



Reports from the Regions



Western Australia

The Western Australian State Government has released a Draft Regional Policy Statement for public comment.

Local Government and Regional Development Minister Tom Stephens MLC released the draft policy on 22 November for a three months consultation period.

The development of a regional policy is important in Western Australia considering that over 70 per cent of its population live in the capital city with the remainder of residents spread across the biggest State in the world.

The WA Government has recently put in place a range of new initiatives for regional areas such as a \$75million regional investment fund and the restoration of uniform electricity tariffs. The Government also continues to support the nine Regional Development Commissions (RDCs) that have the responsibility to promote and facilitate development in the regions.

The draft policy, developed in conjunction with government agencies, peak bodies and RDCs, aims to establish a framework to ensure that the division of Government resources between Perth and the regions is well planned and managed through a whole of government approach.

The 89 strategies and 76 targets outlined in the draft policy are spread across four goal areas of:

- understanding, partnering and delivering better outcomes for regions;
- growing a diversified economy;
- educated, healthy, safe and supportive communities; and
- valuing and protecting the environment.

Every major aspect of regional activity is covered in the statement, from economic development to the arts, and from natural resource management to regional health issues.

Following the public comment period and analysis of the feedback received, the government will consider a final policy in mid 2003.

Copies of the draft can be obtained from the Western Australian Department of Local Government and Regional Development by contacting (08) 9222 0511 or freecall 1800 620 511 or online at: <http://www.dlgrd.wa.gov.au>



Victoria

Policy Roundup

The recently re-elected Bracks Government in Victoria has announced a number of measures designed to stimulate economic development and population growth in regional Victoria, some innovative and others perhaps politically courageous. The new programs and structures are part of the Victorian Government's 'Building for Tomorrow' policy.

Prior to the election, legislation was passed establishing a new statutory authority, Regional Development Victoria. The new organisation is due to commence operations in March 2003 and will have an investment and jobs focus while at the same time seeking to ensure that all government programs and agencies have a regional focus. It will also facilitate regional infrastructure projects and community development. It will focus specifically on nine identified 'interface' council areas. The legislation also established the Regional Development Advisory Committee.

There is to be a further five year extension of the Regional Infrastructure Development Fund (\$180 million). Of this, \$20 million will be dedicated to smaller centres through a Small Towns Development Fund. This will be funded on a matching basis and the initial focus will be on towns facing economic difficulties.

A Regional Business Investment Ready Program will assist regional businesses and local authorities to attract investment from superannuation funds and other financial institutions for new investment and infrastructure projects. The Community Capacity Building Initiative will continue. A new \$50 million research program, Our Rural Landscape, will aim to increase the profitability and sustainability of Victoria's food and agricultural industries. There is to be a new innovation clusters

program in such industries as food and agriculture, health, manufacturing, biotechnology and ICT. Two new Rural Learning Campuses will be created.

The Community Regional Industry Skills Program (CRISP) will develop local strategic plans to identify and address skill and labour shortages in regional areas.

Finally, the Government has announced that it aims to grow regional Victoria's population at the same rate as Melbourne's. This includes both short and longer term goals and seeks to address regional population decline. The Government aims to have the regional population growing by 1.25% per year by 2006. The Government is driven by an understanding of the importance of critical mass to regional economic development, and a conviction that regional service delivery will be enhanced by population growth. The aim is to ensure a better distribution of population growth between Melbourne, the larger regional cities and smaller towns. For example, the population growth rate in regional Victoria fell to below 0.2% annually from 1991-96.

A number of the initiatives come from the Government's regional forums, where concerns about issues such as skills shortages and coordination of government regional initiatives.



Regional Services Directory



South Australia

Australian Bureau of Statistics National Centre for Rural and Regional Statistics (RRSNC)

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Based in the Adelaide Office of the ABS, the National Centre's roles are to:

develop and disseminate data that will assist policy analysts and researchers study the underlying causes of change across rural, regional and remote Australia, support the regional priorities of Commonwealth agencies by providing relevant statistical information to assist policy planning and assessment.

The Centre also incorporates the South Australian Regional Statistics Unit (RSU) specialising in the provision of sub-state data for SA. The RSU publishes *Regional Statistics, South Australia* (Cat. No. 1362.4) annually and provides consultancy services in regional profiling.

Recent Key Projects:

RRSNC discussion paper *Use of Individual Income Tax Data for Regional Statistics*:

Experimental Estimates for Small Areas, 1995-96 and 1996-97 (Cat. No 5673.0) was released on 26 November 2001. The paper summarises a joint ABS/ATO project using individual income tax data to provide new measures of regional labour market activity. Tables produced include profiles of wage and salary income, occupation, age and sex by statistical local areas (SLA) in Australia. Work is underway in building this time series through to 1999-2000.

R&R News: RRSNC Newsletter published quarterly. Contact the above to be added to the mailing list.

SA Centre for Economic Studies

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Products and services:

Regional and Industry Development.

Public Sector Economics.

Economic Conditions and Outlook.

Economic Impact of Gambling.

Studies into Coastal Growth.

Economic Evaluation of Water Reuse.

Innovation.

Program Evaluation.

Recent Key Projects:

'Value of New Zealand Recreational Fishing', New Zealand Ministry of Fisheries.

'Unmet demand for Information Technology and telecommunications courses', Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs. 'Economic and Social Impact of Gaming on the Provincial Cities', Provincial Cities Assoc. of SA. 'Labour Market Planning for the Regions'. 'Keeping Pace: A study on the South Coast Region, Fleurieu Regional Development Commission.

Review of Science, Technology and Innovation Program in Victoria.

Investigation into the Impact of Caps on Electronic Gaming Machines and Review of Self-exclusion Programs.

Labour Market Planning and Supply Side Response (NT Government).

Provincial Cities Update 2002 (Provincial Cities Association of SA).

A Series of Regional Economic Reviews, Forecasts and Planning. Extension of 'Keeping Pace: A Study of the South Coast Region' (Fleurieu Regional Development Commission).

Program and Project Evaluations: Cost and Models Analysis for Commonwealth and State Agencies.

Intergovernmental relations and regional cooperation.

Recent Key Projects:

Our consultancy is small, innovative and flexible, with the capacity for either single person assignments or large projects where we assemble specialist multi-disciplinary teams. In our five years of operation we have successfully completed over 40 assignments spanning a wide range of issues in several States for clients including regional development organisations, Local, State and Commonwealth governments, large and small private sector companies, utility companies, ACCs, State and National peak bodies and private clients.

The principal, Peter Tesdorpf, has over 25 years professional experience including managing delivery of the Commonwealth's Regional Development Program, establishing regional bodies, as Executive Director of one of Australia's most successful voluntary regional organisations of Councils and as a local government planner. He is Victorian President of the Royal Australian Planning Institute and a Councillor of the Regional Science Association of Australia/New Zealand.

Centre of Policy Studies

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Products and services:

The Centre of Policy Studies (CoPS) is an acknowledged world leader in computable general equilibrium (CGE) modelling. These models are widely used by government, private and university sectors in Australia and overseas. The Centre has 14 research staff, including three professors, plus 4 support staff.

The Centre operates a number of large-scale multiregional CGE models which it applies to forecasting, policy analysis and historical analysis. CoPS produces forecasts of Australian regional economies at the statistical division level. It also



Victoria

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Products and services:

Regional and local economic development.

Planning and urban affairs.

Facilitation, consultation, advocacy, negotiations.

Strategy development and policy analysis.

Local government and community affairs.

conducts analysis of a wide range of economic questions at the regional level, including regional development, tourism, hallmark events, major projects, energy, the environment, natural resources, labour markets, transport, industry productivity, microeconomic reform and fiscal federalism. Detailed information on the Centre's products and services can be found at our website, or by phoning the CoPS' Director-Consulting, Dr Philip Adams, on (03) 9905 5094.

CoPS provides a post-graduate research programme and conducts a number of short training courses in economic modelling each year. Prospective students should contact Associate Professor John Madden on (03) 9905 9757. The Centre also produces a suite of general-purpose economic modelling (GEMPACK) software especially suitable for general and partial equilibrium models. It can handle a wide range of economic behaviour. GEMPACK is used in over 400 organisations in over 60 countries. Potential subscribers to GEMPACK should contact Professor Ken Pearson on (03) 9905 5112. Further information on the above services can also be found at the *CoPS' website*.

Recent Key Projects:

CoPS undertakes around 20 major commissioned studies each year. A few recent examples are:

Economic Modelling for The Review of Commonwealth–State Funding.

Tourism Scenarios and Australian Regional Economies.

Economic Impacts of Townsville Power Station Proposal.

Regional Effects of E-commerce.

MMRF-Green Model for Transport Analysis.

Impact of a New Nickel Mine and Refinery in NSW.

Impact of an Outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease.

Geographical Information Systems for Better Water Pricing.

Proposed Canberra-Sydney Fast Rail Link.

Research Planning Design Group (TBA Planners P/L)

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Products and services:

Strategic Planning.

Regional Economic Development.
Statutory Planning.

Research – Demographics, Economic.

Rural and Resource Based Research.

Community Consultation.

Recent Key Projects:

Enhancing the capacity of local government to contribute to the management of dryland salinity – land and water resources research development corporation.

Regional growth centres study – Victorian Department of Infrastructure.

Victorian rural living study – Department of Infrastructure.



Western Australia

Institute for Regional Development

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Products and Services:

Community facilitation and mediation.

Develop and deliver the education, training and professional development initiative.

Economic and social assessment.

Infrastructure planning and evaluation.

Natural resources and environment management.

Policy formulation and analysis.

Post Graduate Programme in Regional Development – national and international – occ@ird.uwa.edu.au

Professional development and capacity building for regional development practitioners.

Programme and project planning and evaluation.

Regional advocacy.

Strategic and statutory planning.

Tourism planning: eco and wilderness tourism.

Recent Key Projects:

An evaluation of the impacts and implications of environmental initiatives on the maritime transport sector for the Australian Maritime Group of the Australian Transport Council.

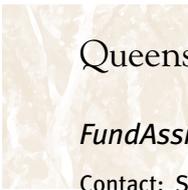
Provision of field research and professional inputs for the environmental assessment of the Hydroacoustic Station (HA01) to be located offshore from Cape Leeuwin to monitor illegal nuclear tests.

Specialist input into identification of high priority areas for dedication as no-take marine reserves in the World Heritage Area of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Specialist input into the resources inventory for the coastal and marine planning strategy and management framework for the Batavia Coast.

The preparation of the Coastal Environs Report for the South West Catchment Council's regional strategic plan.

The provision of specialist consultancy services for community consultation and for the preparation of the Warren Blackwood Development Plan for the South West Development Commission.



Queensland

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FundAssist provides professional assistance to businesses, individuals and local government in gaining access to funding associated with Private (venture capital), Public (government) and Charitable/Philanthropic sources. This assistance is delivered via a range of different services including: preparation of investment briefs and investor introduction services (re venture capital); reviews of funding applications/submissions; complete preparation of funding applications or submissions; tactical and lobbying advice (eg who should be contacted in respect to the project or application/submission); project funding management (assistance and advice in the management of funding deeds/contracts). Packages of services are also available such as our Complete Project Funding Assistance service that includes reviews of applications and submissions, complete preparation of applications and submissions, tactical and lobbying advice and project management advice.

Fees for most services are charged as a percentage of funds being sought or managed. The exact percentage varies according to amount of funding involved (percentage declines as funding amount increases) and type of service (eg Complete Project Funding Assistance involves a higher percentage rate than One Off Funding Application or Submission services). Further, for most services, the majority of our fees are success-based meaning they only become payable when you actually receive funding in respect to our services. Accordingly, it is in our interests only to take on projects when we are fairly confident of a successful outcome. The FundAssist website contains further information about how our fees work for each type of service.

FundAssist also has relationships with several other firms providing specialist service such as Economic and Business Consulting, Office Operation, Workplace Health and Safety, Branding/Graphic Design, Energy Systems/Power Supply, Tourism and Architecture to name a few. The companies with which these working relationships have been established all have a particular emphasis on the delivery of services in Rural and Regional areas. Indeed, FundAssist only deals with Rural and Regional areas and does not service projects in capital cities or their immediate metropolitan surrounds.

Recent Key Projects:

Longreach Saleyards Upgrade Works – funding submission services for the upgrade of the Longreach Saleyards facility. Gemfields Resort Complex – funding submission services for a feasibility study of a resort complex at the Central Queensland Gemfields Central Queensland Employment Consortium Tender – funding submission services in the preparation of a tender under the New Apprenticeships Assistance Program Beef Interpretive Centre – funding for the planning and design of a tourism facility associated with Queensland beef production.

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SRA Consulting provides professional economic and business consulting services including: community economic development planning, community profiling, economic impact statements and economic reports, business planning (operational and strategic), and marketing planning services.

SRA has relationships with several other firms providing specialist services such as Private Investment Assistance (Venture Capital), Office Operation, Workplace Health and Safety, Branding/Graphic Design to name a few. We are able to assemble teams capable of meeting a wide range of needs, or provide interested parties with leads on other service providers who may be able to assist them with particular issues. The companies with which these working relationships have been established all have a particular emphasis on the delivery of services in Rural and Regional areas. SRA Consulting only deals with Rural and Regional areas and does not service projects in capital cities or their immediate metropolitan surrounds.

Recent Key Projects:

Report on the Outback Highway – Boulia to Alice Springs section: report on natural features, fauna, flora, road conditions, travel issues, businesses and services.

Revitalisation of Injune: strategy for the revitalisation of Injune and capitalisation on opportunities created by the sealing of the Carnarvon Developmental Road and consequent increases in traffic volumes.

Included examination of beautification/ street scape development, tourism facility development, and business attraction/enhancement strategies.

Central Queensland Gemfields Resort feasibility – feasibility of a major resort complex in the Central Queensland Gemfields.