

BRIEFING NOTE

To: The Hon Nola Marino MP and DITRDC
From: RDA Murray NSW
Submitted by: Edwina Hayes - DRD-CEO
Information Source: RDA Murray and Murray Socio-Economic Activation Taskforce (MSEAT)
Date: Friday 3 July 2020

Recovery phase and what this looks like:

- Gradually normalising of business practices with great improvements in COVID Safe behaviours across all sectors right along the border (driven by fear of VIC spread)
- VIC issues impacting tourism along the border – focussing on NSW Snow season in the East and Outback experiences in the west
- EOFY triggering more informed forward planning by businesses
 - about a third of small businesses are suggesting they might close with the cessation of JobKeeper (REMPan and local intel)
 - local Chambers of Commerce surveys providing lots of information eg ANCC 350pp from Albury Wodonga

How recovery can be effectively implemented:

- Supported small business financial assessment and planning eg, ATO data availability makes payroll planning more informed.
- Addressing long term disadvantages in region during this time of investment eg,
 - Digital Inclusion
 - roads and freight infrastructure, events spaces, tourism drawcards such as Moama Paddle Steamer and Bridge Arts projects.
- Focussing on getting on with building infrastructure and attracting population and workforce to fill vacancies and drive regional development
- Continuing to balance raising support for human capability and hard infrastructure investment in the region eg.
 - Apprenticeship support matching up with HomeBuilder stimulus
 - Small business contractor business training to engage with Council and larger project investment in the region. (raising WHS and book-keeping minimum standards)

Impact and effectiveness of the government COVID interventions in your region including identifying what additional support may be needed.

- VIC new case number rises are stimulating improved uptake of COVID Safe behaviours along the border
- Small Construction Businesses relying heavily on uptake of construction stimulus and bank loans (need to collect more intel about loans success rates Bankers nervous about unknown jobs and business impacts)
- Sporting Clubs are making competition season decisions with most seeing a reduction in participant numbers despite committing to a season. Some codes cancelling their competitions for the winter season.
- Gyms reopening with limited uptake



Business confidence across your region and good news stories

COVID Response

- Generally the mood is settling, but polarisation small business volatility continues but manufacturing and larger businesses
- Vacancies growing

Getting On With It

- Arts and cultural sector boosted to engage with support and plan future activity
- Domestic Tourism targeting NSW eg Snow trade
- Climate Change adaptation projects moving to practical phases
- Workforce and Population attraction projects
 - Migrant Economic Participation
 - Virtual and residential decentralisation out of Melbourne
- MSEAT subcommittee Regional Digital Inclusion Working Group, accessibility, affordability and capability

Great ideas we will act on from this week's national teleconference:

23 July JobKeeper review announcements will trigger a re-assessment of RDA Murray Business Plan development. (Deb Murphy Illawarra)

Are there any Businesses that would opt out of JobKeeper in the Murray? (Deb Murphy Illawarra)

Build on NSW Cross Border Commissioner focus on Economic Recovery (Tim Williamson Northern Rivers)

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