



# Regional Development *Australia*

R I V E R I N A   N S W

## Regional Plan 2010-2015



Updated August 2011



An Australian Government Initiative



A NSW Government Initiative

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## Executive Summary

The Riverina region has a wealth of people with a proactive and entrepreneurial approach to business and life. This positive attitude and resilient nature will ensure the region adapts and innovates to maximise the many opportunities and overcome the challenges. Opportunities exist in the aviation, manufacturing, education, aged care, transport/logistics and agricultural sectors. Challenges are presented in health care provision, deteriorating infrastructure, skills shortages, access to telecommunications and adapting to a variable water supply.

The Regional Development Australia (RDA)-Riverina region stretches 500 kms east to west across NSW and covers an area of almost 59,665sq kms and services a population of approximately 145,267 people (ABS Estimated Resident Population 2008). The RDA-Riverina is composed of 13 Local Government areas: Carrathool, Coolamon, Cootamundra, Griffith, Gundagai, Hay, Junee, Leeton, Lockhart, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera, Temora and Wagga Wagga.

Population growth rates vary greatly across the region but a number of Local Government Areas experienced higher than average growth compared to NSW (1.7%) and they were Junee (2.4%), Cootamundra (1.9%) and Temora (1.8%). The largest centres of Wagga Wagga and Griffith also experienced a positive growth rate of 1.6% and 1.2% respectively. The major centres of Wagga Wagga (east of the region) and Griffith (west of the region) are the hubs for the provision of health, education and other government services for the region.

Unemployment across the Riverina region was 5.3% in June 2011 compared to 4.7% in June 2010. The workforce participation rate 64.5% (DEEWR, Small Area Labour Markets Australia, March Quarter 2010). The capacity to attract and retain skilled labour in the region will continue to be a challenge especially considering the aging population and migration of younger people aged 20-35yrs.

The region has a strong education base with Charles Sturt University, TAFE NSW Riverina Institute, RAAF and Kapooka Army Base. All will be vital to strengthening the skills and confidence of all people including indigenous and new immigrants in the region.

Agriculture continues to be the largest employer in the region followed by retail, manufacturing and then health and community services. However the agriculture industry experienced the largest drop in the number of people employed. This highlights the difficulties from the extended drought, reduced water allocations and poor commodity prices. The Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area (MIA) located to the west of the region is one of Australia's recognised food bowls providing over one-quarter of all the fruit and vegetable production in NSW. The region not only grows but also processes significant agricultural product from meat, rice/cereal, vegetables and fruit to wine. The MIA is one of Australia's largest exporters of bulk wines.

The region therefore, continues to depend on agriculture for its economic prosperity, but will need to look to diversify industries to be sustainable into the future with an ever changing climate and the varying availability of water. Communities are still recovering from the impact of the drought but recent rain has improved people's outlook for the future. Communities in the Riverina region are anxious for the release of the Murray Darling Basin Plan so they can develop strategies to meet the challenges ahead.

# 1. Introduction

## ***What is Regional Development Australia?***

Regional Development Australia (RDA) is a partnership between the Australian, state, territory and local governments to strengthen regional communities. It will have a pivotal role in ensuring the long-term sustainability of Australia's regions.

The national network of 55 committees was established in August 2009. RDA committees are non profit community-based organisations that are made up of volunteers. Committees comprise committed members of the region and represent the community, business and local government. Each RDA committee has a broad and diverse skills base and demonstrated networks and alliances.

The committees work with their communities to identify and address the economic, social and environmental issues affecting them. The first job for RDA Committees is to produce a regional plan which will guide the committees in growing and strengthening their communities.

The Australian Government funds these committees in conjunction with the State or Territory and local governments in some jurisdictions.

Visit the national website [www.rda.gov.au](http://www.rda.gov.au) for more information on the whole network.

## ***Charter***

Regional Development Australia will work with all sectors of the community, including women, young people, Indigenous Australians and people from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

A key focus of Regional Development Australia will be on the economic, social and environmental issues affecting communities. Regional Development Australia will be an important contributor to and driver of:

- Regional business growth plans and strategies, which will help support economic development, the creation of new jobs, skills development and business investment;
- Environmental solutions, which will support ongoing sustainability and the management of climate change (including the impact of drought, flood or bushfires); and
- Social inclusion strategies, which will bring together and support all members of the community.

Regional Development Australia, in consultation with the community, business, non profit organisations and all levels of government, will articulate local priorities, identify and align resources, engage stakeholders and promote solutions. In doing this, Regional Development

Australia will support the growth and development of regional communities across the country.

Regional Development Australia will support, promote and disseminate information on government policy initiatives for the benefit of local communities. To this end, Regional Development Australia committees and Chairs will have a strong understanding of federal, state and local government policies and initiatives, and the ways in which local communities can engage with them. Regional Development Australia will take a leadership role in bringing together organisations to take advantage of government programs, policies and initiatives.

Regional Development Australia will be an effective conduit between governments and regional communities. It will enable all communities to provide input to governments about the strengths and weaknesses of regional Australia.

### ***Roles and responsibilities of RDA***

A key role for Regional Development Australia (RDA) committees is to deliver information about programs, services, grants and initiatives for regional development offered across all levels of government to local stakeholders. RDA committees are encouraged to be first point of contact for government agencies wanting to consult with a region. The 5 key roles of RDA are:-

1. Consultation and engagement with the community.
2. Informed regional planning
3. Whole-of-Government activities
4. Promotion of government programs
5. Community and Economic development

More information on the roles and responsibilities of RDA is available at [www.rda.gov.au](http://www.rda.gov.au)

### ***Purpose of Regional Plan***

The RDA committees are also responsible for the development of a Regional Plan (RP), which describes the selected region, its attributes, industry and employment base and key advantages. The Regional Plan sets out the economic, environmental and social vision for the region, articulates the drivers of change, identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, and list priorities for action. The Regional Profile of the region is envisaged to assist Local Government, community groups, business/industry, regional bodies and agencies with valuable data that can be used to substantiate proposals for funding applications or the delivery of services.

The Regional Plan lists the priorities of the Australian and State Governments and the programs they have in place to support these. This information will again be important for many across the region in deciding what projects are most likely to be progressed or supported from the Governments perspective.

## ***Regional Plan overview***

Feedback from across the Riverina indicated that the RDA-Riverina Regional Plan needed to build on information that had already been gathered as opposed to duplicating information. With this in mind RDA-Riverina used a number of strategies to collect and collate information for the Riverina Regional Plan or Road Map.

RDA-Riverina conducted a number of individual consultations across the region as well as hosting 2 workshops. In conjunction with this, feedback was also obtained by attending industry and organisation specific forums so organisations need not attend another planning meeting or forum.

Existing plans from Local Government, Government Departments and other regional organisations were also collated.

RDA-Riverina engaged two consultants to assist with the planning process, Strategic Economic Solutions and Diana Gibbs & Partners. RDA-Riverina also used the services of Parsons Brinckerhoff funded through the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development & Local Government to assist with statistical data for the regional plan.

A brief survey was developed which was used as the basis for all the individual consultations and ensure consistency. The questions asked in the survey are listed below:-

1. What are the economic trends & emerging opportunities in the region?
  - a. Either strategic advantages, strengths and opportunities for the region  
OR
  - b. What are the good things about working here?
2. What are the major issues facing the Riverina and surrounds?
3. What are the major obstacles and impediments to the growth of your part of the Riverina, its business, job creation, community development and environment?
4. What kind of community and economic development projects have worked well in the recent past?
5. What projects would you like to see happen?
  - List priorities for action for regional growth & job creation.
6. Who else should we talk to?

This survey will be used in the review process as well.

## 2. Consultation

### Consultation Strategy 2011

Clusters or Groups	Stakeholders or those consulted	Method
Riverina Development Officer Networks	LGA's (Community & Economic Development Officers Trade & Investment NSW AusIndustry Industry Capability Network Regional Arts Boards- Western Riverina Arts / Eastern Riverina Arts Riverina Business Enterprise Centre Riverina Regional Tourism Partnership Brokers	Forums including a planning forum. Use of plans Network meetings
Riverina Murray Infrastructure Sub-Committee	RDA-Murray / RDA-Southern Inland Dept. Premier & Cabinet Trade & Investment NSW NSW Business Chamber- Murray/Riverina REROC / RAMROC	Face to face through Sub-committee meetings
Murrumbidgee Valley Stakeholder Group	Murrumbidgee Irrigation Coleambally Irrigation Ricegrowers Ltd Riverina Citrus Griffith, Leeton, Carrathool Councils Griffith & Leeton Chamber of Commerce	Regular meetings from October 2010 and still occurring.
Education/ Training including Vocational Education in Schools Advisory Board	Charles Sturt University NSW TAFE Riverina Institute Riverina Community College School Principals NSW Department of Education – State Training Services DEEWR Partnership Brokers	Individual face to face meetings and industry meetings
Sustainable Environment	Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority Murrumbidgee Irrigation NSW Dept. Primary Industries NSW Environment & Heritage Dept/ Climate Change Dept. Sustainability NSW State Water	Individual face to face meetings  22 February 2011 Meeting with all RDA's in Murray Darling Basin
Social Inclusion Stakeholders	Indigenous Coordination Centre Dept. of Immigration & Citizenship St Vincent de Paul Anglicare Youth of the Streets Sandhills Aboriginal Corporation Multicultural Council Wagga Wagga NSW Department of Housing NSW Department of Transport Office of Aboriginal Affairs Kurrajong Waratah	Individual Face to face meetings with individuals stakeholders

	Ningana Enterprises	
NSW Regional Managers Network	Representatives from all State Agencies operating in Western NSW	Face to face Meetings & videoconference
Health Sub-Committee	Murrumbidgee Local Health Network Murrumbidgee Medicare Local (Riverina Division of General Practice & Murrumbidgee Division of General Practice) Charles Sturt University	Face to face meetings
Riverina Communities Rural Network (RCRN)	Murrumbidgee Local Health Network Riverina Division of General Practice Barellan, Aria Park, Cootamundra Community members NERRCS Intereach Dept. Family & Community Services Campbell Page Youth Connections Presentation Sisters Rural Outreach CWA TAFE Riverina Institute-Outreach Rural Chaplain Cootamundra Dept. Primary Industries Mate Helping Mate	Meetings on 27 May 2011 & 29 July 2011
Carrathool Murrumbidgee & Griffith (CMG) service Providers Meeting (CMG Network)	Griffith Neighbourhood House Rural Financial Counsellors Intereach Uniting Church Salvation Army Mission Australia Relationships Australia Centrelink	
Business /Industry	Trade & Investment Sutherlands Transport/Patricks/Col Reece Port of Melbourne Sydney Ports Cotton Australia AusIndustry Riverina Business Enterprise Centre Industry Capability Network Marinna Energy Riverina Regional Tourism Charles Sturt University TAFE NSW Riverina Institute	Network/Industry meetings/forums Individual Face to face meetings
Local Government -13 LGA's	General Managers & Mayors attended specific forum on the RDA-Regional Plan and general information sharing session. Attendance at REROC or RAMROC meetings by the Chair or Executive Officer RDA-Riverina Committee Meetings rotate around the region and Councils present at these current opportunities & challenges.	7 <sup>th</sup> September 2011

### 3. Strategic Framework

#### Strengths of the Riverina

Strength	Detail
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close to Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide &amp; Canberra</li> <li>• Access to international markets through numerous transport links such as rail (Sydney-Melbourne rail &amp; regional networks), road (Hume Highway, Sturt Highway, Newell Highway, Kidman Way, Mid Western, Burley Griffin Way) and air (major air services to Wagga Wagga &amp; Griffith plus smaller airports)</li> <li>• Location allows ease of transport to ports</li> <li>• 2 large population centres at either side of the region Griffith to west &amp; Wagga Wagga to east offering a wide variety of services.</li> <li>• Central location is appealing for business &amp; industry developments</li> </ul>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countrylink and freight rail services across the region</li> <li>• Airservices – 2 major passenger carriers in REX airlines and Qantas</li> <li>• On main routes to domestic &amp; export markets</li> </ul>
Geography & environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stable natural resource base, good climate, good soils &amp; stable environment</li> <li>• Fertile farming land, beautiful surrounds &amp; access to water</li> </ul>
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A major centre for irrigation farming in Australia</li> <li>• Substantial growing &amp; exporting of agricultural products as well as processing or part processing of products such as wine, citrus, grains, fruit, meat &amp; rice.</li> <li>• The land capability of the agricultural enterprises is difficult to replicate anywhere in Australia.</li> <li>• Efficiencies being gained in irrigation and water use.</li> <li>• Low carbon initiatives including carbon farming</li> </ul>
Education & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level of secondary &amp; tertiary education</li> <li>• Through TVET program, school students can try TAFE subjects while they are still at school - many subjects can be counted towards their HSC or UAI</li> <li>• Capacity of &amp; access to education with Charles Sturt University (CSU) &amp; TAFE NSW Riverina Institute good.</li> <li>• Allied Health courses such as Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Podiatry, Dentistry / Oral Therapists currently conducted through CSU campuses.</li> <li>• CSU have Veterinary course which focuses on large production animals (reflects needs of the region). Additional funds for Animal &amp; Plant Sciences.</li> <li>• The Business (since 2004), Nursing &amp; Early Childhood CSU degree course currently articulates with Riverina Institute TAFE NSW (Griffith)</li> <li>• International students as a growth industry</li> </ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross Agency Risk Assessment-Domestic &amp; Family Violence (CARAM-DFV) starting in Wagga Wagga in July 2010. This project is one of 5 key projects of the NSW Government's new approach to addressing domestic and family violence (9DFV), that aims to provide a more integrated and consistent service response and facilitate cross-agency</li> </ul>

	<p>communication on individual cases of DFV. This is a trial partnership between Health, Police, Attorney Generals, Community Services and appropriate local NGOs with Health leading the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An effective system for training Doctors &amp; specialists but just need more of funded places. The link with University of NSW and Notredam with the Rural Clinical School based in Wagga Wagga trains Doctors. Wagga Wagga Base is the training hospital. Currently there are 82 Junior medical officers this includes interns, Registra's and fellowships.</li> <li>• CSU, Centre for Inland Health – looks at the research &amp; other opportunities particular to the region such as asthma, Indigenous Health &amp; Mental Health.</li> </ul>
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relative cheap housing</li> <li>• Decent minimum level of community facilities</li> <li>• Strong government presence education, health, defence</li> </ul>
Lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time to enjoy simple pleasures in life</li> <li>• A good population spread across age, sex &amp; nationality makes for an interesting &amp; dynamic community.</li> <li>• Good social facilities sporting clubs, restaurants</li> </ul>
Human Capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great entrepreneurial spirit &amp; attitude</li> <li>• Stable politically &amp; socially</li> <li>• The Riverina for many people represents an opportunity for a new and better life for them and their families.</li> <li>• Diversity of people including immigrants (refugees)</li> <li>• People are tough, resilient &amp; resourceful</li> </ul>

## Challenges for the Riverina

Challenges	Detail
Population decline (particularly in smaller communities) and changing demographic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brain drain from particularly the smaller communities. Skilled people move away.</li> <li>• Aging population and therefore declining workforce</li> <li>• In small farming/agriculturally based communities families moving away, impacts on schools. A drop in numbers decreases viability of school &amp; can lead to closures. The Riverina region over the 2004-2009 period experienced a 9.1% fall in the number of primary school enrolments compared to 2.2% in NSW and 8.2% for secondary school enrolments compared to 1.2% for NSW. The Riverina experienced a notable reduction in the number of schools (3%) over the 2004-2009 period compared to the NSW (0.3%).</li> <li>• Drain of youth out of town and they aren't returning. Youth move away for education or job prospects.</li> <li>• Small communities are finding it difficult to attract people "chicken &amp; egg" scenario not enough people to ensure the critical mass necessary to fund appropriate services and not enough attractive facilities, services, lifestyle enhancers and jobs to attract newcomers to live.</li> <li>• Low rate base and population reduce capacity of local government and other government level to provide &amp; maintain services/facilities in</li> </ul>

	<p>smaller communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing component of overall population is Indigenous &amp; from Cultural &amp; Linguistically diverse backgrounds. Need to understand more about these communities needs and engage with them so they are connected.</li> </ul>
Variability in water availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inconsistent amount of water for agricultural (and supporting industries) use because of on- drought, low water allocations and now Commonwealth water reform via the Murray Darling Basin Plan and the introduction of Sustainable Diversion Limits (SDL's).</li> <li>The accumulated affect of lack of water has caused economic hardship and had a significant impact on mental health of rural people.</li> <li>Reduction in agricultural output leads to loss of jobs on farm, in supporting processing &amp; agricultural supply industries &amp; transport</li> <li>Reliance on water for existing &amp; future industry/community development</li> </ul>
Delivery of Health Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With an increasing aging population there is the challenge of providing adequate and appropriate levels of health care. The need for aged health services and infrastructure is expected to escalate as the population ages.</li> <li>Optometry a particular issues especially with aging population.</li> <li>Deteriorating &amp; aging health infrastructure eg hospitals</li> <li>Lack of GP's and allied health professionals. Attracting workforce particularly specialists (Obstetricians, Gynaecologist, Emergency &amp; Anaesthetist). Substantial funds (7.2 million) spent on premium labour (Agency nurses &amp; specialist doctors) in the Murrumbidgee Local Health Network to fill/temporarily cover vacant positions.</li> <li>Need more placement positions to accommodate newly qualified Doctors.</li> <li>More Nursing &amp; Allied health training positions in hospitals.</li> <li>More Mid Wifery training,</li> <li>Affordable &amp; accessible health care. People in many parts of the region face long waiting times and travel great distances to see specialists or be admitted to hospital.</li> <li>Re-invigoration of health infrastructure</li> <li>Capacity to identify &amp; deliver services for mental health</li> </ul>
Attracting/ retaining & Educating a Skilled Labour force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The increasing number of those leaving the workforce (aging population 65+) and the declining number of those aged between 19-35 in the population.</li> <li>Affecting business &amp; industry's capacity to grow</li> <li>Shortages in Doctors, allied health, mental health &amp; counsellors, nurses affects the deliver of health services to the region (healthcare gaps)</li> <li>Skills shortages professional &amp; technical</li> <li>If newcomers do move to communities there are often limited work opportunities for their spouse or partner.</li> <li>Shortages of Engineers, environmental sciences and urban planners impacts on capacity of LGA's to deliver services.</li> <li>There are highly qualified &amp; trained immigrants not able to gain work in their field and are working in unskilled positions.</li> <li>Aboriginal people not in workforce. Indigenous population enduring disadvantage in employment, need to explore more training &amp;</li> </ul>

	<p>employment for indigenous people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate employers about requirements of a new workforce &amp; capacities of Aboriginal, immigrant people and people with a disability</li> <li>• Cost of obtaining childcare services prohibitive &amp; impacts on capacity to work.</li> </ul>
Reliance on Agriculture & changing nature of agriculture as a business enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Declining terms of trade for agriculture &amp; support from government in regard to programs such as QLD Fruit Fly control.</li> <li>• Changing structure of farming/agricultural enterprises ie. fewer family owned enterprises and more corporate ownership.</li> <li>• Rapidly changing climate &amp; water policy environment and the capacity of farms to adjust with limited financial &amp; human capacity.</li> </ul>
Public transport to access services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public transport across the region is limited so it is a challenge for those without private transport to access health services, training &amp;/or education options. The health &amp; education services tend to be located in the larger centres of Wagga Wagga, Griffith, Leeton &amp; Cootamundra so travelling to these locations without a car or license is a real challenge for young people, older people , Aboriginal people and immigrants.</li> </ul>
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited &amp; aging health facilities eg Wagga Wagga Base Hospital</li> <li>• Telecommunications – limited mobile and broadband services particularly in smaller centres. Access to reliable &amp; fast telecommunications is critical in smaller areas, as people have limited transport to access health and education. Improved telecommunications would enable more services to be provided via videoconference, telephone or the internet. 53% of Riverina households are connected to the internet compared with 65% in NSW (2006 ABS Census)</li> <li>• Constraints in particular roads (for timber haulage), rail, ICT, gas &amp; electricity.</li> <li>• Availability of appropriate housing and/or rentals in smaller communities</li> </ul>
Business/Industry Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited stock of fully serviced industrial land available across the Riverina</li> <li>• Planning framework process for business developments. All Councils are reviewing &amp; modernising land use planning as part of the LEP but still some frustration for business/industry.</li> <li>• Lack of strategic investment for the future and a focus on short term funding.</li> <li>• Limited support for small business, with perception of decreasing support for programs and agencies that support small business.</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern with the raised leaving age of 17yrs. Capacity (resources such as funds/staffing) of schools, training providers to facilitate young people staying at school with programs of value and interest.</li> <li>• Need youth space or facility to assist youth who are disengaged</li> </ul>

## Opportunities for the Riverina

Opportunities	Detail
Value add & diversify agricultural base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research &amp; investigate new crops/farming enterprises</li> <li>• Investigate further value adding within the region to agricultural produce 'paddock to plate' concept.</li> <li>• Export leading technologies with water efficiencies &amp; farming practices</li> <li>• Carbon farming</li> </ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity for aged care service sector with significant aging population.</li> <li>• Currently good system for training Doctors/Nurses through the Rural Medical School and an opportunity exists to expand this .</li> </ul>
Environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate potential of renewable &amp; alternative energy eg solar, biomass,</li> <li>• Research water efficient technologies and implement further infrastructure adjustment to ensure the more efficient use of water in urban &amp; rural areas.</li> <li>• Recycling of waste materials urban, industrial and agricultural eg rice straw processed into particle board.</li> <li>• A hub for sustainability practices and low carbon initiatives</li> </ul>
Education & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand solid base within Education sector ensuring greater participation and skilling of people in the region.</li> <li>• Maximising skills of new immigrant population and aboriginal people.</li> <li>• Ensuring education has strong links to industry demands and gaps.</li> <li>• Strong capacity of Charles Sturt University and Riverina Institute TAFE NSW to develop a highly skilled workforce. CSU looking at Civil Engineering in partnership with TAFE &amp; University of Sydney as well as Regional Organisation of Councils (ROCs)/ LGA's to start 2013. The Deans of Engineering are supportive nationally.</li> </ul>
Promotion of the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Despite the challenges the Riverina region has substantial industry/business opportunities, jobs, affordable real estate and lifestyle so further promote this to those within the region and outside the region.</li> <li>• Capitalise on the growing visiting friends &amp; relatives market in the tourism sector.</li> <li>• Build &amp; grow tourism &amp; cultural facilities to improve lifestyle of the region eg. Arts &amp; Cultural Tourism trail</li> <li>• Potential for Rail Trails in the east of the region.</li> <li>• Promote education &amp; defence opportunities</li> <li>• Promote the Aviation Industry for business, tourism &amp; training including the opportunities offered by the Aviation &amp; Education Hub (Wagga Wagga/Temora), RAAF Base (Forest Hill), Temora Aviation Museum (Temora) and newly launched Australian Aviation Hall of Fame (Wagga Wagga).</li> <li>• The creation of an interactive tourism centre at the gateway to the region.</li> <li>• Country Change &amp; EVO-cities marketing projects Evo-cities-a collaborative partnership between 7 regional cities (Wagga Wagga, Albury, Orange, Bathurst, Dubbo, Armidale &amp; Tamworth ) to</li> </ul>

	<p>promote the fact that you can get a city lifestyle in one of these regional cities. The project involves a major marketing campaign in metropolitan Sydney (particularly the identified demographic that are most likely to consider a move to a regional area).  <a href="http://www.evocities.com.au">www.evocities.com.au</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country Change Bureau- this project has been operating for 5 years and is a collaborative approach between LGA's in the Riverina/Murray region to promote the jobs, business opportunities &amp; lifestyle offered in the Riverina region.  <a href="http://www.countrychange.com.au">www.countrychange.com.au</a></li> <li>• Riverina Naturally..... Brand can be used for food/wine industry and other business/industry groups. Investigate the interest &amp; potential for this branding.</li> </ul>
Business/Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore manufacturing opportunities in relation to value add to agriculture and other industries that have a logical relationship to the region.</li> <li>• Capitalise on new investment from immigrants and overseas investors.</li> <li>• Support and promote small business as this is a significant employer within the region.</li> <li>• Research &amp; development activities at Charles Sturt University</li> <li>• Defence industry opportunities at (Kapooka &amp; Forest Hill Wagga Wagga)</li> <li>• Value adding to timber industry</li> <li>• Development of Bomen (Wagga Wagga), Red Hill (Narrandera) &amp; Lockhart Industrial Estates</li> </ul>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the central location of the region there is a great capacity to build on the current transport infrastructure (road &amp; rail) to ensure access to market for produce/product from the region.</li> <li>• Gillenbah transport hub (intersection of Sturt &amp; Newell Highway), Narrandera</li> <li>• Improve public transport across the region so people can access health &amp; education services.</li> <li>• Transport is a great economic driver as well as assisting with social inclusion factors.</li> <li>• Potential for greater connectivity between the road/rail interfaces at Griffith, Cootamundra, Wagga Wagga and also Albury.</li> </ul>
Diverse population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Region is enjoying an increasing component of the overall population that is Indigenous (greater identification) and from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds. These communities help provide the capacity to sustain population and can supply skilled people for the workforce.</li> </ul>
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated local area planning across government</li> <li>• Encouraging strong civic leadership ensures that projects are supported in a cohesive, strategic &amp; visionary way with good collaboration between all government departments.</li> </ul>

## 4. Vision and goals

### Vision

RDA-Riverina will be a region renowned for its excellence in all dimensions – economic, social and environmental with an 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.

**RDA-Riverina Tag line** – *‘connecting communities, business & government to projects, programs, services, funding and other people’.*

### Values

RDA-Riverina embraces and supports the following values:-

- Innovation/creativity
- Commitment to a learning culture
- Inclusiveness
- Sustainability
- Optimism

### Goals:

- Goal 1: Encourage greater economic diversity & industry innovation.
- Goal 2: Ensure a sustainable environment for future generations and develop an innovative response to the water challenge.
- 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.

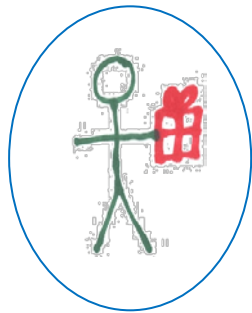
## Strategies:

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 key outcomes can be achieved when implementing strategies across all of the 6 goals but will be listed under the goals where they are likely to be the predominant outcome.

## Guiding Principles:



“Everyone has gifts to bring. Gifts of the head, hand and heart” [Jim Diers](#)

“Never do for people what they can do for themselves” [Abraham Lincoln](#)

“Leaders are not, as we are often led to think, people who go along with huge crowds following them. Leaders are people who go their own way without caring, or even looking to see, whether anyone is following them. "Leadership qualities" are not the qualities that enable people to attract followers, but those that enable them to do without them. They include, at the very least, courage, endurance, patience, humor, flexibility, resourcefulness, stubbornness, a keen sense of reality, and the ability to keep a cool and clear head, even when things are going badly. True leaders, in short, do not make people into followers, but into other leaders. ” [John Holt](#)

“The adventure of life is to learn. The purpose of life is to grow. The nature of life is to change. The challenge of life is to overcome. The essence of life is to care. The opportunity of like is to serve. The secret of life is to dare. The spice of life is to befriend. The beauty of life is to give.” [William Arthur Ward](#)

## Bridging the gap between Government & Community

GOVERNMENT SHIFT	COMMUNITY'S SHIFT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize that neighbourhoods aren't just places with needs but communities of people with underutilized resources</li> <li>• Move beyond customer service and citizen participation to community empowerment</li> <li>• Never do for communities what they can do for themselves</li> <li>• Stop focusing on self-proclaimed leaders and start providing communities with leadership training as well as assistance with outreach and networking</li> <li>• The community can't partner with a government divided by functions, so develop a more holistic, community-based approach.</li> <li>• Recognize that community members have valuable expertise</li> <li>• Make information accessible to the community and provide educational opportunities</li> <li>• Appreciate the unique character of different neighbourhoods and cultures</li> <li>• Delegate as many decisions as possible to the community.</li> <li>• Recognize and thank community members who are effective partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move beyond blaming government to taking a share of the responsibility</li> <li>• Think and act as citizens rather than as taxpayers</li> <li>• Never wait for government to do what could better be done by the community</li> <li>• Make it worth government's while to partner with the community by making it a priority to build broad and inclusive participation</li> <li>• Government can't partner with a community divided by factions, so work collaboratively within the neighbourhood and with other neighbourhoods.</li> <li>• Recognize that government staff have valuable expertise</li> <li>• Keep government informed and coach staff on working effectively with the community</li> <li>• Keep the big picture in mind</li> <li>• Recognize government's role in setting policy and meeting the needs of the community as a whole</li> <li>• Recognize and thank government officials and staff who are effective partners</li> </ul>

Source: Jim Diers [www.neighborpower.org](http://www.neighborpower.org)

## 6b Economic Development & Job Creation Strategy

### Goal 1: Encourage greater economic diversity and industry innovation

KPI's also address **Outcome 5: Improved Community & Economic Development**  
**Outcome 3: Enhanced Whole-of-Government Approach**

#### INFRASTRUCTURE:

Prioritise & support significant infrastructure projects that contribute strategically to the economic, social and environmental development of the region. It is vital that projects be resourced appropriately both financially and with human capital, to ensure success.

Infrastructure is defined as hard & soft:

- Hard ( physical infrastructure: bricks & mortar, roads, rail, utilities):
- Soft (capacity building activities, training, leadership development, planning/modeling feasibility studies). Strategies addressed under Goal 2:

#### Telecommunications:

Reliable & efficient telecommunication infrastructure is essential to encourage a range of service sector delivery and enable growth for business (including Home Based Business).

#### Transport:

Transport infrastructure is an important economic driver as well as an important tool for social inclusion. The Riverina is well positioned for ease of transport and access to ports, however transport systems need to be improved in order to enable access to public transport.

Action	Responsibility & Partnerships	Timeframe	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
<p><b>INFRASTRUCTURE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate Riverina Murray infrastructure committee involving relevant department agencies &amp; key stakeholders to assess and prioritise infrastructure projects for the region. Audit major business requirements across the region (in consultation with LGA's)</li> <li>• Promote in the redevelopment of existing and the building of new infrastructure that environmentally sustainable practices are incorporated and low carbon initiatives considered ie. Energy (renewable energy ) &amp;</li> </ul>	<p>RDA-Riverina/RDA-Murray/RDA-Southern Inland            Trade &amp; Investment NSW            Infrastructure Australia            NSW Infrastructure            NSW Business Chamber            REROC/RAMROC            AusIndustry            Dept. Climate Change &amp; Energy Efficiency            Charles Sturt University            Dept Premier &amp; Cabinet</p> <p>REROC/RAMROC            Trade &amp; INSW            AusIndustry</p>	<p>June 2012</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2012</p>	<p>Identification of regional infrastructure priorities.</p> <p>At least the redevelopment of 1 existing and 1 new building encompasses environmentally sustainable practices.</p> <p>At least 1 collaborative infrastructure projects receives funding in the region.</p>

<p>water efficiencies, recycling of waste etc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build the collaboration and skill level of LGA's, business &amp; agencies so they can prepare detailed funding applications, strengthening the case for infrastructure investment funding from either private or public sources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Transport:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate the strengthening of freight infrastructure partnerships (road/rail) across the region for local, regional, State &amp; National business growth.</li> <li>Analyse the current &amp; predicted freight movements (road/rail) across the region</li> <li>Road &amp; Rail upgrades</li> </ul> <p><b>Telecommunications:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate &amp; promote the development of efficient &amp; effective telecommunications technology (internet etc) in the region for business, health and education.</li> </ul> <p><b>Utilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map the utilities (gas, electricity, optic fibre, water etc) expansions or upgrades planned across the region to promote roll out of the NBN or a similar technology.</li> <li>Identify gaps in utilities across the region and investigate feasibility of delivery.</li> </ul>	<p>ARTC RTA LGA's / REROC/RAMROC Transport Industry RDA-Riverina/Murray/ Southern Inland Trade &amp; Invest. NSW NSW Dept. of Transport Dept. Infrastructure &amp; Transport</p> <p>Dept. Broadband, Communications &amp; the Digital Economy Industry Capability Network (ICN)</p> <p>Utility providers, LGA's , ROC's Dept. Broadband, Communications &amp; the Digital Economy</p>	<p>June 2012</p> <p>2012</p> <p>June 2012</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>2012</p>	<p>% of people with access to the internet in the Riverina region at the next census. Increased number of households with ADSL 2 connections by 2012.</p> <p>A report or map produced of the existing &amp; planned utility development in the region over the next 3-5 years.</p>
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## Significant Riverina Infrastructure Projects

Project Description	Stakeholders	Outcomes/Benefits
Upgrade Base Hospital in Wagga Wagga	Wagga Wagga Base Hospital Wagga Wagga City Council Murrumbidgee Local Health Network NSW Dept of Health Dept of Health and Aging: - National Health and Hospitals Network. National Rural and Remote Health Infrastructure	The development of a modern healthcare facility suited to the current and future needs of the local community.
Private/Public Hospital Partnership (Griffith) E-Health Services & Training Facility	Griffith City Council St Vincents Hospital Mater Health Sydney Murrumbidgee Local Health Network University of Wollongong Charles Sturt University TAFE NSW Casella Spagnolo Trust NSW Dept. of Health	The Griffith Community Private Hospital will be collocated on the same site as the Griffith Base Hospital, the facility will create integrated health campus delivering public/private medical, surgical & primary care for the growing rural community. Key strategic partners will bring world class clinical, managerial, teaching, workforce and research skills to the area
Griffith Freight Terminal Relocation of the Road/Rail freight terminal outside the central business district in Griffith.	Griffith City Council Trade & Investment NSW ARTC RTA Private Businesses	The existing Griffith rail freight yard is in the centre of the city and has serious noise and access problems. Relocation would address both issues as well as remove around ten dangerous level crossings from the city. The proposal has potential amenity and safety as well as economic benefits.
Further development of the existing Bomen Industrial Park to include intermodal transport facilities.	Wagga Wagga City Council Trade & Investment Private Enterprise RTA ARTC	Opportunity for further business development & expansion with transport links to Sydney & Melbourne.
Development of Wagga Wagga Aviation Hub	Wagga Wagga City Council REX Airlines AirServices Australia TAFE NSW	Expansion of airport infrastructure will attract and enable new industry to establish. In conjunction with Temora Aviation Museum, RAAF Base the region has a strong critical mass for an aviation hub that can be further developed.
Griffith Airport upgrade & Industrial Land development.	Griffith City Council REX Airlines	Recently funded through RDAF and will improve the capacity of the airport & runway for increased business and visitor traffic.
Integrated Transport (Road/Rail) Infrastructure development	Wagga Wagga Cootamundra Griffith Albury ARTC/ RTA	A collaborative approach to determine the most effective & efficient way to develop links between road/rails in the region to ports in Sydney & Melbourne.

**Note:** The Riverina Regional Infrastructure projects will be updated and may change on a regular basis.

## **BUSINESS/INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT:**

Facilitate and support existing and new business/industry developments that add value to the natural resources, man-made infrastructure and social/cultural aspects of the Riverina region.

Promote the 'Employer of Choice' key principles to business and the encourage the inclusion of people (Aboriginal people, people with disabilities, migrants and youth) currently not significantly engaged in our workforce. All people should be given the opportunity to work especially those with significant strengths and attributes to contribute to the workforce.

Build on existing businesses (growing critical mass) and profile them to the region thus creating greater awareness and growth. Create a positive proactive environment for attracting and retaining business and industry.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility &amp; Partnerships</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicator (KPI)</b>
<p><b>BUSINESS/INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the current labour or skills shortage and determine the training requirements or skills requirements for these occupations.</li> <li>• Analyse the barriers business/industry face in the Riverina region in attracting &amp; retaining skilled people. Promote the concept of being an "Employer of Choice" and the key principles for business. Promote cultural awareness and other training/funding that can support business when they are employing people who are Aboriginal, from a culturally diverse background or who have a disability.</li> <li>• Promote the Skilled Migration Program to assist business with labour shortages;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supporting business/industry through the provision of skilled labour</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Promote the diversification &amp; value adding of business/industry across the region.</li> </ul>	<p>DEEWR Trade &amp; Investment NSW Job Service Providers State Training CSU/TAFE Riverina Community College</p> <p>NSW Business Chamber Chambers of Commerce Riverina BEC Industry Capability Network DEEWR Dept. Education and Communities RDA-Riverina Skilled Migration Officer ROC's Department of Immigration</p> <p>Dept. Primary Industries Regional Arts Boards Enterprise Connect Riverina BEC TAFE NSW Riverina Institute Charles Sturt University Cultural &amp; Tourism organisations AusIndustry</p>	<p>June 2011</p> <p>June 2011</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2012</p>	<p>Production of a report that identifies the labour shortages and suggested training or occupation requirements.</p> <p>Production of a report that identifies barriers that business face in attracting skilled labour.</p> <p>Increase RSMS visas to 40% of total visa processed compared to the current 29% by 2012.</p> <p>1 new value added or diversified activity commenced</p>

<p>Particularly agricultural sector such as paddock-to-plate concept. Look at potential of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hospitality &amp; Tourism</li> <li>- Creative Industries-arts &amp; culture</li> <li>- IT</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote innovation &amp; environmental sustainability in businesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of new technology</li> <li>- Education/ Training</li> <li>- Research &amp; development</li> <li>- Energy efficiencies</li> <li>- Lowering carbon footprint</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Trade &amp; Investment NSW  Dept. Education &amp; Communities  DEEWR  Dept. Climate Change &amp; Energy Efficiency  Dept. Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities</p>		
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**PROMOTION OF THE RIVERINA:**

In order to make the Riverina attractive place for people to live, work and invest, it is agreed that a range of facilities and services as well as availability of jobs need to be in place.

Tourism is a critical factor in the initial showcasing of the region & the initial step before a relocation for a job or business venture is considered. Events play a significant part in attracting visitors to the region as well as building the morale of the community.

Promote the Riverina for:-

- Investment
- Lifestyle opportunities
- Education & training
- Cultural & recreational opportunities
- Tourism

Action	Responsibility & Partnerships	Timeframe	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
<p><b>PROMOTION OF THE RIVERINA</b> for Investment, Education &amp; Training, Tourism, Arts/Culture &amp; Recreation:</p> <p>Promote the business/investment opportunities that exist in the Riverina region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aviation Industry (Wagga Wagga &amp; Temora)</li> </ul>	<p>RDA-Riverina  LGA's  Riverina Regional Tourism  REROC/RAMROC  Trade &amp; INSW</p>	<p>June 2012</p>	<p>Attendance at or participation in 2 projects that promote the Riverina region per year.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manufacturing –particularly value-adding to agriculture</li> <li>- Renewable energy options</li> <li>- Education &amp; training</li> <li>- Tourism</li> </ul> <p>Including involvement and support for the Evocities Project &amp; Country Change project. <a href="http://www.countrychange.com.au">www.countrychange.com.au</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support value add to agricultural products</li> <li>- Support the paddock to plate concept and further development of hospitality &amp; tourism</li> <li>- Support events that promote food producers, tourism/hospitality industry &amp; the region eg. 100 Mile Food Challenge</li> </ul>	<p>Chambers of Commerce</p> <p>Riverina Regional Tourism</p> <p>Eastern Riverina Arts Program/South West Arts Program</p> <p>Department Sport &amp; Recreation</p> <p>REROC/RAMROC</p> <p>LGA's</p> <p>Sporting Club</p>		<p>5-10 businesses or individuals relocate to the Riverina region by June 2012.</p>
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**ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY:**

Ensuring a sustainable environment for future generations will be integral to the development of the region.

Strategy	Responsibility & Partnerships	Timeframe	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
<p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and support renewable &amp; alternative energy sources such as solar, biomass &amp; biofuels.</li> <li>• Promote opportunities, activities and training for business, local government &amp; other organisations that encourage energy efficiency &amp; environmental sustainability:-               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Energy efficient buildings &amp; facilities.</li> <li>- Low carbon transport; rail as opposed to road &amp; cycling.</li> <li>- Carbon farming</li> <li>- Recycling &amp; renewable waste management</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Trade &amp; Investment NSW CSIRO Coleambally Irrigation Murrumbidgee Irrigation Charles Sturt University Murrumbidgee CMA LGA's (REROC/RAMROC) Low Carbon Australia NSW Environment &amp; Heritage Dept Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population &amp; Communities AusIndustry State Training Services Murrumbidgee Valley Stakeholder Group</p>	<p>July 2012</p>	<p>RDA-Riverina involved in supporting the establishment of 1 renewable or alternative energy project in the Riverina region.</p> <p>No. opportunities/ activities promoted (target 4)</p>



<p>training opportunities available in the region. Promote these opportunities to business &amp; community. The region has key capabilities to attract international students and students from other regions.</p> <p><b>SCHOOL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the idea of a 'Student Services Centre'- a facility &amp; services to assist disengaged youth &amp; those with behaviour issues. The centre could provide access to mental health, police &amp; job services. Community education is important with leaving age for school lifted to 17.</li> <li>• Facilitation of Regional Careers Expos with Employers from across the region.</li> </ul> <p><b>CAPACITY BUILDING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate leadership &amp; grant writing training/programs to improve the capacity of individuals &amp; communities across the region.</li> <li>• Developing &amp; marketing a capacity building/ governance/leadership building training that could be delivered across the region.</li> <li>• Build governance and administration capacity in community groups particularly Aboriginal &amp; Multi-cultural community organisations as well as recreational clubs eg Bowling, Golf &amp; RSL Clubs</li> <li>• Strengthen the leadership and skill capacity of local government (Councillors and Staff), particularly women.</li> </ul>	<p>Department of Family &amp; Community Services  Dept. of Health  Dept. Education &amp; Communities  NSW Police  Schools  TAFE NSW Riverina  Riverina Community College  Non Government Organisations  DEEWR-Partnership Brokers, Youth Connections and Employment, Skills &amp; Jobs Coordinator  Vocational Education In Schools Advisory Board</p> <p>RDA-Riverina  LGA's  REROC/RAMROC  Indigenous Coordination Centre  Multicultural Groups  Local Aboriginal Land Councils  Recreational Clubs  Dept. Premier &amp; Cabinet</p>	<p>2012</p> <p>2012</p> <p>Oct 2010- June 2012</p>	<p>A minimum of 6 leadership, governance or grant writing workshops coordinated across the Riverina per year.</p> <p>A minimum of 3 meetings or seminars with Aboriginal Community organisations per year.</p> <p>A minimum of 3 meetings or seminars with Multi-cultural organisations.</p>
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**Goal 4:** To ensure a collaborative approach between all tiers of government, business and community to solving the challenges of the region.

KPI's also address: **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**

Action	Responsibility & Partnerships	Timeframe	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting &amp; facilitating strong leadership so that projects are supported in a cohesive, strategic and visionary way with good collaboration between all government departments &amp; private enterprise particularly in regard to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Murray Darling Basin Plan</li> <li>- Health Reform; deliver of health care to regional communities.</li> <li>- Infrastructure development including utilities</li> <li>- Integrated road/rail service delivery to the region</li> <li>- Education &amp; Training/Research &amp; Development</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>RDA-Riverina            RDA-Murray            RDA-Southern Inland            REROC/RAMROC            State &amp; Federal            Departments            Agencies</p> <p>RDA-Riverina            Environmental            Sustainability Sub-            committee</p> <p>Murrumbidgee Valley            Stakeholder Group</p> <p>Murrumbidgee CMA            RDA-Riverina Health            Sub-Committee</p> <p>Riverina Murray            Infrastructure            Committee</p>	<p>July 2012</p> <p>Dec 2012</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>2 projects developed with more than 2 stakeholders by 2012.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the 'Positive Employment Projects' model to private &amp; public sector in regard to employing indigenous people. This has been adopted by some LGA's including Griffith &amp; Wagga Wagga. Opportunity for more to be actively involved.</li> <li>• Explore &amp; support indigenous business opportunities particularly in natural resource management or renewable energy.</li> </ul>	<p>RDA-Riverina            Aboriginal Affairs            Trade &amp; Investment            NSW            LGA's            REROC &amp; RAMROC            Chambers of Commerce            Dept. Premier &amp;            Cabinet</p> <p>Murrumbidgee CMA            Aboriginal Affairs            FAHCSIA            DEEWR/TAFE NSW            Office of Environment            &amp; Heritage            National Parkes &amp;            Wildlife            Industry Capability            Network</p>	<p>June 2012</p> <p>June 2012</p>	<p>% of indigenous people in the labour force increases by 2% at the next census.</p> <p>1 Indigenous business opened by 2012.</p>



<p>Promote a proactive approach to health and support healthy living projects.</p> <p>Support health literacy, education &amp; communication projects to assist in changing the behaviour in communities about how health services should be delivered. Increase the awareness in communities &amp; with practitioners about the opportunities with e-health capabilities.</p> <p>Promote further education, training and skilling of the health workforce to ensure adequate multidisciplinary services can be provided across the region. Promote the integration of Primary &amp; Allied Health services delivery.</p>	<p>Dept. Health &amp; Aging CSU-Centre for Inland Health TAFE/UNSW NGO's : Mission Australia, Intereach, Centa care, Relationships Australia, Anglicare University of NSW Rural Clinical School REROC/RAMROC Department of Aging &amp; Disability (NSW) Department of Premier &amp; Cabinet LGA's (REROC/RAMROC) FAHCSIA</p> <p>Murrumbidgee Medicare Local</p>		<p>communication project in the region.</p>
<p><b>CHILDREN &amp; YOUTH</b></p> <p>Support the '<b>Keeping Them Safe</b>' Initiative. A collaborative approach to ensuring all children are safe &amp; healthy.</p> <p><b>Support the Aboriginal Child, Youth and Families Strategy (ACYFS)</b> project. ACYFS will focus on strengthening the skills of Aboriginal communities to support the healthy development of babies and young children of this region. The client group for the project will be parents and carers of Aboriginal children aged 0-5 years and their communities.</p>	<p>RDA-Riverina Dept Premier &amp; Cabinet LGA's (REROC/RAMROC) NSW Police/NSW Health NSW Dept Family &amp; Community Services Indigenous Coordination Centre TAFE NSW Riverina Institute FAHCSIA</p>	<p>2011-2012</p>	<p>All 13 LGA's are aware of the 'Keeping Them Safe' initiative</p>
<p><b>PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY AND AGING POPULATION</b></p> <p>Support service delivery models that allow people to live in their own home.</p>	<p>NSW Dept. Health Dept. Health &amp; Aging NSW Dept. Family &amp; Community Services</p>	<p>2012</p>	
<p><b>MENTAL &amp; ALLIED HEALTH</b></p> <p>Support initiatives and programs for integrated allied and mental health</p>	<p>NSW Health CSU-Centre for Inland Health TAFE Riverina Institute</p>	<p>2012</p>	<p>2 rural health networks supported.</p>

<p>service delivery in isolated rural areas.</p> <p>Support community and regional networks that connect communities to mental health and allied health agencies.</p>	<p>LGA's NGO's Community Groups Murrumbidgee Local Health District Murrumbidgee Medicare Local</p>		
<p><b>WELL BEING</b></p> <p>Facilitate the branding of the Riverina as a 'wellness community' or a region that values good health/healthy living. Promote the value of arts/cultural activities, sport &amp; recreation in building connected and healthy communities.</p> <p>Support and promote the virtues of volunteering. Homelessness Action Plan delivered by RDA-Murray for the Riverina /Murray region</p>	<p>Murrumbidgee Local Health District Murrumbidgee Medicare Local NGO's LGA's</p> <p>Regional Arts Boards Sporting Clubs</p> <p>Community Organisations</p> <p>RDA-Murray</p>		<p>Assist with 4 arts/cultural/sport /volunteering projects in the region.</p>

## 5. Key Regional Issues and Priorities

### 6a: Current status of local economy

#### Economic Drivers:

- Access to water & good water policy
- Access to transport & markets eg ports, rail/road intermodals
- Access to government services & facilities eg Education, Health
- Access to new technology & communication
- Commodity prices

#### Economic Vulnerability:

- Fluctuating commodity prices in the agricultural sector eg decrease in wine grape price (due to oversupply)
- Cost price squeeze particularly in agriculture, prices are stagnant or declining and costs increasing.
- Competing international agricultural imports eg apples (NZ), oranges (Brazil)
- Availability of qualified, skilled & experienced labour force
- In the western part of the region the dependence on agriculture and the processing of agricultural products.

### Key & Emerging Issues Infrastructure

#### Infrastructure:

Minimal funding available for infrastructure upgrades or redevelopments to facilities in smaller Local Government Areas.

#### Telecommunications:

Affordable and effective communication technology in all forms broadband, digital and wireless is critical to the development of the Region. Many towns cannot access ADSL2 or 2+, and all experience a rapid decline in mobile, digital and wireless connections away from the centre of town.

- Ensure Riverina communities are a priority for the installation of fast, reliable & cost efficient broadband services.

#### Public Housing:

Address the concerns of affordable housing and rental property, as it is compromising the availability of workers for lower wage jobs as well as older people, youth & immigrants/refugees.

#### Soft Infrastructure:

- Community events having a greater importance, providing opportunity to offer community pride, connectedness & this then leads to other project activity.
- Unwillingness of Non Government Organisations (NGO) to work together & the difficulties faced submitting tenders for funding of services short term
- Implement programs to increase capacity in Local Government and civic leadership.

## Key & Emerging Issues for Transport

### Road/Rail Infrastructure:

- The need for a collaborative & integrated plan for road & rail development connecting the region to ports.
- Deteriorating roads throughout the region particularly those with heavy road haulage such as Gocup Rd (outside RDA-Riverina region but impacts on the region).
- Deterioration of road, rail & bridge infrastructure across the region. Particularly a concern considering the increased heavy vehicle movement with increased grain & livestock movements across the region, between regions and States.
- Position the Riverina as a logistical & transport hub with:
  - Melbourne to Brisbane Rail Services
  - Fast rail link through the region
  - Improved systems for people & freight

### Public Transport:

- Improve access to public transport to assist with getting students to training and also people to specialist health services.
- Establish a Community Transport Coordinator working across the region with all Human Services Department & agencies to develop and implement strategies to assist in a range of areas including young people & mobility, young Mums getting into town centre and out to access health specialist services or older people to access health specialist in other towns.

## Key & Emerging Issues for Business/Industry

- Capitalise on industry and education links to be leaders in the areas of new manufacturing, aviation training (pilots/support crew), agriculture and research & development.
- Support and promote potential business opportunities that add to the existing Aviation & Education Hub (Wagga Wagga & Temora)
- Expand & promote diverse opportunities in agriculture and the value adding to produce.
- Promote the range of employment opportunities and high quality businesses that do exist in the region to potential employees (young people, those looking for a career change or are forced into a career change). Galvanise regional support to host a Regional Careers Expo.
- Promote the Skilled Migration Program to business and ensure the attraction of quality, skilled workers who best fit the industry needs of the region.
- Investigate the impact of incentives in attracting professionals to regional areas ie teachers, health, police & the capacity to extend it to more regional areas.
- The creation of a 'paddock to plate' food sector development project including more diverse agriculture and horticultural pursuits, niche food markets, food trails, and value adding to regional produce. Eg Restaurants promote & using local produce.
- 'Positive Employment Projects' model to be taken on by private sector in regard to employing indigenous people. This has been adopted by some LGA's Griffith, Wagga Wagga & Narrandera but there is opportunity for more to be actively involved. Support and promote indigenous business opportunities.
- Support Small business as a large employer in the region.
- Streamline development application processes
- Support and grow tourism opportunities in the region as increased visitation increases external

money flowing into town.

- Research contribution of small business to the regions employment and also economic development.

### Key & Emerging Issues for Promotion of the region

- Educating & promoting to business that the Riverina is an attractive destination for investment
- Entice people to the region as a visitor and then they can experience directly what is on offer. Investigate & continue support for branding initiatives relating to:
  - Innovative lifelong learning, go ahead region, great quality of life.
  - Riverina Naturally.....brand / Riverina Food Group
  - Evo-cities/Country Change Project
  - Riverina Festival of Living: food, wine & culture
- Further development of lifestyle enhancers such as the arts sector through galleries, art centre and or theatre. The arts is a fantastic medium to assist with social inclusion assisting with creating understanding and awareness about sensitive issues such as mental health, domestic violence, cultural differences etc.
- Promote cultural and recreational activities such as:-
  - Creation of an Arts & Cultural trail around the Riverina.
  - Rail Trails (Riverina Highland Rail Trail & Murrumbidgee Rail Trail)
  - Cycling tracks / bicycle paths

### Key & Emerging Issues Environment & Water

- Ensure all stakeholders (as listed) present a collaborative & unified message to Government regarding the Murray Darling Basin Plan, water policy & water needs.
- A strategic, collaborative & co-operative approach be taken to water. Focus on how to utilise water & invest in new technologies, recycling, reticulation, grey water for industry as well as regenerating aquifers and water storage.
- Use the Sinclair Knight Mertz Study 'Scenario Planning for an Innovative Response to the water challenge in the Riverina/Murray region'.
- Improving infrastructure to capture, store & deliver water efficiently.
- Research & promote new sustainable agriculture niches.
- Research & promote efficient water use in urban & rural environments.
- CSU researching agricultural sustainability (including agricultural innovations, land, water and society, and wine and grape science).
- CSU, UNESCO - Water for Food security and also the Institute of Land, Water & Society looking at implications around water
- Enable communities to adjust to the outcomes from the Murray Darling Basin Plan- SDL's
- Support the 'Water for Food' project
- Showcase the water savings strategies implemented in the Murrumbidgee Catchment & Australia.
- Encourage reciprocal study tours to other parts of the world looking at water saving strategies.
- Research and investigating renewable & alternative (green) energy sources such as solar, biomass & biofuels
- Research/Audit by CSIRO of Biomass opportunities in the Riverina.
- Investigate alternative industries for those communities that have been impacted by the Murray Darling Basin Plan.
- Investigate & research renewable waste opportunities eg recycled rice stubble into particle board

## Key & Emerging Issues Education

### EDUCATION:

- Further promotion to business/local government of the value of education and training for their employees. Promote the need for flexible training delivery for business, government & non-profit organisations.
- Aboriginal cultural awareness training for employers and also training for those employing people from different migrant cultures. Promotion of programs that can assist with training in this area.
- Promote the use of new technologies in the delivery of education & training.

### SCHOOL:

- Alternative & streamlined pathways from school to work or employment. More school based & Vocational Education Training (VET).
- More volunteering encouraged in schools
- Foster better links between industry, school and training sector.
- Explore alternative educational models to deliver best outcomes for those doing another year of schooling as a result of the higher leaving age. Further promotion of traineeships in schools.
- Improve technology base in schools to allow for diverse & flexible delivery of subjects.
- Funds for more school counsellors, especially considering the greater number of students who will not be mainstream with increasing leaving age.

### POST SCHOOL:

- Support and strengthen capacity from advancement of studies from TAFE to CSU degree. Such as current Business Degree & Nursing offered at Griffith
- Support the RAAF training base coming to Wagga (linking with Rex pilot training)
- Training local people professionally to remain local.
- Building skills and qualifications for employment opportunities in the Riverina (regional areas)
- Focus on training with indigenous & disadvantaged (culturally & linguistically diverse) communities.

## Key & Emerging Issues for Health & Well Being

- Focus on health determinants such as criminality, low level of education & low socio economic status.
- Need more supported accommodation across faculties when students are on practical components of their study.
- Clinical governance is also critical for supervising practical components of study. Supervisors must be experienced so they can provide appropriate support and guidance for students.
- Health Workforce Australia – indicate that the health force is aging.
- CSU has the research capacity to investigate the most appropriate delivery model in the region. The metropolitan model does not work in the regions.
- Skills retention and staffing an issue in all areas including pathology
- Murrumbidgee Local Health District needs to be an Employer of Choice-offering training capacity, support etc.
- Transport across the region to access health services within communities and also between communities is inadequate & could be conducted more collaboratively.
- Need to capitalize on the opportunity with new technology and the NBN in regard to health service delivery.
- Murrumbidgee Medicare Local to facilitate a 'needs analysis across the region for after hour service

(part of funding with NSW Health). Wagga Wagga is the only place that has an after hour service.

- Training of nurses to an advanced level. This will enable people to be assessed in their own community and managed in a Case Management style with nurse, GP & community health. This includes the aging and indigenous people. People can then stay in their own community and a where there is a greater chance of behavioural change with close monitoring.
- Opportunities for Infrastructure for IT-linking up emergency departments with major hospitals in larger centres such Westmead Sydney, Wagga Wagga. This would enable assistance with trauma cases. This is already been done with Mental Health. There is a pilot running at the moment in Wagga Wagga which is a web based platform and it works really well. It links directly with Mental Health Emergency Care Centre.
- Greater focus on Allied and Mental health – a more collaborative approach to delivering services to those in isolated areas.
- Support & promote preventative health services for Aboriginal people & avenues for treatment.

### ***RDA Riverina Project Selection Criteria***

RDA Riverina's work bridges between the activities of the State and Australian Governments and the community. RDA will advocate to these Governments on behalf of the Riverina community, and will help communities shape projects and will help with project funding applications. It will take a more active role itself and/or provide support to projects/ initiatives which meet the following criteria:

1. The initiative aligns with the priorities listed in the RDA-Riverina Regional Plan
2. The initiative is a good fit with the RDA Charter & Roles
3. Advances the Vision, Aims & Goals of RDA Riverina
4. There is evidence that the issue is not being addressed adequately by other stakeholders – there is a gap that RDA Riverina needs to fill
5. There is strong likelihood of funding, or an active partnership, to get results on the issue
6. RDA Riverina will be able to make a real difference on the issue, within the limits of the resources available and attracted, within 2 years.

## 6. Government Strategic Context

### ***Australian Government***

A key focus of Regional Development Australia will be on the economic, social and environmental issues affecting communities. Regional Development Australia will be an important contributor to and driver of:

- Regional business growth plans and strategies, which will help support economic development, the creation of new jobs, skills development and business investment;
- Environmental solutions, which will support ongoing sustainability and the management of climate change (including the impact of drought, flood or bushfires); and
- Social inclusion strategies, which will bring together and support all members of the community.

Regional Development Australia, in consultation with the community, business, non profit organisations and all levels of government, will articulate local priorities, identify and align resources, engage stakeholders and promote solutions.

### ***Australia Governments Social Inclusion Agenda***

The Australian Government's vision of a socially inclusive society is one in which all Australians feel valued and have the opportunity to participate fully in the life of our society. Achieving this vision means that all Australians will have the resources, opportunities and capability to:

- Learn by participating in education and training
- Work by participating in employment, in voluntary work and in family and caring
- Engage by connecting with people and using their local community's resources and
- Have a voice so that they can influence decisions that affect them.

For further information visit [www.socialinclusion.gov.au](http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au)

### ***Australian Governments Closing the Gap***

Closing the Gap is a commitment by all Australian governments to work towards a better future for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, where gaps are closed in areas such as health, housing, education and employment. It aims to help Indigenous children get a good start in life and provide Indigenous people with the same choices and opportunities as other Australians living in comparable locations.

Governments are seeking to partner with the private and non-government sectors in 'Closing the Gap'. They are also working with Indigenous people to build respectful and collaborative relationships. Only Indigenous people can lead change in their communities.

Closing the Gap is about more than overcoming Indigenous disadvantage. There are still gaps in understanding between Indigenous and other Australians. Non-Indigenous Australians have a great deal to gain from closer engagement with Indigenous people, their unique and diverse cultures, and their long history in this continent.

For more information visit [www.indigenous.gov.au](http://www.indigenous.gov.au)

## **NSW 2021**

NSW 2021 is a plan to make NSW number one. It is a 10year plan to rebuild the economy, provide quality services, renovate infrastructure, restore government accountability, and strengthen our local environment and communities It replaces the State Plan as the NSW Government's strategic business plan, setting priorities for action and guiding resource allocation. There are **FIVE STRATEGIES**:

1. **Rebuild the Economy**- restore economic growth and establish NSW as the 'first place in Australia to do business'
2. **Return Quality Services** – provide the best transport, health, education, policing, justice and family services, with a focus on the customer.
3. **Renovate infrastructure**- build the infrastructure that makes a difference to both our economy and people's lives.
4. **Strengthen our Local Environment and communities**- improve people's lives by protecting natural environments and building a strong sense of community.
5. **Restore accountability to Government**- talk honestly with the community , return planning powers to the community and give people a say on decisions that affect them.

There are 32 goals and these can be viewed from the website <http://www.2021.nsw.gov.au/>  
A significant goal is number three:

- 3 **Drive economic growth in regional NSW.** Targets include the following:
  - Increase the share of jobs in regional NSW
  - Increase the population in regional NSW by 470,000 by 2036
  - Protect strategic agricultural land and improve agricultural productivity

## **NSW Industry Action Plans**

The Industry Action Plans will be released in 2012 and the first five sectors being targeted are:

**Manufacturing** - with a focus on processed food and beverage manufacturing; metal manufacturing; and machinery and equipment manufacturing including biomedical and medical devices, renewable energy technology, and defence equipment;

**Professional services** - focused on finance and insurance; legal and regulatory services; and engineering services;

**Digital Economy** - focused on digital content and applications; information services and analytics; and smart networks and intelligent technologies;

**International Education and Research** - with a focus on pursuing education export opportunities (from both public and private providers), building international education and research collaborations and pursuing opportunities for innovation and education delivery; and

**Tourism and Events** - with a focus on developing a tourism and events strategy to double tourism expenditure to NSW by 2020

**Trade & Investment NSW Regional Business Growth Plan**- this will remain the same until reviewed in 2012

#### **High Priority & impact activities for the Riverina**

Strategy 1: Develop initiatives to secure water including re-use and recycling

Strategy 2: Develop Infrastructure

Strategy 3: Develop initiatives to assist manufacturing sector with innovation to increase productivity and global competitiveness.

Strategy 4: Develop initiatives to bring skills (including migrants) to the region and retrain existing workforce.

Strategy 5: Planning and Employment Lands

#### ***NSW Regional Business Growth Plan: Riverina***

To be revised in 2012 **(Trade & Investment NSW)**

Visit the website for a link to the Regional Business Growth Plans:-

<http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/invest-in-nsw/regional-nsw/regional-business-growth-plans>

## **Local Government**

The Riverina-RDA is composed of 13 Local Government areas: Carrathool, Coolamon, Cootamundra, Griffith, Gundagai, Hay, Junee, Leeton, Lockhart, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera, Temora and Wagga Wagga.

These LGA's are represented by 2 regional organisation of council groups:

- REROC: Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils ([www.reroc.com.au](http://www.reroc.com.au) )
- RAMROC: Riverina and Murray Regional Organisation of Councils ([www.ramroc.org.au](http://www.ramroc.org.au) )

### **REROC:**

The Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils (REROC) is a voluntary association of 13 General Purpose Councils and two water county councils located in the eastern Riverina region of NSW. The members of REROC are the councils of: Bland, Coolamon, Cootamundra, Corowa, Greater Hume, Gundagai, Junee, Lockhart, Temora, Tumbarumba, Tumut, Urana, Wagga Wagga, Goldenfields Water and Riverina Water.

Relevant REROC Objectives:

- To participate in activities which promote effective regional development.
- To enhance the collective status of Local Government within the eastern Riverina.
- To provide an additional avenue to secure and implement externally sourced funding on agreed projects or programs.
- To promote a sense of regional community within the eastern Riverina to enhance the ability to achieve outcomes within this broader community while respecting the diversity of aspirations and importance of the individual communities included.
- To promote co-operation between constituent Councils and to realise opportunities for greater efficiency in service delivery where appropriate through sharing of human, financial and capital resources.
- To provide a mechanism to share expertise and ideas and to promote innovation between constituent Councils.
- To facilitate regional planning on a range of environmental, economic, social, and infrastructure issues.
- To advance the interests of the region covered by the member Councils and organisations.

### **RAMROC**

The Riverina and Murray Regional Organisation of Councils (RAMROC) is a voluntary association of 18 councils located in the south western Riverina region of NSW. The members of RAMROC are the councils of: Griffith, Leeton, Narrandera, Murrumbidgee, Hay, Carrathool, Urana, Jerilderie, Greater Hume, Corowa, Albury, Berrigan, Murray, Conargo, Deniliquin, Balranald, Wakool & Wentworth.

## **RAMROC's Mission**

To work collaboratively to enhance the economic, social and environmental capabilities of our communities so as to ensure the long term sustainability of our region.

## **RAMROC's Key Role**

- To provide an effective means for discussion and action on issues of regional significance and common concern;
- To consider the needs of Local Government areas and the people of the region and to make known those needs to the Commonwealth and State Governments to advance the interests of the region;
- To give support to individual Member Councils on specific issues of local concern where appropriate;
- To strengthen the role of Local Government in regional affairs, particularly where the region may be affected by Commonwealth or State Government policy; and
- To facilitate the Member Councils working together and to co-operating on issues and projects of joint interest and benefit.
- The regional plan has also considered the strategic direction of these two organisations as well as the individual councils within the region, ensuring RDA is consistent with Local Government in regard to regional development.

## **Relationship and alignment between key documents**

The RDA-Riverina Committee will embrace the charter for RDA's set by the Australian Government, Australian Government priorities and then align that with the NSW State Plan Key Priority Areas. An overarching consideration for all activities will be considering the Social Inclusion principles for Australians.

RDA-Riverina will encompass projects and activities that align with the Regional Growth Strategic Plan, State Plan and also align with the RDA Charter as priorities for action in their Business Plan. The Regional Plan and Business Plan will be revised on an annual basis to ensure that they are relevant and incorporate new initiatives that may be developed with time.

Please refer to Appendix A: How Riverina priorities align with Australian & State Government Priorities at the end of the Regional Plan.

## 7. Review

Review of the Regional plan is vital to ensure it remains relevant and the actions and associated Key Performance Indicator's are acted upon. It is also vital that the RDA-Riverina is in constant contact with stakeholders and Government so that it is aware of relevant changes to legislation, programs, services and grants for the region. The addition of a new strategic document or the release of more Government funding for a certain program may help realise some of the identified actions sooner leading to quicker and possibly more beneficial regional outcomes.

Therefore the RDA-Riverina will review the Regional Plan and its activities on an annual basis (May/June) to make sure it is responsive to changes in the needs and issues of the region. However changes may be required before an annual review takes place so the document will be a 'living document' adaptable to the regions needs and priorities.

The Regional Plan will be available on the RDA-Riverina website [www.rdariverina.org.au](http://www.rdariverina.org.au) The RDA-Riverina will also have a Business Plan that identifies in detail the delivery details for RDA-Riverina over a year period (in line with the financial year eg 2010-2011) reflecting actions listed in the Regional Plan. Any changes in the Regional Plan will be reflected in the RDA-Riverina Business Plan.

Activities included in the Annual Review:

- Direct consultation with key stakeholders and Government
- A strategic planning & review of progress against KPI's workshop
- Feedback will also be invited via email and the website.

Once the document has been reviewed, the directions and priorities will be consolidated into the RDA-Riverina Business Plan to keep current the projects, the timelines and key performance indicators.

## 8. The Region

The Regional Development Australia-Riverina (Riverina-RDA) region stretches 500 kms east to west across the Riverina region of NSW. It covers an area of almost 59,665sq kms and services a population of approximately 145,267 people (ABS Estimated Resident Population 2008)

The Riverina-RDA is composed of 13 Local Government areas: Carrathool, Coolamon, Cootamundra, Griffith, Gundagai, Hay, Junee, Leeton, Lockhart, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera, Temora and Wagga Wagga.

Some statistics have been included for Tumut & Bland Shire Councils as although they are currently outside the RDA-Riverina area they have strong linkages with the RDA-Riverina region. Some other statistics have been included for other neighbouring shires such as Harden, Young & Boorowa and the Murray region.

RDA-Riverina will also work closely with neighbouring RDA's including RDA-Murray, RDA-Southern Inland, RDA-Central West , RDA-Orana and RDA-Far West on common challenges and strategies for solving those challenges.



## Local Government Areas and their communities

**Carrathool Shire Council:** (Hillston, Goolgowi, Ranking Springs, Merriwagga & Carrathool)  
[www.carrathool.nsw.gov.au](http://www.carrathool.nsw.gov.au)

**Coolamon Shire Council:** (Coolamon, Ganmain, Ardlethan, Beckom, Marrar & Matong )  
[www.coolamon.nsw.gov.au](http://www.coolamon.nsw.gov.au)

**Cootamundra Shire Council:** (Wallendbeen, Stockingbingal)  
[www.cootamundra.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cootamundra.nsw.gov.au)

**Griffith City Council:** (Yoogali, Hanwood, Tharbogang, Lake Wyangan, Bilbul, Beelbangeera, Nericon)  
[www.griffith.nsw.gov.au](http://www.griffith.nsw.gov.au)

**Gundagai Shire Council:** (Muttama, Nangus, Adjunbilly, Coolac)  
[www.gundagai.nsw.gov.au](http://www.gundagai.nsw.gov.au)

**Hay Shire Council:** (Hay, Booligal & Maude)  
[www.hay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hay.nsw.gov.au)

**Junee Shire Council:** (Bethungra, Old Junee, Junee Reefs, Eurongilly, Illabo, Dirnaseer, Wantabadgery, Harefield)  
[www.junee.nsw.gov.au](http://www.junee.nsw.gov.au)

**Leeton Shire Council:** (Yanco, Whitton, Wamoon, Murrami)  
[www.leeton.nsw.gov.au](http://www.leeton.nsw.gov.au)

**Lockhart Shire Council:** (Lockhart, The Rock, Yerong Creek, Pleasant Hills and Milbrulong)  
[www.lockhart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lockhart.nsw.gov.au)

**Murrumbidgee Shire Council:** (Darlington Point & Coleambally)  
[www.murrumbidgee.local-e.nsw.gov.au](http://www.murrumbidgee.local-e.nsw.gov.au)

**Narrandera Shire Council:** (Grong Grong, Barellan, Colinroobie, Corobimilla, Kamarah)  
[www.narrandera.nsw.gov.au](http://www.narrandera.nsw.gov.au)

**Temora Shire Council:** (Temora, Ariah Park & Springdale )  
[www.temora.nsw.gov.au](http://www.temora.nsw.gov.au)

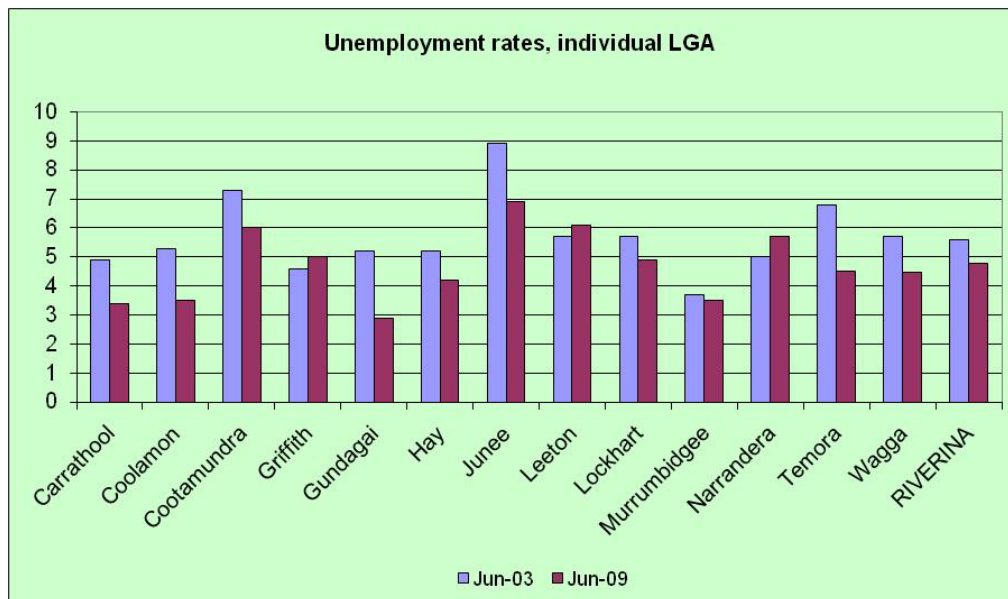
**Wagga Wagga City Council:** (Wagga, Forest Hill, Kapooka, Gumly Gumly, Bomen- Lady Smith, Collingullie, Currawarna, Mangoplah, Uranquinty, Tarcutta, Oura, Galore, Humula)  
[www.wagga.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wagga.nsw.gov.au)

## Socio and demographic profile

### Population

The 2006 ABS Census estimated the RDA-Riverina region's resident population at approximately 136,500 (from 132,587 in the 2001 Census), with the predominant increase being experienced in major centres such as Wagga Wagga and Griffith. The March 2007 ABS Labour Force statistics show that in January 2007, the unemployment in the Murray-Murrumbidgee was 4.2% and the workforce participation rate 66.4%.

**Graph 1: Unemployment Rates per individual LGA 2003 compared to 2009**

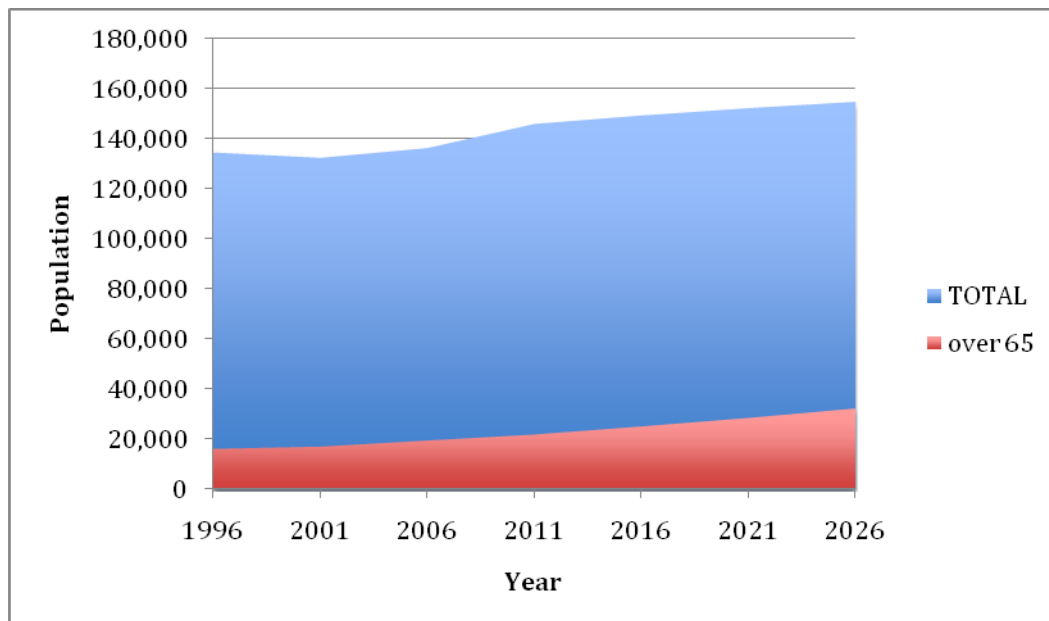


Source: DEEWR, Small Area Labour Markets Australia, March Quarter 2009

Figures 1 and 2 shows the total population counts for the Riverina-RDA up to the 2006 census, combined with forecasts until 2026. Forecasts suggest that by 2026, the population of the region will be around 154,000 people. The estimated resident population for the region in June 2008 was 145,200. Therefore, another 9,000 residents are expected over the next 16 years.

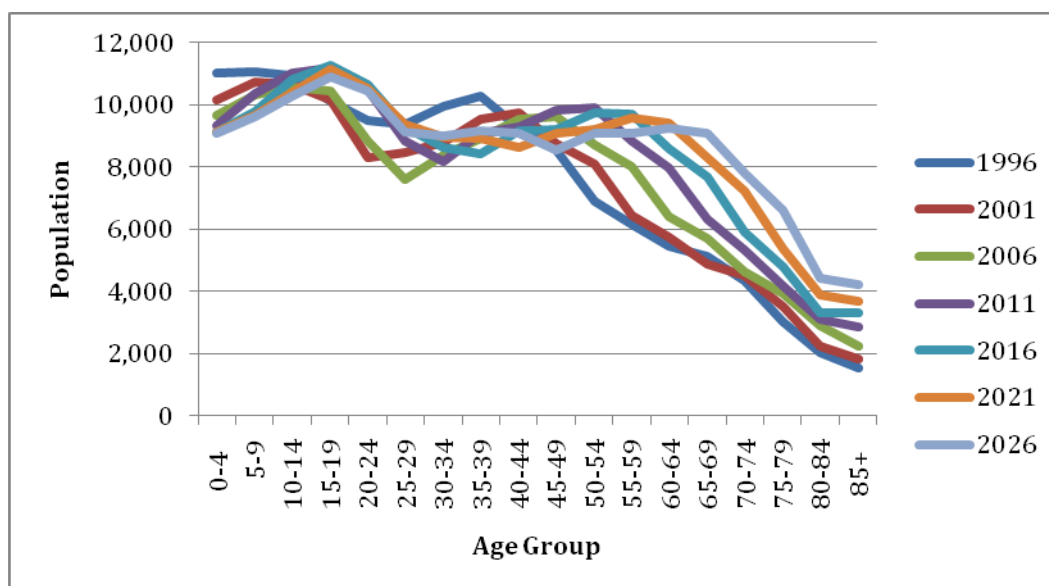
The region's population will show a rapid increase in the number (and percentage) of older residents over the next 16 years – reflecting national demographic trends. In 2006 there were approximately 19,400 people in the region aged over 65 (14% of the total population). This is expected to increase to 32,000 (20% of the population) by 2026. In 2006, Cootamundra had the highest proportion of people aged over 65 in 2006 at 20% of its population. Junee and Murrumbidgee had the lowest proportion of over 65 year olds in the region at about 12.5% each.

**Figure 1: Total Population Growth and Forecasts for Riverina-RDA**



(Source: 2006 ABS Census, DOHA/ABS Forecasts 2008)

**Figure 2: Population Growth and Forecasts by Age Group**



(Source: 2006 ABS Census, DOHA/ABS Forecasts 2008)

The regional picture masks other wide variances across the region. The three LGAs with the largest populations in mid-2008 were Wagga Wagga (62,000), Griffith (26,000) and Leeton (11,800). Murrumbidgee had the smallest population at 2,550 in mid 2008.

**Table A1. Population Counts and Forecasts by Age Group for the Riverina-RDA area**

Age	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	2026
0-4	11,041	10,143	9,668	9,345	9,141	9,123	9,087
5-9	11,075	10,751	10,325	10,352	9,794	9,670	9,636
10-14	10,927	10,655	10,557	11,043	10,839	10,408	10,304
15-19	10,108	10,144	10,470	11,181	11,290	11,171	10,923
20-24	9,494	8,313	8,851	10,511	10,640	10,537	10,437
25-29	9,367	8,450	7,611	8,821	9,278	9,360	9,126
30-34	9,970	8,816	8,383	8,164	8,617	8,963	9,005
35-39	10,296	9,540	8,919	9,071	8,442	8,907	9,180
40-44	9,253	9,737	9,527	9,311	9,152	8,618	9,088
45-49	8,573	8,753	9,645	9,817	9,202	9,077	8,563
50-54	6,898	8,111	8,715	9,908	9,754	9,207	9,091
55-59	6,170	6,435	8,021	8,845	9,727	9,564	9,095
60-64	5,458	5,744	6,392	7,974	8,588	9,413	9,268
65-69	5,142	4,886	5,699	6,320	7,686	8,286	9,088
70-74	4,327	4,500	4,621	5,337	5,919	7,216	7,815
75-79	3,046	3,509	3,952	4,165	4,782	5,375	6,605
80-84	2,028	2,259	2,892	3,119	3,329	3,887	4,431
85+	1,555	1,841	2,246	2,875	3,319	3,675	4,239
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>134,728</b>	<b>132,587</b>	<b>136,494</b>	<b>146,159</b>	<b>149,499</b>	<b>152,457</b>	<b>154,981</b>
Over 65	16,098	16,995	19,410	21,816	25,035	28,439	32,178

(Source: ABS 2006 Census and DOHA Forecasts)

Population growth rates also show great variation across the region. Over 2008-09, several shires in the Riverina-RDA had higher than average growth compared to NSW as a whole. Junee (2.4%), Cootamundra (1.9%) and Temora (1.8%) all had higher growth than the NSW average of 1.7%. Murrumbidgee and Hay both had population declines. Growth rates for each shire are shown in Table 1.

**Table A: Population characteristics and labour force**

	Riverina	NSW	Australia
Indigenous Population	4.1	2.1	2.3
Median Age	36	37	37
Average Incomes (\$ per week)			
-Individual	424	461	466
-Household	864	1036	1027
- Family	1073	1181	1171
Participation Rate (% population aged 15 & over who wish to participate in the labour force)	64.5	63.3	64.6
Unemployment Rate (% of labour force not able to find a job)	4.4	5.9	5.6

Source: 2006 ABS Census data

Participation rate & Unemployment rate DEEWR, Small Area Labour Markets Australia, March Quarter 2010

**Table 1 Percentage Growth by Shire**

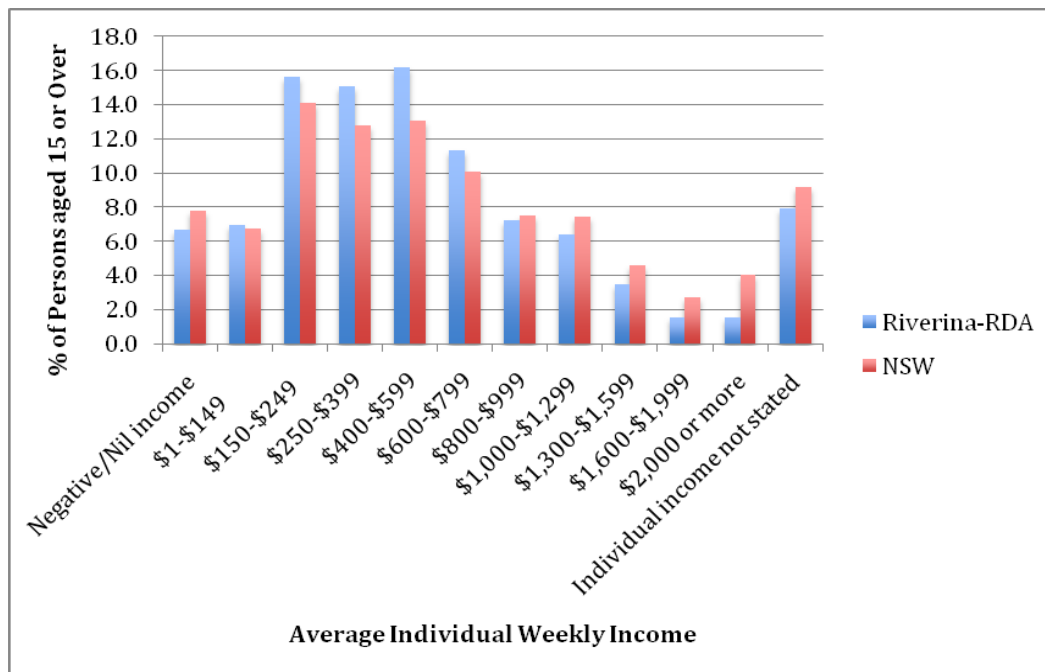
	<b>2006</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2004-2009p</b>	<b>2008r-2009p</b>	
<b>Local Government Area</b>	<b>ERP</b>	<b>ERP</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>no.</b>	<b>%</b>
Carrathool	2918	2964	-0.8	35	1.2
Coolamon	4176	4219	0.6	24	0.6
Cootamundra	7627	7703	0.4	140	1.9
Griffith	24921	25703	0.9	314	1.2
Gundagai	3844	3870	0.4	26	0.7
Hay	3516	3370	-1.0	-34	-1.0
Junee	6057	6283	1.2	149	2.4
Leeton	11785	11906	0.1	127	1.1
Lockhart	3299	3299	-0.4	10	0.3
Murrumbidgee	2593	2556	-0.4	-2	-0.1
Narrandera	6267	6262	-0.4	54	0.9
Temora	6124	6158	0.1	110	1.8
Wagga Wagga	59646	62904	1.7	977	1.6
Bland	6332	6407	0.0	90	1.4
Tumut	11273	11396	0.2	111	1.0
<b>Total NSW</b>	<b>6816087</b>	<b>7134421</b>	<b>1.2</b>	<b>119534</b>	<b>1.7</b>

(Source: ABS Estimated Resident Population Cat 3218.0)

**ERP**=Estimated Resident Population at 30 June

Figures 3 and 4 show income and education trends in the Riverina-RDA area, respectively. It can be seen in figure 3 that the Riverina-RDA area has a lower average income than NSW, with more individuals earning less than \$800 per week, and less individuals earning \$800 or over. Despite this difference, the Riverina-RDA area follows roughly the same income trend as NSW as a whole.

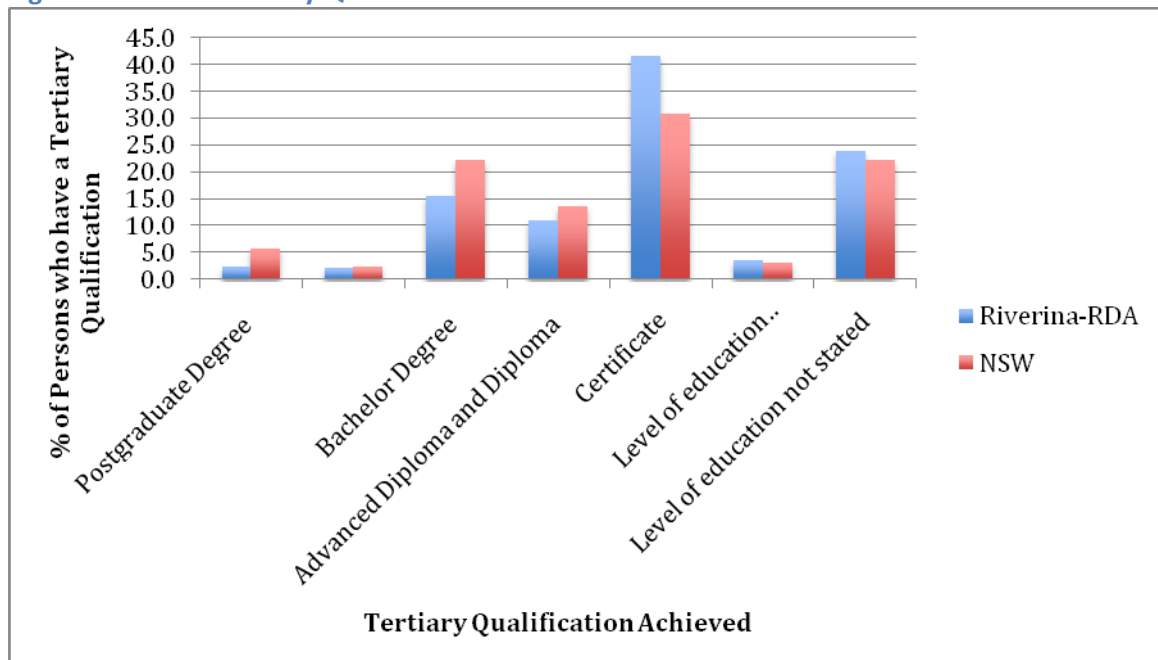
**Figure 3: Average Individual Weekly Income for the Riverina-RDA\***



(Source: ABS 2006 Census. \*Includes Tumut and Bland Shires)

In terms of tertiary qualifications, it can be seen in figure 4 that the Riverina-RDA area has a smaller proportion of individuals holding university qualifications than NSW. The Riverina-RDA area has a lower percentage of people with Bachelor Degrees and Diplomas. 41% of people in the Riverina-RDA area holding a tertiary qualification do so in the form of a Certificate.

**Figure 4: Level of Tertiary Qualifications for the Riverina-RDA\***



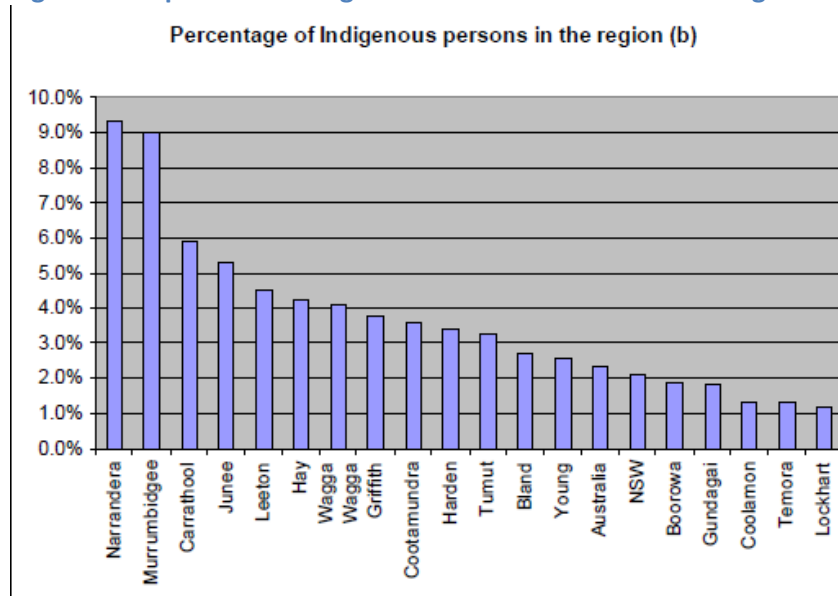
(Source: ABS 2006 Census. \*Includes Tumut and Bland Shires)

Figures 5 and 6 show the proportion of indigenous and overseas born persons, respectively, in the Riverina Region compared to Australia and NSW. In terms of the indigenous

population, Narrandera and Murrumbidgee shires have the highest percentage of indigenous persons, with Lockhart having the lowest in the region. Most shires in the region have a higher proportion of indigenous persons than NSW and Australia.

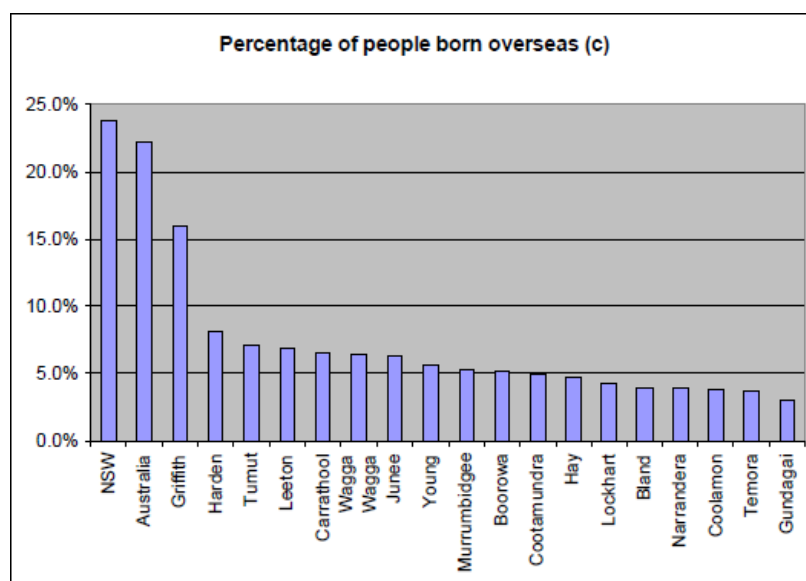
With regard to persons born overseas, Griffith shire has by far the highest proportion at around 15%. The rest of the shires in the region have a similar proportion of overseas persons with an average of between 5 and 10%. The proportion of overseas born persons is much higher in NSW and Australia than in the Riverina-RDA area.

**Figure 5: Proportion of Indigenous Persons in the Riverina Region**



(Source: ABS 2006 Census)

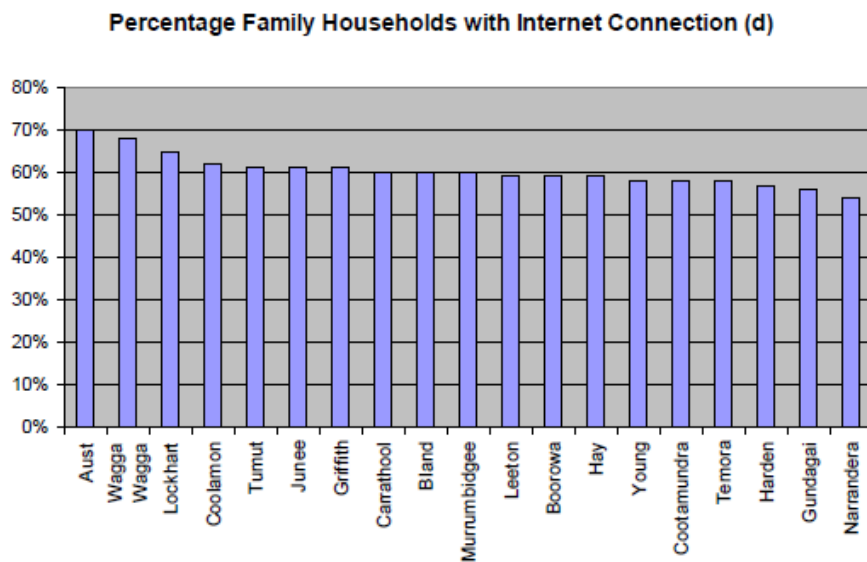
**Figure 6: Proportion of People Born Overseas in the Riverina Region**



(Source: ABS 2006 Census)

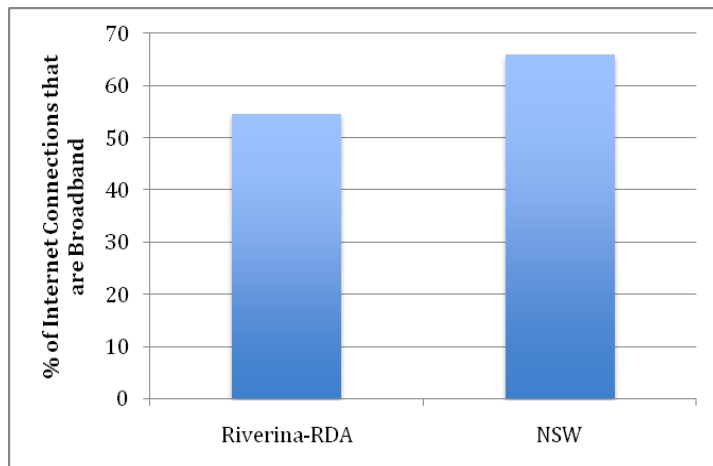
Figures 7 and 8 show the percentage of people with an Internet connection and the percentage of broadband connections for the Riverina-RDA area, respectively. It can be seen that the proportion of households with an Internet connection is fairly similar across all shires in the region. Wagga Wagga has the highest proportion of Internet connections, while Narrandera has the lowest. In 2006, approximately 53% of Internet connections in the Riverina-RDA area were broadband connections, compared with 65% in NSW.

**Figure 7: Percentage of Family Households with an Internet Connection**



(Source: ABS 2006 Census)

**Figure 8: Percentage of Broadband Internet Connections**



(Source: ABS 2006 Census)

## Housing characteristics

In undertaking the regional profiling for housing, education & health, consultants Parsons Brinckerhoff Australia Pty Ltd (PB) have adopted the ABS's classification of Murrumbidgee in NSW. As shown in Table 1.1, the Murrumbidgee statistical division (SD) is divided into three statistical subdivisions (SSD) including Central Murrumbidgee, Lower Murrumbidgee, and Wagga-Wagga. The three SSDs can be further disaggregated into thirteen local government areas (LGAs) that comprise the Riverina region. Specifically, the classifications are used to provide broad statistics on the educational, health, housing crime, and environmental profiles of the region.

**Table 1.1: Riverina NSW – statistical division, sub-division and local government areas**

Statistical Division (SD)	Statistical Sub-Division (SSD)	Local Government Area (LGA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Murrumbidgee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Central Murrumbidgee</li> <li>▪ Lower Murrumbidgee</li> <li>▪ Wagga-Wagga (excluding Wagga-Wagga)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wagga-Wagga</li> <li>▪ Coolamon</li> <li>▪ Cootamundra</li> <li>▪ Gundagai</li> <li>▪ Junee</li> <li>▪ Lockhart</li> <li>▪ Narrandera</li> <li>▪ Temora</li> <li>▪ Carrathool</li> <li>▪ Griffith</li> <li>▪ Hay</li> <li>▪ Leeton</li> <li>▪ Murrumbidgee</li> </ul>

Source: ABS (2010), National Regional Profile 2004 – 2008.

The housing vacancy rate in the Riverina (10.8%) was higher than NSW (9.5%) based on the 2006 Census (see Table 4.1). At this time, the average household size in the Riverina region was on par to that of NSW with 2.6 persons. The 2006 Census also indicates that there was a higher proportion of households that were fully owned in the Riverina (36.7%) compared to NSW (33.2%). Conversely, there was a smaller proportion of households being purchased and rented in the Riverina compared to NSW.

**Table 4.1: Dwelling characteristics – Riverina SD and NSW**

	Riverina (Murrumbidgee SD)		NSW (State)	
	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Dwelling characteristics</b>				
Total dwellings	62,017	-	2,728,719	-
Dwelling occupancy	55,292	-	2,470,451	-
Vacancy rate (%)	10.8%	-	9.5%	-
Average household size (person)	2.6	-	2.6	-
<b>Tenure type</b>				
Fully owned	20,309	36.7%	820,540	33.2%
Being purchased	16,332	29.5%	745,336	30.2%
Rented	15,293	27.7%	700,654	28.4%
Other tenure type	498	0.9%	20,070	0.8%
Not stated	2,863	5.2%	183,850	7.4%

Source: ABS (Census) 2006

**Table 4.2: Dwelling characteristics – Riverina SSDs**

	Wagga-Wagga (SSD)		Central Murrumbidgee (SSD)		Lower Murrumbidgee (SSD)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Dwelling characteristics</b>						
Total dwellings	21,247	-	22,770	-	18,001	-
Dwelling occupancy	19,593	-	19,663	-	16,039	-
Vacancy rate (%)	7.8%	-	13.6%	-	10.9%	-
Average household size (person)	2.5	-	2.5	-	2.7	-
<b>Tenure type</b>						
Fully owned	5,794	29.6%	8,755	44.5%	5,765	35.9%
Being purchased	6,542	33.4%	5,479	27.9%	4,310	26.9%
Rented	6,312	32.2%	4,286	21.8%	4,692	29.3%
Other tenure type	172	0.9%	183	0.9%	144	0.9%
Not stated	772	3.9%	959	4.9%	1,125	7.0%

Source: ABS (Census) 2006

In reviewing the dwelling characteristics of the Riverina SSD's of Wagga-Wagga, Central Murrumbidgee and Lower Murrumbidgee more specifically (see Table 4.2), it is apparent that Central Murrumbidgee (13.6%) had the highest vacancy rate, followed by Lower Murrumbidgee (10.9%) and Wagga-Wagga (7.8%). Central Murrumbidgee (44.5%) and Lower Murrumbidgee (35.9%) also had notably higher rates of fully-owned dwellings compared to NSW (33.2%). In contrast, Wagga-Wagga (33.4%) had a greater proportion of homes being purchased compared to NSW (30.2%).

## Cost of housing characteristics

The median family income of the Riverina (\$1,073) was below that of the State average (\$1,181) (see Table 4.3). The lower median family income recorded in the Riverina was however off-set by a notably lower housing loan repayment. In particular, the median housing loan repayment was \$1,083 per month in the Riverina compared to \$1,517 per month in NSW, a differential of approximately 40%. Correspondingly, median rents were also notably higher in NSW (\$210 per week) compared to the Riverina (\$135 per week).

**Table 4.3: Income and cost of housing characteristics, by SSD**

	Wagga-Wagga (SSD)	Central Murrumbidgee (SSD)	Lower Murrumbidgee (SSD)	Riverina (Murrumbidgee SD)	NSW
Median individual income (\$ per week)	462	376	440	424	451
Median household income (\$ per week)	961	736	910	864	1,036
Median family income (\$ per week)	1,136	998	1,088	1,073	1,181
Median rent (\$ per week)	160	110	140	135	210
Median housing loan repayment (\$ per month)	1,127	894	1,105	1,083	1,517

Source: ABS (2006) Census

Wagga-Wagga SSD (\$1,127) also recorded the highest housing loan repayment compared to Central Murrumbidgee SSD (\$894) and Lower Murrumbidgee SSD (\$1,083). This suggests in part that affordability is the lowest in the Wagga-Wagga SSD compared to the Lower Murrumbidgee SSD and Central Murrumbidgee SSD. In terms of median family incomes and rents, a similar trend applies to that of housing loan repayments. That is, family incomes and rents are highest in the Wagga-Wagga SSD, followed by Lower Murrumbidgee SSD and Central Murrumbidgee SSD.

## Crime profile

### Criminal incident characteristics

The number of crime incidents in the Riverina locality (Murrumbidgee SD) relative to NSW as a whole for major offences over a 2007 and 2009 period are summarised in Table 5.1. Like the State as a whole, the offence of ‘malicious damage to property’ was the most frequent offence that occurred in the Riverina region. This was followed by ‘assault – non domestic violence’ and ‘breaks and enter dwelling’.

However, of all the major incidents reported in 2009, the offence of ‘break and enter non-dwelling’ accounted for the largest share of all major offences reported as a proportion of NSW. That is, the Riverina accounted for 4% of all ‘break and enter non-dwelling’ offences in NSW. This was followed by ‘steal from retail store’ and ‘murder’ which accounted for 3.8% all NSW offences in these categories.

**Table 5.1: Number of recorded criminal incidents for major offences, Murrumbidgee SD & NSW**

Major offences	Riverina (Murrumbidgee SD)			NSW			Riverina - % share of NSW in 2009
	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	
Murder	2	0	3	79	79	80	3.8%
Assault - dom violence related	739	689	733	26,620	25,533	25,964	2.8%
Assault - non-dom violence related	1,087	1,136	1,072	41,770	42,697	39,985	2.7%
Sexual assault	155	146	114	3,918	4,072	4,311	2.6%
Indecent assault	105	151	150	3,290	5,131	5,240	2.9%
Robbery without a weapon	20	25	26	4,628	4,446	3,750	0.7%
Robbery with firearm	2	1	-	536	375	463	0.0%
Robbery with a weapon not a firearm	15	8	7	2,262	1,856	1,660	0.4%
Break and enter dwelling	1,081	1,056	1,020	46,567	44,239	41,410	2.5%
Break and enter non-dwelling	706	785	758	24,316	22,923	19,179	4.0%
Motow vehicle theft	349	369	379	26,592	24,405	22,322	1.7%
Steal from motor vehicle	1,003	1,250	1,001	62,049	57,814	46,961	2.1%
Steal from retail store	404	359	382	18,328	19,894	20,514	1.9%
Steal from dwelling	740	779	804	22,295	21,351	21,225	3.8%
Steal from person	107	92	79	11,653	10,333	9,838	0.8%
Fraud	439	507	415	33,015	38,856	34,694	1.2%
Malicious damage to property	3,158	3,291	2,995	107,137	109,371	101,236	3.0%

Source: Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2010)

## Trend in recorded criminal characteristics

Based on Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2010) recorded crime statistics, the overall trend in both Violent and Criminal offences within the Riverina region (Murrumbidgee SD) has been rated as being 'Stable' over the period January 2008 to December 2009 (see Table 5.2). However, despite the overall stability in the number of crime incidents in the region, it should be noted that the ratio to NSW for violent offences in Murrumbidgee is slightly greater than 1.0. This implies that there is greater proportion of people committing violent offences in the Murrumbidgee SD relative to NSW as a whole per 100,000 head of the population.

**Table 5.2: Trends in recorded criminal incidents, violent and property offences (January 2005 to December 2009)**

Statistical Division	Violent offences			Property offences		
	Annual % change over Jan 2008 – Dec 2009	Average annual % change over Jan 2008 – Dec 2009	Ratio to NSW rate	Annual % change over Jan 2008 – Dec 2009	Average annual % change over Jan 2008 – Dec 2009	Ratio to NSW rate
Murrumbidgee	Stable	Stable	1.2	Stable	Stable	1.0
NSW	Stable	Stable	1.0	Stable	Stable	1.0

Source: Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2010)

Notes: Ratio to NSW rate is a comparison of a NSW regional rate per 100,000 population to the NSW rate per 100,000 population. A ratio of one indicates parity with the state rate. Ratios greater than this 1.0 indicates higher than the state rate (vice-versa)

## Geographic profile

### Land characteristics

The land area in the Riverina region (Murrumbidgee SD) accounted for approximately 8% of total land area in NSW, or 64,231 km<sup>2</sup> (see Table 6.1). Of this area, Central and Lower Murrumbidgee SSD accounted for 99% of the total land area in the region.

**Table 6.1: Land area km<sup>2</sup> (2008)**

	Wagga-Wagga (SSD)	Central Murrumbidgee (SSD)	Lower Murrumbidgee (SSD)	Riverina (Murrumbidgee SD)	NSW
Land Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	220	27,429	36,581	64,231	801,315

Source: ABS (2010), *National Regional Profile 2004 – 2008*.

According to the NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECC 010a), the topography of the landscape is characterised by a series of overlapping low gradient alluvial fans. The bioregion is also dominated by river channels, floodplains, backplains, swamps, lakes and lunettes that are all of Quaternary age. Sandy soils and more saline heavy grey and brown clays can also be found toward the outer perimeter of the floodplains (DECC 2010).

### Water use characteristics

As the agricultural industry accounts for a large share of employment and economic activity in the Riverina region, water use by the industry is an important consideration in maintaining the economic base of the region, as well as environmental and natural resource management. In this context, water use in agriculture within the Riverina accounted for approximately 30% of total agricultural water use in NSW, a large and significant amount. Of this amount, the Lower Murrumbidgee SSD accounted for 92% of total water use (see Table 6.2).

**Table 6.2: Water use on Australian Farms (2006)**

	Wagga-Wagga (SSD)	Central Murrumbidgee (SSD)	Lower Murrumbidgee (SSD)	Riverina (Murrumbidgee SD)	NSW
Area of agricultural land (ha '000)	19	2,300	3,368	5,687	62,119
Area irrigated (ha '000)	0	25	241	266	994
Irrigation volume	542	92,113	1,323,421	1,416,076	4,533,325

	Wagga-Wagga (SSD)	Central Murrumbidgee (SSD)	Lower Murrumbidgee (SSD)	Riverina (Murrumbidgee SD)	NSW
applied (ML)					
Other agricultural uses (ML)	218	17,501	11,504	29,222	261,925
Total water use (ML)	759	109,614	1,334,925	1,445,298	4,795,250
Area irrigated as proportion of agricultural land (%)	0.0	1.1	7.2	4.7	1.6

Source: ABS (2006), Census

The notable use of water by the agricultural industry was accompanied by a higher percentage of irrigated agriculture (as a proportion of agricultural land) in the Riverina compared to NSW – that is, 4.7% in the Riverina compared to 1.6% for NSW as a whole (see Table 6.2).

### Climate characteristics

Based on information sourced from DECC (2010b), the climate in the Riverina region is dominated by a dry semi-arid climate. The region is characterised by hot summers and cool winters. Mean annual temperatures vary little across the bioregion, ranging from 15 to 18°C (see Table 6.3). Rainfall is at its highest in May and September, with drought periods not being unusual. Average annual rainfall varies from 238 to 671mm with more consistent rainfall occurring in the winter months (see Table 6.3) (DECC 2010).

**Table 6.3: Riverina bioregion – climate variable information**

Mean annual temperature	15-18°C
Minimum average monthly temperature	2.2-4.6°C
Maximum average monthly temperature	30.6-33.7°C
Mean annual rainfall	238-617mm
Minimum average monthly rainfall	13-36mm
Maximum average monthly rainfall	26-70mm

Source: DECC (2010b)

## Unique Features

### Water

The RDA-Riverina region is part of the Murray Darling Basin and with the Murrumbidgee River flowing from east to west through the region. Water is a significant asset for the region.

### Roads

The Riverina region is dissected by four Federal Highways including the Hume Highway (North to south), Sturt Highway (east to west), Newell Highway (north to south), Mid western Highway (south to north east), Cobb Highway (north to south). Other major highways include Burley Griffin Way and Kidman Way

### Rail

North south rail line from Melbourne to Sydney, plus a network of other feeder lines spread across the region. A number of these are in need of upgrading & repair.

### Air Infrastructure

The Riverina region has three major airports in Wagga Wagga, Griffith & Narrandera that are accessed for commercial passenger services to either Sydney or Melbourne. Wagga Wagga is serviced daily by Regional Express (REX) Airlines and Qantaslink. QantasLink operate Dash 8 aircraft seven days a week between Sydney & Wagga. REX operate regular daily services to both Sydney and Melbourne with a Saab 340 aircraft. Griffith/Narrandera is serviced daily by REX Airlines.

Airfreight needs in and out of the region are catered to by Air Express, TNT and Toll Priority.

Airports are also located at the following towns Cootamundra, Temora, Hay, Coleambally, Hillston & Lockhart.

## Economic Profile

### The Labour Market

The table below shows industry employment figures for the Riverina-RDA between 1996 and 2006. It can be seen that 'Retail trade' and 'Manufacturing' had high levels of employment and were also growing industries. The industries with the largest falls in the number of people employed 1996-2006 were 'Agriculture, fisheries and forestry', 'Wholesale trade' and 'Information media and telecommunications'. Also worth noting is the decline in employment in 'Mining' and the strong growth in business support services including 'Administrative and support services' and 'Professional, scientific and technical service', as well as in 'Construction', 'Healthcare and social assistance' and 'Arts and recreational services'.

**Table 2: Industry of employment trends 1996-2006**

Industry	Number 2006	% of total 2006	Change 1996-2006	% Change 1996-2006
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	7,935	13	-1,719	-18
Retail trade	7,377	11.8	1,638	29
Manufacturing	6,752	10.8	1,178	21
Health care & social assistance	6,023	9.7	1,324	28
Education & training	5,327	8.5	698	15
Public administration & safety	5,075	8.1	540	12
Accommodation & food services	3,835	6.2	546	17
Construction	3,762	6.0	939	33
Transport, postal & warehousing	2,910	4.7	274	10
Wholesale trade	2,362	3.8	-861	-27
Other services	2,276	3.7	36	2
Professional, scientific & technical services	2,055	3.3	190	10
Inadequately described/Not stated	1,456	2.3	-255	-15
Administrative & support services	1,455	2.3	384	36
Financial & insurance services	1,127	1.8	-30	-3
Electricity, gas, water & waste services	776	1.2	17	2
Rental, hiring & real estate services	669	1.1	80	14
Information media & telecommunications	613	1.0	-230	-27
Arts & recreation services	435	0.7	80	23
Mining	87	0.1	-22	-20
<b>Total</b>	<b>62,307</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,807</b>	<b>8</b>

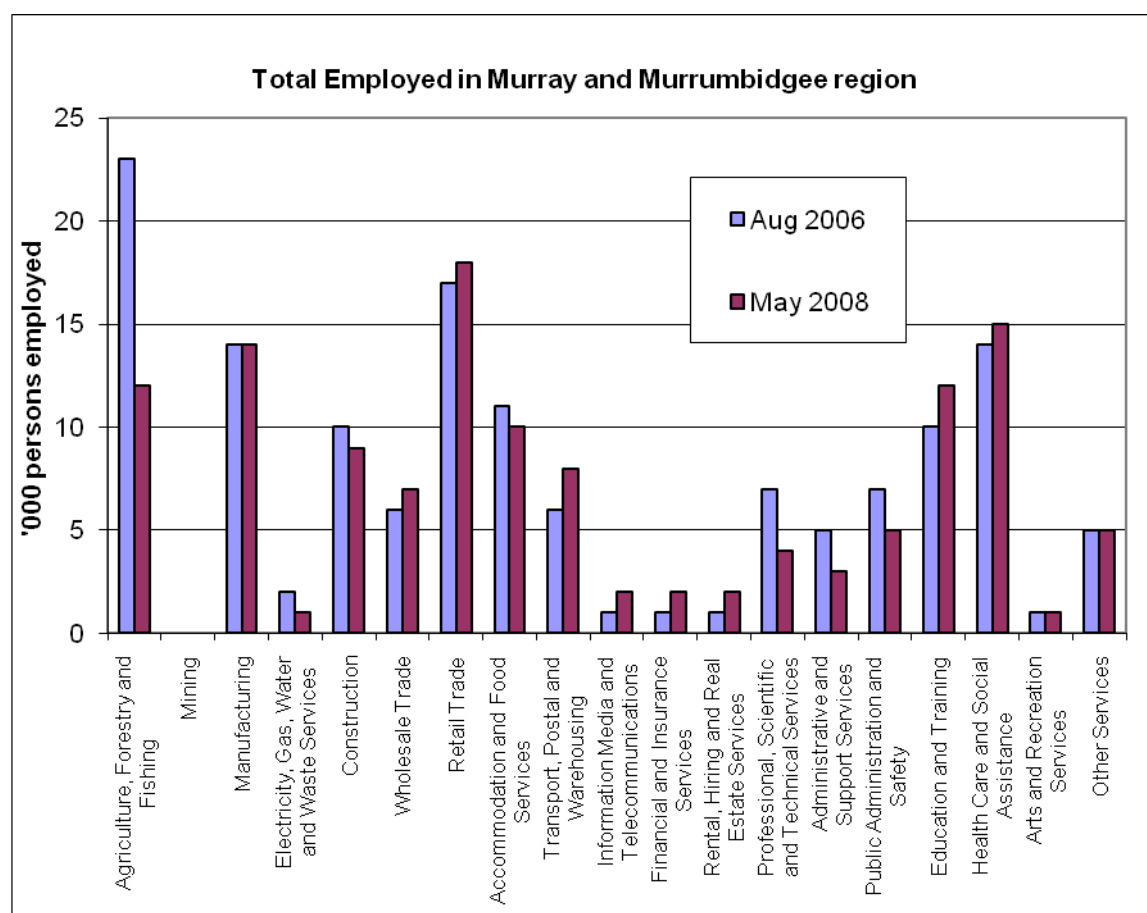
(Source: ABS Census 2006)

## Employment growth

The mix of jobs in the Riverina-RDA is changing in line with the overall trends in the national economy – which has seen growth in tertiary and higher order service sector industries and a decline in primary production employment due to drought, lower water allocations, commodity prices, farm mechanisation and holdings become larger.

These trends are demonstrated for the Murray and Murrumbidgee regions in the graph below. The education sector is strong in the Riverina-RDA area, with Charles-Sturt University having campuses in both Albury and Wagga Wagga. In addition, the TAFE NSW Riverina Institute and other Registered Training Organisations provide skill based training including the National Aerospace Training Centre of Excellence. The Australian Army and Royal Australian Air Force also have a strong presence in the region (*Riverina-Murray Jobs Summit Fact Sheet 2010, NSW Government*).

Figure 9: Total Persons Employed in the Murray and Murrumbidgee Region



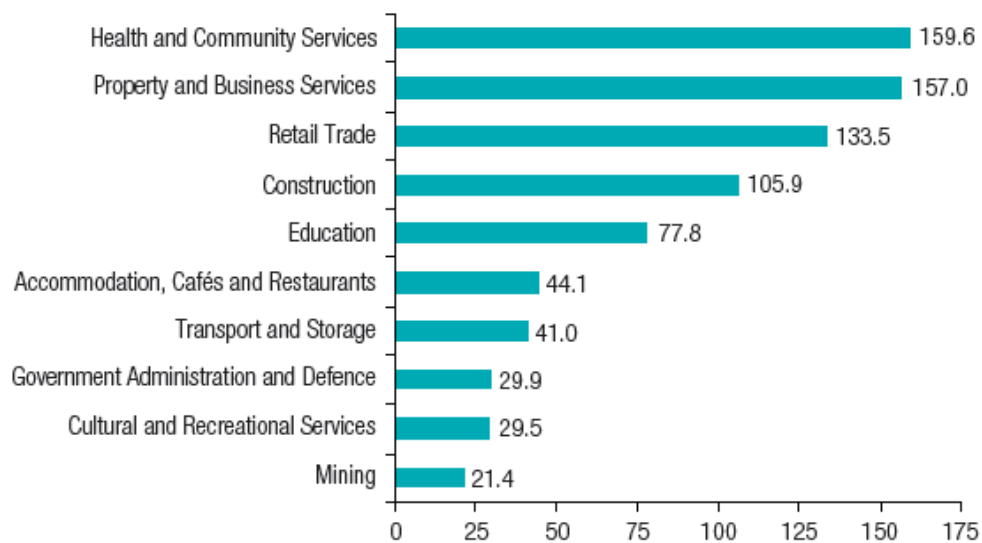
(Source: ABS Labour Force Australia – Employed Persons by Region, Sex, Major Occupation Group)

National employment growth in different industries is analysed by the Department of Employment, Education, and Workplace Relations each year in its *Australian Jobs* publication. The current forecasts (from the 2008 edition) show that the majority of new jobs in Australia through to 2013 will be in just five industries:

1. Health and community service (public and private sector)
2. Property and business services (business services include legal, accounting, design, marketing, exporting services etc)
3. Retail trade
4. Construction
5. Education (public and private sector).

Nationally, these five industries are expected to account for over two-thirds of the new jobs forecast.

### Projected Employment Growth to 2012-13 Top 10 Industries ('000)



Source: *Australian Jobs 2008*, DEEWR

Four of these five industries rely heavily on skilled workers, and for the top two, the profile of skill demand has a strong emphasis on degrees and diplomas. Clearly, for young people in the Riverina-RDA to give themselves the best employment prospects, high levels of education will be a crucial success factor. Fortunately TAFE NSW Riverina Institute(Griffith campus) in partnership with Charles Sturt University (Wagga Wagga) have offered a Bachelor of Business Degree since 2004 and now also offer Nursing and Early Childhood.

Interestingly in Industry Employment Growth in Riverina-Murray Region, 2001-2006 figures it shows that Health Care & Social Assistance, Construction, Retail, Public Administration & Safety and Education & Training were the growth industry sectors for this region (ABS, 2006 Census of Population and Housing).

### **Skill Shortages**

Skills shortages occur where there is a mismatch between available skilled people and the current and emerging needs of industry. They can create critical short term and long term problems for Australia's economic health and the quality of life for Australians.

To combat this issue the Australian Government has enabled inward migration of people with skills to address some of the shortages being experienced. This is coordinated through

the Department of Immigration & Citizenship ([www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)). On the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2010 there were a number of reforms announced to reflect the government's commitment to a labour market demand-driven migration program. These are listed below:-

- In May 2010 there was the announcement of a new more targeted Skilled Occupation List (SOL) effective from 1 July 2010 so only highly skilled migrants will be eligible to apply for independent skilled migration visas. This replaces the Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL)
- In 2010 each State and Territory is required to develop a Migration Plan. Under the new priority processing arrangements, migrants nominated by a state or territory government under their State Migration Plan will be processed ahead of applications for independent skilled migration. The Migration Plans plans will be in the form of Memoranda of Understanding between the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship and the relevant State/Territory government Minister.
- Amendments to the Migration Act will be introduced this year to give the Minister the power to set the maximum number of visas that may be granted to applicants in any one occupation if need be. This will ensure that the Skilled Migration Program is not dominated by a handful of occupations.

Another change has been the fading out of the ASCO code and the introduction of ANZSCO. Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) is a system developed to collect, publish and analyse occupation statistics across government agencies, and is being introduced by the department as the new standard to capture occupation information in all visa, settlement and citizenship programs.

ANZSCO will also be used within skilled visa programs, where it is a requirement for visa eligibility, as the standard by which a visa applicant's skills to undertake a specific occupation in Australia are assessed.

The Riverina region has experienced skills shortages over the last 5 years to varying degrees and in varying occupations.

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) assesses skill shortages through a number of means, one of which is to survey employers who have recently advertised vacancies for selected skilled occupations. DEEWR produces lists of shortages for each State and Territory which can be accessed from the following website.

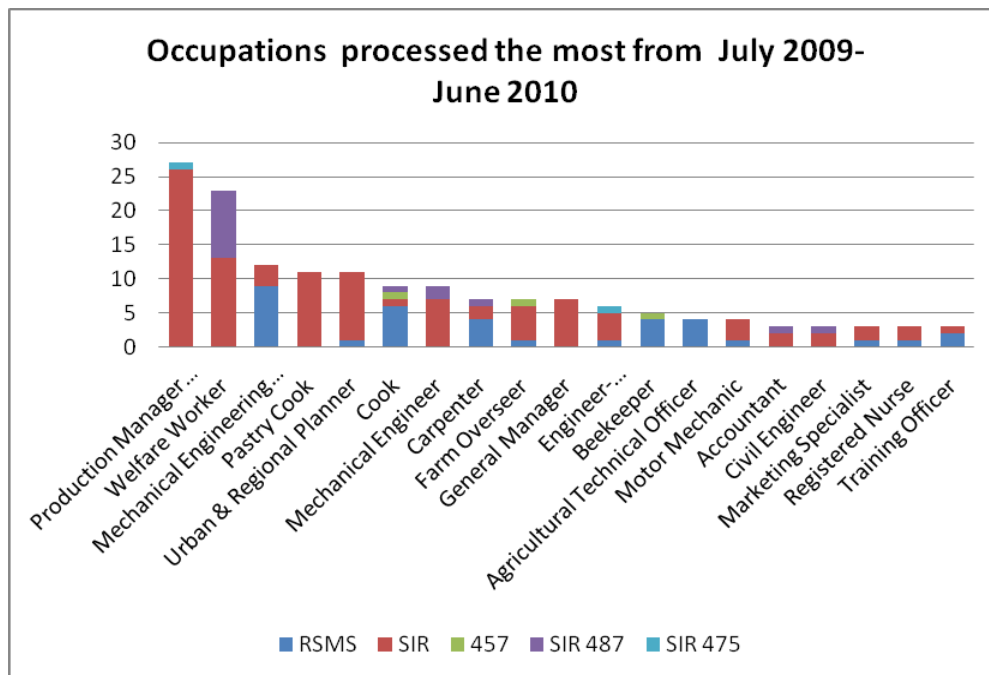
<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/LMI/SkillShortages/Pages/StateTerritorySkillShort.aspx>

RDA-Riverina from November 2009 became a registered certifying body enabling it to provide sponsorship under the individual Skilled - Regional (Provisional) Sponsored Visa Scheme (SRS) or the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS), which enables regional employers to sponsor skilled migrants for skilled positions which cannot be filled using the local labour market.

Applications for sponsorship under the Skilled Regional (Provisional) Sponsored Visa Scheme are designed to address the skill shortages that exist in many parts of Australia, in particular regional Australia. These independent visas allow individuals with the appropriate qualifications, English Level, Age and experience to come to a regional area to obtain a

position that has been identified as a skill in demand, encouraging continued development in the region. Sponsorship will only be considered for those applying for Occupations listed on the Riverina Skilled Occupation List. This list identifies skills or occupations that are in demand in the region. Processing can take considerable time and there is no guarantee of a job. The challenges that face Australian job seekers can be also experienced as well as the cultural barriers with employers. Every support is offered and individuals are referred to Centrelink, Multicultural Agencies and Job Service Providers. For further information visit [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au) or <http://www.rdariverina.org.au/riverina-skilled-migration-program.html>

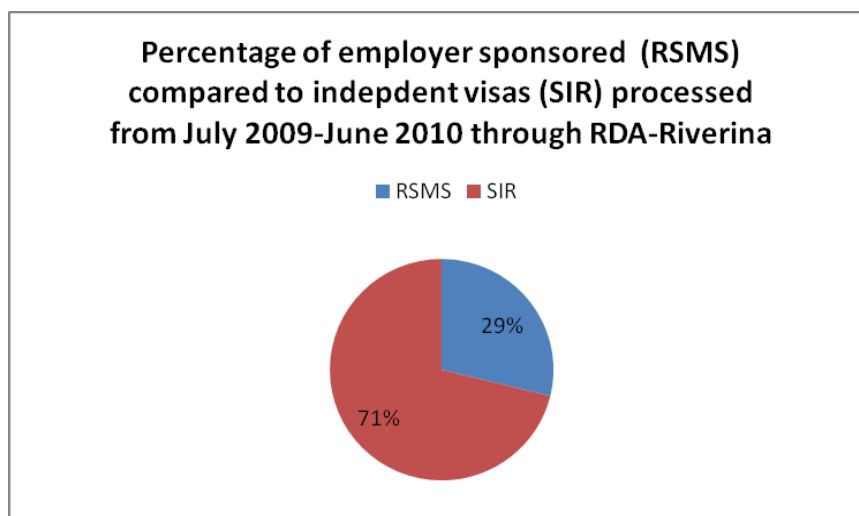
**Figure 10: Occupations sponsored by RDA-Riverina from July 2009-June 2010.**



RSMS- Employer sponsored visa

Independent Visas:- 457 (no longer processed by RDA-Riverina), SIR-475 (offshore applicants) & SIR-487 (onshore applicants)

**Figure 11: Visa types sponsored by RDA-Riverina from July 2009-June 2010**



## Agriculture and Natural Resources

As per 2006 ABS Census statistics Agriculture is the largest employer in the Riverina-RDA. The region has an unmatched diversity of produce based mainly upon the Murrumbidgee and Coleambally irrigation areas (approximately 182,000ha) and dryland farming.

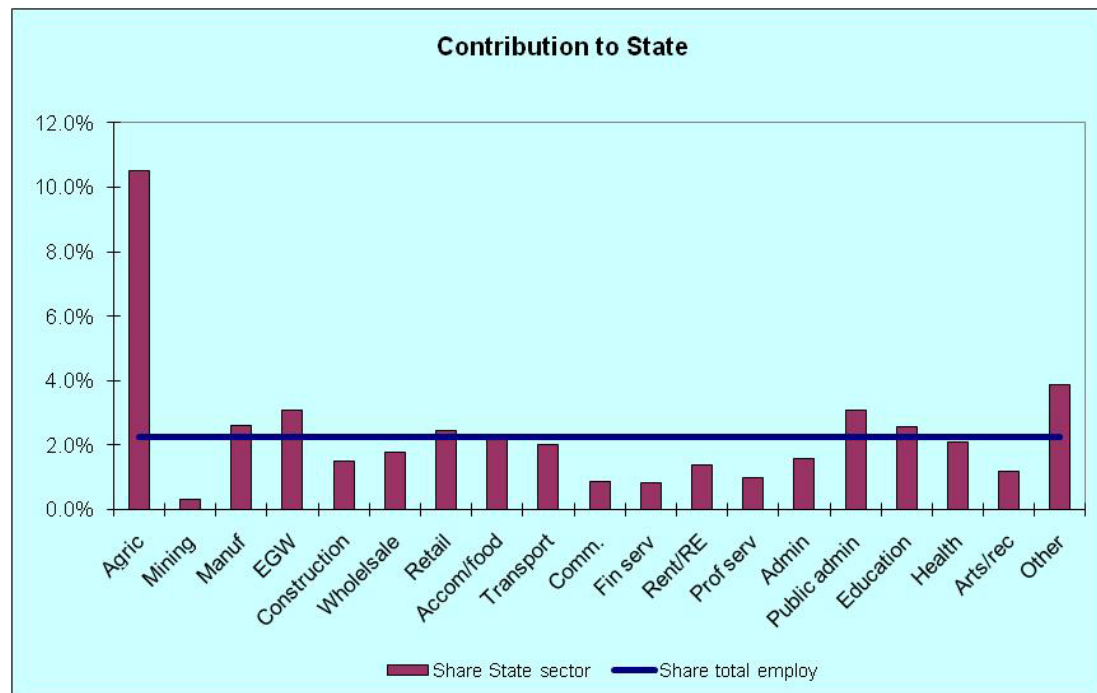
Alongside crops such as rice, maize and canola, the region boasts:

- Over 25% of NSW fruit and vegetable production
- 90% of NSW citrus products
- 80% of NSW wine/grape production
- Livestock feedlots, sales and processing facilities
- Nearly 20% of all NSW crop production and two thirds of its total value.

(Source: NSW Government Industry Statistics)

In a normal year total agricultural and horticultural production in the Riverina is worth more than A\$1 billion (NSW Government Industry Statistics). However, the extended drought has impacted significantly on the region. The withdrawal of previously secure irrigation entitlements has also affected the security of irrigated agriculture in the Riverina-RDA, with potential financial and social ramifications.

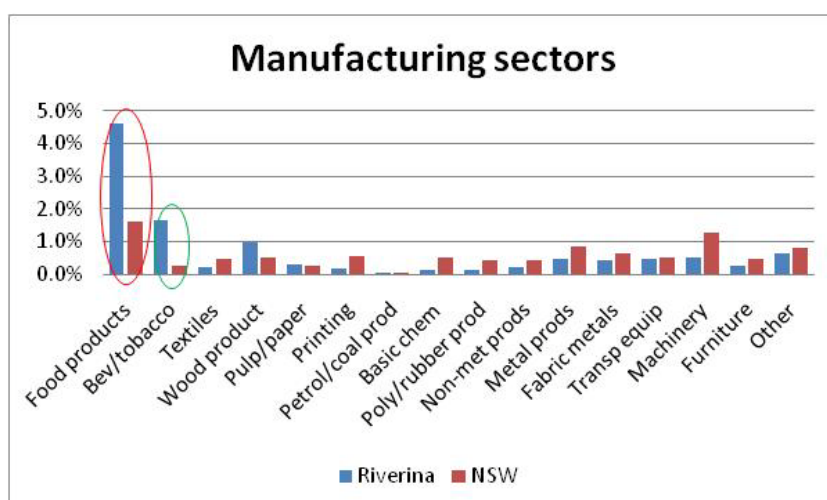
**Figure 12: Industry contributions to the State economy in percentages**



Source: 2006 ABS Census

EGW= Electricity, Gas, Water & Waster Services

Figure 13: Manufacturing contributions to the NSW State economy in percentages



Source: 2006 ABS Census

As can be seen in Figure 13 the large proportion of manufacturing in the Riverina region involves value adding to the agricultural (citrus, rice, fruit/vegetables, beef/lamb/poultry) industry, in particular food products with second being Beverages/Tobacco. The Beverages/Tobacco accounts for the large percentage of grapes processed for wine, particularly in the Griffith area.

**Wine & Grape Industry-** Riverina geographical area produced slightly more than 300,000 tonnes grapes in 2008. De Bortoli's & Casellas are two of Australia's largest wine exporters.

**Rice Industry-**90% of Australia's rice crops are grown in the Murray-Riverina. Rice was first grown in Australia in 1920's in Griffith & Leeton. SunRice is anchored in Leeton, NSW and operates state-of-the-art processing facilities that mill and pack rice, and rice flour, and manufacture rice cakes and convenience rice food.

**Feedlots & Livestock:** The region has major feedlots & processing facilities located at:

- Yanco (Rockdale Beef- currently in transition of ownership)- integrated beef cattle feedlot, feed mill, meatworks and farming business. Capacity 170,000 cattle
- Tabbita, near Griffith (Swift Australia)- Capacity 35,000 cattle and 60 employees.
- Feedlot located at Stockinbingal (Cargill Beef Australia).
- Wagga Wagga (Cargill Beef Australia)-

**Chicken Processing:** Baiada Poultry Ltd (formerly Bartter Enterprise) operate at Hanwood (near Griffith) with approximately 5 million birds. It's a fully integrated poultry operation encompassing livestock farming, feed milling and primary and further processing of chickens.

**Citrus Industry-** The Riverina Citrus industry comprises of over 500 citrus properties, supplying 45 citrus packing sheds and 8 citrus juice processors throughout Australia. The Riverina has approximately 30% of all Australia's citrus production, average total production of 180,000 tonnes & citrus plantings equate to approximately 8,500 hectares.

**Vegetable Industry-** includes broccoli, capsicum, carrots, gherkins, lettuce, onion, potato, pumpkin, beetroot, rockmelon and water melon.

**Cherries & Nut (Walnut & Almond) Industry-** emerging industries

## Tourism

Tourism is a significant contributor to the economic prosperity of the Riverina-RDA, which forms a major part of the geographic corridor between Sydney and Melbourne. For the year ending September 2009, the Riverina region:

- Received 942,000 domestic overnight visitors - up by 10.2% from September 2008
  - Received 5.9% of overnight visitors in regional NSW. Compared to September 2008, the share of visitors was up by 0.9%
  - Had a majority of overnight visits from people '35 to 44 years' (22.4%) followed by those '45 to 54 years' (21.9%)
  - Received 24,900 international overnight visitors - up by 14.8% from September 2008
  - For domestic overnight visitors, 'Visiting friends and relatives' (34.8%) was the largest purpose, followed by 'holiday or leisure' (32.9%) and 'business' (23.9%)
  - For domestic day-trip visitors, 'Eat out at restaurants' (41.1%) was the most popular activity undertaken, followed by 'shopping for pleasure' (35.9%) and 'visit friends and relatives' (27.9%).
- (Tourism NSW Regional Statistics Dec 2009)

The average stay is 2.3 nights which is lower than the NSW average of 3.4 nights. This presents an opportunity to not only increase the number of visitors to the region but importantly to increase the length of stay. Due to the large number of people visiting the Riverina for visiting friends and relatives (VFR) and holiday/leisure, Riverina Regional Tourism will continue to focus its marketing efforts on the holiday/leisure and VFR markets. Intrastate (regional NSW and Sydney) is still the biggest market for the Riverina, followed by interstate, Victoria in particular taking up the majority of this stake. Marketing communications will be focused on reaching these markets across all campaigns.

The RDA-Riverina boasts a number of significant tourist attractions in the region and some of these are listed below:-

- Temora Aviation Museum, Temora/ Shear Outback-The Australian Shearers Hall of Fame
- Riverina Regional Museum
- Wagga Wagga Art Gallery containing the National Art Glass Collection.
- Griffith Regional Theatre, Griffith / Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre
- A number of wineries in the region, particularly surrounding Griffith
- The Murrumbidgee River which is used for many recreational activities such as swimming, water skiing, fishing, canoeing, boating and the along the banks is a favourite location for campers.
- Significant sporting activities in most of the Riverina communities.
- Internationally recognised Fivebough and Tuckerbil Wetlands and Willandra National park provide a number of bird watching and walking trails.
- Touring routes including the Kidman Way and The Long Paddock Cobb Highway Touring route ([www.thelongpaddock.com.au](http://www.thelongpaddock.com.au))

The agricultural tours market has declined in previous years and RRT are considering how promotion of this activity can be broadened to promoting 'special interest' tours and events. The areas of eco-tourism and travelling routes are burgeoning tourism opportunities for the Riverina. Riverina Regional Tourism plays an active role in marketing the Riverina regions tourism product as well as developing the skills of those in the industry. Visit [www.visitriverina.com.au](http://www.visitriverina.com.au)

## ***Environmental profile***

The RDA-Riverina is part of the Murrumbidgee Catchment within the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority Area. The Murrumbidgee River is a regulated system and has 14 dams and 8 large weirs. The large dams include Burrinjuck Dam near Yass, with a capacity of 1.026 million megalitres, and Blowering Dam near Tumut, holding 1.628 million megalitres. Water is used for urban, agricultural, environmental and recreational purposes throughout the region. Situated in the lower-Murrumbidgee Catchment are the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area and the Coleambally Irrigation Area with more than 10 000 kilometres of irrigation channels supplied by the two storages.

The Murrumbidgee catchment is home to sites of international ecological significance including the Ramsar listed Fivebough and Tuckerbil Swamps and the Lowbidgee Wetlands. National significant sites include Mid-Murrumbidgee Wetlands - located from Wagga Wagga to Carrathool (Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Plan).



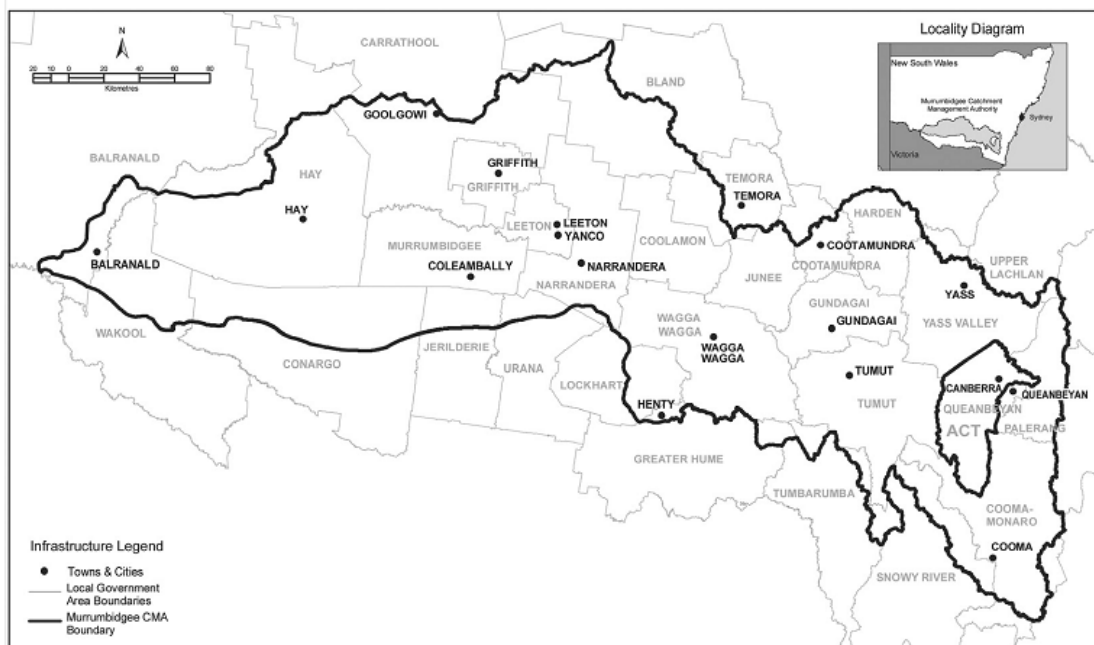
Source: <http://www.murrumbidgee.cma.nsw.gov.au/about/catchment/map.aspx>

Iconic species for the RDA-Riverina region:

- Plains Wanderer and the Superb Parrot

### **River Red Gum Forests**

On 1 July 2010, the NSW Government turned internationally significant River Red Gum forests and woodlands into National Parks. This follows recommendations made by the independent Natural Resources Commission (NRC) after their report in 2009 found that the forests were facing stress as a result of the combined effect of river regulation, the over-allocation of water and drought. Murrumbidgee Shire Council is the only Council in the RDA-Riverina region that is directly impacted by this decision.



Prepared by the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority, from digitised field data held in the Geographical Information System.

October, 2005.

## Cultural Heritage

Australia is home to many different Indigenous or Aboriginal clans, also known as Aboriginal nations or tribes. Among the largest and most prominent of the remaining clans are the Pitjantjatjara, Arrernte, Luritja, Tharawal, Wiradjuri, Wonnarua, Alvarwarre, Guugu, Yimithirr, Gabi Gabi, and Yorta Yorta Peoples. The Riverina forms part of the Wiradjuri nation.

The Wiradjuri are the largest Aboriginal group in New South Wales. They occupy a large area in central New South Wales, from the Blue Mountains in the east, to Hay in the west, north to Nyngan and south to Albury: the South Western slopes region.

The Wiradjuri tribal area has been described as "the land of the three rivers, the Wambool later known as the Macquarie, the Kalare later known as the Lachlan and the Murrumbidgee (Murrumbidjeri). The Murray River forms the Wiradjuri's southern boundary, the change from woodland to open grassland form their eastern boundary."

Occupation of the land by the Wiradjuri can be seen by carved trees and campsite remainders. Carved trees are more commonly found around the Macquarie and Lachlan rivers in the north rather than the Murrumbidgee in the south. Campsites, which indicate regular seasonal occupation by small groups, have been found on river flats, open land and by rivers.

The Wiradjuri are identified as a coherent group as they maintained a cycle of ceremonies that moved in a ring around the whole tribal area. This cycle led to tribal coherence despite the large occupied area.



## ***Health profile***

The RDA-Riverina region is serviced by the Murrumbidgee Local Health District. There are 15 Local Health Districts in NSW.

Murrumbidgee Local Health District Area:



**Source:** <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/services/lhn/murru/>

### **Murrumbidgee Local Health District Board Members:**

Ms Lynda Summers (Chair), Ms Narelle Fitzgerald, Dr Louis Baggio, Mr Keith McDonald, Mrs Amanda Shand, Mr Michael Braybrooks OAM, Dr Thomas Douch, Ms Betty Cragg, Mr John Barron & Mrs Gayle Murphy.

## **Murrumbidgee Medicare Local Area**

The Riverina Division of General Practice and Primary Health Ltd, in partnership with Murrumbidgee General Practice Network Ltd, have been selected as the Murrumbidgee Medicare Local.

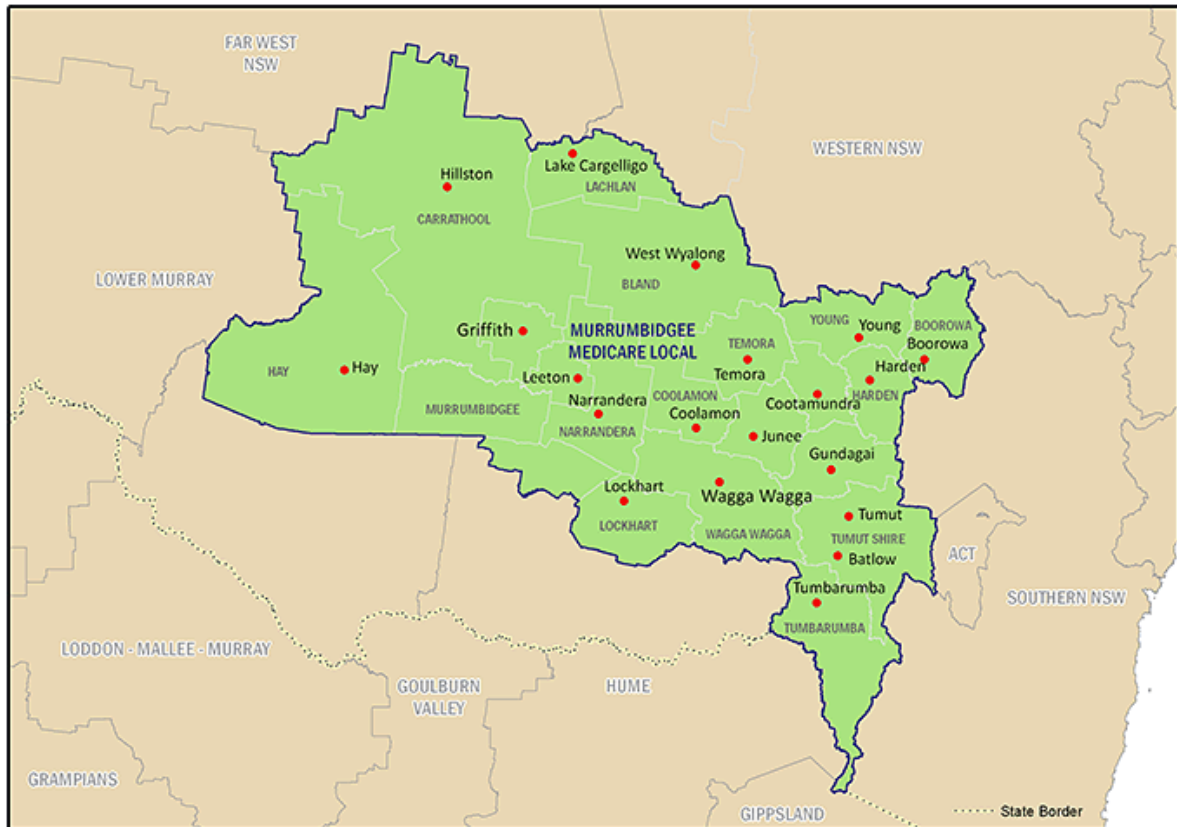
### **Murrumbidgee Medicare Local activities:**

Medicare Locals are required to undertake a range of activities to meet their strategic objectives to:

- Improve the patient journey through developing integrated and coordinated services;
- Provide support to clinicians and service providers to improve patient care;
- Identification of the health needs of local areas and development of locally focused and responsive services;
- Facilitation of the implementation and successful performance of primary health care initiatives and programs; and
- Be efficient and accountable with strong governance and effective management.

Initially, the Murrumbidgee Medicare Local will:

- promote and expand current activities to engage other primary health care providers at the local level where possible, especially the refugee assessment clinic, and after hours services;
- improve the integration of secure communication of electronic medical record data between relevant providers;
- continue to enhance connectivity between the acute setting and follow up primary care between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Outreach Workers;
- facilitate a reduction in inappropriate or inefficient service utilisation and avoidable hospitalisations, including: extending the Connecting Care Program through linkages with Home Care Services to provide support on discharge with appropriate care in place; engaging GPs in the pre-workup for elective surgery patients, particularly those who are diabetic or obese; working in collaboration to establish models of GP after-hours services in rural communities; and expanding the shared antenatal care program; and
- explore whole of life approaches to prevention and early intervention with youth, in relation to: the building bridges program; sexual health; quit smoking; headspace; healthy eating programs; substance abuse; and reducing the incidence of obesity.



Source:

[http://www.yourhealth.gov.au/internet/yourhealth/publishing.nsf/content/MediLocProfile\\_Murrumbidgee](http://www.yourhealth.gov.au/internet/yourhealth/publishing.nsf/content/MediLocProfile_Murrumbidgee)

### Number of health institutions

Based on a survey of NSW's Health (2010a) list of health services, the Riverina region was serviced by approximately 10 public hospitals, 4 aged care centres, 18 community health service centres, 7 mental health service centres, and 3 sexual assault health service centres. Table 3.1 & 3.1a summarises the names of each of the facilities by type and location within the Riverina region.

**Table 3.1: List of health services in the Riverina region**

LGA's	Public Hospitals	Oral Health Service	Aged Care	Nursing Home
<b>Carrathool</b>	Hillston District Hospital	Hillston Community Health Centre		
<b>Coolamon</b>	Coolamon-Ganmain Health Service			
<b>Cootamundra</b>	Cootamundra Hospital	Cootamundra Hospital	Cootamundra Nursing Home	
<b>Gundagai</b>	Gundagai District Hospital	Gundagai Dental Van (fixed)		
<b>Griffith</b>	Griffith Base Hospital	Griffith Base Hospital	Murrumbidgee Aged Care & Assessment team Griffith Nursing Home	Griffith Nursing Home Pioneer Lodge Nursing Home Scalabrini Village Nursing Home

<b>Hay</b>	Hay Hospital	Hay Hospital		Haydays Retirement Hostel
<b>Junee</b>	Junee Hospital & Health Services	Junee Hospital Dental Clinic		
<b>Leeton</b>	Leeton District Hospital	Leeton Child Dental Clinic		
<b>Lockhart</b>				
<b>Murrumbidgee</b>				
<b>Narrandera</b>	Narrandera District Hospital	Narrandera Child Dental Clinic		Narrandera Nursing Home
<b>Temora</b>	Temora & District Hospital	Temora Child Dental Clinic		Narraburra Lodge Nursing Home
<b>Wagga-Wagga</b>	Wagga Wagga Base Hospital/ Calvary Hospital (Private)	Wagga Wagga Hospital Dental Clinic Wagga Wagga Dental Mobile Van	Wagga Wagga Aged Care Assessment Team, Aged Care Advisory Service	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

**Table 3.1a: List of health services in the Riverina region**

<b>LGA's</b>	<b>Community Health Services</b>	<b>Mental Health Services</b>	<b>Sexual Assault Health Services</b>
<b>Carrathool</b>	Hillston Community Health Centre		
<b>Coolamon</b>	Coolamon Community Health Centre Ardlethan Community Health Centre		
<b>Cootamundra</b>	Cootamundra Community Health Centre	Cootamundra Mental Health Service	
<b>Gundagai</b>	Gundagai Community Health Centre	Gundagai Community Health Centre	
<b>Griffith</b>	Griffith Community Health	Griffith Community Health Murrumbidgee CMHC	Griffith Sexual Assault Service
<b>Hay</b>	Hay Community Health	Hay Community Health Centre	
<b>Junee</b>	Junee Community Health Centre		
<b>Leeton</b>	Leeton Community Health Centre	1) Leeton Community Health Centre 2) Leeton/Narrandera Child & Family Mental Health Services	
<b>Lockhart</b>	Lockhart Community Health Centre The Rock Community Health Centre		
<b>Murrumbidgee</b>	Coleambally Community Health Centre Darlington Point Community Health Centre		
<b>Narrandera</b>	Narrandera Community Health Centre		

	Barellan Community Health Centre		
<b>Temora</b>	Temora Community Health Centre	Temora Mental Health Service	
<b>Wagga-Wagga</b>	Wagga Community Health Centre Tarcutta Community Health Centre	1) Wagga Wagga Base Hospital 2) Wagga Wagga CMHC & Rehabilitation Service 3) Women's Health Centre	1) Wagga Sexual Assault Service. Wagga Community Health Centre 2) Wagga Wagga Community Health Centre
	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: NSW Health (2010a), List of Health Services.

[http://www2.health.nsw.gov.au/services/Default.cfm?S\\_UNITNAME=&S\\_SERVICENAME=8](http://www2.health.nsw.gov.au/services/Default.cfm?S_UNITNAME=&S_SERVICENAME=8)

Within this context, the Annual Report of the Greater Southern Area Health Service (GSAHS) (2009) provides broad information on the key issues being faced by medical institutions outlined in the region. Specifically, the institutions located within the LGA's of Coolaman, Junee, Narrandera, Leeton and Temora have reported issues related to (i) ongoing challenges with recruitment of health professional staff, (ii) education of staff to increase skills particularly in emergency care, and (iii) the continuation of training and support of nurses undertaking emergency care courses.

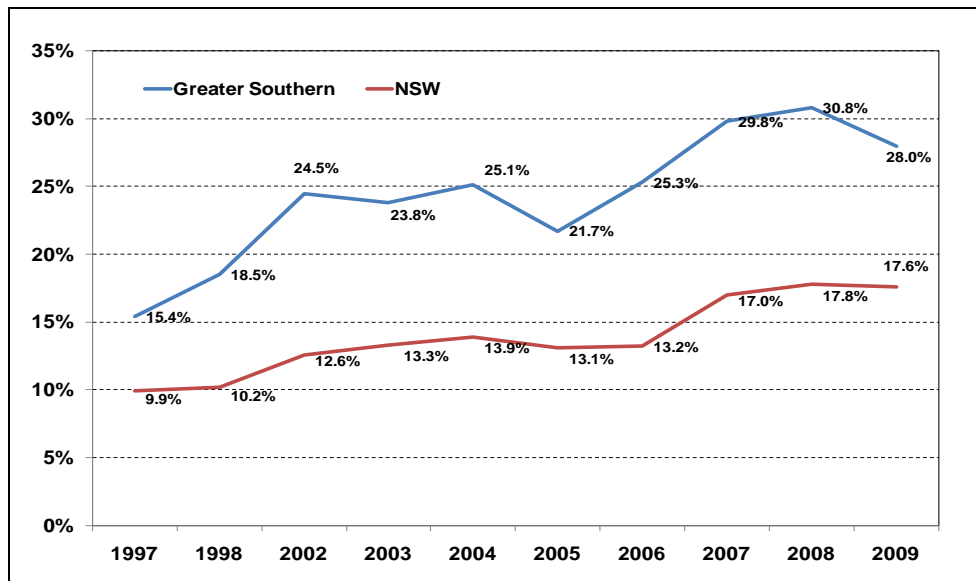
Similarly, key issues faced by medical institutions in Griffith and Hay include the inability to recruit adequate number of medical and nursing staff, resulting in increased costs associated with recruiting locum medical officers and agency nurses (GSAHS 2009). The institutions located in the Wagga-Wagg locality have an added facet of teaching and research infrastructure linkages with UNSW Southern Clinical School and Charles Stuart University (GSAHS 2009).

### **Health care service indicators**

Whilst specific data on the accessibility and quality of service was not readily available for the region of Riverina, NSW Health's (2010b) Population Health Survey provides prevalence statistics associated with 'difficulties in getting health care services' and the 'quality of health services' within the Greater Southern Area of NSW. In this context, it is noted that the Greater Southern Area of NSW incorporates a number of other jurisdictions in addition to the Riverina region, and therefore only provides a broad indicator of Riverina's health care services.

As shown in Figure 3.1, the prevalence estimates (based on 95% confidence interval) of people having reported on 'difficulties getting health care when needing it' in the Greater Southern Area has historically been higher relative to NSW as a whole. In 2009 for example,

28% of people in the Greater Southern population reported difficulties getting health care services compared to 17.8% in NSW.

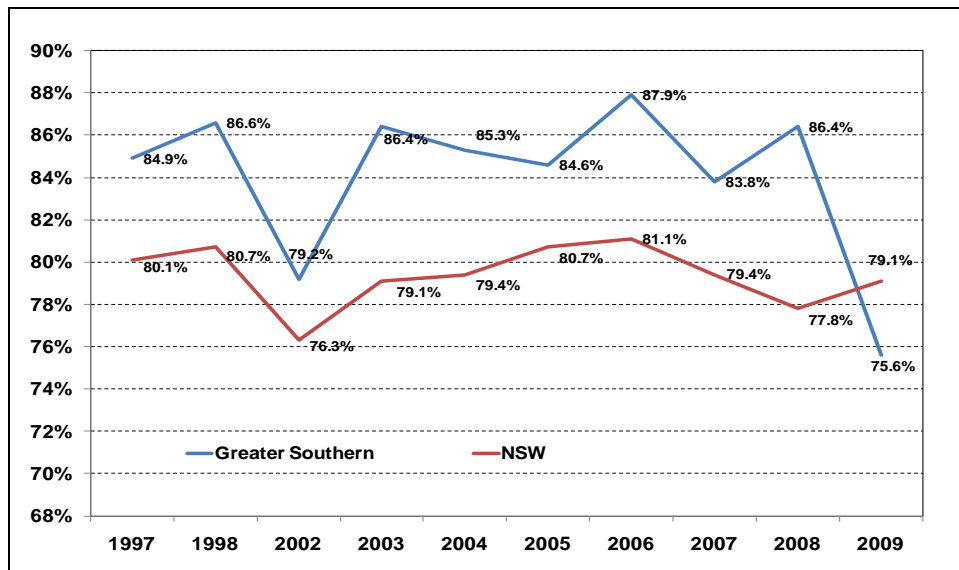


**Figure 3.1: Percentage of persons – difficulties getting health care when needing it by year, adults aged 16 years and over, Greater Southern and NSW (1997 – 2009)**

Source: NSW Health (2010b), 2009 Report on Adult Health – Greater Southern Area Health Service.

At the same time, survey results indicate that the Greater Southern Area have historically reported a greater percentage of people expressing that ‘emergency department care has been excellent, very good or good’ compared to NSW as a whole. However, the Greater Southern Area reported a notable fall in people expressing that ‘emergency department care has been excellent, very good or good’ from 2008 and 2009, with a decline from 86.4% to 76.8% over this period.

**Figure 3.2: Percentage of persons – emergency department care rated as excellent, very good or good by year, Greater Southern and NSW (1997 – 2009)**



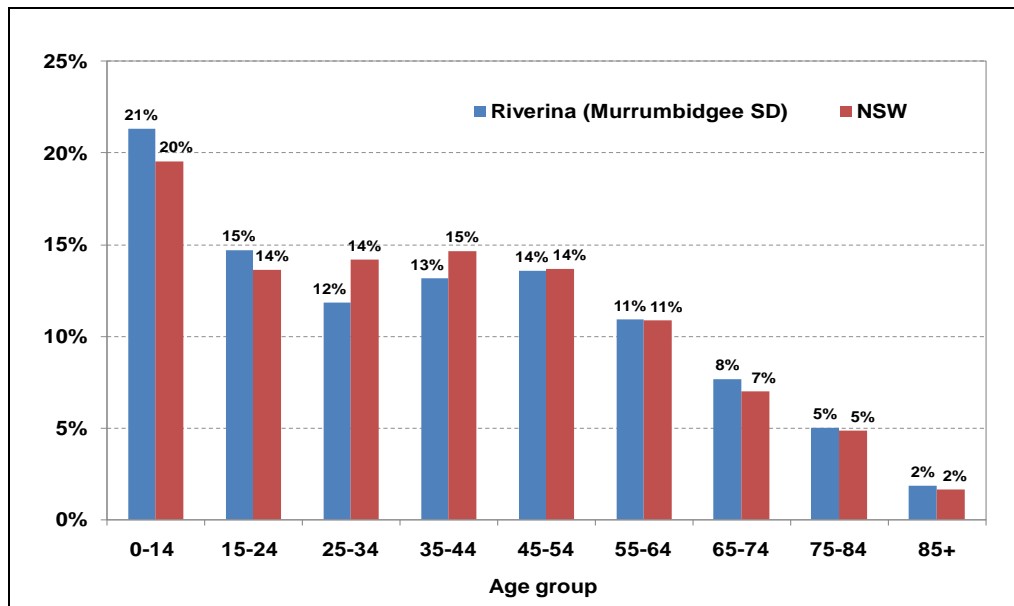
Source: NSW Health (2010b), 2009 Report on Adult Health – Greater Southern Area Health Service.

## Patient characteristics

### Age characteristics

An ageing population will place greater demand for health care services and is therefore an important consideration in assessing the health characteristics of a region. Based on figures compiled for 2008, there are significant differences between the age distribution of the Riverina and NSW as a whole.

With the exception of the group aged between 25 years and 59 years of age, the Riverina had a greater proportion of people in all other (younger and older) age groups relative to NSW (see Figure 3.3). This trend suggests that demand for health services would be higher than would otherwise be the case relative to the State average, as younger and older cohorts place greater demands on health related services.



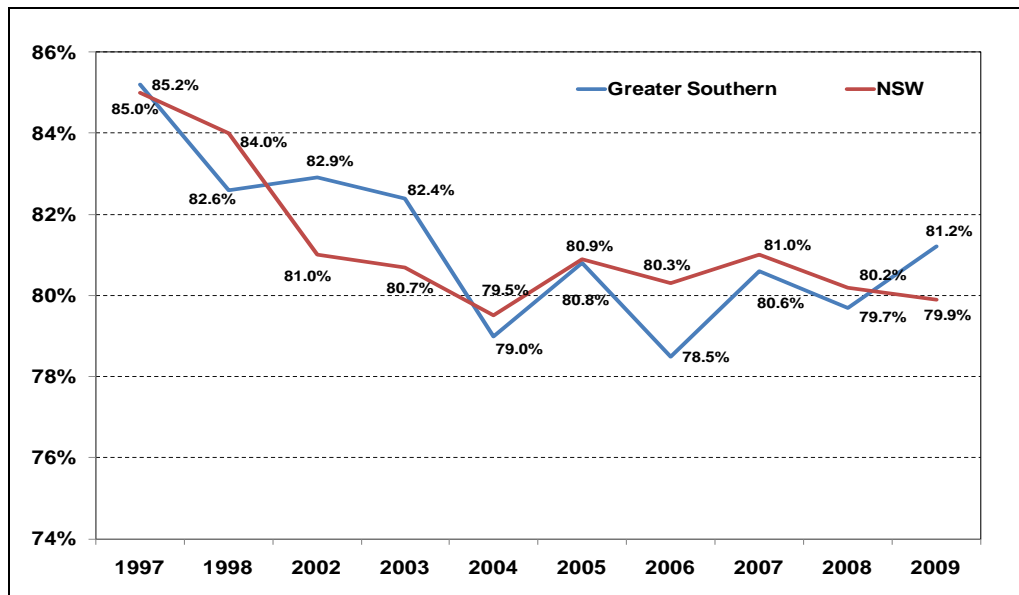
**Figure 3.3: Percentage distribution of population, by age group (2008)**

Source: NSW Department of Planning (2008), NSW and regional population projections 2006-2036

### Self-rated health characteristics

NSW Health's (2010b) Population Health Survey also provides prevalence statistics associated with persons that reported 'excellent, very good, or good self-rated health' statuses within the Greater Southern Area of NSW. As shown in Figure 3.4, the prevalence estimates (based on 95% confidence interval) of people having reported on positive health self-ratings in the Greater Southern Area has been on par to NSW as a whole. In the most recent year of 2009, however, there was a higher percentage of prevalence in the Greater Southern Area (81.2%) compared to NSW (79.9%).

**Figure 3.4: Percentage of persons – excellent, very good, or good self-rated health status by year, adults aged 16 years and over, Greater Southern and NSW (1997 – 2009)**



Source: NSW Health (2010b), 2009 Report on Adult Health – Greater Southern Area Health Service.

### Greater Southern Area Health region at a Glance (Information from the NSW Health Survey, update 2009)

What's steady?	What's declining?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diabetes 9% (GSAHS ranked 3)</li> <li>• Mammograms 76%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smoking 19%</li> <li>• Missing natural teeth 7%</li> <li>• Asthma 10%</li> <li>• Pap tests 76%</li> <li>• Visiting neighbours 70%</li> </ul>
What's Increasing?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fruit consumption 51% (GSAHS females ranked lowest at 8)</li> <li>• Overweight &amp; obesity 58% (GSAHS ranked 2nd)</li> <li>• Risk drinking 37% (GSAHS has the highest prevalence of this in women compared to other NSW Area Health Services)</li> <li>• Veg. consumption 13%</li> <li>• Physical activity 54%</li> <li>• Smoke-free households 91%</li> <li>• Flu vaccination of 65 +yrs</li> </ul>	

Source: [www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/surveys/index.asp](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/publichealth/surveys/index.asp)

## Education profile

### Government school characteristics

#### Number of schools

Based on data sourced from the NSW Department of Education and Training's (DET) Statistical Bulletin (2010), Government schools in the Riverina region accounted for approximately 8.5% of total schools in NSW as at mid-year 2009 (see Table 2.1). Although the bulk of schools in the Riverina comprise Primary Schools, it is apparent that the region made up a significant proportion of total Central/Community Schools in NSW as a whole (i.e. approximately 23.9% of all Central/Community Schools in NSW).

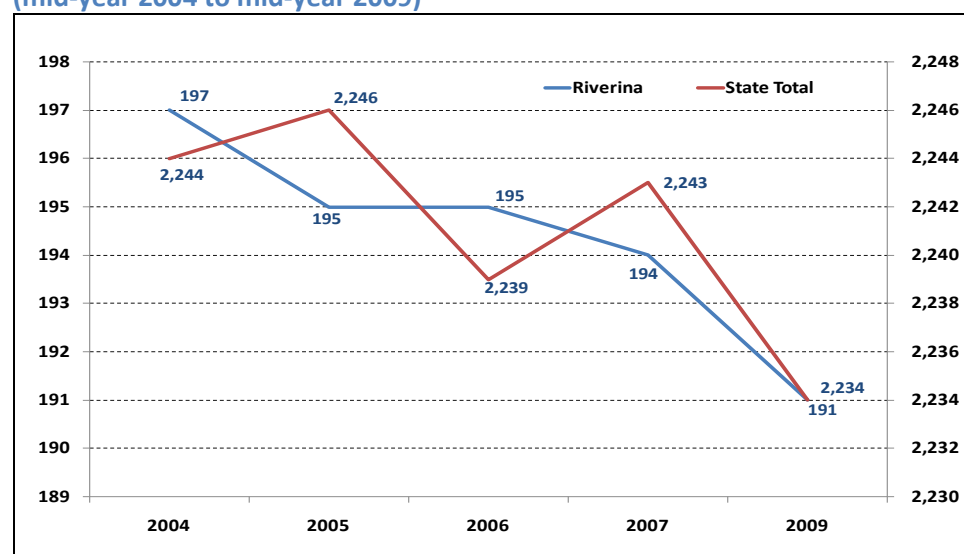
**Table 2.1: Distribution of NSW Government Schools, Riverina and NSW (mid-year 2009)**

Region	Primary Schools	Central/Community Schools	Secondary Schools	Schools for Specific Purposes (SSPs)	Environmental Education Centres (EECs)	Total
Riverina	139	16	26	8	1	190
State Total	1,633	67	398	113	23	2,234
Riverina - % of State Total	8.5%	23.9%	6.5%	7.1%	4.3%	8.5%

Source: NSW Department of Education and Training (2010), Statistical Bulletin – School Students in NSW.

On a trend basis, there has been an overall reduction in the number of Government schools recorded in both the Riverina region and NSW as whole over the period 2004-09 (see Figure 2.1). Specifically, while the number of Government schools in the Riverina fell by 3% from 2004-09 (i.e. from 197 to 191), by comparison the number of schools in NSW fell at a notably smaller rate of 0.3% (i.e. from 2,244 to 2,234). Consequently, the Riverina region recorded a notable reduction in the number of schools over the 2004-09 period compared to NSW.

**Figure 2.1: Trend in total number of Government Schools, Riverina and NSW (mid-year 2004 to mid-year 2009)**



Source: NSW Department of Education and Training (2010, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005), Statistical Bulletin – School Students in NSW.

### Primary and secondary school enrolments

Consistent with the reduction in the number of schools outlined in Section 2.1.1, primary and secondary school enrolments in the Riverina region have fallen notably over the 2004-09 period. That is, the Riverina region experienced a 9.1% fall in the number of primary school enrolments compared to a more modest fall of 2.2% in NSW over that time. Secondary school enrolment also saw a similar trend with enrolments in the Riverina region falling by 8.2% in contrast to 1.2% in NSW from 2004 to 2009 (see Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2: Primary and Secondary School Enrolments, Riverina and NSW (2004 – 2009)**

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	% change
<b>Primary School</b>						
Riverina	20,485	19,841	19,480	19,113	18,623	-9.1%
State Total	438,677	434,876	432,660	429,900	429,000	-2.2%
Riverina - % of State Total	4.7%	4.6%	4.5%	4.4%	4.3%	-
<b>Secondary School</b>						
Riverina	35,507	34,596	34,452	33,653	32,607	-8.2%
State Total	745,508	741,578	738,622	738,636	736,647	-1.2%
Riverina - % of State Total	4.8%	4.7%	4.8%	4.6%	4.4%	-

Source: DET (2010, 2008, 2007, 2006, 2005), Statistical Bulletin – School Students in NSW.

Taken together, there has been a gradual reduction in the proportion of enrolments in Riverina relative to NSW as a whole over the observation period. The proportion of primary enrolments fell from 4.7% in 2004 to 4.3% in 2009. Similarly, the proportion of secondary enrolments fell from 4.8% in 2004 to 4.4% in 2009 (see Table 2.2).

### Post-school qualification characteristics

The proportion of post-school qualified people in the Riverina (as represented by the ABS's Murrumbidgee SD) was below that of NSW. Specifically, 46.3% of the Riverina's population aged 15 years and over had a post-school qualification compared to 54.5% in NSW (see Table 2.3). Therefore, there were on average approximately 8.2% more people in NSW with a post-school qualification compared to people in the Riverina region.

**Table 2.3: Percentage of post-school qualification**

Type of qualification	Riverina (Murrumbidgee SD)	NSW
Postgraduate Degree	1.2%	3.1%
Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate	1.0%	1.3%
Bachelor Degree	7.2%	12.1%
Advanced Diploma and Diploma	5.1%	7.4%
Certificate	19.2%	16.8%
Inadequately Described/Not Stated	12.7%	13.8%
Total with qualifications	46.3%	54.5%

Source: ABS (2006) Census

The Riverina also had a greater proportion of employed persons relative to NSW in the occupations of managers, technicians and trades workers, community and personal service workers, machinery operators and drivers, and labourers. In contrast, NSW had a greater proportion of workers in the occupation of professionals, clerical and administrative workers, and sales workers (see Table 2.4).

**Table 2.4: Percentage of employed persons, by occupation**

Occupation	Riverina (Murrumbidgee SD)	NSW
Managers	17.9%	13.6%
Professionals	14.1%	21.2%
Technicians and Trades Workers	14.6%	13.6%
Community and Personal Service Workers	8.9%	8.6%
Clerical and Administrative Workers	11.9%	15.4%
Sales Workers	9.3%	9.7%
Machinery Operators and Drivers	6.9%	6.4%

Labourers	14.8%	9.5%
Inadequately Described/Not Stated	1.5%	1.9%

Source: ABS (2006) Census

## Post School Education

The RDA-Riverina is serviced by the following institutions:-

- Charles Sturt University (CSU)- Wagga Wagga Campus
- University of NSW Rural Clinical School (Wagga Waga Campus)/ Notredam
- TAFE NSW Riverina Institute NSW- Wagga Wagga, Griffith, Leeton, Narrandera, Temora, Cootamundra and Hay campuses.
- Murrumbidgee Rural Studies Centre, Yanco
- Riverina Community College- Wagga Wagga, Griffith

## Education & Training

- Riverina Business Enterprise Centre, Wagga Wagga & surrounding communities
- GALA- Griffith Adult Learning Association
- Australian Airline Pilot Academy, Wagga Wagga

## Job Services Australia Providers

From 1 July 2009, new employment services were introduced in Australia. These are known as Job Services Australia.

Job Services Australia is a national network of organisations dedicated to helping job seekers to find and sustain employment. Assistance provided by Job Services Australia includes the following:

- gathering vacancies from employers and matching the skills and experience of job seekers to job vacancies
- New Enterprise Incentive Scheme which helps job seekers with ideas for a viable business to establish their own business.

Job Services Australia provides opportunities for training, skills development, work experience and tailored assistance. The service you receive is highly focused on meeting your needs, whether you're a job seeker, or an employer

Providers in the Riverina region include:

Provider Name	Service	Location
Advanced Personnel Management	Disability Employment Services & Disability Management Services	Wagga Wagga, Tumut, Narrandera, Cootamundra, Temora, Lockhart, Hay, Leeton & Griffith
CRS Australia	Disability Employment Services & Disability Management Services	Wagga Wagga & Griffith
Employment Works	Disability Employment Services &	Griffith, Leeton & Hay

	Employment Services	
Ganambarra Ltd	Job Services Australia-Indigenous Australians	Wagga Wagga
Job Centre Australia	Disability Employment Services - Disability Management Service Disability Employment Services - Employment Support Service	Wagga Wagga, Tumut, Cootamundra & Temora
Job Futures/Newtrain	Job Services Australia-Indigenous Australians	Griffith, Leeton, Goolgowi, Hay, Hillston
Job Futures/The Personnel Group	Job Services Australia - Mental Health	Wagga Wagga, Cootamundra, Tumut, Narrandera
Kurrajong Waratah	Disability Employment Services - Employment Support Service	Griffith, Junee, Leeton, Narrandera & Tumut
Ostara Australia Limited	Disability Employment Services - Disability Management Service	Wagga Wagga & Temora
RCC Employment & Training	Job Services Australia - All Client Types Youth at Risk	Temora, Griffith, Gundagai, Ardlethan, Barellan, Hay, Hillston, Narrandera, Wagga Wagga, Tumut, Cootamundra, Junee
Summit Employment & Training	Job Services Australia - All Client Types Harvest Labour Services	Griffith, Hay, Cootamundra, Temora, Junee, Hillston, Narrandera, Leeton, Gundagai Batlow

Source: <http://jobsearch.gov.au/default.aspx>

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## Appendix A: How Riverina priorities align with NSW 2021 .

Riverina Priorities	NSW Departments	NSW 2021 Goals
<p>Infrastructure including:</p> <p>Transport</p> <p>Telecommunications</p> <p>Roads/Rail</p> <p>Affordable Housing</p>	<p>Department of Transport</p> <p>Department of Trade &amp; Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services</p> <p>- Infrastructure NSW</p> <p>Department of Premier &amp; Cabinet:-</p> <p>- Department of Planning &amp; Infrastructure</p>	<p>Return Quality Services &amp; Rebuild the Economy</p> <p>Goal 3: Drive economic growth in regional NSW</p> <p>Goal 9: Improve customer experience with transport services</p> <p>Goal 10: Improve road safety</p> <p>Renovate Infrastructure</p> <p>Goal 19. Invest in critical infrastructure</p> <p>Goal 20: Build liveable centres</p> <p>Goal 21: Secure potable water supplies</p>
<p>Business/Industry development:</p>	<p>Department of Trade &amp; Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services</p> <p>Department of Planning</p> <p>Department of Premier &amp; Cabinet</p>	<p>Rebuild the Economy:</p> <p>Goal1: Improve the performance of the NSW economy</p> <p>Goal 3 : Drive economic growth in regional NSW</p> <p>Goal 4: Increase the competitiveness of doing business in NSW</p>
<p>Education &amp; Training</p> <p>Capacity Building</p>	<p>Department of Education &amp; Communities</p>	<p>Return Quality Services</p> <p>Goal 5: Place downward pressure on the cost of living</p> <p>Goal 6: Strengthen the NSW skill base</p> <p>Goal 15: Improve education and learning outcomes for all students</p> <p>Goal 24: Make it easier for people to be involved in their communities</p> <p>Goal 30: Restore trust in State &amp; Local Government as a service provider</p>
<p>Health , Aging &amp; Well Being</p>	<p>Department of Health</p> <p>Department of Family &amp; Community Services</p> <p>Department of Attorney General &amp; Justice</p> <p>- Corrective Services / NSW Police</p> <p>Department of Premier &amp; Cabinet</p>	<p>Goal 11: Keep people healthy and out of hospital</p> <p>Goal 12: Provide world class clinical services with timely access and effective infrastructure</p> <p>Goal 13: Better protect the most vulnerable members of our community and break the cycle of disadvantage</p> <p>Goal 14: Increase opportunities for people with a disability by providing supports that meet their individual needs and realise their potential.</p> <p>Goal 16: Prevent and reduce the level of crime</p> <p>Goal 17: Prevent and reduce the level of re-offending</p> <p>Goal 18: Improve community confidence in the justice system</p> <p>Goal 25: Increase opportunities for seniors in NSW to fully participate in community life</p> <p>Goal 27: Enhance cultural, creative, sporting and recreation opportunities</p>
<p>Environmental Sustainability</p>	<p>Department of Premier &amp; Cabinet: Office of Environment &amp; Heritage</p>	<p>Strengthen Our Local Environment and Communities</p> <p>Goal 22: Protect our natural environment</p> <p>Goal 23: Increase opportunities for people to look after their own neighbourhoods and environments</p> <p>Goal 26: Fostering opportunity and partnership with Aboriginal people</p>

The above Government priorities and programs were valid as of 1 September 2011, however these are subject to change at any time. This section of the Regional Plan will be updated on a regular basis (at least every 6 months) to ensure the information provided is as accurate and current as possible

## **Appendix B: How Riverina priorities align with Commonwealth Government Plans.**

<b>Riverina Priorities</b>	<b>Commonwealth Departments</b>	<b>Australian Government Priority &amp; Programs</b>
Infrastructure including:  Transport Telecommunications Roads/Rail Affordable Housing	Department of Infrastructure & Transport  Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development & Local Government	Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nation Building Infrastructure.</li> <li>- Regional and Local Community Infrastructure.</li> <li>- Australian Rail Transport Corporation (ARTC)</li> <li>- Black Spot Program and Repairing Regional Roads</li> <li>- Boom Gates for Rail Crossings</li> </ul> Regional Development Australia Fund <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social Housing Initiative</li> </ul> National Affordable Housing Agreement and the National Partnerships on Homelessness, Social Housing and Remote Indigenous Housing, National Rental Affordability Scheme
Business/Industry development:	Dept of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy :  Department of Innovation, Industry, Science & Research  Department of Immigration & Citizenship:  Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Broadband Network</li> <li>- AusIndustry program <a href="http://www.ausindustry.gov.au/Pages/AusIndustry.aspx">http://www.ausindustry.gov.au/Pages/AusIndustry.aspx</a></li> <li>- Enterprise Connect Program <a href="http://www.enterpriseconnect.gov.au">www.enterpriseconnect.gov.au</a></li> <li>- Clean Energy Future</li> <li>- R &amp; D Tax Incentive</li> <li>- Regional Skilled Migration Program</li> <li>- Seasonal worker Program</li> <li>- Fresh Ideas for Work and Family Grants Program (the Program) to support Australian small businesses to implement practices that help employees balance their work and family obligations as well as improve employee retention and productivity</li> </ul>
Education & Training Capacity Building	Dept of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations:  Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development & Local Government	Keep Australia Working <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trade Training Centres</li> <li>- Partnership Broker Program</li> <li>- Youth Connections Program</li> </ul> Employment, Skills & Job Coordinators -
Health, Aging & Well Being	Dept of Health and Aging:	National Health Reform: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Partnerships Agreement.</li> <li>- National Health and Hospitals Network.</li> </ul>

	Dept of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FAHCSIA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Rural and Remote Health Infrastructure</li> <li>- National Mental Health Reform</li> </ul> <p>Social Inclusion Agenda: Indigenous Coordination Centres (ICC)</p> <p>The <a href="#">National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes</a> is tackling chronic disease in the Indigenous community by targeting risk factors, expanding primary health care and building the capacity of the Indigenous health workforce.</p> <p>Two of the Closing the Gap targets set by COAG in 2008 relate to health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to close the life-expectancy gap within a generation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to halve the gap in mortality rates for <a href="#">Indigenous children under five</a> within a decade.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Closing the Gap Strategy.</li> <li>- National Urban &amp; Regional Service Delivery Strategy- the strategy recognises that without achieving significant gains for Aboriginal Australians living in urban and regional locations, it will not be possible to Close the Gap of Indigenous disadvantage nationally.</li> </ul>
Environmental Sustainability.	<p>Dept of the Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population &amp; Communities:</p> <p>Department of Regional Australia, Regional Development &amp; Local Government</p> <p>Department of Climate Change &amp; Energy Efficiency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water for the Future.</li> <li>- Strengthening Basin Communities.</li> <li>- Caring for our Country.</li> <li>- Murray Darling Basin Authority – Murray Darling Basin Plan.</li> </ul> <p>: <a href="http://www.climatechange.gov.au/">http://www.climatechange.gov.au/</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="http://www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au/">http://www.cleanenergyfuture.gov.au/</a></li> <li>- <a href="http://www.livinggreener.gov.au/">http://www.livinggreener.gov.au/</a></li> </ul>

The above Government priorities and programs were valid as of 1 September 2011, however these are subject to change at any time. This section of the Regional Plan will be updated on a regular basis (at le.