An Australian Government Initiative

Regional Development Australia
Central and Western Queensland

Regional Development Australia Central & Western Queensland (RDACWQ)

2024-2025 Annual Business Plan & Budget

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA CHARTER

STRONG, CONFIDENT AND VIBRANT REGIONS

Regional Development Australia (RDA) is a national network of Committees made up of local leaders who work with all levels of government, business and community groups to support the economic development of their regions.

RDA Committees have an active and facilitative role in their communities with a clear focus on growing strong and confident regional economies that harness their competitive advantages, seize economic opportunities and attract investment.

Collaborating with other RDA Committees, all levels of government, and the private sector, RDA Committees will:

a) Facilitate regional economic development outcomes, investment, local procurement and jobs.
b) Promote greater regional awareness of and engagement with Australian Government policies, grant programs and research.
c) Improve Commonwealth regional policy making by providing intelligence and evidence based advice to the Australian Government on regional development issues.
d) Co-ordinate the development of a strategic regional plan, or work with suitable existing regional plans that will align with the Commonwealth's regional priorities.

Assistant Minister for Regional Development

28 October 2020

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Executive Summary

The Central and Western Queensland's strengths and diversity were highlighted throughout 2023-2024 and will continue throughout 2024-2025, as predicted by price and production trends in the regions key industries.

Despite record inflation and rising interest rates, local building approvals and property prices remained strong, and unemployment decreased (with the state average increasing.)

While the Central and Western Queensland region remains in a strong position, it is not without its challenges, including housing shortages, delays in Beef Road funding, attraction and retention of skilled workers, lower movement through the region's cattle saleyards, and a need to continued infrastructure investment across the region.

RDACWQ quarterly economic updates have delivered to the region a clear snapshot of the economic position of the region, demonstrating not only the strength of the region, but giving confidence to investors. RDACWQ intends to continue the development of the quarterly economic updates throughout 2024-2025.

Moving into 2024-2025, RDACWQ will focus on key nation building projects including Inland Rail to the Port of Gladstone and attraction of Australian Defence Force projects.

The recent Local Government elections have seen many mayoral changes across the region, a focus in the upcoming financial year will be to establish and maintain fruitful working relationships with all our Councils, including RAPAD and CQROC.

Certified by: Andrew Martin, Deputy Chair, RDACWQ
Signature:

Date: 2 July 2024

Committee Member details

Position	Name	Mobile phone	Email	Current Term Start Date	Current Term End Date
Chair	Grant Cassidy OAM FAICD	0448 275 722	chair@rdacwq.com.au	01/03/2018	30/06/2025
Deputy Chair	Andrew Martin	0427 574 114	mayor@btrc.qld.gov.au	31/08/2018	30/09/2025
Secretary	Robert Gibb	0428 189 939	Robert.a.gobb@outlook.com	11/07/2020	30/09/2025
Treasurer	John Lever	0407 623 170	kooraba@westnet.com.au	01/01/2015	30/09/2025
Member	Neville Ferrier	0418 371 373	mayor@banana.qld.gov.au	01/03/2015	30/09/2025
Member	David Arnold	0428 583 301	ceo@rapad.com.au	31/08/2018	30/09/2025
Member	Bronwyn Roberts	0439 126 106	bronwyn@brruralbusiness.com	01/08/2022	30/06/2025
Member	Kim Harrington	0437 443 069	Kim.harrington1007@gmail.com	28/05/2024	30/09/2025
Member	Garry Scanlan	0409 575 243	Garry.scanlan63@gmail.com	28/05/2024	30/09/2025

Strategic context and regional priorities

As identified in the RDACWQ Strategic Plan the following items are the major economic influences for the region in 2024/25:

1. **Global Decarbonation**
    a. Hydrogen Industry Development
    b. New Economy Minerals and Metals
    c. Supporting Global Emissions Reduction with CQ Coal

Needs – Job transition/replacement/creation, Workforce attraction/creation.
Potential Impact of external influences – Could be significantly impacted by changes in Australian and/or foreign government policies.
Regional Investment Framework – Investing in Industries and Local Economies.

Short Term Outcomes	**Medium Term Outcomes**	**Long Term Outcomes**
Advocacy for policy framework to promote development of new industries.	Increased Green Hydrogen Manufacturing in Central Wester Queensland.	Manufacturing jobs growth/new industries for value add of minerals.

2. **Developing Northern Australia**
    a. Developing Water Resources
    b. Improving Regional Supply Chains and Connectivity
    c. Supporting Liveable Communities

Needs – Water security, Job transition/replacement/creation, Workforce attraction/creation housing, medical services, connectivity, aged care.
Potential Impact of external influences – Australian government focus/prioritisation of otherwise of Northern Australia will be help or otherwise.
Regional Investment Framework – Investing in Places.

Short Term Outcomes	**Medium Term Outcomes**	**Long Term Outcomes**
Provision of evidence to support policy making.	Improvement in meeting needs identified above.	Further improvement in meeting needs identified above.

3. **Defence and Regional Security**
    a. Lowering the cost of Capability Deployment
    b. Improving Capability Through Force Posture
    c. Supporting Sovereign Manufacturing Capability

Needs – Job creation to replace drop off in coal related jobs.
Potential Impact of external influences – Geo-political uncertainty provides opportunity for region.
Regional Investment Framework – Investing in Industries and Local Economies.

Short Term Outcomes	**Medium Term Outcomes**	**Long Term Outcomes**
Provision of evidence to support policy & private decision making.	Increased Australian Defence Force and private contractor presence in CWQ.	Further increased Australian Defence Force and private contractor presence in CWQ.

4. **Technological Change**
    a. Developing Centres of Excellence
    b. Manufacturing Opportunities
    c. New Jobs in Existing Industries

Needs – Job creation to replace drop off in coal related jobs. New manufacturing industries sited regionally.
Potential Impact of external influences – Significant challenges from external/competing forces, e.g. re capital and labour.
Regional Investment Framework – Investing in Services, Industries and Local Economies.

Short Term Outcomes	**Medium Term Outcomes**	**Long Term Outcomes**
Provision of evidence to support policy & private decision making.	Development of new manufacturing and jobs in region.	Further development of new manufacturing and jobs in region.

5. **Ageing of the Region's Population**
    a. Providing More Quality Aged-Care Services
    b. Developing Age-Friendly Communities

Needs – Increased workforce and aged care facilities.
Potential Impact of external influences – Ageing population is helping. Government policy changes have big impact.
Regional Investment Framework – Investing in Services.

Short Term Outcomes	**Medium Term Outcomes**	**Long Term Outcomes**
Provision of evidence to support policy & private decision making.	More, and better quality, aged care options in region.	All residents can live how they want as they age.

Annual Work Plan

Global Decarbonation	**Activities to be completed in the year ahead:** Advocacy for policy framework to promote development of new industries.
	Link to Outcomes and Performance Indicators: Collaborate to foster growth of Green Hydrogen Industry in Central Western Queensland. Renewable Energy Readiness Assessment.
	Rational of this focus: Central Queensland produces 57% of all baseload generation capacity in Queensland. Central Queensland produces 32.6% of all coal exported in Queensland (2019-20 figures.) Green Hydrogen opportunities exist within Central Queensland. Central Queensland is in a position to make change.
	Rational if not currently relevant to RDACWQ: n/a
	Role of RDACWQ: Support.

Developing Northern Australia	**Activities to be completed in the year ahead:** Provision of evidence to support policy making.
	Link to Outcomes and Performance Indicators: Developing Northern Australia remains a priority of RDACWQ, however is not set as a separate outcome or performance indicator in 2024/2025.
	Rational of this focus: Developing Northern Australia will continue with RDACWQ being an active part of the Norther RDA Alliance. As RDACWQ falls within Northern Australia, it goes without saying that RDACWQ will contribute to the work priorities identified by the Northern RDA Alliance.
	Rational if not currently relevant to RDACWQ: n/a
	Role of RDACWQ: Partnership.

Defence and Regional Security	**Activities to be completed in the year ahead:** Provision of evidence to support policy & private decision making.
	Link to Outcomes and Performance Indicators: Apply for Regional Economic Futures Fund grant. Build detailed business case(s) for Defence Industry attraction. Maintain working relationships with CQROC.
	Rational of this focus: This item has the capacity to develop and attract a new industry and workforce to the region, thereby supporting the diversification of the Central Queensland economy.
	Rational if not currently relevant to RDACWQ: n/a
	Role of RDACWQ: Support and Lead.

Technological Change	**Activities to be completed in the year ahead:** Provision of evidence to support policy & private decision making to facilitate Developing Centres of Excellence, Manufacturing Opportunities, and New Jobs in Existing Industries.
	Link to Outcomes and Performance Indicators: This item is not directly shown in the outcomes and performance indicators table. While it remains relevant for the region, RDACWQ's role will be in a support capacity, therefore not included in the outcomes and performance table.
	Rational of this focus: This item is essential for existing industry to stay up to date, or even lead, technological advances across industry and agriculture.
	Rational if not currently relevant to RDACWQ: n/a
	Role of RDACWQ: Support.

Ageing of the Region's Population	**Activities to be completed in the year ahead:** Provision of evidence to support policy & private decision making.
	Link to Outcomes and Performance Indicators: This item is not directly shown in the outcomes and performance indicators table. While it remains relevant for the region, RDACWQ's role will be in a support capacity, therefore not included in the outcomes and performance table. In addition, many Council's, not for profits and private businesses are taking leading rolls in addressing the aging population. RDACWQ is in a position to support the organisations taking this lead.
	Rational of this focus: Aging in place remains topical across Central Queensland.
	Rational if not currently relevant to RDACWQ: n/a
	Role of RDACWQ: Support.

Summary of top 5 strategic priorities for the upcoming year

1. Facilitate regional economic development outcomes, investment, local procurement and jobs
2. Promote greater regional engagement with Australian Government policies, grant programs and research.
3. Improve regional policy making by providing intelligence and evidence-based advice to Governments on regional development issues and opportunities.
4. Work with other RDA Committees, all levels of Government and the private sector to realise the full economic potential of Central and Western Queensland.
5. Advocate for priority projects that will facilitate economic growth by working with key economic stakeholders.

Summary of top 5 business activities for the upcoming year

1. Advocate for projects identified in the RDACWQ Regional Strategic Plan.
2. Advocate to securing funding for the Inland Rail to the Port of Gladstone.
3. Advocate to secure funding for Defence & Defence Industry opportunities identified in the CQROC/RDACWQ Defence Industry attraction collaboration document.
4. Provide advice to project proponents to facilitate the growth and diversification of the region's economy.
5. Coordinate with various stakeholders to develop an infrastructure snapshot and related workforce coping strategies.

Communications Strategy

RDACWQ has a Communication Strategy that identifies the relationships between its stakeholders and itself and how it intends to engage with its various stakeholders. As RDACWQ has separated its stakeholders into four categories and has communication and engagement guidelines for each category, as outlined in the RDACWQ Communication Strategy.

- Tier One Stakeholders are considered regional decision makers – RDACWQ intends to strengthen this relationship to provide trusted advice to decision makers. The desired outcome from communicating with this tier is to create open, clear and trusted two-way communication.

  RDACWQ will provide tier one stakeholders with updates on relevant topics to ensure they remain informed on RDACWQ activities and projects happening within the region. When appropriate, RDACWQ will prepare and deliver project briefs to stakeholders prior to seeking support or approval for projects/funding. In turn, it is hoped RDACWQ will build stronger relationships with decision makers and open up two-way communication.

  Tier One stakeholders are invited to subscribe to RDACWQ's monthly e-newsletter and follow RDACWQ's social media feeds.

  RDACWQ will meet in person with tier one stakeholders when relevant to discuss regional projects and priorities, and to advocate for support for projects. It is anticipated that by continually providing regional insights to tier one stakeholders RDACWQ will be seen as more approachable and active in achieving outcomes.

- Tier Two Stakeholders are considered regional implementors of RDACWQ's priority areas – RDACWQ intends to build strong working relationships with this stakeholder group to implement priority projects across the region. The desired outcome with tier two stakeholders is about trusted and productive working relationships to deliver outcomes to the region.

  It is anticipated the main communications strategy for interacting with tier two stakeholders will be in person meetings, telephone conversations and email communication. Tier two stakeholders are implementers and have a more detailed approach to achieving outcomes. While these relationships will be essential for achieving outcomes the day-to-day communications will generally be in a less formal manner.

  Tier Two stakeholders are invited to subscribe to RDACWQs monthly e-newsletter and follow RDACWQ's social media feeds.

  RDACWQ will engage with tier two stakeholders frequently to assist in implementing outcomes. In addition to implementation tier two stakeholders will be a key consultative group for RDACWQ to obtain regional knowledge and details of projects RDACWQ may not have been involved in previously that are now becoming a priority for RDACWQ.

RDACWQ will work with tier two stakeholders to undertake relevant community engagement (such as surveys or forums) to assist in identifying regional priorities and to implement actions to achieve outcomes.

- Tier Three Stakeholders are considered regional implementors of broader economic outcomes that are not the priority of RDACWQ. RDACWQ intends to continue working relationships with this stakeholder group and provide support where appropriate and RDACWQ has resources available. RDACWQ aims to maintain working relationships with these stakeholders and provide support as appropriate on a case-by-case basis.

  RDACWQ will provide letters of support for tier three stakeholders seeking funding from either private or public funds.

  Tier Two stakeholders are invited to subscribe to RDACWQ's monthly e-newsletter and follow RDACWQ's social media feeds.

  RDACWQs engagement levels with tier three stakeholders will be on a case by case basis dependant on the availability of RDACWQ staff resources and projected project outcomes.

  Tier three stakeholders will be invited to participate in RDACWQ community engagement activities were relevant links apply.

- Tier Four Stakeholders are considered its broader audience, namely the general public and media outlets.

  Tier Four stakeholders are invited to subscribe to RDACWQs monthly e-newsletter and follow RDACWQ's social media feeds.

  Content within the RDACWQ newsletter is intended to provide information relevant to economic development and share information and resources that tier four stakeholders may find interesting.

  RDACWQ will provide media released to media outlets to promote RDACWQ achievements.

PRIORITY MATRIX

6. Select which priorities best fit with your RDA

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT	
Infrastructure development incl. land, water, energy, renewables	☒
Transport – roads, bridges, airports, rail links, ports, intermodal centres, public transport, integrated transport connections	☒
Land, water, energy infrastructure	☒
Telecommunications (incl. digital economy initiatives)	☐
Affordable housing	☒
Identification of priorities	☐
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
Leadership	☐
Supporting local government	☒
Facilitate proposals for funding	☒
Population attraction and liveability	☐
Regional snapshot and economic modelling	☐
Economic diversity (through new industries/ underdeveloped industries)	☒
Smart Cities and City Deal Collective	☐
Agribusiness growth and diversification (incl export)	☐
Food produce and innovation	☒
Tourism	☐

Cross regional economic development opportunities	☐
Decentralisation of businesses (into region)	☒
Supply chain integration	☐
Entrepreneurship incl. incubator and accelerator programs	☐
Smart Specialisation Strategy	☐
Creative arts and dance activities	☐
Defence industry	☒
Indigenous business development	☐
Industry diversification and clustering	☐
New technologies incl. drones	☐
Identification and promotion of state-wide economic development opportunities	☐
Development of capital city stakeholder relationships	☐
SKILLED AND READY WORKFORCE	
Innovation skills and capability	☐
Education, learning and jobs pathways	☒
Workforce development	☒
Increase employment and job diversity	☒
Aged care, disability and community sectors workforce	☒
STEM – Science Technology Engineering and Maths	☐
Supporting Indigenous leadership	☐

ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL ASSETS	
Building future resilience	☐
Environment and natural resource management (includes water and land use planning)	☐
Community support incl. children, families and youth	☐
Building community capacity	☐
Sustainable food production	☐

2024-2025 3A OUTCOMES AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS TABLE

Top 5 business activities for the upcoming year:

1. Advocate for projects identified in the RDACWQ Regional Strategic Plan.
2. Advocate to securing funding for the Inland Rail to the Port of Gladstone.
3. Advocate to secure funding for Defence & Defence Industry opportunities identified in the CQROC/RDACWQ Defence Industry attraction collaboration document.
4. Provide advice to project proponents to facilitate the growth and diversification of the region's economy.
5. Coordinate with various stakeholders to develop an infrastructure snapshot and related workforce coping strategies.
6.

PART 1 – FOR THE ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN			
What will we do?	**RDA's anticipated role**	**Timeframe**	**Expected outcomes**
Strategic priority 1 – Advocate for projects identified in the RDACWQ Regional Strategic Plan.			
Activity 1.1 - Collaborate to foster growth of Green Hydrogen Industry in CWQ	Contributed to	Ongoing throughout 24/25	Increased development of Green Hydrogen production in CWQ
Activity 1.2 - Audit of Food and Fibre Production in CWQ	Lead	Begin Early 2025	Detailed Food and Fibre Report
Activity 1.3 - Renewable Energy Readiness Assessment	Contributed to	Begin July 2024	Renewable Energy Zone Impact Assessment
Strategic priority 2 – Advocate to secure funding for the Inland Rail T2G.			
Activity 2.1 - Advocate with State Government re Inland Rail	Lead	Ongoing throughout 24/25	Decision made to build rail link
Activity 2.2 - Maintain partnerships with CQROC councils	Lead	Ongoing throughout 24/25	United voice
Strategic priority 3 – Advocate to secure funding for Defence & Defence Industry opportunities identified in the CQROC/RDACWQ Defence Industry attraction collaboration document.			
Activity 3.1 - Apply for Regional Economic Futures Fund grant	Contributes to	July 2024	Winning proposal
Activity 3.2 - Build detailed business case(s) for Defence Industry attraction	Contributes to	Ongoing throughout 24/25	Finalised business case
Activity 3.3 - Maintain working relationships with CQROC	Lead	Ongoing throughout 24/25	United voice
Strategic priority 4 – Provide advice to project proponents to facilitate the growth and diversification of the region's economy.			
Activity 4.1 - Provide evidence and advice as requested	Lead	Ongoing throughout 24/25	Project proponents able to make better decisions
Strategic priority 5 – Coordinate with various stakeholders to develop an infrastructure snapshot and related workforce coping strategies.			
Activity 5.1 - Partner with State Gov't departments	Contribute to	Begin July 2024	Cumulative Economic Impact analysis

2024-2025 BUDGET

Attachment 3.B - Annual Budget and Annual Audited Accounts reporting template

RDA name:	Regional Development Australia Central & Western Qld Inc

This template is to be completed for the business plan (budget figures only) and the audited accounts (inclusion of actual amounts). Dates should be amended as required for the appropriate financial year.

Committees are only required to acquit RDA program funding.

The budget figures should not change once the business plan has been accepted. See BPG clause 3.2 and FA clause 6.11 for exceptions.

Please round all figures to the nearest dollar.

GST exclusive amounts	**RDA program funding (incl. all $ in FA and schedules)**		
	Budget 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025		**Actual to 30 June 2024**
Income			
Surplus funding carried forward from previous financial year	$39,759		$14,048
Funding for this period	$382,377	(1)	$367,367
Interest on Commonwealth funds	$4,000		$6,767
Supplementary funding (if any) #			$4,000
[Other category as required]			
[Other category as required]			
[Other category as required]			
Total RDA program income (A)	$426,136		$392,182
Expenditure - major budget items ^			
Employee salaries	$230,850		$231,696
Employee entitlements	$22,100		$21,748
Other employee expenses	$7,200		$823
Office lease and outgoings	$13,410		$12,954
Vehicle costs			
Operational	$106,076		$47,221
Financial, legal and professional	$22,900		$20,100
Marketing	$10,000		$7,621
Asset acquisition			
Committee costs	$13,600		$10,260
Supplementary funding (if any)			
[Other category as required]			
[Other category as required]			
[Other category as required]			
Total RDA program funding expenditure (B)	$426,136		$352,423
Surplus / Deficit of RDA program funding (A - B)	$0	(2)	$39,759
If surplus, percentage of RDA program funding unspent = (2) / (1) * 100 (See **Note 1**, below)			**10.8%**

Examples of supplementary funding provided by the Australian Government include funding for professional coaching and or for the development of a strategic regional plan.

^ The department recognises that there may be no allocation against some items, as the Committee may pay for these utilising funding from other sources. Please use the [Other category as required] row as needed.

Note 1: The Management of Funding clause of the funding agreement (clause 6) requires that an RDA Committee must write to the department if more than 20% of the funding for the financial year was unspent at the end of that financial year and the RDA Committee wishes to treat that unspent amount as funding for the following year. This refers to RDA program funding to support the Committee to achieve the outcomes as opposed to project, state/territory or other funding. Please identify the estimated unspent RDA program funding as a percentage of the year's total RDA program funding. Please note that any surplus funding that was carried forward from the previous financial year is not to be included in this calculation. The actual carry-forward is to be confirmed in the Annual Audited Accounts. The RDA Better Practice Guide provides advice on the process for approval of carry-forwards greater than 20%.

Certification:

Annual Budget certified as correct by:

Name of authorised person:
Andrew Martin

Signature:

Date: 2 July 2024

Independent auditor's statement to accompany the Audited Annual Accounts:

I certify that the statement of receipts and expenditure are fair and true, and that funding any other contributions (if any) were held and expended by the RDA Committee in accordance with the 2021-25 Funding Agreement.

Name of auditor:

Auditor's company:

Signature:

Date: