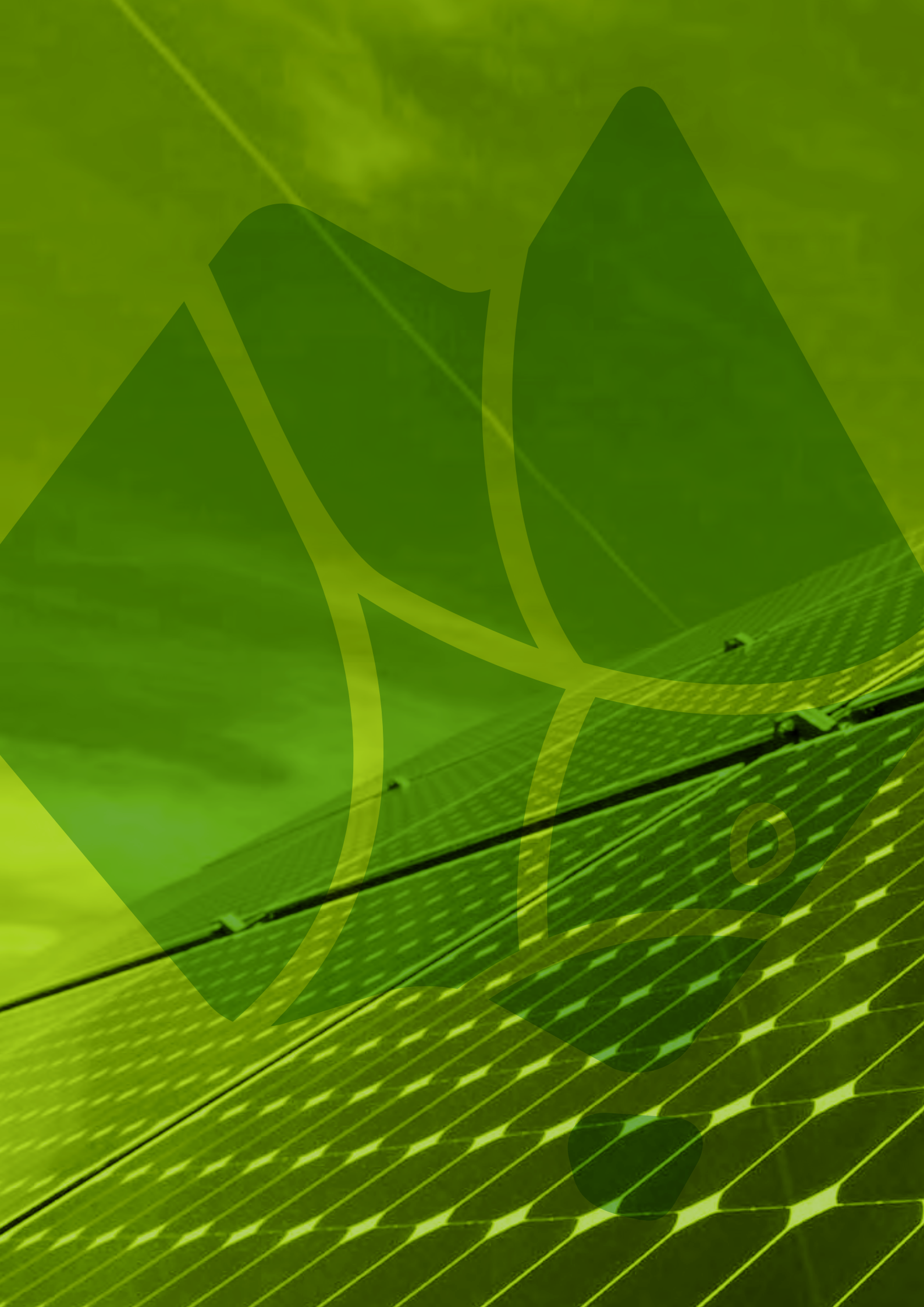




Regional  
Development  
*Australia*  
F A R N O R T H

ANNUAL **REPORT** 20/21





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# 1. MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Working closely with key stakeholders, Regional Development Australia (RDA) Far North identified a number of challenges and opportunities across the region. We developed strategies to focus on areas that had the most impact on the region's growth and future sustainability. Private investment, tourism, unlocking transport and access solutions, collaboration, connectivity, population, and decentralisation were identified as key priorities.

There were some very positive outcomes for the region during the 2020/21 financial year, with several major projects working their way through the investment pipeline. The pipeline of large investment projects across the region totalled \$6.5 billion. These investments will create 4,250 employment opportunities in construction and 460 ongoing jobs.

As positive as the investment pipeline is, the construction workforce does add an additional 18% to our regional population, which in turn increases pressure on services, retail, hospitality, and accommodation industries.

There have also been some other significant challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, which has had a major impact across the region, state, and nation. Our agricultural sector is working through the recovery process after experiencing many years of drought. Attracting and retaining staff continues to be a major issue for local businesses. RDA Far North has been actively working on a range of initiatives to support these challenges.

RDA Far North covers a vast area of South Australia which is logistically sometimes difficult. We continue to work closely with other key stakeholders to ensure that priority areas and projects are being recognised and supported.

There were many government and non-government funding opportunities during the period. Our team closely monitored relevant funding opportunities and various grants were promoted throughout the year. We also assisted local applicants with grant applications. Thirty grants were successful in 2020/21 totalling \$3.85 million.

Small business continued as an important sector in the diverse economy of the region. Our work to enhance this sector's capacity to do business has been crucial in supporting growth. RDA Far North provided general business advisory services to 138 SMEs across the region, covering a range of topics from general business health and compliance to marketing and branding. We continued to support the region's Chamber of Commerce organisations, including Business Port Augusta, Quorn Business Group, Coober Pedy Retail, Business and Tourism Association, Roxby Downs Business Forum, and the Leigh Creek Progress Association.

RDA Far North continued to deliver Local Contact Officer services across the region as per our agreement with the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC). A proportion of this funding was also allocated to RDA Yorke and Mid North to cover the Southern Flinders area of the tourism region. Our tourism-related work included keeping tourism operators informed of opportunities and developments, information sharing, assisting, and supporting SATC with state tourism campaigns. RDA Far North also provided support to the Tourism Industry Council of South Australia (TICSA) and the Flinders Ranges and Outback (FRO) Board.

Our organisation maintained strong relationships with all levels of government throughout the year. We continued to play an important role in communicating our region's challenges and opportunities to stakeholders, decision-makers, and funding bodies. RDA Far North's collaborative activities included being an active member of 10 committees, working groups and stakeholder groups across the region.

A highlight for 2020/21 was the Live, Work and Play initiative which commenced. RDA Far North engaged Woof Media to assist with the campaign, which aims to attract people to the region to live and work.

A Seasonal and Regional Workforce Program was also undertaken, linking employees with employers. This program is a response to the challenges employers are experiencing and an inability to fill vacancies.

RDA Far North worked with Telstra on two projects which will see increased connectivity in the Northern Flinders Ranges and APY Lands. Telstra was successful in gaining \$2,732,531 funding from the Regional Connectivity Program.

We also assisted the State Government with their electric vehicle charging rollout plan in regional SA. The next step is site reviews and RDA Far North will continue to work with the Department of Energy and Mining to influence as best we can appropriate travel corridors throughout the region.

Additionally, RDA Far North continued to work closely with Uni Hub Spencer Gulf (Port Augusta Campus). We assisted with funding applications and facilitated discussions with the Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) for a fantastic new initiative to strengthen the relationship between the Port Augusta Campus and the agriculture sector.

**Mark Sutton**  
Chair

## 2. RDA FAR NORTH'S ROLE

### OUR PURPOSE





OUR REGION



### 3. OUR COMMITTEE & STAFF

RDA Far North is a not-for-profit organisation governed by a committee of regional people. Our committee members are appointed for their industry knowledge and understanding of the Far North SA region.

#### COMMITTEE

Name	Position	Term Expiry Date
Mr Mark Sutton	Chair	31/12/2025
Mr Colin Davies	Deputy Chair	30/09/2022
Mr Craig Cresp	Committee Member	30/09/2022
Mr Mark Fennell	Committee Member	30/09/2022
Mr Sam Johnson	Committee Member	30/09/2022
Ms Lucy Morphet	Committee Member	30/09/2024
Mr Scott McKay	Committee Member	30/09/2024
Mr Kerry Mudge	Committee Member	30/09/2023
Mr Dave Petersen	Committee Member	30/09/2022
Mr Trevor Wright	Committee Member	30/09/2023
Cr Linley Shine	Committee Member (Local Government)	30/09/2023
Mayor Greg Flint	Committee Member (Local Government)	30/09/2023

#### STAFF

Name	Position
Ms Claire Wiseman	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Greg Williams	Business Development Manager
Mr Jeremy Carn	Economic Development Manager - Tourism
Ms Suzanne Noll	Economic Development Manager - Workforce
Mr Hamilton Heading	Economic Development Manager - Communications
Ms Shari Dodd	Project and Finance Support Officer (July-February) & Office Manager (March-June)
Ms Melita Miller	Administrative Officer
Ms Bronwyn Fuller	Office Manager (July-February)

## 4. OUR STAKEHOLDERS & THIRD PARTY ARRANGEMENTS

### OUR STAKEHOLDERS

RDA Far North has core funding agreements with:

- Commonwealth of Australia, as represented by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (DITRDC)
- State Government, through the Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA)
- Five Local Government Areas:



**District Council of Coober Pedy**

District Council of Coober Pedy (DCCP)



**The Flinders Ranges Council**

The Flinders Ranges Council (FRC)



**Outback Communities Authority**

Outback Communities Authority (OCA)



**Port Augusta**  
CITY COUNCIL

Corporation of the City of Port Augusta (PACC)



Municipal Council of Roxby Downs (RDC)

### CONTRACTS

The following outlines the various contracts and funding agreements that RDA Far North had for core and position funding for the 2020/21 financial year:

#### Commonwealth Government

Core funding for administrative positions and operational purposes  
1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021

- \$226,758 - DITRDC

#### Local Government

Core funding for administrative positions and operational purposes  
1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021

- \$14,756 - DCCP
- \$10,480 - FRC
- \$51,680 - OCA
- \$57,344 - PACC
- \$18,944 - RDC

#### State Government

Far North Economic Growth and Investment  
1 July 2019 - 30 June 2020

- \$435,000 - PIRSA

#### Tourism Service Delivery

1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021

- \$48,948 - SATC (note \$10,600 is provided to RDA Yorke and Mid North covering the Southern Flinders Region)
- \$10,000 - FRC
- \$20,000 - OCA
- \$10,000 - DCCP

#### Regional Workforce Coordination Initiative

1 January 2021 - 30 June 2021

- \$100,000 - PIRSA



## 5. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

RDA Far North continues to build and maintain investor confidence in the region by promoting its positive attributes, including the ongoing potential as a site for renewable energy production, innovative horticultural and agricultural production, and thriving service, tourism and retail sectors.



**\$6.5 billion**

in investment pipeline, creating **4,250** employment opportunities during construction and **460** ongoing



over **130** regional business provided specialist business advisory services with **4** consultations facilitated and over **60** attendees



**30** proponents assisted with funding applications to the value of over **\$3.5m**



over **133** meetings held with regional stakeholders



**\$10.5 million**

in expansion projects in small business, creating **57** new ongoing employment opportunities



over **45** regional small business connected with Government support programs



**4** industry consultation sessions ensuring direct input from regional industry



Active member of **10** working groups focused on specific challenges and opportunities across the region

## 6. KEY CHALLENGES

Like most of regional SA, COVID-19 hit the Far North region hard with many businesses having to close their doors temporarily or scale back their operations considerably. The tourism industry was the hardest hit, with many businesses temporarily closing, resulting in losses of up to 95% of their income. The early recovery period has been encouraging, with the industry experiencing a positive “off-peak” summer season,

with visitor numbers far greater than previous off-peak seasons. That said, the tourism industry remains down with its key statistics remaining below pre-COVID figures.

Following is a summary of the overall impact comparing pre-COVID data to March 2021 (twelve months on) data.



Attraction and retention of staff in the region continues to be a challenge for local employers. Even with attractive packages including meals, accommodation and above-award rates, businesses are still having difficulty attracting staff. RDA Far North continues to work with these businesses. We provide support to help businesses identify options and link them to other organisations that may be able to assist.

Whilst there has been an increase in new-build housing, these new homes are unlikely to come online in time to meet the demand. Added to this, the “boom and bust” cycle created by the increase in the economy and then the decline once construction is completed, if not carefully managed, has the potential to negatively impact on business and community confidence.

As positive as the investment pipeline is, the construction workforce adds an additional 18% to our regional population. This, in turn, increases pressure on services, retail, hospitality, and accommodation industries. During 2020/21, there was a significant impact on accommodation availability. For example, Port Augusta, our largest city, has seen rental availability drop from an average of 60 rental properties available to an average of fifteen available to rent. As a result, it is harder to attract new residents due to a lack of available housing.

Covering such a vast region has its logistical challenges. To help address these, RDA Far North works closely with key stakeholders to ensure priority areas and projects are being recognised and supported. Where possible, agencies work and travel together to remote areas of the region. This shows the solidarity of service provision across the region and is economical.

# 7. PROGRESS TOWARDS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IN 2020/21

## 7.1 PRIVATE INVESTMENT

During 2020/21, RDA Far North directly supported private investment by local and regional businesses and the attraction of new industries and businesses addressing market gaps. This included:

- Facilitating meetings with key stakeholders and consultation groups
- Providing linkages to government and local supply chains
- Marketing opportunities for investment via RDA Far North's communication channels (where appropriate)
- Assisting regional proponents in sourcing and preparing applications for projects and initiatives
- Maintaining an investment pipeline database
- Assisting nine major investors/potential investors and a further one new opportunity
- Working closely with major project developers to assist in navigating through the compliance and reporting systems of the three levels of Government

### Business Advisory Services

RDA Far North provided general business advisory services to 138 SMEs across the Far North region covering a range of topics:

- General business health
- Growth opportunities
- New business partnerships
- Improvement feasibility studies
- Grant and funding opportunities
- Advice on insurance assessment
- Introduction to RDA Far North and its services
- Links with other companies and collaboration opportunities
- Future planning
- Recruitment, retention, and upskilling of staff
- Marketing and branding
- Business data
- Collaboration
- Accounting and financial planning
- Business planning
- Compliance and access
- Planning SA changes and protocols
- Consultant engagement
- Project impacts
- Infrastructure upgrades
- Licence requirements
- Business diversification
- COVID-19 support, including JobKeeper and related programs

Re-engaging with businesses in the region has been positive. However, visits to businesses have taken more time because of COVID-19.

RDA Far North has also continued to work closely with the Small Business Commissioner's office to collate and distribute the latest information to our region's businesses.

### Support to Chamber of Commerce Organisations

RDA Far North provided support to Chamber of Commerce organisations across the region. RDA Far North recognises these associations are driven by volunteers who all have priorities within their own businesses, which must take their most immediate attention. RDA Far North regularly communicates to these groups to provide support where necessary.

Significant assistance was provided to the following organisations during 2020/21:

### Business Port Augusta

RDA Far North has re-engaged with Business Port Augusta and regularly attends meetings. Regular updates on opportunities, available services and other relevant information are provided. For example, RDA Far North provided updates on JobKeeper statistics. Attendance is also valuable as another source of connection with local businesses to understand their needs. RDA Far North looks forward to continuing this relationship and offering networking and other opportunities for members in the future. RDA Far North also arranged for Rural Business Support to present at a meeting as a keynote speaker.

### Quorn Business Group

RDA Far North provided significant assistance in the creation of this group. RDA Far North also provided guidance about meeting organisation, committee representation, association rules, and procedural documents.

The Business Development Manager has remained an active member attending all meetings, facilitating planning sessions and organising key speakers for meetings. For example, Rural Business Support was invited to be a guest speaker. Relevant information is also forwarded regularly to the Group Executive Committee to be distributed to members.

### Coober Pedy Retail, Business and Tourism Association

RDA Far North continued to be an active observer of this organisation. Significant support was provided towards their annual planning, project rollout, funding applications and work with the Council.



#### **Roxby Downs Business Forum**

RDA Far North continued to be an active member of this group, participating in planning sessions, event coordination, workshop identification and working with the Council.

#### **Leigh Creek Progress Association (LCPA)**

RDA Far North has been active in assisting the Progress Association in planning its future operations. This assistance included discussions regarding the future of the local Foodland and options to ensure its continuity. A great outcome has now come into place for this business with RDA Far North playing a significant role in negotiations from all sides.

RDA Far North helped to support visitor information services, town services and general future planning. Assistance was also provided to the LCPA regarding all weather access to the pontoon at Aroona Dam.

#### **Indigenous Incubator Support**

RDA Far North attended and presented to the participants of the Indigenous Business Incubator Program being facilitated by Complete Personnel. RDA Far North assisted the Manager of the Indigenous Incubator and clients, looking at funding and possible start-ups suitability for the Incubator Program.

#### **BHP Local Buying Foundation**

RDA Far North's Business Development Manager was appointed to the BHP Local Buying Foundation Advisory Committee. The purpose of this committee is to review and recommend project applications from local businesses that help build business communities.

#### **Global Maintenance Upper Spencer Gulf**

RDA Far North provided finance, administrative and executive office support services to Global Maintenance Upper Spencer Gulf, which is a supply chain support network.

#### **Upper Spencer Gulf (USG) Skills and Employment Group**

RDA Far North is a member of the USG Skills and Employment Group. Our organisation successfully nominated to be a member of the Commonwealth Local Jobs Program Taskforce and continue to be an active member.

#### **Funding Assistance**

The RDA Far North team continued to work with businesses to identify viable sources of finance. Our organisation monitored all relevant funding opportunities and various grants were promoted during 2020/21, including:

- Grants SA Small and Medium rounds
- Recreation and Sport
- Building Better Regions Fund
- Drought Communities Program
- Entrepreneurs Fund
- National Radioactive Waste Management Facility Community Benefit Fund
- Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) Tackling Tough Times Together Program
- Various drought assistance grants
- South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) Tourism Industry Development Fund
- Future Drought Fund
- Regional Arts Fund
- Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand
- Live Music Events
- Recreation and Sport Infrastructure Fund

RDA Far North assisted local applicants with grant applications. Support varied from providing letters of support to assisting with information gathering, seeking other letters of support and/or quotes, developing project plans and briefs, developing budgets and risk management plans, compiling, and even writing applications.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Total value of current investment pipeline is **\$6.5 billion** with **4,250 jobs** created in construction and **460 ongoing jobs**.

This includes private investment, community projects, cultural projects, infrastructure projects, minerals and resources projects, and renewable projects.

**45 organisations,** emerging businesses and entrepreneurs connected with business support, investment, and growth programs

Assistance provided to **30** grant funding proponents:

Total successful grants = **\$3.85m**

### SUCCESSFUL GRANTS INCLUDED:

**\$1,200,000**

**VARIOUS PROJECTS**  
National Radioactive Waste Management Facility Community Benefit Program

**\$51,672**

**INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**  
Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal Tackling Tough Times Together Program

**\$52,500**

**MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL PROJECT**  
National Radioactive Waste Management Facility Community Benefit Program

**\$25,600**

**INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT**  
National Radioactive Waste Management Facility Community Benefit Program

**\$47,713**

**TRAIL SIGNAGE**  
National Radioactive Waste Management Facility Community Benefit Program

**\$30,000**

**OVAL INFRASTRUCTURE**  
Cricket Australia Infrastructure Fund

**\$10,000**

**REGIONAL EVENT**  
SATC Regional Festivals and Events Program

**\$18,090**

**REGIONAL WORKSHOP**  
Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal Tackling Tough Times Together Program

**\$20,000**

**REGIONAL EVENT**  
SATC Regional Festivals and Events Program Fund

**\$1,000,000**

**VARIOUS PROJECTS**  
Drought Communities Program

**\$464,419**

**BUSINESS REDESIGN**  
SATC Tourism Development Fund

**\$92,860**

**BUSINESS EXPANSION**  
SATC Tourism Development Fund

**\$500,000**

**BUSINESS EXPANSION**  
SATC Tourism Development Fund

**\$357,000**

**BUSINESS EXPANSION**  
SATC Tourism Development Fund

## 7.2 TOURISM

### Local Contact Officer Funding

RDA Far North continued to deliver Local Contact Officer services across the region as per our agreement with the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC).

This included:

- Ensuring regional tourism operators were informed of opportunities and developments in tourism, such as grants, strategies, reports, and marketing campaigns
- Maintaining regular communication with regional operators through regular newsletters, email blasts, websites and segments of operator forums
- Contributing to the maintenance of the SATC and FRO key stakeholder databases
- Information sharing from industry-related agencies including SATC, Tourism Industry Council of South Australia (TiCSA), Ecotourism Australia, Department for Environment and Water (DEW), SA Arid Lands Landscapes Board team, Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA), Outback Communities Authority (OCA), Station Stays SA, Business SA, LGAs and local tourism industries
- Promoting industry sign-ups for the Australian Tourism Data Warehouse, especially in categories linked to the key touring routes
- Tourism businesses across the region were provided with information and assistance to navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic and reopening guidelines and opportunities, including assistance in setting up QR codes

RDA Far North provided a proportion of this Local Contact Officer funding to RDA Yorke and Mid North to cover the Southern Flinders area of the tourism region.

Our team assisted SATC's marketing team with the development and refinement of marketing campaigns and provided support for the SATC Regional Manager during their visit to the region in May 2021 for the Flinders Ranges and Outback (FRO) Board meeting. We also helped with regional photo shoots, media release content and contacts, assisted in the editing of the Explorers Way maps, and met with Tasting Australia to discuss possible events and locations.

Additionally, RDA Far North worked with Bike SA, Adelaide Fringe and local councils to develop tourism products in the region. Our organisation has also been involved with the development of cycling trails in the greater Flinders Ranges region. Experience development was also a key focus this year, with multiple Indigenous products in development to deliver cultural immersive tours.

### Flinders Ranges and Outback (FRO) Board Support

FRO Board meetings continued throughout the year. RDA Far North assisted the FRO Board in the coordination of their annual planning day.

The FRO Tourism Forum was held in Port Augusta on 10 February 2021 with a focus on "Diversity from the Dust". RDA Far North assisted in the planning and coordination of the forum. Our team also provided some assistance with the planning of the Carbon Farming Forum held the following day. Both events were funded by OCA through the Drought for Communities Funding Program.

RDA Far North provided support to edit the Flinders Ranges and Outback Visitor Guide, managed the FRO Facebook page and assisted with website development. Assistance was also provided to Flinders Ranges Tourism Operators Association (FRTOA) and the FRO Board with visitor guide stock and sales data for future editions.

### Promotion of Regional Tourism Assets

#### Social Media Promotion

RDA Far North promoted tourism assets right across the region via content on Flinders Ranges and Outback social media pages.

#### Media Outreach

Information on attractions and accommodation in the Flinders Ranges and Outback tourism region was provided to various media outlets including The Advertiser and Channel 10. This included promotion of the silo art in Quorn.

Various connections with national and international media have been made including SATC, Tourism Australia, Applewood Distillery, Fairfax papers, Tim Ross Media, and the Adelaide Fringe regarding possible events for the region.

RDA Far North helped with planning for the South Aussie with Cosi filming around The Flinders Ranges Council region. This gained exposure for the silo art in Quorn and Flinders Food Co based at Hawker.

### Tender Opportunities with SATC

RDA Far North marketed the opportunity for photographic and video businesses to tender for work with SATC and Tourism Australia.

### Indigenous Tourism Opportunities

RDA Far North worked closely with the Indigenous Business Incubator Program (IBIP) and Many Rivers on an Indigenous arts proposal. This project was identified as part of the earlier IBIP workshops facilitated in Coober Pedy.



#### **Assistance to Tourism Industry Council of South Australia (TiCSA)**

RDA Far North assisted TiCSA to organise the Tourism Industry Restart Conference held concurrently across 10 locations on 2 November 2020. This included Coober Pedy and Quorn with live feeds to the other locations.

#### **Great State Vouchers**

The RDA team promoted the South Australian government's Great State Voucher initiative (Round Three). This included providing information and links to tourism operators to encourage participation.

#### **Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW)**

RDA Far North continued to promote the benefits for businesses in creating ATDW listings. This included targeting regional progress associations, and emphasising the importance of maintaining their registration. RDA Far North also researched organisations, events and attractions that are not privately owned, which could be listed on the database.

#### **Aussie Travel Code**

Aussie Travel Code was launched, rolled out across the whole region, and heavily promoted during the year. There was a good uptake of the initiative from the media. State and Commonwealth Government agencies were active in promoting the new initiative.

#### **SATC Signage Project**

RDA Far North in collaboration with SATC and the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT) facilitated the installation of 16 large welcome to region signs across the whole Far North. RDA Far North took the lead in roll of the project consulting with the Local Government and the Outback Communities Authority in relation to exact locations of signs. The signs also act as links to the regional visitor guide via a QR code on them.

RDA Far North also travelled 750 kilometres across the region, engaging in substantial discussion with councils to identify existing brown directional signage that needed to be replaced, and coordinated the erection of over 30 directional signs across four council regions through the SATC and DIT.

#### **Regional Visitor Strategy**

A Regional Visitor Strategy meeting was held with the SATC in Coober Pedy on 2 September 2020 and another in Port Augusta on 9 September 2020. Great discussions were had about the direction over the next five years and input from regional businesses was appreciated.

The Regional Visitor Strategy was released and is available for download: <https://tourism.sa.gov.au/strategies/strategies/regional-visitor-strategy>

RDA Far North participated in the development of a tourism infrastructure priority list for the SA Regional Visitor Strategy Regional Tourism Infrastructure List. The statewide list of shared priorities of South Australia's 11 tourism regions includes two priorities in the FRO region:

1. Address key telecommunications black spots
2. Seal the Strzelecki Track

#### **Flinders Ranges World Heritage Bid**

RDA Far North continues to play a key role on this committee. The draft report for the Flinders Ranges World Heritage Bid has been produced and is currently being reviewed.

#### **Kati-Thanda Lake Eyre Economic Analysis**

In partnership with the OCA, RDA Far North produced a report of the Kati-Thanda Lake Eyre Economic Analysis which outlines the social, economic, and environmental impacts of an event in the lake as well as the opportunities of water or no water in the lake. The report will be released in early 2022.

#### **Visits to Regional Communities**

The RDA Far North team visited tourism businesses across the region. Discussions focused on COVID-19 updates and ongoing operations, summer promotions, plans for the 2021 season and funding opportunities. The SA Government's Nature-Based Tourism Co-Investment Fund was marketed as part of this. Information was provided to relevant tourism operators and organisations.

#### **Rising Stars Leadership Program**

The Rising Stars Leadership Program received funding under the Building Better Regions Fund Round 4. RDA Far North provided significant assistance in the drafting of the application as well as the EOI process for participants. The program created great interest with four outstanding rising stars from the region undertaking the program. The success of this program has seen other organisations looking to roll out the program. The RDA Far North team has assisted with applications for funding to roll out other rounds of this valuable program.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

5%

5% increase in visitation  
in the Far North region by 2021

1%

Number of days for visitors  
stays increased by 1% by 2021

42 businesses assisted to manage COVID impacts,  
ranging from understanding changes in restrictions, marketing opportunities, reviewing offerings to increase  
nature-based experiences, human resource management, and recruiting and retaining staff

7 Businesses provided advisory services with start-up and expansion projects totalling  
\$8,228,063, creating 70 jobs in construction and 31 ongoing jobs as follows:

\$3.7m

One business continues to be assisted with a \$3.7 million business expansion, creating 25 construction jobs and 15 ongoing roles. Construction is well underway and due for completion by the end of 2021.



One start-up business assisted is providing a new Indigenous experience in the region. RDA Far North linked the business with Indigenous Business Australia and the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA).

\$200,000

One business was experiencing strong growth with excellent products and needed to expand to meet market demand. Expansion value \$200,000, creating five jobs in construction and two extra ongoing jobs with expansion completed mid-2021.

\$150,000

One business assisted to develop new product and visitor experiences. Expansion valued at \$150,000 creating five jobs in construction and one new ongoing role.

\$1.5m

One business assisted to totally redesign its business to offer a new experience to the region. Revitalisation valued at \$1.5 million, creating 15 jobs in construction and five new roles ongoing.

\$500,000

One community organisation assisted to expand their visitor offerings. Expansion valued at \$500,000 with 10 jobs in construction and two new ongoing roles created.

\$2.3m

One business assisted to expand its product and service offering. Total expansion valued at \$2.3 million with 10 jobs created in construction and six ongoing roles created.

## 7.3 COLLABORATION

### Industry and Government Briefings

RDA Far North has continued to provide briefings to industry and all levels of government on the challenges and opportunities the region is facing, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. We provided regional intelligence on how regional businesses have been coping, the main areas of concern, and opportunities for recovery.

RDA Far North staff also continue to link in with relevant webinars run by the State Government, Commonwealth Government, economic development institutions, business support and advocacy bodies and others. These webinars continue to be key in keeping up to date with the latest industry information, opportunities and learnings from other regions and areas across regional Australia.

### Commonwealth Government

RDA Far North participated in monthly teleconferences with The Hon Nola Marino MP, Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories, with a focus on providing regional intelligence about what is happening in the Far North region and how it is moving through the recovery phase. The meetings are summarised in a bulletin which goes to all Commonwealth Ministers and Department Heads. Positive feedback has been received about these bulletins and they are considered a valuable source of information.

Other engagement with Commonwealth Government included:

- Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development – provided COVID-19 regional intelligence and promoted grant and funding opportunities
- AusIndustry – promoted grant and funding opportunities, including the Entrepreneurs Fund, and provided regional intelligence on business capabilities
- National Indigenous Australians Agency – informed of new regional project with Indigenous involvement, signage project in Coober Pedy, meetings regarding business support for local Indigenous business, funding opportunities for start-ups, and general discussions regarding business support for local Indigenous businesses
- Department of Innovation and Skills – regarding the Seasonal and Regional Jobs initiative and launch, as well as career services

### State Government

RDA Far North participated in regular meetings with State Ministers and the Regional Development South Australia (RDSA) network to work towards a broader SA regional approach. As part of this, the Regional Blueprint document was developed. This document provides both an

overview of regional South Australia and a snapshot of each region, detailing strategic industries/sectors, themes for growth and key statistics. Underpinning the Blueprint is a fully scoped investment pipeline detailing conceptual through to shovel-ready projects. The Blueprint demonstrates complete collaboration across every RDA within the State as they seek to deliver both within and across the eight regions for the best possible outcomes for SA. The Blueprint was distributed to Local, State and Federal Government partners and other stakeholders. A copy of The Regional Blueprint is available on our website: <http://www.rdafn.com.au/publications>

### Regional Development Strategy

The Regional Development Strategy was released 20 April 2021 with an accompanying website: [https://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions/regional\\_development\\_strategy](https://www.pir.sa.gov.au/regions/regional_development_strategy)

RDA Far North's Chair lead the consultation committee for the strategy and had continued involvement in the design of the strategy rollout. One of the recommendations from the strategy is the creation of a steering committee with membership from each of the South Australian RDAs and the Chief Executives of all State Government departments. The first steering committee meeting was held 31 May 2021 with RDA and the majority of State Government department Chief Executives in attendance. These meetings will be held biannually and will focus on regional development priorities, seeking input, advice and support, and identifying new priorities and engagement needs for regional communities.

### Regular Meetings with Dan van Holst Pellekaan, MP, Member for Stuart

RDA Far North's Chair and CEO, along with the RDA Yorke and Mid North Chair and CEO, meet bimonthly with the region's local MP, Dan van Holst Pellekaan, Member for Stuart. The purpose of these meetings is to provide a briefing on the recovery strategies that the two respective RDAs have developed and to raise any opportunities or concerns.

### Career Employment Group (CEG) – Skilling Blueprint Project

RDA Far North participated in CEG's Skilling Blueprint Project. KPMG was engaged to develop a Skilling Blueprint to support future jobs in the mining, manufacturing (relating to mining resources), and resources sectors.

### Jobs and Skills Taskforce

RDA Far North actively participated in the Jobs and Skills Taskforce. This taskforce promotes the Commonwealth Local Jobs Program which provides funding for workforce initiatives across the region. Our team also assisted the Local Jobs Program with the organisation and rollout of a Small Business Forum in Port Augusta on 25 May 2021, which offered an excellent line-up of speakers.



### Local Government

Monthly meetings were held with the CEOs of all Local Government stakeholders and one annual presentation to the Elected Body of each Council. RDA Far North utilised the Local Roundtable network to disseminate information of relevance to Council CEOs.

A Local Government Roundtable meeting was held on 17 March 2021. Topics included:

- Local roads funding
- Live, Work and Play campaign
- Electric vehicle charging network
- Waste management

RDA Far North hosted dinner events with its Committee Members, Council Mayors and CEOs. This included keynote guest speakers on relevant topics such as SA's electric vehicle transition, COVID impacts and economic recovery.

Additionally, RDA Far North presented to the Legatus group, providing an overview about our organisation and region, the impact of COVID across the region and how we work with Councils.

### Assistance to Clubs

Whilst assisting community clubs is not a core role of RDA Far North, when time and workload has permitted, our team have been able assist with planning and grant applications. RDA Far North has worked with the Port Augusta Golf Club, Quorn Cricket Club, and Quorn Golf Club, providing advice about how to be "grant ready". The team also continued to assist the Port Augusta Racing Club with grant funding applications.

### Assistance with OCA Consultation

RDA Far North distributed the OCA Outback Futures consultation notice via our business database. We also distributed the initial feedback summary from the first round of consultations.

### Leigh Creek Task Force

Task Force meetings were attended by RDA Far North staff. A Leigh Creek - Future Township Plan meeting was held on 17 December 2020 where the future of the town was outlined by Minister van Holst Pellekaan and key members of the Leigh Creek Task Force. Further discussions were held that night and the following day seeking feedback and looking at the impacts and opportunities. The Task Force Chair and project contact, Department for Infrastructure & Transport, OCA, LCPA and local businesses, contractors, employees, and residents attended.

### Regional Visits

Every month, RDA Far North staff visited towns and met with businesses around the region. A total of 71,025 kilometres was travelled throughout the 2020/21 financial year. Some of the places visited included:

- Andamooka
- Woomera
- Pimba
- Marree
- Copley
- Leigh Creek
- Kingoonya
- Lyndhurst
- Innamincka
- Blinman
- Parachilna
- Wilpena Pound
- Oodnadatta
- Quorn
- Hawker
- Coober Pedy
- William Creek
- Yunta

Where possible, the RDA Far North team accompanied the OCA team. This included a field trip to Yunta, Olary and Manna Hill. The group also visited Oulnina and Bindarrah stations, met with the Yunta Telecentre, and viewed the new Yunta racecourse. Whilst in the area, the team provided an update on projects and services. Tourism opportunities were also discussed with the Olary Progress Association, and business advisory services were delivered to local businesses in Yunta and Manna Hill.

### Quarterly Common Interest Meetings

Quarterly common interest meetings were held with the RDA Far North team, the SA Arid Lands Landscapes Board team, PIRSA, OCA and Austrade.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

**428** appointments held with businesses, clients, and business associations across the region

Active member of **10** committees, working groups and other stakeholder groups across the region

**2**

MEETINGS

Outback Roads  
Action Group

**3**

MEETINGS

Australian  
Remote Medicine  
Academy

**2**

MEETINGS

Department  
of the Premier and  
Cabinet Export Hub

**4**

MEETINGS

Port Augusta  
Operations  
Community  
Reference Group

**8**

MEETINGS

Upper Spencer Gulf  
Employment, Skills  
and Workforce  
Taskforce

**5**

MEETINGS

Local Jobs  
Program

**1**

MEETING

SA Settlement  
Services Planning  
Committee

**9**

MEETINGS

Jobs and Skills  
Taskforce

**1**

MEETING

Cultana  
Environmental  
Advisory  
Committee

**2**

MEETINGS

Waste and Resource  
Management  
Strategy and  
Action Plan

**6**

MEETINGS

Water and  
Infrastructure  
Corridor Steering  
Committee

**65**

MEETINGS

Port Augusta, Flinders  
Ranges, Coober  
Pedy, Roxby Downs  
Councils and Outback  
Communities Authority

**38** Regional Development  
South Australia (RDSA) meetings

**22** government consultation  
sessions/surveys/inquiries/advisory  
groups provided input to/hosted

**6** monthly teleconferences  
with Minister Merino

**2**

Infrastructure and freight  
consultations facilitated - one  
with Infrastructure Australia  
and the other with the SA  
Freight Council

**4**

Keynote dinner  
events facilitated

**7**

Monthly meetings  
with Local  
Member

**3**

Briefings provided to  
Local Member on specific  
challenges facing the region

**2**

Presentations/  
involvement in  
events resulting in  
promotion/  
recognition of  
regional activities

## 7.4 POPULATION

RDA Far North continued to play an active role in supporting projects and initiatives that help to attract new residents. The team kept abreast of programs that focused on supporting investment or the attraction of investment into the region. This involved maintaining knowledge about available programs, eligibility requirements and making connections to known projects and opportunities within the region.

### **Live, Work and Play Initiative**

RDA Far North engaged Woof Media for this campaign, which aims to attract people to the region to live and work. The campaign will include a visual advertisement for the Far North region, a campaign landing page, and a three-month digital marketing campaign.

RDA Far North also obtained quotes to enable the five councils to take advantage of the opportunity and receive a 30-second edit for their specific region. The cost per council quoted ranged from \$2,700 each to \$7,500, depending on how many councils “buy-in”. The footage will be available to participating councils to use on their websites and social media platforms. The footage could also potentially be used for future television marketing. Expressions of interest from councils are due at the end of July 2021, with the campaign shoot scheduled for late August 2021.

### **Regional Workforce Summit**

Regional Development South Australia (RDSA) held a Regional Workforce Summit on 3 June 2021. As part of this event, the Growing Our Regional Workforce Review Summary Document was released. This document lists the top five priorities for action which the RDSA network will focus on over the next 12 months:

1. Increasing Housing Supply
2. Create Employment Readiness Pathways
3. Regional-based Workforce Resources
4. Increase Business HR Capacity and Capability
5. Reform Migration

The full document can be downloaded here: <https://www.rdaadelaide.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Regional-Workforce-Policy-Paper-Summary-June2021.pdf>

### **Seasonal and Regional Workforce Program**

RDA Far North commenced a Seasonal and Regional Workforce Program, funded by PIRSA, which links employees with employers. This program is a response to employer challenges, with numerous jobs across the region and an inability to fill them.

### **Support from Economic Development Manager**

RDA Far North’s Economic Development Manager provided assistance as part of the Real Work, Real Experience Program. Support was provided to businesses having difficulty filling vacancies.

### **Stakeholder Meeting**

RDA Far North facilitated a stakeholder meeting with a focus on regional population attraction, retention, and growth. 22 stakeholders attended the event. This proved worthwhile, with attendees working through scenarios in groups identifying what makes the Far North region and how towns can retain their populations and attract new residents.

### **SA Regional Organisation of Councils Event**

RDA Far North attended and actively participated in an event facilitated by the South Australia Regional Organisation of Councils. This event focused on attracting workers to SA Regions. The RDSA Chair provided a keynote presentation which RDA Far North helped prepare.



## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### DEVELOPMENT OF DESIGNATED AREA MIGRATION AGREEMENT (DAMA) BY 2020

Regional DAMA developed

### INDUSTRY NEEDS UNDERSTOOD AND ACTION UNDERTAKEN TO MEET THEM

Established strong connection  
and understanding of the Regional Outreach  
Officer role

Growing our Regional Workforce Review research  
paper developed, and summary document released  
at Regional Workforce Summit

### SEASONAL AND REGIONAL WORKFORCE PROGRAM (APRIL TO JUNE)

Developed list of accommodation  
available for short-term workers  
on RDA Far North website

Partnered in holding a small business  
forum focused on Employing Staff - What  
businesses need to know

Presented at Industry and Schools  
Partnership Forum for Student Pathways to  
promote Regional Work SA.

98

Met with 98 businesses detailing  
their employment needs

60

Posted 60 hidden jobs on RDA Far  
North jobs board and Facebook page

34

Met with 34 regional job  
seekers and referred 12 suitable  
candidates to employers

## 7.5 CONNECTIVITY

### Regional Connectivity Program

RDA Far North worked with Telstra on two projects which will see increased connectivity in the Northern Flinders Ranges and APY Lands. Telstra was successful in gaining \$2,732,531 funding from the Regional Connectivity Program.

#### Ernabella Project

This project will upgrade the backhaul capacity to the existing Telstra 4G mobile tower in Ernabella (Pukatja). The upgrade will provide improved coverage and user throughput speeds for the Ernabella township and the surrounding community, including the local airstrip.

#### Far North Project

This project will upgrade key transmission infrastructure between Hawker and Leigh Creek in South Australia's Far North, expanding the available core network capacity into Leigh Creek and Marree. This will facilitate the provision of fixed broadband services to Leigh Creek Area School and Marree Aboriginal School. The project will also upgrade the transmission capacity at Telstra's Mount Scott and Leigh Creek base stations, enabling improved 4G access. Telstra also will commission 4G Satellite Small Cells into the communities of Dalhousie Springs, Yunyarinyi, Nyapari, Murputja, Kalka, Kanpi and Watinuma.

### Mobile Black Spot Program

Round five of this program was released. RDA Far North worked with Telstra to assist with their application. This involved identifying priority black spots, such as the black spot between the Oz Minerals mine turn-off and Coober Pedy. Fixing this black spot would alleviate some transport safety challenges for tourists in the region. Some visitors underestimate their fuel tank capacity and become stranded with no fuel and no mobile coverage to seek assistance. RDA Far North will continue to work through the list of black spots in the Far North region.

### NBN Regional Roundtables

RDA Far North facilitated two NBN Regional Roundtable meetings. The focus of these meetings was to provide case studies of regional businesses that access the NBN for high usage industries and work.

#### Partnership with Adelaide Business Hub

RDA Far North worked in partnership with Adelaide Business Hub to deliver workshops in Port Augusta and online. 'Effective E-Commerce - How to prepare for online selling' was held on 27 October 2020. Nine people attended. Two-hour mentoring sessions were also on offer for businesses across the region. There was a great uptake for this program, with 35 businesses participating.

### Regional Development South Australia (RDSA) Digital Empowerment Project

RDA Far North engaged with the consultants driving the RDSA Digital Empowerment Project. This included providing feedback on digital impairments and challenges affecting industries across the region. Our team also provided potential business contacts within the community so that case studies could be developed.

### Assistance to NBN Co

The RDA Far North team assisted NBN Co to coordinate a small business event highlighting the Business Fibre Connectivity Availability Project for Port Augusta. Unfortunately, the event was cancelled due to COVID.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

8

New mobile black spot locations funded by 2021

Announcement made by the Federal Government that under the Mobile Black Spot Program the following locations in the Far North region would receive communications solutions: Arkaroola, Cadney Park, Cradock, Flinders Ranges Way, Lyndhurst, Nepabunna, Pichi Richi Pass, Blinman, Copley, Leigh Creek, Lyndhurst, Mintabie and Farina

53%

The Flinders Ranges Council  
Fibre to the Node 53%  
(same as June 2020)

35%

The Flinders Ranges Council  
Fixed Wireless 35%  
(up from 22.6% in June 2020)

68%

Roxby Downs Council  
68% (up from 67%  
in June 2020)

4%

Roxby Downs Council  
Satellite 4%  
(not previously recorded)

40%

District Council of  
Cooper Pedy 40%  
(up from 39% in June 2020)

10%

District Council of Cooper Pedy  
Satellite 10%  
(not previously recorded)

65%

Port Augusta City Council  
Fibre to the Premises 65%  
(up from 63.4% in June 2020)

6%

Port Augusta City Council  
Fibre to building 6%  
(not previously recorded)

37%

Port Augusta City Council  
Fixed Wireless 37%  
(not previously recorded)

28%

Port Augusta City Council  
Satellite 28%  
(not previously recorded)

25%

Outback Communities Authority  
Satellite 25%  
(not previously recorded)

23%

APY Lands  
Satellite 23%  
(not previously recorded)



## 7.6 TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

### Sealing of the Strzelecki Track

RDA Far North has long been lobbying for the sealing of the Strzelecki Track. It is a vital supply link for major oil and gas facilities in the Cooper Basin and an essential transport corridor for outback communities, tourism, and pastoralists.

Funding was committed from both Federal and State Government totalling \$215 million, which enabled the sealing of the Strzelecki Track to commence in 2020. Expected completion is 2025.

RDA Far North played a significant part in this project and notes the efforts of all involved, resulting in a great outcome.

### Investment in a Multispecies Livestock Transshipping Hub

RDA Far North continued to promote the Multispecies Livestock Transshipping Hub (MLTH) report we prepared. To view the full report, follow this link: [www.rdafn.com.au/publications](http://www.rdafn.com.au/publications)

IOR Petroleum has installed a livestock cross-loading facility on the preferred site. This has alleviated the most immediate need. The project was also put forward as one of the top five priority projects from the Far North region for the RDSA infrastructure priority list.

### SA Government Electric Vehicle Charging Rollout

RDA Far North assisted the State Government with their electric vehicle charging rollout plan in regional SA. We did this through promoting the expression of interest process for site nominations to be considered by network developers as part of the statewide electric vehicle public charging network.

Our organisation played a lead role in ensuring local government and businesses were aware of the opportunity. We provided a list of potential sites, including contact details for each of the council areas to the Department for Energy and Mining (DEM). The next step is site reviews and RDA Far North will continue to work with DEM to influence as best we can appropriate travel corridors throughout the region.

### Regional Freight Issues Forum

The RDA Far North team facilitated a Regional Freight Issues Forum in conjunction with the South Australian Freight Council (SAFC). The purpose of the forum was to understand the current and future multimodal (road, rail, sea, air) freight needs of the region. The event formed part of SAFC's Regional Freight Productivity Project, which aimed to improve understanding of future freight challenges in regional South Australia, including linkages to key export gateways, to enable prompt interventions that support the state's growth agenda. Challenges and opportunities raised at the meeting were fed back to the State Government and Department of Infrastructure and Transport.

### Regional Infrastructure Strengths and Gaps Consultation

RDA Far North facilitated a Regional Infrastructure Strengths and Gaps consultation with WSP (consulting firm) and Infrastructure Australia in May 2021. All Council CEOs and infrastructure personnel were invited, as well as other regional key stakeholders. The consultation aimed to:

- Supply a national view of the diverse strengths and infrastructure gaps Australia's regions are facing
- Enable the identification of priority areas for Infrastructure Australia's future planning and analysis



# PERFORMANCE MEASURES

## PARTICIPATE IN SIX LOBBYING OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDING PARLIAMENTARY AND SENATE INQUIRY SUBMISSION

Submission to Infrastructure South Australia's priority listing consultation

Two submissions to Infrastructure Australia Infrastructure Priority List

Briefing to Minister McKenzie and Rowan Ramsey MP - Strzelecki Track

Briefing to Minister van Holst Pellekaan - Strzelecki Track

## DEVELOPMENT OF AN INFRASTRUCTURE PRIORITY LIST FOR THE REGION WITH ANNUAL REVIEW

Infrastructure Priority List developed

Listing currently being reviewed with several projects completed

Assisted SA Freight Council and Infrastructure Australia in regional consultations

## 10 MEETINGS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

Three Outback Roads Action Group meeting

Meeting with Outback Communities Authority and PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)

Two meetings with PwC relating to the Strzelecki Track Sealing

Meeting with Infrastructure SA Deputy CEO to discuss Strzelecki Track and the Transshipping Facility

## 7.7 TERTIARY EDUCATION

RDA Far North continued to support the Community Owned Tertiary Education Centre (COTEC) initiative and other initiatives which seek to enable regional access to tertiary education.

### **The Future Drought Fund**

The Future Drought Fund is an \$86 million funding allocation for adoption and innovation hubs which aims to bring together research providers with research users with a regional focus. RDA Far North identified this as a fantastic opportunity for a node to be located in Port Augusta with the additional benefit of connecting the northern pastoral community with the Uni Hub Spencer Gulf (Port Augusta Campus).

RDA Far North and the PIRSA Regional Manager facilitated a meeting to discuss support for an initiative across the region. This resulted in the South Australian Drought Resilience Innovation and Adoption Hub successfully undertaking a statewide bid, including a pastoral node in Port Augusta.

As a partner organisation, RDA Far North committed to provide in-kind support to the value of \$54,560 which was conditional that the hub includes a pastoral node in Port Augusta.

### **Further Assistance to Uni Hub Spencer Gulf (Port Augusta Campus)**

RDA Far North assisted the Port Augusta Campus to plan and write a funding application to expand into Roxby Downs and to provide an outreach service to Coober Pedy. There has been some increased interest and student enrolments from these areas. There is also a good connection to BHP, including strategic links they already have with CQ University around engineering in other states.

A bursary fund was also developed to assist students from the Far North region with costs associated with study through the Uni Hub Spencer Gulf (Port Augusta Campus).

### **SA Skills Needs Analysis**

RDA Far North participated in the consultation for the SA Skills Needs Analysis that was conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC). We provided regional intelligence and other useful information. BHP and the Department of Education, Skills and Employment engaged PwC on a Future of Work Program. The purpose of the program is to support educational pathways in regional Australia and help create a pipeline of skilled workers to support regional economies. Through the program, BHP will create 1,000 skills development opportunities through funding for students undertaking short courses (undergraduate certificates and graduate certificates) and advanced apprenticeships.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD AND FOCUS OF MEETINGS

3

Three meetings attended with a focus on the opening of the Uni Hub Spencer Gulf (Port Augusta Campus), location, attendance rates and industry engagement

4

Four meetings held focused on the expansion of Uni Hub Spencer Gulf (Port Augusta Campus) to service Roxby Downs and Coober Pedy

3

Three meetings held focused on a funding bid for Drought Resilience Innovation and Adoption Hub in South Australia

1

One meeting held following the successful application for the South Australia Drought Resilience Innovation and Adoption Hub

3

RDA Far North actively participated in three meetings focused on skills needs analysis for the mining industry



## 7.8 DECENTRALISATION

RDA Far North continued to support the movement of government and industry offices to the region.

Our team participated in a meeting with The Hon Nola Marino MP, Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories, and Minister Gee, Minister for Decentralisation and Regional Education. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an update on the Government's Regional Decentralisation Agenda and seek views on the relocation of the private and public sector to regional Australia.

The Commonwealth are in the early stages of developing a Regional Decentralisation Discussion Paper which will guide a national discussion on the agenda and further policy development.

### Keynote Speaker Presentation

The RDA Far North Board, local government mayors and CEOs were invited to a meeting in December 2020 where external experts on decentralisation/ regionalisation presented to attendees. RDA Far North engaged a university professor specialising in decentralisation/ regionalisation as a keynote speaker. This proved a very worthwhile session with many questions and ideas discussed.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### Performance Measures

Facilitated two consultation opportunities to discuss decentralisation. Participated in two consultations focused on decentralisation.

Participated in parliamentary/senate inquiries relevant to the region by making written submissions and presenting on panels when invited.

Engaged a keynote speaker for a presentation to the RDA Far North Board and other key stakeholders. The keynote speaker was a university professor specialising in decentralisation/regionalisation.

Participated in five RDA Town Hall meetings: Regional Telecommunications, Free Trade Agreements, Manufacturing, Decentralisation, and Tourism Industry Recovery Initiatives.

Numerous promotional activities were undertaken to promote initiatives and programs, including Entrepreneurs Program, changes to JobKeeper and JobSeeker, Financial Counselling Support Services and other COVID tools and resources.

Sought/provided advice on which services or offices are required in the region:

- Aided several local developments focused on providing accommodation for corporate travellers both in terms of office accommodation and overnight accommodation.
- Assistance provided to a serviced office hub development with connections to potential tenants, grant funding opportunities and data to assist in investment support.
- Management services provided to the Business Centre which provides serviced office accommodation.
- Continued to work with all levels of Government regarding essential services in the region and lobbied where appropriate.
- Continued assisting a client undertaking a significant business expansion which includes the consideration of expanding into locations in the Far North region.

## 8. CASE STUDIES

### SEALING THE STRZELECKI TRACK

RDA Far North has long been lobbying for the sealing of the Strzelecki Track. It is a vital supply link for major oil and gas facilities in the Cooper Basin and an essential transport corridor for outback communities, tourism, and pastoralists.

In 2017, RDA Far North produced Economic Growth and Investment Strategies for each of the Local Government Areas in the Far North region. Each of these documents identified the sealing of the Strzelecki Track as a priority infrastructure project.

RDA Far North worked in partnership with one of our key stakeholders (Outback Communities Authority) to undertake an analysis of the economic and community benefits of sealing the track. The final report was launched by The Hon Rob Kerin in January 2018. All three levels of government attended and funding commitments were made.

Since then, a raft of funding has been committed from both Federal and State Government totalling \$215 million. This enabled the sealing of the Strzelecki Track to commence in 2020. Expected completion is in 2025.

RDA Far North played a significant role in this project and notes the efforts of all involved, resulting in a great outcome for our region.

### DROUGHT RESILIENCE AND INNOVATION

The Future Drought Fund has an \$86 million allocation for adoption and innovation hubs aimed at bringing together research providers with research users with a regional focus. RDA Far North identified this as a great opportunity to strengthen the relationship between Uni Hub Spencer Gulf (Port Augusta Campus) and the agriculture sector.

In working with our PIRSA Regional Manager, RDA Far North facilitated a roundtable to discuss the opportunity for a pastoral node in the Far North region. All participants agreed that we were highly supportive of a pastoral node in the region, based in Port Augusta. The fund was released and the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) prepared a statewide bid with nodes in regions. The bid provided for four nodes, a low, a medium and a high rainfall node, across various locations in regional South Australia and a pastoral node in Port Augusta.

Following on from this, RDA Far North provided a commitment to participate as a partner organisation in a bid from the University of Adelaide, PIRSA and SARDI, for a South Australian Drought Resilience Innovation and Adoption Hub through the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund.

As a partner organisation, RDA Far North committed in-kind support to the value of \$54,560 which was conditional that the hub included a pastoral node located in Port Augusta. The in-kind support will be provided over three years and includes hot desk spaces, provision of economic datasets, steering committee participation, dissemination of information, as well as access to meeting rooms and facilities for group discussions. The application was successful and RDA Far North now continues with this project as an active contributor as the Hub moves through development.

## 9. ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

#### INCOME STATEMENT

INCOME	NOTE	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue	2	685,643	534,694
Employee Benefits Expenses		(371,513)	(414,888)
Depreciation Expenses		(831)	(1,040)
Other Expenses	3	(253,838)	(117,139)
<b>Surplus (Deficit) from Ordinary Activities</b>		<b>59,461</b>	<b>1,627</b>

#### BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

ASSETS	NOTE	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	4	1,346,200	1,249,912
Trade and other Receivables	5	27,063	27,452
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>1,373,263</b>	<b>1,277,364</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, Plant & Equipment	6	10,876	4,154
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>10,876</b>	<b>4,154</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>1,384,139</b>	<b>1,281,518</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other Payables	7	245,228	286,233
Projects in Progress	8	715,796	637,522
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>961,024</b>	<b>923,755</b>
<b>NET ASSETS/ LIABILITIES</b>		<b>423,115</b>	<b>357,763</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Retained Surplus (Deficit)	10	423,115	357,763
		423,115	357,763

The accompanying notes form part of these Financial Statements



## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>2021 \$</b>	<b>2020 \$</b>
Receipts from operations, Resource Funding Projects, etc.	2,408,801	1,371,150
Payments to suppliers and employees etc.	(2,317,470)	(1,399,240)
Interest received	12,510	22,699
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities</b>	<b>103,841</b>	<b>(5,391)</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Fixed assets purchases	(7,553)	-
Proceeds on sale of fixed assets	-	-
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities</b>	<b>(7,553)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net increase (decrease) in cash held</b>	<b>96,288</b>	<b>(5,391)</b>
<b>Cash at the beginning of the financial year</b>	<b>1,249,912</b>	<b>1,255,303</b>
<b>Cash at the end of the financial year</b>	<b>1,346,200</b>	<b>1,249,912</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these Financial Statements

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### 1 SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a general purpose financial report that has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Interpretations and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and the requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act (SA) 1985.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs modified by the revaluation of selected non-current assets and financial assets and financial liabilities for which the fair value basis of accounting has been applied.

The financial report complies with all Australian equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards (AIFRS) in their entirety.

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by the Association in the preparation of the financial report. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

#### (a) Plant and Equipment

Plant and Equipment are measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses.

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by the Association to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from those assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows, that will be received from the assets' employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have been discounted to their present values in determining recoverable amounts.

#### (b) Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated on a diminishing value basis over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are:

- Class of Fixed Asset Depreciation Rate
- Plant and Equipment 18%-40%
- Office equipment 10%-33.3%

#### (c) Leases

Lease payments under operating leases, where substantially all the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

#### (d) Employee Benefits

Provisions were made for the Association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee benefits expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus related on costs.

Contributions made by the Association to employee superannuation funds are charged as expenses when incurred.

#### (e) Cash

For the purposes of the Statement of Cash Flows, cash includes cash on hand, at banks and on deposit.

#### (f) Income Tax

The Income of the Association is exempt from Income Tax under Section 50(5) of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

#### (g) Goods & Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the Balance Sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

#### (h) Comparative Figures

When required by accounting standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year.

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

<b>2 REVENUE</b>	<b>2021 \$</b>	<b>2020 \$</b>
<b>Operating Activities</b>		
Resource Funding		
Local Government etc.	153,024	148,500
Grants		
Department of Regional Development Australia	226,759	226,095
Cash Flow Boost	100,000	
Other	146,900	137,400
	46,450	
<b>Non Operating Activities</b>		
Interest Received	12,510	22,699
	<b>685,643</b>	<b>534,694</b>
<b>3 OTHER EXPENSES</b>		
<b>Includes</b>		
Auditors Remuneration		-
Auditing	3,350	6,210
Taxation Services	400	400
		-
Board Member & Meeting Expenses	28,351	9,798
Insurance	3,556	1,778
Communications	14,144	30,753
Staff Travel & Accommodation	7,702	8,742
Motor Vehicle Expenses	17,844	18,428
Rent for Premises	21,575	21,396
Fringe Benefits Tax	5,094	5,094
<b>4 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>		
Petty Cash - Admin	81	111
Cash at Bank - General	29,595	67,343
Cash at Bank - Other	413,658	286,254
Cash at Bank - Term Deposit	885,119	875,532
Expense Accounts	17,747	20,672
	<b>1,346,200</b>	<b>1,249,912</b>



## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### 5 TRADE & OTHER RECEIVABLES

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Trade Receivables	11,500	14,749
FBT Receivables		-
GST Receivables	15,563	12,703
	<b>27,063</b>	<b>27,452</b>

### 6 PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT

Plant & Equipment	112,241	104,688
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(101,365)	(100,534)
	<b>10,876</b>	<b>4,154</b>

#### Movements in carrying amounts for Plant & Equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year

Balance at beginning of year	4,154	5,194
Additions	7,553	-
Depreciation expense	(831)	(1,040)
	<b>10,876</b>	<b>4,154</b>

### 7 TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES

#### Current

Trade Payables	18,801	30,424
Other Creditors & Accruals	18,707	17,175
Short Term Employee Benefits	196,418	227,528
GST Payable	11,302	11,106
	0	-
	<b>245,228</b>	<b>286,233</b>

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

<b>8 PROJECTS IN PROGRESS</b>	<b>2021 \$</b>	<b>2020 \$</b>
Deputy CEO	22,510	27,281
Tourism Development Manager	73,577	60,441
Business Development Manager	(313)	{7,782}
Opal Alliance	1,369	1,369
Outback SA Community Inc	9,538	9,538
Marketing & Investment Attractions	25,349	31,470
Workshops and Forums	31,662	31,782
Admin support	273,061	256,051
Economic/Community Development	98,303	106,006
Workforce Development	121,985	123,911
RDA Grant Fund - PIRSA	{21,750}	(21,450)
Economic Growth & Investment Strategy	6,633	3,905
Digital Solutions SA Program	9,983	5,000
Lake Eyre Economic Analysis	900	10,000
Strategic Projects	60,500	-
Regional Workforce CCP	1,289	-
UniHub Bursary Fund	1,200	-
	-	-
	<b>715,796</b>	<b>637,522</b>
<b>9 COMMITMENTS FOR EXPENDITURE</b>		
Other expenditure committed at the reporting date but not recognised in the Financial Statements as Liabilities		
Employee Remuneration contracts	1,040,780	602,885
Operating Leases	12,580	11,568
	<b>1,053,360</b>	<b>614,453</b>
These Expenditures are payable not later than one year	484,304	406,760
Later than one year & not later than 5 years	569,056	207,693
	<b>1,053,360</b>	<b>614,453</b>
<b>10 RETAINED PROFITS</b>		
Retained surpluses (Deficits) at the beginning of the financial year	357,763	357,769
Net Surplus (Deficit) for the year	59,461	1,627
Prior Year Adjustment from Projects	5,891	(1,633)
<b>Retained Surpluses (Deficits) at the end of the financial year</b>	<b>423,115</b>	<b>357,763</b>

## REPORT OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

In accordance with Section 35 (5) of the Association Incorporation's Act 1985, the Board of Management of the Regional Development Australia Far North Inc. states that during the period to which the accounts relate.

- a) i. No officer of the Association
- ii. no firm of which an officer is a member; and
- iii. no body corporate in which an officer has a substantial financial interest,

has received or become entitled to receive a benefit as a result of a contract between the officer, firm or body corporate and the Association except for the following:

- 1. Mark Sutton ,Director of Outback Communities  
Authority Stakeholder
- b) No officer of the Association has received directly or indirectly from the Association any payment or other benefit of a pecuniary value except for the reimbursement of travel expenses and honoraria for Mark Sutton, Colin Davies, Catherine Way, Lucy Morphet and Mark Fennell.

**Signed 13th day of December 2021**

**in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Management**



**MEMBER**



**MEMBER**

## STATEMENT OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEMBERS

In the opinion of the Board of Management of the Regional Development Australia Far North Inc. the accompanying Financial Report attached thereto, are drawn up so as to present fairly the results of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2021, and the state of affairs of the Association as at 30 June 2021, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

**Signed 13th day of December 2021**

**in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Management**



**MEMBER**



**MEMBER**



## NOTES



