

### ***Executive Summary***

The Perth Area Consultative Committee accepts this unique opportunity to provide input into the foundation and future direction of Regional Development Australia.

Becoming RDAc (Perth) will build upon the competitive advantages of the ACC Network – namely our comprehensive knowledge of the local economic, social and environmental architecture of our region and our 13 year credible track record in building collaboration across the three levels of government, industry, education and the community.

The economic performance of cities and regions is interrelated and the growth of each depends on the success of the others in reaching their full potential. Metropolitan RDAcs will play a key role in the ensuring that RDA is seen as a comprehensive regional development agency and an effective national network for the delivery of the Australian government regional development policy.

In developing this report, Perth ACC has addressed the guidelines provided by the Department and consulted with a wide range of stakeholders on the role of RDA, its structure and reporting. As part of the consultation process, Perth ACC has also sought feedback on improving engagement of the region with the Australian Government and the services provided by Perth ACC.

Perth ACC in partnership with Sydney Grow, Greater Brisbane and Adelaide Metropolitan ACCs have undertaken research and received advice on importance of the roles of RDAc (Metros) in the delivery of the Australian Government regional development and reengagement with cities policies. A consolidated response paper on behalf of the metropolitan ACCs will be provided as part of this reporting process to the CRG Interim Board, Department Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, Minister Albanese and Parliamentary Secretary Gray.

#### **The six key conclusions of this report are:**

##### **1. The Vision**

Regional Development Australia will facilitate strategic regional development by addressing agreed infrastructure, economic, social and environmental priorities of regional significance. This will be achieved through a commitment to engage and work in partnership with government, business and community.

##### **2. The Role**

2.1 The role of RDA should go beyond “advising” to being a key partner in delivery of the Australian Government’s Regional Development policy.

2.2 RDAc (Metros) have the skills and networks to assist in addressing the local issues associated with the major urban infrastructure development agendas of Infrastructure Australia and the Major Cities Unit.

### **3. Key RDA Charter Points**

- 3.1 Establishes linkages and partnerships with key stakeholders and across government to identify agreed priorities and establish a strategic shared vision for the region.
- 3.2 Provides a conduit to access Commonwealth resources to address agreed infrastructure, economic, social and environmental priorities of regional significance.
- 3.3 Provides the Australian Government with strategic information on community infrastructure needs, service delivery and regional issues and opportunities.
- 3.4 Facilitates regular communications and engagement between federal, state and local government and undertakes regular regional gatherings to deliver information and raise discussion about a range of issues and needs for the community.
- 3.5 Facilitates economic development planning and investment attraction initiatives, leveraging resources from others in the public, private and community sectors to address local needs and issues.
- 3.6 Disseminates information about Commonwealth programs and services and provides comments and recommendations to the Government for relevant Australian Government funding programs.
- 3.7 Advises the Australian Government on implementation of specific federal initiatives/programs and undertakes ad hoc consultations and meetings on behalf of appropriate portfolios or federal agencies where a regional network or site specific visit is required.

### **4. RDA National Board**

- 4.1 Increase the profile and role of RDA National Board to be a major player in regional development along with other key agencies such as Infrastructure Australia, Major Cities Unit, Social Inclusion Board, Office of Northern Australia.
- 4.2 A formal reporting structure between the RDAc network and the Board and the Board and the Minister with a formal report such as *State of Regional and Urban Australia* to be provided at least annually to the Minister.
- 4.3 Membership should be broader than RDAc Chairs to provide a holistic view of regional development issues and responses to the Minister.
- 4.4 Membership should include national key stakeholders in regional development such as Infrastructure Australia, Major Cities Unit, Office of Northern Australia, ALGA and Social Inclusion Board.

### **5. RDAc - Chairs, Structure and Boundaries**

- 5.1 Chairs to be appointed by the Minister after a publicly advertised call for EOI for the position.
- 5.2 RDAc (Perth) should retain the current not for profit Incorporated Association status to preserve the independence and apolitical nature of the organisation.
- 5.3 RDA boundaries should take into account existing government structures and presences and align with the jurisdiction of State Government Development Organisations and Regional Councils of Local Government. RDA boundaries and roles should reflect and be complementary to the jurisdictions and roles of other Australian Government agencies such as the Major Cities Unit and Commonwealth Urban Offices.
- 5.4 RDAc (Perth) boundary should be extended to include the Town of Kwinana and the City of Rockingham.
- 5.5 The Executive Officers Reference Group role as the peak and formal national EO group should be strengthened and reviewed to reflect the structure and operations of the new RDA network. The title of the group should be changed to Executive Officers National Committee and the Chairperson should be an ex Officio member of the RDA National Board.

## **6. Improving Communication between the Government and the Region**

6.1 Reinststate the WA State Office of Department Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government in Perth.

6.2 Undertake regular planning and co-ordination meetings at a regional level with inter sectoral and three levels of government representation. This would be a valuable resource for increased collaboration and maintaining strong networks.

6.3 RDAc (Metros) facilitates the connection between head offices of State and Australian Government and regional RDACs. This connection between rural and metropolitan RDAc increases collaboration and strengthening of economic and infrastructure corridors and underpins the value of the national RDA network.

6.4 Metropolitan RDACs are the perfect platform for the government to use to provide advice and feedback on their policy of reengaging with cities.

6.5 Undertake regular issues forums with all tiers of government, community and business to identify community infrastructure needs, service delivery and regional issues and opportunities. These issues can be prioritised and incorporated into a strategic plan of action for the region and establish multi skilled teams to achieve the tasks. The forums can also be used to deliver Australian government information on services and programs.