

RDA Riverina Overview 2011

RDA Riverina connecting communities, business & government to projects, programs, services funding and other people.



Regional
Development
Australia

R I V E R I N A N S W



An Australian Government Initiative



A NSW Government Initiative

Vision

RDA Riverina will be a region renowned for its excellence in all dimensions – economic, social and environmental with emphasis on innovation, life long learning, healthy living and an optimistic outward looking culture based on confidence, resilience and social inclusion.

Mission

RDA Riverina will build partnerships that facilitate the development of a sustainable region.



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Introduction

Who is Regional Development Australia?

Regional Development Australia (RDA) is a partnership between the Australian, state, territory and local governments to develop and strengthen the regional communities in Australia. RDA includes the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts & Sport, State Departments as well as a national network of 55 committees (RDAs) that were established in August 2009. In NSW RDA committees are incorporated non-profit community-based organisations that are made up of 12 committee members appointed jointly by both the Federal (The Hon. Simon Crean MP, Minister for Regional

Australia, Local Government, Arts & Sport) & the State Minister (The Hon. Andrew Stoner MP, NSW Minister for Trade & Investment). Members have a broad and diverse skills base developing local solutions to local problems.

In New South Wales there are 14 RDAs. RDA Riverina is composed of 13 local government areas (LGAs): Carrathool, Coolamon, Cootamundra, Griffith, Gundagai, Hay, Junee, Leeton, Lockhart, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera, Temora and Wagga Wagga

“Our overarching goal is to help regions become more resilient, more viable, more sustainable and more prosperous. I strongly believe that a top – down, one size fits all approach wont achieve this. Empowering regional communities to take ownership of their future will.” The Hon. Simon Crean MP



L to R: Julian McClaren (Wagga Wagga Business Chamber), The Hon. Simon Crean MP, Yvonne Braid (Wagga Wagga City Councillor and RDA Riverina Committee Member), Joe Burns (Deputy Chair RDA Riverina)

What does Regional Development Australia – Riverina do?

The RDA Riverina Committee is responsible for the development of a Riverina Regional Plan, which describes the selected region, its attributes, industry and employment base and key advantages. The Riverina Regional Plan sets out the economic, environmental and social vision for the region, articulates the drivers of change, identifies strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, and list priorities for action. The RDA Riverina Regional Plan 2010-2015 can be accessed from the <http://www.rdariverina.org.au/uploads/docs/RegionalPlan03112011.pdf>. RDA Riverina takes a leadership role in bringing together organisations to take advantage of government programs, policies and initiatives that align with the RDA Riverina Regional Plan.

RDA Riverina is one of the first points of contact for government agencies wanting to consult with a region. The 5 key roles of RDA Riverina are:-

- Consultation and engagement the with community
- Support informed regional planning.
- Promote government programs- distribute information about programs, services, grants and initiatives
- Provide information and advice on the Riverina region to all levels of government.
- Support and promote community and economic development.

Visit www.rdariverina.org.au for more information.



Business Development at Bomen Industrial Park.



Australian Airline Pilot Academy, Forest Hill.

A message from the Chairman

Tom Watson

The biggest challenge in 2011 was the economic threat posed by the draft guide to the Murray Darling Basin Plan (MDBP).

RDA Riverina worked closely with a range of stakeholders to ensure balance in the MDBP and made its own strong submissions to the Authority and the Parliament.

A second draft MDBP, released in November 2011, produced some improvements, as it acknowledged the potential socio-economic impact on the Basin but there remains community concern about the potential impact of reduced water on regional prosperity.

RDA Riverina will continue to work with stakeholders to achieve a final plan designed to guarantee both the continuing prosperity of the Riverina and the health of the river system by a focus on efficiency through appropriate infrastructure improvements, a detailed environmental watering plan and a legislated opportunity for review in 2015.

Despite the challenging year there have been a number of new business developments and expansion of existing businesses in the region.

2011 saw the launch by the Commonwealth Government of the Regional Development Australia Fund with Griffith receiving \$1.9 million funding towards the funding of the upgrade of the airport in the first round.

The Wagga Base Hospital secured funding of \$55 million from the Commonwealth Government under its hospital upgrade program and together with the previously secured State funding this high priority regional project is now underway.

RDA Riverina continues to successfully conduct the Country Change project, the Riverina First Community Fund and the regional Skilled Migration Program as well as a wide range of programs to enhance community capacity and promote the region. The appointment of Project Officer Marg Couch in April 2011 has enabled RDA Riverina to provide a greater range of services and products. An additional staff member has assisted in ensuring regional activities remain aligned with the RDA Riverina Regional Plan 2010-2015 and that strategies identified in the RDA Riverina Business Plan can be implemented.

A big thank you to all the Committee and staff for all their work throughout the year.

Tom Watson

Chair RDA Riverina



2009 - 2011 RDA Committee

Chair

Thomas Watson

Deputy Chair

Joseph Burns

Committee

Lyndall Angel

Patrick Barbaro

Yvonne Braid

Peter Brooks

Rosemary Campbell

Terrence Kiss

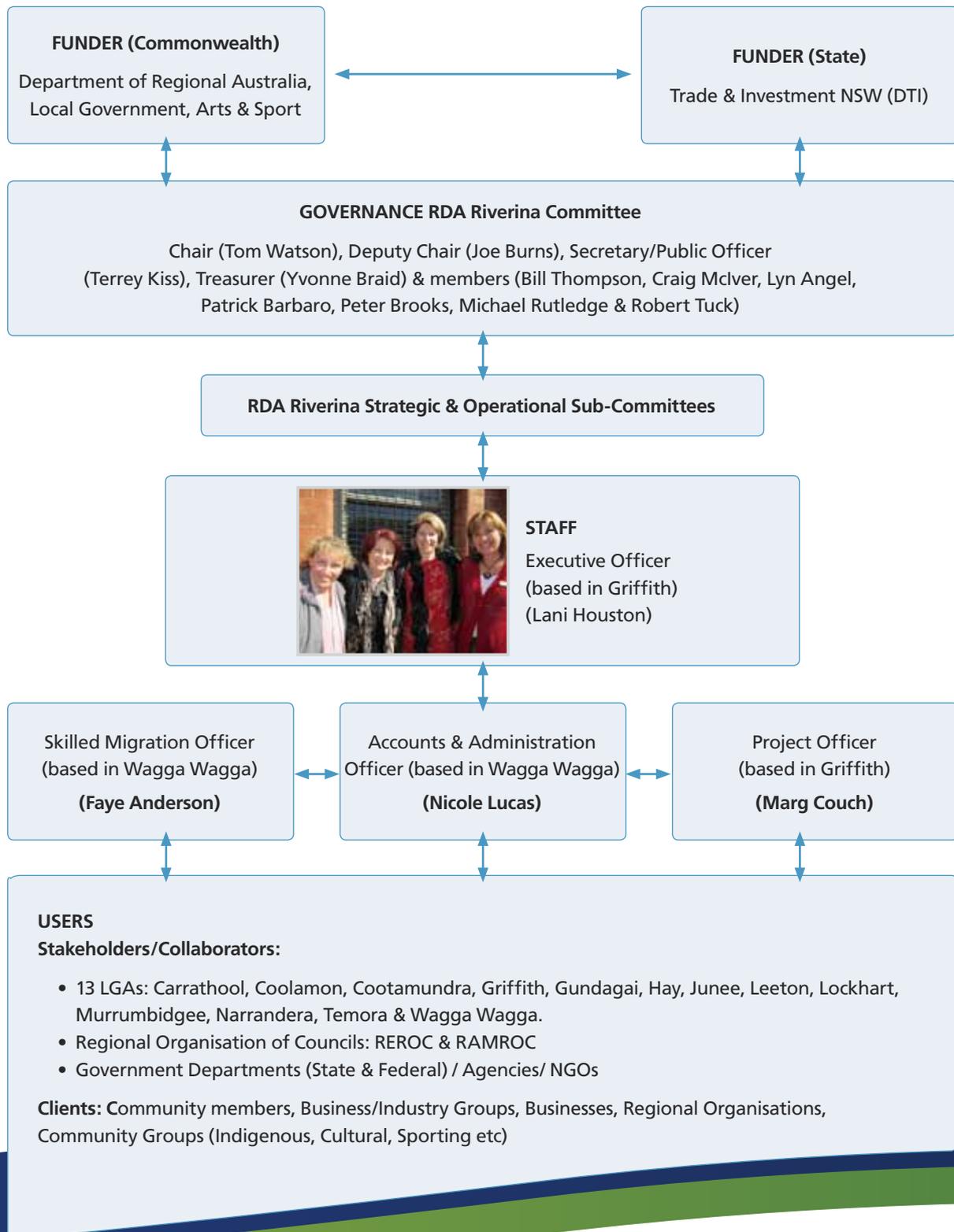
Craig McIver

Michael Rutledge

William Thompson

Organisational Structure of RDA Riverina in 2011

Who provides the funding, governance and implements the strategies:



About this Report

This overview includes reports, stories and photos demonstrating the achievements of RDA Riverina and its partners in 2011. It also includes the strategies that RDA Riverina implements its goals.

The RDA Riverina Goals are:-

- Goal 1** Encourage greater economic diversity & industry innovation
- Goal 2** Develop an innovative response to the water challenge and ensure a sustainable environment for future generations
- Goal 3** Ensure all people have the capacity & confidence to contribute to the regions growth
- Goal 4** To ensure a collaborative approach between all tiers of government, business and community to solving the challenges of the region
- Goal 5** To encourage a proactive approach to health and living

The strategies that RDA Riverina implements when aiming to achieve its goals will result in the following key outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Enhanced Community Engagement and Consultation
- Outcome 2: Improved Regional Planning
- Outcome 3: Enhanced Whole-of-Government Approach
- Outcome 4: Enhanced Awareness of Government Programs
- Outcome 5: Improved Community & Economic Development

The delivery of these outcomes is supported through work of strategic regional sub-committees responding to the priority areas identified in the RDA Riverina Regional Plan.

The Strategic Regional Sub Committees Include:

Infrastructure – prioritise infrastructure for the Riverina and coordinate the Riverina/Murray Infrastructure Committee.

Health – focuses on health related activities such as health reform and health restructure.

Social Inclusion – focuses on groups that are experiencing disadvantage such as youth, Aboriginal people and people from multicultural backgrounds.

Education, Skills & Jobs – focuses on education & training initiatives to skill the workforce and build capacity of people & organisations across the Riverina.

Environmental Sustainability – (Water, Energy, Low Carbon) focuses on activities that are related to the environment, clean energy, water, lowering carbon, the Murray Darling Basin Plan & natural LC resource management.

Country Change – Promotion of the Riverina region for employment, investment, & lifestyle.

Riverina First Community Fund – a philanthropic fund used to improve the social, cultural and community services and facilities in Riverina communities.

Goal 1 Encourage greater economic diversity & industry innovation

Infrastructure



RDA committees played a major role in working with local communities to identify projects that were consistent with their regional plans.

Griffith Airport Terminal Facilities Upgrade

Regional Development Australia Fund (RDAF)

The Australian Government has allocated almost \$1 billion to the Regional Development Australia Fund.

The RDAF is administered by the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport.

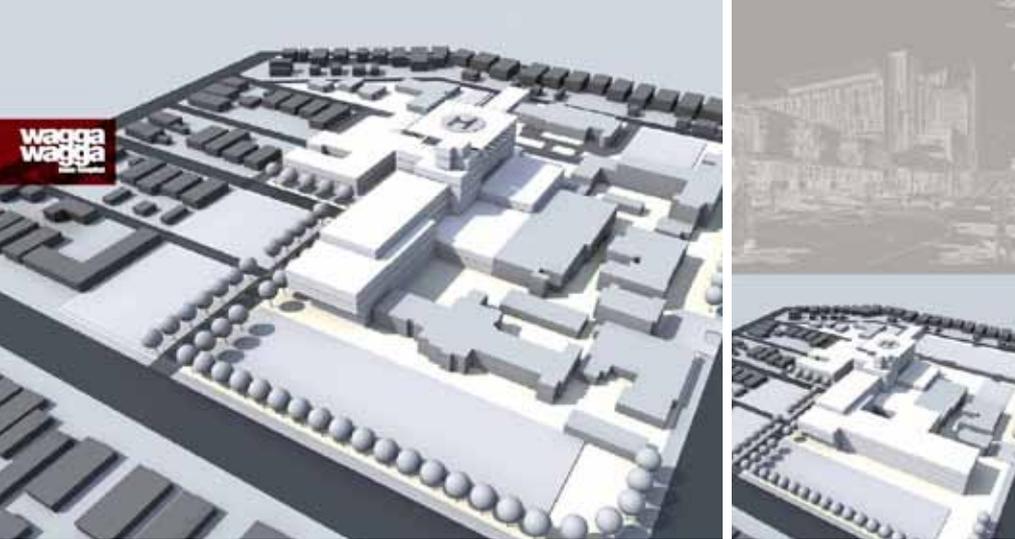
In 2011 a very strong response to RDAF Round One, was received with 553 applications submitted by local government and not-for-profit organisations. Up to \$150 million was approved for investment-ready projects that supported the growth of local communities across the country. This was extended from \$100 million due to the strong response from communities.

Griffith City Council was successful in its bid for \$1.9 million towards their proposed \$2.4 million Griffith Airport Terminal Facilities Upgrade. With projections that passenger numbers will reach 120,000 per annum by 2025 and the increasing pressure on the 40 year old terminal and the main apron, the upgrade will see the terminal space doubled to cope with the influx over the next 30 years servicing not only Griffith but Carrathool, Murrumbidgee, Leeton and Narrandera Local Government Areas. The expansion of the Griffith Airport Terminal includes green initiatives that will help reduce the environmental footprint of the terminal.



Goal 5 To encourage a proactive approach to health and living

Infrastructure



Wagga Wagga Redevelopment Project

Commonwealth Health and Hospitals Fund

The Health and Hospitals Fund (HHF) is used to support strategic capital investments in health infrastructure to equip Australia's health and hospital system for the future, such as the renewal and refurbishment of hospitals, hospital facilities, medical technology equipment, and medical research facilities and projects. \$475 million has been allocated for another Health and Hospitals Fund round targeting regional infrastructure development.

RDA Riverina supported Wagga Wagga Base Hospital's application to redevelop a range of facilities including an upgraded emergency

department which will provide the Wagga Wagga regional community with expanded and quality health services.

Stages 1 & 2 have a capital budget of \$270.1 million with funding of \$215 million from the State Government and \$55.1 million from the Commonwealth's Health and Hospital Fund.

A further \$12 million has been allocated from the Commonwealth Government's Sub-acute Program for a 20 bed sub-acute Mental Health unit increasing the overall capital budget to \$282.1 million.

Other Projects supported by RDA Riverina that were successful:

- **Murrumbidgee Medicare Local** announced as one of 19 of the first Medicare Locals as part of the primary health care reform. Existing entities 'The Riverina Division of General Practice and Primary Health and the 'Murrumbidgee General Practice Network will disband to form the new Murrumbidgee Medicare Local.

- **Bidgee Riverside Cultural Trail**



*Cobbs Wheels, Bushy Bend, Hay NSW
Photo courtesy of The Long Paddock*

Hay Shire Council received \$82,500 through Tourism Quality (TQUAL) program.

Construction of artwork, sculptures and interpretive panels at the Bidgee Riverside Cultural Trail, Hay. The project supports regional themes associated with The Long Paddock Touring Route and Riverina Regional Tourism's Murrumbidgee Access Trail.

- **The future of e-health infrastructure provision for the Riverina region: An investigation of mental health services**, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga received \$26,000 through the Regional & Rural Research & Development Grants (RRRDG) Program.
- **Cultural Project (A cultural Trail)**, Western Riverina Arts.
- **'Turning Your Place Green'** project, TAFE NSW Riverina Institute received funds through the NSW Environmental Trust.
- Restoration of the 110km speed limit on the majority of the Newell Highway from 31st July 2011.
- Riverina Highland Rail Trail to become its own incorporated entity in June 2011.

Goal 1 Encourage greater economic diversity & industry innovation

Business Development

Skilled Migration Program

RDA Riverina has continued to support business/industry through the provision of skilled labour via the Department of Immigration & Citizenship's, Skilled Migration Program. RDA Riverina has a Skilled Migration Officer based in the RDA Riverina office in Wagga Wagga. The program supports business and industry by providing sponsorship to highly skilled migrants who are keen to live and work in the Riverina region. Under the individual Skilled - Regional (Provisional) Sponsored Visa Scheme (SRS) and the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) regional employers can sponsor skilled migrants for skilled positions which cannot be filled using the local labour market.

RDA Riverina is authorized as a gazetted Regional Certifying Body (RCB) and Skilled Migration Officer Faye Anderson processed 153 applications in 2011 for regional sponsorship.

Approximately 36 singles and 20 families were granted visas by the Department of Immigration and have advised RDA Riverina office of their arrival. Faye continually liaises with employers, industry bodies, migration agents and government bodies to assist with bringing highly skilled workers to the region to address skill shortages.



*That Italian Place
Restaurant proprietors
Belinda Lane & Nino
Ieracitano pictured with
Chand Khan (centre)*

The occupations that RDA Riverina has brought to the region include:

- Civil Engineer
- Baker
- Metal Machinist
- Bricklayer
- Mechanical Engineer
- Fitter (General)
- Construction Project Manager
- Production Manager (Manufacturer)
- Electrician
- Tool Maker
- Pastry Cook
- General Manager
- Secondary School Teacher
- Fitter (General)
- Civil Engineer
- Electrician (General)
- Registered Nurse
- Registered Nurse-perioperative
- Agricultural Technician
- Occupational Health & Safety Adviser
- Chef
- Fitter (General)
- Cook
- General Practitioner
- Mixed Crop & Livestock Farmer
- Mixed Crop Farmer
- Motor Vehicle Mechanic
- Nursery Person
- Technical Service Manager

Goal 1 Encourage greater economic diversity & industry innovation

Value adding to Agriculture



Good Food & Wine Show

Local producers were worked off their feet as they showcased the abundance the Riverina Foodbowl has on offer at the Good Food and Wine Show in July 2011. RDA Riverina funded a stand at the show to enable local producers (who have value added to their product) to market and sell their products directly to consumers. Constant tasting to over 38,000 eager Sydney wine & foodlovers over 3 days proved very successful for Riverina businesses Bonah Organic Meats, Dissegna Olive Oil and Green Grove Organic Licorice Factory. Participation at the stand enabled the businesses to really analyse the requirements of their market, the importance of packaging and the value of actively promoting your product.

Nathan Billing (Bonah Organic Meat) said “people were queueing for my organic Bonah Burgers and not only did it provide exposure for my business, I acquired additional city customers and a potential exporting opportunity in Hong Kong”.

Olive grower & director of Dissegna Olive Oil Diane Dissegna reported the show proved a great opportunity to build their business as they acquired new sales outlets in Sydney. Good Food and Wine



Show also gave Neil Druce of Green Grove Organics and June Licorice Factory promotional benefits for new product lines. He said, “the opportunity to meet his existing customers and gain feedback on their latest release - Organic Whisky is extremely valuable”.

RDA Riverina Project Officer Marg Couch coordinated the stand and said “overall Good Food and Wine Show is an excellent opportunity for Sydneysiders to build a sense of where their food comes from and in the process it raises the Riverina profile”. Visitors to the stand were surprised at the variety of primary and secondary industry and the diversity of produce our region has to offer.

Promotion



Georgia MacDougall
(Tumbarumba
Shire Economic
Development
Officer & Nicola
James (Griffith
Shire Economic
Development
Officer) promote
a country lifestyle
change at Country
and Regional Living
Expo @ Rosehill
Racecourse



COUNTRY CHANGE: www.countrychange.com.au

NSW's Friendliest Towns, Two Evocities and the Riverina Lifestyle – Live the Difference!

Country Change, is a collaborative project involving 10 Local Government Areas (LGAs) that are working together to promote the wonderful benefits of living and working in the Riverina region of NSW to residents of Sydney and Melbourne. The project has a similar aim to Evocities, encouraging people in Sydney to relocate to a region for employment, business and lifestyle. Country Change works collaboratively with Evocities.

The Country Change project is auspiced by RDA Riverina and was initiated to address the labour shortage in the region. However research has indicated that it can take a number of years (3-5yrs) before people make a firm decision to move, so the initial task is for them to visit.

Country Change has used Expos and a redeveloped website to promote relocating. Country Change attended three expos in 2011 - National Career and Employment Expo (Exhibition Centre Darling Harbour), Retirement and Lifestyle Expo and Country and Regional Living Expo (both held at Rosehill Racecourse Sydney).

The stands promoted current job opportunities, business opportunities, available real estate, community facilities, tourism information, \$7000 relocation grant and the newly developed Country Change website. Feedback from potential "changers" again highlighted the importance of access to employment, education and health as critical factors in the decision to move.

The newly developed Country Change website (launched in July 2011) contains all the information individuals need to know (work, education, health, housing and regional events) to relocate and it also has the capacity to collate feedback which is critical to the project. The website recorded 1,111 visitors in first quarter (July-September) and a significant jump in the second quarter to 6,470 (October –December) in 2011 which is fantastic.

For further information: www.countrychange.com.au



Tony Harper South African Immigrant:

We made the decision to move as we wished to provide our children with a better opportunity in life and to enjoy a freedom we both enjoyed as children growing up in South Africa.

The acceptance into Griffith community has been magnificent, with the friendly nature of everyone making the move very easy for us as a family.

Goal 1 Encourage greater economic diversity & industry innovation

Promotion



The 100 mile Riverina Team

L - R: Nino Zoccali (Pendolino Restaurant), TAFE NSW Riverina Institute Team Fiona Bance (Wagga), David O'Dea (Albury), Alexander Burns (Wagga), Warren Thompson (Wagga), Luke Piccolo (Wagga).
Front Deborah McLinden (Albury), Ben Warren (Albury), Shyanne Galvin (Wagga), Johnny El-Achkar (Albury), Brylee Green (Albury).

The inaugural 100 Mile Challenge - Local Food, Local Wine, Local People brings five NSW regions to Sydney.

100 Mile Food Challenge

The Great 100 Mile Challenge involved 5 regions competing to be judged as the 2011 100 Mile Winners at the 100 mile challenge lunch staged at Carriageworks Eveleigh. This event was the final event of Crave Sydney International Food Festival 2011.

RDA Riverina partnered with TAFE NSW Riverina Institute to coordinate a team of 20 local chefs, apprentices and supporters who competed with 4 other NSW regions.

Each team was responsible for providing three 'plattered' courses, utilizing regional produce with matched beverages, to 100 guests. The teams were judged on extensive and sensitive use of local ingredients, development of well matched/ balanced wine and beverage choices. How the team worked together and advocated on behalf of their region was also judged.

The Riverina Team was paired with Nino Zoccali (Pendolino Restaurant) Strand Arcade Sydney and Bryan Curry, Winemaker Westend Estate Wines Griffith, to work with the chefs and apprentices from TAFE NSW Riverina Institute throughout the challenge.



Prior to the event a series of regional dinners were presented by the hospitality departments of TAFE NSW Riverina Wagga Wagga & Albury Campus - to appreciate good food lovers who provided valuable feedback on the most popular dishes on the 100 mile menus.

RESULTS for REGION

- The event consolidated a strong & energized relationship with TAFE NSW Riverina.
- Nino Zoccali facilitated an intensive 2 hour educational at Pendolino Restaurant Sydney for students & teachers on all aspects of best practice in owning and managing a successful restaurant and business.
- WINNER 100 mile challenge awards: Best Apprentice and Best Matched Meal – wine and food.
- Secured work experience opportunities with 3 high profile metropolitan chefs.
- Showcased the Riverina as the Foodbowl of Australia creatively highlighting diversity, innovation and excellence of our wine and food produce and industry.
- Lyndey Milan, one of Australia's most recognised food, wine and lifestyle personalities has filmed a segment of her new food show "Just Add Spice" in Rankins Springs at local caper grower, Russell Mitchell's farm. This food show is to be screened on SBS in the second half of 2012.
- The luncheon provided a valuable opportunity for local producers to promote their products and themselves to some of Australia's best food media.
- Catalysed the compilation of the Riverina Food Directory. This directory is continually updated and includes producers, food retailers and food service providers across the Riverina.
- Extensive media coverage on ABC local, Weekly Times, Area News, Living Magazine, SMH Good Food Wine Section.

For further information: www.100milefoodchallenge.com.au



100 Sydneysiders experience a Taste of the Riverina at 100 Mile Challenge Lunch at Carriageworks, Everleigh.

Goal 2

Develop a sustainable environment for future generations involving an innovative response to the water challenge

Environmental Sustainability

Water

The release of the Guide for the proposed Murray Darling Basin Plan (MDBP) in October 2010 had significant implications for the region. RDA Riverina endeavoured to encourage a collaborative and unified approach to developing a response to the MDBP. Initially this involved providing feedback to the Government and the Murray Darling Basin Authority to convey the communities concerns regarding the lack of engagement with regional communities in the formation of the Guide and the flawed approach resulting in an unbalanced Plan. RDA Riverina provided submissions to the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA), House of Representatives Committee on Regional Australia and Senate Standing Committee on Rural Affairs and Transport on the negative implications for the region if the MDBP was implemented as per the Guide.

RDA Riverina has also been an active member of the Murrumbidgee Valley Stakeholder Group (MVSG). This group was formed at the end of 2010 as a result of concerns about the impact the MDBP would have on western Riverina communities and industries (particularly in Griffith, Leeton, Murrumbidgee, Carrathool and Narrandera Local Government Areas). The MVSG represents a diverse section of the Murrumbidgee Valley community including business, industry, local government and community groups. All groups and entities represented have varying opinions on the intricacies of the Murray Darling Basin Plan but are united with a number of key issues.

Visit http://mvsg.net/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1 for details.

2011 (with Craig Knowles as the new CEO for the MDBA) has certainly seen an improvement in the engagement process with communities and an acknowledgement that infrastructure is preferable to buyback for communities, however there are still significant concerns with the draft Murray Darling Basin Plan released on 4 November 2011. There is a

20 week consultation process where submissions can be made to the Murray Darling Basin Authority and this closes on 16 April 2012. RDA Riverina Chair Tom Watson chaired the MDBA forum held in Griffith on 15 December 2011 as part of the consultation process. A crowd of up to 8000 people packed Griffith's Yoogali Club, calling for balance and the removal of non-strategic water buy backs. Tom Watson referred to the process as "the people's parliament". The crowd's plea was heard by Federal Water Minister Tony Burke and Murray Darling Basin Authority chairman Craig Knowles, Leader of the Opposition Tony Abbott, and Nationals Member for Riverina Michael Mc Cormack.

During 2011 RDA Riverina has been investigating alternate industry opportunities and identifying projects for potential funding that may create competitive advantages, generate employment and support value adding opportunities for the region to assist with the challenge of a future with less water. This is something businesses and communities in the region have previously identified having just survived 10 years of drought. The potential implications of the draft Murray Darling Basin Plan have also reinforced this. RDA Riverina in partnership with RDA Murray (with funding from Trade & Investment NSW) engaged consultants Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM) to investigate this further through a project "Scenario Planning for an Innovative Response to the Water Challenge in the Murray Riverina region". The report will be released in 2012 and identifies a number of industry sectors that offer potential for expansion. In November 2011 consultants Marsden Jacob Associates were appointed by the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport to assist RDAs in the Murray Darling Basin identify specific projects that could create long term solutions that will diversify our skills and economy.

Renewable Energy & Low Carbon

RDA Riverina has been encouraging and promoting a number of projects with a renewable energy focus including biomass, solar and biofuels for energy generation. For example Murrumbidgee Irrigation Ltd and Tarac Technologies Pty Ltd who have been working collaboratively on a biomass energy generation facility in the Griffith area. A feasibility study is due to be completed in May 2012.

RDA Riverina also facilitated a round table discussion hosted by Charles Sturt University with Minister Simon Crean on the "Role of Universities and Education in a Lower Carbon Future". This discussion brought a number of stakeholders together from education, business and local government to discuss the implications of a low carbon future and the implications for the Riverina region.



*Image courtesy
of ABC Rural*

Goal 3

To ensure a collaborative approach between all tiers of government and community to solving the challenges of the region

All Government Approach

During 2011 RDA Riverina facilitated:

- NSW RDA Forum in Wagga Wagga
- Consultation on the RDA Riverina Regional Plan
- Four Development Officer Forums
- Six Rural Service Provider Network Meetings

These forums provided opportunities for local and state government, non government agencies, business and community organisations to recognise the strengths, act on emerging opportunities and build capacity to face the challenges of living in regional and rural centres.



Regional planning consultation attended by General Managers & Mayors from 13 LGAs at Murrumbidgee Rural Studies Centre, Yanco.



RDA Riverina & RDA Murray presented on overview of current activities to RAMROC at Jerilderie Shire Chambers. RAMROC represents the interests of eighteen Member Councils in Murray and Western Riverina region of NSW.

L – R Ray Stubbs (EO RAMROC), Barbara Hull (EO RDA Murray) Peter Murray (Acting Chair RDA Murray) Terry Hogan (Chair RAMROC) Tom Watson (Chair RDA Riverina), Lani Houston (EO RDA Riverina)



Neil Druce –The Licorice Story



Riverina Development Officers(DO) at Leeton DO Meeting tour Turn Your Place Green Van - a project designed and coordinated by TAFE NSW Riverina Institute Outreach Coordinators, Ian Bruce (Albury), Monica Clapp(Wagga), Sue Delves (Griffith).

2011 Development Officer Forums

March

Community Hall, Lockhart

June

Yarran Wines, Yenda

August

Licorice Factory, Junee

December

Roxy Theatre, Leeton

Topics Covered in 2011 Included:

- **Port of Melbourne** – (Port of Melbourne)
- **Skilled Migration from a migrant perspective**
- **Home Power Savings Program** – (Fieldforce)
- **Hospitality Course** – Barista & Customer Service – (TAFE NSW Riverina Institute Hospitality & Tourism)
- **Economic Development Tools & Business Retention Expansion Survey SDRT** –(Community Economic Development Manager I & I NSW)
- **Overview of regional Skilled Migration Programs**- Dept of Immigration & Citizenship
- **Spirit of the Land Festival** –How to create a community event and the benefits- Sue Schneider
- **National Broadband Network** – (Industry Capability Network)
- **Regional Development Australia Fund (RDAF)** – (Executive Officer RDA Riverina)
- **Working with Work Cover, New legislation and workshops for business**– (Work Cover Authority)
- **Labour Market Conditions in the Region** - Feedback from employer survey. Dept of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations (DEEWR)
- **Riverina First Community Fund and Grant Applications:** (Project Officer-RDA Riverina)
- **Creation of Cultural Tourism Trail:** (Western Riverina Arts Board Arts Development Officer)
- **Country Change Program & new website**– (RDA Riverina Project Officer,)
- **Food Bank in Carrathool Shire** –a creative way to build community and make good use of food – (Community Development Officer, Carrathool Shire Council)
- **Economic Forecasting (ID.)**- (Wagga Wagga City Council)
- **Job Services Australia (JSA) Youth Programs Indigenous Education:** (DEEWR)
- **Milling Around-The Licorice Story** - (Green Grove Organics)
- **Riverina Business Enterprise Centre**, Update on services—(BEC Business Advisor)
- **artEffects**- (Eastern Riverina Arts Arts Development Officer)
- **Clean Energy Future Programs**-(Dept Climate Change and Energy Efficiency)
- **Riverina Institute Turn Your Place Green Van** – (TAFE NSW Riverina Institute)
- **Parental & Community Engagement Program' (PACE)** - (Leeton Shire PACE Coordinator)
- **New Education, Skills & Jobs Coordinator** - (DEEWR)
- **Regional Industry Link** - (Industry Capability Network)
- **Digital Switchover** -Assisting with the transition from Analog to digital TV-Digital Switchover Officer, Dept. Broadband, Communications & the Digital Economy
- **Draft Murray Basin Plan Submission Process** – Murray Darling Basin Authority Engagement Team
- **100 Mile Challenge** - (Project Officer-RDA Riverina)

Goal 3

To ensure a collaborative approach between all tiers of government and community to solving the challenges of the region

RCRN & CMG Networks

RDA Riverina Project Officer coordinates two key rural service provider networks across in eastern and western Riverina. These service provider networks are called:

- RCRN - Riverina Communities Rural Network
- CMG - Rural service providers network for Carrathool, Murrumbidgee & Griffith Shires.

Formed as a result of the drought support workers concerns for the health and welfare of people in these rural communities, these networks continue to update information on new services, emerging trends, community challenges and seek as a collective, to find effective solutions

for positive outcomes. Service Providers met in Aria Park, Cootamundra, Coolamon, Hanwood and Darlington Point.

AIM OF RCRN

To actively support, connect & advocate for rural communities.

OBJECTIVE

To be proactive in providing options for Riverina communities to communicate and access assets available that will benefit individuals and the community.

Rural community service providers consist of:

- Intereach – Communicare 5000, HAP, CRCC (Commonwealth Respite Community Care)
- Economic & Community Development Officer (Local Government)
- Regional Development Australia Riverina
- Dept Primary Industry – Rural Support Workers
- Presentation Sisters - Rural Outreach Service – Outreach Workers
- TAFE NSW Riverina Institute
- NSW Farmers Association
- NSW Rural Financial Counselling Service- Southern region
- Relationships Australia
- Campbell Page
- Salvation Army
- Dept Premier & Cabinet
- Dept Education Employment & Workplace Relations
- Dept of Family & Community Services
- Dept of Human Services Housing
- Regional Arts Development Officers
- Centrelink
- Amaranth
- NSW Police
- Mission Australia
- Murrumbidgee Medicare Local
- Murrumbidgee Local Health
- Compact
- Centacare
- NERRCS - North East Riverina Rural Counselling Service
- CMA – Catchment Management Authority
- Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services
- Richmond Fellowship
- Local Progress Associations
- CWA – Country Women’s Association

Goal 4 Ensure all people have the capacity & confidence to contribute to the regions growth

Riverina First Community Fund

A total of 16 projects amounting to approximately \$30,000 were successful through the Riverina First Community Fund Round 9, auspiced by RDA Riverina.

The fund is a philanthropic fund used to improve social, cultural and community services and facilities in Riverina communities. The successful projects included the installation of new equipment, refurbishment of community facilities to digital media toolkits and literacy resources for low literacy teenagers.



RDA Riverina Project Officer Marg Couch (centre) with Gayle & Ken Murphy (Narrandera). Visitations to Tiger Moth and Visitors Centre have increased by 300%.

The successful project recipients were:

- Narrandera Shire Library – Teenagers Books for low literacy
- Corowa Pastoral, Agricultural - Ride On Mower
- Jerilderie Steam Rail & Heritage Club – Heritage Windmill
- Spirit of the Land Lockhart Inc – Signage
- Wagga Wagga Womens Health Centre – Storage cabinets
- Rand Sports Ground - Infants playground
- Ganmain Out Of School Hours Centre - Airconditioning
- Barellan & District Progress Association – Airconditioning for Treasure Chest community shop
- Bowna & Mullengandra Public Hall – Misting Fans
- Western Riverina Arts Inc – Cultural Trail
- Tarcutta Soldiers Memorial Hall – Cooking benchtop
- NO. 8 EFTS Memorial - Signage
- Anglican Parish Holbrook - Playgroup playground
- Eastern Riverina Arts Program - Digital Media Toolkit - Artist Forum
- Griffith Neighbourhood House – Outdoor seating
- Binya Public Hall Trust - Rain Water Tank

Building Capacity



Grantwriting workshops

Partnerships were formed with RDA Riverina and the local councils of Cootamundra, Leeton, Wagga Wagga, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera, Temora and Junee to deliver 13 (Level 1- Beginner and Level 2-Advanced) grant writing workshops throughout 2011.

The workshops were designed for those seeking direction in grantwriting for the first time in addition to those who want to further their skill and expertise to a higher level.

Well renowned presenters Julie & Heather Woodrow of 100 Monkeys inspired participants from community organisations, business and local government to bring innovative change to the challenges experienced within business, government and the human sector.

All participants completed the workshops reporting a better understanding of the grant process, new ideas for grants, how to access relevant websites and strategies in optimising grantwriting techniques.

Evaluation forms indicated 90% participants rated the workshops as 'Excellent' or 'Very Good' and requested followup workshops focusing on Tender Writing for the public, business and community sectors.

The Riverina First committee also reported that the quality of applications for Round 10 of Riverina First Community Funding, which closed on November 30, 2011, had improved considerably.



Building Strong Communities

RDA Riverina believes that building community capacity through education is vital for all people in the region. Improving individual's skills and confidence provides for enhanced community well being and increases the value of contribution to the region's growth.

Jim Diers a Seattle based community developer and world renown speaker on Asset Based Community Development conducted seminars in Coolamon and Yanco in 2011. Over seventy participants from local government, non government organisations, charities and community based organisations attended 3 workshops covering topics such as: building stronger connections to enhance safety, the built and natural environment and care for one another.

In addition Jim focused on strategies that support and develop young people to tap their unique strengths. Building stronger links with government was also covered so that participants could work in ways that are more holistic, strength based and community driven.

Useful links for project funding:

- GrantsLINK – government grant database : www.grantslink.gov.au
- Community Builders – general grant database: www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au

Business

- Department of Industry & Investment: www.business.nsw.gov.au/community
- Regional Entry Point – government program and service list: www.regionalaustralia.gov.au
- Our Community – (fee associated if subscribing): www.ourcommunity.com.au
- Philanthropy Australia – funding program list (fee associated): www.philanthropy.org.au
- Visit www.business.gov.au/grantfinder to search over 600 grants that could help to fund and support your business.

Indigenous

- Indigenous Business Australia <http://www.iba.gov.au/>

Environmental

- Murrumbidgee CMA <http://www.murrumbidgee.com.nsw.gov.au/services.aspx>
- For information on the Carbon Farming Initiative visit: <http://www.climatechange.gov.au/cfi>
- To find more information on Clean Energy Future visit: <http://www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au/>

Arts

- Regional ARTs NSW <http://www.regionalartsnsw.com.au/grants/grants.html>
- Australia Council for Arts <http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/grants>

Education

- DEEWR <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Pages/Default.aspx>

Social Inclusion

- Social Inclusion website <http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au>
- Closing the Gap <http://www.closethegap.com.au>



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