

## Regional Plan 2010 - 2020 An Overview

### *Vision for the Hunter Region*

The vision of Regional Development Australia Hunter is for the growth of a vibrant and sustainable regional economy in a carbon constrained future.

The Hunter will have a more diversified economy supporting a larger and better connected population, with healthy and thriving communities – more socially cohesive, innovative and enriching.

### *Working for the Hunter community*

RDA Hunter was established in 2009 as the **peak regional development consultative organisation** for the Hunter Region.

RDA Hunter collaboratively **links regional community members and businesses to government** to address challenges and create opportunities for long-term sustainable **economic growth**, while fostering community well being.

Funding from the Australian and NSW Governments is supported by project grants and contributions from regional partners.

RDA Hunter achieves its objectives by:

- **Facilitating partnerships** between regional development organisations, community groups and the private sector to identify strategic responses to issues;
- Managing **strategic and regionally significant projects** in support of the RDA Hunter Regional Plan;
- Supporting projects which complement the goals of the Regional Plan; and
- Actively **marketing and promoting** the Hunter Region's competitive advantages.

RDA Hunter seeks to influence and deliver Federal and State government policies and programs for the benefit of the Region.

### *Working with Governments*

Australian and NSW Governments have recently **increased their emphasis on regional Australia** and 'regionalism'. This has enhanced the roles and responsibilities of RDA Hunter to:

- Bring together the three levels of government to advance opportunities for **regional growth and development**;
- **Advise** governments about the needs and opportunities in the Hunter;
- **Represent the views of the region** to government on economic, social and environmental issues and opportunities;
- Ensure there's a **whole-of-government response** to opportunities and needs;
- Support and promote the regional development policies and programs of Federal and State governments.

RDA Hunter is working with key ministers, *Federal Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government*, the Hon. Simon Crean, and *NSW Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional Infrastructure and Services*, the Hon. Andrew Stoner, to deliver growth and development of the Hunter Region.

# Context for Planning for 2020

As a world-class region of Australia, the Hunter services international as well as national and local markets. It is important to look well beyond regional boundaries when envisioning the Region's future. RDA Hunter has taken a range of information into account in developing its plans.

## International context

RDA Hunter considers the **megatrends and megashocks**, identified in a 2010 CSIRO report, as particularly relevant to the Hunter:

- **Limited resources** for larger populations and economic growth
- **Personalisation of services** from a growing services sector
- **Urbanisation and increased mobility** impacting transport, housing and employment markets
- **Divergent demographics** of an ageing population and shrinking workforce.
- **Digital and natural convergence** as Internet use and functionality develop

Sudden "**megashocks**" impact a regional economy operating in international markets:

- Asset price collapse
- Slowing Chinese economy
- Oil and gas price spikes
- Extreme weather and climate change

## National context

Federal regional policy and funding initiatives relevant to Hunter infrastructure are:

- **National Port Strategy**
- **Land Freight Strategy,**
- **National Aviation White Paper**
- **High Speed Rail Feasibility Study**
- **'Our Cities Our Future'** and
- **National Broadband Network**

In *Communicating the Imperative for Action*, an Infrastructure Australia report to COAG, four infrastructure challenges were identified:

1. National productivity growth rate decline
2. Lack of government leadership on the way key infrastructure is funded
3. Slow progress in pursuing regulatory and other reform, and
4. Weaknesses in planning of our infrastructure investment decisions

## State context

*NSW 2021 A Plan to Make NSW Number One* (released Sept 2011) is the NSW Government policy directive to rebuild the economy, provide quality services and renovate infrastructure, restore government accountability and strengthen the local environment and communities.

RDA Hunter will work with Infrastructure NSW for a **coordinated, strategic approach to infrastructure planning in the Hunter.**

According to *The NSW Economy in 2020, A Foresighting Study* the State has strengths in: financial and business services; high value manufacturing and agriculture; creation of smart networks and delivery of smart services; and knowledge exports.

Four **megatrends** that will impact on the NSW economy are:

- actions to address **climate change**
- adopting new **information technologies**
- emerging economies – **China and India**
- a growing and **ageing population.**

## Local context

Several important areas were taken into account by RDA Hunter to develop this Plan.

- **Hunter's economic role**
- **Population now & future**
- **Infrastructure & transport connectivity**
- **Land use for strategic benefits**
- **Environment - opportunities**
- **Facing challenges together**

**RDA Hunter's response** is to articulate local priorities, identify and align resources, engage stakeholders and promote solutions. Specific activities include:

- **Connecting the Hunter**
- **National Urban Policy**
- **Engagement for consensus**

# Strategic priorities for the Hunter

<b>Infrastructure to Improve Productivity and Efficiency</b>	
<b>Priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Speed Rail Network between Newcastle and Sydney;</li> <li>• Connectivity of airport, seaport and Newcastle CBD via road and rail;</li> <li>• Glendale Interchange;</li> <li>• National Broadband Network; and</li> <li>• Water security.</li> </ul>	<b>Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and prioritise new regional infrastructure investment opportunities to improve productivity and efficiency;</li> <li>• Acquisition of land for future road and rail expansion;</li> <li>• Continue work on the Hunter Expressway - completing the F3 to M2 link road;</li> <li>• Expansion of Newcastle Port and Airport capacity; and</li> <li>• Upgrade capacity of Hunter rail infrastructure.</li> </ul>
<b>Grow the Hunter's Economy</b>	
<b>Priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New and alternate (green/cleaner) energy industries;</li> <li>• Market the Region</li> </ul>	<b>Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defence contracts and related industries,</li> <li>• Expanding economy in the Upper Hunter;</li> <li>• Port of Newcastle and port-related industry;</li> <li>• Tourism, wine and equine industries;</li> <li>• Hunter Founders Forum and Angel Investing; and</li> <li>• Cultural and creative industries.</li> </ul>
<b>Comprehensive and Cohesive Long-term Planning</b>	
<b>Priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and plan for population growth; and</li> <li>• <i>Our Cities: Our Future – National Urban Policy</i> response</li> </ul>	<b>Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update to <i>Lower Hunter Regional Strategy</i> and formulation of a Upper Hunter Regional Strategy;</li> <li>• Growth and expansion of Newcastle Port and Airport;</li> <li>• Address issues of land-use conflict;</li> <li>• Co-ordinated approach to regional transport planning;</li> <li>• Managed approach to Hunter Region Employment Lands</li> </ul>
<b>Investment in Education, Skills and Workforce Development</b>	
<b>Priority</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering program (ME).</li> </ul>	<b>Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocational education and training;</li> <li>• Improve participation and retention rates in schools;</li> <li>• Support Aboriginal participation;</li> <li>• Support expansion of the University of Newcastle and the tertiary sector; and</li> <li>• Skills development strategies with Hunter TAFE.</li> </ul>
<b>Build Knowledge Skills and Innovation Capabilities</b>	
<b>Priority</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hunter Innovation Festival</li> </ul>	<b>Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smart infrastructure, skills and innovation capabilities;</li> <li>• Capitalise on medical, environmental and other leading research capabilities; and</li> <li>• Encourage development of sustainable technologies which promote water and energy efficiency and the take-up of cleaner/greener technologies.</li> </ul>
<b>Enriching the Natural and Built Environment to Create Liveable Places</b>	
<b>Priorities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newcastle CBD as a connected international port city;</li> <li>• University of Newcastle presence in the CBD; and</li> <li>• Population hubs connected via public transport.</li> </ul>	<b>Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth of Region as an important and expanding service centre;</li> <li>• Offering quality lifestyle choices;</li> <li>• Encourage responsible land-use planning to address growing pressure from urban, industrial, mining and infrastructure development, population growth and predicted impacts from climate change; and</li> <li>• Encourage further research, development and investment in renewable energy technology.</li> </ul>

# A Shared Vision

RDA Hunter notes the following **Infrastructure Australia** challenge:

*Do any of our cities have clear targets for the economic, social and environmental outcomes for their communities? If there are no targets and no clear plans to reach those targets, it is little wonder that many in the community feel that as a country, we are drifting and apprehensive about the future. We need clear economic focus to drive our infrastructure investment in cities and elsewhere.*

It is important for the Nation and the Region that the Hunter community, its businesses and decision-makers, work together with a shared vision. Change in the Hunter in the next decade will be driven by **investment in people, resources and infrastructure**. That investment will come from both public and private sources. This Regional Plan is intended to shape the priorities for investment and action so that resources are used most effectively to achieve shared aims and objectives.

**For further information or your copy of the complete Regional Plan, contact**

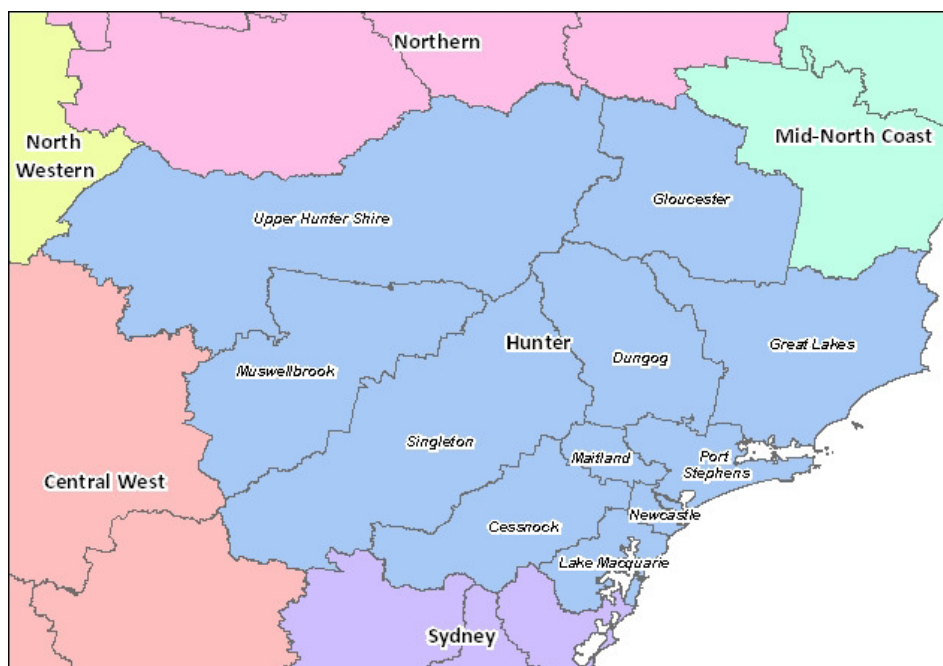
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The Hunter Region, or Hunter Statistical Division (Hunter SD) as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) using the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), 2007 (Cat. No. 1216.0). This definition of the Hunter SD incorporates 11 local government areas (LGAs)



An Australian Government Initiative

