



**REGIONAL
AUSTRALIA**
INSTITUTE

**REGIONAL
AUSTRALIA
COUNCIL**

2031

REGIONAL AUSTRALIA COUNCIL 2031

COMMUNIQUE #2

Wednesday 22 July 2020

RAC2031 MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

- Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association (APPEA)
- Aurizon
- Australia Post
- Bendigo and Adelaide Bank
- Commonwealth Bank
- Expedia Group
- KPMG
- National Australia Bank (NAB)
- NBN Co.
- Prime Super
- Telstra
- TransGrid

SECOND MEETING – 22 JULY 2020

The Minister for Decentralisation and Regional Education, the Hon. Andrew Gee, addressed the second meeting of the Regional Australia Council 2031 (RAC2031) on Wednesday 22 July, 2020. The Minister welcomed the establishment of the RAC2031 initiative, which he said would contribute to and compliment the Government's commitment to create jobs and boost investment in country Australia. He also spoke about the importance of regionalisation for both the public and private sectors.

The second meeting of RAC2031 focused on Jobs and Employment. The Members of RAC2031 discussed the future of work and the lessons learned from working at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Australia is seeing a profound shift in thinking about the nature of work. Employees are rethinking lifestyle and priorities, businesses are considering their working model and their physical footprint. It is timely to ramp up the national conversation on the regionalisation of the workforce.

RAC2031 Members identified that COVID19, while causing much heartbreak and loss, is providing unexpected positive impacts on changing the way we work. Working from home has finally meant that there is a level playing field between regional and metropolitan areas and that people can choose where to live to suit their lifestyle, while still being productive employees or business owners. There is a growing shift in the traditional thinking about how organisations operate and their physical footprint.

Minister Gee urged RAC2031 members to provide input on how businesses can be supported to either move to regional areas or allow their staff to live in regional areas and work online.

Chaired by Liz Ritchie, CEO of the Regional Australia Institute, RAC2031 is a forum of the most influential corporate organisations in Australia who are committed to making regions a priority.

RAC2031 REACHED CONSENSUS THAT:

- Members will work with RAI to develop a unique data set on the regionalisation of workforce. This will identify priority areas for policymakers.
- Working from home has been shown to have significant benefits on productivity and staff wellbeing. It has made a move to a regional area a more realistic and a more feasible option for many staff and businesses.
- Regionalisation can play an important part of Australia's national recovery story.
- The work of RAC2031 will have a lasting legacy for the future of regional Australia. The narrative is already changing.

The RAC2031 will come together four times a year to discuss and activate the four pillars identified by the RAI that are vital to regional Australia. These are:



RAC2031 MEETING #3

The next meeting of RAC2031 will be held in October 2020 and will have a focus on Population.

RAC2031 will work to increase its membership base to 25 by the end of 2020. For enquiries, please contact RAI CEO Liz Ritchie info@regionalaustralia.org.au or phone 02 6260 3733.

For media enquiries, please contact Corporate Affairs Director, Amanda Barwick amanda.barwick@regionalaustralia.org.au or phone 0429 142 232.