

BRIEFING NOTE

To: The Hon Nola Marino MP and DITRDC
From: RDA Murray, NSW
Submitted by: Edwina Hayes – Director Regional Development and CEO, RDA Murray
Information Source: RDA Murray Network and MSEAT
Date: Wednesday 30 Sept 2020

Murray NSW-VIC Border Closure restrictions continue to ease with “agriculture worker COVID-19 border entry permit” coming into play last week and announcements that Victorians from non-Hotspots can access the Murray River.

Federal Announcements projecting budget outcomes have been welcomed and expected to make a significant impact in our region.

Storm and unusual weather systems with a Spring “heatwave” followed by isolated/patchy frosts, hail and snow creating havoc in ag sector production and yield predictions.

Tourism and Hospitality Sector require additional assistance to rebuild Murray visitation
Key solutions are a more concerted cross-border, collaborative NSW and VIC Gov approach:

1. to support the region to attract more visitors
 - a. from VIC (NSW programs focus on NSW and VIC on VIC, the border requires a joint regional focus)
 - i. additional VIC oriented marketing campaigns
 - b. from NSW
 - i. NSW Premier publicly state the NSW-VIC Border Region is open for business (counteract statements on NSW media that she expects cases on the border)
 - ii. NSW Border region be included in DNSW campaigns and funding
 - iii.
2. Confirm Murray Regional Tourism Funding
3. NSW Gov match VIC Gov accommodation subsidies based on loss of trade from Melbourne restrictions

Henty Machinery Field Days campaigns by businesses and HMFD media and marketing teams have been well received.

NSW Southern Border Small Business Grants are undersubscribed. May be due to fatigue, amount, eligibility likely to be tweaked to lower thresholds for size of business and % impact of Border Restrictions.

University transformation programs coming into effect in coming weeks with 100 FTE voluntary separations in regional NSW projected by one University. RDA Murray is developing a program to connect separated academics with job opportunities and voluntary work in region eg Landcare and Business development support.



RDA Murray focussed on connecting people with jobs, workforce pipeline activation and regionally prioritised infrastructure projects to maintain jobs and drive job creation in the longer term for sustainable economic development.

MSEAT focus turning to recovery project delivery needs and resourcing eg.

- Build border business confidence and certainty
- Create partnerships and collectives to best utilise limited project management and engineering HR.
- Identifying and mobilising private-public partnerships
- Connect training and workforce pipeline activity to jobs
- Connect JobSeekers with jobs
- Engage investment in re igniting border tourism and

RDA Murray leading attention on migrant issues impacting job creation in region eg 485 VISA expiry dates (3 Melbourne educated welder-fabricators working in Murray for past 6 months)

RDA Murray supporting small business mental health programs being delivered through Chambers and Job Actives

Annual Plan 19-20 data analysis shows RDA Murray activity doubled in April 2020 and has remained high ever since with peaks related to Bushfire and Border Closures in January and July.

Edwina Hayes Ph: 0427 267 753

