

Appointment of Chair Regional Development Australia Riverina

Regional Development Australia Riverina is excited to announce that Dianna Somerville has been appointed as it's Chair by Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories Nola Marino for the next 4 ½ years. Dianna will take up the position after former Chair Richard Allsopp's term ended in December 2020.

"I am honoured to accept the appointment as Chair of RDA Riverina. I look forward to working with the committee and staff to continue the great work and impact the organisation has across the Riverina. I also would like to thank Richard and the previous chairs and committees for their dedication to the role, and I hope I can continue to ensure the Riverina is well placed as we transverse these unprecedented times."

The RDA Riverina team, led by CEO Rachel Whiting, has worked tirelessly to deliver insight and leadership across topics of economic development, migration, regionalisation and workforce strategy. RDA Committees play an important role in building strong, confident and vibrant regions. The focus of RDA Committees is to work with all levels of government, business and community groups to create jobs, attract investment and stimulate economic growth in their regions. RDA Committees also provide the Australian Government valuable regional intelligence to inform policy development and implementation.

"Over my term I am focused on delivering for the region. At last weeks Regional Australia Institute Regions Rising Summit there was a wonderful sense of optimism about regional Australia's future and also a collaborative approach to tackling the challenges, such as housing shortages. There is a real wind at our backs and an opportunity to create sustainable and vibrant regions, especially in the Riverina" Dianna said.

Assistant Minister for Regional Development the Hon. Nola Marino MP said

"Ms Somerville will lead RDA Riverina under a refreshed Charter that focuses their role on driving investment and local procurement opportunities and through this, creating economic growth for our regions".

Regional Development Australia Committees (RDAs) have played and continue to play an important role in delivering sustainable infrastructure and services to their region. These Committees deliver important work in consulting with communities, promoting and participating in regional initiatives, and providing information and advice on their region to all levels of Government.

Brief Bio of Appointee: Dianna Somerville is the Community Manager at Bridge Hub, Founder of Regional Pitchfest and a Director at Thomas Bros Group. Born and educated in Wagga Wagga, She is a former Naval Officer and Defence public servant who worked as the Base Manager - Kapooka Military Area and also as part of the Defence National Contract Transition Team. Dianna has grown her own businesses and, through her work in the innovation sector, has become a spokesperson for regional entrepreneurship and opportunity. She delivered Regional Pitchfest nationally in partnership with Australia Post and has observed innovation ecosystems across Australia, US and Israel. She now works for Agrifood Tech Innovation hub – Bridge Hub which is base in Wagga with offices in Sydney and Israel. She also continues to work within the family business as a Director to the Thomas Bros Group organisations. Dianna has previously served as a director at Country Hope and lives with her husband and two children on a farm at Collingullie.

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MEDIA NOTE: For more information, contact RDA Riverina CEO and Director of Regional Development Rachel Whiting on 0429 444 213.

