



# WHEATBELT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT



GOVERNMENT OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Wheatbelt  
Development  
Commission







# STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC**  
**Minister for Regional Development**

In accordance with Section 66 of the Financial Management Act, we hereby submit for your information and presentation to Parliament, the Annual Report of the Wheatbelt Development Commission for the financial year ended 30 June 2018.



Rebecca Tomkinson  
Chair of the Board  
3 September 2018



Wendy Newman  
Chief Executive Officer  
3 September 2018

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# WHEATBELT

## FAST FACTS



### OUR ECONOMY



**\$6.66 billion in 2017**  
Wheatbelt GRP

### WA's Largest agricultural producer

Producing **\$3.35 billion** and **41%** of WA's total gross value of agricultural commodities produced (GVACP) in 2015/16:



Horticulture =  
**\$126.4 million**  
GVACP



Livestock =  
**\$467.1 million**  
GVACP



Livestock  
products  
(eggs, wool and milk) =  
**\$386.3 million**  
GVACP



Broadacre  
crops =  
**\$2.26 billion**  
GVACP



**Largest  
employing  
sector**

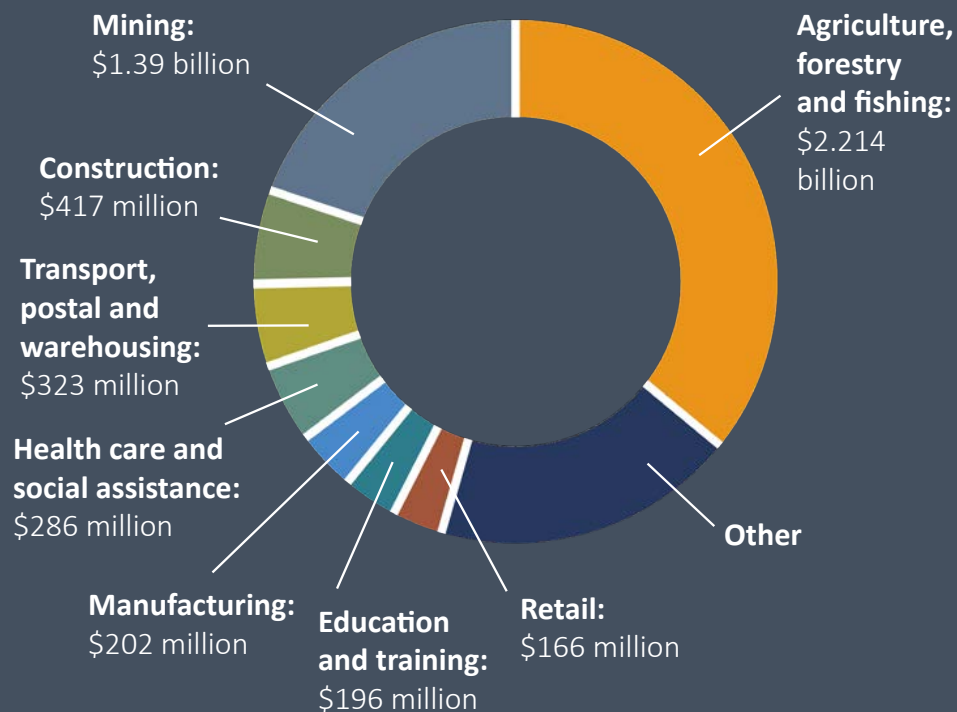
**agricultural, forestry and  
fishing at 24.7%**

# WHEATBELT FAST FACTS



## OUR ECONOMY

In 2017, the industry share to the Wheatbelt's GRP was as follows<sup>1</sup>:



**700,000**  
visitors annually<sup>2</sup>

The Wheatbelt is the second most non-metropolitan region visited in WA

## Largest producer of alternative energy

Currently producing over 300MW of wind energy, the Wheatbelt generates **over 50%** of the State's renewable energy from wind farms.

<sup>1</sup>Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development 2018, Western Australia Gross Regional Product

<sup>2</sup>Wheatbelt Development Commission 2017, Growing Wheatbelt Tourism 2017 – 2020

# WHEATBELT FAST FACTS



## OUR PEOPLE



**Home to over 74,000 people**  
WA's third most populated region

Sub-regional populations<sup>3</sup>:

SUB REGION	POPULATION	% OF WHEATBELT
Avon	26,700	36%
Central Coast	14,000	19%
Central East	9,600	13%
Central Midlands	6,200	8%
Wheatbelt South	18,000	24%

**\$666**  
per week

Wheatbelt total personal median  
income (WA's: \$724 per week<sup>4</sup>)



## 10 year growth rates (2006 – 2016)<sup>4</sup>:

- Wheatbelt = 8.1%
- Avon = 10.7%
- Central Coast = 29.7%
- Central East = -2.3%
- Central Midlands = 0.5%
- Wheatbelt South = -0.3%



**Unemployment Rate: 2016/17**  
6.1%, increasing from 3.6% in  
2014/15

**Labour Force Participation Rate:**  
56.7% lower than WA's of 62.9%<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017, Estimated Resident Population

<sup>4</sup>Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017, Census of Population and Housing 2016



# WHEATBELT FAST FACTS



## OUR COMMUNITIES



### 29.4% Volunteering Rate

Compared to WA state average of 19.0%<sup>4</sup>



**Wheatbelt ATSI  
Population:**  
4.5% (WA 3.1%<sup>4</sup>)



**Golden Oldies**  
20% of the  
Wheatbelt's  
population is over  
the age of 65



Multiple liveability  
options across  
**200 communities**



**14.2%**  
increase in  
Wheatbelt  
high school  
enrolments

at an AAGR of 3.5%  
from 2014 – 2018





Rebecca Tomkinson - Chair

Strong regional communities are a great asset to all of Western Australia. Regional development is at its best when we come together with a clear and shared agenda, and strong collaborative partnerships.

Previous planning involving extensive stakeholder engagement by the Wheatbelt Development Commission has greatly contributed to our shared priorities. Strengthening and building strong partnerships across local government, private, public and community sectors has seen us deliver for regional WA.

The Board and Staff of the Commission have focussed our efforts on those initiatives that have the greatest potential to:

- grow and diversify the economy;
- attract private investment;
- grow jobs and employment opportunities;
- grow the population, particularly workforce aged people;
- enhance liveability; and
- drive collaboration and innovation.

Across the Region we are reaping the benefits of these collaborative efforts, seeing private and public investment in land development (residential and industrial), industry expansion, key transport and digital infrastructure and social infrastructure, particularly that which enables our seniors to age in their communities close to family and support systems. The Commission has been directly involved in co-designing and delivering more than 25 priority initiatives during this reporting period.

The Wheatbelt is one of the best-kept secrets in WA. Peri-urban growth presents significant jobs growth opportunity, as does the growth of the intensive agriculture and population services sectors. The Wheatbelt's transport network, alternative energy sector, proximity to Perth and multiple liveability and investment options are existing assets that will continue to support this growth.

The Commission has taken great pride in collaborating in amalgamating at a regional level with the new Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. Both physical office relocation and joint projects using shared expertise of staff have driven many of the achievements outlined in this report.

I would like to sincerely thank the Board and Staff of the Commission for their ongoing commitment to the Region. I would like to specifically acknowledge outgoing Board members Tim Shackleton (Chair), Karin Day (Deputy Chair), Carmel Ross, Val Ammon and Graham Cooper. Tim's considerable contribution also included leadership within the broader Regional Development portfolio.

From across the Region and with diverse interests, each Board member, past and present, brings to the Board great commitment to make the Wheatbelt the preferred place to live, work, invest and visit.

We will be working hard to continue to build awareness of the significant attributes of the Wheatbelt as a vibrant hub of regional development opportunities.





Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC

Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade

### Enabling Legislation

The Wheatbelt Development Commission, a Western Australian Statutory Authority was established in 1993 under the Regional Development Commissions Act 1993. It is one of nine Commissions governed by the same legislation.

### Objects and Functions

Under the Regional Development Commission Act 1993, the objects and functions of the Commission are to:

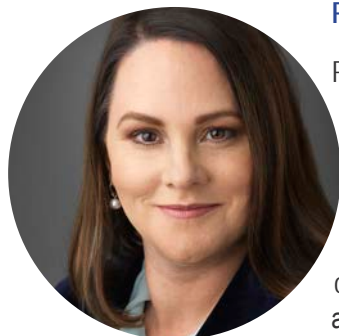
- maximise job creation and improve career opportunities in the Region;
- develop and broaden the economic base of the Region;
- identify infrastructure services to promote business development within the Region;
- provide information and advice to promote business development within the Region;
- seek to ensure that the general standard of government services and access to those services in the Region is comparable to that which applies in the metropolitan area; and
- generally take steps to encourage, promote, facilitate and monitor the economic development of the Region.

For the purpose of achieving these objectives, the Commission is to:

- promote the Region;
- facilitate co-ordination between relevant statutory bodies and state government agencies;
- co-operate with representatives of industry and commerce, employer and employee organisations, education and training institutions and other sections of the community within the Region;
- identify opportunities for investment in the Region and encourage that investment;
- identify infrastructure needs of the Region and encourage the provision of that infrastructure in the Region; and
- co-operate with departments of the Public Service of the State and the Commonwealth and other agencies, instrumentalities and statutory bodies of the State and Commonwealth and local government authorities, in order to promote equitable delivery of services within the Region.

## OUR BOARD

As of the 30th June 2018, the Wheatbelt Development Commission Board consists of seven members: two local government, two community, two ministerial representatives and the CEO as an Ex-officio. Members come from diverse backgrounds and locations.



**Rebecca Tomkinson – Chair - June 2020**

Rebecca brings a highly strategic and broad sector lens to her role as Chair. Rebecca's professional experience includes government relations, strategic policy development, social advocacy and stakeholder engagement. She has extensive experience in the delivery of transformative organisational and community development initiatives across private, public and not-for-profit sectors.



**David Lantzke – Deputy Chair - June 2019**

David Lantzke is the CEO of the Ardross Group and has been intricately involved in land and property development in Jurien Bay, Bunbury, Manjimup and Albany over many years. David has been the Secretary and/or Treasurer of the Jurien Bay Chamber of Commerce since 2010 and is Chair of the Turquoise Coast Chambers Alliance. He has been Secretary of the Indian Ocean Festival organising committee for 6 years, a member of the Regional Chambers of Commerce Executive for 2 years and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



**Karin Day – Deputy Chair - 2012 - 2017**

Karin is currently the Westonia Shire President. Her background is in agriculture and regional development and she is a Board member of the Agricultural Women – Wheatbelt East (AWWE Inc). Karin is involved in many sporting and community groups.



**Graham Cooper – Board Member - June 2018**

Graham currently operates Farmways in Cunderdin and Dowerin as a joint venture partnership with Elders Rural Services. Graham has served as a Councillor with the Cunderdin Shire including six years as Shire President and held varied community positions. He is former Chair of Regional Development Australia Wheatbelt.



**Carmel Ross – Board Member - Oct 2017**

Carmel is a psychologist by profession and has many years of management experience mostly in education, tourism and community organisations. Carmel runs an organisational consulting business and is a former CEO of New Norcia. She is Chair of the Heartlands WA Board and Secretary of the Bindoon Farmers Market Committee.



**Heidi Cowcher – Board Member - June 2018**

Heidi has predominantly worked in local government for the last 20 years, with a short stint in State government. Heidi has a passion for regional economic development, with a particular interest in the sustainability of small, regional local governments and how they can adapt to a changing environment and make them more effective and efficient. Heidi currently lives and works in Williams.





**Valerie Ammon – Board Member - Nov 2017**

Val was former Councillor with the Shire of Gingin and has experience as a small business owner. With a background as a qualified psychologist, she has extensive experience in the areas of mental health and drug and alcohol abuse.



**Julie Flockart – Board Member - June 2020**

Julie has an agricultural, community and small business development background and has been actively involved in a range of small businesses in the retail and hospitality industries.



**Leslee Holmes – Board Member - June 2020**

Leslee is Shire President of Dandaragan and is a member of the Joint Chambers Alliance Cervantes/Jurien Bay as Tourism Leader. Leslee has held leadership roles at a State level, and received the Margaret Court Award for Outstanding Service to Tennis in Western Australia. Leslee has a particular interest in small business development, tourism and marketing.



**Wendy Newman – Chief Executive Officer (Ex Officio)**

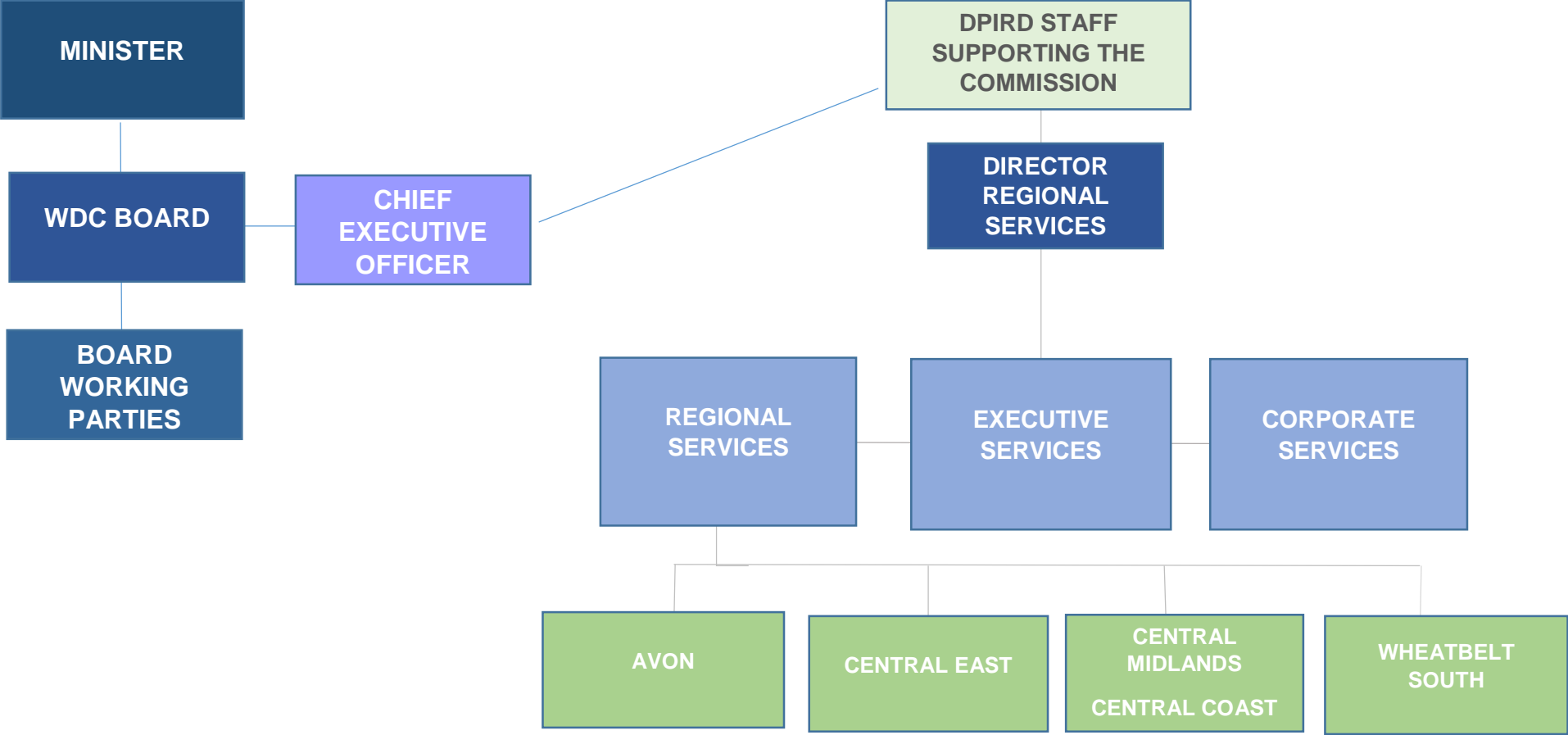
Wendy is the Chief Executive Officer of the Commission, and brings to the position a range of professional experiences across the areas of education, organisational development, human resource management, marketing and regional development. Wendy has been a member of numerous boards and advisory bodies for government and not for profit sector at a national, state and local level.



**Ross Ainsworth – Board Member - June 2019**

Ross Ainsworth has a background in Agriculture and lives in York. He was the Chair of the Farmer's Federation Grains Council and held the Seat of Roe for the Nationals WA. He served on the Parliamentary Standing Committee for Health and Education for 16 years and chaired the Select Committee on Road Safety. His interests include regional development, education and training, health and tourism.

# ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE





# PARTNERING TO DELIVER RESULTS

## STRUCTURE AND STAFF

To meet the needs of a highly dispersed Region, the Commission delivers its services through offices located in Northam, Moora, Merredin and Narrogin. The following units exist to deliver the Commission's priorities.

**Regional Services** – This unit facilitates development in and across five sub-regions – Avon, Central Coast, Central Midlands, Central East and Wheatbelt South. As well as local stakeholder engagement and geographically relevant development, this unit has responsibilities for the full range of portfolio areas, including key infrastructure (land, power, water, sewerage and telecommunications), economic development and service delivery reform (health, aged care, education).

**Corporate Services Unit** – This unit provides financial, human resources, purchasing and information technology services to the Board and staff.

**Executive Services Unit** – Developed to provide executive support to the Board, CEO and other organisational units, this unit undertakes Board and stakeholder liaison and marketing and provides support to the Avon Industrial Park Advisory Board.



Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC, Minister for Regional Development meeting with members of the Northern Growth Alliance.

# PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

## Who We Are

The Wheatbelt Development Commission is a statutory authority of the WA Government. Its Objects and Functions are outlined in Section 23 of the Regional Development Act 1993.

## What We Do

The Wheatbelt Development Commission creates strategic partnerships to deliver jobs and maximise leverage and impact from private and government investment.

Job growth occurs in the Region because we partner with industry to solve problems so that they can invest and grow.

Budget repair occurs and cost effective services are delivered by government because we:

- Partner with agencies to design, prioritise and deliver infrastructure and integrated services that meet the needs of the Region;
- Leverage non-government and government investment for maximum regional benefit; and
- Collaborate cross-regionally to deliver state-wide solutions.

## Our Capacity

- Regional knowledge, networks and innovation
  - Using this knowledge to promote opportunities to invest, live, work and visit
- Collaboration and integration from effective partnerships
  - Using these partnerships to drive evidence led decisions, prioritisation and alignment of action
- Program, strategy and project management
  - Using this discipline to build capacity, leverage and impact
  - Aligning resources to strategic priorities and outcome delivery

## Delivering on Government Priorities

In fulfilling its Statutory Objectives and Functions, the Commission is committed to a 'whole of government' approach to regional development to enhance its contribution towards meeting the Government's goals:

- Sustainable Finances: Responsible financial management and better service delivery;
- Future Jobs and Skills: Grow and diversify the economy, create jobs and support skills development;
- Strong Communities: Safe communities and support families; and
- Better Places: A quality environment with liveable and affordable communities and vibrant regions.

The State Government has committed to a number of initiatives that will deliver on these priorities and those programs where the Commission is involved include:

- The Regional New Industries Fund, comprising of two allocations, a Regional Stream and a State Network stream. Totalling \$4.5 million over four years. The Fund aims to build regional economies that are entrepreneurial, creative and technology driven to create sustainable job opportunities for regional people.
- A DPIRD Local Content Officer (LCO) is located in the Commission to take a lead role in maximising local content opportunities, including goods, services and jobs, for State Government funded projects. The LCO will also support local businesses to focus on local content to create job opportunities in regional WA.

To deliver these State and Regional priorities, the Commission uses analysis of the Region's comparative advantages and global opportunity to focus on activities that will maximise economic and social impact from private and public investment.



The Commission has been focused on delivering initiatives identified through independent economic analysis and prioritised by the Board according to their ability to deliver:

- Jobs and economic growth;
- Private Investment;
- Population Attraction (workforce);
- Vibrant Communities (cross community solutions); and
- Innovative solutions.

## Maximising Wheatbelt Opportunity

In this reporting period, the Commission has focused on delivering the following outcomes:

Strategic Partnerships to drive delivery of priorities through:

- Regional intelligence, facilitating information sharing and advocacy;
- Collaboration and innovation across diverse stakeholder groups including local government alliances, industry sectors and government agencies.

Industry Development:

- Developing job intensive emerging industry - intensive agriculture/processing (horticulture, aquaculture, livestock), tourism and personal services industries (aged care, education, childcare); and
- Driving local business and jobs growth through maximising Local Content and Aboriginal enterprise development.

Economic Infrastructure:

- Land Assembly that attracts new business/industry in areas of growth and includes innovative power and water solutions;
- Building digital capacity; and
- Strategic Freight Networks.

Service Reform:

- Maximising impact of DPIRD integration and Commission capability; and
- Service model reform in aged care and education.

Regional Promotion:

- Targeted promotion of investment and development opportunities (industry sectors, geographic 'hot spots').

## Monitoring and Delivery Outcomes through the Business Planning Process

The mechanism for setting and monitoring outcome targets and the initiatives that will best deliver them is through the annual development of the Wheatbelt Development Commission Business Plan.

The Business Plan is reviewed and endorsed by the Board annually.

# Wheatbelt Sub-Regional Economic Opportunities

## Central Coast

Aquaculture, Horticulture & Food Processing  
Renewable Energy  
Retirement & Lifestyle  
Mining, Construction & Light Industry  
Tourism

## Avon

Broadacre Agriculture  
Transport & Industry  
Retail & Lifestyle  
Health & Aged Care  
Tourism

## Central East

Agricultural Production  
Mining Support Services  
Population Services

## Central Midlands

Agriculture, Horticulture & Food Processing  
Peri-Urban & Rural Land  
Health & Ageing  
Mining, Manufacturing & Support  
Tourism

## Wheatbelt South

Agriculture, Livestock & Food Supply Chains  
Lifestyle Amenity & Retirement  
Health & Education  
Tourism





# COMMISSION ACHIEVEMENTS

*The Commission's goal is to develop a diversified and adaptive economic base that is built on the Region's assets and is aligned with state, national and international opportunity.*

Throughout the 2017-18 financial year, the Wheatbelt Development Commission has focused its effort on two outcomes: jobs growth and service reform. The Commission has continued to develop strategic partnerships to deliver jobs and maximise leverage and impact from private and government investment. Our partnerships with industry have resolved a number of issues so that they can continue to invest and grow.

The Commission has also expended considerable effort on addressing the government priority of budget repair. We have done this by:

- facilitating the effective amalgamation of Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) activity across the Wheatbelt region;
- collaborating on cross regional initiatives; and
- partnering with agencies to design, prioritise and deliver infrastructure and integrated services that meet the needs of the Region.

A diverse range of activity has resulted in the following achievements during this reporting period:

## **Outcome 1: Jobs Growth**

### **Goal: Grow and diversify the economy and jobs in areas of strength**

*Initiative: Business and Industry Development - Diversify and add value along the supply chain in areas (geography/sectors) that are job intensive*

Northern Growth Alliance - The Northern Growth Alliance (NGA) is a collaboration between the Wheatbelt Development Commission and the Shires of Chittering, Dandaragan and Gingin. Initiated by the Commission, the Alliance aims to facilitate the development phase of Perth's peri-urban northern growth corridor including industry investment and job creation. Collaboration with the private sector and key agencies aims to deliver a 'joined up' approach to maximise growth opportunities. To achieve this, the current priority initiatives of the Alliance include:

- Sub regional precinct planning to identify key economic activity zones;
- Emerging industry development in high job-creating areas of strength including intensive agriculture, aged care and tourism;
- Development of the agri-precinct mapping tool and precinct identification. This tool has been developed as part of the agri-processing precinct identification. Numerous sites within the high growth NGA area have been identified as suitable for the development of higher value and job intensive agricultural industries. The mapping tool and its process will continue to be utilised in partnership with industry to further develop and diversify the Region's economy through precinct identification. This will help to inform statutory land use planning and economic development and is capable of being scaled up for use across the whole Wheatbelt and potentially the State;
- Partnering with emerging businesses (eg Wide Open Agriculture, AgriStart) to help develop their ideas and aid industry in leveraging Government resources and expertise to grow. Two examples of such partnerships include ongoing collaboration with AgriStart to connect innovators (including digital innovators) with primary producers and with Wide Open Agriculture to aid in their site selection to maximise investment potential.
- Advocating for key economic infrastructure to enhance production, processing and access to markets, transport, water, energy and telecommunications;

- Advocating for service design that attracts and retains the workforce capability required;
- Partnering with the City of Wanneroo on a range of initiatives, including the North of Perth Food Zone, economic infrastructure and growing the digital economy;
- Partnering with the University sector to explore and deliver innovative water and energy solutions at enterprise level.

Tourism Industry Development – As the second most visited region after the South West, welcoming over 700,000 visitors annually, the Commission has focused efforts on better understanding both current and potential tourism activity and economic value. During this reporting period, the Commission put out for public consultation a Draft Wheatbelt Tourism Strategy. The Strategy focuses on an analysis of the considerable assets and tourism activity that occurs as a result of these assets and proposes an implementation plan to increase visitor spend through a targeted product development and marketing process. In addition to this strategic work, the Commission has assisted individual proponents to shape initiatives to deliver on the intent of the Strategy. These include projects that will build product and marketing capability in the areas of Aboriginal and Astro tourism.

Small Business Development – The Commission initiated a Small Business Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Wheatbelt Business Network (WBN), Heartlands WA and RDA Wheatbelt. The aim of the MOU is to ensure alignment of effort creates maximum benefit for the Region's 10,000 small businesses. In addition, the Commission supported Heartlands WA to complete the Wheatbelt Business Database and grow it to capture information on over 2,000 businesses. This information has been used to connect business to achieve collaborative contracting outcomes and promote the diverse range of business activity across the Region. The business database will continue to be developed to enhance the impact of initiatives such as the New Industry Fund and the Local Content Program.



*Initiative: Local Content – Build capacity of businesses and match capability to public and private investment activity*

WA Jobs Act – Local Content Advisor - As part of the broader WA Jobs Act implementation, the Commission has, in partnership with DPIRD initiated a dedicated Local Content Advisor role. This role will develop, promote and maximise opportunities for local suppliers, contractors and jobseekers in the Wheatbelt. It will connect to relevant government, industry, businesses, Aboriginal Corporations, employment and training stakeholders. During the reporting period, the Commission has established networks and information flows with regional organisations to promote the WA Jobs Act 2017 and the associated local content initiatives. During the course of normal activity Commission, staff have:

- Engaged with the Wheatbelt Business Network (WBN) and CCIs as contract and supply opportunities have arisen;
- Liaised with State government procurement officers who are based in the Region;
- Promoted regional tender opportunities through Heartlands WA, WBN and Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) networks; and
- Worked with head contractors to provide opportunities for them to engage with local suppliers.

*Initiative: Innovation – Drive innovation in the Wheatbelt to support job creation, economic growth and community vibrancy.*

The Commission continues to recognise innovation as a key enabler for economic and social development. In all areas of our operations including policy advice, project development and proponent support, we encourage innovative thinking to challenge the status quo to deliver positive outcomes for the Region.

Regional New Industries Fund - On 1 May 2018, the Wheatbelt Innovation Partnership was initiated at the New Industries Fund Roadshow in Northam. As a result of this workshop, and from the issues identified by participants, a draft Wheatbelt Innovation Roadmap was developed and endorsed by the Wheatbelt Development Commission Board at its June meeting. It is anticipated that a Wheatbelt Regional New Industries Fund grant round will be called in the next reporting period to facilitate the implementation of identified priority initiatives. Parallel to this process, the Commission has worked with a number of projects leads interested in contributing to delivering key initiatives outlined in the Roadmap. These include cross regional efforts to:

- Develop a digital platform to facilitate regional innovation networks and connect to global innovation activity;
- Drive new sector development in the areas of intensive agriculture and tourism; and
- Support Aboriginal Enterprise development.

*Initiative: Aboriginal Enterprise - Improve participation and outcomes for Aboriginal residents from existing programs*

Aboriginal Enterprise Audit – During this reporting period, the Commission developed a comprehensive database of initiatives that were supporting Aboriginal Enterprise Development. This has assisted in identifying initiatives across the Wheatbelt that are in both developmental and operational phases. This database has assisted RDA Wheatbelt as they initiate their Noongar Enterprise Development Support Project.

Noongar Enterprise Development Support Project – RDA Wheatbelt has been successful in securing Federal funding for two years to develop this project which is comprised of two key elements:



- Enterprise Development Officers  
Two Noongar Enterprise Support Field Officers (in Northam and Moora, and servicing 82% of the Wheatbelt's Aboriginal population) will support social enterprise, Aboriginal small business and provide a mechanism for the delivery of other funded programs into the Wheatbelt; and
- Noongar Enterprise Development Toolkit  
Existing Wheatbelt physical and cultural assets will be analysed to develop a culturally appropriate Governance handbook and an entrepreneurial film resource to showcase Aboriginal enterprises.

In its more mature phase, it is hoped that project ownership will be transferred to a collaboration between the four Noongar Regional Corporations overlapping the Wheatbelt as they become established and operational under the South West Native Title Settlement process. The Commission continues to collaborate with RDA Wheatbelt to maximise opportunities from State and Federal programs to drive sustainable business enterprises.

Moora Speedway Art Project – Central Midlands Speedway received Wheatbelt Regional Grant Scheme funding of \$150,000 for the construction of purpose-built clubrooms to replace the existing clubrooms and for the establishment of an Aboriginal art installation, led by the Yuat people. This initiative was intended to provide a sense of ownership and belonging to the traditional owners of the land, in and around Moora. The \$13,000 art project has led to significant benefits beyond this initial piece of art, including:

- Intergenerational engagement of local Elders and community members to tell and capture stories;
- Strong commitment to develop a second piece of art involving students at Central Midlands Senior High School; and

- A commitment from the community to use the success of this project to drive broader engagement in a range of initiatives to promote culture and enterprise for the Yuat community across the Central Coast and Central Midlands Sub-regions of the Wheatbelt.

#### Directions Workforce Solutions Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre –

As a direct result of a 2013-14 Wheatbelt Regional Grant Scheme project, Directions Workforce Solutions have developed the highly successful Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre (AWDC). Aboriginal Workforce Development Centres assist Aboriginal people in Western Australia to get into training, find employment, and further their career. They also support WA employers to make their workplaces and employment practices more culturally sensitive and welcoming to Aboriginal people. This success has translated to finding ongoing employment for 51 Aboriginal people and connecting a further 23 to study opportunities. The Commission is committed to ongoing support to Directions Workforce Solutions through CEO involvement on their Board.

Bilya Koort Boodja Centre for Nyoongar Culture and Environmental Knowledge (Northam). The Shire of Northam, as recipient of \$300,000 from the Wheatbelt Regional Grant Scheme in 2016 and with additional support from Federal funding and Lotterywest, has successfully completed construction of the Aboriginal and Environmental Interpretive Centre (AEIC). Named 'Bilya Koort Boodja' in the Nyoongar language, its meaning translates to River Heart Lands in English. Inside, an interactive educational experience recognises important regional Aboriginal heritage and showcases the Ballardong Nyoongar culture. The Centre combines Aboriginal knowledge and heritage with environmental and conservation programs to develop approaches to land management that incorporate traditional principles. The Centre is a multi-purpose, multi-user design, including workshop, exhibition, retail and office space.



Boyagin Rock Day Use Area – the Seabrook Aboriginal Corporation is using \$47,640 from the 2016 Regional Grant Scheme to develop the Boyagin Rock Day Use Area to promote cultural and tourism activity. WDC effort during this reporting period has focused on clarifying land access issues and developing an MOU to define partnership responsibilities between project partners The Pingelly Tourism Group Inc., Boyagin Rock Working Group (BRWG), Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions Western Australia (DBCA), and Seabrook Aboriginal Corporation (Seabrook).

**Goal: Maximise impact of public and private investment**

*Initiative: Economic Infrastructure - Prioritise investment that maximises private investment leverage, impact and jobs growth*

Strategic Transport Infrastructure – The Commission has supported two key activities to drive understanding and prioritisation of Wheatbelt strategic transport solutions. Revitalising Agricultural Region Freight (RARF) is a joint DPIRD and Department of Transport project. In April 2018, WDC became members of the RARF working party. WDC has sourced input from a range of stakeholders to ensure Wheatbelt road-planning initiatives are understood and are part of broader network considerations. WDC has provided the RARF with information on the Wheatbelt Secondary Freight network, the Wheatbelt Strategic Lime Route project as well as other Wheatbelt strategic freight priorities.

The Commission also continues to support the excellent work of the Wheatbelt Secondary Freight Routes Working Party. This is a collaboration between the North and South Wheatbelt Road Groups (comprised of all 42 Wheatbelt Local Governments) that seeks to plan and prioritise the secondary freight task across the Region. This prioritisation is done in the context of the relationship between secondary freight routes and federal and state road, rail and port infrastructure. The WDC is a member of the WSFR

Steering Committee, requiring us to continually raise the profile of the project and its intended outcomes with the Department of Transport, Main Roads WA, DPIRD and RDA Wheatbelt.

During this reporting period, the Commission also facilitated a number of key transport outcomes, including the site selection of the York bypass, partnering with Main Roads WA and the Shire of York. Due to the success of this process, Main Roads WA will continue to adopt the methodology designed with the Commission for other community engagement processes.

Maximising Opportunity from NorthLink Investment – The Commission has been working regionally to best capitalise on the NorthLink WA investment. Particularly as it related to the development of the Muchea Industrial Park. The Project better links the fast-growing region North of Perth to the Metropolitan region and the State heavy haulage network. It improves access to labour markets in northern suburbs of Perth such as Wanneroo and Ellenbrook. Through better access to Perth markets, Perth International Airport, and Kwinana and Fremantle Ports, the project greatly decreases the distance and time it takes to access the domestic market and export opportunities. Upgrades to Tonkin Highway link into this project, creating a direct heavy haulage network to the southwest of the State and Peel region, with Tonkin Highway planned to continue through to Pinjarra. The Commission is working with regional LGAs, including the Northern Grown Alliance, to ensure that awareness of the benefits of the project are disseminated throughout the Region and that opportunities are maximised.

Linking Wanneroo Industrial Area to Muchea – The intent to link Neerabup Industrial Area to Muchea has led to a range of partnerships and collaboration across both regional and metropolitan areas to maximise the benefits of the high growth north of Perth to the State and the City of Wanneroo. With no east-west heavy vehicle links to the emerging Neerabup Industrial Area, the City of Wanneroo finds itself in a sense, 'landlocked'. The industrial park is a

strategic priority for both the City of Wanneroo and the State. Linking this site with Muchea and the NorthLink project is a vital aspect of the project. As part of linking Neerabup with Muchea and the State Heavy Haulage Network, Neaves Road has been identified as the best transport route to be upgraded. Though there is currently no funding allocated for the upgrade, it is in Main Roads WA plans to eventually upgrade Neaves Road to a RAV7 heavy haulage route. The Commission supports the upgrade of Neaves Road to improve linkages between Muchea and other industrial hubs and complimentary precincts.

Wheatbelt Water Solutions – The WDC has a goal to minimise growth of water use from the integrated water system and reduce the reliance on extensive and ageing network infrastructure. The Commission continues to seek innovative ways to manage water including re-use, identifying alternative water sources and potential off grid and end of grid solutions. Strong partnerships with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Water Corporation and the University sector drive this innovative practice. The Commission has built a strong relationship with the Water Engineering and Technology section of Murdoch University. This has resulted in, through partnership with the Department of Water and Regulation, an inventory of potential non-pipeline water sources throughout the Wheatbelt including town dams. Work is progressing on a pilot micro water processing plant that will suit Wheatbelt farms. It is hoped that this pilot will be running in the new financial year to allow data analysis and fine-tuning for on farm applications. By developing technological improvements, more non-pipeline water should be available in the Wheatbelt Region through water processing.



Wheatbelt Land Assembly – During this reporting period, the Commission, in partnership with LandCorp, has completed surveys of Central Midlands, Central Coast, Wheatbelt South and Central East local governments to ‘map and gap’ light industrial land availability. This follows the completion of the Avon Land Assembly Project that resulted in a business case in 2016 for land development in priority locations. A lack of serviced land is an inhibitor to development across the Wheatbelt. Utility development costs for individual proponents result in market failure for significant areas of the Region. Follow up interviews with local government have occurred and Heartlands WA has been engaged to compile findings into a report that will assist in the prioritisation of land assembly to ensure investment that best drives economic growth and diversity. This process has also been invaluable in better understanding the scope of water, power and telecommunications availability and capacity hot spots.

Well-Aged Housing – During the reporting period, the Commission supported the submission of 5 business cases to the Regional Aged Accommodation Fund. The Avon Regional Organisation of Councils (AROC) and Wheatbelt South were successful in receiving funds to submit a revised application for Regional Aged Accommodation Program (RAAP) funding, inclusive of a more robust options assessment for the project. \$7.64 million has been set aside for future considerations of these proposals. In early 2018, five Shires in the Wheatbelt South completed the 4WD Lakes Well-aged Housing Project with the construction of independent living units across the Shires. This dedicated aged accommodation will create growth and job opportunities, including encouraging substantial spend on goods and services in local communities. The Commission continues to support the Central East Aged Care Alliance (CEACA) as they implement Stage Two of their Well-Aged Housing Project, having successfully secured \$14,986,439 Royalties for Regions (RfR) funding in this reporting period.

Digital Connectivity – 73 towers have been delivered to the Wheatbelt over the period 2013-2018. These have been funded through the Federal Mobile Black Spot Programs (rounds 1 and 2) and the State funded Regional Telecommunications Project and Regional Mobile Communications Program.

The Commission has ensured the use of a regionally relevant methodology of qualitative and quantitative analysis in a collaborative site identification and prioritisation process. Ongoing review of our prioritisation database, liaison with local government and industry and ongoing advocacy for priority investment in the Wheatbelt region has delivered sound investment in this critical infrastructure.

Innovation Central Midlands Inc - a peak body for the Sub-region, has completed a feasibility study on providing fibre to the Wheatbelt region. Strong partnerships with Arc Infrastructure and CBH allowed for the exploration of possibilities. Extensive research and study has been undertaken to map and cost requirements. As of 30th June 2018, additional investment into the proposed WA SuperNet is being sought. The Commission continues to advocate for increased regional communications infrastructure and recognises the fundamental role fibre plays in the future as a backbone to other ICT technologies.

North Eastern Wheatbelt Regional Organisation of Councils (NEWROC) Telecommunications Project - The Wheatbelt region has experienced increasing interest for better provision of broadband services to couple with the increased mobile service provided via State and Federal funding over recent years. In April 2018, NEWROC Telecommunications Network launched a Wheatbelt based self-sustaining network that provides faster internet speeds and unlimited download capacity to the Wheatbelt residents and businesses across six NEWROC shires in the north-east of the Wheatbelt and the Shire of Merredin.

This Wheatbelt solution caters to an estimated population of 2,500, in a region dominated by agricultural economic activity, specifically broadacre cropping. Crisp Wireless, a Narrogin based organisation, won a competitive tender to provide fixed wireless infrastructure delivering point-to-point broadband data communication. 'Opt in' internet packages offering high speed internet plans are maximising benefits to residents, families and businesses in the NEWROC Shires. Stage 1, estimated at a cost of \$1 Million, received a Federal Government contribution of \$700,000 from the Building Better Regions Fund.

*Initiative: Promoting Wheatbelt Opportunities - The Wheatbelt value proposition is clear to public and private investors and families wishing to live, work and visit*

Targeted Marketing - Not for profit marketing organisation, Heartlands WA assisted the Commission to produce its monthly e-newsletter, emailed to over 550 subscribers including various media outlets with an open rate of 38%, well above industry averages. Heartlands WA also coordinates social media Tweets to over 600 followers, a 100% increase from 300 followers last year.

Wheatbelt Winners/Achievements - are featured in the e-newsletter, recognising individuals, community groups and businesses for outstanding achievements including award winning, fundraising, medal honours and innovation.

Faces of the Wheatbelt Campaign - Throughout the reporting period, the Commission implemented the Faces of the Wheatbelt Campaign. Proudly funded by the Avon Community Development Foundation and the Wheatbelt Development Commission, the Faces of the Wheatbelt project was dedicated to highlighting individuals, businesses, organisations, and communities that are achieving growth through innovation. A \$7,500 grant was allocated to

Heartlands WA Inc for this Project. Each monthly story was promoted through social media and targeted towards radio and print media in order to gain further exposure.

Governor's Visit – The Governor of Western Australia, Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson AC visited the Wheatbelt on March 8 and 9, 2018. As Her Excellency's first regional visit was to the Wheatbelt, it was fitting it was her last before she stood down from her role. A busy two days saw Her Excellency visit the Quairading Women in Business Forum, the Hyden Vietnam 'Vets' Volunteer Initiative, Camp Kulin, Cambinata Yabbies and Mary's Farm Cottages in Kukerin, the Narrogin Cottage Homes and Well Aged Housing Units in Williams.

Minister's Visits – Minister for Regional Development Hon Alannah MacTiernan officially opened the \$11.5m Northam Grains Research Facility at the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, the Northam Boulevard Shopping Centre redevelopment, visited the Senior High School and learned about other private and public investment in Northam during her visit on 2 May.

This engagement continued at the Meet the Minister forum, where 120 people from across the Region heard first hand from Minister MacTiernan about the McGowan Government's priorities for regional WA around jobs growth and budget repair. The Minister addressed a range of issues, including current priority initiatives to grow the agriculture industry, drive digital capability and innovation and support new industry development.



The Minister also visited Moora on 15 June for a full program including meeting with the Shire of Moora to discuss economic opportunities and initiatives; a tour of the Central Midlands Residential College; meeting apprentices at AFGRI Equipment; and visiting the new club facilities at Central Midlands Speedway. The community engagement continued at the Moora Chamber of Commerce and Industry sundowner where Minister MacTiernan spoke to over 50 attendees about the economic opportunities in Moora followed by an open question and answer session.

## **Outcome 2: Service Reform**

### **Goal: Maximise impact from DPIRD integration**

*Initiative: DPIRD Integration*

Co-location of WDC and DPIRD Regional Offices - The WDC has co-located at all sites in the Wheatbelt, being Moora, Northam, Narrogin and Merredin. WDC staff attend regional business development meetings and meet regularly with senior staff from the Region. Anita Swift provides secretarial services to both Pamela l'Anson from the ex-Agriculture part of the Department and Wendy Newman, CEO of the WDC. Other staff from the Region have provided primary industry knowledge and assisted with economic mapping for WDC projects. Work will continue on maximising the benefits of the combined skill sets of DPIRD and the WDC.

Cross Regional Collaboration - The Commission collaborates with the State's other Regional Development Commissions and other agencies across regional boundaries to minimise duplication and maximise the impact of our activity. In recognition of the peri-urban nature of the regions, the WDC has a close working relationship with the Peel Development Commission. Key areas of collaboration during this reporting period have been transport planning and intensive agricultural developments. The Commission is





working to develop a number of cross regional proposals for the Regional New Industries Fund. With a focus on entrepreneurial support and innovation and the emerging astro-tourism sector these proposals will deliver jobs and economic benefits to regional communities across the State. The Commission also supported the Gascoyne and Peel Development Commissions to engage the University of WA and Murdoch University to access additional research capabilities.

Resource Sharing – The Commission has taken the opportunity to utilise existing skill sets within the new DPIRD and this has been facilitated by the amalgamation. Skill sets, infrastructure and knowledge have been made all the more accessible through the integration and have helped to streamline processes of data collection, sharing and analysis. In particular, GIS mapping processes that can be expensive to outsource have been sourced from within DPIRD, utilising the skill sets of staff and the resources within the department (in this case, mainly data) to cost effectively develop tools and processes. Proactively engaging within the new department has been key to unlocking this potential.

Tammin Waste Site Identification Report - This Report will identify multiple areas outside the Inner Avon (Northam, York and Toodyay) that are on the Great Eastern Highway and the east-west rail line. These sites will have the potential for future development to handle excess waste from Perth, should the need arise. The mapping for this Project was almost completed during this fiscal year. The only remaining task is to communicate with landholders in the most prospective areas prior to releasing the final report. While this will not be a full site assessment, the identification report will highlight sites that meet broad criteria including distance from Perth and transport corridors. Detailed environmental planning and clearances will still be required.

**Goal: Facilitation, collaboration, innovation, good information, agreed priorities, leveraged investment and quality project management are used to maximise outcomes and impact**

*Initiative: Innovative Regional Service Models*

Graduate Program - The Commission continues to partner with the University of WA to identify the 'best and brightest' to offer work experience and employment opportunities. This program improves capacity in the Region, develops future leaders for the Public Sector and provides an ongoing supply of young professionals to the Wheatbelt. During the reporting period, the Commission has provided employment for six graduates. The quality of graduates has allowed the WDC to undertake some complex planning work that would not have been possible within internal resources. Ongoing funding and flexibility is imperative for this Program to continue.

Collaborative Consulting - Maximising opportunities within a dispersed population setting is key to the growth of the Wheatbelt. This requires the capacity of groups and individuals to collect and analyse information, allowing them to arrive at innovative models. Collaborative consulting is a methodology whereby the Commission only pays for the expertise that is required to deliver an outcome. Wherever possible, the expertise is sourced from the Region. External expertise is only used for those elements where there is no capacity in either the Commission or the Region, or if external, expert analysis and verification is required. In developing business cases, rather than 'outsourcing' the entirety of business case development, a disciplined project management methodology has been used to design a process, identify the expertise required for different elements (e.g. research, stakeholder engagement, technical costing and design) and write the business case. It is then determined which elements will be conducted within the Commission and which will be procured. The Commission 'buys in'

research and analysis, business case development coaching, and technical design.

Proponent Support - The Commission uses its networks and linkages with industry, government and not for profits organisations to support proponents to develop sound evidence-based project plans and business cases. We also assist proponents to manage and overcome challenges during the implementation of projects. Sometimes this can include a complex redesign of their ideas or it can be as simple as advice on how best to engage with Government. With tight budgets and growing pressure on agencies, businesses and communities to deliver in short time frames, the WDC is finding it needs to put more effort into strengthening the communication and collaboration between parties busily undertaking their individual pieces of work. This is imperative to ensure the best results are achieved with limited resources. Examples include the Secondary Freight Routes transport planning, strategic planning for agricultural lime, community consultation for the York Heavy Haulage By-pass, planning for future water management, planning for growth north of Perth and service delivery reform, especially aged care and education.

Strategic Partnerships - Much of the Commission's ability to deliver tangible outcomes for the Region links to its ability to advocate for change and influence decision makers both internally and external to the Region. The Commission works to establish strategic partnerships across geographic locations and portfolios to support its ability to advocate and influence. Key strategic partnerships for the Commission during this reporting period include UWA, City of Wanneroo, Murdoch University, Water Corporation, Wheatbelt Business Network, Heartlands WA, RDA Wheatbelt, Main Roads WA, LGAs, DPIRD and WA Country Health Service (WACHS).

Education Service Reform - Throughout 2017-18, the Commission has been in ongoing discussions with key stakeholders about future approaches to education in the Wheatbelt. Throughout this process, the need for tailored programs to encourage increased participation for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students has been identified as a priority. WDC will continue to stimulate debate about what technology enabled future education models might look like, particularly to improve education outcomes in dispersed population settings, where issues of workforce attraction and achieving economies of scale required new service models to be considered. The Commission will assist with a community consultation process for education services in the Moora area in the new financial year.

Health Service Reform – Across the Wheatbelt, ongoing investment from Royalties for Regions in both capital and digital health has seen considerable service delivery reform during this reporting period. The Commission has supported NEWROC to develop a cross-community health services plan. The Commission will continue to monitor the development of Primary Health Demonstration sites at Pingelly and Cunderdin in terms of the applicability of this model of service delivery in other areas of the Region. The Commission has also, through the draft Northern Growth Plan, proposed solutions to health service delivery to high growth areas north of Perth. Advocacy for health services across regional WA are supported through the Commission CEO's role as Deputy Chair of the WA Country Health Service Board.

Children's Services Reform - In early 2018, Royalties for Regions through the Regional Community Child Care Development Fund, combined with Lotterywest, provided joint funding of \$1.4 million to support the implementation of the Regional Early Education and Development Inc (REED) organisation to enable community-based centres to merge under a single banner. REED's nine-member board will continue to undertake a strong governance role to support the merger. A Narrogin based central management structure will relieve individual management committees from complex governance and legal responsibilities. Continued work in this direction will allow for ongoing provision of quality community services for the benefit of children, families and business. It will also provide a stronger, sustainable model for Wheatbelt childcare services to continue to deliver high-quality programs, which contribute to children's development in critical early years. The new model aims to provide sustainable Wheatbelt childcare services, which improves employment opportunities and economic prosperity while enhancing the economic and social fabric of communities of the Wheatbelt region. The Commission has played a support role in the ongoing development of childcare across the Wheatbelt region.







# GRANTS FUNDING

## Wheatbelt Regional Grants Scheme and Wheatbelt Community Chest Fund projects funded in 2017/18

Shire of Kondinin	Extensions to Kondinin Community Recreation Centre	\$185,000
Shire of Narembeen	Collocated Emergency Services Facility	\$250,000
The National Trust of Western Australia	Avondale Houses Conservation	\$200,000
The Liebe Group	Construction of Liebe Group Purpose Built Facility	\$200,000
Central Midlands Speedway Association	Central Midlands Speedway Association Clubrooms	\$150,000
Shire of Kellerberrin	Kellerberrin Speedway Facility Upgrade	\$100,000
Northam Districts Motor Cycle Club	Northam Districts Motorcycle Club Clubhouse Facility	\$93,581.12
Avon Valley Motor Museum Association	Acquisition of the York Motor Museum	\$200,000
Hotham Williams Economic Development Alliance	Marradong Country Self-Drive Trail	\$10,000
Wandering Boddington Clay Target Club	Wandering Boddington Clay Target Club Expansion	\$15,000
Brookton Old Time Motor Show	2018 Brookton Old Time Motor Show	\$10,000
Wongan Community Care Inc	Shed Up! More Space for a Growing Community Resource	\$10,000
Shire of Wickpin	Healthy Community Precinct	\$28,540.50
New Norcia Services	River Walk Upgrade & Implementation of an Indigenous Archaeological Artefact Display	\$50,000

St John Ambulance Bruce Rock	Fit-out of Quiet Room Extension to Existing Building	\$30,000
Shire of Pingelly	Dementia Friendly Sensory Space	\$30,000
St John Ambulance Wyalkatchem	Koorda Building Extension	\$50,000
Shire of Gingin (Northern Growth Alliance)	Northern Growth Alliance Sub Regional Tourism Strategy	\$21,400
Shire of Bruce Rock	Installation of New Playground at Caravan Park/Aquatic Centre Precinct	\$22,000
Upper Great Southern Hockey Association	Narrogin Hockey Stadium Kitchen Upgrade	\$50,000
Shire of York	York Motorcycle Festival	\$10,000
Shire of Beverley	Flying Through History	\$27,834
Shire of Merredin	Merredin Water Re-use Reticulation Upgrade	\$25,000
Shire of Yilgarn	Southern Cross Outdoor Fitness Centre	\$25,000
Shire of Lake Grace	Newdegate Active Precinct Skate Park & Playground	\$30,000
Artists' Revolution	Community Art Space Project	\$15,000
Shire of Toodyay	Anzac Park Redevelopment	\$50,000
Shire of Kulin	Camp Kulin Expansion Project	\$31,500

# GRANTS FUNDING

## Completed Projects

### Narrogin Cottage Homes

The health and aged care service industry will experience growth in the Region thanks to the opening of the Narrogin Cottage Homes (NCH), not only will older people remain closer to family and friends, but the economic and jobs benefit are significant, with an estimated \$3m per annum being generated in economic activity.

This upgrade to the Karinya Residential Aged Care Facility has seen the construction of:

- a new 14 bed dementia wing,
- 2 purpose built bariatric suites,
- a palliative care suite and
- a new family room (adjacent to the palliative suite).

In addition, the existing facilities were upgraded to meet current building standards including widening of doors and installation of a fire sprinkler system.

This new facility at Karinya, opened by the Hon Darren West, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Regional Development and Agriculture on 15 November 2017, expands existing facilities and services provided by NCH, which include 74 Independent Living Units. The new wing was named the "Maxwell Wing" in honor of the current Board Chair Rob Maxwell in recognition of his service of 37 years.

### Moora Speedway Clubroom Mural opening

An excited crowd of approximately 40 attended the celebration unveiling of the new Moora Speedway Clubroom Mural on 1 February 2018. The artwork features the Aboriginal constellation of the Emu in the Sky by Yuat artists Roberta Mippy and Debbie Nannup. The Mural was a vital part of the Central Midlands Speedway Clubroom project, supported by Wheatbelt Regional Grants Scheme 2017 funding of \$150,000. The project not only produced a stunning piece of artwork but also bought the community together. It has helped to create a strong sense of collaboration and pride in the town and wider community around Moora and celebrated the Aboriginal heritage of the speedway site.







## Auditor General

### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Parliament of Western Australia

### WHEATBELT DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

#### Report on the Financial Statements

##### *Opinion*

I have audited the financial statements of the Wheatbelt Development Commission which comprise the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2018, the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, and Notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In my opinion, the financial statements are based on proper accounts and present fairly, in all material respects, the operating results and cash flows of the Wheatbelt Development Commission for the year ended 30 June 2018 and the financial position at the end of that period. They are in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions.

##### *Basis for Opinion*

I conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report. I am independent of the Commission in accordance with the *Auditor General Act 2006* and the relevant ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

##### *Responsibility of the Board for the Financial Statements*

The Board is responsible for keeping proper accounts, and the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions, and for such internal control as the Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Board is responsible for assessing the agency's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Western Australian Government has made policy or funding decisions affecting the continued existence of the Commission.

##### *Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

As required by the *Auditor General Act 2006*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statements. The objectives of my audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial statements.



As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the agency's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Board.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Board's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the agency's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

I communicate with the Board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

## **Report on Controls**

### **Opinion**

I have undertaken a reasonable assurance engagement on the design and implementation of controls exercised by the Wheatbelt Development Commission. The controls exercised by the Commission are those policies and procedures established by the Board to ensure that the receipt, expenditure and investment of money, the acquisition and disposal of property, and the incurring of liabilities have been in accordance with legislative provisions (the overall control objectives).

My opinion has been formed on the basis of the matters outlined in this report.

In my opinion, in all material respects, the controls exercised by the Wheatbelt Development Commission are sufficiently adequate to provide reasonable assurance that the receipt, expenditure and investment of money, the acquisition and disposal of property and the incurring of liabilities have been in accordance with legislative provisions during the year ended 30 June 2018.

### **The Board's Responsibilities**

The Board is responsible for designing, implementing and maintaining controls to ensure that the receipt, expenditure and investment of money, the acquisition and disposal of property, and the incurring of liabilities are in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 2006*, the Treasurer's Instructions and other relevant written law.



### **Auditor General's Responsibilities**

As required by the *Auditor General Act 2006*, my responsibility as an assurance practitioner is to express an opinion on the suitability of the design of the controls to achieve the overall control objectives and the implementation of the controls as designed. I conducted my engagement in accordance with Standard on Assurance Engagements ASAE 3150 *Assurance Engagements on Controls* issued by the Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. That standard requires that I comply with relevant ethical requirements and plan and perform my procedures to obtain reasonable assurance about whether, in all material respects, the controls are suitably designed to achieve the overall control objectives and the controls, necessary to achieve the overall control objectives, were implemented as designed.

An assurance engagement to report on the design and implementation of controls involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the suitability of the design of controls to achieve the overall control objectives and the implementation of those controls. The procedures selected depend on my judgement, including the assessment of the risks that controls are not suitably designed or implemented as designed. My procedures included testing the implementation of those controls that I consider necessary to achieve the overall control objectives.

I believe that the evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

### **Limitations of Controls**

Because of the inherent limitations of any internal control structure it is possible that, even if the controls are suitably designed and implemented as designed, once the controls are in operation, the overall control objectives may not be achieved so that fraud, error, or noncompliance with laws and regulations may occur and not be detected. Any projection of the outcome of the evaluation of the suitability of the design of controls to future periods is subject to the risk that the controls may become unsuitable because of changes in conditions.

### **Report on the Key Performance Indicators**

#### **Opinion**

I have undertaken a reasonable assurance engagement on the key performance indicators of the Wheatbelt Development Commission for the year ended 30 June 2018. The key performance indicators are the key effectiveness indicators and the key efficiency indicators that provide performance information about achieving outcomes and delivering services.

In my opinion, in all material respects, the key performance indicators of the Wheatbelt Development Commission are relevant and appropriate to assist users to assess the Commission's performance and fairly represent indicated performance for the year ended 30 June 2018.

#### **The Board's Responsibility for the Key Performance Indicators**

The Board is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the key performance indicators in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 2006* and the Treasurer's Instructions and for such internal control as the Board determines necessary to enable the preparation of key performance indicators that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the key performance indicators, the Board is responsible for identifying key performance indicators that are relevant and appropriate having regard to their purpose in accordance with Treasurer's Instruction 904 *Key Performance Indicators*.

### **Auditor General's Responsibility**

As required by the *Auditor General Act 2006*, my responsibility as an assurance practitioner is to express an opinion on the key performance indicators. The objectives of my engagement are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the key performance indicators are relevant and appropriate to assist users to assess the agency's performance and whether the key performance indicators are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion.



I conducted my engagement in accordance with Standard on Assurance Engagements ASAE 3000 *Assurance Engagements Other than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information* issued by the Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. That standard requires that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to assurance engagements.

An assurance engagement involves performing procedures to obtain evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the key performance indicators. It also involves evaluating the relevance and appropriateness of the key performance indicators against the criteria and guidance in Treasurer's Instruction 904 for measuring the extent of outcome achievement and the efficiency of service delivery. The procedures selected depend on my judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the key performance indicators. In making these risk assessments I obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the engagement in order to design procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances.

I believe that the evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

### **My Independence and Quality Control Relating to the Reports on Controls and Key Performance Indicators**

I have complied with the independence requirements of the *Auditor General Act 2006* and the relevant ethical requirements relating to assurance engagements. In accordance with ASQC 1 *Quality Control for Firms that Perform Audits and Reviews of Financial Reports and Other Financial Information, and Other Assurance Engagements*, the Office of the Auditor General maintains a comprehensive system of quality control including documented policies and procedures regarding compliance with ethical requirements, professional standards and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.

### **Matters Relating to the Electronic Publication of the Audited Financial Statements and Key Performance Indicators**

This auditor's report relates to the financial statements and key performance indicators of the Wheatbelt Development Commission for the year ended 30 June 2018 included on the Commission's website. The Commission's management is responsible for the integrity of the Commission's website. This audit does not provide assurance on the integrity of the Commission's website. The auditor's report refers only to the financial statements and key performance indicators described above. It does not provide an opinion on any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from these financial statements or key performance indicators. If users of the financial statements and key performance indicators are concerned with the inherent risks arising from publication on a website, they are advised to refer to the hard copy of the audited financial statements and key performance indicators to confirm the information contained in this website version of the financial statements and key performance indicators.



DON CUNNINGHAME  
ASSISTANT AUDITOR GENERAL FINANCIAL AUDIT  
Delegate of the Auditor General for Western Australia  
Perth, Western Australia  
6 September 2018