



**Regional
Development**
Australia
T A S M A N I A

Business Plan

01 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

Helping Tasmanians by linking organisations across the State with all levels of Government by facilitating projects that make a difference to our region

Confirmation of Annual Business Plan:

RDA Tasmania Chair

Prof. Sue Kilpatrick

Signature:

Date:

31st August 2020

Executive Summary

The 2020-2021 RDA Tasmania Committee Annual Business Plan has been prepared with the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic at the forefront of our thinking. The Committee has recognised that developing a plan with specific actions and measurable outcomes remains challenging as the COVID-19 environment is still very much 'response' focussed, and COVID-19 regulations, although somewhat relaxed in our region at the time of writing, could change very suddenly and impact on our ability to actively engage with our community and key stakeholders.

Notwithstanding, we have kept an eye on recovery and many of the actions identified focus on supporting our communities plan (and implement) recovery when that time arrives.

The annual business plan continues to recognise the importance of engaging with State and local government, particularly relating to a coordinated response to COVID-19. This includes, understanding the broad impacts of the pandemic on our community and economy.

Our annual budget reflects a considerable carry forward budget from the past financial, a result of savings resulting from been unable to physically meet and restricted mobility of our staff from mid-March 2020 through to 30 June 2020. Outside of our Operational Funding Contract, the RDA Committee received, and continues to receive, the Australian Government's Cash Flow Boost. The Committee is considering how to best utilise these funds, drawing on our [COVID-19 Principles for Economic Recovery](#).

The RDA Committee will continue to widely promote our activities through cost effective social media and e-newsletter platforms. These platforms are continuing to grow in both reach and engagement.

Strategic Context and Regional Priorities

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tasmanian economy was continuing to perform well.

Commsec¹, for example, in July 2020 noted that Tasmania holds the mantle of the best performing economy in its own right. Last time Tasmania was on top of the performance rankings was October 2009. It replaces Victoria which held top position in the economic rankings for eight quarterly surveys.

This is noted by the Tasmania *Premier Economic & Social Recovery Advisory Council* (PESRAC) which reported in July 2020²

The Tasmanian economy has done well in recent years and many Tasmanians have benefited from its growth. Tasmania entered 2020 with a sense of confidence, reaping the benefits of growth in employment and wealth. Our extraordinary environment, culture, heritage and produce had been discovered

¹ https://www.commsec.com.au/stateofstates?cid=CAS_Website

² <https://www.pesrac.tas.gov.au/reports>

by the world, with 1.35 million visitors coming to the State and international goods exports of \$3.6 billion annually.

Tasmania's recent growth has been the envy of the nation:

- *our economy grew by 3.6 per cent in 2018-19, compared with the national growth rate of 1.9 per cent, and per capita, it grew by 2.3 per cent against national per capita growth of 0.3 per cent;*
- *in February 2020, our unemployment rate was below the national average at 4.9 per cent;*
- *over the period 2015 to 2019, Tasmania's business survival rate was the strongest in the nation; and*
- *our population growth was 1 per cent during 2019, in contrast with the 10-year average of 0.6 per cent, with strong net interstate migration over the period 2017 to 2019.*

Tasmania's growth has been reasonably broad, with health care and social assistance, primary industries, construction, retail, ICT, and tourism, all growing in real terms over the past 20 years. Tasmania has also undergone a structural transition towards service sectors, with health care and social assistance now being by far the largest sector in Tasmania; 20 years ago that position was held by manufacturing.

In employment terms, the growth in services has been even stronger, with retail, tourism and accommodation - key parts of the visitor economy - being especially large employers, along with education, public administration, health care and social assistance.

However, some features of our economic and social structure create vulnerabilities. These are now playing a significant role in shaping the way COVID-19 suppression measures are impacting Tasmania.

Notwithstanding this, COVID-19 has had an impact on our economy and jobs, particularly in the tourism and hospitality sectors. Likewise there is significant evidence that the negative social impacts as a result of the pandemic have also been considerable. Economy.Id³ noted that in the June quarter, Tasmania Gross Regional Product is forecast to fall by -9.4%; Local Jobs are forecast to fall by -7.2% (equating to a fall of 17,915 local jobs); and if JobKeeper recipients impacts are included then the employment fall is estimated at -12.9% (31,862 jobs). The RDA Tasmania Committee is also aware that there are significant variations within the Tasmanian region.

In addition to the impact on our economy, COVID-19 has already come at significant costs to all levels of government through lost revenues (mainly taxes) and increased costs (mainly through community support measures).

³ <https://economy.id.com.au/tasmania/covid19>

Nevertheless, there continues to be a significant amount of public infrastructure construction planned and a growing need for a skilled workforce to support the State's potential economic growth in the context of an ageing population. This presents opportunities for ongoing investment in building workforce capability and providing new employment opportunities. Similarly, commitments to initiatives such as Project Marinus will give significant confidence for other investments in renewable energy such as pumped hydro, private sector windfarm and hydrogen, which can also play a part in Tasmania's long term economic recovery.

The RDA Tasmania Business Plan activities are focussed on continuing to make sure that supporting economic growth within Tasmania as a key priority. We also recognise that as a small and well connected State, coordinated activities with all levels of Government are essential as we manage our response to COVID-19 and plan our recovery.

RDA Tasmania's activities emphasise working effectively with the Tasmanian agencies who maintain a strategic focus on policy and projects that leverage economic growth. The Local Government Association of Tasmania and the Department of State Growth have standing invitations to attend RDA Tasmania Committee meetings and actively participate and contribute to the formulation of the Committee's business plan.

Annual Work Plan

Committee members have had ongoing engagement in the development of the business plan, concluding in a workshop in August 2020. Input was also invited from the Local Government Association of Tasmania and the Department of State Growth who have standing invitations to attend the meetings of the Committee.

RDA Tasmania, through its networks with industry, government (including state and local councils) and education providers, continues to collaborate and engage to understand key and emerging issues. Our ongoing activities including strategic planning, project development and delivery of structured outcomes with key stakeholders is critical to addressing these issues. We are also involved in numerous committees through the State in areas such as freight, industrial precinct development, formal business networks, regional body strategic planning, and local council project development.

The activities contained within the Business Plan reflect the outcomes of this broad level of engagement.

Communications Strategy

In 2018 -2019, the RDA Tasmania Committee developed a communications strategy. This strategy remains relevant for the 2019 -2020 annual business plan.

The strategy focuses on personal engagement by the Committee and staff, electronic information sharing through social media and e-news, and formal participation through event sponsorship and forums that have relevance to our business plan.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND BUDGET TABLES

Summary

The following table of activities highlights the focus of the RDA Tasmania committee.

Specifically, the following table can be summarised as being consistent with the following key priorities and activities

Summary of top 5 strategic priorities for upcoming year:

1. Actively participate with State and Federal governments COVID-19 economic and social recovery initiatives (consistent with [RDA Tasmania's COVID-19 Principles for Economic Recovery](#))
2. Support collaborative regional economic development planning to understand COVID-19 impacts, particularly at a local government level
3. Support the ongoing strategic development of a skilled Tasmanian workforce
4. Maintain a good understanding of Tasmania's infrastructure investment needs to support economic growth post COVID-19
5. Supporting COVID recovery by assisting business expansion, diversification and innovation

Summary of top 5 key business activities for upcoming year:

1. Strengthen the engagement between the RDA Tasmania committee and key regional partners and stakeholders
2. Continue to support collaborative business growth through industry led and place-based business collaborations
3. Support Tasmania's renewable energy development opportunities at a state-wide and local community level;
4. Actively participate in regional collaboration initiatives of local government
5. Ensure coordination with all levels of government 'economic development practitioners'

OUTCOME THEME 1	Increased economic opportunities and investment in Your Region
OUTPUT i.	Identify economic development opportunities that leverage private and public sector investment in Your Region.
What will we do	1.1 [LEAD] Raise awareness of, and respond to industry enquiries and leads for economic development opportunities
	1.2 [LEAD] Support renewable energy development opportunities at government and private sector level, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Ongoing advocacy for the investment in Project Marinus, pumped hydro and hydrogen opportunities</i> <i>ii. Assisting with local place-based community and economic benefits that can be leveraged from the planned renewable energy developments</i>
	1.3 [LEAD] Help communities take advantage of local economic development opportunities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Host business roundtables associated with Committee meetings to discuss critical issues and regional development solutions</i> <i>ii. Provide advice to other Australian and state agencies including Skills Tasmania and Department of Employment on Renewable Energy workforce and development opportunities</i> <i>iii. Support the actions identified in the State Government T21 Visitor Economy Action Plan 2020-2022</i>
	1.4 [SUPPORT] Supporting Tasmanian food networks that facilitate entrepreneurship and innovation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• (e.g. UTAS Food Systems Innovation Group, UNESCO Creative City for Gastronomy bid for Launceston, SeedLab Tasmania, Fermentation Tasmania, Tasmanian Food Cluster, Northern Tasmanian Food Network and Eat Well Tasmania)</i>

OUTCOME THEME 2	Increased trade and job creation.
OUTPUT ii.	Connect Your Region with industry sectors, international trade partners, financial markets, regional entrepreneurs and business leaders to attract investors to explore new opportunities to grow local jobs in Your Region.
What will we do?	<p>2.1 [SUPPORT]</p> <p>Support industry led and place-based business collaborations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Work with the Bell Bay Advanced Manufacturing Zone to implement its action plan including becoming an independent organisation</i> <i>ii. Facilitate industry and place-based business collaborations</i> <p>This will include engagement with regional business bodies such as chambers of commerce etc, understanding supply chains, and success factors for collaborative business models</p> <hr/> <p>2.2 [LEAD]</p> <p>Support opportunities to build trade growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Support the implementation of the Tasmanian Trade Strategy</i> <i>ii. Work with the regional business bodies such as chambers of commerce, Regional Development and Industry and Business Development teams in State Growth, DFAT, Brand Tasmania, AusTrade, AusIndustry and Industry Growth Centres, sharing information on the latest government support programs and industry trends</i> <i>iii. Work with trade peak bodies, exporters and reference groups</i> <hr/> <p>2.3 [LEAD and SUPPORT]</p> <p>Improve the skills and leadership of the region's current and future workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Support localised skill training for established and emerging industry sectors in regional locations where accessibility is an issue; possible industry and government collaboration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Skills training for existing and future employees and job participants</i> <i>ii. Industry Skill Development Reference group to government (Region and State Based) to provide guidance for future policy direction</i> </i> <i>ii. Support coordination between the new regional workforce development officers, and other government and industry stakeholders working in this area as we recover from COVID-19</i> <i>iii. Engage with school-aged education and career pathway initiatives (eg, Beacon and Next Gen etc)</i> <i>iv. Engage with post-school and adult education and career pathway initiatives</i>

OUTCOME THEME 2	Increased trade and job creation.
OUTPUT ii.	Connect Your Region with industry sectors, international trade partners, financial markets, regional entrepreneurs and business leaders to attract investors to explore new opportunities to grow local jobs in Your Region.
	<p>2.4 [LEAD]</p> <p>Continue to provide support for activities of the Tasmanian Logistics Committee, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Advocate with the Tasmanian Logistics Committee to continue work on national policies</i> <i>ii. Provide input into the activities of the Tasmanian Trade Strategy (Tasmanian Govt)</i> <i>iii. Further reporting – National Freight & Supply Chain Strategy (Australian Govt)</i> <i>iv. Advocacy for the TFES (Southbound) extension implementation</i> <i>v. Provide ongoing submissions and support to the Victorian Government on their Port and Access Review and Coastal Shipping review - Tasmanian perspectives</i>

OUTCOME THEME 3	Cooperative effort with all levels of government, industry, community and other regional stakeholders leads to improved economic development outcomes.
OUTPUT iii.	Develop and maintain positive, collaborative, working relationships and partnerships with all levels of government, industry, community and other regional stakeholders which address identified gaps or needs in economic development activity.
What will we do?	<p>3.1 [LEAD]</p> <p>RDA Tasmania will take a result focussed approach to achieving economic development for Tasmania’s 29 councils.</p> <p>These activities will include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Work with southern Tasmanian Councils to strengthen regional organisations of Councils and explore the practicality of a southern regional economic development strategy</i> <i>ii. Lead the Local Government Economic Development Network (a community of practice of over 60 local government professionals established in 2018)</i> <i>iii. Organise three Local Government Economic Development Network meetings a year. These will introduce people to leaders in economic development, shine a light on excellence in local government and facilitate collaboration between councils.</i> <i>iv. Identify gaps in economic development practice and working with the Councils to manage them (e.g. strategy writing, survey methods).</i> <i>v. Work with Councils to develop evidence-based project proposals that are aligned to funding opportunities</i> <i>vi. Use the recommendations from the Councils as Place Makers report to reform the way information on projects and capital expenditure is maintained and reported by Local Government so it is simpler to research.</i> <i>vii. Engage with LGAT on regional issues and policy, including through the RDA Committee meetings</i> <i>viii. Support the use of the state-wide ID Profile data set by councils</i> <p>3.2 [LEAD AND SUPPORT]</p> <p>Work with all levels of government to assist Tasmania to become a leader in the circular economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Work with Dulverton Waste Management on development of their FOGO NW project for NW councils</i> <i>ii. Work with Waratah Wynyard Council and Circular Head Council on their FOGO project</i> <i>iii. Work with State Government, Greater Hobart, LGAT and other stakeholders on recycling and circular economy projects in southern Tasmania, particularly in relation to the Recycling Modernisation Fund.</i> <i>iv. Host one meeting with key stakeholders and a representative of the National COVID-19 Coordination Committee’s Manufacturing Taskforce to identify issues and options and where Tasmanian has a competitive advantage in sustainable packaging</i> <i>v. Support the Launceston City Deal to develop a circular economy initiative</i>

OUTCOME THEME 3	Cooperative effort with all levels of government, industry, community and other regional stakeholders leads to improved economic development outcomes.
OUTPUT iii.	Develop and maintain positive, collaborative, working relationships and partnerships with all levels of government, industry, community and other regional stakeholders which address identified gaps or needs in economic development activity.
	<p>3.3 [LEAD and SUPPORT]</p> <p>Pursue opportunities from collaborating across the RDA network, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Work with RDA South West (WA) via our MOU, including support for the partnership between the two region's forestry industries</i> <i>ii. Connect with RDA Barwon South West in relation to the re-location of the Spirit(s) of Tasmania from Station Pier to Geelong</i> <i>iii. Connect with RDA Gippsland in relation to Project Marinus</i>
	<p>3.4 [SUPPORT]</p> <p>Continue to engage with Tasmania's Peak bodies (eg, TasCOSS, TCCI etc), in relation to understanding the impact of COVID-19 on health and wellbeing of Tasmanians.</p>

OUTCOME THEME 4	Achieve Government program objectives.
OUTPUT iv.	Assist in the delivery of Commonwealth programs including public and private sector decentralisation.
What will we do?	<p>4.1 [SUPPORT]</p> <p>Continue to participate in City Deal objectives for our region;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Continue participation in the implementation of the Launceston City Deal; and</i> <i>ii. Continue participation in the implementation of the Hobart City Deal</i> <hr/> <p>4.2 [LEAD]</p> <p>Support Tasmania’s economic response and recovery from COVID-19 by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Engage with Premiers Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council (PESRAC) to provide a regional development perspective and connect potential Commonwealth Government support.</i> <i>ii. Consider a RDA Tasmania Post COVID-19 Development Fund that can assist communities recover from the impacts of COVID-19 (use the RDA Tasmania’s https://www.rdatasmania.org.au/client-assets/documents/documents-and-reports/RDA%20Tasmania%20COVID%2019%20-%20Principles%20for%20Recovery%20(FINAL).pdf)</i>

OUTCOME THEME 5	Maximise access to Government programs and grants.
OUTPUT v.	Promote and disseminate information on Commonwealth policies and grant programs and support community stakeholders in Your Region to develop project proposals to access funding.
What will we do?	<p>5.1 [LEAD]</p> <p>Provide support to applicants of Government grants and programs to strengthen and enhance the quality of applications particularly through the use of local data and evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Provide grant writing support that complements activities and resources from Business Tasmania, Grantslink and the Tas Community Fund</i> <i>ii. Produce an online grant writing workshop with supporting grant writing resources on our website</i> <i>iii. Undertake community based or online grant writing workshops in each sub-region to enhance local community organisations grant writing capability and promote government programs</i>
	<p>5.2 [SUPPORT]</p> <p>Play an active role in Australian Government place based programs delivered by agencies based or active in the region, including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. AusIndustry, AusTrade, Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade, Department of Education, Skills and Employment, the Regional Development Australia Branch, the City Deals Division.</i>
	<p>5.3 [SUPPORT]</p> <p>Continue to work with the Tasmanian Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Including the Department of State Growth, DPIPWE, DPAC, Skills Tasmania, Office of the Coordinator-General, Infrastructure Tasmania, Brand Tasmania and other stakeholders to promote programs and grants and to support on policy and projects that leverage economic growth</i>

OUTCOME THEME 6	Advice supports development outcomes.
OUTPUT vi	<p>For Your Region:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide evidence-based advice to the Commonwealth on critical regional development issues; and • Provide information on regional activities and competitive advantages to all levels of government, industry, business and community sectors.
What will we do?	<p>6.1 [SUPPORT]</p> <p>Provide reports, commentary and presentations as required on regional economic development and critical issues in Tasmania by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Partnering with Dept. of State Growth on data collection for publications such as The Sentiment and General Economic Regional Report (SAGE Book)</i> <i>ii. Presenting at State and National forums themed around regional economic development</i>
	<p>6.2 [LEAD]</p> <p>Support a well-informed RDA Tasmania Committee through incorporating site visits, guest speakers and associated regional roundtables</p>
	<p>6.3 [SUPPORT]</p> <p>Respond to parliamentary inquiries and requests for feedback on draft policies by providing evidence based information on regional issues and perspectives</p>
	<p>6.4 [LEAD]</p> <p>Understand the impacts of COVID-19 on our region, and possible actions to support recovery, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Undertake research to best describe digital literacy, connectivity and accessibility issues and opportunities</i> <i>ii. Undertake research into seasonal workforce</i> <i>iii. Supply chains</i> <i>iv. Logistics</i> <i>v. Young Tasmanians will be disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic and through no fault of their own, will face an increased likelihood to become disengaged, coming at a cost to them personally and to society. RDA Tasmania is working with the Youth Network of Tasmania to understand this issue and identify activities to mitigate the impact</i> <i>vi. The recovery of Tourism, Hospitality and Events</i>

Attachment 3.B – Annual Budget and Annual Audited Accounts Reporting Table

RDA Name	Tasmania
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Funding Sources and Budget													
GST Exclusive Amounts	Commonwealth Funding <small>(incl. All \$ in FA & Schedules)</small>		Commonwealth 3rd Party Projects		State/Territory Operational		State/Territory Projects		Other		Total		
	Budget <small>(01/07/2020)- (30/06/2021)</small>	Actual to <small>(date)</small>	Budget <small>(01/07/2020)- (30/06/2021)</small>	Actual to <small>(date)</small>	Budget <small>(01/07/2020)- (30/06/2021)</small>	Actual to <small>(date)</small>	Budget <small>(01/07/2020)- (30/06/2021)</small>	Actual to <small>(date)</small>	Budget <small>(01/07/2020)- (30/06/2021)</small>	Actual to <small>(date)</small>	Budget <small>(01/07/2020)- (30/06/2021)</small>	Actual to <small>(date)</small>	
	Income												
Surplus Funding* carried forward from previous period (See note)	64,258						49,677					113,935	
Funding for this Period (estimated)*	652,952											652,952	
ATO Cashflow boost*									50,000			50,000	
BBAMZ Sub Cttee									203,647			203,647	
Bell Bay Econ Diversification Grant							25,000					25,000	
Nth Workforce Development officer									195,000			195,000	
Interest on Commonwealth funds	6,000											6,000	
Total Income (A)	723,210						74,677		448,647			1,246,534	

Note 1: the Management of Funding clause of the Funding Agreement requires that an RDA Committee must write to the Department if more than 20% of the total Budget remains unspent at the end of the Financial Year and the RDA Committee wishes to treat that unspent amount as Funding for the following year. This refers to Funding to support Your Committee to perform the Outputs and achieve the Outcomes as opposed to Project Funding. Please identify below the estimated Unexpended Funding from previous years as a percentage of your previous year's Funding. The actual carry-forward is to be confirmed in your Annual Audited Accounts. The RDA Better Practice Guide provides advice on the process for approval of carry-forwards greater than 20%.

% Funding carried-forward	9.8%	Please refer to the RDA Better Practice Guide for advice on the process for approval of any carry-forward greater than 20% of your previous year's Funding (excluding Project Funding).
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GST Exclusive Amounts	Commonwealth Funding (incl. All \$ in FA & Schedules)		Commonwealth 3rd Party Projects		State/Territory Operational		State/Territory Projects		Other		Total	
	Budget (01/07/2020)- (30/06/2021)	Actual to (date)	Budget (01/07/2020)- (30/06/2021)	Actual to (date)	Budget (01/07/2020)- (30/06/2021)	Actual to (date)	Budget (01/07/2020)- (30/06/2021)	Actual to (date)	Budget (01/07/2020)- (30/06/2021)	Actual to (date)	Budget (01/07/2020)- (30/06/2021)	Actual to (date)
	Expenditure Major Budget Items											
Staff Salaries	404,889										404,889	
Employee Entitlements	57,965										57,965	
Other Staff Expenses	33,850										33,850	
Office Lease & Outgoings	15,750										15,750	
Vehicle Costs	63,880										63,880	
Operational	25,750										25,750	
Financial, Legal & Professional	24,611										24,611	
Marketing	7,750										7,750	
Asset Acquisition												
Committee costs	16,850										16,850	
ATO Cash flow boost*									50,000		50,000	
BBAMZ Sub Cttee*									203,647		203,647	
Bell Bay Econ Diversification Grant							74,677				74,677	
Nth Workforce Development officer									200,700		200,700	
Total Expenditure (B)	651,295						74,677		454,347		1,180,319	
SURPLUS (A-B)	71,915						-		5,700		66,215	

*** Notes**

- 1) The full year OFC income is based on the known 6 months to 31 December 2020 and an assumption of CPI increase for the 2nd half of the FY ;
- 2) BBAMZ is planned to transition to an independent organisation in the 02nd Qtr 2020/2021;
- 3) The Committee is yet to consider the application of the 2019/2020 OFC carry over. This will be considered when the annual budget and the new OFC is provided to the Committee from the Department; and
- 4) The Committee is considering the use of the ATO Cash Boost.