

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

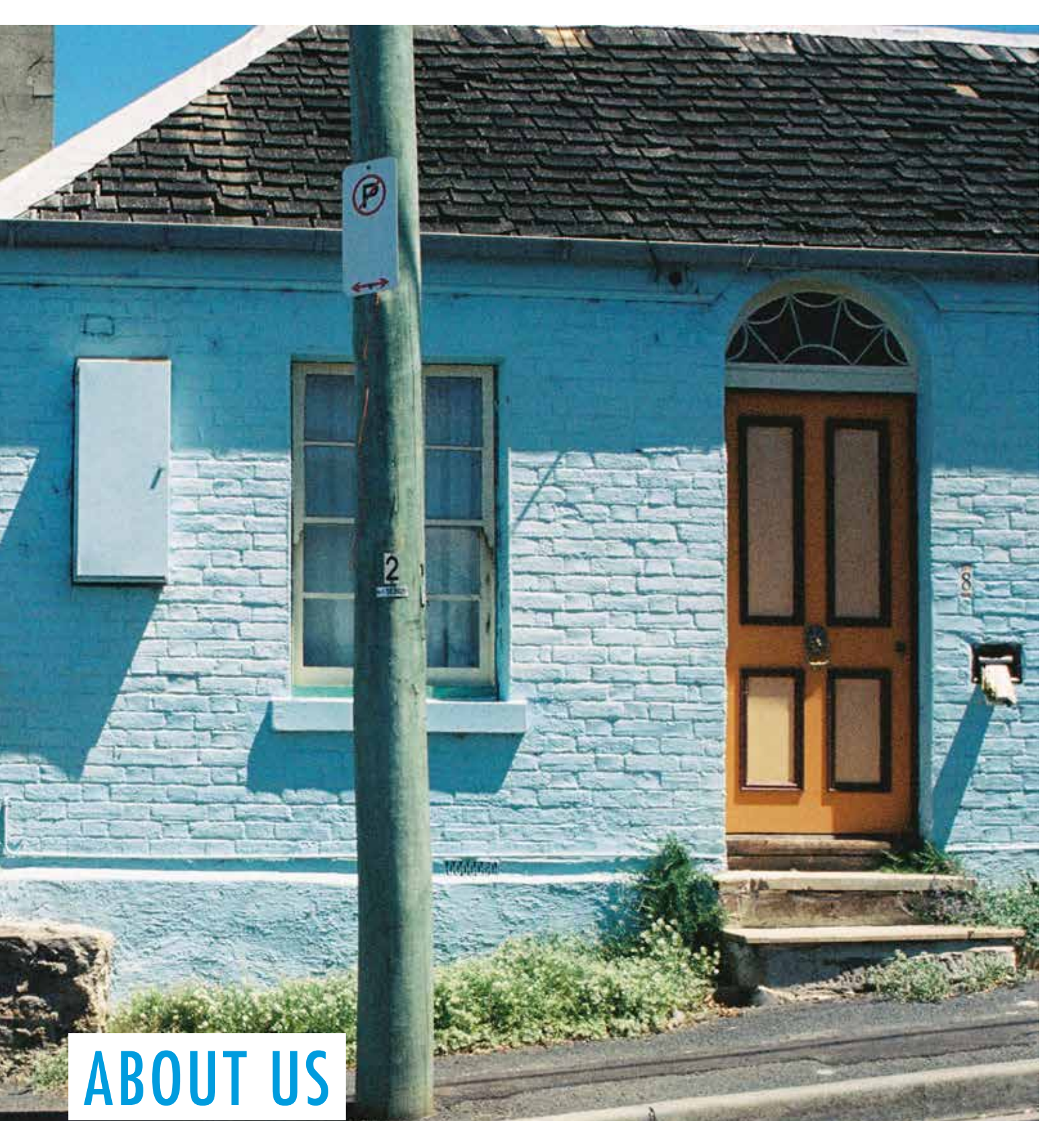


**REGIONAL
AUSTRALIA**
INSTITUTE



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ABOUT US

The Regional Australia Institute (RAI) is Australia's only independent think tank solely focused on better outcomes for Regional Australia. Our evidence-based research and community engagement enables us to develop strong policy outcomes to transform Australia's future. The RAI is the voice for the regions.

The RAI is a not-for-profit organisation established as a public company limited by guarantee and we are an Approved Research Institute for tax purposes. The Institute was founded in 2011 with seed funding from the Australian Government. A mix of Commonwealth and state government support, partnerships with Universities and a range of companies and projects working directly with regions support our ongoing work.

FROM THE CHAIR



Regional Australia has many champions but, as the first and only independent think tank devoted to issues affecting Regional Australia, the RAI holds a unique position.

When the RAI was established, we wanted to make a difference for the 9 million people who call Regional Australia their home. As we all navigate our way through the COVID-19 pandemic, the RAI will continue to espouse the role that Regional Australia will play in our recovery.

As the inaugural Chair of the RAI, it's been a pleasure to oversee both the inception and the current transformation of the RAI as we build the platform for the future. But we certainly have not been immune to the financial challenges of COVID-19 and, as such, the positive financial position was a welcome result for the 2019-20 year.

We are continuing to focus on strengthening our business model that will ensure the longer term sustainability of the Institute and undoubtedly enable us to leave a lasting legacy. The Board endorsed a new three-year strategy (2019-22) in mid-2019, which strives to continue the evidence-based research and policy solutions but equally focuses on the critical activation that is necessary for impact and engagement.

The relevance of our research has been instrumental in driving the national agenda to ensure that Regional

Australia is front of mind for our political leaders. Population and Jobs are two critical macro-economic issues that that will drive future growth, so the two reports Regional Population Growth – Are We Ready? and The Big Movers, as well as the introduction of the Quarterly Regional Job Vacancy reports provided much needed thought leadership. They have also changed the narrative for Regional Australia and policy leaders and governments around the country have taken notice.

The development of our events, both in-person and virtual, has provided the perfect vehicle to share and discuss insights, and the ever increasing following of our work is evidence of this. Furthermore, the new coalition of industry who have joined the RAI to support the development of the Regional Australia Council 2031 is a turning point to bring key players to the table.

I would like to thank my fellow directors, Christian Zahra, Prof. Annabelle Duncan, Grahame Morris and our newest member, Rebecca Tomkinson, for their support and commitment to the Institute this year.

I have every confidence that the RAI's future work will be an essential factor in achieving the best outcomes for the places that lie outside our capital cities. At such a critical time in history, Australia needs its regions performing at their best.

I wish to thank our partners who invest in and collaborate with us on our work. We share our achievements with you all.

And finally, I congratulate and thank our CEO, Liz Ritchie, for her leadership and vision in navigating the RAI through a year of transition. The year ahead will be an exciting phase for the RAI as we continue to grow our capability and launch our National Awareness Campaign that will shine the spotlight on the many opportunities of living, working and investing in our regions.

As a proud Regional Australian and Chairman of the Board, I am certain that the work of the RAI is needed now more than ever – for the benefit of all Australians.

MAL PETERS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mal Peters', written in a cursive style.

FROM THE CEO



Regionalisation is the new vernacular, which is providing an opportunity for hope and renewal at a time when it's most needed. As the CEO of the RAI, this is a movement I am delighted to lead and will continue to do so.

In 2019-20, I experienced a year like no other, both personally and professionally. The opportunity to transform and re-imagine the future of the RAI has been an honour. The impacts of droughts, bushfires, floods and the global pandemic certainly raised the stakes in terms of dealing with uncertainty for our organisation and, more importantly, for our stakeholders in the regions.

One year into our new three-year strategy, I'm proud to report that we have elevated our brand, influence, and reach to new heights, and the team should be commended for their dedication, innovation and courage to transition. Bringing life to our strategy of 'activation', we have built a powerful platform for convening through our Regions Rising series, providing thought leadership across the nation to engage in regional policy issues.

Our research continues to bust long held myths about Regional Australia, enabling us to speak from a place of strength. One of the most pivotal reports was the Regional Population Growth – Are We Ready? which raised questions about the country's future if predicted population growth continued on its current trajectory.

This was instrumental in our decision to create an intervention for Regional Australia. Henceforth our recommendation to build a National Awareness Campaign was born and has caught national attention of government, industry and communities at large.

As a nation, we have discovered that we can now live where we love, rather than having to live where we work. This opens a pathway for a more balanced population settlement strategy which we are now developing with a broad range of stakeholders.

One of our newest stakeholder cohorts is the Regional Australia Council 2031 (RAC2031). This is a new corporate council which will prioritise regional issues, support the work for the RAI, and actively engage in regionalisation. I'd like to thank the 12 members who have joined to date.

Regions will undoubtedly play a key role in navigating Australia out of this current recession. As our job vacancy figures hover around the 40,000 mark; this continues to show us that regions need more people. Our Big Movers report informed us that Australians are already voting with their feet, with over 65,000 more people choosing regions over our capital cities in the last census period, and this is not a new trend.

So my message to Regional Australians is that we are about to see a regional renaissance as we unlock the opportunities in Regional Australia to help drive a societal shift. Work with us as we continue to drive prosperity for the people who call Regional Australia home.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the many organisations that partner and support us; you are instrumental to our success. To my Chairman, Mal Peters, and the Board, thank you for your unwavering support and leadership through the past year. Finally, to the RAI team, you are the engine room for Regional Australia and you should be very proud of what we have achieved this past year; thank you!

LIZ RITCHIE

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Liz Ritchie". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

OUR PEOPLE

REGIONAL AUSTRALIA INSTITUTE BOARD

The RAI is governed by a diverse group of independent thinkers, who bring together the right mix of knowledge, expertise, skills and experience. The Board has extensive capacity in research and policy implementation at local, state and federal levels, and strong community links.



MR MAL PETERS OAM (CHAIR)



PROF ANNABELLE DUNCAN



MR GRAHAME MORRIS



MS REBECCA TOMKINSON



MR CHRISTIAN ZAHRA AM

FELLOWS

The RAI's Fellows are recognised experts in regional development and provide input on the direction of our research. Our Fellows come from a range of community, government, industry and academic platforms, and are committed to the vision of the Institute.

Professor John Tomaney (Inaugural Fellow)
Professor Andrew Beer
Professor AJ Brown
Professor Ngjare Brown
Professor Chris Cocklin
Professor John Martin
Professor Fiona Haslam McKenzie
Adjunct Professor Tony Sorensen

RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Research Advisory Committee assists the Board in the development and implementation of the RAI's research agenda. The Committee is responsible for ensuring that our research aligns with the research vision, framework and priority areas of the Institute.

Professor Annabelle Duncan (Chair)
Professor Andrew Beer
Professor John Tomaney
Ms Kate Charters
Dr Chris McDonald
Ms Maree Parker
Ms Maxine Loynd

STAFF

Liz Ritchie, CEO
Dr Kim Houghton, Chief Economist
Hayley Achurch, Senior Researcher
Geraldine How, Researcher
Shyla Vohra, Migration Director
Amanda Barwick, Corporate Affairs Director
Nina Davis, Marketing Coordinator
Divyusha Polepalli, Business Manager

OUR WORK 2019-20

THE NUMBERS

43 BLOGS

3 GOVERNMENT SUBMISSIONS

6 RESEARCH RELEASES



6 REGIONS RISING STATE EVENTS

3 REGIONS RISING WEBINARS

2 SHARED INQUIRY THEMES



\$13.9M
ASR VALUE



151K
WEBSITES PAGEVIEWS



3K
TWITTER FOLLOWERS



1339
MEDIA MENTIONS



52.9K
WEBSITES USERS



3K
FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS



32.2M
MEDIA VIEWS



10
E-NEWSLETTERS



3.6K
LINKEDIN FOLLOWERS



REGIONS RISING WEBINAR SERIES

Due to the upheaval of the events industry from coronavirus restrictions, in May 2020 the RAI started delivering webinars as part of our Regions Rising events brand. The series is delivered in partnership with, and funded by, Bendigo and Adelaide Bank and their charitable arm, the Community Enterprise Foundation. This allows us to deliver the webinars free of charge to an audience across Australia. More webinars are scheduled through to the end of 2020.

Webinar 1: Regional recovery – what are we learning? 27 May 2020

The first webinar had a focus on the opportunities for Regional Australia as the whole nation begins to recover from the COVID-19 health and economic crises. The RAI CEO Liz Ritchie hosted Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications, and Local Government the Hon Mark Coulton, and Bendigo and Adelaide Bank Managing Director Marnie Baker.

Webinar 2: The big population reveal, 24 June 2020

The RAI released our Big Movers report, and Chief Economist Kim Houghton presented the key findings at the second webinar. REA Group Chief Economist Nerida Conisbee and Murray River Council Mayor Chris Bilkey also joined the panel. Conisbee and Murray River Council Mayor Chris Bilkey also joined the panel.

REGIONS RISING ROADSHOW

The RAI was proud to ignite its long held ambition to be a convenor of thought leadership and ideas across the country. In 2019-20, the RAI rolled out our first ever Regions Rising National Series. We were delighted to have Bendigo and Adelaide Bank and NBN Co as our National Series Platinum Partners.

The RAI visited every state and territory to hold a Regions Rising event, engaging with local leaders from Government, industry and not for profit sector with a common goal to discuss, debate and design a better future of those who call Regional Australia home.

The national events series saw over 1000 attendees come together, representing more than 400 businesses and organisations. Not only did the series draw huge media attention, but the attendee feedback was also overwhelmingly positive. Regions Rising has contributed to the RAI's huge uplift in brand perception and profile in the public eye.


1000+
ATTENDEES


400+
BUSINESSES &
ORGANISATIONS


8/10
ATTENDEE
RATING


10
MINISTERIAL
ADDRESSES


\$3.9M
ASR VALUE


970+
MEDIA MENTIONS


12M
MEDIA VIEWS



Regions Rising National Summit, Canberra, 4-5 April 2019

The theme for the inaugural Regions Rising National Summit was Regional Futures. Over 250 of the country's best and brightest in regional development converged on Canberra for two days of discussions about key issues impacting regional communities. Attendees also participated in a regional Policy Hack on the topics Jobs of the Future; Population; Health; and Education. The outcomes of the Policy Hack have gone on to inform RAI's strategic direction, recommendations to policymakers, and the foundation of the national awareness campaign to promote the opportunities to live, work, and invest in Regional Australia. Deputy Prime Minister the Hon Michael McCormack launched the RAI's report The Future of Jobs.

Regions Rising WA, Perth, 12 June 2019

The theme for Regions Rising WA was Regional Economic Diversification and Jobs in WA and nearly 140 people attended. The Hon. Alannah MacTiernan MLC, Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Ports; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade launched the RAI's report, Regional Growth Prospects.

Regions Rising SA, Adelaide, 10 July 2019

The theme for Regions Rising SA was Regional Jobs and Migration. Over 100 people attended and the Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development, the Hon. Tim Whetstone, launched the RAI's migration toolkit, Steps to Settlement Success.

Regions Rising VIC, Melbourne, 7 August 2019

The theme for Regions Rising VIC was Regional Population Growth. Over 180 regional leaders were in attendance and the Minister of Regional Development, the Hon. Jaclyn Symes, launched the RAI's report, Regional Population Growth – Are We Ready?

Regions Rising QLD, Brisbane, 9 October 2019

The theme for Regions Rising QLD was Regional Population, Jobs and Migration. Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning, the Hon. Cameron Dick was the keynote speaker and shared his vision for regional QLD with 90 attendees.

Regions Rising TAS, Hobart, 7 November 2019

The theme for Regions Rising TAS was Regional Population, Jobs and Migration. The Hon. Will Hodgman, Premier of Tasmania, provided the keynote address at the invitation-only event for 36 people.

Regions Rising NSW, Sydney, 4 December 2019

The theme for Regions Rising NSW was Regional Population, Jobs and Migration. Attended by 130 people, the keynote address was delivered by the Hon. John Barilaro, Deputy Premier of NSW.

Regions Rising NT, Darwin, 20 February 2020

The theme for Regions Rising NT was Regions in Transition. Over 80 people attended, and the keynote address was delivered by Chief Minister Michael Gunner.

2019-20 Regions Rising Sponsors

National Series Platinum Partners



National Summit Supporting Partners



State & NT Events Supporters



2019 INTERGOVERNMENTAL SHARED INQUIRY PROGRAM

OUTCOMES SUMMARY

The 2019 Intergovernmental Shared Inquiry Program had two main themes for research and policy:

1. Future of Regional Jobs
2. Mid-Sized Towns

1. Future of Regional Jobs

The Future of Regional Jobs theme was completed under the leadership of Dr Angela Lehmann, supported by Dr Kim Houghton, and had five main parts:

- 1.1 Regional Jobs
- 1.2 Technology and tourism
- 1.3 Local employment in remote major projects
- 1.4 NDIS in Regional Australia
- 1.5 Health industry contributions to Regional Australia

The work on the Future of Regional Jobs provides analysis of the employment prospects in Regional Australia of two important industries: tourism and health. The work also profiles innovative practices in lifting the local workforce contribution to major projects in remote regions. The work prepared a multi-dimensional picture of employment, training and job seeking in the Latrobe and Gippsland regions in Victoria.

The package of research gives policymakers a realistic appraisal of the prospects for increasing regional employment through two growth industries. It finds that while there is scope for new technologies to widen tourism offers in regions and attract new visitors, digital transformation can also replace

some low and medium skilled workers. Tourism growth is generally driven by destination marketing and promotion, but the research finds that product development is lagging, and that knowledge and use of innovative digital systems is not widespread among operators in regional areas. A consequence of this finding is that tourism industry development funding needs to facilitate links between tourism and digital technology researchers and businesses, offering a better balance between marketing, product development and digital capability development amongst regional operators.

The health sector is anticipated to be the biggest source of employment growth in Regional Australia, and the research finds that health workers are a mix of low skill low wage jobs alongside high skill high wage jobs which have significant economic impact on regions. The health workforce accounts for around 12.5% of high income jobs in regions. The distribution of the health workforce is varied across Regional Australia, and the research profiles case studies of places that have taken their own initiative to build a cohesive health sector and boost career and service options in regions. The examples show how grass roots collaborative efforts are building stronger health sectors in particular places, providing lessons for regional leaders. This extends into the NDIS, with the research profiling community scale initiatives like All About You in southern Tasmania which are building deep local networks to enable the rollout to diversify the mix of jobs.

2. Mid-Sized Towns

The research theme on mid-sized towns reflects the predominance of towns of this population range across Regional Australia, their vital importance in regional economies, and their different historical and future trajectories. Covering the 182 towns and cities with between 5,000 and 50,000 residents, this theme fills a gap between the RAI's work in recent years on regional cities and small towns.

The Mid-sized towns work was completed under the leadership of Dr Kylie Bourne, supported by Dr Kim Houghton, and had six main parts:

- 2.1 Diversification or specialization as growth paths for Mid-sized Towns (UniSA)
- 2.2 Big Movers: Population mobility in Regional Australia (RAI)
- 2.3 Typology and Roles of Mid-sized Towns Briefing Note (RAI)
- 2.4 Understanding Liveability Briefing Note (RAI)
- 2.5 In-Depth Case Studies of Three Mid-sized towns (RMIT)
- 2.6 Liveability Toolkit (RAI)

The work on the Mid-sized towns provides jurisdictions with a new perspective on the movement of people around Australia. Pinpointing the places that are attractive and desirable, the research helps identify

the reasons that people are attracted to some places instead of others. This understanding can help to shape population, economic and community development policies in regional communities.

The research provides foundational support for place-based policies by characterising mid-sized towns according to the roles they play in their wider region, showing how these roles can be identified and the implications for regional policy. It assesses the debate between diversification and specialisation approaches to securing regional resilience, and finds that the nature of specialisation or diversification is as important as the direction itself. Long term benefits in incomes accrue from creative adaptations of existing specialisations, while short term transitions can be supported by diversifying into whole new fields of enterprise, but these do not offer the same income benefits.

Discrete choice modelling of three regions highlighted the drivers of liveability across different community segments. This powerful analytical tool finds that the returns from investments in different liveability measures can be quantified, enabling policymakers and regional leaders to weigh up the benefits of addressing competing demands for investments from a community outcomes perspective, helping build long term resilience.

2020 INTERGOVERNMENTAL SHARED INQUIRY PROGRAM

The 2020 Intergovernmental Shared Inquiry Program comprises projects addressing policy questions of natural disaster recovery in Regional Australia. Discussions in early 2020 highlighted the importance of including some rapid response research on COVID-19 response measures as part of this broad theme, and the RAI produced a series of regular updates on the impact of the COVID-19 restrictions on Regional Australia.

The main theme agreed for the 2020 Shared Inquiry Program is disaster recovery and resilience, tools for Regional Australia.

Natural disasters are a recurring feature of life in Regional Australia and drought, bushfires and floods have been major concerns for most jurisdictions through 2019-20. Alongside these natural disasters, economic shocks driven by domestic market changes, regulatory changes due to COVID-19 suppression and global market forces are also causing both slow and rapid adjustments in many regions. While the causes may be different, there are some overlapping elements to the way these kinds of shocks are managed and recovered from in Regional Australia.

2020 Inquiry Program Projects

1. The impacts of natural disasters on main street retail and services in Regional Australia (UniSA)
2. What are the most effective ways of building business resilience in regional and rural communities? (UniSA)
3. Case studies of business recovery pathways (UniSA, RMIT, RAI)
4. Building resilience in remote regions (CDU)
5. Disaster recovery and resilience: The locus of decision-making in disaster recovery (RMIT)
6. Resilient regional supply chains (RMIT)
7. Market failure in rebuilding in regions post disaster (RAI)
8. Review of resilience indices (RAI)

COVID-19 and Regional Australia

Over the first half of 2020, the RAI turned its focus to analysing the immediate effects of COVID-19 on regions. This included a series of articles, and regular short economic video updates by RAI Chief Economist Dr Kim Houghton during the early months of the pandemic.

The written articles included:

- Looking at all levels of government stimulus through a regional lens
- What impact will the JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments have on regions?
- What happens when COVID-19 takes out a major employer in town?
- How will COVID-19 affect regional areas with older populations?

In March 2020, the RAI also implemented a new regional-focused survey series called The Gauge that aims to check the pulse of Regional Australia. This survey series will look at economic and social impacts of significant events and issues, the first being the coronavirus pandemic.

Regional Research Connections

To support the Shared Inquiry Program, the RAI partnered with four universities to establish Regional Research Connections in 2018. This partnership continued through 2019 and into 2020.

The partnership includes the University of South Australia, RMIT University, Southern Cross University and Charles Darwin University and will provide additional resources and expertise to the RAI and the Shared Inquiry Program.

Teams of researchers from these institutions and the RAI will continue to collaborate on the Shared Inquiry Program and associated research topics.

RELEASES

Steps to Settlement Success: a toolkit for rural and regional communities

Toolkit; July 2019

Regional Population Growth – Are We Ready?

Report; August 2019

Future Urban and Regional Settlement Patterns: scenario analysis

Regional Research Connections Report; August 2019

Settlement Patterns: econometric analysis

Regional Research Connections Report; August 2019

Building the NDIS in Regional Australia: a review of key policy approaches

Report; August 2019

The Big Movers: understanding population mobility in regional Australia

Report and Factsheet; June 2020

SUBMISSIONS

Jobs for the Future in Regional Areas

August 2019; Submission for the Senate Select Committee inquiry into Jobs for the Future in Regional Areas

Inquiry into Migration in Regional Australia

October 2019; Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration

Inquiry into Regional Australia

October 2019; Submission to the House of Representatives Select Committee Inquiry into Regional Australia



MAJOR RELEASES SUMMARY

Regional Population Growth – Are We Ready?

The RAI's report *Regional Population Growth – Are We Ready?* was launched by Victorian Minister for Regional Development, the Hon. Jaclyn Symes at the *Regions Rising VIC* event in Melbourne. The report looks at the economic consequences of alternative population scenarios that could alleviate Australia's megacity future and supercharge regions.

This body of work raises serious questions about the type of future Australia has if predicted population growth continues as projected in the outer suburbs of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth. It shows that many workers living in outer city suburbs could be financially better off if they moved to Regional Australia.

Australia's population is set to grow by up to 19 million by 2056, with the Sydney and Melbourne to hit megacity status in the next few decades. Brisbane and Perth will grow to the size of Sydney and Melbourne today. But if Australia continues with the current geographic patterns of settlement, most of that population will end up in the outer suburbs.

Rapid urban population growth creates challenges already clear to residents in our outer suburbs, with high house prices paid by average wages and rising commute distances already emerging as key points in the "Big Australia" debate.

In conjunction with the report, the RAI released an online interactive tool, *MOVE*, which allows potential home owners to find out which areas in Australia give them the best chance of paying off their mortgage faster. It combines average wages with average house prices in Local Government Areas (LGAs) so people can quickly find out where they could pay off their mortgage the fastest.

One of the recommendations to come out of the report was a new national awareness campaign to promote the opportunities of living in Regional Australia, and help drive a population shift in coming decades. In 2020, the RAI has started to bring this campaign to life, with the instigation of the *Regional Australia Council 2031 (RAC2031)*, the *Regional Activators Alliance*, and through engagement with creative agencies. This campaign will be a priority for the RAI in 2020-21.



The Hon Jaclyn Symes holding RAI's report, with RAI CEO Liz Ritchie and RAI Chief Economist Dr Kim Houghton

The Big Movers: Understanding Population Mobility in Regional Australia

The experience of dealing with COVID-19 has removed one of the most significant barriers to a substantial population shift in this country. The notion of how people work has been turned on its head and the RAI hopes this change will see significant population growth in regions, following on from a trend that has already been set over a decade. COVID-19 travel restrictions has allowed staff and employers to see that location is no longer a barrier for where they choose to work.

The RAI's report, *The Big Movers*, uses Census data to unpack population trends around the country, and confirms that in the five years to 2016, Regional Australia attracted 65,204 more people than it lost to capital cities. This trend is not new; for the decade 2006-2016, more than 135,000 more people moved from capital cities to regions than the other way around. Between 2011 and 2016, more than 1.2 million people either moved to Regional Australia or moved around Regional Australia from one location to another.

The policy questions are more about how we can further understand and amplify the drivers of this movement toward Regional Australia to extend the population settlement even further and supercharge the regions. Industry, government and regional communities need to work together to ensure regionalisation of the workforce.

As a country, Australia is an extremely mobile nation, with a propensity to change address at twice the rate of people in most OECD countries. If location is no longer a barrier for employment, it is possible that the trend line over the next decade could see an even greater swing to regions – and this is the RAI's ambition.

One of the key trends uncovered in the research was that most people who left a city for a move to the region stayed in their respective state. Understanding the way the population moves around Regional Australia is an important first step in identifying the reasons people are attracted to some places instead of others. This understanding can help to shape a population policy for regional communities.

The *Big Movers* also looks at the movement of millennials (20-35 year olds). It found that while 178,961 millennials moved to capital cities from Regional Australia, more than 200,000 moved between regions. The top three regional destinations for millennials to move to during the last Census period were the Gold Coast, Newcastle and Sunshine Coast. Greater Geelong, Cairns, Toowoomba, Ballarat, Maitland, Greater Bendigo and Lake Macquarie were also popular.

Released via webinar during COVID-19 lockdown in June 2020, *The Big Movers* still attracted a large amount of media attention and over 830 people registered to tune into the presentation by RAI Chief Economist Dr Kim Houghton. The report generated nearly 200 media mentions with an advertising space rate (ASR) of over \$560,000 and over 4.7million media views.



REGIONAL MIGRATION INITIATIVE

The past year has seen RAI strengthen its role in supporting regional migration. It has moved from information gathering, through migration roundtables and consultations, to “activation” of its learnings and research.

It had become apparent that many communities around Australia were interested in attracting migrants to settle in their region as a way to increase population, contribute to community renewal and fill workforce needs. A key focus of RAI’s work throughout the year was to support regional councils and communities to understand the main factors involved in successful migrant attraction and retention, to ensure that regional migration is beneficial and sustainable.

In July 2019, the RAI’s Toolkit Steps to Settlement Success was launched in Adelaide by the Minister for Regional Services, the Hon. Tim Whetstone, at Regions Rising SA. The Toolkit is designed to be a practical resource to help regional communities successfully attract and retain migrants. Its content is based on a number of interviews and case studies from around Australia, and it has been a central resource to the RAI’s migration work over the past year. Developing the Toolkit was made possible by the Scanlon Foundation.

In 2019-2020, the RAI was funded under the Building Better Regions Fund (BBRF) to implement the project “The Rural Migration Initiative –National Coordination”. This allowed the RAI to support the position of Migration Director to implement the BBRF project and continue to drive the issue of regional migration.

As part of the BBRF project, the RAI took the Toolkit on a roadshow of events around Australia. The roadshow was an awareness-raising and community engagement exercise to enable rural communities to develop or further their own locally-led migration strategies, using the RAI’s key learnings.

Roadshow events were held in:

- St George, Balonne Shire, QLD (18-19 Sep 2019)
- Dubbo, Orana Region, NSW (3-4 Oct 2019)
- Kalgoorlie-Boulder, WA (24 Oct 2019)
- Bendigo, Loddon-Campaspe Region, VIC (12 Dec 2019)
- Cradle Coast, TAS (10 Feb 2020)
- Darwin, NT (20 Feb 2020)

RAI also continued to be a convenor on regional migration. In September 2019, it called together other

agencies which are also working, within their respective mandates, to enhance and support regional migration. Supported by the Cameron Foundation, the RAI’s forum of more than 12 agencies provided an opportunity for diverse actors to discuss issues related to regional migration, and coordinate and establish partnerships. The second meeting of the inter-agency group allowed a sharing of information on how COVID-19 has been impacting the work of boosting regional settlement.

The RAI also established a network for discussion and exchange on issues, experiences, challenges, solutions and questions on locally-led migration strategies. Through the Migration and Regional Development Facebook group, individuals, organisations and communities around Australia are connected and provided a platform to discuss issues of regional migration.



The RAI continued to share its research and learnings on regional migration. It contributed a submission to the Joint Committee on Migration’s Inquiry into Regional Migration, making 17 recommendations on ways to improve and strengthen regional migration. The RAI participated in a panel on regional migration at the Federation of Ethnic Communities’ Councils of Australia (FECCA) 2019 conference, and presented a workshop on regional migration at the University of NSW’s Advancing Community Cohesion Conference in early 2020.

Another project conducted during the year was the development of a migrant attraction and retention strategy for the Limestone Coast region of South Australia. Through a series of interviews and field visits, the research focused on the availability and capacity of services available for migrants in Naracoorte in the local government area (LGA) of Naracoorte Lucindale and Bordertown in the LGA of Tatiara. The project was funded by South Australia’s Department of Primary Industry and Regions.

REGIONAL AUSTRALIA COUNCIL 2031 (RAC2031)

In May 2020, the RAI established the Regional Australia Council 2031 (RAC2031). Launched by Deputy Prime Minister the Hon. Michael McCormack, RAC2031 represents a new voice for Regional Australia, bringing together some of the most influential corporate organisations in the country.

At the time of writing, RAC2031 boasts a member group of 12, with an aim to increase this number to 20 by the end of 2020. Members include Australia Post, Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association (APPEA), Aurizon, Bendigo and Adelaide Bank, Commonwealth Bank (CBA), Expedia Group, KPMG, National Australia Bank (NAB), NBN Co, Prime Super, Telstra, and TransGrid.

Chaired by RAI CEO Liz Ritchie, the Council gives corporate Australia a vehicle to support the development, investment and prosperity of our regions in a collaborative way that will enhance the lives of one-third of our population. Members of RAC2031 are asked to make Regional Australia a priority.

This forum listens to organisations that have a genuine care for and impact on Regional Australia. It does not function as a lobby group, but rather as a solution-based model to support the work of the RAI and in turn Regional Australia.

**REGIONAL
AUSTRALIA
COUNCIL**

2031

Each member of RAC2031 is helping to support the development of the RAI vision and national awareness campaign that will promote the opportunities to live, work and invest in Regional Australia. Equally, the knowledge and strength of engagement within RAC2031 will contribute to the overall direction and agenda of the Council.

The RAC2031 will actively seek to shift policy underpinning four key pillars: Jobs, Population, Liveability and Leadership. It aims to build a powerful legacy by supporting the RAI to be the central policy voice for Regional Australia, to ensure a narrative shift which will help regions thrive for decades to come.

Some of the key activities include:

1. Helping the RAI set a regional population target for 2056 and actively support programs that will drive a societal shift to meet this goal;
2. Supporting regional migration prioritisation and activation of locally-led migration strategies in Regional Australia;
3. Supporting programs to meet the current job vacancies in Regional Australia of more than 40,000 roles;
4. Investigating internal organisational policies that better support the optimisation of the Regional Australian workforce, such as flexible employment and remote location;
5. Creating an Employer of Choice system for Regional Australia;
6. Supporting the RAI Liveability Framework and Toolkit to help regional towns and cities understand their strengths and weaknesses and deliver attraction and retention strategies; and
7. Embark on building people power and leadership programs in Regional Australia to equip them to support the Regions Rising 2031 Vision

RAC2031 will actively work with government at all levels, industry and the community sector to ensure success and affect positive outcomes for regions.

BLOGS & EDITORIALS

July 2019

Steps to Settlement Success – a toolkit for regional and rural communities

Putting rural issues on the agenda

Has your town built a health precinct?

Labour mobility is a win for both regional employers and pacific workers

August 2019

Introducing Shyla Vohra – Migration Director RAI

We're looking for local councils to work with us

Coming soon: the Regional Australia Hub

Making a difference to the growth of Australia's mid-sized cities

September 2019

Growing stronger regions – education is key

Regional jobs – the latest on what's happening in your area

Regional Australia Hub now open at RAI

Regions Rising heads to Brisbane – secure your seat today

Migrant workers helping grow regional towns

October 2019

August job vacancy figures – how is your state travelling?

RAI appears before public hearing – jobs for the future in regional areas

RAI to host Tasmanian Premier

Migration Director update: October 2019

Mid-sized towns and cities – we need your help!

November 2019

Inland Rail workshops update

Migration Director update: November 2019

Latest job vacancy figures: September 2019

Building the NDIS – for regional Australia

Help your region forge a new path

December 2019

Migration Director update: December 2019

Latest job vacancy figures: October 2019

RAI hosts liveability forum

Regions Rising 2020 – work with us!

January 2020

Helping Regional Australia recover from disaster

February 2020

Supporting small business more important than ever

March 2020

Migration Director update: March 2020

Building back better – Regional Australia

A new voice for Regional Australia – RAC2031

April 2020

COVID-19: government stimulus packages through a regional lens

COVID-19: Have your voice heard

COVID-19 impact on Regional Australia – JobKeeper and JobSeeker

COVID-19 impact on Regional Australia – major employers in regions

COVID-19 impact on Regional Australia – older populations

We can't leave regional kids behind!

May 2020

COVID-19 and Regional Australia – workforce impacts

COVID-19 and Regional Australia – 26 May update

Be a changemaker for Regional Australia

June 2020

Migration Director update: June 2020

Regional consumers hold the key to our local economy

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

RAI continues to be a respected independent voice for the regions in the media and has seen a phenomenal uplift in its brand presence and profile in the public due to the vast amount of media coverage received over 2019-20.

As a small not-for-profit organisation, the headline numbers are truly remarkable: for the financial year 2019-20, over 1300 media stories mentioned the RAI, with a cumulative reach of 32.2million, and an advertising space rate (ASR) value of \$13.9million. In comparison, 2018-19 saw a reach of 20.3million and an ASR rate of \$6.4million.

Liz Ritchie, CEO, and Dr Kim Houghton, Chief Economist, were RAI's media spokespeople, and together completed a vast number of interviews on numerous topics. The narrative that the RAI told through the media was consistent and relevant to the latest research. The key topic for 2019-20 revolved around regional jobs and population; there are consistently tens of thousands of well-paying jobs available in the regions, which require more people to fill these jobs and keep them thriving or, in some cases, surviving.

Media coverage for the RAI peaked around major report releases, and also during Regions Rising event weeks.

A highlight for the RAI was the cover story of the Weekend Australian Magazine on 20 June 2020 by Greg Bearup. It was a very positive piece about

families making the leap to regional living and referenced the RAI and an interview with CEO Liz Ritchie several times. The story attracted a cumulative reach of about 880,000 and an ASR value of over \$600,000. Around the same time, The Project on Network 10 ran a story with a similar message and featured an interview with Liz Ritchie.

Other key media outlets that RAI appeared in include:

- ABC Radio National
- local ABC radio stations across both regional and metro areas
- ABC Statewide Drive NSW, WA, QLD
- ABC Online
- Triple J Hack
- ABC News24
- Commercial radio stations, such as 6PR (Perth), Triple M, 2BS Bathurst, 2CC (Canberra), 2SM (Sydney)
- Sunrise (Seven Network)
- The Daily Edition (Seven Network)
- WIN News
- SkyNews on WIN
- The Age
- Southern Cross Austereo
- Australian Community Media mastheads, such as The Courier, Illawarra Mercury, The Land, The Canberra Times
- NewsCorp Australia mastheads, such as The Australia, Weekend Australian Magazine, The Daily Telegraph, Herald Sun, The Courier Mail, NT News



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

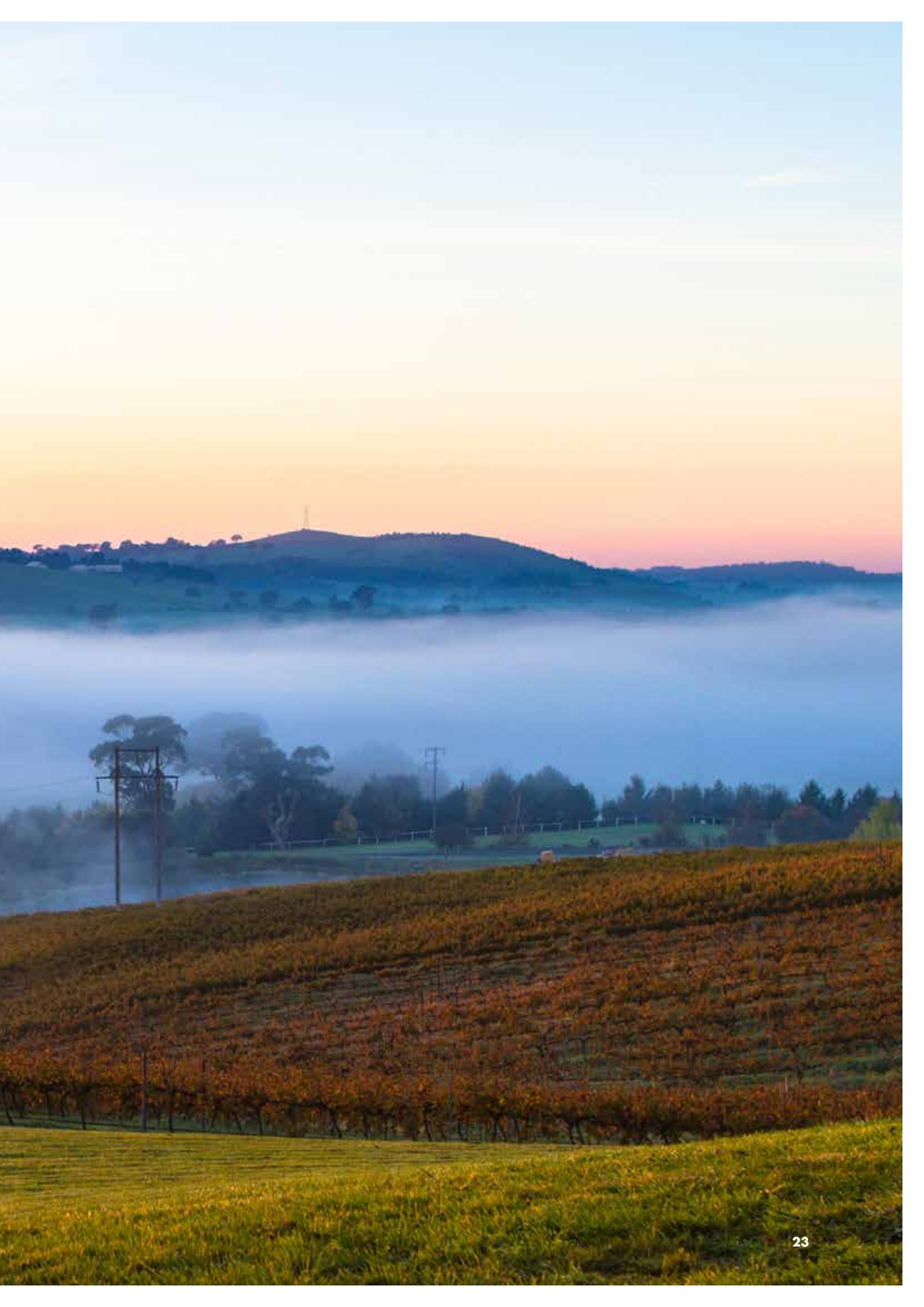
REGIONAL AUSTRALIA INSTITUTE LIMITED

ABN 65 152 955 667

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR

THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020





Regional Australia Institute Limited

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For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

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Regional Australia Institute Limited

Directors' Report

30 June 2020

The directors present their report on Regional Australia Institute Limited for the financial year ended 30 June 2020.

General information

Directors

The names of the directors in office at any time during, or since the end of, the year are:

Names	Position	Appointed/Resigned
Malcom John Peters OAM	Director, Chairman	22 September 2011
Christian John Zahra AM	Director	22 September 2011
Grahame Allan Morris	Director	1 January 2017
Professor Annabelle Duncan	Director	1 May 2017
Ms Rebecca Ann Tomkinson	Director	1 April 2019

Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

Principal activities

The principal activity of Regional Australia Institute Limited during the financial year was was conducting research into priority policy issues impacting on all areas of Australia lying outside capital cities.

The Institute's objectives are:

- To conduct research into priority issues impacting on regional Australia, with the aim of identifying solutions that enhance the prosperity, and sustainability of regional Australia.
- To promote the results of policy research to governments and the wider community.
- To foster debate on policy issues impacting on regional Australia.
- To engage in other such activities of a like nature as may be identified as contributing to regional Australia.

No significant changes in the nature of the Company's activity occurred during the financial year.

Short term objectives

The Company's short term objectives are:

Authoritative research resulting in widely used information product

RAI develops a program of research and information products that are widely used and recognised by our stakeholders as authoritative sources of knowledge on regional issues. The foundation for this is a Shared Inquiry Program supported by the Australian Government and all states and territories. Supporting this are smaller, short term research projects to provide timely input to policy debates and explore new concepts and issues that have the potential to be important for regional policy in the future. A Research Advisory Committee assists the RAI Board in developing and implementing projects under the research agenda.

Influential policy advice and promotion of an informed debate on regional issues

RAI develops and presents advice in a range of formats including through products on the RAI website, formal briefings, actively engaging in public debate through public commentary, opinion pieces and forums and by presentations at conferences. A communication and stakeholder engagement strategy underpins this.

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Directors' Report

30 June 2020

Financial sustainability based on a diversity of memberships and investment from government, corporations, philanthropists and interested individuals

The RAI has benefited from a significant short-term investment by the Australian Government as well as a range of corporate partnerships and projects with regions.

Secure longer-term agreements with the Australian Government and State Government partners helps the organisation to meet its ongoing objectives. The RAI has longer-term commitments from the Australian Government and a range of other partners to ensure the operations and contribution of the RAI to regional Australia can continue.

Operational and governance structures that are efficient and meet stakeholder expectations.

Governance structures that reinforce the RAI's position as an independent, apolitical contributor to policy have been established. Internal policies and procedures to ensure appropriate transparency and manage the operations of the business are in place, including a Board Charter, delegations and operational policies.

Long term objectives

The Company's long term objectives are:

Enabling regions to achieve their potential for the benefit of all Australians

To achieve this will require better informed discussion about the status of regional Australia and where we want it to be in the future. It will require new policy approaches, different thinking amongst governments and industry leaders and the empowerment and engagement of regional communities so that they can better shape their own futures.

To be Australia's pre-eminent authoritative source of independent information and policy advice on issues impacting on regional Australia

We will do this by building the evidence base and informed public debate and by developing new ideas, by harvesting the best approaches used around the country and internationally and by working to help others involved in the debate and in decision making, to be more effective in what they do. We will proactively provide advice to governments and regional leaders on future policy options and the best approaches to implementation of their policies for regional Australia.

Members' guarantee

Regional Australia Institute Limited is a company limited by guarantee. In the event of, and for the purpose of winding up of the company, the amount capable of being called up from each member and any person or association who ceased to be a member in the year prior to the winding up, is limited to \$10 for each member.

At 30 June 2020 the collective liability of members was \$70 (2019: \$70).

Information on directors

Malcom John Peters OAM
Experience

Director, Chairman
Former Chair, Northern Basin Advisory Committee MDBA; Past President, NSW Farmers Association; Inaugural Board Member, Australian Farm Institute; former director National Farmers Federation; Rural Assistance Authority; Border Rivers Catchment Management Authority and Agriculture Health Australia

Special Responsibilities

Chairman, Chair, Remuneration and Nomination Committee

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Directors' Report

30 June 2020

Information on directors

Christian John Zahra AM

Qualifications

Experience

Director

B.Economics, M.Assessment and Evaluation, FAICD

Principal at strategy and policy consulting firm, Impact Partners Australia and Independent Non-Executive Director at Waardi Limited. Formerly Chief Executive Officer of Wunan Foundation in the Kimberley region, a Director in KPMG's Strategy Group, Executive Director at Pacific Strategy Partners, Partner at Government Relations Australia, Chairman of the Federal Government's \$1B Regional Development Australia Fund Advisory Panel and Non-Executive Director at several public and private sector companies over the last 16 years. Representative of the electorate of McMillan in the Federal Parliament between 1998 and 2004.

Special Responsibilities

Chair, Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, Member, Remuneration and Nomination Committee.

Grahame Allan Morris

Experience

Director

Chairman and Federal Director of Barton Deakin Government Relations, based in Canberra. Formerly Chief of Staff to Prime Minister John Howard, Partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers; Chairman of PwC's Office of Federal Government Services and head of the PwC Government Strategy Unit based in Canberra; CEO of leading issues management firm Jackson Wells Morris, Strategic Policy Director for News Ltd; Deputy Federal Director, Liberal Party of Australia and State Director, South Australian Liberal Party. Associate Professor Pennsylvania State University, and Journalist.

Special Responsibilities

Member, Finance Audit and Risk Committee

Professor Annabelle Duncan

Qualifications

Experience

Director

B.Sc. Otago (NZ) 1975; Postgraduate Diploma of Science, (with Credit) Otago (NZ) 1976; M.Sc. Otago (NZ) 1978; Ph.D. La Trobe (Australia) 1987; DSc Murdoch (Honoris causa) (Australia) 2005

Professor Annabelle Duncan was until recently the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer of the University of New England. She joined the University in September 2010, initially as Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and then as Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Professor Duncan is a member of the AARNet Board, and member NSW Innovation Productivity Council. Prior to joining UNE, Professor Duncan spent 16 years in the CSIRO, including 6 years as Chief of the Division of Molecular Science. She has also served in managerial roles within the Bio21 Institute at University of Melbourne and AgriBio Institute at La Trobe University. Professor Duncan acted as an advisor to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on biological weapons control, representing Australia at international arms control meetings and acting as a biological weapons inspector with the United Nations in Iraq. She was awarded a Public Service Medal in 1996, and Honorary Doctor of Science (DSc) from Murdoch University in 2005 for her work in arms control.

Special Responsibilities

Chair, Research Advisory Committee

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Directors' Report

30 June 2020

Information on directors

Ms Rebecca Ann Tomkinson

Qualifications

Experience

Director

Bachelor's Degree in Community Development, Post Graduate Diploma in Public Policy and a Post Graduate Certificate in Social Impact

Rebecca is the Chief Executive Officer of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (Western Operation). Rebecca is also the Chair of the Wheatbelt Development Commission and serves on the Board of Perth Zoo and the Senate of Murdoch University. Rebecca has held advisory roles across a number of sectors and is deeply committed to the development of regional Western Australia – where she was raised and educated

Meetings of directors

During the financial year, 4 meetings of directors were held. Attendances by each director during the year were as follows:

	Directors' Meetings	
	Number eligible to attend	Number attended
Malcom John Peters OAM	4	4
Christian John Zahra AM	4	4
Grahame Allan Morris	4	4
Professor Annabelle Duncan	4	4
Ms Rebecca Ann Tomkinson	4	4

Auditor's independence declaration

The auditor's independence declaration in accordance with section 307C of the *Corporations Act 2001* for the year ended 30 June 2020 has been received and can be found on page 5 of the financial report.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:

Director: 

Director: 

Dated this 16th day of November 2020

Auditors Independence Declaration To the Board of Directors of the Regional Australia Institute Limited

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2020 there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Vincents Audit Pty Ltd



Phillip W Miller
Partner

16 November 2020

canberra. adelaide. brisbane. gold coast. melbourne. sydney

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GPO Box 680, Canberra ACT 2601 w www.vincents.com.au

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Regional Australia Institute Limited

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

		2020	2019
	Note	\$	\$
Revenue	5	2,127,075	1,989,377
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(95,054)	(11,008)
Board meeting and travel expenses		(51,536)	(76,879)
Salaries, wages and directors fees		(1,340,849)	(1,746,399)
Consulting expenses		-	(24,700)
Other Expenses	6	(506,290)	(550,454)
Research cost		(20,202)	(17,282)
Profit before income tax		113,144	(437,345)
Income tax expense		-	-
Profit for the year		113,144	(437,345)
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		113,144	(437,345)

The Company has initially applied AASB 15 and AASB 1058 using the cumulative effect method and has not restated comparatives. The comparatives have been prepared using AASB 111, AASB 118, AASB 1004 and related interpretations.

The Company has initially applied AASB 16 using the cumulative effect method and has not restated comparatives. The comparatives have been prepared using AASB 117 and related interpretations.

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Statement of Financial Position

As At 30 June 2020

	Note	2020 \$	2019 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	7	1,238,875	1,120,437
Trade and other receivables	8	142,913	129,878
Other assets	9	15,497	24,554
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		1,397,285	1,274,869
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	10	23,013	15,199
Intangible assets	10	179	614
Right-of-use assets	12	725,184	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		748,376	15,813
TOTAL ASSETS		2,145,661	1,290,682
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	11	137,897	279,997
Lease liabilities	12	130,635	-
Employee benefits	13	60,972	59,448
Other liabilities	14	597,863	480,803
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		927,367	820,248
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	12	628,322	-
Employee benefits	13	17,895	11,501
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		646,217	11,501
TOTAL LIABILITIES		1,573,584	831,749
NET ASSETS		572,077	458,933
EQUITY			
Retained earnings		572,077	458,933
TOTAL EQUITY		572,077	458,933

The Company has initially applied AASB 15 and AASB 1058 using the cumulative effect method and has not restated comparatives. The comparatives have been prepared using AASB 111, AASB 118, AASB 1004 and related interpretations.

The Company has initially applied AASB 16 using the cumulative effect method and has not restated comparatives. The comparatives have been prepared using AASB 117 and related interpretations.

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

2020

	Retained Earnings	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2019	458,933	458,933
Profit attributable to members of the parent entity	113,144	113,144
Balance at 30 June 2020	572,077	572,077

2019

	Retained Earnings	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2018	896,368	896,368
Deficit attributable to members	(437,435)	(437,435)
Balance at 30 June 2019	458,933	458,933

The Company has initially applied AASB 15 and AASB 1058 using the cumulative effect method and has not restated comparatives. The comparatives have been prepared using AASB 111, AASB 118, AASB 1004 and related interpretations.

The Company has initially applied AASB 16 using the cumulative effect method and has not restated comparatives. The comparatives have been prepared using AASB 117 and related interpretations.

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Statement of Cash Flows For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
Note	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Receipts from customers	2,715,574	2,423,919
Payments to suppliers and employees	(2,507,778)	(2,958,655)
Interest paid	(20,698)	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	<u>187,098</u>	<u>(534,736)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	<u>(21,858)</u>	(4,310)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	<u>(21,858)</u>	(4,310)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Payment of lease liabilities - (principal)	<u>(46,802)</u>	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	<u>(46,802)</u>	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	118,438	(539,046)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	<u>1,120,437</u>	1,659,483
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	7 <u>1,238,875</u>	<u>1,120,437</u>

The Company has initially applied AASB 15 and AASB 1058 using the cumulative effect method and has not restated comparatives. The comparatives have been prepared using AASB 111, AASB 118, AASB 1004 and related interpretations. The Company has initially applied AASB 16 using the cumulative effect method and has not restated comparatives. The comparatives have been prepared using AASB 117 and related interpretations.

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

The financial report covers Regional Australia Institute Limited as an individual entity. Regional Australia Institute Limited is a not-for-profit Company, registered and domiciled in Australia.

The principal activity of the Company for the year ended 30 June 2020 was conducting research into priority policy issues impacting on all areas of Australia lying outside capital cities.

The functional and presentation currency of Regional Australia Institute Limited is Australian dollars.

Comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

1 Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

2 Change in Accounting Policy

Revenue from Contracts with Customers - Adoption of AASB 15 / Income of Not-for-Profit Entities - Adoption of AASB 1058

The Company has adopted AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* and AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* for the first time in the current year with a date of initial application of 1 July 2019.

The Company has applied AASB 15 and AASB 1058 using the cumulative effect method which means the comparative information has not been restated and continues to be reported under AASB 111, AASB 118, AASB 1004 and related interpretations. All adjustments on adoption of AASB 15 and AASB 1058 have been taken to retained earnings at 1 July 2019.

The Company has assessed the impact of adopting the new revenue standards and it was determined that the adoption of these new standards had no significant impact on the Company's current revenue streams. The policies adopted are set out in Note 3.

Leases - Adoption of AASB 16

The Company has adopted AASB 16 *Leases* using the modified retrospective (cumulative catch-up) method from 1 July 2019 and therefore the comparative information for the year ended 30 June 2019 has not been restated and has been prepared in accordance with AASB 117 *Leases* and associated Accounting Interpretations.

Impact of adoption of AASB 16

The impact of adopting AASB 16 is described below:

Company as a lessee

Under AASB 117, the Company assessed whether leases were operating or finance leases based on its assessment of whether the significant risks and rewards of ownership had been transferred to the Company or remained with the lessor. Under AASB 16, there is no differentiation between finance and operating leases for the lessee and therefore all leases which meet the definition of a lease are recognised on the statement of financial position (except for short-term leases and leases of low value assets).

The Company has elected to use the exception to lease accounting for short-term leases and leases of low value assets, and the lease expense relating to these leases are recognised in the statement of profit or loss on a straight line basis.

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

2 Change in Accounting Policy

Leases - Adoption of AASB 16

Impact of adoption of AASB 16

Practical expedients used on transition

AASB 16 includes a number of practical expedients which can be used on transition, the Company has used the following expedients:

Contracts which had previously been assessed as not containing leases under AASB 117 were not re-assessed on transition to AASB 16; lease liabilities have been discounted using the Company's incremental borrowing rate at 1 July 2019; right-of-use assets at 1 July 2019 have been measured at an amount equal to the lease liability adjusted by the amount of any prepaid or accrued lease payments; a single discount rate was applied to all leases with similar characteristics; the right-of-use asset was adjusted by the existing onerous lease provision (where relevant) at 30 June 2019 rather than perform impairment testing of the right-of-use asset; excluded leases with an expiry date prior to 30 June 2020 from the statement of financial position and lease expenses for these leases have been recorded on a straight-line basis over the remaining term; used hindsight when determining the lease term if the contract contains options to extend or terminate the lease; for leases which were classified as finance leases under AASB 117, the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset and the lease liability at 1 July 2019 are the same value as the leased asset and liability on 30 June 2019.

Financial statement impact of adoption of AASB 16

The Company has recognised right-of-use assets of \$805,760 and lease liabilities of \$805,760 at 1 July 2019, for leases previously classified as operating leases.

The weighted average lessee's incremental borrowing rate applied to lease liabilities at 1 July 2019 was 5.50%.

3 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Revenue and other income

Revenue from contracts with customers

For current year

The core principle of AASB 15 is that revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the Company expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services. Revenue is recognised by applying a five-step model as follows:

1. Identify the contract with the customer
2. Identify the performance obligations
3. Determine the transaction price
4. Allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations
5. Recognise revenue as and when control of the performance obligations is transferred

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

3 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Revenue and other income

Revenue from contracts with customers

Generally the timing of the payment for sale of goods and rendering of services corresponds closely to the timing of satisfaction of the performance obligations, however where there is a difference, it will result in the recognition of a receivable, contract asset or contract liability.

None of the revenue streams of the Company have any significant financing terms as there is less than 12 months between receipt of funds and satisfaction of performance obligations.

Specific revenue streams

The revenue recognition policies for the principal revenue streams of the Company are:

Revenue from rendering of services

Revenue from rendering of services is recognised over the period in which the services are rendered. For corporate subscriptions, the members simultaneously consume and receive the benefits as and when the services are provided by the Company and therefore revenue is recognised over time on a time proportionate basis over the period of the membership as the Company's efforts or inputs are expended evenly throughout the performance period.

Where payment is required upfront, a contract liability is recognised on receipt of the payment and recognised as revenue as the services are provided.

Grants and donation income

Grants and donations where there is an enforceable contract with a customer with sufficiently specific performance obligations are accounted for under AASB 15, where by income is recognised as and when the performance obligations are satisfied.

Grants and donations that are not enforceable or where the performance obligations are not sufficiently specific, are accounted for under AASB 1058- where by income is recognized immediately on receipt.

Interest

Interest income is recognised as interest accrues using the effective interest method.

Other income

Other income is recognised on an accruals basis when the Company is entitled to it.

(b) Income Tax

The Company is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

(c) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of GST.

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

3 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(c) Goods and services tax (GST)

Cash flows in the statement of cash flows are included on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

(d) Volunteer services

No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

(e) Property, plant and equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment.

Items of property, plant and equipment acquired for nil or nominal consideration have been recorded at the acquisition date fair value.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment are measured using the cost model.

Depreciation

Property, plant and equipment, excluding freehold land, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the assets useful life to the Company, commencing when the asset is ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are shown below:

Fixed asset class	Depreciation rate
Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings	10%
Computer Equipment	40%
Leasehold improvements	10%
Website development	40%

At the end of each annual reporting period, the depreciation method, useful life and residual value of each asset is reviewed. Any revisions are accounted for prospectively as a change in estimate.

(f) Financial instruments

Financial instruments are recognised initially on the date that the Company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

On initial recognition, all financial instruments are measured at fair value plus transaction costs (except for instruments measured at fair value through profit or loss where transaction costs are expensed as incurred).

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

3 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(f) Financial instruments

Financial assets

All recognised financial assets are subsequently measured in their entirety at either amortised cost or fair value, depending on the classification of the financial assets.

Classification

On initial recognition, the Company classifies its financial assets into the following categories, those measured at:

- amortised cost
- fair value through profit or loss - FVTPL
- fair value through other comprehensive income - equity instrument (FVOCI - equity)
- fair value through other comprehensive income - debt investments (FVOCI - debt)

Financial assets are not reclassified subsequent to their initial recognition unless the Company changes its business model for managing financial assets.

Amortised cost

Assets measured at amortised cost are financial assets where:

- the business model is to hold assets to collect contractual cash flows; and
- the contractual terms give rise on specified dates to cash flows are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding.

The Company's financial assets measured at amortised cost comprise trade and other receivables and cash and cash equivalents in the statement of financial position.

Subsequent to initial recognition, these assets are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method less provision for impairment.

Interest income, foreign exchange gains or losses and impairment are recognised in profit or loss. Gain or loss on derecognition is recognised in profit or loss.

Impairment of financial assets

Impairment of financial assets is recognised on an expected credit loss (ECL) basis for the following assets:

- financial assets measured at amortised cost

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

3 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(f) Financial instruments

Financial assets

When determining whether the credit risk of a financial assets has increased significant since initial recognition and when estimating ECL, the Company considers reasonable and supportable information that is relevant and available without undue cost or effort. This includes both quantitative and qualitative information and analysis based on the Company's historical experience and informed credit assessment and including forward looking information.

The Company uses the presumption that an asset which is more than 30 days past due has seen a significant increase in credit risk.

The Company uses the presumption that a financial asset is in default when:

- the other party is unlikely to pay its credit obligations to the Company in full, without recourse to the Company to actions such as realising security (if any is held); or
- the financial assets is more than 90 days past due.

Credit losses are measured as the present value of the difference between the cash flows due to the Company in accordance with the contract and the cash flows expected to be received. This is applied using a probability weighted approach.

Trade receivables

Impairment of trade receivables have been determined using the simplified approach in AASB 9 which uses an estimation of lifetime expected credit losses. The Company has determined the probability of non-payment of the receivable and multiplied this by the amount of the expected loss arising from default.

The amount of the impairment is recorded in a separate allowance account with the loss being recognised in finance expense. Once the receivable is determined to be uncollectable then the gross carrying amount is written off against the associated allowance.

Where the Company renegotiates the terms of trade receivables due from certain customers, the new expected cash flows are discounted at the original effective interest rate and any resulting difference to the carrying value is recognised in profit or loss.

Other financial assets measured at amortised cost

Impairment of other financial assets measured at amortised cost are determined using the expected credit loss model in AASB 9. On initial recognition of the asset, an estimate of the expected credit losses for the next 12 months is recognised. Where the asset has experienced significant increase in credit risk then the lifetime losses are estimated and recognised.

Financial liabilities

The Company measures all financial liabilities initially at fair value less transaction costs, subsequently financial liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

The financial liabilities of the Company comprise trade payables, bank and other loans and lease liabilities.

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

3 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(g) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

(h) Leases

For comparative year

Lease payments for operating leases, where substantially all of the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are charged as expenses on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease term.

Lease incentives under operating leases are recognised as a liability and amortised on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease term.

For current year

At inception of a contract, the Company assesses whether a lease exists - i.e. does the contract convey the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration.

This involves an assessment of whether:

- The contract involves the use of an identified asset - this may be explicitly or implicitly identified within the agreement. If the supplier has a substantive substitution right then there is no identified asset.
- The Company has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from the use of the asset throughout the period of use.
- The Company has the right to direct the use of the asset i.e. decision making rights in relation to changing how and for what purpose the asset is used.

(i) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Company has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

Provisions recognised represent the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.

(j) Adoption of new and revised accounting standards

The Company has adopted all standards which became effective for the first time at 30 June 2020, the adoption of these standards has not caused any material adjustments to the reported financial position, performance or cash flow of the Company or refer to Note 2 for details of the changes due to standards adopted.

4 Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments

Those charged with governance make estimates and judgements during the preparation of these financial statements regarding assumptions about current and future events affecting transactions and balances.

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

4 Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments

These estimates and judgements are based on the best information available at the time of preparing the financial statements, however as additional information is known then the actual results may differ from the estimates.

The significant estimates and judgements made have been described below.

Key estimates - impairment of property, plant and equipment

The Company assesses impairment at the end of each reporting period by evaluating conditions specific to the Company that may be indicative of impairment triggers. Recoverable amounts of relevant assets are reassessed using value-in-use calculations which incorporate various key assumptions.

Key estimates - provisions

As described in the accounting policies, provisions are measured at management's best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period. These estimates are made taking into account a range of possible outcomes and will vary as further information is obtained.

Key estimates - receivables

The receivables at reporting date have been reviewed to determine whether there is any objective evidence that any of the receivables are impaired. An impairment provision is included for any receivable where the entire balance is not considered collectible. The impairment provision is based on the best information at the reporting date.

5 Revenue and Other Income

Revenue from continuing operations

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
- Government grants	1,137,169	1,420,126
- Sponsorship, research and licencing fees	742,488	182,193
- Interest	13,136	24,206
- National event series	200,799	287,951
- Other income	33,483	74,901
Total Revenue	2,127,075	1,989,377

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

6 Other expenses

The result for the year includes the following specific expenses:

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Other expenses:		
Rental expense	58,061	103,211
Auditor's remuneration	9,584	19,212
IT expense	28,051	38,895
Insurance	14,375	19,852
Telephone	14,901	22,752
Flights and accommodation	90,916	102,918
Lease interest expense	20,698	-
Bookkeeping	35,240	30,160
University projects	189,929	178,867
Other	44,535	34,587
	<u>506,290</u>	<u>550,454</u>

7 Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash at bank and in hand	<u>1,238,875</u>	<u>1,120,436</u>
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8 Trade and other receivables

CURRENT		
Trade receivables	136,036	99,015
Rental bond	6,877	6,877
Total current trade and other receivables	<u>142,913</u>	<u>105,892</u>

The carrying value of trade receivables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short-term nature of the balances.

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date is the fair value of each class of receivable in the financial statements.

9 Other Assets

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Prepayments	<u>15,497</u>	<u>24,554</u>

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

10 Property, plant and equipment

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Leasehold improvements		
At cost	2,017	2,017
Accumulated depreciation	(782)	(580)
Total leasehold improvements	<u>1,235</u>	<u>1,437</u>
Furniture, fixtures and fittings		
At cost	25,843	3,985
Accumulated depreciation	(4,533)	(251)
Total furniture, fixtures and fittings	<u>21,310</u>	<u>3,734</u>
Computer equipment		
At cost	65,282	65,282
Accumulated depreciation	(64,814)	(55,254)
Total computer equipment	<u>468</u>	<u>10,028</u>
Total plant and equipment	<u>23,013</u>	<u>15,199</u>
Intangible assets		
Website development		
At cost	33,326	33,326
Accumulated depreciation	(33,147)	(32,712)
Total Website development	<u>179</u>	<u>614</u>
Total property, plant and equipment	<u>23,192</u>	<u>15,813</u>

(a) Movements in Carrying Amounts

Movement in the carrying amounts for each class of property, plant and equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year:

	Leasehold improvement	Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings	Computer Equipment	Computer Software	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Year ended 30 June 2020					
Balance at the beginning of year	1,437	3,734	10,028	614	15,813
Additions					
Additions	-	21,858	-	-	21,858
Depreciation expense	(202)	(4,282)	(9,560)	(435)	(14,479)
Balance at the end of the year	<u>1,235</u>	<u>21,310</u>	<u>468</u>	<u>179</u>	<u>23,192</u>

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

11 Trade and Other Payables

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Trade payables	4,466	116,377
Other payables	133,431	163,620
	<u>137,897</u>	<u>279,997</u>

Trade and other payables are unsecured, non-interest bearing and are normally settled within 30 days. The carrying value of trade and other payables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short-term nature of the balances.

12 Leases

Company as a lessee

The Company has leases over buildings.

The buildings lease is for the Company's premises and expires on 31 December 2024. The rentals are subject to an annual increase of 2.5%.

The Company has elected to measure the right of use asset arising from the concessionary leases at cost which is based on the associated lease liability.

Right-of-use assets

	Buildings	Total
	\$	\$
Year ended 30 June 2020		
Balance at the beginning of the year	-	-
Change due to adoption of AASB 16	805,760	805,760
Depreciation	(80,576)	(80,576)
Balance at end of year	<u>725,184</u>	<u>725,184</u>

Lease liabilities

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

The amounts recognised in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income relating to leases where the Company is a lessee are shown below:

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Interest expense on lease liabilities	20,698	-
Depreciation of right-of-use assets	20,698	-
	<u>41,396</u>	<u>-</u>

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

12 Leases

Statement of Cash Flows

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
Total cash outflow for leases	<u>(67,500)</u>	<u>-</u>

Maturity analysis of lease liabilities based on contractual undiscounted cash flows is shown below:

	2020	2019
	\$	\$
< 1 year	168,188	-
Between 1 – 5 years	<u>687,952</u>	<u>-</u>
Total undiscounted lease liabilities	<u>856,140</u>	<u>-</u>

Lease liabilities included in the Statement of Financial Position:

CURRENT	-	-
Lease liabilities	130,635	-
NON-CURRENT	-	-
Lease liabilities	<u>628,322</u>	<u>-</u>
Total lease receivables	<u>758,957</u>	<u>-</u>
Net investment in the lease	<u>758,957</u>	<u>-</u>

13 Provisions

CURRENT		
Short term employee benefits	60,972	59,448
Long term employee benefits	<u>17,895</u>	<u>11,501</u>
	<u>78,867</u>	<u>70,949</u>

14 Other Liabilities

CURRENT		
Grants received in advance	<u>597,863</u>	<u>480,803</u>

15 Members' Guarantee

The Company is incorporated under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and is a Company limited by guarantee. If the Company is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$10 each towards meeting any outstandings and obligations of the Company. At 30 June 2020 the number of members was 7 (2019: 7).

16 Key Management Personnel Remuneration

The total remuneration paid to key management personnel of the Company is \$ 452,232 (2019: \$ 326,197).

Regional Australia Institute Limited

Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2020

17 Related Parties

The Company's main related parties are as follows:

Key management personnel - refer to Note 16.

Transactions between related parties are on normal commercial terms and conditions no more favourable than those available to other parties unless otherwise stated.

18 Contingencies

In the opinion of those charged with governance, the Company did not have any contingencies at 30 June 2020 (30 June 2019:None).

19 Impacts of COVID-19

The Regional Australia Institute Board has assessed the financial or business impact on Regional Australia Institute's business due to the COVID-19 event, and whilst the Regional Australia Institute remained open during the pandemic, there was a significant reduction in expected revenue. Regional Australia Institute experienced a reduction in contracted sponsorship revenue, event income and postponed project income. However, reductions in overall expenses and utilisation of the Government stimulus packages were material in managing finances. The border closures and restrictions have directly impacted event income and will continue to if closures remain; however, the financial losses were mitigated with two new programs that have replaced 60% of the income.

The impact of COVID 19 has been raised and considered by the Regional Australia Institute Board at every monthly meeting since the pandemic began. Regional Australia Institute's financial position has remained steady with vigilance. COVID-19 has also impacted on the ability of Regional Australia Institute to deliver contracted services to meet its contracts or funding requirements, as the operations of Regional Australia Institute were able to continue through remote working from home arrangements for staff. There are no plans or intentions as a result of COVID-19 that may affect Regional Australia Institute 's assets and liabilities, Regional Australia Institute has the financial resources to meet its any remaining operating costs.

The Company has \$1,238,875 in cash and cash equivalents as at 30 June 2020. In addition, the Company has a secured funding arrangement in place from Federal and State Governments until at least 30 June 2021.

The current cash position and secured future funding will be sufficient to meet the ongoing office administrative and other expenses of the Company in the foreseeable 12 months from the date of signing of these financial statements.

20 Events after the end of the Reporting Period

The financial report was authorised for issue on the date of signing by those charged with governance.

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Company, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Company in future financial years.

21 Statutory Information

The registered office and principal place of business of the company is:
Regional Australia Institute Limited
Level 2, 53 Blackall Street
Barton ACT 2600


Regional Australia Institute Limited


Directors' Declaration

In the Directors' opinion:

- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the registered entity is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable; and
- the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulation 2013*.

Director 

Director 

Dated this 16 day of November 2020

Independent Audit Report to the members of Regional Australia Institute Limited

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Regional Australia Institute Limited, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2020, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion the financial report of Regional Australia Institute Limited has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (i) Giving a true and fair view of the registered entity's financial position as at 30 June 2020 and of its financial performance for the year ended; and
- (ii) Complying with Australian Accounting Standards and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the registered entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Report

Those charged with governance of the registered entity are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the registered entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

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As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the registered entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Vincent's Audit Pty Ltd

Phillip Miller

Partner

Canberra

Dated: 16 November 2020

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ABOUT THE REGIONAL AUSTRALIA INSTITUTE

Independent and informed by both research and on-going dialogue with the community, the Regional Australia Institute develops policy and advocates for change to build a stronger economy and better quality of life in regional Australia – for the benefit of all Australians.