

BRIEFING NOTES for National RDA Regional Updates Teleconference 14/07/2021

To: The Hon Nola Marino MP and DITRDC
From: RDA Murray, NSW
Submitted by: Edwina Hayes – Director Regional Development and CEO
Information Source: RDA Murray Network incl Murray Socio-Economic Activation Taskforce
Date: 14 July 2021

1. Economic Development

Investment

RDA Murray and RDA Hume support Hyne Timber solution to mitigate the short-term structural timber supply crisis constraining housing construction and threatening HomeBuilder stimulous policy efficacy.

Hyne request \$25M to subsidise 12 months freight bringing logs to the Tumbarumba Mill where they can be processed and fed into the HomeBuilder construction supply chain.

Hyne Timber's direct request went to Minister Sukkar and cc'd Minister Duniam. (see attached) It is our understanding Ministerial and Departmental staff are investigating opportunities to evidence and meet this request.

The housing construction timber supply crisis is a slow burn fanned by Bushfire losses in 2019-202. Demand has been tracking to outstrip supply in the SWS Softwoods Forestry Region over time and Bushfire losses and Home Builder stimulous are exacerbating and amplifying the issue.

Minister Duniam convened a meeting of timber processing stakeholders who agreed processing logs (freighted in from other areas with more logs and less processing capacity) at the Tumbarumba Mill was the most sound short-term option to avert an economic and social crisis.

This solution will have an almost immediate and significant direct effect on

- bushfire and COVID economic adaptation and resilience in the South West Slopes
- the delivery of the whole HomeBuilder program
- builders
- building contracts, Mum and Dad HomeBuilders
- regional housing demand - affordability, diversity offering incl social housing
- addressing regionalisation constraints

Hyne Tumbarumba Mill is the only Mill with capacity to process more logs, has had \$200M invested in recent years and was significantly impacted by the 2019-20 Bushfires.



Creating Jobs

RDA Murray has been focussed on developing systems for Job Matching and engaging people who want to move to the region to take up existing jobs.

There is increasing evidence of workforce constraints on the Murray regional economy eg. hesitancy to invest in an Almond processing factory in Balranald LGA

We are raising awareness of support required to sustain keystone NSW Border Murray Tourism operators in readiness for resilient growth. RDA Murray engaging Destination NSW CEO in Golf on The Murray proposal and physical tour of region (likely postponed)

2. Promote Greater regional awareness of Aus Gov

RDA Murray newsletter and social media has 17,500 subscribers/followers/ Our monthly newsletter and Grants and Funding email subscription is 2,350 with many networks relying on our content to populate their communications eg Councils, Peak and Industry Bodies and Charities.

RDA Murray co-facilitated a collaboration of South West Slopes and Upper Murray Farmer Groups and agricultural economic development stakeholders to apply for FRRR-DAWE Drought Funding to develop a Farming Systems Group to build much needed capacity and economic resilience in the livestock sector in southern NSW-NE Victoria.

RDA Murray are communicating cross-border restrictions and preparing communications and NSW Restrictions.

RDA Murray are promoting and encouraging COVID-19 and Influenza vaccination.

3. Contribute to Commonwealth regional policy making – evidence based advice

We are monitoring, collecting evidence and working with partners to continuously assess the needs of and best solutions to address NSW border employees and business impacted by VIC and NSW restrictions.

We are collecting evidence to improve Murray regional resident's access to vaccines. Public Hubs are

We are observing a projection of postponements and cancellations in the region as a result of Sydney and NSW COVID restrictions and anticipation of further precautions

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