



Regional Development Australia Hunter

Quarterly Report to the Region

1 April to 30 June 2018

RDA Hunter
Building A, Room AG.5
266 Maitland Rd. Tighes Hill NSW 2297
P (02) 4940 8355
M PO Box 159, Hamilton NSW 2303
E admin@rdahunter.org.au
W rdahunter.org.au

INTRODUCTION

Regional Development Australia (RDA) is a national network of local leaders facilitated by the Federal Government through the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities working with all levels of government, the private sector, businesses and community groups to support economic development within their regions.

From 1 January 2018, RDA Hunter is funded by the Australian Government for a further three years to facilitate a new charter for a strong, confident and vibrant region.

RDA Hunter's Quarterly Report to the region highlights recent work we have undertaken from 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018 and identifies future economic development opportunities.

APRIL 2018

RDA Hunter Committee Upper Hunter Visit

Regional Development Australia (RDA) Hunter Chair, John Turner and Board travelled to Scone on Wednesday 4 April to meet with local government and business organisations to hear about priorities and opportunities for economic development within the Upper Hunter region.

RDA Hunter held its meetings at the Hunter Valley Equine Research Centre (HVERC) in Scone and heard from Chair, Bill Rose and Director, Derek Field regarding the horse breeding industry region and the potential for growth in employment by linking the industry with a skilled workforce.

The opportunity to meet with local organisations within the Upper Hunter region was the first step in delivering the RDA's charter, as provided by the Federal Government. The charter includes:

- Developing and maintaining positive working relations with local government bodies
- Assisting in delivery of Australian Government programs including public and private sector decentralisation
- Promoting and disseminating information on Australian Government policies and grant programs and supporting community stakeholders in the Hunter to develop proposals to access funding.

Local government bodies, Upper Hunter Shire Council, Muswellbrook Shire Council and Singleton Council were in attendance to promote their current projects and priorities within the region with the hopes of building investment and industry development opportunities.

The Board also met with Scone, Muswellbrook and Singleton Chambers of Commerce and Industry to discuss the challenges for local business and communities and priorities for the economic development of the area.

RDA Hunter Website Story:

<http://rdahunter.org.au/news-events/rda-hunter-visits-upper-hunter-to-discuss-economic-development-opportunities>

miniME Schools Announced

The MiniME Project is about engaging with primary school students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). It is part of RDA Hunter's STEM Workforce Initiative and is supported by Newcastle City Council's Smart Move Newcastle: Intelligent Mobility, Energy and Data Networks Project and Obelisk Systems.

Partner schools for the 2018 miniME Program include:

Newcastle East Public School; Newcastle Grammar School – Park Campus; New Lambton Public School; St Joseph's Primary School Merewether; Hamilton North Public School; Islington Public School; Waratah Public School; St Philips Christian College – Junior School; Waratah West Public School; Mayfield East Public School; Hunter Christian School; Mayfield West Public School; Tighes Hill Public School; Plattsburg Public School; Heaton Public School; Glendore Public School and Minmi Public School.

RDA Hunter Website Story:

<http://rdahunter.org.au/news-events/2018-minime-partner-schools-announced>

Applications for RDA Hunter Committee Open

RDA Hunter opened applications for positions of Deputy Chair and Members of the Board for the period 1 July 2018 to 31 December 2020.

The Board of RDA Hunter has an active and facilitative role in its region and a clear focus on growing a strong and confident Hunter economy that harnesses the region's competitive advantages, seizes on economic opportunities and attracts investment.

Within the application process applicants were to consider the core skills identified as required in the leadership and management of the Board. The core skills were:

- Leadership and governance;
- Delivery focus;
- Business acumen;
- Stakeholder engagement;
- Representational skills and;
- Commitment to the region.

RDA Hunter website story and application documents:

<http://rdahunter.org.au/news-events/applications-open-rda-hunter-board-positions>

RDA Hunter's ME Program Case Study

The ME Program was showcased in Australia's Chief Scientist, Dr Alan Finkel's report from the STEM Partnerships Forum which looked at *Optimising STEM Industry-School Partnerships: Inspiring Australia's Next Generation*.

The report outlines the success and positive impact the ME Program has had in the Hunter region on the uptake of STEM subjects in schools and the industry partnerships that inspire students into STEM careers.

RDA Hunter's ME Program success can be found on Page 52:

[Optimising STEM Industry-School Partnerships: Inspiring Australia's Next Generation Final Report](#)

Regional Growth Fund Applications

RDA Hunter assisted Hunter region businesses with applications and provided letters of support for the Regional Growth Fund. The Regional Growth Fund provides grants of \$10 million or more for major transformational projects which support long-term economic growth and create jobs in regions undergoing structural adjustment.

RDA Hunter assisted over 10 local business in their application for the Regional Growth Fund and provided letters of support for their applications.

Building Better Regions Fund

RDA Hunter assisted Hunter region businesses with application and provided letters of support for the Building Better Regions Fund. Dr John McVeigh MP, Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government has announced the projects to be funded under Round Two of the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) Infrastructure Projects (IP) stream. Three Hunter projects were successful in gaining funding through the stream.

The Hunter region successful projects:

Applicant Organisation	Project Title	Project Description	Project Location	State	Grant Approved	Total Project Cost
Cessnock City Council	Business Capability Study and Council Capacity Building Toolkit	This project will involve a study of businesses to determine numbers within the region, their size, employment capacity, ICT take up, export and import status, and skills shortages.	Cessnock	NSW	\$15,000	\$30,000
Anglican Care	Construct New Seniors Living Community Village	The project will build a community based residential aged care facility, incorporating 54 single rooms with ensuites and communal facilities.	Gloucester	NSW	\$8,000,000	\$18,141,511
Singleton Council	Livestock Market Kiosk Upgrade	The project will refurbish the Singleton Regional Livestock Market's Office/Kiosk building to improve the aesthetics of the building and make it more user friendly.	Singleton	NSW	\$305,955	\$611,910

Regional partnerships

Consultations continued with government agencies, business and industry groups and community organisations throughout April. RDA Hunter met with representatives from the Salvation Army, Energy Industries, Transport for NSW Roads & Maritime Services, AusIndustry, Hunter Development Cooperation, Hunter Defence and NSW Department of Education & more.

Media Coverage

Scone Advocate – RDA Hunter Board Upper Hunter Visit

<https://www.huntervalleynews.net.au/story/5336123/exploring-economic-development-opportunities-in-the-upper-hunter/>

Wingham Chronicle – John Turner Appointment

<https://www.winghamchronicle.com.au/story/5333356/turner-appointed-rda-hunter-chair/>

Port Stephens Examiner – John Turner Appointment

<https://www.portstephensexaminer.com.au/story/5331145/new-rda-chairman-sees-potential-from-port-stephens-perspective/>

NBN News – Aerospace Careers Day

<http://www.nbnnews.com.au/2018/04/06/careers-in-aerospace-industry-growing/>

NBN News – SheFlies Drone Camp

<http://www.nbnnews.com.au/2018/04/05/drone-piloting-inspires-hunter-girls/>

Port Stephens Examiner – SheFlies Drone Camp

<https://www.portstephensexaminer.com.au/story/5333899/port-girls-explore-drone-opportunities-in-she-flies-camp-photos-video/>

MAY 2018

STEM Workforce Conference

RDA Hunter's third annual STEM Conference identified the importance of building a STEM skilled workforce, equipped with teamwork and entrepreneurial skills to enable innovation driven growth and propel industry development.

The impressive list of guest speakers included futurist, Mark Pesce, CEO for the Foundation for Young Australians, Jan Owen, STEM and education experts, Dr Catherine Ball and Dr Jenine Beekhuyzen as well as representatives from leading global companies Cisco, BAE Systems, Boeing, Hedweld Group, Hummingbird Electronics, Jacobs, Bohemia Interactive Simulations; educators, St Philips Christian College, University of Newcastle and TAFE NSW; and Newcastle City Council.

The agenda was planned in such a way as to guide the 150-strong audience's thinking about workforce development in terms of people – to discuss the type of students we are working with; the technologically advanced world in which they've grown up; how this technology is, and will continue to, impact industry and jobs; and the necessity to prepare our education system to adequately skill our future workforce.

RDA Hunter website story:

<http://rdahunter.org.au/news-events/stem-workforce-conference-delivers-workforce-development-strategies>

STEMship TAFE Component Commences

The 2018 STEMship cohort started their studies at TAFE NSW's Tighes Hill Campus on Tuesday 1 May.

STEMship is Australia's first VET pre-employment program focusing on the development of STEM skills at a technical level. The program includes:

- An innovative, multi-disciplinary TAFE NSW skills-set taught by project-based activities including design, manufacture and advanced technologies
- A full qualification in Certificate III Engineering—Technical (MEM30505) 17 weeks program combining training and work placement (25 hours per week)
- An opportunity to gain work placement in some of the Hunter Region's most innovative organisations
- Industry site tours to promote awareness of employment pathways

RDA Hunter website story:

<http://rdahunter.org.au/news-events/official-program-begins-for-the-2018-stemship-cohort>

Defence Industry Skilling and STEM Strategy

RDA Hunter responded to the Defence Industry Skilling and STEM Strategy Discussion Paper put forward by the Defence Industry Branch.

<http://www.defence.gov.au/SPI/Industry/IndustrySkillingSupport.asp>

STEM Defence & Innovation Pitch Night

RDA Hunter's ME Program in collaboration with The Business Centre Newcastle worked with STEM students from St Philips Christian College in a three-month business acumen program.

Part of RDA Hunter's ME Program activities to upskill Hunter students for the STEM jobs of tomorrow, 11 St Philips students pitched their innovations, which included mind-controlled prosthetic hands, autonomous trollies and stealth drones – honed over many months during their iSTEM studies, to an expert panel which comprised Officer Commanding of the Tactical Fighter Systems Program Office, Group Captain David Abraham, Manager of the F18 Classic Hornet Program for Boeing Defence Australia, Claire Kluge and Business Centre CEO, Pierre Malou.

ME Program website story:

<http://www.meprogram.com.au/student-entrepreneurs-pitch-their-innovations/>

Regional partnerships

Consultations continued with government agencies, business and industry groups and community organisations throughout May. RDA Hunter met with representatives from Department of Premier & Cabinet, Hunter Young Business Minds Awards, CoastXP, Newcastle City Council, Urban Development Institute of Australia & AusIndustry.

Media Coverage

Hunter Headline – STEM Workforce Conference

<http://www.hunterheadline.com.au/hh/business-news/rda-hunters-conference-will-shine-light-stem/>

The Herald – STEM Workforce Conference

<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5392941/cessnock-schools-share-stem-skillset-with-peers-at-unique-conference/>

Hunter Headline – STEM Defence & Innovation Pitch

<http://www.hunterheadline.com.au/hh/business-news/high-school-stem-students-pitch-perfect/>

Hunter Headline – Build Me A Future Day

<http://www.hunterheadline.com.au/hh/business-news/2018-build-future-days-help-hunter-students/>

JUNE 2018

STEMship Industry Visits

The 2018 STEMship students visited Hunter region industry partners to gain an understanding of the scope of the roles they will undertake during the four-week work placement component of the program.

Thales, Varley Group, Civmec, UVAir Pty Ltd, Hedweld Group and Port Waratah Coal Services hosted the cohort to demonstrate the breadth of opportunities available within the sector and their organisations as well as the roles participants will undertake during their placements. Participants also met some of the teams they will be immersed in during their on-the-job stints.

RDA Hunter website story:

<http://rdahunter.org.au/news-events/2018-stemship-participants-visit-hunter-industry>

Minister approval of RDA Hunter Committee

Following endorsement by Federal Minister for Regional Development, Dr John McVeigh MP, John Turner, Chairman of Regional Development Australia (RDA) Hunter, today announced the appointment of the organisation's new Board of Directors for the period 1st July 2018 to 31st December 2020.

Mr Turner appointed Deputy Chair:

- Ms Susan Ivens - Acting Deputy Chair of RDA Hunter since April 2017 BA, Dip Ed, MBA, BLaws, FAICD, Chair RDA Hunter Finance and Audit Subcommittee Business and legal expertise

and Board members:

- Ms Kelsey Barrett - Director of Kumalie Group, risk analysis, corporate communications expertise
- Mr Darren Bayley - Principal of Tocal Agricultural College, expertise in education and agriculture
- Ms Jennifer Hayes - Non-executive Director, NFP health care governance, audit/risk specialist
- Mr Paul Hughes - Non-Executive Director, local government, airport and tourism management
- Mr Geoff Lilliss - Retired CEO multinational manufacturing/electricity companies, conjoint professor
- Dr Kirsten Molloy - CEO, Hunter Valley Coal Chain Coordinator, STEM exemplar
- Mr Ian Pedersen - Consulting Engineer, Chair Infrastructure Committee & Councillor NSW Business Chamber

RDA Hunter website story:

<http://rdahunter.org.au/news-events/chairman-appoints-new-rda-hunter-board>

Regional partnerships

Consultations continued with government agencies, business and industry groups and community organisations throughout June. RDA Hunter met with representatives from MidCoast Council, Department of Premier & Cabinet, NSW Health Pathology, EFIC, Lake Macquarie City Council, Tomaree Business Chamber, Ai Group & Committee for Sydney.

Emerging and potential issues impacting future regional development

Issue	RDA Hunter's responses
<p>Shortage of skilled workforce to maximise opportunities from arrival of Joint Strike Fighter aircraft fleet at Williamtown RAAF Base</p>	<p>RDA Hunter has developed and implemented a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) program for people aged 8 to 18 to be ready for future jobs. RDA Hunter's STEM Workforce Initiative starts at primary school, with robotics and coding, through to secondary schools with career pathways and curriculum enhancement, and support programs for entry to VET, internships, apprenticeships and university.</p> <p>RDA Hunter is actively seeking funding to continue and expand this Initiative.</p>
	<p>RDA Hunter was approached by Lockheed Martin Australia to form a partnership for the development of a STEM skilled workforce for the arrival of JSF at Williamtown.</p>
	<p>RDA Hunter signed a funding agreement with NSW Department of Education to deliver a new Schools/Industry STEM Partnerships program.</p> <p>RDA Hunter is coordinating collaboration between RDA Central West and RDA Southern Inland to deliver the program in locations across NSW.</p> <p>RDA Hunter is partnering with a new industry partner, NSW Health Pathology for the project.</p>
	<p>RDA Hunter progressed the partnership with Newcastle City Council for the miniME project to implement STEM activities in Newcastle LGA primary schools.</p>

RDA HUNTER NEWSLETTERS

DATE	TOPIC
10 April	RDA Hunter Update
17 April	STEM Workforce Initiative Update
20 April	RDA Hunter Quarterly Report to the Region
22 May	STEM Workforce Initiative Update
12 June	STEM Workforce Initiative Update
26 June	STEM Workforce Initiative Update

REGIONAL CERTIFYING BODY

Responded to and facilitated 2 Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme enquiries from 1 April – 30 June 2018.