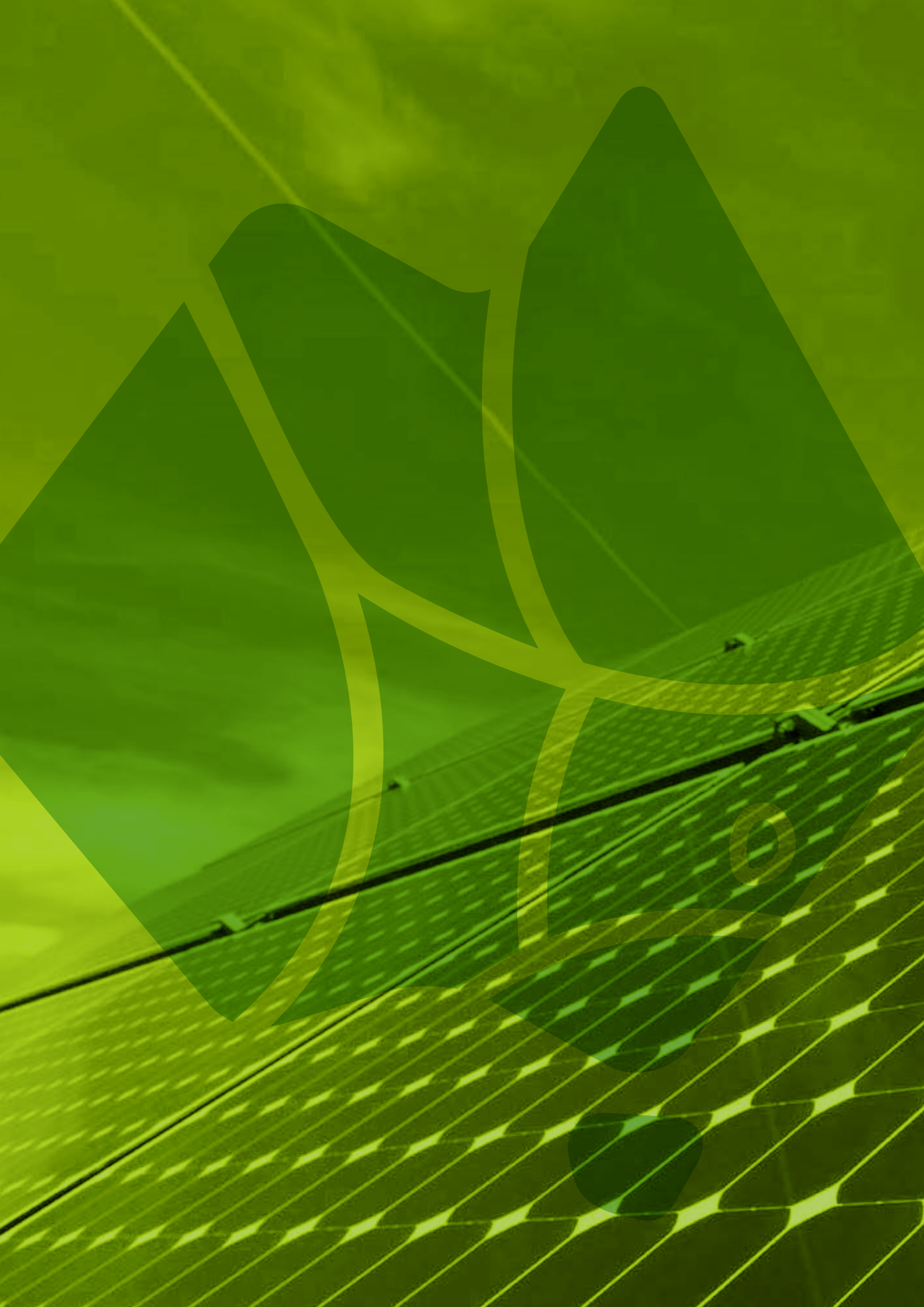




Regional  
Development  
*Australia*

**FAR NORTH**

**ANNUAL REPORT** 23/24



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# 1. MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Regional Development Australia (RDA) Far North continued to work closely with our key stakeholders throughout the 2023/24 financial year to progress the key priorities for our region:

- Economic Development
- Strategic Infrastructure Investment
- Business Capacity Building
- Population
- Collaboration

**The Far North SA region has experienced continued growth throughout the financial year with a growing pipeline of investment projects. As at 30 June 2024, the pipeline of large investment projects across the region equalled over \$11.2 billion, creating 10,664 employment opportunities in construction with 3,703 ongoing. Acknowledging these projects are all in various stages of their development, even if only some have come to fruition, this still creates significant growth across our region.**

This increased economic activity, and a growing population have exacerbated housing issues across the region. Port Augusta's significant growth driven by the green energy and resources sector has put significant pressure on the current housing supply, with a need for more housing.

RDA Far North has been working closely with the Office for Regional Housing to move housing-related projects forward. The team has also worked closely with other government departments, local government, and industry on a range of strategic projects throughout the year. This included the Northern Water Supply Project, a key project for the mining industry in Far North SA.

With an increasing population and the need to attract even more skilled people to the region, childcare has become a priority issue. The RDA Far North Committee completed a 'Childcare Supply and Demand Audit' during the financial year to gather data about the region's needs.

RDA Far North's Leadership Development Program has been a huge success throughout the year and it's pleasing to see such excellent participation from right across the region. Our Business Planning for Success Program, funded through the State Government's Small Business Fundamentals Program has also been a great addition to RDA Far North's services throughout the year.

As RDA Far North looks ahead, we remain committed to collaborating with our stakeholders to both navigate the challenges and seize opportunities for our region. We approach the new financial year with optimism and look forward to further supporting the growth and development of Far North SA in 2024/25.

*Scott McKay*  
*Chair*

## 2. RDA FAR NORTH'S ROLE

### OUR PURPOSE

#### **RDA Far North's Mission is to:**

To foster and enhance a robust, diversified, vibrant and growing economy across Far North SA through the timely and professional provision of economic development services.

#### **Using our networks and skills in the following streams:**

Economic Development  
Business Development  
Skills & Workforce Development  
Corporate Governance & Administration

#### **And working with the following sectors:**

Small Business  
Resources  
Transport  
Tourism  
Services  
Renewable & Emerging Industries

#### **We aim to achieve our vision:**

For residents of Far North South Australia to enjoy a high quality of life in prosperous and sustainable communities

## OUR PRIORITIES

To meet the strategic objectives and key performance indicators set for the 2023/2024 financial year, the following outlines RDA Far North's key focus areas:

### PRIORITIES

RDA Far North facilitated and supported sustainable economic development in the far north of South Australia by articulating and advocating for the following key regional priorities.

#### **Economic Development:**

advancing the major growth sectors in the Far North Investment Pipeline through working with key industry sectors and businesses to assist them reach their potential.

#### **Strategic Infrastructure Investment:**

identifying strategic infrastructure requiring investment with a focus on connectivity across the Far North further opening the region to industry, tourism and business.

#### **Business Capacity Building:**

support private investment by local and regional businesses, and attraction of new industries and businesses addressing market gaps, as well as harnessing the visitor economy through the promotion of the region.

#### **Population:**

support projects/initiatives which improve the liveability of the Far North Region.

#### **Collaboration:**

support collaboration with other key stakeholders, including RDA Committees across SA and Australia to share ideas and grow local knowledge.

### INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK

RDA Far North focused on projects which met the strategic priorities identified by the region and the Regional Investment Framework as follows.

#### INVESTING IN SERVICES

RDA Far North utilised its networks, regional intelligence, stakeholders, and connections to all three levels of Government to advocate challenges (with solution focused approach) faced by the regions and connect the region with government programs /services to assist in growing the region.

This was done with a focus on:

- Promoting grant and funding opportunities.
- Providing access to key regional information and data.
- Playing an advocacy role for regional challenges and opportunities.
- Supporting the identification core infrastructure gaps and proposals for investment.

#### INVESTING IN PEOPLE

RDA Far North recognises the number of industry organisations, specific focus groups and government committees across the region. Maintaining an active involvement and information flow through these associations, groups and committees makes it easier to provide information to their members and design and deliver targeted approaches to mitigate or solve the challenges faced. The goal of RDA Far North was to keep these major organisations up to date on what is available to businesses and what and how RDA Far North can help our regional businesses.

- RDA Far North continued to keep regular interaction with these groups across the region attending meetings of these industry associations at various levels.
- RDA Far North continued to remain an active participant in projects focused on skills, education, and training which are essential for fostering economic growth and competitiveness of the region.

### **INVESTING IN PLACES**

In collaboration with the five local government stakeholders, RDA Far North created Economic Growth and Investment Strategy (EGIS) documents for each sub-region. These contain both specific major strategic actions and overlapping actions that RDA Far North collaborates on with all stakeholders. These initiatives are centred on the same important regional priorities as those indicated above.

RDA Far North focused on strategies which:

- Undertook direct consultation in updating the infrastructure projects list for the far north region. The list was fed into the Regional Development South Australia (RDSA) Regional SA Infrastructure Priority document which is used as a consolidated information and lobbying document to State and Commonwealth Governments Ministers and their departments. This was also utilised in identifying projects put forward to Infrastructure Australia as part of their annual call for projects.
- Where prioritised by RDA Far North against a balance of social and economic analysis, i.e. in an order that gets the best bang for the buck, RDA Far North assisted 'shovel ready' projects which provide outcomes in the best interests of the region.
- Facilitated collaborative working groups, projects, or partnerships

RDA Far North engaged with the Chief Executive Officers (CEO) of the five local governments in the Far North region via monthly meetings held with each CEO across the region and facilitate the opportunity for the CEO's to meet on a bi-annual basis to discuss like challenges and opportunities for collaboration.

### **INVESTING IN INDUSTRIES AND LOCAL ECONOMIES:**

RDA Far North engaged with businesses, major industry and projects across the region focussing on economic and industry growth.

- Identifying and promoting investment opportunities across the region.
- Assisting current organisations or potential investors with investment opportunities.
- Connecting emerging businesses or entrepreneurs with business support, investment, and growth programs.
- Maintaining a major project documents compiled from active projects the organisation is engaged in allowing ongoing consultation and engagement with proponents.
- RDA Far North continued to maintain activities and level of contact which allowed for ongoing conversations in identifying challenges and solutions with major industry and projects across the region.
- RDA Far North continued to provide businesses and industry in our region with helpful and accessible information and support.

# OUR REGION





# 3. OUR COMMITTEE & OPERATIONAL TEAM

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

## COMMITTEE

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Term Expiry Date</b>
Mark Sutton	Chair	June 2023 – December 2023
Scott McKay	Deputy Chair	June 2023 – December 2023
Scott McKay	Chair	January 2024 – June 2024
Baldev (Sunny) Singh	Committee Member	30 September 2024
Tony Vaughan	Committee Member	30 September 2025
Lucy Morphett	Committee Member	30 September 2024
Kerry Mudge	Committee Member	30 April 2024
Linley Shine	Committee Member	30 September 2026
Trevor Wright	Committee Member	30 April 2024
Greg Flint	Committee Member	30 April 2024
Geoff Sheridan	Committee Member	30 September 2025
Patsy Reynolds	Committee Member	30 September 2025

## OPERATIONAL TEAM

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Claire Wiseman	Chief Executive Officer
Greg Williams	Business Development Manager
Tara Hogg	Tourism and Marketing Manager
Andrew Padgett	Economic Development Manager (up until April 2024)
Renata Hackett	Leadership Program Manager
Shari Dodd	Office Manager
Lee-Anne Dalla Santa	Administrative Officer

# 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, Communications and the Arts
- 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)



**Port Augusta CITY COUNCIL**

Port Augusta City Council (PACC)



Municipal Council of Roxby Downs (RDC)



**Outback Communities Authority**

Outback Communities Authority (OCA)

## CONTRACTS

The following outlines the various contracts and funding agreements that RDA Far North had for core and position funding for the 2023/24 financial year:

### Commonwealth Government

Core funding for administrative positions and operational purposes \$256,360

### Local Government

Core funding for administrative positions and operations purposes

- \$172,334

Contributions from:

- District Council of Coober Pedy
- The Flinders Ranges Council
- Port Augusta City Council
- Municipal Council of Roxby Downs
- Outback Communities Authority

### State Government

Far North Economic Growth and Investment \$409,120

### Tourism Service Delivery

- \$48,236 (plus \$11,264 allocated to RDA Yorke & Mid North to deliver in Southern Flinders region)

### Regional Leadership Program

- \$125,000

The significant third-party contracts are with the State Government and Local Government partners. Without this additional funding, RDA Far North would not be as operational as it is, given the area to be covered and the workforce required. If these funds were not available, there would be a severe lack of service to this vast region.

# 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.



**\$11.2 billion** in investment pipeline, creating **10,664** employment opportunities during construction and **3,703** ongoing.



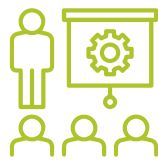
Leadership training provided to **320** regional people across **18** locational events.



**49** proponents assisted with funding applications. **\$2,746,554** in grant funding successful.



**53** grants marketed, **25,245** email contacts, **34** social media campaigns reaching **20,113**.



**16** workshops delivered with **295** businesses participating.



**\$2.5 million** in expansion projects in small business, creating **42** new ongoing employment opportunities.



**1** Key piece of research initiated articulating key challenges for the region and strategies for stakeholders to meet the challenge.



**28** economic datasets provided to Local Government and **49** economic datasets provided to Industry.



Active member of **8** working groups focused on specific challenges and opportunities across the region.



Business support services provided to **590** small businesses across the region.

# 6. PROGRESS TOWARDS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IN 2023/24

## 6.1 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

RDA Far North continued to promote the region and encourage private investment throughout the financial year. There was a focus on supporting key industry sectors and businesses in the region to help reach their full potential. This included:

- Maintaining a current investment pipeline of projects in the region
- Working closely with regional developers, new businesses, and regional stakeholders
- Providing a responsive business support service across the Far North
- Providing support to small to medium businesses seeking funding through State and Federal government
- Driving relevant programs and initiatives from the region's Economic Growth and Investment Strategies and other plans.

### Investment in Far North South Australia

As at 30 June 2024, the pipeline of large investment projects across the region equalled over \$11.2 billion, creating 10,664 employment opportunities in construction with 3,703 ongoing jobs. This included:

- **Private investment**  
\$426,361,413 – 826 jobs in construction and 734 ongoing jobs.
- **Public projects**  
\$89,663,492 – 363 construction jobs and 62 ongoing jobs.
- **Cultural projects**  
\$1,550,000 – 5 construction jobs and 20 ongoing jobs.
- **Infrastructure projects**  
\$4,312,154,000 – 3,467 construction jobs and 1,532 ongoing jobs.
- **Minerals and resources**  
\$1,140,000,000 – 1,500 construction jobs.
- **Energy projects**  
\$5,314,170,500 – 4,458 construction jobs and 1,375 ongoing jobs.

### Port Augusta Infrastructure Investment Strategy

The RDA Far North team continued efforts towards an Investment and Attraction Strategy for Port Augusta. An application to the Local Buying Foundation was successful in contributing \$75,000 towards the project with other contributions secured of \$50,000 from the Port Augusta Business Centre and \$10,000 in-kind contribution from Port Augusta City Council. RDA Far North is also contributing \$20,000 in-kind. This project will commence in the 2024/25 financial year.

### Commonwealth Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program

RDA Far North worked with a number of proponents considering funding applications to the Commonwealth Regional Precincts and Partnerships Program. This included assisting with the preparation for a significant application which would provide funding to develop a raft of planning documents to increase the liveability and economic diversity of an important regional precinct.

### Economic Forums

RDA Far North delivered two Economic Development Forums, one in Coober Pedy and one in Roxby Downs with 86 businesses represented at the events.

### REMPLAN Economic Research and Analysis

Throughout the financial year, RDA Far North continued to use REMPLAN, economic modelling tool, for economic research and impact analysis for several individual projects throughout the year. This has been very helpful in showing the economic value and impact of regional projects for grant applications.

### Port Augusta Technical College

The five key study areas that will be offered at the Port Augusta Technical College are:

- Tourism and hospitality
- Renewable energy
- Manufacturing and construction
- Mining and mineral processing
- Health and social assistance

RDA Far North advocated for regional students to be able to access the brand-new facility which will include accommodation for regional students when they need to complete blocks of study. Our team has provided ongoing support and industry consultation for this project throughout the financial year. This included fortnightly meetings with the Industry Engagement Consultant for the Department of Education.

### Upper Spencer Gulf (USG) Workforce Needs

RDA Far North has continued to be an active member of three different committees focused on the workforce needs across the Spencer Gulf through:

- The Local Jobs Program Taskforce
- A State-funded workforce program which RDA Eyre Peninsula is rolling out across the Upper Spencer Gulf (USG)
- A group created by the Workforce Summit.

The RDA Far North team participated in a career roadshow event held in Port Augusta in May 2024. Several schools from Port Augusta and across the region attended the event.

RDA Far North was also a partner for businesses to help address gaps in their workforce. This well-attended workshop helped to provide strategies, information and tips for recruitment and retention.

Our team provided workforce data and the investment pipeline of jobs for Port Augusta and surrounds to the organising committee of the Upper Spencer Gulf Workforce Summit. Meetings with Workforce Australia continued to be held throughout the year.

### Hydrogen Jobs Plan

RDA Far North actively participated in several meetings with representatives from Hydrogen Jobs - Whyalla to keep updated about the opportunities available.

### Housing Issues

Housing remains a high priority issue across the region. Port Augusta, in particular, is currently experiencing significant growth driven by the green energy and resources sector. This places significant pressure on Port Augusta's housing supply and there is a need to increase housing to cater for the increased population.

During the year, RDA Far North put forward a project within our infrastructure priority listing identifying 18 housing development estates within Port Augusta with the ability to provide 1,085 houses, noting 148 of those are lifestyle living villages. There is further scoping to be undertaken to identify impediments such as existing service capacity for water, sewerage and general access, as well as construction capacity to develop these estates.

Funding was pursued with the Local Government Association of SA (LGASA) Research and Development (R&D) fund to enable a baseline housing supply and demand assessment for Regional South Australia, in conjunction with RDA Adelaide. Unfortunately, this application was unsuccessful. However, RDA Far North also prepared a scoping document to undertake this work for the three USG cities, and sought funding to engage the Regional Australia Institute to work on the project.

Throughout the year, RDA Far North has continued working with the Office for Regional Housing to progress housing-related initiatives. This has included several meetings with developers and organisations who are looking for investment-ready projects in the regions.

### Far North Regional Plan

RDA Far North committee members and our operational team participated in the Stakeholder Visioning Workshop for the Far North Regional Plan on 24 July 2023. This Plan covers where houses and jobs will go, how they will be serviced, and the infrastructure required.

## 6.2 STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

### Regional Development South Australia (RDSA)

#### Infrastructure Priority Listing

RDSA is the peak body for South Australia's RDA Committees. Membership consists of the Chair and CEO from each of the eight RDA Committees across the state. RDSA focuses on projects that have relevance to the entirety of regional SA.

RDSA's Infrastructure Audit and Priority Listing was a key collaboration project during the 2023/24 year. The top ten priority projects identified and put forward by the RDA Far North Committee were:

- Coober Pedy water supply
- Quorn water supply
- Port Augusta housing supply
- Outback waste management
- Outback power
- Outback water
- Livestock transshipping facility
- Outback roads
- Flinders Ranges and Outback Tourism Accommodation Infrastructure Program
- Yorkey's Crossing upgrade

The priority listing document was released in early 2024 and provided to all Ministers, Shadow Ministers, Members and Government Department CE's.

#### Northern Water Supply Project

The Northern Water Supply Project is a proposed desalination project key for mining in our region. The project will supply water to northern and Upper Spencer Gulf areas of South Australia. RDA Far North has been actively involved in supporting this project since the very early stages of stakeholder consultation. The team has participated in the Northern Water Supply Project Committee Reference Group throughout the financial year. Regular meetings were also held with Infrastructure SA, RDA Yorke and Mid North and RDA Eyre Peninsula CEOs, Port Augusta and Whyalla City Council CEOs. RDA Far North's CEO also attended a tour of the Cape Hardy site in late June.

#### Arkaroola Water Supply

RDA Far North met with Arkaroola management during the year to discuss water supply issues. This issue was then raised with the appropriate Minister's office as well as provided an update about Arkaroola to the SA Tourism Commission regarding the shortage of water supply for the village. Drilling exploration was completed which identified a new supply is in the process of a new connection being setup.

### Childcare Supply and Demand Strategic Project

RDA Far North's committee allocated \$20,000 to undertake a supply and demand audit of childcare across the region. The study involved desktop research and extensive consultation across the region. As part of the consultation, the communities of Quorn, Hawker, Coober Pedy, Roxby Downs, and Port Augusta were all visited meeting with local providers, users and other key stakeholders. Additionally, online meetings were held with remote community members, and a survey was distributed across the region.

The final document, which includes actionable recommendations for the next steps to be undertaken, is available on RDA Far North's website.

#### Meeting with Major Project Proponents

The RDA Far North team met with major project proponents working across Port Augusta in mid-February 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss project timings and other things which may impact the community. The results were positive with good participation and feedback.

#### Proposed Bio Truck Washdown Facility

A proposed Bio Truck Washdown Facility for Port Augusta is another key project the RDA Far North team have been working on this past year. Pastoralists in the Far North SA region have recognised the need for livestock trucks to be washed before entering properties to collect livestock. Currently the nearest facility is near Dublin, a return trip of more than 500km, and a significant additional cost for transport.

Northern Territory Local Government has prioritised this project from a biosecurity perspective across the border. Port Augusta City Council is also supportive of a facility being established in the area.

During the financial year, RDA Far North have been working with both pastoralists and representatives from local government in both states and Livestock SA to move the project forward.

## 6.3 BUSINESS CAPACITY BUILDING

RDA Far North continued to support local industry and the region's business sector throughout the financial year. This included supporting private investment, business advisory services, assisting businesses to connect with and apply for grants and funding opportunities, and harnessing the visitor economy through the promotion of the region.

### Business Support Services

RDA continued to provide a responsive and practical business advisory service across the region. One-on-one business advisory services were provided to 590 small and medium enterprises across the Far North region. Advice and assistance varied and was tailored to each enterprise, but included these broad topics:

- Startup/business establishment assistance
- Human resources management, including recruitment policies and processes
- Business planning and strategy
- Product development
- Supply chain and transport issues
- Grants and funding opportunities
- Referrals for accountancy and financial auditing assistance
- General business health checks
- Connecting businesses to new potential business partnerships
- Workforce planning and staff retention strategies
- Marketing strategy
- Tourism opportunities
- Skills development opportunities for local businesses

### Distribution of Resources for Regional Businesses

RDA Far North continued to distribute useful information and resources to regional businesses and organisations throughout the year. This included the following:

- Agricultural Town of the Year nomination information
- ATO updates, news, and information about their free online small business courses
- Austrade and Tourism Australia's National Accessible Tourism Guide available for tourism operators
- AFL Gather Round program and marketing opportunities
- Aussie Travel Code signage project sign-up packages
- Australian Tourism Data Warehouse (ATDW) business listings and information, including details about the upcoming changes and new digital platform
- Business.gov.au newsletter and events

- Consumer and Business Services updates
- Cyber Uplift Step Program information from the Australian Cyber Collaboration Centre
- EOI process for the SA Tourism Commission (SATC) Experience Development Pilot Program available to FRO operators
- First Nations Tourism Mentoring Program
- Free online Austrade webinars on sustainability for tourism operators
- Free mental health webinars for the small business sector facilitated by Mindarma in conjunction with the Office for Small and Family Business
- Grey Nomads Best Pub Stay Awards because voting was opened and two FRO businesses were nominated for the awards (William Creek Hotel and Cradock Hotel)
- Information about major local events
- LMP regional updates
- Many Rivers small business event (11 October) information aimed at small Indigenous business startups
- Monthly Tourism Newsletter
- 'Navigating Family Business' and 'Governance in Family Business' workshops (a Small Business Fundamentals Program initiative)
- Office for Small and Family Business news
- Outback SA Drought Workshops
- Promotion of the Regional Tech Hub service to assist with the transition from 3G to 4G
- Promotion of SA Small Business Week events
- Promotion of 'Agri-Silience' program delivered in Yunta and Orroroo which aims to build resilient agricultural businesses
- Promotion of the FRO forum
- RDA Migration Information webinar details (held 31 January 2024)
- SALA Festival registration information
- SA Tiny Town Awards voting information
- SA Tourism Awards nomination information
- SATC news and updates
- SA Tourism Conference information
- Sustainable Tourism Toolkit (a national framework for operators provided by Austrade and Tourism Australia).
- Tactic 'Meet the Buyer' event
- TAFE information about upcoming business training
- TiCSA updates, including information about workshops, webinars, programs and events

### **Learning Opportunities for the Small Business Sector**

RDA Far North's ongoing work with the region's small business sector has helped to identify skills gaps where training or additional support is required. The following learning opportunities for small businesses were offered during the financial year with RDA Far North's involvement:

#### **Virtual Grant Writing Workshops**

RDA Far North rolled out virtual grant writing workshops in late May 2024. Over 80 people attended the one-hour workshops online. Excellent feedback was received from participants.

#### **Cyber Security Information Session**

Business Port Augusta hosted a Cyber Security Information Session in August 2023. The RDA Far North team distributed information about the event to local businesses. Participants were provided with information to help them protect their businesses from cybercrime.

#### **Cyber Security Awareness Workshop for Business in Port Augusta**

A workshop was held in Port Augusta on 7 March 2024 in conjunction with the Adelaide Business Hub and Business Port Augusta. The event was widely promoted by the RDA Far North team and 10 participants registered for the session.

#### **Cyber Security Awareness Workshop for Quorn Business Group**

RDA Far North facilitated this workshop, which was held in Quorn on 6 March 2024 in conjunction with the Adelaide Business Hub and the Quorn Business Group. There were 17 registered participants for the session. Two participants had follow-up mentoring sessions as part of the Digital Solutions Program the following day.

#### **Home-based Business Forum**

RDA Far North attended and presented at the first Home-based Business Forum held at the Roxby Downs Innovation Hub 31 July 2023. 14 businesses attended.

#### **TiCSA Regional Workshop**

RDA Far North's Tourism and Marketing Manager helped to organise the TiCSA regional workshop and networking event at Pichi Richi Park Tuesday 26 March 2024 and presented at the event.

#### **Other Opportunities**

Additionally, RDA Far North partnered with RDA Eyre Peninsula to roll out 'Cultural Understanding for Recruitment and Retention' workshops. Workshop content was focused on how to partner with traditional owners and Indigenous businesses. All events were very well-attended with positive feedback received.

RDA Far North also promoted the Healthy Workplace Webinar (August 2023) widely across the region. This event was organised by RDA Eyre Peninsula.

#### **Business Skill Gaps Online Survey**

The RDA Far North team launched a Business Skills Gap Online Survey in June 2024 to gather feedback from local businesses. The purpose of the survey was to identify what workshops and skills training local businesses need and would be interested in attending over the next financial year.

#### **Resilient Ready**

RDA Far North's Regional Business Development Manager attended the Resilient Ready Workshop on 'Insurance for Small Business' held at Central Oval in Port Augusta in October 2023. RDA Far North is a member of the Resilient Ready Local Advisory Group. This program is providing a 'Resilient Ready Business Support Tool Kit' for businesses. Additionally, there was a 'Thursday Thinkers' workshop held as part of the program on 7 September 2023. Six businesses were represented.

#### **A Small Business Sustainability Workshop for the Region**

RDA Far North put forward a case to the Office for Small and Family Business to hold a Small Business Sustainability Workshop in the Far North Region. This has now been scheduled for September 2024 in Port Augusta.



### **Adelaide Business Hub**

Meetings were held monthly with Adelaide Business Hub throughout the financial year to discuss future regional workshops and the promotion of the next phase of the Australian Small Business Advisory Service (ASBAS) program.

Additionally, the team met with Adelaide Business Hub to discuss the Digital Solutions Program, Women in Business Program, and Cyber Workshops for the region.

### **Office for Small and Family Business**

RDA Far North's team met regularly with the Office for Small and Family Business's Business Support Officer to discuss programs, initiatives, and resources for our region's businesses.

In May 2024, the RDA Far North team helped to coordinate a visit by the Office for Small and Family Business to the region to meet with associations and businesses. Business networking events were held in Hawker and Quorn. The Quorn event received 17 registrations, and the Hawker event received 11 registrations from businesses in diverse industries.

### **Small Business Fundamentals Program**

#### **- Business Planning for Success**

RDA Far North continued to roll out Business Planning for Success, funded by the Small Business Fundamentals Program, during the year.

The program worked with 40 businesses in the region to develop business plans enabling them to grow. Currently, there are 32 businesses registered in the program from a total of 55 enquiries about the program. Two participants have completed the program and there has been 385 facilitator consultancy hours of support provided for the program in total so far.

Participants in this program are from right across the region, including Port Augusta, Flinders Ranges, Coober Pedy, Roxby Downs, and Outback Communities Authority areas.

The registration data shows that the majority of registrations are for businesses that have less than 5 FTE employees. The top three most prevalent industries are represented in the program to date are:

- Tourism/Accommodation/ Hospitality (8)
- Professional Services (5)
- Trade Related Services (5)

Out of the current 32 registered participating businesses, only 6 of the participants had an existing business plan. This represents only 19.35%, highlighting the important need for this program.

RDA Far North will undertake a full evaluation at the end of the program which will include speaking with each of the participating businesses. However, we have met with two businesses/organisations that have completed the program and anecdotal feedback back has been extremely positive.

Additionally, RDA Far North participated in a tourism product trial in Coober Pedy that was developed and supported through the business planning program.

The Business Planning for Success Program continues to provide RDA Far North with the opportunity to work with many businesses that we have not worked with or offered services to previously. The program has enabled us to strengthen relationships and support the business community effectively across the region.

### **The Circle - First Nations Entrepreneur Hub**

RDA Far North attended The Circle showcase at the Wayville Showgrounds. There were 125 stallholders and 1400 registered delegates.

## **National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)**

### **Indigenous Business Incubator Project**

Work with the NIAA has continued throughout the year. RDA Far North has assisted businesses that are part of the program to grow their ideas from concept to reality. The RDA Far North team has provided information about funding opportunities to several Indigenous start-ups and connected businesses with the program. The program has been extended until December 2024.

### **Indigenous Business Hub Planning**

RDA Far North met with key stakeholders in relation to a local Indigenous Business Hub in Port Augusta. The team facilitated a visit to the proposed site with RDA Far North's CEO and Chairperson, Minister McBain Federal Minister for Regional Development, Senator Grogan, and their staff.

### **South Australian Trading Tracks Rollout**

During the year, RDA Far North team met with the Indigenous Management Group to assist with their consultation for the rollout of the South Australian Trading Tracks Program. This program is supported by the Local Buying Foundation, C-Res, and BHP.

### **Assistance with Grants and Funding Opportunities**

The RDA Far North team continued to work with businesses, councils and community organisations to identify relevant funding opportunities. A list of priority projects for the region continues to be maintained so that projects can be matched with available grants where possible.

During 2023/24, the following grants were promoted:

- 2024 NAIDOC Local Grants
- Activating Tourism Heritage Program (TiCSA & DEW)
- Climate Smart Agriculture Program - Partnerships and Innovation Grants
- Economic Recovery Fund: Small Business Energy Grants
- Energy Efficiency Grants for SMEs
- Expand Together Grants
- Experience Nature Tourism Fund
- Federal Government Industry Growth Program
- FRRR Strengthening Rural Communities
- Growing Regions Fund
- Heritage Program
- Industry Growth Program: Commercialisation and Growth

- Industry Growth Program: Early-Stage Commercialisation
- Livestock and Animal Traceability Development Grant (Implementations and Improvement)
- Local Buying Foundation Grants
- Multicultural Grants - Expand Together
- National Priority Funding - Requests for Proposals
- Office of Recreation and Sport Active State Collaboration Program
- Office of Recreation and Sport Facilities Program
- On Farm Connectivity Program
- On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme
- ORSR South Australian AED Grants Program
- PIRSA Thriving Regions Fund
- Play Our Way Program
- RAI and Elders Community Giving Fund
- Regional Event Fund (SA Tourism Commission)
- Regional Precincts Partnerships Program
- Remote Airstrip Upgrade Round 10
- SA Arid Land Grassroots Grants
- SATC Experience Development Program
- SATC Experience Nature Tourism Fund
- Small Network Grants for remote, regional, and rural community organisations
- Stream One - Precinct Development Planning
- Stronger Together Grants
- Telstra AFL Footy Grants
- Telstra's Connected Communities Grant Program (FRRR)
- The Power of Her Infrastructure and Participation Program
- Thriving Communities - Enabling Infrastructure Fund

The team regularly monitors Grant Connect and provides grant information widely across the region.

RDA Far North assisted with 49 grant applications during the 2023/24 financial year. Support included collecting information, writing letters of support, seeking letters of support or quotes from others, developing project plans and briefs, budgets, and risk management plans. The team assisted to compile information and write some applications.

### **Support to Chambers of Commerce, Business and Industry Associations**

RDA Far North continued to play an active role supporting Chamber of Commerce organisations and Business Groups across the Far North SA region.

Assistance was provided to these organisations during the 2023/24 financial year:

#### **Business Port Augusta**

The RDA Far North team continued to attend Business Port Augusta meetings in an observation capacity providing regular updates on programs and services available to businesses.

The team assisted in the facilitation and engagement of a consultant to assist Business Port Augusta with strategic planning. All board members attended, and it was a robust and positive session.

We also collaborated with Business Port Augusta to involve the committee in supporting a range of workshops and events for local businesses.

#### **Quorn Business Group**

RDA Far North regularly attended Quorn Business Group meetings throughout the year. We partnered with Quorn Business Group to run two social media workshops in July 2023. The workshops covered social media and Canva and were very successful with 29 registrations. RDA Far North presented at both workshops providing an overview of RDA's role and services.

#### **Coober Pedy Retail, Business and Tourism Association (CPRBTA)**

RDA Far North's team attended several Coober Pedy Retail, Business and Tourism Association's meetings, including the AGM. Other meetings were held to plan networking events.

An introduction was provided to the new committee, which included RDA Far North providing an overview of how we have worked with the Association in the past, and future opportunities. This was a very positive meeting, and we will continue to work closely with the Association to ensure positive outcomes for Coober Pedy businesses. During the year, RDA Far North also met with the BHP Community Engagement Team to discuss opportunities to partner with the CPRBTA.

A highlight of the year was the business networking event held in Coober Pedy, hosted by RDA Far North, Office for Small and Family Business, and the CPRBTA. There were 40 business representatives in attendance at the event, held at the Opal Inn. Feedback was gathered from attendees about potential upskilling opportunities and information that would be useful to them.

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

RDA Far North continued to be an active member of the Roxby Downs Business Forum, attending several meetings to discuss workshops and training opportunities, small business roundtable and pitch sessions, cyber security business audit, and an AI business session.

A Roxby Business Forum Business Breakfast event was held on 30 November 2023. Guest speakers included BHP's Copper Asset Manager, and the Regional Project Officer for the Office for Small and Family Business. The event was well-attended with 65 attendees.

During the year, RDA Far North also attended a meeting to discuss Woomera's involvement in future sessions to be held at the Roxby Innovation and Community Hub.

#### **Leigh Creek Community Engagement**

The team attended a number of meetings with Leigh Creek Residents and Ratepayers Association. Assistance was provided with strategic planning which included a succession planning session and a strategic planning session for the Leigh Creek township to discuss expected outcomes, key partnerships and stakeholders, capacity, funding options, and impacts.

#### **SA Business Chamber**

RDA Far North's met with the policy team at the SA Business Chamber during the year. Relevant information about opportunities and seminars was distributed to local businesses.

### Local Contact Officer Funding

RDA Far North continued to deliver Local Contact Office services across the region in accordance with the terms of the grant between the South Australia Tourism Commission and RDA Far North. RDA Far North also continued to provide a proportion of the funds to RDA Yorke and Mid North to cover the Southern Flinders area of the tourism region.

This included the following.

- Monthly newsletters were distributed for the Flinders Ranges and Outback (FRO) area, which included industry and grant updates, workshop and webinars information, data and statistics, resources, and more
- Liaised with SA Tourism Commission (SATC) as required, included assisting with media and public relations opportunities and ensuring they have up-to-date information about Far North tourism operator
- The Tourism and Marketing Manager was the FRO local contact person and sat on several committees, such as the Flinders Ranges World Heritage Community Reference Group and the 2030 Total Solar Eclipse Working Group
- Information sharing from industry-related agencies
- Sharing relevant information on RDA Far North's Facebook and LinkedIn pages, along with local industry sites
- Provided regular updates to operators at events and forums
- Relationship-building with industry committees, progress associations and business groups
- Promoted SATC initiatives
- Ongoing review and updating of the tourism database to ensure information is relevant
- Represented regional tourism at various workshops, training, events, conferences and forums including FRTOA Forums, SA Tourism Conference, SA Festivals and Events Policy Forum, Cultural Awareness training, and SA Tourism Awards
- Travelled throughout the region to meet face-to-face with operators and attended tourism meetings
- Assisted, promoted and supported tourism industry and SATC marketing campaigns, including 'Travel Our Way' (assisted with regional shoot and content) and 'Winter Our Way' (promoted with operators to encourage involvement)
- Attended Flinders Ranges Tourism Operators Association (FRTOA) Forum
- Visitor Information Centre Visits

### FRO Committee Support and Assistance

RDA Far North continued to assist FRO with tourism marketing for the region. Information, including SATC updates, visitor data, and current campaigns, was provided throughout the year.

Product information and contact details for new and existing FRO operators was shared with key stakeholders; and RDA Far North assisted multiple PR Media agencies with connecting with FRO operators and accessing the SATC Media Gallery for specific projects.

The team facilitated meetings with the FRO Tourism Marketing Committee to provide updates on the SATC Regional Review Summary Report. We then facilitated a presentation from SATC to the Committee which they could then discuss the outcomes of the report.

Online meetings were held with the outgoing FRO Chair and incoming Chair and Deputy Chair to discuss SATC marketing funding for 2023-24. Future communications with the new committee were also discussed.

### Media Opportunities

RDA Far North assisted Archive Producer for SBS series Great Australian Walks, to access SATC's Media Gallery and contact details for pre-shoot footage of Wilpena Pound for an upcoming episode.

Additionally, we promoted, engaged and assisted the SATC social media team with the 'Untold Stories' campaign with local FRO operators.

### HelloWorld Incentive 'Famil' to the Flinders Ranges and Outback Region

We assisted the SATC Trade, Event, and Famil team with a HelloWorld Incentive Famil to the Flinders Ranges and Outback region.

### Airline Promotions

RDA Far North attended an online meeting with a Senior Specialist at Jetstar to discuss potential marketing collaboration opportunities with FRO operators. Grafton Create was also engaged to promote their recent digital marketing (short videos) that included FRO operators, created/ designed for Qatar Airways onboard entertainment.

### Coober Pedy Tourism

RDA Far North connected SA Tourism Commission's social media team to Coober Pedy contacts to help them obtain new content, also assisted with pre-planning for the SATC Destination Development Team and Trade Events/Inbound visit to Coober Pedy.

### Aussie Travel Code

The Aussie Travel Code initiative continued to be promoted in 2023/24. Information about sign-up packages was included in tourism newsletters. Merchandise, such as stickers, was also distributed throughout the year. Information about potential funding opportunities for the 'Responsible Camping' campaign was also distributed. Content was also provided for the 2024 Caravan and Camping Guide.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### BUSINESS ADVISORY AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

16

Workshops delivered

Business support services provided to **381** businesses.

295

Businesses attended workshops

### BUSINESS PLANNING FOR SUCCESS PROGRAM (FUNDED THROUGH THE SMALL BUSINESS FUNDAMENTALS PROGRAM)

32 Businesses registered

### GRANTS AND FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Promoted **53** separate grant and funding programs.

Provided **63** businesses and community organisations with assistance applying for grants

Total of grants successful = **\$2,746,544**

### SUCCESSFUL GRANTS INCLUDED:

\$36,939

1 x Experience Nature Tourism Fund

\$1M

1 x Economic Recovery Fund 2023/2024

\$6,000

1 x Australian Governments Regional Art Fund

\$571,000

1 x Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program

\$40,000

1 x Sports and Recreation Fund

\$75,000

1 x BHP Local Buying Foundation Grants

\$1M

1 x Enabling Infrastructure Fund

\$10,000

1 x Activating Tourism Heritage Program 2024

\$7,605

1 x Stronger Communities Program

### NUMBER OF TOURISM BUSINESSES AND DEVELOPMENTS ASSISTED:

148

Businesses assisting with product development

56

Businesses assisted to build their marketing materials

5

Marketing projects assisted

## 6.4 POPULATION

RDA Far North continued to support projects and initiatives that improve the liveability of the Far North region. This included working closely with local government organisations to assist them to enhance liveability within their towns. RDA Far North met with each local government CEO monthly to discuss projects of common purpose and strategic projects. Additionally, the team meet with the councils when they are travelling to their council region.

### Outback SA Drought Resilience Plan

The Outback Communities Authority (OCA) was funded to deliver a Drought Resilience Plan for pastoral areas during the financial year. RDA Far North is a key partner and sits on the Steering Committee that is guiding the project. The draft plan was released in June 2024.

### Live, Work, and Play Initiative

RDA Far North's Tourism and Marketing Manager continued to work on the Live, Work, and Play campaign, which was successfully launched in the previous financial year. A new schedule was designed to continue promotion on social media. The landing page on the RDA Far North website was also updated to include the latest local content about jobs, housing, schools, and other important information. This is useful information for people considering relocation to our region.

### Stirling North Primary School 'Shark Tank'

During the year, the Tourism and Marketing Manager visited Stirling North Primary School for their 'Shark Tank' Project Presentations completed by Year 5/6 students. The presentations focused on improving the Port Augusta Wharf Precinct and providing new experiences to increase visitor numbers to the region.

### Assistance to Local Organisations

RDA Far North continued to assist local organisations and sporting clubs with funding applications for community events and infrastructure projects. These projects all contribute to the attractiveness of the region and lifestyle.

### Visits to Regional Communities

RDA Far North staff travelled more than 33,826 kilometres during the 2023/24 financial year. Staff met with stakeholders in these places:

- Andamooka
- Arkaroola
- Beltana
- Blinman
- Coober Pedy
- Copley
- Cradock
- Glendambo
- Hawker
- Innamincka
- Leigh Creek
- Lyndhurst
- Marree
- Nipapanha/Nepabunna Community
- Oodnadatta
- Parachilna
- Pimba
- Port Augusta
- Quorn
- Roxby Downs
- William Creek
- Wilpena Pound
- Woomera
- Yunta

### Leadership Development Program

The Regional Leadership Development Program (RLDP) overall was a huge success. At the completion of the RLDP, 320 people from the Far North region had taken part in some form of leadership training.

Program	Number
Committee Basics	173
Committee Basics Online Panel	12
Leadership Development Program	23
Students	66
Graduation Dinner Leaders	14
Business Associations Forum	14
Nilpena Ediacara Site Visit	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>320</b>

The program was informed by a regional Gap Analysis to determine the needs of the Far North Region. Through community engagement via survey, and one-on-one meetings with Community Leaders and attendance of Committee Meetings in region, it was determined that the main areas of focus for the RLDP in the Far North were:

#### Underrepresented Community Cohorts

- Indigenous
- Younger community leaders (to allow for succession planning)
- Older community members

#### Training for Volunteer Committee Members

- Basic training around the functions of community groups and roles that sit within those groups

#### Networking and Collaboration

- Opportunity to share ideas and resources with others in the region

The RLDP in the Far North was made up of four different training programs delivered over a 12-month period.

### Committee Basics

Committee Basics was a 3-hour training that covered the fundamentals of being a successful Committee Member. It was targeted towards volunteers in community-based organisations.

The Committee Basics program gave participants an overview of:

- Why they were on a committee and who their organisation is aiming to serve
- Understanding their Constitution and how to update it
- What makes a great committee member
- When it is time to freshen things up in Committees
- How to listen and when it is ok to question
- How to bring diversity to your group
- How to deal with conflict
- Personality types in groups
- Meeting agendas and minutes
- How to set goals and make good decisions
- The art of successfully collaborating

At the end of the program, participants were given tools to take back into their committees to continue to help them be effective leaders.

The program was delivered 13 times in 12 locations over a two-month period, with 173 people across our region attending:

Andamooka	13	Oodnadatta	7
Coober Pedy	26	Port Augusta (2 sessions)	28
Glendambo	7	Quorn	15
Hawker	17	Roxby Downs	27
Leigh Creek	12	William Creek	5
Marree	5	Yunta	11

Once the Committee Basics Roadshow was completed, all 173 participants were invited to attend an online panel hosted by RDA Far North, along with 3 local leaders (The Hon. Rob Kerin, RDSA Chair, Kym Thomas, Chair of Nukunu Wapma Thura Aboriginal Corporation, Tracey Freeman, Governance expert) from varying backgrounds who were available to answer further questions about committees that had come up since people attended the training.

The feedback from the Committee Basics program was overwhelmingly positive, with many of the larger centres asking for the program to be repeated for those that missed out. 88% of those who attended would like to see a refresher or further training in this area in the future.

### Leadership Development Program

The Leadership Development Program (LDP), a more intensive training program, ran between May and October in 2023. It was a 7-day program delivered over 6 months including face-to-face and online training. Participants attended 3 x 2-day sessions in Port Augusta with a final graduation event to celebrate the completion of the program. In addition to the in-person training, participants also completed 20 hours of online training held in 1.5-hour blocks over the 6 months.

The co-contribution for the LDP was \$400 per participant. To ensure the cost didn't prohibit people from applying, RDA Far North approached local sponsors for the 23 participants to cover \$300 of their fee. Sponsors were promoted throughout the program and invited to events throughout. Participants contributed \$100, as well as being responsible for their travel and accommodation whilst in Port Augusta for the training.

23 participants attended the program in Port Augusta over three different 'residential's. The participants travelled in from all over the Far North region and were representing a local committee from the towns of Copley, Hawker, Oodnadatta, Roxby Downs, Andamooka, Quorn and Port Augusta. In addition to this, the participants were required to participate in 20 hours of online training – completing the RELISH program.

Each residential was held at a different venue in Port Augusta, all of which were managed and run by community volunteer run sporting clubs – Port Augusta Golf Club, Central Oval (managed by South Augusta Football Club) and West Augusta Football Club. As most participants were from outside of Port Augusta, this gave them an opportunity to experience local venues and see directly how other community clubs are managed and their roles within the Port Augusta community.

- **Residential 1**  
Held over 2 days in May. The first residential was about 'Creating Community Champions' with the program, focusing on the personal development of the participants themselves.
- **Residential 2**  
The focus of Residential 2 was 'Fostering Champion Communities' which looked at the communities' the participants came from and worked to help them understand the type of leadership needed.
- **Residential 3**  
The final stage of the program was about 'Championing a Cause', focusing on organisational leadership skills and the internal infrastructure required to support an organisation to be efficient and effective at what it exists to do.

### RELISH Online Learning

In addition to face-to-face learning, LDP participants were required to complete an additional 18 hours (minimum) of online learning. The program looked at the six social cognitive needs that drive behaviour and performance using the RELISH framework. For each of the six needs, participants attended a minimum of 2 x 1.5-hour sessions with the option to attend an extra 1-hour session. This intense program was intertwined with the face-to-face residential's, and participants were given a separate certificate of completion for this program.

### Graduation

A Graduation dinner was held with 51 people attending, including participants and their partners. Of the 51 people, there were 14 representatives from local government, boards and business associations – all of whom are existing local leaders, giving them the opportunity to participate in the program delivery. A keynote address was given by Andrew Griffiths, author and entrepreneur, followed by a graduation ceremony where participants received a plaque as a memento of their participation in the Leadership Development Program.

### Business Associations Forum

A one-day forum involving Executive Committee Members from five local business associations within the Far North was held in November 2023. Committee members were given the opportunity to discuss strengths and challenges of their community groups, hear from a visiting Chamber of Commerce, share strategic plan ideas and network within groups.

Representatives from Business Port Augusta, Quorn Business Group, Roxby Down Business Forum, Flinders Ranges Tourism Operators Association and Station Stays SA, attended.

The day was facilitated by Jason Vidovich from JVTC and participants were asked to complete a pre-event survey outlining the successes and challenges of their association.

As with all of the programs, the highlight for most was the chance to network and share ideas with others in the region working in similar volunteer community roles.



### Nilpena Ediacaran National Park – site visit

A full-day trip to the new site was arranged for 18 local leaders from Far North LGAs and Boards. This was an opportunity to showcase the new tourism venture to existing leaders and highlight an example of strong leadership creating a new venture through collaboration and partnerships.

Participants were also able to network with other existing leaders in the region and share ideas on potential projects that only come to fruition with strong leadership skills being utilised.

### Next Steps for the Leadership Development Program

The next iteration of the Leadership Development Program (version 2) is underway with the gap analysis completed and being submitted to PIRSA. There will likely be a roll out of 'meeting basics' workshops across the region, and a more intensive leadership program running over a longer duration.

RDA organisations are working together to develop the bid for ongoing funding for this program so it can continue across South Australia.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT

69

Meetings held with local government

8

Planning sessions held with local government

### ECONOMIC DATASETS

28

General economic datasets provided to local government

49

Economic impact datasets provided to Industry

### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

320

Participants

## 6.5 COLLABORATION

Throughout the 2023/24 financial year, the RDA Far North team continued to support collaboration with key stakeholders, including all levels of government, RDA Committees across South Australia, and local industry, businesses, and community-based organisations.

### RDA and Regional Development South Australia Network Meetings

RDA Far North continued to actively participate in RDA virtual meetings held fortnightly and Regional Development South Australia (RDSA) CEO meetings held every six weeks. Additionally, RDSA meetings were held every twelve weeks.

One of the key collaboration projects across the RDAs during the year was focused on policy design. The project is in its early stages and will involve a series of focus groups for policy development.

Each RDA Chair and CEO has been allocated a policy area. RDA Far North's Chair was allocated 'Net Zero and Renewables' and the CEO assigned 'Housing'. We worked with the RDA Adelaide focus group to assist in policy design for these areas.

### Regional Development South Australia Annual Conference

The annual Regional Development South Australia RDSA Conference is being held in the Far North region this year 1- 2 October 2024. The theme for the event will focus on 'Net Zero' and will showcase RDA's work across the state. A call was put out to interstate RDA Committees to ask if they would like to showcase anything at the event.

The conference is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the Far North SA region, and it is expected that up to 130 people will attend the event.

### Industry and Government Briefings

During the 2023/24 financial year, RDA Far North continued to provide briefings to industry and all levels of government. We provided regional intelligence on the challenges and opportunities within Far North SA.

### Participation in Working Groups and Stakeholder Meetings

Throughout the year, members of the RDA Far North team continued to participate in regional working groups and stakeholder meetings.

This included discussions with:

- AusIndustry
- Department for Education
- Department of Home Affairs
- Department of Infrastructure and Transport
- First Nations Innovators
- Flinders Ranges World Heritage Community Reference Group
- Flinders Ranges 2030 Total Solar Eclipse Working Group
- Goal 1000 (UniHub/LocalJobs)
- ICN Network Upper Spencer Gulf
- Landscapes SA
- Linking Futures
- Livestock SA
- Local Buying Foundation
- Many Rivers
- Net Zero Economy Agency
- National Indigenous Australians Agency
- Northern Water Project Local Stakeholder Group
- Northern Water Supply Community Stakeholder Reference Group
- Office for Regional Housing
- Office for Small and Family Business
- Outback Roads Action Group
- Department of Primary Industries and Regions - SA
- Resilient Ready Program Local Advisory Group
- Study Adelaide
- SA Business, Industry, and Regional Outreach
- SA First Nations Voice
- SA Tourism Commission
- Tactic
- TAFE SA
- The Circle - First Nations Entrepreneur Hub
- Uni Hub
- Upper Spencer Gulf Workforce Project
- Wellbeing SA
- Workforce Australia

#### **Engagement with BHP**

RDA Far North met with the BHP community engagement team to discuss work being done on the central shopping precinct reactivation plan for Roxby Downs. The team also met with BHP during the year to discuss updates on the BHP and OzMinerals transition.

#### **NBN Co**

During 2023/24, the RDA Far North team met with NBN Co regularly to receive updates on their latest initiatives.

#### **Drought Hub**

RDA Far North continued to be an active member of the Drought Hub Steering Committee. The focus of this group is to identify research topics and opportunities for the Pastoral Drought Sector.

#### **Port Augusta Operations Community Reference Group**

The RDA Far North team attended the Community Reference Group meeting where updates were provided by Port Augusta Operations and the Hallett Group.

#### **Northern Regions Career Tour**

The RDA Far North team assisted Study Adelaide with the Northern Regions Career Tour planned during the year.

#### **Local Buying Foundation Stakeholder Review**

RDA Far North participated in the Local Buying Foundation's stakeholder review survey. The purpose of this survey was to determine the state of the program and if changes are necessary.

#### **Ministerial Visits and Meetings**

RDA Far North continued to play an important role supporting ministerial visits and meetings in the region. During the year, this included a visit from The Hon. Claire Scriven, State Minister for Regional Development. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss challenges facing the regions and impediments to growth.

#### **Local Government**

RDA Far North continued to hold regular meetings with our local government partners. This included attending and presenting at Council meetings when appropriate.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

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### WORKING GROUPS AND COMMITTEES

RDA Far North is actively involved in **2** working groups and **6** committees

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TOTAL NUMBER OF MEETINGS WITH BUSINESS GROUPS/PROGRESS ASSOCIATIONS - **34** MEETINGS HELD.

**6**

MEETINGS

Business  
Port Augusta  
Meetings

**6**

MEETINGS

Roxby  
Community  
Board

**4**

MEETINGS

Cooper Pedy  
Business Retail and  
Tourism Association

**6**

MEETINGS

Quorn  
Business  
Group

**1**

MEETINGS

Hawker Community  
Development  
Board

**6**

MEETINGS

Flinders Ranges  
Tourism  
Group

**2**

MEETINGS

Station  
Stays  
Group

**2**

MEETINGS

Flinders Rangers  
Tourism Operators  
Association

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### INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT AND MAJOR PROJECTS

**17**

Projects provided  
with intensive  
support

**4**

Industry  
information sessions  
facilitated

**14**

Major projects  
provided with  
intensive assistance

**26**

Gatherings of key  
stakeholders

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# 8. ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

### GENERAL INFORMATION

The Financial Statements cover Regional Development Australia Far North Incorporated as an individual entity. The financial statements are presented in Australian Dollars, which is RDA Far North Incorporated's functional and presentation currency. RDA Far North Inc is a not-for-profit incorporated association, incorporated and domiciled in Australia. Its registered office and place of business is: 2A Stirling Road, Port Augusta SA 5700. A description of the nature of the incorporated association's operations and its principal activities are included in the officer's report, which is not part of the financial statements. These statements were authorised for issue on 28 October 2024.

### REPORT OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Your committee submit the financial statements of the Regional Development Australia Far North Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2023.

#### Committee Members

The following persons were members of the incorporated association during the whole of the financial year and up to the date of this report, unless otherwise stated:

**Chairperson:** Mark Sutton (*from June to December 2023*)  
Scott McKay (*from January to June 2024*)

**Public Officer:** Claire Wiseman

**Committee:** Lucy Morphet  
Baldev (Sunny) Singh  
Patsy Reynolds  
Linley Shine  
Kerry Mudge  
Tony Vaughan  
Scott McKay - Deputy & Treasurer  
Geoff Sheridan

b) No officer of the Association has received directly or indirectly from the Association any payment or other pecuniary value except for the reimbursement of travel and honoraria for Mark Sutton, Lucy Morphet, Scott McKay, Linley Shine, and Sunny Singh.

c) Colin Davies received an honoraria as Non-voting member of Governance and audit committee

#### Principal Activities

The principal activities of the Association during the financial year were to provide strategic and targeted responses to economic, environmental and social issues affecting the region.

#### Operating Result

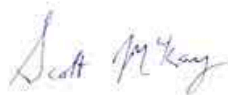
The surplus / (deficit) from ordinary activities amounted to:

30/06/2024	30/06/2023
\$ 337	\$ 33,956

In accordance with Section 35 (5) of the Associations Incorporation Act (1985), the committee hereby states that during the financial year ended 30 June 2024:

- 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 corporate body and the Association except for the following:
- Mark Sutton, Director of the Outback Communities Authority - Stakeholder
  - Linley Shine, Councillor of the Port Augusta City Council - Stakeholder
  - Scott McKay, Board Member of Tactic Incorporated - Client
  - Sunny Singh, Elected Member of Port Augusta City Council - Stakeholder
  - Patsy Reynolds, Deputy Mayor of The Flinders Ranges Council - Stakeholder
  - Tony Vaughan, Board Member of The Outback Communities Authority - Stakeholder
  - Geoff Sheridan, Administrator of Coober Pedy Council - Stakeholder

**Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Committee**



**CHAIRPERSON**



**DEPUTY CHAIR**

**Dated this day 28 of October 2024**

## INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

REVENUE	NOTE	2024 \$	2023 \$
Funding revenue	2	868,692	773,215
Interest		111,366	34,171
Project Income		325,972	310,511
Sundry Income	2	34,520	25,778
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b>1,340,551</b>	<b>1,143,675</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Employment Expenses		820,654	683,477
Depreciation	5	1,500	3,805
Project Expenses		136,442	76,297
Other Operational Expenses	3	381,617	346,140
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		<b>1,340,213</b>	<b>1,109,719</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)</b>		<b>337</b>	<b>33,956</b>

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

CURRENT ASSETS	NOTE	2024 \$	2023 \$
Cash and cash equivalents	4	1,738,253	1,771,011
Trade and other receivables	6	127,869	190,980
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>1,866,122</b>	<b>1,961,991</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	5	3,396	4,896
<b>Total Non Current Assets</b>		<b>3,396</b>	<b>4,896</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>1,869,518</b>	<b>1,966,887</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	7	18,969	78,240
Accrued Wages		-	14,030
Amounts Received in Advance		84,050	160,883
Employee Benefits		106,844	105,698
Projects in progress	8	1,098,784	1,064,556
Provision for Long Service Leave		144,562	127,510
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>1,453,210</b>	<b>1,550,917</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>1,453,210</b>	<b>1,550,917</b>
<b>NET ASSETS / LIABILITIES</b>		<b>416,308</b>	<b>415,970</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Retained Surplus		415,970	382,015
Current Surplus / (Deficit)		337	33,955
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>416,307</b>	<b>415,970</b>

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>2024 \$</b>	<b>2023 \$</b>
Funding & Other receipts	1,292,296	990,592
Payments to suppliers and employees	(1,436,420)	(910,783)
Interest received	111,366	34,171
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities</b>	<b>(32,758)</b>	<b>113,980</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Payments for Plant & Equipment	-	-
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) plant &amp; equipment</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Net increase / (decrease) in cash held	(32,758)	113,980
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year	1,771,011	1,657,031
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year</b>	<b>1,738,253</b>	<b>1,771,011</b>

The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

# NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## 1 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements are special purpose financial statements prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1985 (South Australia). The Board has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated specifically, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous year unless stated otherwise, have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements.

### (a) Revenue and Other Income

Grant and project income is recognised as revenue in the year of receipt. If conditions are attached to the grant that must be satisfied, recognition of the grant as revenue will be deferred until those conditions are satisfied.

Where the Association has unspent funds at the end of the grant period, and the grantor is in agreement, the funds are retained as unspent funds by the Association to utilise on future projects.

The Association is committed to expend all grants received for the purposes for which they are intended by the authorities and institutions providing the funds.

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest method, which for floating rate financial assets is the rate inherent in the instrument. All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax.

### (b) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

### (c) Accounts Receivable and Other Debtors

Accounts receivable and other debtors include amounts due from members as well as amounts receivable from donors. Receivables expected to be collected within 12 months of the end of the reporting period are classified as current assets. All other receivables are classified as non-current assets.

### (d) Accounts Payable and Other Payables

Accounts payable and other payables represent the liability outstanding at the end of the reporting period for goods and services received by the Association during the reporting period that remain unpaid. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

### (e) Economic Dependency

The ongoing operations of RDA Far North Inc is dependent on receiving operational funding from the Local, State and Federal governments.

In addition to the current projects that are funded to promote economic development in the region, RDA Far North Inc. continue to run a number of unfunded programs using their own operational funding. Without the support of the government, the special projects may not be viable to continue.

### (f) Plant & 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.



**(g) Depreciation of Non Current Assets**

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is 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%

**(h) Maintenance and Repairs**

Maintenance, repair costs and minor renewals are expensed when incurred. This includes IT maintenance charges.

**(i) Employee Benefits**

Employee benefits are accrued on a pro rata basis for annual leave and long service leave up to the reporting date.

No accrual for sick leave has been made because it is non-vesting. The best estimate of the sick leave expense for the reporting period is the actual amount paid for the year.

The superannuation expense for the reporting period is the amount of the statutory contribution the Association has applied to wages and salaries. These entitlements have been paid to the employees' nominated superannuation funds.

The Association has this year recognised all Long Service Leave entitlements as current given they're due and payable.

**(j) Leases**

Lease payments for 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.

The Association has no finance leases as at reporting date.

**(k) Income Tax**

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

**(l) Goods & Service 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.

**(m) 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>2024 \$</b>	<b>2023 \$</b>
Funding - Regions SA	525,203	417,203
Funding - DIRD	261,960	242,940
Funding - Councils	81,529	113,071
	<b>868,692</b>	<b>773,214</b>
<b>Sundry Income</b>		
Misc Income	34,394	15,418
Fee For Service	-	10,000
Workcover Reimbursement	126	360
	<b>34,520</b>	<b>25,778</b>
<b>3 OTHER OPERATIONAL EXPENSES</b>		
<b>Includes</b>		
Auditors Remuneration	13,367	10,375
Board Member & Meeting Expenses	39,779	29,654
Subs/Memberships/Publications	15,655	7,308
Staff Travel & Accommodation	53,826	44,037
Motor Vehicle Expenses	15,455	16,061
Rent for Premises	21,520	19,613
Others	222,015	219,092
	<b>381,617</b>	<b>346,140</b>
<b>4 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>		
Cash at Bank - General	18,076	73,591
Cash at Bank - Other	763,033	774,463
Cash at Bank - Term Deposit	943,135	904,680
Expense Account	13,816	18,084
Petty Cash - Admin	193	193
	<b>1,738,253</b>	<b>1,771,011</b>
<b>5 PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT</b>		
At cost	112,241	112,241
Less Accumulated depreciation	(108,845)	(107,345)
	<b>3,396</b>	<b>4,896</b>
Movements in carrying amounts for property, plant and equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year.		
<b>Balance at beginning of year</b>	8,701	10,876
Additions	-	-
Depreciation expenses	(1,500)	(3,805)
Carrying amount at end of year	<b>3,396</b>	<b>4,896</b>

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

<b>6 TRADE &amp; OTHER RECEIVABLES</b>	<b>2024 \$</b>	<b>2023 \$</b>
Debtors	118,750	164,141
Interest Income Accrual	6,656	-
<b>GST</b>		
- GST Collected	(17,526)	14,271
- GST Paid	19,989	12,568
	<b>127,869</b>	<b>190,980</b>
<b>7 TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES</b>		
Trade payables	5,891	38,240
Other creditors and accruals	13,079	40,000
	<b>18,969</b>	<b>78,240</b>
<b>8 PROJECT IN PROGRESS</b>		
Economic Development Manager	99,206	67,364
Tourism Development Manager	64,308	105,496
Business Development Manager	17,050	31,475
Leadership Program Manager	107,814	141,450
Opal Alliance	1,369	1,369
Outback SA Community Inc	9,538	9,538
Marketing & Investment Attractions	30,476	35,126
Workshops and Forums	34,173	35,977
Admin support	330,604	280,887
Economic/Community Development	111,911	112,605
Workforce Development	134,402	137,682
RDA Grant Fund - PIRSA	22,500	22,500
Economic Growth & Investments Strategy	20,633	1,633
Strategic Projects	29,846	49,028
Small Business Fundamentals	51,812	-
Customer Relations Management	20,000	20,000
Unihub Bursary Fund	13,141	12,426
	<b>1,098,784</b>	<b>1,064,556</b>

## NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

<b>9 COMMITMENTS FOR EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>2024 \$</b>	<b>2023 \$</b>
Other expenditures committed at the reporting date but not recognised in the Financial Statements as Liabilities		
Employee Remuneration contracts	929,118	848,341
Operating Leases	49,686	12,580
	<b>978,804</b>	<b>860,921</b>
These Expenditures are payable not later than one year	698,435	459,676
Later than one year & not later than 5 years	280,370	401,245
	<b>978,804</b>	<b>860,921</b>

<b>10 EQUITY</b>		
Retained Surpluses (Deficits) at the beginning of the financial year	415,970	382,015
Net Surplus (Deficit) for the year	337	33,955
Retained Surpluses (Deficits) at the end of the financial year	<b>416,307</b>	<b>415,970</b>

### **11 EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD**

The Members are not aware of any significant events since the end of the reporting period that are required to be disclosed.

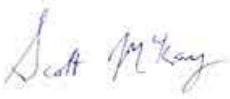
## STATEMENT OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT MEMBERS

The board has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the board the financial statements:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Regional Development Australia Far North Inc. as at 30 June 2024 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that Regional Development Australia Far North Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

**This statement is in accordance with a resolution of the committee and is signed for and on behalf of the board by:**



**CHAIRPERSON**



**DEPUTY CHAIR**

**Dated this day 28 of October 2024**

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of Regional Development Australia Far North Incorporated

### Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Regional Development Australia Far North Incorporated, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, the statement of profit and loss, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the statement by members of the committee.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report presents fairly, in all material respects the financial position of Regional Development Australia Far North Incorporated as at 30 June 2024, and its performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Note 1 to the financial statements and the Associations Incorporation Act (SA) 1985.

### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of Regional Development Australia Far North Incorporated in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Regional Development Australia Far North Incorporated to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (SA) 1985. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

### Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Report

The Board of Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the applicable legislation and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

### **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: [http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors\\_responsibilities/ar4.pdf](http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Rodney Miller", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Rodney Miller**  
Partner

RSM Australia Pty Ltd

Adelaide, South Australia  
Dated: 28 October 2024

