I hereby acknowledge that the Barwon South West RDA Committee Business Plan for the period 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020 is fair and true to the best of my knowledge.

Sincerely

Bruce Anson
Chair
Regional Development Australia – Barwon South West
31 July 2019
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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

SUMMARY OF KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND LEARNINGS FROM JULY 2018 TO JUNE 2019

With very limited resourcing and a committee comprising of the Chair and two members, Regional Development Australia Barwon South West (RDA BSW) continued to engage with stakeholders across the region and identify opportunities to optimise collaboration and grow regional prosperity as efficient, effective and engaging as possible.

This committee continued to maximise the existing efforts in the region to align priorities across the three levels of government by leveraging its representation on both the Barwon and Great South Coast Regional Partnerships.

City Deal for Geelong and the Great Ocean Road

RDA Barwon South West also welcomed a landmark $370 million Commonwealth and State contribution towards Victoria’s first City Deal for Geelong.

The Geelong City Deal aims to harness the strengths and opportunities in the local Barwon South West economy to deliver new jobs and make the area an even better place to live, work and visit. The funding announcement came after many years of strong advocacy for the Barwon South West region’s greatest assets, the Twelve Apostles.

Since RDA Barwon South West was founded in 2010, we have been advocating for the transformation of the Twelve Apostles precinct and the Shipwreck Coast which are our region’s greatest environmental and tourism assets.

Acknowledging the economic significance of the Shipwreck Coast to the region, the RDA Barwon South West Committee prioritised the implementation of the Shipwreck Coast Master Plan and led a regional funding advocacy group in 2018 to prosecute the case for investment and secure funding for the revitalisation of the Shipwreck Coast.

The group brought together representatives of Surf Coast Shire, Warrnambool City Council, Corangamite Shire, Moyne Shire, Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism, Geelong Regional Alliance (G21) and the Victorian Government’s Great South Coast and Barwon Regional Partnerships.

The committee engaged all levels of government together with local and regional leaders to identify areas for economic development and highlight risks to tourism, visitor satisfaction and the environment without significant investment.

Avalon Airport activation

RDA Barwon South West worked closely with Avalon Airport to secure international air passenger services with Air Asia X between Kuala Lumpur and Avalon that commenced in late 2018. The activation of international flights and establishment of an international air terminal at Avalon Airport is exceeding expectations of international passengers entering the region.

Strong collaboration and facilitation led by the Director of Regional Development helped secure the regular international air passenger service and investment in the international terminal and border force operations at Avalon Airport. The agreement reached between Avalon and Air Asia X, has enabled a twice daily service between Avalon and Kuala Lumpur for the next 10 years, securing Avalon Airport as the second international gateway into Victoria.

Commonwealth Treasury Visit to South West Victoria

We were delighted to host Commonwealth Treasury officials in March to understand regional priorities in Victoria’s south west. The delegates from Canberra and Melbourne were introduced to local leaders and businesses from Warrnambool and Port Fairy to broker new relationships and a greater understanding of the challenges and opportunities that exist across the Barwon South West region. The visit provided valuable insight into the economic policies and issues impacting regional economies.

The Barwon South West is a big contributor to Victoria’s economic prosperity but are not immune to issues facing regional Australia with regards to economy, budget, taxation, financial sector, foreign investment, structural reform, energy, immigration, education, superannuation, small business, housing affordability and international economic policy.

As part of this regional engagement, the group met with several stakeholders from government and industry to discuss a number of regional issues unique to the region including labour and skills shortages, infrastructure to support economic growth, agriculture sector development and diversification, renewable energy opportunities and tourism yield growth opportunities that could be created by increasing visitor length of stay.
Regional engagements add richness to policy development and provide valuable advice to Ministers and also ensures the lines of communication remain strong between our region and the Commonwealth Treasury.

**Building Better Regions – Round 3**

The region was successful again in securing funding for 19 projects across the region with an additional **$10.3 million** toward a total investment of **$27.7 million** under Building Better Regions Fund Round 3. RDA BSW continued to work closely with stakeholders to ensure strong applications were submitted from the region.

**Designated Area Migration Agreement**

Further work in this reporting period led to more focused discussions around the population and workforce supply in the region, specifically the labour shortages in the agriculture and food processing sectors and the tourism sector along the Great Ocean Road which has led to employers in the Great South Coast be given a boost, with a new visa agreement between the Commonwealth and Warrnambool City Council set to attract skilled workers to the region.

The Commonwealth Government were in discussions with a number of regions who were experiencing labour shortages to see if a Designated Area Migration Agreement (DAMA) could be put in place to supplement the local workforce and it was announced late in 2018, that the Great South Coast region would be among-the-first across the country to enter into a five-year agreement with the Commonwealth.

RDA Barwon South West have continued to support the Warrnambool Council and provided funding for the establishment of a website for the DAMA to assist key agriculture, hospitality and other businesses on the Great South Coast to fill critical employment gaps by providing access to a broader range of overseas workers than is available through the standard skilled migration programs.

More than 25 eligible occupations will be available under the Great South Coast DAMA and a full list of these occupations was made available in June 2019 when the site went live.

**Cross Border Collaboration**

Over the last six months, RDA Barwon South West has been working collaboratively with cross-border RDA committee representatives to share knowledge and experience, leading to better outcomes for border communities and all Victorians.

RDA Barwon South West are uniquely placed to leverage and coordinate regional effort and influence policy decisions from within state and commonwealth government levels by collecting intelligence on cross-border issues and opportunities and advising government predominately Victorian Government but also New South Wales, South Australian, Tasmanian and Commonwealth Governments where appropriate.

The four RDA committees, Barwon South West, Grampians, Lodden Mallee and Limestone Coast, are committed to continuing to engage on a regular basis to investigate and progress opportunities for collaborative projects to ensure that state border lines seize opportunities for economic development across the Victorian and South Australian borders.

Each region is unique but there are similarities with the challenges that are faced and working collaboratively will help identify opportunities for economic development, job creation and growth and create greater benefits for the border regions. The group have explored regional themes including workforce shortages and visitor attraction opportunities to increase tourism that will lead to greater benefits for border towns have been identified for collaborative cross-border projects. Cross-border working groups will be established to further this work.

I look forward to working with the new RDA BSW Committee, once the appointment process is finalised, and with the ongoing support of our regional stakeholders, we will continue to deliver strong outcomes for the region on behalf of the Australian Government.

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Bruce Anson  
Chair  
Regional Development Australia – Barwon South West  
*31 July 2019*
WHO WE ARE
Regional Development Australia (RDA) is a national network of 52 Committees made up of local leaders who work with all levels of government, business and community groups to support the economic development of their regions.

OUR ROLE
RDA Committees collaborate with government, business and community to attract, inspire and facilitate investment and economic growth in the region.

STRATEGIC FOCUS

Innovation Precincts – Support and encourage investment in priority innovation precincts (Future Economy Precinct, Warrnambool & Federal Woolen Mills / Pivot City Innovation district)
Bridging the Digital Divide – Advocate for digital parity and encourage greater digital intensity
Energy as an Enabler and a Growth Industry – Address rising energy prices and inconsistent energy policy to enable investment
Economic Diversification – Support the region to deliver industry diversification projects and decentralisation initiatives (Great South Coast & Glenelg)
Workforce Supply Shortages and Jobs Led Population Growth – Demonstrate Commonwealth Government intervention required to address workforce supply shortages
Agriculture Sector Development – Intensively agriculture production through investment in enabling infrastructure such as water services, energy and freight connections
Avalon – International Airport & Victoria’s Future Inland Freight Precinct – Grow tourism activities in the region and maximise potential export opportunities
Visitor Economy – City Deal & Great Ocean Road investment, promote and support tourism development opportunities throughout the region
Australian Animal Health Laboratory (AAHL) Geelong – Engage with AAHL to explore regional economic development and investment opportunities
Cross Border Collaboration – Progress opportunities for collaborative projects to ensure state border lines seize opportunities for economic development
Princes Highway West of Colac to the South Australian Border – Prioritising investment into this key economic road infrastructure

OUTCOMES
1. Increased economic opportunities and investment in the BSW
2. Increased trade and job creation
3. Cooperative effort with all levels of government, industry & regional stakeholders leads to improved economic development outcomes
4. Achieve Government program objectives
5. Maximise access to Government programs and grants
6. Advice supports development outcomes

HOW

Leveraging regional advantages and building sector strengths
Promoting regional capabilities and investment opportunities
Reducing barriers to job and economic growth
Supporting increased in exports and greater Asian presence
Enabling and encouraging regional prosperity and monitor progress in key areas

Agribusiness Healthcare Renewable Energy Visitor Economy Tourism Digital Economy ICT Advanced Manufacturing Work anywhere

RDA CHARTER
Working in close partnership with fellow RDA Committees, all levels of government, and the private sector, RDA Committees will:
1. Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to identify economic opportunities and leverage private and public-sector investment to the regions;
2. Connect regional businesses, councils and industry sectors with international trade partners, financial markets and potential investors;
3. Promote and disseminate information on Australian Government policies and grant programs to state and local governments and industry, business and community sectors;
4. Support community stakeholders to develop project proposals to access funding;
5. Develop and maintain positive working relationships with the local government bodies in their regions;
6. Facilitate public and private sector decentralisation;
7. Assist in the delivery of Australian Government programs, where relevant and where requested by the Minister;
8. Engage with regional entrepreneurs and emerging business leaders to explore new opportunities to grow local jobs in their regions;
9. Provide information on their region’s activities and competitive advantages to all levels of government, industry, business and community sectors; and
10. Provide evidence-based advice to the Australian Government on critical regional development issues positively and negatively affecting their regions.
OVERVIEW OF RDA BSW COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND STAFF

RDA BSW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Bruce Anson (Chair)
Bruce Anson has been the Chairman of the RDA Barwon South West since its inception in 2009. And has been the Chief Executive Officer of Warrnambool City Council since 2008. Bruce has extensive committee experience throughout the region, including member of Great South Coast Regional Partnerships, Regional Cities Victoria Group, Deakin University Warrnambool, the Great South Coast CEO’s Group and the Warrnambool Community Leaders Group. Bruce has a good understanding of the issues driving coastal cities as well as the challenges facing rural economies.

Elaine Carbines
Elaine Carbines is the RDA representative on the Barwon Regional Partnership and is the Chief Executive Officer of G21 Geelong Region Alliance and also a Director of Barwon Water, the Institute of Public Administration Australia (IPAA) Victorian Branch, G-Force and a former member of State Parliament.

Anita Rank
Anita Rank is the RDA representative on the Great South Coast Regional Partnership and is Mayor of the Glenelg Shire Council. Anita also holds Director positions with Portland District Health, Active Health Portland, and Leadership Great South Coast and Chairs the Community Advisory Committee for Portland District Health and is a current Board and Life Member of South West Sports.

WAITING ON CONFIRMATION OF NEW MEMBERS

RDA GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES
THE EXECUTIVE

The RDA BSW Committee is supported by several key Executive positions. Their roles are described below:

Chair – The RDA Committee Chair leads a diverse organisation of individuals working in a complex environment to deliver high value outcomes for the community and the region. The RDA Chair provides strategic direction and leadership to the RDA Committee and ensure corporate governance arrangements are effectively designed and implemented.

Deputy Chair – Deputy Chair assumes the role and duties of the RDA Chair, whenever the Chair is not available. The Deputy Chair also plays an important role in supporting the Chair in day-to-day matters.

Director, Regional Development – Manages the day-to-day affairs of the RDA Committee and its personnel consistent with the RDA Charter, Funding Agreement and Better Practice Guide, the Committee’s Regional Plan, Annual Business Plan and budget. The Director provides strategic and operational leadership across the organisation and will promote the region’s activities to all levels of governments, industry, business and community sectors to highlight competitive advantages and encourage decentralisation and relocation opportunities.

Manager, Regional Planning & Coordination – Provides overall corporate services management and executive support to the Director, the RDA Chair and Committee.

Project Coordinator – Oversees RDA projects, record keeping, reporting activities, including the management and monitoring of the Commonwealth and State grants programs. The Project coordinator provides strategic, financial and executive administrative support services to the committee, the Director and the Regional Planning and Coordination Manager.

RDA BSW office facilities are provided by RDV at each end of the region in Geelong and Warrnambool:

GEELONG
Level 2, Harrison Place
237 Ryrie Street,
Geelong, Victoria 3220
Telephone – 03 5215 6000
Email rda.barwonsouthwest@rdv.vic.gov.au

WARRNAMBOOL
703 – 709 Raglan Parade
Warrnambool, Victoria 3284
Telephone – 03 5561 4135

Twitter account is http://twitter.com/#!/rdabarwonsw

OPERATIONAL PARAMETER FOR THE COMING YEAR

EXPENSES

• Commonwealth Operational Funding to be expended entirely on management salaries and committee costs
• State Government Funding to be expended on administrative & support services; professional fees, committee costs; Vehicle costs, operational, marketing and projects funded by a combination of carried forward surplus

OUT OF THE ORDINARY COSTS

• All costs budgeted are within the ordinary operations of the organisation

DETAILS OF SIGNIFICANT THIRD-PARTY CONTRACTS

• There are no significant third-party contracts
REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Barwon South West regional context is unique in Victoria and, indeed, Australia. Within the region is Victoria’s second biggest city, Geelong, which has a strong sense of identity and is experiencing population growth more than most other regional cities in Australia.

The region comprises two sub-regions, Barwon and the Great South Coast (GSC). The Barwon sub-region encompasses the local government areas of Greater Geelong, Queenscliffe, Colac Otway and Surf Coast. The GSC encompasses the local government areas of Warrnambool City, Moyne, Corangamite, Glenelg and Southern Grampians.

The residential population of the BSW region was 403,569 people in 2017. The region abuts the nation’s largest population growth corridor (west of Melbourne), and it is expected the region will reach a population of more than 480,000 by 2022.

The BSW has three economies: one inland which is founded on agriculture; one on the coast that is dominated by tourism and amenity lifestyles; and one in Geelong which has a diverse economic and social base.

The main industries are manufacturing, retail trade, health care, construction, education and training, agriculture, forestry, fishing and tourism. Manufacturing, health and retail trade are currently the largest employing industries, although the economy has significant opportunities for growth in new energy, advanced manufacturing and food security industries.

Environmentally, the BSW enjoys higher than average rainfall and wind, providing us with ongoing competitive strengths in agriculture, food, renewable and clean energy production. The region also boasts nearly forty percent of Victoria’s coastline, including marine national parks, the Surf Coast, the Shipwreck Coast and the iconic Great Ocean Road.

Beyond the coast are diverse and vulnerable landscapes including Indigenous National Heritage listed sites, areas of State Forest and National Park, internationally significant wetlands, the Grampians and Otway Ranges and highly productive timber and agricultural land.

The region has a wide selection of tertiary education providers including a multi-campus university, two TAFE colleges and various private providers operating throughout the region.

Infrastructure assets of the BSW include deep sea ports in Portland and Geelong, a strong road and rail network and Avalon Airport which has recently attracted an international carrier expected to begin operations in October this year.

1 ABS Census 2016
KEY STAKEHOLDERS

RDA BSW will provide links to key stakeholders across the region and aim to connect regional businesses, councils and industry sectors with international trade partners, financial markets and potential investors.

RDA BSW will continue to work closely with and maintain positive working relationships with the local government authorities in our region.

RDA BSW will support community stakeholders to develop project proposals to access funding where the project aligns with regional priorities and leverages funding from the other levels of government.

The following is an indicative list of the key stakeholders that RDA BSW will engage with in achieving regional priorities and outcomes:

- Barwon Regional Partnership
- Great South Coast Regional Partnership
- G21 Geelong Region Alliance
- Great South Coast Group
- Committee for Geelong
- Committee for Portland
- State and Federal MPs
- Local Councils: economic development, community services, planning
- Relevant Victorian Government Departments
- Relevant Australian Government Departments
- Geelong Chamber of Commerce
- Geelong Manufacturing Council
- Barwon Water
- Wannon Water
- Southern Rural Water
- Geelong and Warrnambool Community Leaders Groups
- Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine
- Great Ocean Road Tourism
- Grampians Tourism
- Discovery Coast
- Three Local Learning and Employment Networks
- Barwon Health
- South West Healthcare
- Office of the Victorian Skills Commissioner
- Deakin University
- Gordon TAFE
- South West TAFE
- Geelong Port
- Port of Portland
- Avalon International Airport
- Job Network agencies
- Local Business Incubators
- Major employers
- Peak Industry Bodies

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

A communications strategy has been developed for RDA BSW. The communications strategy aims to define how RDA BSW will engage with stakeholders and leverage new and existing channels to promote the work of the committee and the priorities of the region.

(Attachment 1 – RDA BSW Communications Plan)
**Risk Management**

This section provides a Risk Management Plan for the RDA BSW Committee. The focus of the Risk Management Plan is to identify potential risks that could negatively impact or prevent the successful implementation of this Business Plan.

**Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities**

RDA BSW will be responsible and accountable for reviewing the Risk Management Plan to ensure that the risk controls are being implemented and are adequate in minimising and/or eliminating the identified risks. Further risk controls will be developed to address any new or elevated risks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Risk – what it is and how it might happen</th>
<th>Likelihood (a)</th>
<th>Consequence Rating (b)</th>
<th>Risk Rating (a x b)</th>
<th>Strategy to mitigate risk</th>
<th>Timeframe to implement mitigation strategy</th>
<th>Residual Risk Ranking, taking account of mitigation strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss of funding resulting in RDA BSW not being able to implement the Business Plan.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Submit detailed and robust funding applications with clear deliverables Maintain strong relationship with RDV</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of key personnel and therefore loss of tacit knowledge.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Maintain robust recording and reporting system with dedicated project and financial files</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instability in the Committee caused by changing members and/or disharmony within the Committee creating a dysfunctional environment.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Clear focus of current Committee and strong leadership from Chair. Stable operational team to maintain focus on agreed business plan Keep local MPs informed of RDA BSW activities</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breach of confidentiality by the Committee or staff creating legal liability and causing reputational damage.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Ensure all Committee members and staff have signed Confidentiality Agreements. Ensure all Committee members have been made aware of the RDA Code of Conduct. Conflict of Interest declared at each meeting. Governance training.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unable to engage with the community which may compromise the successful delivery of the RDA BSW charter.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Ensure RDV recruit appropriately qualified staff. Ensure Committee members actively engage with the community and establish rapport with community groups.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project disaster causing reputational damage, and political and community backlash</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Risk is recognized however, RDA BSW is not able to implement an adequate risk control for this risk.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RDA COMMITTEE WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY (WHS) - RISK ASSESSMENT, PLAN AND REPORT TEMPLATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of activity/work undertaken by the RDA committee to fulfil requirements of Funding Agreement</th>
<th>Who manages/is directly responsible for this activity?</th>
<th>What are the WHS risks associated with this activity?</th>
<th>Strategies to address these risks</th>
<th>Report on implementation of WHS strategies</th>
<th>List WHS incidents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travelling to an RDA meeting or event</td>
<td>RDA committee members or RDV staff members travelling.</td>
<td>Car accident</td>
<td>Director, Regional Development and Chair regularly remind members and staff not to travel when fatigued. Make available video conferencing facilities to reduce need to travel. Time meetings to avoid the need for evening travel. Implement DJPR Driver Safety Policy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of RDV facilities by employees supporting the operation of RDA.</td>
<td>Director, Regional Development</td>
<td>Workplace injuries associated with workplace hazards</td>
<td>Twice yearly workplace inspections employing the DJPR workplace safety checklist. Implement DJPR Occupational Health and Safety and Manual Handling Policy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of RDV facilities by Committee Members for meetings and events.</td>
<td>Director, Regional Development</td>
<td>Workplace injuries associated with workplace hazards</td>
<td>Twice yearly workplace inspections employing the DJPR workplace safety checklist. Implement DJPR Occupational Health and Safety and Manual Handling Policy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaks in workload of the RDA Committee or employees supporting the RDA Committee</td>
<td>Chair and Director, Regional Development</td>
<td>Workplace stress</td>
<td>Implement DJPR Occupational Health and Safety - Workplace Psychological Health Policy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 2: IDENTIFICATION OF RDA ACTIVITIES

12 MONTH STRATEGIC FOCUS

The strategic focus has been informed from regional stakeholder engagement held over the last three years and is based on our region’s competitive advantages. It aligns with both the Barwon and the Great South Coast Regional Partnerships’ economic priorities.

The purpose of the strategic focus is to guide decision making and investment facilitation to progress the agreed economic agenda for the Barwon South West region.

Areas of focus for the RDA will include:

INNOVATION PRECINCTS

Geelong Future Economy Precinct adjoins Deakin University’s Waurn Pond Campus focussing on innovation in manufacturing. The Geelong region has been successful in attracting investment from global industry leaders in the advanced fibre sector such as Carbon Revolution, Quickstep Automotive and HeiQ which have co-located in the Future Economy Precinct to be close to world leading research expertise in this sector.

Carbon Revolution are the world’s first single piece carbon fibre wheel manufacturer and have a 5-year expansion plan to increase exports to nearly 200,000 wheels per year and employ 500 people.

Plans to formally establish an advanced fibre cluster in Geelong is set to position the region as an internationally-recognised region of excellence in advanced fibre and composite manufacturing and innovation.

The Pivot City Innovation District is set on a 11-hectare site in North Geelong. The first stage, Federal Mills, is the highly successful home to the Runway incubator, Tribal software, Tango Energy and the annual Pivot Summit event. The vision for the district is to expand to 5,000 workspaces set in three distinct precincts embracing the unique waterfront location.

RDA BSW will continue to support and encourage investment in these important regional precincts and work with stakeholders to accelerate the region’s industry sectors of competitive advantage to support a culture of collaboration, entrepreneurship, innovation and growth.

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

The region has prioritised achieving digital parity with Melbourne and supporting the region to shift to a greater digital intensity to support economic development by:

- Creating Smart Cities and Towns - High Speed Broadband in business precincts and fringe areas, public Wi-Fi to support social inclusion and enable IoT Smart City Applications and support for digital skills across growth sectors;
- Coverage for Primary industries and Rural Communities – funding to address mobile blackspots for Agriculture, Tourism, Transport and Emergency Services, IoT infrastructure and digital skills pilots addressing primary production and building capability.

There is significant digital divide compared to schools, households and businesses in Melbourne. There is limited public Wi-Fi, restricting local governments implementing Smart City solutions, visitor amenity and provision of low-cost connectivity for disadvantaged citizens.

RDA BSW will continue to work with the region to bridge the digital divide.

ENERGY AS AN ENABLER AND A GROWTH INDUSTRY

Our region like the rest of Australia is concerned about the impact of rising energy prices. Recent energy price volatility and uncertainty around energy policy have threatened industry stability and regional jobs.

Energy prices have doubled in recent years due to a combination of the closure of the Hazelwood Power Station, the shortage of oil due to overseas demand and the cost of infrastructure replacement programs. Barwon South West has a high number of manufacturing and food processing facilities that means that the cost and volatility of energy prices is a significant challenge for industry in the region.
There is between $3-5 billion worth of investment ready renewable energy projects planned in the Barwon South West region. The planned investments are impacted by a lack of consistency around energy policy and more specifically, consistency around a clean energy target. These projects are viewed as a vital part of any future energy mix and integral to helping bring down future energy prices in the region. These projects will have an operational life of at least 15 years which will help to attract investment by maintenance firms with Portland, Warrnambool and Hamilton well placed to be regional service hubs.

RDA BSW will continue to work with the region to drive this important message at a national level and advocate for consistency around energy policy and more specifically, consistency around a clean energy target.

RDA BSW is supporting Barwon Region Water Corporation to deliver the Colac Waste-to-Energy Biogrid (WEB) – Market Development analysis. The water Industry has a strong driver to provide leadership in carbon emissions reduction due to the water energy nexus.

RDA BSW will continue to work with the region to support new energy technology.

**ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION**

In the South West, the region’s strength in food and fibre is also identified as one of its weaknesses with 30% of the region’s GVA coming from agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

In Portland, the local economy is overly reliant on the aluminium smelter. RDA BSW have been working with the Committee for Portland and contributed to the development of the Portland Futures document. A pipeline of possible projects has been prepared to assist with the diversification of Portland economy.

RDA BSW will continue to work with the region to facilitate investment into industry diversification projects.

With the headquarters of the Transport Accident Commission, National Disability Insurance Agency and WorkSafe all based in the CBD of Geelong, there is opportunity for further developing Geelong’s social insurance innovation hub. RDA BSW supports the region’s decentralisation proposal for the relocation of the Australian Government Comcare to Geelong and will continue to work with the region on potential growth opportunities to the social insurance sector.

**WORKFORCE SUPPLY SHORTAGES AND JOBS LED POPULATION GROWTH**

The South West region’s is facing a lack of access an appropriately skilled workforce which may impact on the region’s economic growth potential. Projected jobs growth, low unemployment, aging workforce and stagnant population growth contributing to the region’s workforce challenges and without intervention will become more pronounced over the next 5-10 years. The current workforce population is unbalanced and significantly underrepresented in the 15-30 year-old cohort, with the largest representation sitting between 50-54 years old (ABS Census 2016).

Increasing the proportion of migrants that settle in the region has been identified as an immediate priority to address the current workforce imbalance.

In 2018, the Commonwealth Government entered a Designated Area Migration Agreement (DAMA) with the South West part of the region to help address workforce shortages. The South West region is one of the first across the country to enter into a five-year agreement with the Commonwealth.

Other migration initiatives such as secondary migration programs, temporary workers and consideration of recent visa changes will also be utilised. The Great South Coast Economic Migration project is an example of a successful initiative that helps address regional labour shortages and there is a strong appetite to further expand this project.

RDA BSW will continue to support the region to advocate for a collective approach that empowers regions to implement place-based migration initiatives to improve workforce supply and economic output.
AGRICULTURE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Agriculture, forestry, fishing and food processing industries are priority industry sectors in our region and are built on our natural climatic and geographic advantages.

Agricultural production is a key driver of employment in other sectors in our region. The region’s agriculture sector contributes 11.5% GVA, (28.5% GVA in the South West part of the region). These flow-on impacts of agriculture are of importance to both remote and large communities alike. There is substantial opportunity to intensify agriculture production in the region, through investment in enabling infrastructure such as water services, energy and freight connections.

The region recently prioritised establishing food production and agribusiness employment precincts supported by recycled water, waste heat and CO2 from Barwon Water’s Black Rock treatment plant. The Black Rock Food Production and Employment Precinct project cost is circa $50 million, including an $11.5 million private sector commitment. The precinct will utilise recycled water and waste-to-energy as a combined package to create a competitive advantage that will attract further private investment. RDA BSW will look to support planning work and facilitate investment in this initiative.

Additionally, RDA BSW is leading the preparation of a Roadmap for commercialised international education, training and innovation in farming and agribusinesses. This project will chart a plausible course to realise the regions potential as an ‘international education, training and innovation hub in farming and agribusiness.’

AVALON – INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT & VICTORIA’S FUTURE INLAND FREIGHT PRECINCT

With Avalon now being an international airport, it is expected that the region will experience significant growth in the visitor economy. It is also anticipated that additional international destinations will be offered out of Avalon, and additional airlines will operate out of the airport.

RDA BSW is facilitating ongoing collaboration with Avalon Airport to advocate for a dedicated transport link between Melbourne and Avalon airports. The Regional Investment team is working closely with businesses in the region to support the growth of tourism activities in the region and maximise potential export opportunities.

Additionally, Avalon has been identified as the most efficient long-term inland freight terminal for Melbourne and Victoria. Over 57 billion tonne of freight travels through Victoria that are dispersed across many sites and not linked efficiently to the seaports. Avalon has the potential to become Victoria’s future inland freight precinct.

VISITOR ECONOMY – GEELONG CITY DEAL & GREAT OCEAN ROAD INVESTMENT

Over $370 million has been secured for the Geelong City Deal that includes funding for significant projects in Queenscliff, Lorne and Apollo Bay and the Twelve Apostles coast. The Geelong City Deal is a ten-year partnership with State and Commonwealth governments to revitalise the city and the broader regional economy.

Barwon South West region is already a highly visited destination and includes the world-renowned Great Ocean Road and Budj Bim UNESCO World Heritage listed site.

RDA BSW will continue to leverage the Geelong City Deal and Budj Bim’s UNESCO World Heritage status to unlock private investment, support new tourism product development and build economic and community benefits for the region.
AUSTRALIAN ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY (AAHL) GEELONG

AAHL in East Geelong is a strategic element of Australia’s response to outbreaks involving the most dangerous microorganisms; it plays a vital role in testing and vaccine development. AAHL is a critical component for protecting Australia’s multi-billion-dollar livestock and aquaculture industries - and the public - from emerging disease threats. AAHL boasts physical containment capabilities and skilled personnel found in less than half a dozen other places worldwide.

AAHL is the closest such facility to Asia, which faces grave emerging threats from exotic zoonotic diseases (i.e. diseases that spread from animals to humans). AAHL can play an important role in an improved collaborative effort. This project develops an Asia-wide collaborative vision along with targeted capital works which together can make AAHL and the Geelong region Asia’s true centre for collaborative infectious disease and biosecurity preparedness and research, as well as a facility for research into lethal antibiotic resistant ‘superbugs.

RDA BSW will engage with this commonwealth agency to explore regional economic development and investment opportunities for this highly specialised facility.

CROSS BORDER COLLABORATION

RDA BSW is uniquely placed to leverage and coordinate regional effort and influence policy decisions from within state and commonwealth government levels by collecting intelligence on cross-border issues and opportunities and advising government, predominately Victorian Government but also New South Wales, South Australian, Tasmanian and Commonwealth Governments where appropriate.

Each region is unique but there are similarities with the challenges that are faced. Working collaboratively will help identify opportunities for economic development, job creation and growth and create greater benefits for the border regions.

RDA BSW will continue to engage on a regular basis to investigate and progress opportunities for collaborative projects to ensure that state border lines seize opportunities for economic development.

PRINCES HIGHWAY WEST OF COLAC (PHWC)

Linking our region’s freight connections, particularly the two major ports (Portland and Geelong) and Avalon International Airport, remains a key priority for the BSW region.

By 2020 the Great South Coast region will haul 1/3 of Victoria’s regional road corridor tonnage, however the condition, efficiency and load limitations of roads create ongoing transport and safety challenges. PHWC is the key road connection through the south-west between Melbourne and Adelaide.

RDA BSW fully supports the preparation of the Princes Highway Corridor Strategy from Sydney to Port Augusta and is working with the region to prioritise investment for the section of the Princes Highway West of Colac to the South Australian border.
RDA BSW Mission and Underpinning Principles

Mission

RDA BSW will execute its core responsibilities as outlined in the charter in a collaborative, practical and efficient way by:

a) Enabling and encouraging regional prosperity and monitoring progress in key areas;
b) Leveraging regional advantages and building sector strengths;
c) Promoting regional capabilities and investment opportunities;
d) Supporting increase in exports and greater Asian presence; and
e) Reducing barriers to job and economic growth, i.e. infrastructure development and policy alignment.

Underpinning Principles

RDA BSW will follow the principles and encourage their adoption throughout the region as the evolved paradigm for collaboration for regional prosperity:

- **Regional prosperity is what matters**: A focus on prosperity rather than economic development. While economic activity is important, it is an insufficient indicator of whether people will come to or remain in a place. Regional prosperity is what attracts and retains business and enables thriving community groups.

- **Place-based planning**: We understand that there are significant differences between and within communities in terms of the demographic, needs and priorities of families. A consistent view amongst stakeholders is that one community’s priorities, policy frameworks and services may not be the most appropriate for another. Place-based planning requires good and rich data, a willingness to work closely in partnership, thoughtful financial planning and accountability and high-quality local leadership. Most importantly, it requires that government agencies work outside their silos, accept that communities prosper when they are deeply engaged in their own planning and invest in enabling this. This practical, real-world approach is widely shared by stakeholders within the region.

- **Optimising federation**: Application of the federation-approach as it applies to many areas of life in building regional prosperity. In the same way that the Australian Government Department of Education sets standards and policies and measures progress but does not run schools, we see there is an opportunity to help establish and monitor progress towards regional prosperity rather than have a project-based approach.

- **Valuing enablement and leadership**: In the past, successful projects have been seen by many as the key to success. In the future, enablement and leadership are key to place-based planning, reducing complexity and achieving collective impact. Collective impact, as has been the region’s own experience, provides a framework for facilitating and achieving large-scale social change within an area or region. This model brings cross-sector and cross-agency organisations together to focus on a common agenda that result in long-lasting change. This must include businesses.

- **Engaging, informing and educating role**: Experience shows that an engaging, informing and educating role in developing the region is best done by the relevant level of government. This minimises the politics and optimises the ability to engage on appropriate and more significant agendas. In this principle, local government engages community, the State Regional Partnership Forums and RDV engage State Government (and its agencies) and RDA engages Australian Government (and its agencies). This principle relies on and underpins, a collaborative and transparent approach.

- **Respect for the region’s reality**: The BSW is many communities and a number of sub-regions. Aggregation is not always possible, practical or desirable. Whilst aggregation may suit other arena, in this context we need to communicate and educate the reality of the region, rather than simplify to meet the needs of others.
REGIONAL COLLABORATION

RDA BSW will collaborate with relevant stakeholders to identify economic opportunities and leverage private and public-sector investment in the region.

BSW RDA is also committed to collaborating to grow regional prosperity and address complex issues such as growing jobs and tackling disadvantage as this requires an integrated, collaborative approach between all levels of government, business, community and individuals.

The region boasts several mature and accomplished regional alliances, partnerships and networks. These organisations undertake extensive community consultation to inform the region’s well-developed regional strategic plans, growth plans and agreed regional priorities.

In recognition of the complimentary roles and differentiated responsibilities across these organisations, RDA BSW endeavours not to duplicate the work of any of these stakeholder groups; rather we will draw upon the data, knowledge, experience and opinions of these organisations, and add value to their endeavours by identifying opportunities to achieve common objectives.

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Nine Regional Partnerships have been established by the Victorian Government across regional and rural Victoria to give communities a greater say about what matters to them and ensure their priorities are communicated to the heart of the Victorian Government.

There are two Regional Partnerships in the BSW region and RDA BSW is represented on both the Barwon and Great South Coast partnership groups. The RDA representative’s role is to provide the link into the Australian Government, presenting a clear opportunity to connect the Australian Government’s regional agenda and align regional development priorities.

RDA BSW representatives have been working with Regional Partnerships to consult with stakeholders and refine regional priorities. There is a strong collaboration with the regional partnerships and the RDA committee on aligned economic development and investment and trade priorities.

INDUSTRY AND TRADE

RDA BSW will continue to engage with organisations, industry, potential investors, entrepreneurs and emerging businesses to:

- create investment and job opportunities
- connect them with business support, and investment and growth programs
- connect them with export opportunities or export readiness support

RDA BSW have identified seven priority growth sectors based on two criteria: (1) alignment with the high growth sectors identified by the Victorian Government, and (2) areas of regional competitive advantage. The priority sectors for the BSW region are:

1. Agribusiness (Food and Fibre)  
2. Renewable Energy  
3. Healthcare, aged care, Medical Technologies  
4. Visitor Economy – Tourism  
5. Digital Economy – ICT  
6. Advanced manufacturing  
7. Work anywhere (decentralisation)  
8. Higher Education
Potential to grow in BSW - The industries of the future will not be prominent everywhere. Specialising in areas of strengths will be vital for these regional economies to thrive. Existing industries could be shifted so that they are more ideally suited in a knowledge economy.

Transition - The region’s economy continues to undergo structural transition which has implications for labour force participation, future industry structure and productivity of the economy.

The direct and indirect prospects for future employment - High growth sectors are not necessarily those where employment number are growing. Automated and labour-saving technologies are disrupting all industries than others. This means that some sectors, which have traditionally been large employers, are becoming less labour-intensive. However, the growth of less labour-intensive sectors is still essential for regional prosperity since they may spur employment across related sectors and supply chains.

Globalisation: By 2030, Asia is forecast to have a middle-class population of around 3.2 billion people, almost double that of the rest of the world. This will occur in an environment of increased global competition for markets and a highly globalised supply chain. There are opportunities for the region because of the trends in food and fibre production and tourism but also challenges in responding to issues such as low-cost overseas manufacturing.

Indicators for sector growth - There is no single indicator for sector growth. In some sectors, key indicators (such as output and employment) may be trending in different directions – so it is important to consider which ones are relevant to accurately demonstrate the economic trends and conditions in the BSW region.

Delivery of Australian Government Programs

The Australian Government delivers various programs and grant opportunities to business and local government designed to create jobs, drive economic growth and build stronger regional communities into the future. This includes the Australian Government’s commitment to decentralisation.

RDA BSW will assist the Australian Government in the delivery of these programs by:
- disseminating information on Australian Government programs
- assisting potential stakeholders to identify and develop strong project proposals that will contribute to long term economic growth and is a priority within our region
- working with applicants to prepare competitive applications, supporting documents and evidence
- identifying decentralisation opportunities and advocating for these opportunities.

Reports and advice to the Australian Government

RDA BSW will provide evidence-based advice to the Australian Government on critical regional development issues positively and negatively affecting the region.

RDA BSW will provide quarterly reports to the region, an annual business plan and communications plan, and an annual outcomes report. These reports will be available on the RDA BSW website in line with the calendar below.

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SECTION 3: TABLE OF OUTCOMES & ACTIVITIES

RDA BARWON SOUTH WEST TOP FIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

Summary of the top five strategic priorities for RDA BSW are:

1. **Bridging the digital divide** – RDA BSW will continue to work with the region to bridge the digital divide.

2. **Workforce supply shortages and jobs led population growth** – RDA BSW will continue to support the region to advocate for a collective approach that empowers regions to implement place-based migration initiatives to improve workforce supply and economic output.

3. **Princes Highway West of Colac (PHWC)** - RDA BSW fully supports the preparation of the Princes Highway Corridor Strategy from Sydney to Port Augusta and is working with the region to prioritise investment for the section of the Princes Highway West of Colac to the South Australian border.

4. **Agriculture Sector Development** – RDA BSW will continue to look for opportunities to intensify agriculture production in the region, through investment in enabling infrastructure such as water services, energy and freight connections.

5. **Geelong City Deal & Great Ocean Road Investment** – Over $370 million has been secured for the Geelong City Deal that includes funding for significant projects in Queenscliff, Lorne and Apollo Bay and the Twelve Apostles coast. The Geelong City Deal is a ten-year partnership with State and Commonwealth governments to revitalise the city and the broader regional economy. RDA BSW will continue to leverage the Geelong City Deal and Budj Bim’s UNESCO World Heritage status to unlock private investment, support new tourism product development and build economic and community benefits for the region.

Summary of top five key business activities for RDA BSW are:

1. **Avalon International Airport** – RDA BSW is facilitating stakeholder discussions with Avalon Airport at a State and Commonwealth level to advocate for a dedicated transport link between Melbourne and Avalon airports.

2. **Great South Coast Designated Area Migration Agreement (GSC DAMA)** – RDA BSW is working with Warrnambool City Council, the Designated Area Representative (DAR) for the GSC DAMA to ensure successful implementation and a positive contribution to labour shortages and long-term population growth in the GSC.

3. **Cross Border Collaboration** – RDA BSW is uniquely placed to leverage and coordinate regional effort and influence policy decisions from within state and commonwealth government levels by collecting intelligence on cross-border issues and opportunities and advising government. RDA BSW will leverage the RDA network to progress collaborative projects with a focus on enabling infrastructure (road and rail networks, digital) and addressing skilled workforce shortages.

4. **New Energy Investment Attraction** – RDA BSW is undertaking work to support new energy technology and is supporting Barwon Region Water Corporation to deliver the Colac Waste-to-Energy Biogrid (WEB) – Market Development analysis. This project will position the Barwon South West region as a world leader in industrial symbiosis.

5. **Training and innovation in farming and agribusiness** – RDA BSW is leading the preparation of a roadmap for commercialised international education, training and innovation in farming and agribusinesses.
### OUTCOME THEME 1

**Increased economic opportunities and investment in the Barwon South West region**

**OUTPUT**

Identify economic development opportunities that leverage private and public-sector investment in the Barwon South West region

**What will we do?**

List in this row Activities You plan to undertake to perform the Outputs and meet the Outcomes.

- RDA BSW will have minimum of 100 business engagements across the region to generate investment opportunities
- RDA BSW will engage with organisations or potential investors to identify and create investment opportunities
- RDA BSW will facilitate new investment in the region, assisting local businesses to invest, create and retain jobs

**Measures**

- Number of business engagements
- Number of investment opportunities identified
- An example of an identified investment opportunity and RDA BSWs involvement in progressing the investment opportunity

### OUTCOME THEME 2

**Increased trade and jobs creation**

**OUTPUT**

Connect our region with industry sectors, international trade partners, financial markets, regional entrepreneurs and business leaders to attract investors to explore new opportunities to grow local jobs in the Barwon South West Region

**What will we do?**

List in this row Activities You plan to undertake to perform the Outputs and meet the Outcomes.

- RDA BSW will support organisations to increase job opportunities by connecting them to business support, investment and growth programs
- RDA BSW will engage with organisations to identify and create export opportunities by connecting them with Trade Missions and Global Victoria Events.
- RDA BSW will engage with organisations to facilitate export readiness support, as well as growing exports and replacing imports

**Measures**

- Number of new jobs created
- Number of export opportunities identified
- Example of facilitated export readiness support
## OUTCOME THEME 3

### Cooperative effort with all levels of government, industry, community and other regional stakeholders leads to improved economic development outcomes

**OUTPUT**

Develop and maintain positive, collaborative working relationships and partnerships with all levels of government, industry, community and other regional stakeholders which address identified gaps or needs in economic development activity in the Barwon South West region.

**What will we do?**

List in this row Activities You plan to undertake to perform the Outputs and meet the Outcomes.

- RDA BSW will meet regularly with stakeholders across the region to facilitate regional economic development outcomes
- RDA BSW will invite stakeholders to present on priority projects
- RDA BSW will be involved in a minimum of 10 working groups to facilitate/support regional economic development outcomes/projects
- RDA BSW will assist stakeholders with BBRF & RGF and other government programs as required

**Measures**

- Number of meetings with stakeholders
- Number of regional working groups participated in
- An example of a local government priority and or regional working group initiative outlining RDA BSW’s involvement in progressing this priority/initiative

## OUTCOME THEME 4

### Achieve Government program objectives

**OUTPUT**

Assist in the delivery of Commonwealth programs including public and private sector decentralisation

**What will we do?**

List in this row Activities You plan to undertake to perform the Outputs and meet the Outcomes.

- RDA BSW will engage with stakeholders to identify and facilitate decentralisation opportunities where applicable
- RDA BSW will facilitate initiatives to promote and or assist in the delivery of Australian Government programs
- RDA BSW will represent the Australian Government on the Barwon Regional Partnership and the Great South Coast Regional Partnership to connect Australian Government’s regional programs and align regional development priorities across the three levels of government, industry and or community

**Measures**

- Number of decentralisation opportunities identified
- Example of a facilitated initiative to promote or assist in delivering Australian Government programs
- Number of Regional Partnership meetings and events participated in
- Example of alignment across the three levels of government and industry/community on a regional development priority
### OUTCOME THEME 5  
**Maximise access to Government programs and grants**

#### OUTPUT
**Promote and disseminate information on Australian Government policies and grant programs and support community stakeholders in Barwon South West region to develop project proposals to access funding**

#### What will we do? List in this row Activities
You plan to undertake to perform the Outputs and meet the Outcomes.
- RDA BSW will disseminate information on Australian Government policies and grant programs via existing communication channels including newsletters, stakeholder campaigns, social media and websites
- RDA BSW will assist potential stakeholders to identify and prepare competitive applications, supporting documents and evidence
- RDA BSW will provide letters of support for applicants for grant applications where the project will contribute to long term economic growth and is a priority within our region

#### Measures
- Number of communications promoting information on Australian Government programs and grants
- Number of stakeholder contacts specific to providing information and/or support on Australian government policies and grant programs
- Number of applications to Australian Government grant programs from the region

### OUTCOME THEME 6  
**Advice supports development outcomes**

#### OUTPUT
**Provide evidence-based advice to the Australian Government on critical regional development issues; and Provide information on regional activities and competitive advantages to all levels of government, industry, business and community sectors.**

#### What will we do? List in this row Activities
You plan to undertake to perform the Outputs and meet the Outcomes.
- RDA BSW will deliver advice, in the form of reports, briefings or submissions, to the Australian Government on critical regional development issues and priorities for our region
- RDA BSW will deliver information and advice to our key stakeholders and all levels of government on regional activities and competitive advantages
- RDA BSW will brief members of the Victorian Government on RDA BSW activities and priorities
- RDA BSW will monitor the effectiveness of the communication and stakeholder management plan and report on annually

#### Measures
- Accurate and timely reports detailing RDA BSW activities and priorities are provided to the Australian Government
- Specific example of advice provided to the Australian Government outside of its normal reporting requirements
- Specific example of communication/advice provided to key stakeholders and/or the Victorian Government on regional activities and competitive advantage.
Contact

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