



Northern RDA Alliance (NRDAA) comprises of eight RDAs whose regions make up Northern Australia. This network, representing the Gascoyne in Western Australia to Gladstone in Central Queensland, has been meeting regularly and providing input to the Australia Government on the development of the White Paper on Developing Northern Australia and the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility. Our aim is to support all governments to develop policies and to prioritise investment opportunities to ensure the sustainable development of Northern Australia.

The Northern RDA Alliance had a series of positive and productive meetings in Canberra in late May with:

- The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Michael McCormack MP - we welcomed the budget announcement committing \$1.5b of the \$3.5b Roads of Strategic Importance (ROSI) funding to Northern Australia; raised the importance of industry and community engagement in relation to the investment of that funding; and highlighted the benefits of considering the Inland Queensland Roads Action Plan (IQ-RAP) methodologies as part of this process.
- Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government the Hon Dr John McVeigh MP - we discussed the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) and Regional Growth Fund (RGF) and the key role of the RDAs in facilitating outcomes through these programs; we noted the significant uptake of RGF and the strong interest from the private sector, suggesting that a future round would be welcomed and would catalyse private sector investment; we noted the specific work of the NRDAA in relation to trade and investment, infrastructure and relevant regional inquiries; timeliness of the processing of grant applications was discussed and recognized by the Minister; we welcomed the announcement in the budget of an additional \$200m in funding for another round of BBRF.
- Minister for Resources and Northern Australia Senator the Hon Matt Canavan – we discussed the outcomes from the April Northern Australia Ministerial Forum; the value of the work of the NRDAA was noted by the Minister; the Minister expressed interest in the development of the proposed Northern Australia Investment Prospectus and suggested the NRDAA put forward a full proposal to take the initiative forward; the commitment to funding \$1.5b from the ROSI was welcomed with advice to consider the IQ-RAP methodologies in its implementation.
- Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment the Hon Steven Ciobo MP – we discussed the recent Northern Australia Investment Forum; briefed the Minister on the NRDAA proposal for a Northern Australia Investment Prospectus in which he expressed interest; and discussed the importance of strong relationships between Austrade and the NRDAA.



- Senior Advisor to Minister for Jobs and Innovation Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash Megan Purcell- we discussed the opportunities for 10 RDAs across Australia to participate in the \$10m Regional Employment Trials Program announced in the 2018 Budget; we were advised that due to the Community Development Program (CDP) operating in most areas in the north, that only the Townsville area was eligible in northern Australia.
- Minister for Revenue and Financial Services the Hon Kelly O'Dwyer MP – we discussed the previous Senate Inquiry into Insurance in northern Australia and the current ACCC Insurance Inquiry; the Minister was presented with a copy of the RDA Pilbara report a Study on Insurance and Banking in the Pilbara.
- Mr Mark Cully, Chief Economist, Department of Industry, Innovation and Science we discussed the changes to the Department arrangements to strengthen and align the delivery of the Developing Northern Australia agenda.
- Warren Entsch MP, Chair Joint Standing Committee for Northern Australia – we discussed the northern Australia tourism inquiry, future land tenure related inquiry, insurance inquiries; we provided an update on the activities of the NRDA.
- Shadow Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry the Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP, Shadow Minister for Resources and Northern Australia and Shadow Minister for Trade and Investment the Hon Jason Clare MP, Shadow Minister for Regional Services, Territories and Local Government Stephen Jones MP – we discussed the broader northern Australia development agenda going forward and the role of the NRDA; we were advised of their support for the RDA program and our work in the NRDA.



We welcomed new Chairs to the Northern RDA Alliance including:

- Elsia Archer – RDA Kimberly (former Deputy Chair)
- Yvonne Messina – RDA Midwest Gascoyne (former Committee member)
- Grant Cassidy – RDA Fitzroy and Central West (former Committee member)
- Frank Beveridge – RDA Townsville and North West Qld (former Deputy Chair)
- David Kempton – RDA Far North Qld & Torres Strait

The Alliance also acknowledges Rob Kendrick as Acting Chair, RDA NT and the Acting Chair for the Northern RDA Alliance and welcomed back returning Chairs Fiona White-Hartig from RDA Pilbara and Graeme Smith from RDA Mackay Isaac Whitsunday.

The Northern RDA Alliance had a productive session with senior staff from the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities who expressed their support for the collaborative approach of the Alliance and its activities and aspirations in delivering on the Northern Australia development agenda.

The Northern RDA Alliance extends its appreciation to the Hon Assistant Minister for the Environment, Melissa Price, MP for Durak for hosting a very enjoyable networking event for the Alliance which was attended by numerous northern MPs, senior public servants and Minister Canavan. Tammy Corby deserves a special mention for her outstanding hosting support. We would also like to thank Tamara Sjroh, from Warren Entsch MP's office and Anne Stzunzer from Minister Canavan's office for their continuing support assisting the Alliance with its Canberra delegations.



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