



Regional
Development
Australia
BARWON SOUTH WEST

Business Plan 2022-23

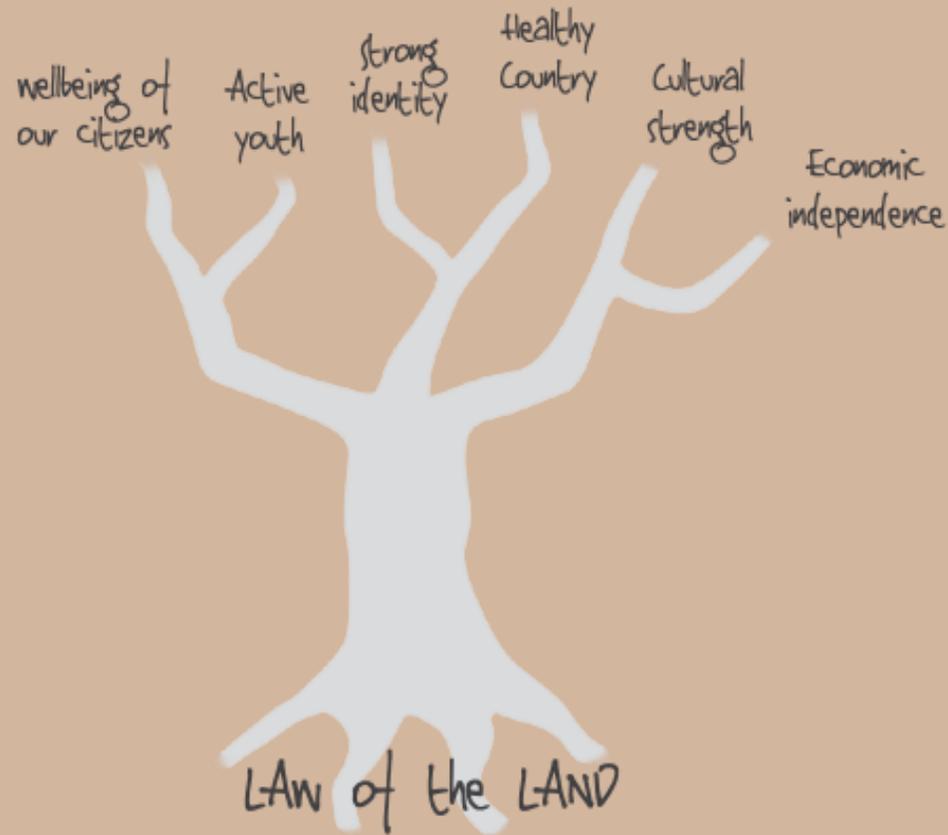


Eastern Maar
Aboriginal Corporation

“We look to a future in which we have secured our rightful place in society and on Country. A future where Eastern Maar citizens are a free people, proud of our heritage and our achievements. Where we are respected as the Traditional Owners of our lands and waters, living in harmony with the rest of society.

Our culture matters. Our Country matters. And in the modern world we live in, financial independence also matters. In our future, we will have built up our economic independence, but not at the expense of our culture or our values. We will remain true to who we are and we will continue to care for the Country that has looked after us for tens of thousands of years.”

Extracted from Meerreengeyye ngakeepoorryeeyt – The Eastern Maar Country Plan (Source: <https://easternmaar.com.au/>)



“Through Meerreengeyye ngakeepoorryeeyt - our Country Plan - we have defined our vision for the future. To help us on the path to achieving our vision, we have identified six goals that will form the focus of our efforts. For each of our goals, we have a number of objectives that we will work towards - as individuals, as a nation and in partnership with others. These goals are underpinned by the law of the land, our oral authority that dictates how we live and behave, who we interact with and how we will always care for our Country.”

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we live and recognise the continuing connection of the Eastern Maar people to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



We will respect and support self-determination activities of the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation by acknowledging, promoting and supporting their vision for the future.

We will ensure that the six goals of *Meerreengeyye ngakeepoorryeeyt* and the five principles of economic independence within it are honoured in decisions and activities of the RDA Barwon South West Committee.



GUNDITJ MIRRORING
Traditional Owners
Aboriginal Corporation



“Through GMTOAC, Gunditjmara people ensure that our cultural obligations and responsibilities which arise from Gunditjmara country and under Gunditjmara law, custom and beliefs are upheld and recognised for the protection and benefit of our traditional lands and waters and for our respect to our Gunditjmara ancestors and for our Elders.

Through the self-determination of the Gunditjmara community, GMTOAC upholds the following pillars in order to advance the cultural identity and standing of Gunditjmara peoples:

- *Strengthening Gunditjmara Resources;*
- *Celebrating Gunditjmara Community and Culture; and*
- *Providing Collective Leadership.”*

(Source: <https://www.gunditjmirring.com/about>)

During the time of creation, Gunditjmara Country was inhabited by beings that were sometimes human, sometimes animal, sometimes neither, and these beings brought the Country into life. Their movements are written across Gunditjmara Country and give meaning to the contemporary landscape.

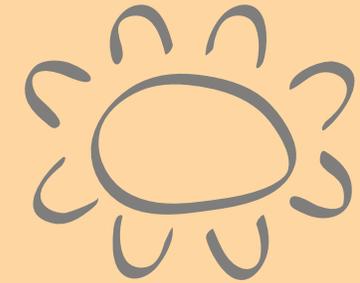
From at least 6,600 years ago, the Gunditjmara created an extensive and complex aquaculture network where modified channels diverted water and kooyang (short-finned eel) into holding ponds. Here kooyang grew fat and were harvested with woven baskets set in weirs built from volcanic rocks and wood lattice structures.

The story of the Gunditjmara people is intimately related to the volcanic eruption of Mount Eccles from around 30,000 years ago, when an ancestral creation-being revealed himself in the landscape.

Country is part of Gunditjmara identity as a people. It contains places with deep cultural and spiritual meanings. Country itself, as a living landscape, is Gunditjmara heritage and identity.

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we live and recognise the continuing connection of the Gunditjmara people to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



We will respect and support self-determination activities of the Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (GMTOAC) by acknowledging, promoting and supporting their vision for the future.

We will ensure that the three pillars of the GMTOAC are honoured in decisions and activities of the RDA Barwon South West Committee.





Wadawurrung
Traditional Owners
Aboriginal Corporation

“Wadawurrung People are determined to see their unique cultural heritage protected and respected. Wadawurrung aims to restore Traditional knowledge and authority over the management of Wadawurrung Country for the betterment of those living on, prospering from and/or simply enjoying its land, waterways and coastal areas.”

(Source: <https://www.wadawurrung.org.au/>)



Gobata Dja
baap Ngubiyt

Taking care of Country and waters



Gobata
bengadak tjarra

Us Supporting Us –
Cultural Strengthening



Wurrurrwilwa
Wadawurrung
Corporation

Strengthening Wadawurrung
Corporation

Wadawurrung’s RAP area covers over 10,000 square kilometres on the western side Melbourne and including the major regional cities of Geelong and Ballarat. This area incorporates the activities of 11 separate local councils – including many that are experiencing very high rates of growth in terms of population, infrastructure, commercial and residential development. Wadawurrung Country also incorporates the start of the Great Ocean Road, one of Australia’s most iconic and popular tourist destinations.

(Source: <https://www.wadawurrung.org.au/>)

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we live and recognise the continuing connection of the Wadawurrung people to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Paleert Tjaava Dja
Let’s make country good together

Koling wada-ngal
Let’s walk together

We will respect and support self-determination activities of the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation by acknowledging, promoting and supporting their vision for the future.

We will ensure that the three programs of the *Wadawurrung Country Plan* and the 18 strategies within it are honoured in decisions and activities of the RDA Barwon South West Committee.

Wurrurrwilwa gupma bengadak Wadawurrung wurring-wurring baap dja

All people working together to make Wadawurrung Country and culture strong.



Wadawurrung
culture and people



Enterprise
and
employment



Wadawurrung
cultural sites
and places



Bush tucker,
medicines and
resources



Yulluk
Waterways, Rivers,
estuaries and
wetlands



Inland
country



Coastal
country



Warre
Sea
country



Native
animals

“These are the important things that we want to look after”
OUR VALUES - BUILDING BLOCKS

Message from the Chair

Before anything else, the Barwon South West region of Victoria is beautiful, bountiful, delicate and wild.

The lands and waters of the Eastern Maar, Gunditjmara and Wadawurrung people are home to the Great Ocean Road, the Shipwreck Coast, the Surf Coast, the Otways, the Grampians, the Bellarine and Victoria's largest regional city, Geelong.

With rich agricultural land and UNESCO listed Aboriginal cultural sites, our economy has strengths and opportunities in advanced manufacturing, high-value agriculture, sustainable and cultural tourism, green hydrogen, renewable energy, health and community services and innovative education, training and co-working spaces.

Since the start of the pandemic, we have seen a significant increase in migration from metropolitan Melbourne – more than any other region of Victoria. While migration of proportionately younger people to the region brings opportunity, it is also exacerbating critical challenges in affordable housing, transport, digital capability and workforce.

The shortage of housing for skilled workers and the continuing absence of international workers is hampering our economic and social recovery efforts. International trade influencers, uplift in urgency for climate change mitigation and adaptation, the 2026 Commonwealth Games and the ongoing pandemic have created an environment of change and opportunity.

With more growth anticipated, the Barwon South West region must leverage its competitive advantages to ensure its population and economic growth is equitable, inclusive and environmentally sustainable.



BARWON SOUTH WEST

Eastern Maar
Aboriginal Corporation

Gunditj Mirring
Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners
Aboriginal Corporation

The barriers to economic recovery that threaten to impact the region's short and mid-term goals include:

- Skilled workforce shortages
- Affordable and accessible housing
- Visitor economy decline
- Digital infrastructure and capability

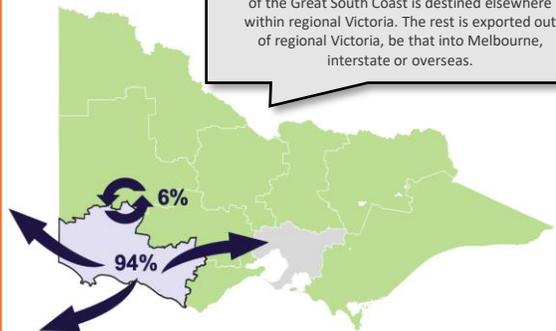
Key emerging opportunities include:

- Competitive advantage in emerging **Hydrogen Economy**
- Greater **support for regions** at state and federal levels
- **Increased migration** to regional areas
- Changed political environment with greater priority given to **climate change mitigation** and **first nations people**
- 'Build back better' in a more **equitable, environmentally sustainable** and **socially responsible** way

Great South Coast Export Destination

REMPPLAN (2020)

For Sheep, Grains, Beef and Dairy Cattle, an estimated 6% (net) of product that is exported out of the Great South Coast is destined elsewhere within regional Victoria. The rest is exported out of regional Victoria, be that into Melbourne, interstate or overseas.



Great South Coast farms produce¹²



15.3%

of Victoria's beef



25.2%

of Victoria's dairy



23.9%

of Victoria's sheep



Chair's Message (continued)

2021-22 Achievements

Our **Brown Bag Briefing** sessions improved awareness, alignment across priorities and enabled us to share information and coordinate advocacy effort on immediate barriers and opportunities in the Barwon South West region.

Attended by over 200 stakeholders, the briefings provided overviews on current initiatives in key focus areas:

- Visitor Economy Recovery
- Affordable Housing for Key Workers
- BSW Freight and Logistics Industry round table
- Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority
- Geelong City Deal stakeholder briefing and consultation.

Spirit of Tasmania Passenger & Freight Opportunities

RDA BSW has been working with stakeholders and RDA Tasmania to better understand the economic impact and opportunity of the Ferry moving from Port Melbourne to Geelong.

In 2021 we worked with Tourism Geelong and the Bellarine to undertake research into visitation potential. In September 2022 the *Spirit of Tasmania Relocation Impact and Opportunity Assessment* will potentially unlock value add and freight forwarding opportunities in the BSW region.

Key and Essential Worker Housing

The '*Delivering Key Worker Housing in the Barwon South West*' project will advance the recommendations from the Key and Essential Worker Housing Supply Action Plan (Sept 2020).

This work also enabled the Committee to put forward a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue 'Inquiry into Housing Affordability and Supply in Australia' and attend a hearing on this critical issue.



Chair's Message (continued)

2021-22 Achievements

Ministerial Teleconferences and Town Halls

As we shifted out of the pandemic environment RDA BSW continued to provide critical advice to both state and federal governments on the impacts of COVID-19 through participation in regular teleconferences with the Federal Assistant Minister of Regional Development. The teleconferences and regional Town Halls were well attended by Committee members, providing a direct line to the Minister and her colleagues to hear firsthand, on the ground advice on issues of significance affecting regional Australia.

Economic Futures

RDA BSW Committee member Grant Sutherland took a lead role as Chair of the GSC Economic Futures Steering Group to continue to drive economic diversity and high value economic outcomes in the Great South Coast end of the region. Grant also presented at the RDA National Forum on Growing Economic Futures, using the Great South Coast Economic Futures as a case study. RDA BSW is about to commence the next stage of this project.

Federal Government Funding

Barwon South West received Building Better Regions Round 5 funding totalling \$10,381,289 to support projects investing \$25,292,063 into the region and provided advice and support for nine strong applications to Round 6 with announcements expected in Q3 2022.

We look forward to supporting the priorities of our regional stakeholders to deliver even stronger outcomes for the region.

Anita Rank

Chair, RDA BSW Committee



RDA Barwon South West has a direct link to the Australian Government through Minister McBain



The Hon Kristy McBain MP
Minister for Regional Development,
Local Government and Territories



Regional Partnerships have a direct link to the Victorian Government through Minister Shing



The Hon Harriet Shing MLC
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Water
Minister for Equality



RDA Barwon South West Committee was established by the Australian Government and is supported by the Victorian Government through RDV. Chair is endorsed by both Ministers.

RDA Barwon South West Committee members include: Industry and business members with global, national and local experience in advanced manufacturing, agriculture, education, tourism and energy, supported by the Regional Director of RDV Barwon South West



RDV Barwon South West
Regional Director and officers coordinate and connect the activities of the RDA and both Regional Partnerships.



Barwon Regional Partnership and Great South Coast Regional Partnership were established by the Victorian Government and are supported through RDV.

Regional Partnerships' members include: Business and community members, the CEOs of our Local Government Areas, an RDA Barwon South West Committee member, the Regional Director of RDV Barwon South West and a senior officer (Dep Sec) from the Victorian Government.

BARWON SOUTH WEST REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS



Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation • Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation
Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation • Deakin University • Avalon Airport • GeelongPort
Port of Portland • Committee for Geelong • Committee for Portland • Major employers • Peak industry bodies
Local business incubators • Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine • Great Ocean Road Region Tourism
Grampians Tourism • Discovery Coast • Great Ocean Road Coast and Parks Authority • RICE
Geelong Chamber of Commerce • Geelong Manufacturing Council • Gordon TAFE • South West TAFE
Local Learning and Employment Networks • Barwon Water • Wannon Water • Southern Rural Water



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Regional Development Victoria (RDV)

Serving all 6 RDA Committees and all 9 Regional Partnerships with:

Shared evidence • Data analysis • United voice • Joined-up priorities • Capital city connections • Coordination • Pathways to government

Statement of Collaboration

To amplify opportunities for collaboration and increase high-value outcomes for the region, RDA Barwon South West Committee, Barwon Regional Partnership and Great South Coast Regional Partnership will endeavour to coordinate their respective activities.

We will leverage Regional Development Victoria's representation on all three groups to coordinate high-value communications with the Victorian Government and the Australian Government.

We will use RDV's regional resources and skills to ensure our key projects and priorities are supported by:

- **Shared evidence**
Improve advocacy outcomes through use of consistent, shared evidence in BSW region business cases, projects and policies.
- **Data analysis**
Strengthen regional business cases by leveraging digital and business analysis skills of the centralised RDV team.
- **United voice**
Use consistent messaging and advocacy collateral to create a confident and united voice for the region.
- **Joined-up priorities**
Identify aligned priorities and coordinate activities, resources and messaging to reduce duplication and improve outcomes.
- **City connections**
Engage RDA networks to advocate for regional issues, influence state capitals and inform city-based businesses on regional opportunities.



LONG TERM STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

Diversify and strengthen our economic foundations

Add value to and diversify within the agri-food supply chain

Accelerate the transition to new and high-value manufacturing opportunities

Realise the potential of the visitor economy

Grow and equip the workforce needed to enable future economic opportunities

Switch on clean energy and green collar jobs

SHORT TO MEDIUM TERM PRIORITY FOCUS AREAS

Affordable housing for key workers

Value add opportunities in agriculture and raw commodities

Address immediate skill and workforce shortages

Digital access and capability gaps

Build momentum in focused green hydrogen opportunities

Supply chain interruptions and freight logistics

UNDERPINNED BY

First Nations engagement, inclusion, consultation and advice

RDA Charter

The RDA Charter outlines the role and expectations of the Australian Government to the future activities of the RDA Committees. The Charter has four elements. Collaborating with other RDA Committees, all levels of government and the private sector, RDA Committees will:

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

Long Term Strategic Focus Areas

1. **Add value and diversify within the agri-food supply chain** - through diversifying agricultural commodities, investment in advanced manufacturing capabilities and an increasing local value add to ensure the region is adaptive and responsive to new opportunities ([REDS GSC 2022](#)).
2. **Accelerate the transition to new and high value manufacturing opportunities** - support the sector to build future-focused products and advanced manufacturing capabilities whilst leveraging existing supply chains and transport infrastructure to drive new and high-value manufacturing opportunities ([REDS Barwon 2022](#)).
3. **Realise the potential of our visitor economy** - leverage our region's world-renowned natural and cultural assets to build high value economic return for the region through enabling self-determined Traditional Owner opportunities, private sector investment and improved visitor experience.
4. **Grow and equip the workforce to enable future economic opportunities** - build a strong and well aligned pipeline of people with the skills and capabilities required to meet industry demand - now and in future.
5. **Switch on Clean Energy and Green Collar Jobs** - harness compelling regional advantages and current projects to create a path to demonstrate clean energy applications, support a greener energy grid and the transition to a lower emission economy.

Key business activities to support short to medium term priority focus areas

1. **Continue to deliver the regionally recognised RDA Brown Bag Briefing Sessions** - a series of out-of-session briefings and consultations with key stakeholders to share information and collaborate where appropriate on immediate barriers and opportunities in the Barwon South West region.
2. **Invest in and lead regional initiatives that will enable high value growth and diversification opportunities** - Spirit of Tasmania relocation impact and opportunity assessment; Great South Coast value add opportunity report; and the Crown land utilisation for local economy stimulation strategy.
3. **Work with all levels of government** - to deliver targeted interventions that support outcomes in our strategic focus areas.
4. **Provide regional advice to government** - on actions and interventions that will advance outcomes or address challenges in our strategic focus areas.
5. **Leverage Commonwealth Games** - Leverage opportunities to position the region as innovative, inclusive, connected and environmentally sustainable in the lead up to the Commonwealth Games.
6. **Aboriginal economic opportunities** - Ensure our activities consider self-determined priorities for Aboriginal economic development.

Strategic Focus

Our **strategic focus** areas align with several of the strategic directions in the Barwon and Great South Coast Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS), reflecting the region's comparative advantages and opportunities to drive future economic growth.

The strategic focus areas are **long term** and aim to diversify and strengthen our economic foundations through prospective high value opportunities, leveraging the region's comparative advantages and latent potential.

Our business activities aim to support outcomes in our **short to medium term** priority focus areas.

For 2022-23 they are:

- Affordable housing for key workers
- Value add opportunities in agriculture and raw commodities
- Address immediate skill and workforce shortages
- Digital access and capability gaps
- Build momentum in focused green hydrogen opportunities
- Supply chain interruptions and freight logistics.

Strategic Plan Alignment



Regional Economic Development Strategies

The Victorian Government has developed Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) for the Barwon and Great South Coast regions, which identify strategic directions for future economic development based on a strong evidence base. The REDS have informed the identification of the strategic focus areas for the Barwon South West RDA Committee.

The REDS also identify four key factors that are critical to enabling economic growth in the region – digital connectivity, transport connectivity, workforce and housing.

In addition to providing a consistent evidence base and the strategic framing of economic opportunities to coordinate investment and activity, the REDS have also identified five opportunities for **Aboriginal economic development**:

- **Identify opportunities** to leverage natural resources for economic benefit, including through adopting traditional agricultural techniques and practices.
- **Invest in the growth and awareness of Aboriginal-owned industry**, including nature based and cultural tourism, business enterprise and procurement.
- **Pursue greater Aboriginal ownership** of land to sustainably manage resources.
- **Promote recognition of the land, its waters and its cultural significance** to ensure that economic activities generate benefits in circumstances where degradation or destruction can be avoided, and existing damage is healed.
- **Engage with young people** to ensure there are opportunities to access secure jobs and build an economic future on Country while, at the same time, learning about culture and traditions.

Regional profile

Demographic, social and economic indicators

- 62 to 65** Australian Digital Inclusion Index Score in Great South Coast in 2021⁹ (Victorian average: 71)
- 63.2%** Local workforce in Great South Coast was employed in skilled occupations in 2021⁹ (Regional Victoria: 62.2%, Melbourne: 67.3% (2021))
- 15.0%** Residents with a bachelor's degree or higher in 2016⁹ (Regional Victorian: 17.0%, Melbourne: 31.0%)

Policy insights

Review of existing policies and local plans, informed by stakeholder engagement

- 4.2** Overall access to roads and public transport in Barwon South West RDA region⁷ (Regional Victoria: 4.1 and Victoria: 5)
- 0.4%** Average rental property vacancy rate in the 6 months leading up to June 2021¹⁰ (Compared to benchmark of 2.5%)
- 31.1%** Increase in median rent in Barwon South West RDA region from 2016 to 2020¹¹ (Victoria, 6.9%, Regional Victoria 28.6%)

Comparative advantage

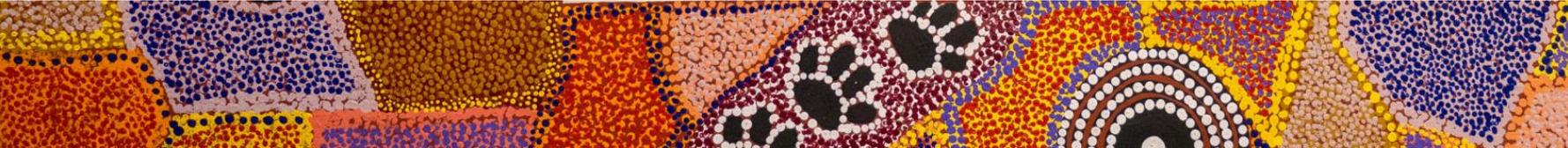
Analysis of the region's strengths and areas of emerging specialisation

- 63 to 70** Australian Digital Inclusion Index Score in Barwon in 2021⁹ (Victorian average: 71)
- 61.7%** Local workforce in Barwon was employed in skilled occupations⁹ (Regional Victoria: 62.2%, Melbourne: 67.3% (2021))
- 22%** Residents with a bachelor's degree or higher in 2016⁹ (Regional Victorian: 17.0%, Melbourne: 31.0%)

Strategic directions

Medium- to long-term priorities for future economic development

- 4.2** Overall access to roads and public transport in Barwon South West RDA region⁷ (Regional Victoria: 4.1 and Victoria: 5)
- 0.9%** Average rental property vacancy rate in the six months leading up to June 2021¹⁰ (Compared to benchmark of 2.5%)
- 31.1%** Increase in median rent in Barwon South West RDA region from 2016 to 2020¹¹ (Victoria, 6.9%, Regional Victoria 28.6%)





Strategic directions

Barwon's five strategic directions have been identified using an evidence base that considers the region's unique attributes, existing and emerging industries, and socioeconomic context.

- **Developing future-focused products and advanced manufacturing capabilities** will, along with existing supply chains and transport infrastructure, drive new and high-value manufacturing opportunities.
- Existing innovation hubs and significant local research expertise will contribute to business incubation, productivity growth and a **future-focused education and training sector**.
- The **diverse range of tourism offerings**, including natural landscapes, creative industries, Aboriginal heritage and emerging agritourism, strongly positions the region to take advantage of changing domestic visitor trends.
- Strong population growth and changing demographics have driven **service-based sectors** with a skilled workforce – cultivating these sectors is an opportunity for long-term growth and wider economic benefits.
- **Renewable energy generation**, including rooftop and large-scale solar, wind and renewable hydrogen, complement strong community interest in resource recovery and recycling to drive sustainability in the region.

324,300
Population
(2020)

21.8%
Population
growth
(2011-20)

\$17.6B
Gross regional
product
(2020)



Barwon Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) Strategic directions

- Accelerate the transition to new and high-value **manufacturing** opportunities
- Further the **innovation** and **skills** ecosystem
- Realise the potential of the **visitor economy**
- Maximise the economic benefit from expanding **service-based sectors**
- Build a **sustainable** and **climate-resilient** economy

Employment	Regional average		
	Barwon %	Regional average %	Metro Melbourne %
Unemployment rate (September 2021)	3.4	4.2	6.0
Average annual employment growth (2011-20)	2.0	1.0	2.1

Top employing sectors (2020)	
	Workers
Health care and social assistance	22,700
Retail trade	18,800
Construction	14,800
Education and training	14,000
Manufacturing	11,300
Public administration and safety	10,300

Top sectors by gross value add (2020)	
Construction	\$1.9B
Health care and social assistance	\$1.8B
Manufacturing	\$1.5B
Public administration and safety	\$1.2B
Education and training	\$1.2B
Retail Trade	\$1.1B





Strategic directions

104,200
Population
(2020)

2.4%
Population
growth
(2011-20)

\$5.8B
Gross regional
product
(2020)



Great South Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy (REDS) Strategic directions

- Add value to and diversify within the **agri-food supply chain**
- Maximise the potential of the region's **energy resources**
- Grow and equip the **workforce** needed to enable future economic opportunities
- Expand existing strengths in **cultural and nature-based visitation**
- Capture the greater potential of the **'Green Triangle'** cross-border economic zone

Great South Coast's five strategic directions have been identified using an evidence base that considers the region's unique attributes, existing and emerging industries, and socioeconomic context.

- Diversification of the region's **agricultural commodities**, investment in advanced manufacturing capabilities and an increase in local value add will ensure the region is adaptive and responsive to new opportunities.
- Local wind, solar and bioenergy generation capabilities, and the associated skilled workforce, position the region to harness other **renewable energy** opportunities (including hydrogen); there are also new opportunities in natural gas exploration and production.
- Specialised research and skills, harnessing technological change, inclusive employment and stimulating migration will ensure a **workforce** able to both capitalise on growth opportunities and meet the needs of an ageing population.
- **Investment in agritourism**, 'hero experiences', natural attractions and Aboriginal heritage such as the Budj Bim Cultural Landscape will allow the region to encourage longer stays and take advantage of changing visitation trends towards domestic travel.
- Improving cross-border collaboration and the flow of goods, services and people will bolster the region's economic potential. The existing forestry supply chain positions the region to capitalise on increasing global demand for wood fibre and to grow into a **world-leading sustainable forestry hub**.

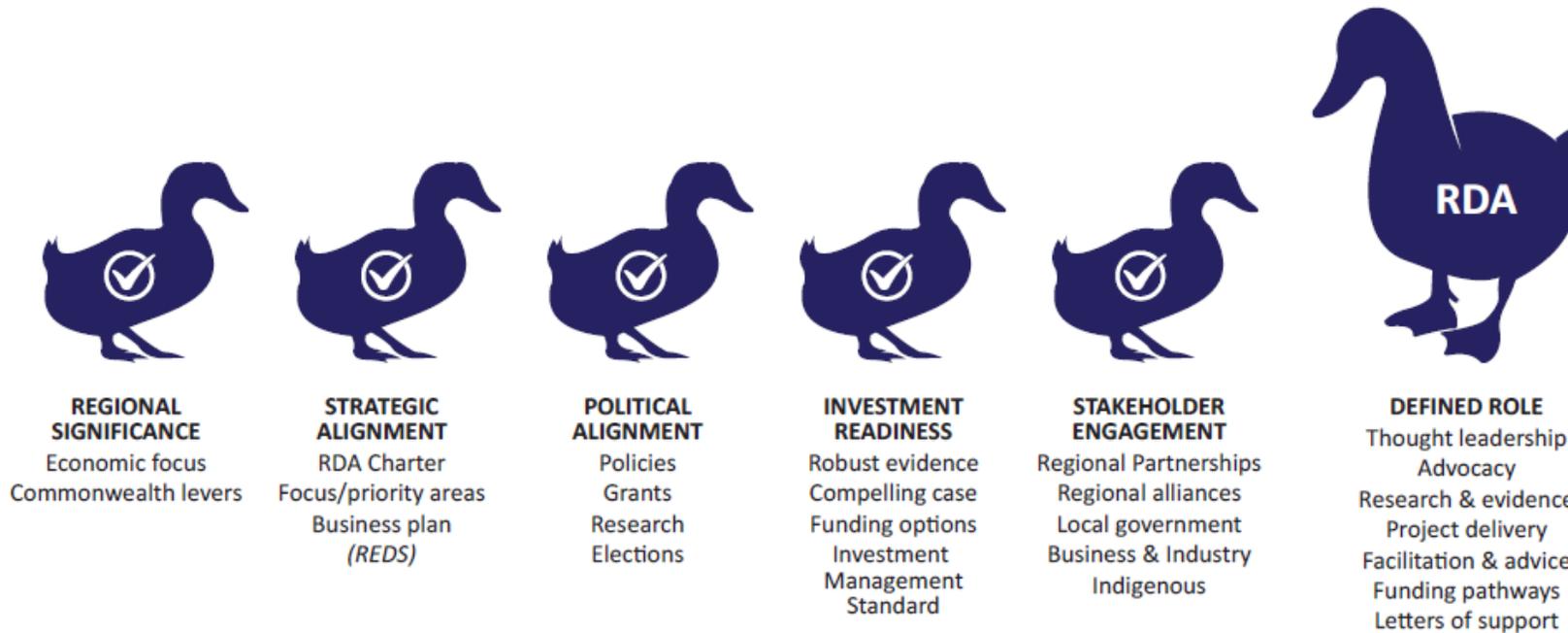
Employment	Great South Coast	Regional average	Metro Melbourne
	%	%	%
Unemployment rate (September 2021)	3.9	4.2	6.0
Average annual employment growth (2011-20)	0.2	1.0	2.1

Top employing sectors (2020)	Workers
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	10,700
Health care and social assistance	7,200
Retail trade	4,800
Manufacturing	4,600
Education and training	4,000
Construction	3,500

Top sectors by gross value add (2020)	
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	\$1.2B
Health care and social assistance	\$530.4M
Manufacturing	\$477.0M
Construction	\$324.4M
Education and training	\$321.3M
Retail Trade	\$269.8M



Strategic Alignment



The BSW region boasts several mature and accomplished regional alliances, partnerships and networks. These organisations undertake extensive community consultation to inform the region's well-developed strategic and growth plans. In recognition of the complimentary roles and differentiated responsibilities across these organisations, **RDA Barwon South West endeavours not to duplicate but to align, add value and identify opportunities to achieve common objectives.**

Investment readiness

The RDA Barwon South West Committee defines its role in assisting the delivery of regional priorities after assessing the criteria featured in the illustration to the left.

In line with the RDA Charter, the Committee will **facilitate** economic development outcomes, investment, local procurement and jobs, **promote** greater engagement with Australian Government policies, grant programs and research, **provide** evidence based advice to the Australian Government on regional development issues, **work with** regional plans that align with the Commonwealth's regional priorities.



Anita Rank
Chair



Grant Sutherland
Deputy Chair



Keith Baillie



Mary-Ann Brown



Peter Dorling



Anne Howard



Alison McLeod



Darryl Mohr



Liz Price



Clive Pugh



David Spear



Brett Ince
Director, Regional Development



Meg Bullen
Manager, Strategy Development and Regional Planning



Nada Malinac
Regional Development Project Officer, RDA

EXECUTIVE SUPPORT

RDA Barwon South West Committee 2022-23

RDA Barwon South West committee members are selected for their business expertise in the region's key economic areas. The high calibre team has global, national and local experience in advanced manufacturing, digital capability, agriculture, education, tourism and energy.

Underpinning this expertise is the deep political experience of the chair, Anita Rank, who is the Glenelg Shire Mayor, and the Deputy Chair, Grant Sutherland, who is CEO South West Victoria, Deakin University. The team has extensive networks and experience supporting economic outcomes.

Read more about our Committee members at <https://www.rdv.vic.gov.au/regional-development-australia/barwon-south-west/about-us#who>

Executive support

The Director of Regional Development provides strategic and operational leadership to the RDA BSW Committee and the executive support team. The executive support team promotes the region's activities to all levels of government, industry, business and community, highlighting competitive advantages and encouraging decentralisation and relocation opportunities. They oversee RDA projects and report on activities, including the management and monitoring of the Commonwealth and State grants programs.

RDA Barwon South West has executive support offices across the region in Geelong, Warrnambool and Portland.

Annual Work Plan

RDA Barwon South West – Draft Engagement Plan

	July 2022	August 2022	September 2022	October 2022	November 2022	December 2022
RDA BSW Committee Meeting		25 August (Warrnambool)		27 October (online)		15 December (Geelong)
RDA BSW Chair & Deputy Chair Engagement	RDA Executive	RDA Executive Chairs' Meeting	RDA Executive Chairs' Workshop 13/14 September Regions Rising National Summit (Canberra)		RDA Executive Chairs' Meeting RDA/BRP/GSC Executive	
RDA BSW Committee Member Engagement	SoT Relocation Impact & Opportunity Assessment PCG & Stakeholder Engagement Food & Fibre GSC GSC Economic Futures Roundtable GSC Economic Futures PSG DELWP's Offshore Wind Energy Stakeholder Briefing	GSC Regional Partnership SoT Relocation Impact & Opportunity Assessment PCG Barwon Regional Partnership GOR Tourism Conference SEGRA Conference – (Tasmania) New Committee Member Introductions	GSC Agricultural Value-Add Project PSG GSC Economic Futures PSG	GSC Agricultural Value-Add Project PSG Barwon Regional Partnership BRP meeting with Commonwealth Games Team GSC Regional Partnership GSC RP meeting with Commonwealth Games Team	GSC Agricultural Value-Add Project PSG GSC Economic Futures PSG	GSC Agricultural Value-Add Project PSG GSC Economic Futures PSG
RDA BSW Brown Bag Briefing Sessions		17 th - Key Worker Housing in BSW Project Outcomes 19 th - Geelong City Deal Three Year Review 29 th - nbn Technology in our regions				
RDA Teleconferences with Minister	TBC	National Jobs & Skills Summit Engagement	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
RDA Town Hall Teleconferences (Ad Hoc)	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
	Spirit of Tasmania Impact and Opportunity Assessment					
	Great South Coast Agricultural Value-Add Project					
RDA BSW Projects	Crown Land Utilisation for Local Economy Stimulation Strategy					
	Great South Coast Economic Futures Project Development					
RDA BSW Reports due		2022-23 - Business Plan	2021-22 - Outcomes Report	Audited Financials		

Brown Bag Briefing Sessions

- Deliver a series of out-of-session briefings with key stakeholders to share information and collaborate where appropriate on immediate barriers and opportunities.
- Clarify roles, share evidence and provide intelligence on key interventions to improve economic outcomes.

Skills and Workforce Roundtable

- Bring together stakeholders from across the skills and workforce sector to drive more coordinated advice on current and future workforce needs and challenges.
- Define RDA Barwon South West's role, align key messaging and advocacy effort.

Regional Development Australia Chairs Network – Victoria and Cross Border RDA network opportunities

Facilitate meetings as required to progress shared priorities.

Annual Work Plan (continued)

RDA Barwon South West – Draft Engagement Plan

	January 2023	February 2023	March 2023	April 2023	May 2023	June 2023
RDA BSW Committee Meetings		23 February (Portland)		27 April		22 June
RDA BSW Chair & Deputy Chair Engagement		RDA Executive Chairs' Meeting		RDA Executive Chairs' Meeting	RDA/BRP/GSC Executive	RDA Executive Chairs' Meeting
RDA BSW Committee Member Engagement		Barwon Regional Partnership GSC Economic Futures PSG GSC Regional Partnership		Barwon Regional Partnership GSC Economic Futures PSG GSC Regional Partnership		Barwon Regional Partnership GSC Economic Futures PSG GSC Regional Partnership
RDA BSW Brown Bag Briefing Sessions				Brown Bag Briefing Sessions	Brown Bag Briefing Sessions	
RDA Teleconferences with Minister	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
RDA Town Hall Teleconferences (Ad Hoc)	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
RDA BSW Projects	Great South Coast Economic Futures Project Development					
RDA BSW Reports due						2023-24 - Business Plan

Engagement with Regional Partnerships

Engage with Regional Partnerships as outlined in our statement of collaboration to progress advice to Commonwealth Government where applicable on issues and opportunities relating to Regional Partnership priorities.

Dedicated RDA member representatives on each of Regional Partnerships.

Twice yearly RDA BSW, Barwon RP and GSC RP Executive meetings to progress shared priorities and outcomes.

Stakeholder engagement to address barriers and opportunities

Continue to work with key stakeholders across the region to support the required interventions that will address and accelerate outcomes in our intervention areas and/or strategic focus areas.

Provide Regional Partnership Development Funding (RPDF) support to projects and initiatives that will accelerate outcomes in our intervention areas and/or strategic focus areas.

Provide strategic direction to advance outcomes in the Great South Coast Economic Futures report through the RDA BSW Deputy Chair's role as Chair of the Great South Coast Economic Futures Steering Group.



Communications

Communications strategy

A communications strategy has been developed for RDA BSW. The communications strategy defines 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.

Communications channels & schedule

Key communication activities are included in the RDA Barwon South West 2022-23 Draft Engagement Plan (see pages 17-18).

Key channels include both RDA BSW and regional stakeholder group assets including:

- Direct email
- Social media
- Websites
- Newsletters
- Reports
- Submissions
- Promotional videos
- Workshops
- Meetings
- Regional forums
- Regional delegations
- Brown Bag Briefings.

G21 REGIONAL ALLIANCE

Snapshots

G21 is the formal alliance of government, business and community organisations, working together to improve people's lives in the Geelong region.

June 2022

BE BRAVE. MAKE CHANGE.

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK 2022
22 MAY - 3 JUNE #NRAW2022



Seize the Day: G21 ready to work with Canberra

The G21 Region Alliance congratulates Prime Minister Albanese and his team, notably our local MPs, Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles in the seat of Corio, Catherine King in Ballarat and Corangamite's Libby Coker. Mr Marles and Ms King will be strong advocates for our region at the cabinet table in Canberra.

We also congratulate the Opposition's Dan Tehan for being returned in Wannon and for his service as Australia's former Trade and Tourism Minister.

We look forward to the fulfilment of the incoming government's pre-election commitments under the following G21 priority areas:

- G21 Regional Growth Areas
- Regional Road Connections
- Clean Energy, Clean Tech & Circular Economy
- Addressing Disadvantage
- Social Housing, Affordable Housing & Worker Accommodation
- Regional Digital Connectivity & Upskilling

Click [here](#) to see the full list of projects to be funded.



OBJECTIVE ONE

Facilitate regional economic development outcomes, investment, jobs and local procurement

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Provide details and/or a copy of a suitable existing strategic Regional Plan that your RDA is contributing to or that your RDA is developing in accordance with the Charter and the RDA Better Practice Guide.
- Provide details of the investment (in dollar terms), jobs (number), local procurement opportunities (in dollar terms) and other regional development outcomes that your RDA will facilitate (for planning purposes) or has facilitated (for reporting purposes) for your region during this financial year.

What will we do?

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

- Engage with organisations or potential investors to identify and create investment opportunities (L&C)
- Facilitate new investment in the region, assisting local businesses and industry to invest, create and retain jobs (C)
- Work with the Victorian Government to drive the objectives of the Regional Economic Development Strategies – Barwon and Great South Coast (L)

2. Advocate for and drive interventions to address immediate economic barriers and opportunities

- Affordable housing for key workers (L&C)
- Value add opportunities in agriculture and raw commodities (L&C)
- Address immediate skill and workforce shortages (C)
- Digital access and capability gaps (C)
- Build momentum in focused green hydrogen opportunities (C)
- Supply chain interruptions and freight logistics (C)

3. Advocate for investment into initiatives that align with RDA BSW Long Term Strategic Focus areas (L)

Anticipated Outcomes

Level of involvement

Please separate these in terms of outcomes that your RDA has:
Led/championed – heavily involved with the outcome, or
Contributed to – moderately involved with the outcome, or
Otherwise assisted – marginally involved with the outcome.
Examples of these levels of involvement are at item A.3.3 of your 2021-25 funding agreement.

Refer to the activities opposite under “What will we do?”

(L) = RDA BSW Committee lead or champion this initiative

(C) = RDA BSW Committee contribute to this activity

(O) = RDA BSW Committee otherwise assist this activity

Expected timeframes

Refer to schedule on pages 17-18.

Anticipated outcomes

- Increased economic opportunities and investment in the Barwon South West region.
- Barriers to economic recovery reduced.
- Emerging opportunities for economic growth progressed.
- Regional stakeholder group initiatives aligning with RDA BSW strategic focus areas are supported.

OBJECTIVE TWO

Promote greater regional awareness of and engagement with Australian Government policies, grant programs and research

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Provide details of where you have supported awareness raising and/or engagement.
- Number of submissions supported.

What will we do?

- Engage with key stakeholders to raise awareness of Australian Government grant programs, policies and research**
 - Facilitate stakeholder meetings or briefings to promote and/or assist in the delivery of Australian Government programs (L)
 - 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 (L)
- Use targeted communication channels to raise awareness of Australian Government grant programs, policies and research**
 - Disseminate information on Australian Government policies and grant programs via existing communication channels including newsletters, stakeholder campaigns, social media and websites (L)
- Support stakeholders to develop project proposals to access Commonwealth grant programs**
 - Assist potential stakeholders to identify and prepare competitive applications, supporting documents and evidence (C)
 - 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 (L)

Anticipated Outcomes

Level of involvement

Refer to the activities opposite under "What will we do?"

- (L) = RDA BSW Committee lead or champion this initiative
- (C) = RDA BSW Committee contribute to this activity
- (O) = RDA BSW Committee otherwise assist this activity

Expected timeframes

Refer to schedule on pages 17-18.

Anticipated outcomes

- Improved understanding of the roles of the RDA BSW Committee and other regional stakeholder groups.
- Improved understanding from regional stakeholders on Australian Government grant programs and relevant regional policy.
- Strengthened applications from the region to Australian Government grant programs.

OBJECTIVE THREE

Contribute to Commonwealth regional policy making by providing intelligence and evidence-based advice to the Australian Government on regional development issues

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Outline instances where you have provided intelligence and evidence-based advice to the Australian Government.
- Number of instances information / feedback was provided.
- Outline instances where you have contributed to the achievement of common outcomes for State and Commonwealth Government.

What will we do?

1. Engage with key stakeholders to share evidence and coordinate advocacy effort and advice to government

- Deliver the RDA BSW Brown Bag Briefings (coordinated regional briefings to provide shared communication on regional issues) (L)
- Seek evidence and work with leaders from key regional stakeholder groups to inform RDA BSW decision making (L)
- Work with the RDA Victorian Network in partnership with the Victorian Government (L)
- Work with the Victorian Government's Regional Partnerships and Regional Development Victoria (L)

2. 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.

- RDA BSW will deliver advice, in the form of reports, briefings or submissions, and surveys to the Australian Government on critical regional development issues and priorities for our region (L)
- Meet with members of parliament to discuss regional matters (L)
- Participate in roundtables and teleconferences led by the Commonwealth Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories and/or colleagues (C)

Anticipated Outcomes

Level of involvement

Refer to the activities opposite under "What will we do?"

- (L) = RDA BSW Committee lead or champion this initiative
(C) = RDA BSW Committee contribute to this activity
(O) = RDA BSW Committee otherwise assist this activity

Expected timeframes

Refer to schedule on pages 17-18.

Anticipated outcomes

- Shared understanding of regional issues and opportunities.
- Shared evidence and consistency of advice provided to all levels of government.
- Better identification of evidence gaps.
- Improved regional insight for all stakeholder groups.
- Increased regional development outcomes that deliver on both Victorian and Commonwealth objectives.
- Increased outcomes for the Victorian Regional Partnerships by providing advice to the Commonwealth on Regional Partnership priorities that align with the RDA Charter and RDA BSW Business Plan.
- Increased opportunities for joint funding across the Commonwealth and Victorian governments.

About the Region

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

The residential population of the Barwon South West region was **434,619 people in 2021**. Population growth in the region has been strong over the past decade and **well above the regional Victorian average** of 13.3 per cent. Growth is focused around the major socioeconomic and population hub of Geelong with the Surf Coast Shire also experiencing notable growth.

The Barwon South West 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 Barwon South West 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 the **UNESCO World Heritage listed Budj Bim**, areas of State Forest and National Park, internationally significant wetlands (Ramsar), 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. It also boasts a significant transport network, with infrastructure that includes the **Port of Geelong** and **Port of Portland, Avalon Airport**, Princes Highway Transport Corridor, passenger and freight rail infrastructure.

About the Region



BARWON SOUTH WEST





FRUITFUL COMMUNICATIONS 2022

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RDA Barwon South West regularly provides advice to the Australian Government and is committed to working with stakeholders across the region on positive and negative critical development issues.



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