derived from selling their house and resettling into a rural community) into a super fund without any entry tax. We believe such a scheme would be very much to our community's advantage and a very significant advantage of the nation as a whole.

Yours faithfully



John Williams MP
MEMBER FOR MURRAY-DARLING

PLEASE REPLY TO DENILIQUN OFFICE

20 September 2010

Mrs Marianne O'Halloran
Vice Chair
Balranald Inc
PO Box 33
BALRANALD NSW 2715

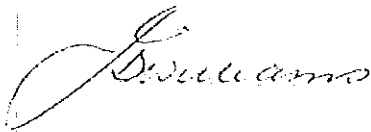
Dear Marianne

Thank you for correspondence dated 6 September 2010 requesting my support for a scheme for decentralisation based on a zoned taxation concession for self-funded retirees.

I certainly support your thoughts and would encourage such a scheme, however this matter is a Federal Government issue and I am sure Sussan Ley will be taking up this matter on your behalf.

I have passed a copy of your suggestions to the NSW Nationals Senators Fiona Nash and John Williams, for their information.

Yours sincerely

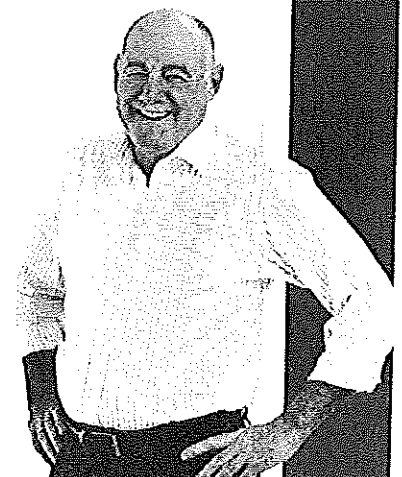


JOHN WILLIAMS, MP
MEMBER FOR MURRAY-DARLING

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THE NATIONALS for Regional NSW

SENATOR **John Williams**

Senator for NSW | The Nationals Whip in the Senate

13 October 2010

Mrs. Marianne O'Halloran
Vice Chair
Balranald Inc
P.O. Box 33
BALRANALD N S W 2715

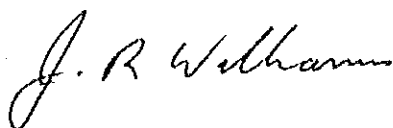
Dear Marianne,

My New South Wales Nationals colleague John Williams MP has forwarded to me a copy of your letter dated the 6th of September. In that letter you request support for a scheme that would hopefully attract more people to regional area.

For your information, the NSW Nationals have adopted as policy a commitment to increase the population of regional New South Wales by 470,000 over a twenty years period. This includes the offer of a \$7,000 relocation grant for people who relocate from Sydney and build or buy a home in the regional area, and 40 percent of the 100,000 jobs to be created under the Jobs Action Plan will be in regional New South Wales. These incentives will hopefully enhance the attraction of country areas. Included are details of the Federal Nationals policies for Regional Development and Tax and the Economy.

I have also forwarded your thoughts to the Shadow Treasurer the Hon Joe Hockey MP.

Yours sincerely



J R Williams
The Nationals Senator for NSW
The Nationals Whip in the Senate





The Hon **SUSSAN LEY MP**
Federal Member for Farrer



Reference: SL/ES

22 September 2010

Mrs Marianne O'Halloran
50 Myall Street
BALRANALD NSW 2715

Dear Mrs O'Halloran

Thank you for contacting me with your concerns about regional development and decentralisation and seeking advocacy to amend the tax regulations for superannuation.

You have put forward excellent ideas, which I hope can form the basis for sensible policy work in the case of decentralisation.

I have passed your letter on to the Shadow Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Water, Senator Barnaby Joyce, and have asked that he keep your ideas in mind for Coalition policy consideration.

Thank you again for contacting me with your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have further queries or concerns which I might be able to assist you with.

Yours sincerely

SUSSAN LEY MP
Federal Member for Farrer

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