

**Submission
No 26**

PERFORMANCE OF THE REGIONAL INVESTMENT ACTIVATION FUND AND THE REGIONAL JOB CREATION FUND

Organisation: Broken Hill Distillery

Date Received: 23 November 2023

Broken Hill Distillery
400 Thomas St,
Broken Hill, NSW, 2880

Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development

re: Inquiry into the performance of the Regional Investment Activation Fund and the Regional Job Creation Fund

Our business, Broken Hill Distillery was unsuccessful in obtaining any Job Creation Funding as by the time it was rolled out, we had almost completed our works during Covid lockdowns/restrictions and had spent way more than what the government was looking for as a down payment.

We had already digested assets and secured SME funding and spent approximately \$400000 on renovations and infrastructure to increase our current business (Tydvil Hotel & Bistro), started a new attached business (Broken Hill Distillery) and had it all completed for when restrictions were lifted.

We were approached and advised by relevant representatives from the Job Creation Fund to submit an application even though they were advised that we didn't have another spare bucket of cash to throw around after carrying our staff and businesses through this period of onerous business challenges.

There was an opportunity for the the Job Creation Fund to add on to our planned works and an extended business plan but they declined to do so as we did not have have 50/50 ratio they were looking for and only wanting to max pay of \$20000 per FTE position created.

If the Job Creation Fund had joined the party, there would be at a minimum, another 8 persons employed at this stage and with the continuing success of our new business on the national and international stages, I would project that number to be more around 13 new employees.

The new roles across both businesses would have included Kitchenhands, Cleaners, Chefs, Administration, Distillers, Warehouse/Dispatch, Hospitality Management.

Finding funding for growth in the Far West region is always going to be hard and we are yet to be successful with a grant application as they seem to turn up too late and then miss the mark by waiting to long for approvals to be administered. If we had waited for the approval of this Job Creation Fund, we would have been shut, when we should have been open.

If the opportunity rose again we would reapply for the Job Creation Funding, but they may need to expect less outlay from small businesses that have already outlaid plenty already.

Maybe a "Recognition of Prior Expenditure" might be something to include in the next round.

That's the short and sweet version. Feel free to contact myself if more information is required.

Kind Regards,
Eric Hanna

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