



MEETING MINUTES

REGIONAL CAPITALS AUSTRALIA

BOARD MEETING

Date: Wednesday 8 February 2023

Location: Private Dining Room 1, Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Time:

- 9:00am – 3:00pm AEDT
- 8:00am - 2:00pm AEST
- 7:30am - 1:30pm ACST
- 6:00am - 12:00pm AWST

Attendees

- Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council (Chair)
- Mr Frank Zaknich – GM, Albury City Council
- Mayor Jaysen de San Miguel - Mayor, City of Bunbury (Deputy Chair)
- Mr Mal Osborne - CEO, City of Bunbury
- Cr Grant Henley – Mayor, City of Busselton (WA Representative)
- Mr Tony Nottle - CEO, City of Busselton
- Cr Mathew Dickerson – Mayor, Dubbo Regional Council (RCA Secretary)
- Mr Murray Wood – Dubbo Regional Council
- Mr Ross McKim – CEO, City of Greater Geraldton
- Cr Trent Sullivan - Mayor, Greater Geelong City Council
- Mr Andrew Brien – CEO, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- Cr Doug Curran – Mayor, Griffith City Council (NSW Representative)
- Mr Brett Stonestreet – GM, Griffith City Council
- Cr Kellie O'Callaghan - Latrobe City Council (VIC Representative)



- Cr Russell Webb – Mayor, Tamworth Regional Council
- Ms Rachael Sweeney – RCA Project Manager and Secretariat (Managing Director, Collective Position)
- Ms Edwina Blackburn – RCA Secretariat

Apologies

- Cr Matt Paterson – Mayor, Alice Springs Town Council
- Mr Robert Jennings – CEO, Alice Springs Town Council
- Cr Des Hudson – Mayor, City of Ballarat
- Mr Evan King – CEO, City of Ballarat
- Cr Tom Kennedy – Mayor, Broken Hill City Council
- Mr Jay Nankivell – GM, Broken Hill City Council
- Cr George Seymour – Mayor, Fraser Coast Regional Council
- Mr Ken Diehm – CEO, Fraser Coast Regional Council
- Cr John Bowler – Mayor, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder
- Ms Kaarina Phyland – Acting CEO, Greater Geelong City Council
- Mayor Shane Van Styn – Mayor, City of Greater Geraldton (RCA Treasurer)
- Mr Steven Piasente – Latrobe City Council
- Cr Harold Tracey – Mayor, Shire of Broome
- Mr Sam Mastrolembo – CEO, Shire of Broome
- Cr Peter Long – Mayor, City of Karratha
- Ms Virginia Miltrup – CEO, City of Karratha
- Cr Dallas Tout – Mayor, Wagga Wagga City Council
- Mr Peter Thompson – General Manager, Wagga Wagga City Council
- Mr Paul Bennett – GM, Tamworth Regional Council
- Cr Peter Carter – Mayor, Town of Port Hedland
- Mr Carl Askew – CEO, Town of Port Hedland
- Cr Debbie Arnott – Mayor, Warrnambool City Council
- Mr Peter Schneider – CEO, Warrnambool City Council

The meeting was declared open at 9:00am AEDT.

1. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY, WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council, opened the meeting, welcomed members to the meeting and noted apologies.



2. OVERVIEW OF THE DAY

Ms Rachael Sweeney – RCA Project Manager and Secretariat provided an overview of the day for the information of members.

Ms Rachael Sweeney – RCA Project Manager and Secretariat provided an overview of the talking points and noted meetings were organised with the following Ministers' Offices and stakeholders:

- The Hon Kristy McBain MP - Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories;
- The Hon Andrew Giles MP - Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs;
- The Office of the Hon Michelle Rowland MP, Minister for Communications;
- Office of the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government;
- The Office of the Hon Julie Collins MP - Minister for Homes, Homelessness and Small Business; and
- Regional Australia Institute.

Members noted the meetings and overview of the day.

3. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council welcomed the Hon Kirsty McBain MP – Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories to the meeting and introduced all members.

Regional Capitals Australia members provided an overview of the RCA policy priorities including:

- Population policy priorities;
- Arts and culture policy priorities;
- Regional infrastructure policy priorities;
- Local Rodas and Community Infrastructure Program policy priorities;
- Regional airport policy priorities; and
- Financial impact of current market conditions on regional infrastructure delivery.

The Hon Kirsty McBain MP – Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories provided an overview of regional development priorities, including:



- Importance of the Regional Development Australia committees in supporting regional development objectives; and
- Importance of planning for Renewable Energy Zones in regional areas.

The Hon Kirsty McBain MP – Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories noted a review of energy infrastructure was underway by Mr Andrew Dyer - Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner.

Members noted the update by the Hon Kirsty McBain MP – Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories.

4. REGIONAL ARTS AND IMMIGRATION

RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council welcomed the Hon Andrew Giles MP – Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs to the meeting and introduced all members.

The Hon Andrew Giles MP – Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs provided an update on immigration priorities as they relate to regional Australia, including:

- A review of the Australian migration system was conducted to inform the Australia's Migration Program for 2023-24;
- The future of Designated Area Migration Agreements (DAMAs) being considered as part of the review;
- Changes to citizenship ceremonies and the importance of these changes to regional communities; and
- Support services for newly arrived migrants in regional areas.

Members noted the update by the Hon Andrew Giles MP – Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs.

5. MEMBER DISCUSSION

Members noted the presentations by the Hon Kirsty McBain MP – Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories and the Hon Andrew Giles MP – Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs.



Members noted Mr Andrew Dyer was the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner and agreed to draft a position on the impact of renewable energy infrastructure on regional communities.

Members noted the importance of DAMAs and discussed the review of the Australian migration system. Members agreed to refer the responses on DAMAs to local regional development Australia committees.

RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council noted consensus of members on the agreed actions.

ACTIONS

5.1 RCA Secretariat to draft a position on the impact of renewable energy infrastructure on regional communities for the consideration of the Board; and

5.2 Members refer the responses on DAMAs to local regional development Australia committees.

6. REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council welcomed the Office of the Hon Michelle Rowland MP, Minister for Communications to the meeting and introduced all members.

Senior Advisor to the Hon Michelle Rowland MP, Minister for Communications provided an overview of regional communications programs and priorities, including:

- On Farm Connectivity Program for primary producers to extend connectivity in their fields; and
- Submissions on the draft guidelines of round 3 of the Regional Connectivity Program were open. The Program will include:
 - A \$100 million Regional Connectivity Solutions stream for place-based solutions that deliver new or upgraded broadband services or upgraded mobile services; and
 - A \$50 million Mobile Black Spot Solutions stream that delivers New Handheld Coverage to regional, rural and remote Australia.

Members discussed the importance of the government's audit into mobile connectivity and sought to understand how this would be achieved. It was noted that the government was working with various



providers but there was a likely opportunity for local government to support the audit and if this was the case that Mr Lloyd would work through the Secretariat to coordinate this involvement.

Members noted the update by the Office of the Hon Michelle Rowland MP, Minister for Communications.

7. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council welcomed the Office of the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government to the meeting and introduced all members.

Advisors to the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government provided an update on regional development priorities, including:

- Aviation White Paper Terms of Reference released for submission; and
- Importance of the Local Roads and Communities Infrastructure Fund;
- The Regional Partnerships Program; and
- The Growing Regions Fund.

Members noted the update by Advisors to the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

8. MEMBER DISCUSSION

Members noted the presentations by Advisors to the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government and Advisor to the Hon Michelle Rowland MP, Minister for Communications.

Members discussed the update provided by Advisors to the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government and noted the opportunity to provide feedback on the Aviation White Paper Terms of Reference.

Members agreed to form a working group to formulate a response on the Aviation White Paper Terms of Reference.



Members discussed the update by Advisor to the Hon Michelle Rowland MP, Minister for Communications on the On Farm Connectivity Program Submission and the Regional Connectivity Program Submission and requested the information on the regional communication programs be circulated for the information by members.

RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council noted consensus of members on the agreed actions.

ACTIONS

8.1 RCA Secretariat to organise an RCA Aviation Working Group to formulate a response on the Aviation White Paper Terms of Reference;

8.2 RCA Secretariat to draft a submission on the Aviation White Paper Terms of Reference; and

8.3 RCA Secretariat to circulate the information on the On Farm Connectivity Program Submission and the Regional Connectivity Program Submission for the information of members.

9. REGIONAL HOUSING

RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council welcomed the Office of the Hon Julie Collins MP, Minister for Homes, Homelessness and Small Business to the meeting and introduced all members.

Advisor to the Hon Julie Collins MP, Minister for Homes, Homelessness and Small Business provided an overview of regional housing priorities, including:

- Regional First Home Buyers Guarantee has had 10,000 applicants to date;
- National Housing Accord has lead to 10,000 affordable housing for key workers;
- National Housing and Homelessness Plan to be announced this year; and
- The interim National Housing Supply and Affordability Council is operating until it will be established in legislation.



Advisor to the Hon Julie Collins MP, Minister for Homes, Homelessness and Small Business noted the draft Housing Australia Future Fund Bill would be tabled in the House of Representatives that week. The draft Bill included;

- \$200 million for the repair, maintenance and improvement of housing in remote Indigenous communities;
- \$100 million for crisis and transitional housing options for women and children impacted by family and domestic violence and older women at risk of homelessness; and
- \$30 million to build housing and fund specialist services for veterans who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.

Advisor to the Hon Julie Collins MP, Minister for Homes, Homelessness and Small Business outlined details of a long term national plan for housing and homelessness that would seek to coordinate the delivery of all forms of housing. He advised that the Minister would like to see a response from Regional Capitals as part of any consultation.

Members noted the presentation.

Post meeting note: The draft Housing Australia Future Fund Bill was tabled in the House of Representatives on Thursday 9 February 2023.

10. MEMBER DISCUSSION

Members noted the presentation by Advisor for the Office of the Hon Julie Collins MP, Minister for Homes, Homelessness and Small Business and agreed on the importance of affordable housing solutions in regional Australia.

Members noted the National Housing and Homelessness Plan and agreed to provide a submission on the Plan once it was released.

RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council noted consensus of members on the agreed actions.

ACTIONS



10.1 RCA Secretariat to draft a submission on the National Housing and Homelessness Plan once released for consultation.

11. REGIONAL AUSTRALIA INSTITUTE

RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council welcomed Ms Liz Ritchie - CEO, Regional Australia Institute and Ms Laureta Wallace – Director Campaigns and Commercial, Regional Australia Institute to the meeting and introduced all members.

Ms Liz Ritchie - CEO, Regional Australia Institute provided an overview of the work of the Regional Australia Institute to date including:

- Regionalisation Ambition 2032 launched in September 2022;
- Regionalisation Ambition 2032 include 20 individual targets under the following headings:
 - Population;
 - Jobs and Skills;
 - Liveability;
 - Productivity and Innovations; and
 - Sustainability and Resilience.
- National Alliance for Regionalisation would support the Regionalisation Ambition 2032.

Ms Liz Ritchie - CEO, Regional Australia Institute provided an overview of the launch of the National Alliance for Regionalisation:

- The Alliance will provide a critical role of the Regionalisation Ambition 2023 - Framework to Rebalance the Nation; and
- The Alliance will build momentum on the 20 targets outlined in the Regionalisation Ambition 2023.

Ms Laureta Wallace – Director – Campaigns and Commercial, Regional Australia Institute noted RCA had been invited to join the National Alliance for Regionalisation.

Members noted the presentation and acknowledged the National Alliance for Regionalisation closely aligned with RCA's priorities.



12. MEMBER DISCUSSION

Members noted the presentation by Ms Liz Ritchie - CEO, Regional Australia Institute and Ms Laureta Wallace – Director Campaigns and Commercial, Regional Australia Institute and agreed on the importance of collaboration between the RCA and the Regional Australia Institute. Members discussed joining the Regional Australia Institute’s National Alliance for Regionalisation and agreed on the importance of advocating for regional Australia.

Cr Grant Henley – Mayor, City of Busselton moved to join the Regional Australia Institute’s National Alliance for Regionalisation. Cr Russell Webb – Mayor, Tamworth Regional Council seconded the motion.

ACTIONS

12.1 RCA Secretariat to advise the Regional Australia Institute of the resolution to join the National Alliance for Regionalisation.

13. FEDERAL ARTS POLICY - REVIVE

Ms Rachael Sweeney – RCA Secretariat provided an overview of the Federal arts policy ‘Revive’ and tabled the RCA Arts and Culture position for discussion by members.

Members discussed the Federal Revive policy, noting the similarities with the RCA priorities. Members discussed the responsibility of regional Councils providing funding and resources for community facilities such as arts centres and sports facilities services metropolitan councils do not necessarily provide.

Members noted the City of Bunbury had prepared a paper detailing the community use and cost of running community infrastructure in the municipality. Members agreed to draft a position paper on the economic impact community facilities have on regional capital councils for the consideration of members.

RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council noted consensus of members on the agreed actions.



ACTIONS

13.1 RCA Secretariat to circulate the City of Bunbury Community facility funding paper for the information of members; and

13.2 RCA Secretariat to draft a Regional Communities Facilities Paper for consideration of the Board.

14. CONFIRMATION OF MEETING MINUTES

RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council, tabled the draft minutes from the previous November 2022 meeting.

Ms Rachael Sweeney – RCA Secretariat provided an update on the actions from the RCA November Board Meeting. Members received and noted the minutes and updates.

Cr Grant Henley – Mayor, City of Busselton moved the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Cr Mathew Dickerson – Mayor, Dubbo Regional Council seconded. RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council noted consensus from members on the minutes.

15. FINANCIAL UPDATE

Ms Rachael Sweeney – RCA Secretariat tabled the January 2023 Treasurer's Report for endorsement.

Members received and noted the financial update. RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor,

Albury City Council noted consensus to endorse the January 2023 Treasurer's Report.

16. SECRETARIAT UPDATE

Ms Rachael Sweeney – RCA Secretariat, tabled the following reports and registers for discussion and noting:

- 1) January Membership Status;
- 2) January Stakeholder Report; and
- 3) January Communications Report and Proposal.



Ms Rachael Sweeney – RCA Secretariat noted the RCA Communications proposal on an updated RCA newsletter structure for consideration by members.

Members received and noted all reports and registers. RCA Chair Cr Kylie King – Mayor, Albury City Council noted consensus to endorse the proposed RCA Communication Proposal and January 2023 reports from members.

17. GENERAL BUSINESS

The meeting was declared closed at 3:07pm AEDT.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Task	Responsibility
RCA Secretariat to draft a position on the impact of renewable energy infrastructure on regional communities for the consideration of the Board.	Secretariat
RCA Members refer the responses on DAMAs to local Regional Development Australia committees.	RCA members
RCA Secretariat to circulate the information on the On Farm Connectivity Program Submission and the Regional Connectivity Program Submission for the information of members.	Secretariat
RCA Secretariat to organise an RCA Aviation Working Group to formulate a response on the Aviation White Paper Terms of Reference.	Secretariat
RCA Secretariat to draft a submission on the Aviation White Paper Terms of Reference.	Secretariat
RCA Secretariat to draft a submission on the National Housing and Homelessness Plan once released for consultation.	Secretariat



RCA Secretariat to advise the Regional Australia Institute of the resolution to join the National Alliance for Regionalisation.

Secretariat

RCA Secretariat to draft a Regional Communities Facilities Paper for consideration of the Board.

Secretariat

RCA Secretariat to circulate the City of Bunbury Community facility funding paper for the information of members.

Secretariat