

ANZRSAI Newsletter

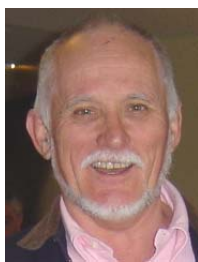
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND REGIONAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

An interdisciplinary international organisation focusing on understanding
the growth and development of urban, regional and international systems

March 2005

RSAI Elects Australian for Top Job

Professor Bob Stimson is now President of the Regional Science Association International. Bob's incoming President's speech was published in the RSAI newsletter in January and is reprinted below. Congratulations Bob – we look forward to hearing news from the global perspective.



It is a great honour for me to be the President of RSAI, and I trust I will be able to serve the Council and all of the members of the association well during my two years as President.

The regional science community of scholars and practitioners is a truly unique organization

providing a wide range of national and sub-national, supra-regional and international forums for interaction with colleagues from across several disciplines with a concern for matters spatial, from theoretical and methodological to applied and policy perspectives. Personally I have found regional science during my career to have provided not only the most stimulating of intellectual environments, but also the opportunity to develop many wonderful friendships with people across the world and the opportunity to work collaboratively on research with many people.

I first became involved in regional science in 1971 as a young academic in my late 20s when Alex Kerr, the founder of the Australian and New Zealand Regional Science Association, asked me to join a group of economists, geographers and engineers from universities and the CSIRO to help form a new local association. I served on the Council of ANZRSA for a long period from 1975 to 1987, and was President for three years, 1980-82. My first international participation in regional science was in 1976 when I went to the North American meeting. In 1981, Kevin O'Connor and I organized the first PRSCO meeting to be held in Australia (at Surfers Paradise on the Gold Coast). I was to serve on the PRSCO Council from then until 1991. Ever since I have tried to get to as many regional science conferences as I can. I particularly look forward to being able, over the next two years, to attend all the supra-regional meetings and as many local meetings as possible. January 2005 represents a landmark for RSAI as from that month the new universal membership arrangements start operating.

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"The regional science community of scholars and practitioners is a truly unique organization . . ."

RSAI Elects Australian for Top Job *(cont.)*

Over the next year or so, progressively the members of up to 30 local and national regional science associations will become integrated into RSAI. 2005 also is the year when Blackwell commences a partnership with RSAI which will see the Papers in Regional Science and the RSAI Newsletter go on-line. The Secretariat has already been successfully transferred from Urbana to Leeds.

Out-going President Antoine Bailly deserves special recognition for having driven these developments. The outcome will be the evolution of RSAI into a formidable international association with potentially over 4,000. Antoine is a very distinguished geographer (with an outstanding publications record writing in both English and French languages) and a former President of the University of Geneva. He has used all of his formidable leadership and negotiating skills to drive this transition for RSAI. His presidency marks the beginning of a new global era for regional science. Thank you, Antoine.

In addition, it is important for us to recognize the collaborative efforts of Graham Clarke, our Executive Director, and Kieran Donaghy, our immediate past Executive Director, and the staff at the Urbana Office, in achieving the transition of the RSAI Secretariat from Urbana to Leeds. Of course, many of our colleagues have been significant players in planning for and facilitating the important steps in this evolution of RSAI, including a number of past presidents through their role on the Long Range Planning Committee.

The RSAI Council now faces the challenge of developing new initiatives to enhance services to members which our widely expanded and more diverse membership has a right to expect from an effective international association. We encourage you to provide us with ideas in this regard. The Long Range Planning Committee and the Council will be specifically addressing this issue over the coming year.

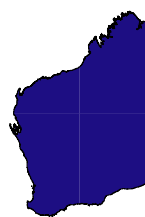
Robert Stimson

"The RSAI Council now faces the challenge of developing new initiatives to enhance services to members which our widely expanded and more diverse membership has a right to expect . . ."

Regional Roundup

The regional Roundup section of the newsletter provides information from all corners of Australia and New Zealand. Whether it be news about regional policies, communities, or natural environments, the roundup aims to keep you in touch with what's going on across different geographies and jurisdictions.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



From the desk of the Mid West region, Western Australia has chosen that the best option for state governance is to Gallop the Labor Party back into to power rather than heading up the canal without a paddle.

Western Australia no doubt is full steam ahead in the resource boom, with pending take overs of major mining companies to become even more major in the future. The economic boom is fuelling support for the sustainability of Fly In/Fly Out to meet the demands and needs of employees who choose to live in the capital city of Perth, and mining companies which require skilled staff. The question in my mind is how sustainable is Perth City in terms of environmental capacity and social infrastructure in the long term? For example renewable energy options, water sustainability and health investment.



Marine Terrace Mall, Geraldton. Photo: Wei Tung

But wait! Don't forget the regions! The regions are responding to the boom by crying out for further infrastructure investment by the Government to ensure that they too get a fair

slice of the resource cake and attracting skilled workers and their families to adopt a regional lifestyle as apposed to the Perth City lifestyle. By providing heavy infrastructure investment into the regional cities such as Geraldton and Kalgoorlie for example, this will ease the load of population density and environmental impacts to Perth City. As well, it shares the social capital back out into the regional cities. Let's face it, regional lifestyles have the most to offer not to forget to mention housing affordability!

Whilst population growth continues for coastal areas, further remote and isolated towns continue to face down the barrel of survival. Ongoing drought brings despair to the Mid West pastoral industry; Indigenous youth population explosion sees rising juvenile justice



Murchison Region WA. Photo: Jane Wardlaw

Regional Roundup (cont.)

issues; non-Aboriginal population is in decline in remote areas and finally, withdrawal of major mining investment from some areas sees the demise of small business who relied on major business for support. How much in control are the remote isolated regions in regards to their survival?

Yet it is the PRACTITIONER who carries the load of positiveness and easing these impacts of change. Hail the practitioner! They provide so much in terms of psychological support, programme development and initiation to build healthier and happier community lifestyles. It's because of the practitioner that people develop a sense of place and belonging. A fine example is the proposal to introduce Aboriginal education programs for aquaculture and agricultural development; rebuilding eco-systems and environmental philosophies by using water in unused mining voids that surround Meekatharra. Now that is a big vision and a worthy one too.

Western Australia must continue to ensure in its response to the resource boom, consideration of its effects on society, environment and economy. By working together and responding to the issues and impacts of the resource boom, Western Australia will prove to be the place to live work and invest.

Disclaimer: The views of this report belong entirely to the author.

Jane Wardlaw, Project Manager, Mid West Development Commission, Geraldton

TASMANIA

"To Ferry or not to Ferry?" This was the question that has dominated regional development issues in Tasmania over recent months. Tasmania's island status and the significance of the tourism industry again came under the spotlight of responsibility and accountability when the Government Business Enterprise (GBE) hearings into the TT Line, the manager of the three ferries, revealed that Spirit III travelling between Sydney and Devonport was losing \$2 million a month. The TT Line was expecting a \$35 million loss this year, of which \$25 million was attributable to the third ferry.

In June 2003 then Premier Bacon announced that the government would be adding a third ferry to its existing Bass Strait fleet and it would travel between Sydney and Devonport. All three ships were bought rather than chartered or leased. The State Treasury at the time had recommended against a purchase. The third ferry cost \$105 million and was refitted at a cost of \$3 million and launched into the Sydney market with an \$11 million marketing promotion. It was expected to carry 115,000 in its first year of operation but failed, carrying only 66,000 passengers, including Tasmanians leaving the state, and contributed to a TT Line loss of \$3.4 million

last financial year. The plight of all three ferries has not been assisted by the increased competition provided by discount airlines. Spirit III dropped its prices by 30% to attract customers.



Photograph by Michael Kenyon: www.simplonpc.co.uk/TT-Line-Tasmania.html

Transport access is a contentious issue for island states and Tasmanians recognise that ferry operations are heavily subsidised and that tourism is a vital industry in Tasmania. However, the losses are so significant that the government asked for a further Treasury report into the operation of the ferries. That report handed to the Premier, Paul Lennon was withheld from his Tourism Minister, Ken Bacon who subsequently floundered in the GBE hearings, when the losses were revealed by the TT Line management. Prior to the hearings the Premier had indicated that costs attached to running the ferries was significant and money spent on the ferries could not be used in other critical policy areas such as health, education, and law and order. Transport brokers had offered to facilitate a sale of the ferry to European based operators.

Political pressure was mounting on the government to clarify its support or demise of the third ferry. The tourism industry and maritime unions mounted a media campaign for the retention of the ferry based on employment opportunities and the reach of the tourism dollar into the state's economic performance. On Tuesday, March 15 the Premier announced that the government would provide a \$115 million rescue package for Spirit III until 2008. This decision was made despite the fact that the Treasury report indicated that the ferry should be sold and the cost of the subsidy would be more than the tourist contribution. Treasury estimated that the subsidy was of the equivalent of \$2,500 per visitor. Clearly unimpressed by the management of the TT Line, the subsidy was conditional on actions determined by the Auditor General who will assess the governance and decision-making of the TT Line.

In the end, the government despite the advice of Treasury determined that the ferry should be given a 'fair go'. No performance targets have been publicly revealed. TT Line chairman, Nick Evers resigned for health reasons, a decision he had made prior to the GBE revelations. More heads are expected to roll, perhaps even the Tourism Minister, Mr Bacon whose knowledge and respect for the principles of responsible

Regional Roundup (cont.)

government have been surely exposed both in the GBE hearings and subsequently in the parliament.

With the May budget looming, the Lennon government will be looking forward to putting the saga of the ferries behind them as they announce their election budget – an election is likely to be held in March 2006 – buoyed by significant receipts from a resurgent state economy and GST revenue.

Tony McCall, University of Tasmania,
Cradle Campus T.McCall@utas.edu.au

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Regional Communities Consultative Council

The Minister for Regional Development, Hon Karlene Maywald MP, has recently appointed new members to the Regional Communities Consultative Council for the next two years. To be chaired by Mr Peter Blacker of Port Lincoln, the RCCC will continue to provide the Minister and the Government with advice on issues of importance to regional and rural communities. The membership is made up of community leaders and representatives from regional areas representing such diverse industries as farming, health care, business development, higher education and tourism and organisations including regional development boards and Local Government.

The 2002-2004 Council, under the commendable leadership of Dennis Mutton, who completed his term as Chair of the Council on 31 December last year, has prepared a Scorecard outlining its activities and achievements during its term. A copy of this document is available from the Office of Regional Affairs on +61 (0)8 8303 2179.

Phylloxera Heat Shed

South Australia's first phylloxera treatment facility opened in Naracoorte recently, in a move that will help protect the state's grape industry from contracting the destructive vine disease.

The heat shed, which cost about \$170,000, disinfects machinery from disease risk areas. The viticulture industry, Naracoorte-Lucindale Council, Limestone Coast Regional Development Board and South East Area Consultative Committee worked in partnership to trial the concept and then fund its implementation. The facility was funded with contributions from industry, and the three spheres of government, including \$48,000 from the Federal Government's *Regional Partnerships program* and \$40,000 from the State Government's *Regional Development Infrastructure Fund*.



Photo taken by Rob Forgan. Limestone Coast Regional Development Board

Community Development - Eyre Peninsula

The Office of Regional Affairs conducted its eighth Building Positive Rural Futures Study Tour from 13 - 17 March. The tour visited the Eyre Peninsula, visiting a wide range of communities along the way. As with all tours, participants visited best practice examples of community economic development. Examples included aquaculture projects, Boystown in Port Pirie, Indigenous cultural awareness raising and several community run enterprises such as the Gladstone Jail.

An important part of the tour was a free half day workshop in Cummins to discuss community rebuilding in the wake of the Eyre Peninsula bushfire. Di Butcher from the Canberra Recovery Taskforce was the keynote speaker, and she shared Canberra's experience and learnings with tour participants and members of the local community. Local speakers addressed the effects of the fire on the Indigenous community, the environment and the psychological effects on the wider community. By sharing this information, it is hoped that communities will be better prepared for potential disasters in future.

Leon Mills, SA Office of Regional Affairs
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Copy me!

Feel free to make copies of the ANZRSAl Newsletter for your office colleagues or others who may be interested in learning more about regional issues or about the ANZRSAl organisation.

Regional Roundup (cont.)

AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

Planning is well under way for the 29th Annual Conference of ANZRSAl which will take place in Manukau, New Zealand, from 27 to 30 September 2005. The conference is being co-hosted with the Economic Development Association of New Zealand, and it may be useful in this report to introduce EDANZ to ANZRSAl members.



EDANZ is an industry-created body to represent the interests of economic development agencies and units in local authorities, city councils and district councils. It has a current membership of 76 agencies, to whom it offers advice, training and representation.

One of the flagship programmes of EDANZ has been to work in partnership with the Institute of Public Policy (Auckland University of Technology) to set up a postgraduate qualification in regional development. This programme is about to enter into its third year, and has provided a much appreciated boost to the professional standing of economic development agencies in New Zealand.

EDANZ organises two national conferences on regional development each year. Its executive director, Ann Verboeket, has a lot of experience in running these conferences, which is already contributing to a fantastic programme for September 2005.

Lord of the Regions Conference
Manukau New Zealand 27th to 30th September 2005
CALL FOR CONTRIBUTED PAPERS

ANZRSAl and EDANZ invite contributed papers for the "Lord of the Regions" conference. Papers of broad interest to regional scientists and practitioners are welcome. These might include (but are not restricted to) papers that address the conference's main themes:

- Regional innovation
- Sustainable economic development
- Regional capability building in a global context
- Maori, Pacific & Aboriginal economic development
- Innovative solutions

Abstracts of 150-200 words should be sent to James Rowe at the address below no later than **Thursday 30th June 2005**. Presenters are encouraged to submit their papers to the conference organisers prior to the conference. All papers received by 26th August will be peer reviewed for publication in the conference proceedings, and will be eligible for the Paper of the Conference Prize.

Further enquiries about contributed papers can be directed to:

James Rowe, Senior Planner Economic Development,
Manukau City Council. Phone (64-9) 262-5191;
Fax: (64-9) 262-5171; Mobile 027 277 1318;
Email: jrowe@manukau.govt.nz



The overall theme of the conference, **Lord of the Regions: The Myths, Magic and Mix for Regional Innovation**, obviously echoes Peter Jackson's wonderfully successful trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings*. Providing film locations to international film producers has been part of the development strategy of several regions in New Zealand, but the idea that small places can have an international impact has much wider application.

In association with EDANZ and the feedback in the plenary session of the ANZRSAl 2004 conference, we have chosen five sub-themes: regional innovation; regional capability building in a global context; sustainable economic development in action; Maori, Pacific and Aboriginal economic development; and innovative solutions.

The conference venue is a brand-new facility in Manukau, Auckland. By linking with EDANZ we have been able to increase the number of keynote speakers in the conference (while leaving plenty of room for contributed papers), and there will be an exciting social programme associated with the conference (beginning with a formal welcome at a local winery on the eve of the conference).

In short, the 29th Annual Conference should be the best ever!! We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the conference.

James Rowe (New Zealand Vice President)
Paul Dalziel (Council Member)

Sponsored Attendance Fees for Community Groups at ANZRSAl Conference

Sometimes sending a delegate to ANZRSAl is beyond the financial capacity of regional community groups. To help to build the capability of such groups, the Australian Government Department of Transport and Regional Services is prepared to fund the ANZRSAl Conference registration fees of up to eight Australian delegates who would not otherwise be able to attend. One sponsored place will be allocated per state and territory.

If you would like to apply for sponsored attendance fees, please write a letter of no more than two pages stating how your community group would benefit from having a delegate at ANZRSAl and enclosing two one-page letters of support to:

Daniel Owen
 Assistant Secretary, Regional Policy
 Dept of Transport and Regional Services
 GPO Box 594. Canberra ACT 2601

“Hot Topics” Discussion Forum

Skills Shortages in Regional Australia

The issue of skills shortages has been brought to prominence recently with Australian Government plans to boost skilled immigration and ACTU calls to increase training efforts. In order to get behind this debate and examine the regional aspects of skills shortages, this edition of the ANZRSAl Newsletter presents a discussion around this topical issue.

Why do skills shortages occur?

Regional skills shortages are often caused by a combination of inter-related factors – economic, demographic and social.

Economic change

The availability of career development and training opportunities is important for attracting skilled labour. In an era of greater economic and social uncertainty, those in the workforce require access to alternative jobs or even careers, as well as access to the education and training services that can facilitate such change. The need for flexibility and breadth or diversity of opportunity makes larger centres more attractive.

At the same time, regional industries are becoming more diverse and have a wider range of skills needs.

Demographic change

Skills shortages occur in areas of population decline as well as growth. Ironically, many areas have experienced economic prosperity on the basis of reducing labour requirements and this has led to out-migration and subsequent loss of services and skills.

In 20 years time, regional Victoria is likely to contain fewer children but more old people. A key outcome of an ageing population is that there is a relatively low proportion of working age persons in the population. This can contribute to skills shortages.

Social change

The decisions by skilled workers about where to live and work are based on a range of factors over and above the location of a particular job. Influences may include:

- employment opportunities for partners;
- educational opportunities for children;
- rates of property appreciation in different locations;
- the availability of career development and training opportunities; and,
- the diversity of lifestyle opportunities and recreational activities.

Hence, the shortage of some skilled workers in regional areas is as likely to be related to social and cultural factors as it is to demographic or economic factors.

Reference: “Regional Skills Shortages: An Overview of Demographic, Economic and Social Change” by Fiona McKenzie *Sustaining Regions* vol. 3, no. 1, 2003.



Photo source: Tourism Victoria

How extensive is the problem?

According to research undertaken by Professor Bob Miles *et al* at the University of Central Queensland skills shortages are a commonly reported problem. A survey distributed in regional Queensland in 2003 found that 89% of the 57 respondents reported difficulty in attracting and retaining suitably qualified staff.

A striking feature of the responses was the diversity in skills nominated as being in short supply, ranging from teachers and stock inspectors through to engineers and medical specialists. Respondents were also asked if they were aware of other groups in their region which also experienced difficulties, and 97% indicated that they were.

In addition to the survey, a suite of five regional round table discussions were conducted as part of the study. Lack of professional support and development, limitations on the level of education available and the higher cost of living in the regions were raised as issues.

While some of the issues raised region to region were similar, solutions that were found to work in one region were not necessarily transferable to another. The qualitative information gathered for this study has shown clearly that there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

Reference: *The Attraction and Retention of Professionals to Regional Areas* by Prof R L Miles, C Marshall John Rolfe and Sally Noonan, paper presented at ANZRSAl Annual Conference 2004, Wollongong

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“Hot Topics” Discussion Forum (*..cont*) Skills Shortages in Regional Australia

How has government responded?

Responses to regional skills shortages have taken the form of:

- Attraction and retention initiatives for example, the Australian Government Rural Retention Program for GPs.
- Advertising and promotion of regional areas, for example, the Victorian Government Provincial Victoria Campaign.
- Overseas Migration Programs for regional areas.
- Industry Training and Development initiatives for regional areas, for example flexible learning initiatives in the township of Walcha NSW and by the River Murray Training organisation

References: *Understanding Regional Skills Shortages: a Review of Recent Government Policy* by Fiona McKenzie, paper presented at ANZRSAl Annual Conference 2004, Wollongong

Flexible learning initiatives:

<http://flexiblelearning.net.au/casestudies/casestudies/rivermurray.htm>
<http://flexiblelearning.net.au/casestudies/casestudies/walcha.htm>

Help shape the debate . . .

The ANZRSAl Newsletter Discussion Forum aims to bring you commentary on current regional issues.

We welcome your ideas on what you would like to see discussed – perhaps you have a burning question for the experts to respond to, or perhaps you have some observations and thoughts which you would like to share with us.

If you have an interest in the discussion topic presented in this edition of the Newsletter, please let us know. Those with first hand experience of the issue are also encouraged to send us your thoughts.

All correspondence should be forwarded via email to:

The Editor, ANZRSAl Newsletter
anzrsai@uq.edu.au

Where can I find out more?

Online Resources

National Skills Shortages Strategy (DEST)
www.getatrade.gov.au/fact_sheets/fact.htm

Regional Partnerships Program (DoTaRS)
www.regionalpartnerships.gov.au

Rural Retention Program for GPs (DHA)
www.health.gov.au/internet/wcms/publishing.nsf/Content/health-pcd-programs-ruralgp-rurret-index.htm

Sustainable Regions Program (DoTaRS)
www.sustainableregions.gov.au

Victorian Government Provincial Victoria Campaign. www.provincialvictoria.vic.gov.au

Publications

Australian National Training Authority 2004, *National Industry Skills Report*.

Department of Education, Science and Training 2002, *Nature and Causes of Skills Shortages*.
www.skillsinitiative.gov.au/documents/Nature_CausesSkillShortages.rtf

Regional Business Development Analysis Panel 2003, *Regional Business. A Plan for Action*, ('The Keniry Report'). www.rbda.gov.au/index.htm

Overseas Migration Programs for regional areas.
www.migration.gov.au/migration/regional

Case Studies

Standing Committee on Regional Development 2004, *Attracting and Retaining Skilled People in Regional Australia: A Practitioner's Guide*.
www.rdcouncil.gov.au/downloads/skilled_people.aspx

Greater Green Triangle Area Consultative Committee 2002, *Regional Growth and the Skilled Labour Force Forum*, Victoria. www.ggtacc.com.au/iedefault.htm

In the June edition of the ANZRSAl Newsletter

Offshore Territories the “other” regions of Australia and New Zealand

Cocos Island, Tokelau, the Antarctic Territories

These are just some of the offshore territories falling within our broader region. In the June edition of the Newsletter we will introduce and explore these territories. Stay tuned for regional perspectives from the Indian, Pacific and Southern Oceans.

Publication Reviews

Publication reviews for the ANZRSAI Newsletter are aimed at a mixed audience of regional practitioners, policy makers and researchers. Publications chosen for review will usually be government research reports or reviews of best practice case studies across a range of regional issues: economic, social and environmental.

Sustainability and Change in Rural Australia

edited by Chris Cocklin and Jacqui Dibden, UNSW Press, 2005. RRP \$39.95 (Aust).



This is the second volume to come out of a 2001 Australian Research Council (ARC) funded research project on 'The Sustainability of Australian Rural Communities'. The first was Community Sustainability in Rural Australia: A Question of Capital? (2003), edited by Chris Cocklin and

Margaret Alston, and published by the Centre for Social Research at Charles Sturt University. The current volume, Sustainability and Change in Rural Australia, brings together an impressive gathering of researchers on Australian rural social issues to consider the intertwining themes of sustainability and change as they play out in contemporary rural Australia.

The book takes as its starting point twin challenges facing rural Australians: to 'embrace change' and to ensure sustainability for the future. 'Sustainability' in this book is defined according to triple-bottom-line criteria (acknowledging social, economic, and environmental assets and outcomes), and assessed according to a framework of 'capitals' (natural, human, social, institutional, and produced capital). While this framework provides a convenient categorisation tool and suggests ways in which sustainability and change in rural communities could be measured, it is also an unfortunately rigid tool for attempting to interpret the complex, fluid and integrated social processes which these authors describe.

Overall, the main contribution of this book lies, not in its theoretical framework, but in the insight with which the authors speak of rural Australian communities as they are seated in larger (political, economic, ecological) contexts. Particularly useful, as well, is the book's first section, 'Sustainability in Context', which provides a thoughtful analysis of some of the key ideas in contemporary regional and rural development discourse. As such is recommended reading for both students and policymakers/ practitioners trying to make sense of the thicket of current development jargon. Alan Black's chapter is a particularly good overview, illuminating the problems of definition that surround terms such as 'sustainable communities' and 'sustainable livelihoods'. Similarly, Graeme Davison puts contemporary ideas about 'rural decline' in their historical context, while the chapter by Graeme Hugo uses clearly presented population data to tackle myths about rural growth and diversity.

The second section of the book then explores 'Issues in Contemporary Rural Australia'. While this comes

across as a loose collection of articles rather than a thorough overview, the individual chapters in this section do provide useful insights into issues such as rural economic restructuring, social exclusion, and the environmental performance of Australian agriculture. The third section, 'Responding to the Challenges', goes on to describe and reflect upon government policy responses to Australian rural issues. The tendency here is toward thoughtful critique, but with only limited recommendations for how policymakers might better address the issues raised.

As Cocklin and Dibden allude to in the book's Conclusions, the chapters suggest a somewhat negative view of the future: that aspirations for balanced and viable economies, communities and natural environment in rural Australia 'might not be met' despite signs of a growing awareness of sustainability issues among policymakers. A lack of 'integration of policy around sustainability' is flagged as a key issue, but the problems are acknowledged as bigger than government actions alone can remedy. This book thus provides good material for reflection, but no easy solutions.

Reviewer: Robyn Eversole
RMIT University, Hamilton Victoria

eWork in Regional Australia

by Peter Standen & Jan Sinclair-Jones, *eWork in Regional Australia*. Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) 2004. Available at www.rirdc.gov.au/reports/HCC/04-045sum.html

Most readers of this newsletter will be old enough to remember how the advent of the internet and other information and communication technologies saw savants foretell the physical decentralisation and relocation of employment. Workers could be home based and not spend their days in the company/department workplace. IT proficient workers theoretically could be located in regional areas away from major city centres. eWork seemed to offer new business and employment prospects for areas previously regarded as too far from the retail markets for business services. The product of work could be sent electronically to its user point and not depend upon physical delivery or proximity. Implicitly the new ICT could benefit those regional areas whose economy was being restructured and employment bases eroded by economic globalisation.

Some of this hype is mercantilist by implication and some of it – particularly the emphasis on firm attraction rather than occupational attraction – possibly in part



Publication Reviews (cont.)

misdirected¹. But evaluating the impact of the new eWork is an important task.

This valuable publication comprehensively examines the theory that eWork may have significant implications for employment in rural and regional Australia. The eWork services analysed are grouped into seven areas:

1. sales (telemarketing and mobile sales work);
2. customer service, including providing information, counselling and advice;
3. data processing, typing and other forms of data input;
4. software development, maintenance and support;
5. accounting and other financial services;
6. human resource management, training and management support; and
7. editorial, design and creative functions, including research and development.

eWork has evolved as Information and Communication technologies have developed from the initial relatively simple relocation of firms' work to back offices often in suburban locations where property prices were lower than those of the firm HQ in the CBD. Today ICT enterprises are supplying a range of services of varying complexity, ranging across accounting and human resource services, logistics and industrial design. For example, the \$1.4 billion LNG plant being built in Darwin by the (US) Bechtel construction firm was designed by firms located in Perth, the oil and gas hub of Australia.

International studies have found significant application of eWork technologies to relocate work across jurisdictions in North America and Europe. More recently there has been considerable evidence of the shifting of work from labour-expensive western economies (including Australia) to Asia, in particular India, indicating that eWork may not be at all immune to the pressures of globalisation.

The growth of eWork in Australia arises from three factors: the take-up of the new technologies, corporate strategies either to reduce costs by relocating to places where the workforce may cost less or have superior skills or to access new markets, together with the interaction between a public policy agenda of the desirability of creating work in non-metropolitan areas and government incentives to encourage such employment.

This survey indicates that the attractions of eWork outsourcing for firms were dominated by the presence of relevant workforce, followed by cost, reputation and the quality/reliability/attitude/creativity of the supplier (ref. page 21). Regional developers take note, your workforce is of paramount importance (ref. Markusen below).

Probably one of the most surprising results of this survey is the relatively minor position of call centres, certainly

the aspect of eWork that has created the most public attention from advocates of regional employment creation. The survey results show that only 13% of the outsourced eWork utilised by the firms sampled involved call centres. The conclusions that regional development practitioners could draw from this survey's analysis of the call centre phenomenon are of its mixed benefits. It advantages mainly large non-metropolitan population concentrations, such as regional cities (perhaps contributing to the 'soak city' phenomenon of small rural centre population deskilling and out-migration?). In addition, while it has many benefits from the point of view of employment creation, there are critics who point to the low skills involved and employment practices that build in a large workforce 'churn'. The authors conclude that regional practitioners should focus efforts on small to medium enterprises as these are less likely to centralise functions to a single point or to 'offshore' these functions.

One of the most interesting results of this survey is that the supply of traditional outsourced services in some regional areas (principally in the southeastern states) is greater than the supply of eWork-based outsource services. The authors conclude that this may create new enterprise opportunities in regional Australia. Regional developers again take note.

This study is a most thorough piece of work. Arguments are carefully and usefully referenced, even if occasionally the conclusions are too cautious. The survey work upon which this study is based is impressive (it includes an analysis of the literature, a telephone survey of 1,000 employers as well as case studies of managerial decision making and interviews with regional development officers around Australia). The study also has comprehensive reporting of its case study evidence. Standen and Sinclair-Jones have produced the most authoritative study of eWork available in this country and for that they are to be congratulated.

If I have any criticisms of this study is it in its choice of case study areas – the NSW Central Coast, Victoria/Bendigo, Tasmania/Launceston and Manjimup-Bridgetown in WA. These are life-style choice places where ('trendy') refugees from the metropolitan ratrace have relocated. The success areas are those that Richard Florida's emphasis upon amenity and lifestyle for 'creative class' worker location would have predicted. Notwithstanding this minor caveat, Standen and Sinclair-Jones have produced an invaluable volume and a 'must have' for any practitioner (or theorist) of Australian regional development.

Reviewer: Rolf Gerritsen
Department of Chief Minister, Darwin

1. Ann Markusen, 'Targeting Occupations in Regional and Community Development', *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Vol. 70, No. 1, Summer 2004.

Publication Reviews (cont.)

Growing the Capital of Rural Australia: the task of capacity building

by R. Macadam *et al.* Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) 2004. Available at www.rirdc.gov.au/reports/HCC/04-034sum.html

Every now and again we read a publication that cannot be put down. As you get into these gems they provide information and insight beyond the claims in their title. Macadam *et al.*'s, *Growing the Capital of Rural Australia: The task of capacity building*, is one such report. It addresses an area of increasing interest to rural and regional development policy makers. Funded by the Cooperative Venture for Capacity Building for Innovation in Rural Industries, an agglomeration of rural industry development corporations and the Commonwealth Government, indicates the interest now being shown in the possibilities rural communities have to take action to address the issues they face.

The report is some 70 pages of rich material about ways in which to grow the capital of rural Australia. For academics and regional development practitioners alike this is a report worth reading. In his Foreword Simon Hearn, Managing Director of the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation notes that the project 'was commissioned with a view to promoting and rethinking rural extension, learning and education through government, industry and community groups.' It does this and much more. Macadam heads a team of highly regarded agricultural extension academics and consultants who consulted widely with a reference panel of their peers.

Developed over eighteen months using several explanatory workshops which produced a discussion paper: *Rural Industries, Organisations, Capacity Building and Learning: a rich picture*, the project team also carried out 'data analysis' to define themes, develop constructs and identify needed improvements. After extensive consultation and a draft report we have *Growing the Capital of Rural Australia*. I highlight this extensive process of consultation because it is indicative of the subject matter and the philosophical position taken in the report. It seems the growing of capital in rural Australia will be a slow process if the time involved in producing this report is anything like that to be taken by others less skilled in facilitating such a discussion.

State government officials vested with responsibility for rural and regional development will be concerned with the position taken and recommendations made in this report. It suggests that the current approach taken by most agencies is conceptually poorly based and therefore doomed to fail. In their discussion of who builds capacity, the Report highlights that 'defining some as providers (of capacity building services) and

other as users (of the services) is counter productive.' (p. 22) In Victoria (the state with which this reviewer is most familiar) the capacity building initiative comes from the State Government, with consequences of the kind Macadam and his colleagues talk about¹.

Engaging with the people of rural Australia in a conversation about the opportunities and challenges they face is no easy task. Made worse by the antagonism of an increasingly politically divided intergovernmental system, people in rural Australia receive poor leadership and consideration from all levels of government. They are treated as objects to be informed, educated and motivated to change in a way consistent with the beliefs of central government politicians and their accepting officials. Macadam and his colleagues highlight the futility of the current approach.

For a Commonwealth Government report it is somewhat dense and academic in style. Nevertheless what it has to offer is well worth reading. The chapter headings reflect the intellectual coherence of the report: The Operating Environment for Rural Australia; The interactive nature of capacity building and institutional arrangements; Maintaining a focus on outcomes; Engaging relevant communities of practice; Creating a shared capacity-building agenda; Political, institutional and organisational commitment to the goal of community-led programs; and, Reflective practice and research. In each of these you will find a comprehensive and up-to-date review of ideas and practice of relevance to academic and practitioner.

I have found myself going back to this report readjusting my assumptions about the approach I take in rural and regional development. The authors and RIRDC are to be congratulated for making such a worthwhile contribution to this important area impacting rural Australia.

Reviewer: Dr John Martin
Centre for Regional & Rural Development
RMIT University, Hamilton, Victoria.

1. See J. Martin (2004) "If you can't kill the guru...": Sustaining Communities in the Face of Bureaucratic Dominance' *New Community Quarterly*, 2(4), pp. 9-12

ANZRSAl membership

If you know of people who would like to join ANZRSAl, please download a membership form from the website:

www.uq.net.au/~zzanzrsa/pdf/membership.pdf

2004/05 Membership Fee (GST Inclusive)

Standard	AUD \$135.00
Student	AUD \$ 62.50
Emeritus	AUD \$ 93.50
Institutional	AUD \$312.50

Sustaining Regions Journal

The Journal

Sustaining Regions is produced by ANZRSai with financial support from the Federal Government's Understanding Rural Australia Program. *Sustaining*



Regions endeavours to present topical articles and information on cutting edge issues affecting all Australian regions - metropolitan, remote, urban and rural - and affecting all dimensions of the way we live. The journal embraces issues of economic development and governance, environmental protection, human welfare and social well-being,

modelling; social capital and volunteering. *Sustaining Regions* aims to present information in an informative and accessible fashion and will be an important portal to other information resources. The journal is published in hard copy with abstracts of articles available electronically.

In the Next Edition . . .

Scott Prasser of Sunshine Coast University will discuss the outcomes of the 2004 Federal election and its regional dimension.

Al Rainnie will present a critique of Richard Florida's ideas on the creative class.

Brian Dollery and **Neil Marshall** from the University of New England will discuss Voluntary Regional Organisations of Councils as effective forms of governance.

Dick Bedford will analyse population and growth issues in New Zealand's equivalent of the Gold Coast.

Plus: news from the Engaged Governance project in Queensland.

Find out more . . .

Sustaining Regions is edited by Andrew Beer and is hosted by the School of Geography, Population & Environmental Management at Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia. For further information on *Sustaining Regions* visit the website at:

www.flinders.edu.au/anzrsai/about.html

From the Mailbag

Using Economic Multipliers at the Regional Level

The following note may be of interest to readers of the newsletter, who are involved in using multipliers at regional level. It identifies an important limitation of multipliers in relation to state and federal government service provision.

Government services can be a very important part of the economy of, and employment in, rural centres. Typically, the local school, the hospital, the police station, court house, agricultural advisers, etc. form a significant part of employment in these centres.

The size of many of these services often closely relates to the area's population and if population expands strongly, the size of these services could be expected to expand strongly also.

However, it is important to recognize the way multipliers are structured; they tend to "follow a money trail". In the case of government services, payment for these tends to go out of the area in taxes and the fact that it might come back in the form of expenditure on the school, the hospital, etc. may not be recognized in the multipliers.

My advice to anyone using regional multipliers, in a situation where government employment is important, is to check with who ever constructed the multipliers about how taxation and government service delivery was treated.

With local government services (as opposed to state and federal), where the rates are paid locally and the money stays in the region, there is probably not the same problem.

Bill Cummings
CUMMINGS ECONOMICS
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CAIRNS QLD 4870

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Website: www.cummings.net.au

Editor's note: Many thanks for your contribution Bill. No doubt your experience will be valuable to other people working in the field. I also hope it encourages other readers to write to us and share their insights and expertise.

Internet Resources

Rural and Regional Affairs

www.aph.gov.au/library/intguide/rural/index.htm

For those of you looking for a comprehensive internet site for **Rural and Regional Affairs**, try the Australian Parliament House Library Resource Guide. The Guide contains over 70 links and is organised under the following headings:

- Commonwealth Government
- State & Territory Governments
- Organisations
- Academic and Research Institutes
- Conferences
- Education
- Health
- Women's issues
- Resource Guides and Links

Economic Gardening

www.littletongov.org/bia/economicgardening/default.asp

An Entrepreneurial Approach to Economic Development

In 1987, the City of Littleton, Colorado pioneered an entrepreneurial alternative to the traditional economic development practice of recruiting industries. This demonstration program, developed in conjunction with the Centre for the New West, was called "economic gardening." Of particular interest are the roles that temperament, innovation and chaos/complexity theory play in the economic development process.

At this website you can also subscribe to the mail list on the Internet called Econ-Dev. The purpose of the mail list is to encourage discussion about an entrepreneurial approach to economic development (economic gardening) among industry professionals. The list typically has 300-400 subscribers consisting of economic development practitioners, academics, economists, consultants, students, the media and writers, elected officials and other individuals and institutions interested in the theory and practice of economic development. The list is also used to post job openings in the profession, to announce conferences and call for papers, and to notify participants of local, state and national legislation affecting the profession.

Community Engagement

www.mwdc.wa.gov.au

Network Co-ordination – A Hands on Guide for Regional Practitioners

The Mid-West Development Commission in Western Australia has produced a "Hands on Guide" to coordinating a Western WISE Network Gathering. This document can assist rural and remote communities in organisation a networking forum with guest speakers.

The Western WISE Network is an initiative that builds community capacity and leadership of remote, rural people throughout the Mid West region of Western Australia. The Western WISE Network brings a diversity of people together on a bi-monthly basis to encourage and learn from one another through regular meetings. Together, they learn more about the activities and issues in the region, motivate and educate the benefits of diversification and small business opportunities by highlighting positive role models (local, intrastate and interstate) as guest presenters. Topics of interest identified by the participants are based on three central themes: environment, community capacity building and sustainable enterprise development.

Effective Community Engagement

www.dse.vic.gov.au/engagement-workbook

The Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) has produced "Effective Community Engagement: Workbook and Tools" with the aim of developing staff capability to engage effectively with stakeholders and the community. The workbook provides tools and resources to develop purposeful and effective engagement plans that respect, and are inclusive of, the diversity of stakeholders and community. The workbook is intended as a dynamic resource which will continue to evolve as staff skills and capacities are extended.



The Notice Board

PhD Scholarships Available

University of New England Centre for Local Govt

We invite applications from suitably qualified persons for two PhD Scholarships funded by an ARC Discovery Grant. Each Scholarship carries a stipend of \$20,000 p.a. for three years. Those appointed will have a strong academic background in one or more of the following fields: economics, political science, public administration, geography, or local govt.

Project 1: Alternative models of local governance for rural and regional Australia

Under the direction of Professor Brian Dollery, the PhD student will identify feasible models of local governance for rural and regional communities, especially in Northern NSW. The project will test their relative efficiency and effectiveness on a range of criteria including service delivery, infrastructure provision, and social sustainability.

Further information: Prof. Brian Dollery Ph: 61 (0)2 6773 2500 Email bdollery@une.edu.au.

Project 2: Changing patterns of regional governance in rural and regional NSW

Under the direction of Associate Professors Tony Sorensen and Neil Marshall, the PhD student will use case studies to analyse the intersection of Australia's

three formal tiers of government, their client agencies, and ad hoc regional networks in the delivery of public services, infrastructure, and regional development.

Further information: Tony Sorensen Ph 61(0)2 6773 2500 Email Tony.Sorensen@une.edu.au or Neil Marshall Ph 61 (0)2 6773 2475 Email nmarshall@une.edu.au.

General information on research at UNE can be found at: www.une.edu.au/research-services/phd.html. Look especially at the PhD rules under "Useful Links"

Application: Applicants should use the application form found at the following web-site: www.une.edu.au/research-services/Home/phdapp.doc Applicants should also include a sample of their academic writing not less than 2000 words in length. Applications should be addressed to Professor Brian Dollery, School of Economics, University of New England, Armidale NSW 2351, Australia.

Closing date: Friday 1 April, 2005.

Note: Australian citizens and persons with permanent resident status in Australia are exempt tuition fees for the degree of PhD. Potential overseas applicants should be aware that they will be liable for tuition fees should they be offered one of the Scholarships. These currently stand at > A\$13,000 per annum.

Regional Development Research: A Fulbright Seminar in Vienna



This is a call for participants and presentations at the **second annual Fulbright Seminar* in regional development** to be held **8-13 July 2005** at the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration. The first seminar was held at UNC in Chapel Hill, June 2004.



The **overall objective** is to provide an opportunity for junior scholars (PhD students and post-docs at all stages of research progress) to present their original research and to discuss that of other junior (or senior) scholars concerning regional development questions of importance to Europe and North America, although regional research need not be strictly limited to these continents. The seminar will feature **active, intense discussions** among a maximum of 25 junior scholars. We intend to balance the range and depth of topics, research focus, and background of participants.

While possible **topics** include the those usually found in ERSA or Regional Studies conferences, Fulbright seminar presentations and discussions will focus intensively on the theories, research methods or available findings capable of yielding further insights into regional development. The **program** will consist of **4** full seminar days, **1** social activity/joint dinner day, **1** excursion day.

Core faculty members will be drawn from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, and the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, plus other partner university faculty.

Applicants are asked to supply a c.v. and a 1-page abstract of their research by **15 March 2005** to: Ursula Grafeneder <sre@wu-wien.ac.at>. Applicants may also indicate their preference for 1) oral or poster-board **presentation**, and 2) low-cost student apartments or other **economy accommodation** (~€30-50/ppd), which we will attempt to locate. Notification of acceptance to be sent **1 April 2005**. **Participant fees:** €100 for the seminar are due **15 April 2005**. **Updated FAQs, information, and key links** will be supplied at the following URL: <http://www.wu-wien.ac.at/inst/iir/>

*Funds for the two-year seminar generously provided by U.S. Fulbright Program



Conference Calendar 2005

Aboriginal Philosophy Week

March 28th to April 2nd
Linga Longa Aboriginal Philosophy Farm
Telegraph Point NSW
www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/events

Sunshine Coast – State of the Region Conference.

April 2005
Further information: Dr Scott Prasser, University of Sunshine Coast, sprasser@usc.edu.au, 07 5459 4494.

Australian Association of Gerontology (NSW Division) Rural Conference

April 14th to 15th
Nowik Theatre Complex, Albury NSW
www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/events

Creative and Sustainable Communities Planning Institute of Australia National National Planning Conference

April 17th to 20th
Melbourne and Bendigo, Victoria
www.piacongress2005.com.au/index.shtml

Connecting Up 2005

Information and Communications Technology for Australian Communities
May 2nd to 3rd
Hyatt Regency Adelaide, South Australia
www.communit.info/cgi-bin/wf.pl

'Looking Out: Looking In – the role marketing plays in building regional communities'

Australian Marketing Institute Inaugural Regional Marketers Conference.
May 12th to 13th
Hotel Grand Chancellor, Launceston.
www.ami.org.au

The 7th International Cities, Town Centres & Communities (ICTC) Conference

May 31st to June 3rd
Rydges Capricorn Coast Queensland
www.ictcsociety.org/conf2005/index.htm

2nd National Conference on the Future of Australia's Country Towns

July 11th to 13th
Bendigo, Victoria
www.latrobe.edu.au/cscc/2ndconference/index.html

Engaging Communities – International Conference

August 14th to 17th
Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre
www.engagingcommunities2005.org/

Portuguese RSA National Congress

The Portuguese Section of the European Regional Science Association "Associação Portuguesa para o Desenvolvimento Regional" (APDR) is organising its 11th National Congress, to be held in Faro (Algarve), from 16-18 September 2005. Since 1998, APDR organises each year a meeting that gathers about 200 Portuguese and foreign researchers. The official languages of the Congress are Portuguese, English, Spanish and French. For detailed information, please consult the Congress webpage at www.apdr.pt/2005/eng/home.html.

MDBC International River Health Conference

October 16th to 19th
Mildura, Victoria
www.riverhealth.com/main.php

National General Assembly of Local Government

Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) -
November 6th to 10th
Canberra
www.alga.asn.au

Would you like to contribute to the ANZRSAl Newsletter?

We welcome contributions from readers on topics that are likely to be of interest to regional practitioners and researchers. Please send your contribution via email to:

ANZRSAl Newsletter anzrsai@uq.edu.au

For further information, phone Fiona McKenzie on +61 (0)3 9637 9837

If you know of any conferences or events that may be of interest to ANZRSAl readers and would like to have them included in this column, please send details by email to: Editor ANZRSAl Newsletter: anzrsai@uq.edu.au

Improving the ANZRSAl Newsletter: tell us what you think

In order to help us bring you a useful and informative newsletter, we are seeking your views. What do you like about the current Newsletter? What do you think should be changed? What additional features should we include in future editions? The following survey should only take a few minutes to complete. Responses will remain anonymous and information gathered through the survey will only be used for the purpose of improving the content and/or format of the ANZRSAl Newsletter.

Please email, fax or post your completed form to:
Fiona McKenzie, DSE, Level 2, 8 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne, VIC 3002.
Ph 61 (0)3 9637 9837 Fax 61 (0)3 9637 8485 Email fiona.mckenzie@dse.vic.gov.au

A. YOUR USE OF THE NEWSLETTER

1. How familiar are you with the ANZRSAl Newsletter?

- ☐ Always read it
- ☐ Usually read it
- ☐ Don't read it (*please go to question 3*)
- ☐ Can't remember ever seeing it (*please go to q. 8*)

2. How often do you read the following sections?

	Every Edition	Sometimes	Never
President's message	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regional Roundup	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conference Reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special articles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Do you share the ANZRSAl Newsletter with any one?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

B. ASSESSMENT OF THE NEWSLETTER

4. How relevant to your work / interests is the Newsletter?

- ☐ Highly relevant
- ☐ Somewhat relevant
- ☐ Not relevant
- ☐ Not sure

5. Do you receive other e-Newsletters?

- ☐ Yes (*please specify*) _____
- ☐ No (*please go to q. xx*)

6. How does the ANZRSAl Newsletter compare to others that you receive?

7. How much do you value the newsletter as part of your overall membership package?

- ☐ Critical (would not join if there was no newsletter)
- ☐ Desirable
- ☐ Optional
- ☐ Not critical (join for other benefits)

C. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEWSLETTER

8. Which of the following additions to Newsletter content would be of most interest / benefit to you?

- ☐ Discussion forum on current regional issues
- ☐ Reviews of recent regional research
- ☐ Updates on regional policy development
- ☐ Case studies on regional practice
- ☐ Guide to information resources (eg. web sites, government agencies)

9. Are there any other ways in which Newsletter content could be made more relevant to your needs?

10. Are there any changes to Newsletter format or design that you would like to see?

11. Do you have any other comments in relation to the ANZRSAl Newsletter?

D. RESPONDENT DETAILS

12. Employment

- ☐ Federal Government
- ☐ State Government
- ☐ Local Government
- ☐ Academia
- ☐ Consultancy
- ☐ Regional Practitioner
- ☐ Other (*please specify*) _____

13. Role _____

14. Location _____

15. Approximately how long have you been a member of ANZRSAl?

- ☐ Less than a year
- ☐ 1-5 years
- ☐ More than 5 years

The ANZRSAl Council would like to thank you for your participation in this survey