

BRIEFING NOTE

To: The Hon Nola Marino MP - DITRDC National RDA Input Session
From: RDA Murray NSW
Submitted by: Edwina Hayes - DRD-CEO
Information Source: Weekly Regional Leader Forum
Date: Friday 07 May 2020

RDA Murray Committee Meeting 6 May 2020 acknowledged the positive impact of the National Teleconferences and DITRDC RIBs on RDA Network Collaboration eg. Sharing of Regional Taskforce ToR

1. What's happening on the ground?

- Polarising and amplification of positive and negative impacts of COVID and government interventions
- Solid rain across the region buoying winter crop and livestock producers however limited impact on irrigation drought in rice production areas. Hume Dam has risen from 14-18%
- Bushfire Recovery activity continues
- Regional collaboration bringing projects forward, adapting systems to accommodate restrictions and delivering support and stimulus where possible.
- General community sentiment: people looking to what their new normal will look like.

2. What impact are government interventions having (positive and negative)?

Positive:

- Local Government consultations engaging more people than ever using online platforms like 'Bang The Table'
- Remote working and adaptive decentralisation
 - Melbourne Storm training in Albury
 - 12 week Pointer Remote workshops in Snowy Valleys Council area.
 - 2-3 large companies looking to move their HQ to Albury
- Start Ups and entrepreneurial adaptations popping up everywhere
 - Microbusiness and hyper-localism boom
- Local Health data being clarified across NSW - VIC border
- Job Keeper support and rising confidence in restriction measures mean some small cafes and shops are reopening with partial hours and takeaway/pickup services.
- Financial Companies / Accountants increasing activity supporting SMEs assess their solvency and access support and stimulation
- Digital adaptations

For noting:

- Food supply and demand adaptations positive and negative
 - retailers benefitting from reduced restaurant trade in high quality produce
 - producers, processors and wholesalers losing margins adapting to market decline and shift from restaurant to retail with diminishing demand



- NSW Gov using JobKeeper eligibility for Stimulus is restricting reach of stimulus
- Business confidence in mid-term solvency (6-months) is unsure.

Negative:

- Unemployment and permanent Business closures rising
- Cross-border confusion with NSW – VIC inconsistencies
- Businesses seeking advice about solvency assessments, concerns about staff entitlements being adequately accounted for
- Commercial and residential tenants withholding rent and Landlords dependant on income are having difficulty negotiating National Code of Conduct Commercial Leasing principles

3. What more could be done by government or others?

- Continue information clarification and communication as policies are implemented
- Support the coordination of regional information gathering through RDAs

What RDA Murray is doing,

- Partnering with Riverina and Murray Joint Organisations of Councils to deliver
 - Regionally coordinated infrastructure and other project prospectus
 - Economic Development training and support to ensure Recovery Planning is sound
- Negotiating transition of Murray Regional Leaders Group to Taskforce style, proactive, collective regional scale support for Recovery Stimulus and Support Activities.
- Communicating health and business advice from government and established and trusted sources of information.
- Engaging all levels of government locally to present solid, coordinated, meaningful leadership.
- Supporting sharing of economic modelling for recovery and adaptations
- Providing advice to support exceptional circumstances Temporary Visa Holders' inclusion in Job Keeper to retain high priority skills in regions

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