Regional Development Australia Wide Bay Burnett (RDA WBB) in collaboration with all Local Government Authorities and key regional stakeholders is leading the way with a focused approach to resource sector opportunities and their economic, social and community impacts.

The coordination of stakeholders which brings together industry development, social and community awareness will support a united approach to regional solutions to help shape the future of the Wide Bay Burnett.

To deliver sustainable solutions that address the region’s social and economic challenges it is imperative that a clear understanding of what the impacts from economic and population growth will have on our communities’ lifestyle and social wellbeing.

In August 2010 RDA WBB developed the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Roadmap which identified five key priorities that provided a framework for the development of regional actions.

Regional Roadmap Priorities:

1) Strengthening our regional profile
2) Developing economic prosperity and job creation
3) Fostering natural resource management and sustainability
4) Advancing education and training
5) Supporting our community and social wellbeing.

The Wide Bay Burnett Resource Sector Opportunities Study is a key action of the Roadmap and establishes the business case required to support RDA WBB’s application for funding for a dedicated regional Fly-In Fly-Out (FIFO) Coordinator, ensuring the Wide Bay Burnett is a centre for sustainable workforce and community development.

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Foreword

Wide Bay Burnett has the largest population of any region in Queensland outside of the South East Queensland region and is projected to continue to maintain this status with a forecast population of 425,139 in 2031. (Source Queensland Regionalisation Strategy July 2011).

The quality of our region’s lifestyle is widely regarded and distinguishes Wide Bay Burnett from other places in Queensland and Australia. It is characterised by ready access to a unique and world renowned natural environment which underpins a growing regional economy.

The clear goal for the Wide Bay Burnett of the future is to be resilient, diverse and thriving. It will need to capitalise on the strengths and competitive advantages of its six sub-regions to drive the necessary growth and advancement.

Regional Development Australia Wide Bay Burnett (RDA WBB) is working with local government, industry and community stakeholders to plan for the future spreading the benefits of growth across the entire region.

Queensland’s resource sector is driving rapid growth and this not only provides opportunities for regional economic development, but also puts pressure on local communities, their economies, lifestyle, environment and social wellbeing.

The Wide Bay Burnett Resource Sector Opportunities Study identifies economic development and job creation opportunities in four key resource sector economic zones. These zones have been targeted due to their geographic location and proximity to readily access services and lifestyle opportunities within Wide Bay Burnett.

The Resource Sector Opportunities Study builds on preliminary work already underway in the region that is bringing together regional stakeholders and industry. Consultation through these and other initiatives has helped identify the key opportunities for Wide Bay Burnett and is reflected in the study.

In July 2011, RDA WBB released an updated roadmap which states the key regional activities and action plan. These actions and activities align with and are supported by the priorities stated by Minister Crean and Minister Mulherin for RDA, which include:

- Involvement in Queensland economic recovery
- Progressing the regionalisation agenda
- Developing regional workforces

The development of this Resource Sector Opportunity Study and Application for Funding for a Fly In-Fly Out (FIFO) Coordinator are two key activities identified in the RDA WBB Roadmap action plan.

The Resource Sector Opportunities Study is not the solution to the region’s issues, but establishes a framework for a coordinated, region-wide approach. It demonstrates RDA WBB’s commitment to considering the needs and priorities of the region in its planning and prioritising.

The engagement of a dedicated resource to assist in coordinating and implementing regional workforce solutions in the Local Government Areas of Bundaberg, Cherbourg, Fraser Coast, Gympie, North Burnett and South Burnett will be critical to addressing regional issues such as long term high unemployment and the Wide Bay Burnett’s disproportionate level of social and economic disadvantage.

Grant Maclean
Chairman

Paul Massingham
Executive Officer
Introduction

There is a valuable opportunity to help the Wide Bay Burnett reach its full and considerable potential. By magnifying the assets the Wide Bay Burnett has to offer the community’s social and economic position can be enriched and broadened. The opportunity at this time is to capitalise on the employment prospects that exist within the mining and resource sector, developing a more diverse and sustainable regional economy.

The Wide Bay Burnett region faces some vast challenges, including persistent high levels of unemployment and an historically low labour force participation rate. The region currently has the highest unemployment rate in Australia, with the latest figures showing unemployment sitting at 11.2% which is more than double the national average (DEEWR, August 2011). These challenges will need to be addressed if the whole region is to prosper. A significant challenge for the Wide Bay Burnett region will be to avoid leaving some citizens behind as a result of a patchwork economy – where some parts of the economy grow while others languish and where prosperity is not shared by all.

Perhaps of greater concern than the unemployment rate is the historically low participation rate experienced in the Wide Bay Burnett region. Increasing this figure will be important as the region moves forward. It is estimated that by 2025 across Australia a participation rate of 69% will be necessary to improve Australia’s productivity, provide the required workforce and improve social inclusion.
The participation rate for the Wide Bay Burnett region at August 2011 stood at 53.1% (3 month average to August figures). Significantly the Wide Bay Burnett region is the only labour force region in Queensland to have a participation rate under 60%. It will be an important long term challenge for the region to increase the participation rate to meet future workforce demands. The figure above indicates the scale of the challenge facing the Wide Bay Burnett region to increase participation.

The Socio Economic Index For Areas (SEIFA) indexes are created by combining information collected in the Census. They rank geographic areas across Australia in terms of their socio-economic characteristics. Of the four indexes, the index of relative socio-economic disadvantage (IRSD) is the one generally used to look at broad measures of disadvantage. The IRSD uses 17 different measures including income, education, unemployment and employment in unskilled occupations to give a broad picture of disadvantage in a region.

Against a base score of 1,000 for Queensland, the Wide Bay Burnett region, with a score of 940, is one of the most disadvantaged regions in Queensland. A considerable 50.6% of the population of the Wide Bay Burnett region were in the most disadvantaged quintile (Quintile 1) compared with the 20% of the population in each quintile across Queensland. Also significant is the low proportion of people in the least disadvantaged quintile (Quintile 5) – 2.6% for the Wide Bay Burnett compared with 20% for Queensland. The figure right highlights the differences between the relative disadvantage in the Wide Bay Burnett region and Queensland across each quintile.

Individual weekly incomes in the Wide Bay Burnett region are substantially below Queensland levels. At the 2006 census, 51.5% of the population of the Wide Bay Burnett region stated their gross individual weekly income was less than $400 compared with 39.7% for Queensland. Significantly fewer people (7.7%) stated their gross weekly incomes as between $1,000 and $1,999 compared with Queensland (13.9%).
As of August 2011, unemployment in the Wide Bay Burnett stood at around 14,500 which together with a relatively low labour force participation rate of 53.1%, provides a large pool of workers who can be trained for resource sector positions or to backfill existing workers hired by the resource sector (DEEWR and ABS data).

The region’s training sector has the broad capacity to meet many of the needs of the resources sector by up skilling the existing labour force to specific job requirements. This includes a regional TAFE network with campuses in Gympie, Maryborough, Hervey Bay, Kingaroy and Bundaberg; University campuses in Bundaberg and Hervey Bay; a range of private sector RTOs; and school-based Trade Training Centres coming on line in Bundaberg and Maryborough.

The resources sector, encompassing mining, gas, energy and minerals processing industries, makes a major contribution to the Australian economy, particularly through the key resource states of Western Australia and Queensland (Garson 2008). However limited information is available on how the resource sector impacts local and regional economies, particularly when changes over time are considered. As part of this Resource Sector Opportunities Study, RDA WBB reviewed the findings identified in the “Economic Contribution of the Resources Sector by Regional Areas in Queensland” study completed in March 2011, by the Centre for Environmental Management, Central Queensland University, Lawrence Consulting and the Queensland Resources Council. This study identifies the extent to which direct, indirect and final consumption impacts are located in local and regional areas in Queensland. The research has been conducted with the involvement of the resources industry through the Queensland Resources Council, which collated expenditure data across the state.

There are a number of economic impacts of resource industries on regional areas however direct impacts of wages for direct employment of workforce and expenditure on business services in local and regional economies are a key driver of economic change. As a comparison, the tourism industry which is one of the largest employers in the Fraser Coast region, attracted approximately 750,000 visitors in the year ending March 2011 (source Tourism Queensland). The estimated economic contribution of tourism on the Fraser Coast is approximately $600 Million to the local economy. Summary data from the resource sector used in the Analysis of the Economic Contribution of the Resources Sector by Regional Areas in Queensland report states that approximately 677 directly employed resource sector employees reside in the Wide Bay Burnett, which through salaries, business supplier and community spend have a total direct economic stimulus of over $300 million.

With sound regional infrastructure in health services, schools, water supply and entertainment strengthened by the high volume of affordable housing, Wide Bay Burnett has the capacity to set an achievable and manageable target in excess of 3,000 additional workers and their families to establish this region as their principle place of residence. While the region has the key infrastructure available for the potential and current workforce to have direct access to their worksites, a coordinated approach is required to establish the links with the appropriate mining and aviation companies. The key regional industries such as agriculture, manufacturing and tourism will be enhanced and the regional economy strengthened by the diversification of employment opportunities. The increase in high income residents will also assist to address the current socio-economic imbalance.

The resource sector spans the entire nation however this study focuses on four key economic zones of opportunity. Over 60,000 construction jobs and more than 30,000 operational positions will be required in these four areas alone and due to the Wide Bay Burnett’s proximity, the region has the infrastructure and most of all the liveability to support the workers and their families today and into the future.

Based on current figures, the engagement in the resource sector of 1,000 of the Wide Bay Burnett’s currently unemployed workforce plus a further 3,000 new workers who may be attracted to the region would result in a direct economic stimulus of approximately $2 billion per annum for the local economy.
New prospects create new opportunities. Queensland is looking to further accelerate its already booming resource sector through the expansion and set up of developments. Areas such as the Surat Basin, Galilee Basin and Gladstone are firming as areas of opportunity for the state, with even further wide spread development expected from the existing Bowen Basin. Wide Bay Burnett is in prime position to access these four areas which have been identified as the region’s strongest Economic Zones of Opportunity.

Wide Bay Burnett is geographically one of the closest regions to the Surat Basin. The Surat Basin has been identified as one of the primary zones of opportunity, given its location directly south west of the Wide Bay Burnett. The relationship between the Wide Bay Burnett region and the Surat Basin is likely to grow closer with the region providing additional labour and housing opportunities. The region has the capacity to house a significant number of fly in fly out (FIFO), drive in drive out (DIDO) and bus in bus out (BIBO) employees. Kingaroy is the major centre in the South Burnett district which will cater for substantial regional growth and ultimately benefit from its proximity and access to the Surat Basin.

The Bowen and Galilee Economic Zones of Opportunity present a fairly streamlined prospect, when compared to the Surat Basin. The primary option for workers to access the mines/plants would be FIFO. The Galilee and Bowen Basins are positioned North West of the Wide Bay Burnett. Northern parts of the Wide Bay Burnett also provide an option for DIDO workers to access these economic opportunity zones. The Bowen and in particular Galilee Basins will experience high growth within the next five years and will require effective solutions to accommodate their labour force demands.

When identifying direct and practical solutions for the growth that Gladstone is currently experiencing, Bundaberg, Fraser Coast and Monto highlight themselves as the geographical hotspots. Being located within 200km of Gladstone and less than a 2.5 hour drive, Bundaberg has the housing capacity to benefit from the overspill of population growth. In addition to the available housing infrastructure, the Wide Bay Burnett has the capacity in its industries to deal with greater demand created on goods and services, by being able to sustainably offer efficient and reliable business and transport services.

As identified in the summary of major projects in the Economic Zones of Opportunity (pages 12 & 13) approximately 60,000 construction positions will be required with a further 30,000 full-time operational jobs once construction is completed. These figures are based on the estimated number of workers involved with the mine and plant sites. The employment figures do not represent the flow on effect of additional employment services which are created to service the increase in population generated by workers and their families.
The Surat Basin is one of Australia’s largest, and relatively untapped, energy resource areas. The basin covers a geographical area of approximately 300,000 km². It extends from central southern Queensland to central northern New South Wales. The Surat Basin is a region comprising established and strong communities supported by a robust and productive agricultural economy. Significant growth is being experienced in the region due to mining and extraction of extensive deposits of thermal coal and coal seam gas (CSG).

While the Surat Basin has, and will retain, a strong and traditional agricultural foundation, it also contains more than six billion tonnes of proven thermal coal reserves which are largely undeveloped and suitable for power generation, both domestically and abroad.

The area is serviced by an existing network of facilities in regional centres. Services which cater for the current capacity of townships include health services, education facilities and community centres. However as the growth of the Basin increases, so will the pressures on the capacity of these services. The pressures already felt in townships in and around the Surat Basin have highlighted poor housing availability. The need to house, as well as provide basic services, will prove to be a further challenge to the region’s existing infrastructure capacities. The Surat Basin’s location is open to the three access options of FIFO, DIDO and BIBO.

Construction of mining sites and plants has already started across the Surat Basin, with this set to continue up to 2018 and possibly beyond. The total number of construction jobs in the region is projected to reach almost 10,000. The number of operational jobs is expected to reach almost 5,000.

Wide Bay Burnett regions that could best service the Surat Basin via DIDO include South Burnett, North Burnett and Gympie. The maximum drive time from these areas to any number of sites in the Surat Basin is estimated as short as two hours to less than 4.5 hours. The Fraser Coast and Bundaberg regions are highlighted as the ideal locations for FIFO employees to access the Surat Basin, with DIDO employees also being able to access the basin from these centres. Currently, these five regions have over 10,000 properties available for sale and a further 1400 properties available for immediate rent, making them the ideal “Access Hub” for Surat Basin workers and their families.

Two of the major centres for Indigenous population within the region, Cherbourg (96.9%) and Eidsvold (20.1%), are ideally situated for access to the Surat Basin. The majority of the Wide Bay Burnett Region’s Indigenous labour force is predominantly employed as labourers. The skills necessary for these positions are transferable skills and comparable to those required for resource sector employment opportunities.
Queensland’s booming gas industry has taken off in rapid succession creating global opportunities for the state and Australia. Gladstone has the potential to produce 51.8 million tonnes per annum (MMt/a) of gas collectively when its largest projects are operational. To put this in perspective, Port of Gladstone’s total exports last year (2009/2010) was 83.4 Mt.

It is estimated that over the next 20 years during operation of major projects headed by Santos and the BG Group, that the value of exports from the Gladstone plants will be some $250 billion. That is over $10 billion per year and equivalent to half the annual value of all the coal currently exported from Queensland.

By launching Australia’s first CSG to liquefied natural gas (LNG) export core in Gladstone, the move will cause significant social and economic pressures for the region. The increased demand causes the need for enhanced infrastructure to develop the local economies growing needs. Gladstone housing data shows the region has less than 1,100 properties available for rent or purchase as at today with approximately 3,000 job vacancies in the gas/resource industry. The difference in this data already shows the issues affecting Gladstone. The supply of sustainable infrastructure expansion in the short-term for Gladstone is one of the biggest issues the region is facing. Like the Surat Basin, Gladstone’s location enables the workforce to be able to utilise FIFO, DIDO and BIBO.

GLADSTONE

Four projects alone are expected to require almost 20,000 workers throughout construction phases associated with the projects. Almost another 3,500 operation jobs will be created as a result of these projects. These figures are the benchmark for opportunities for the region.

Wide Bay Burnett has the ability to offer not only labour to Gladstone, with over 9,000 available in our labour force, but has the existing infrastructure in place to handle greater than expected population growth. With a total of over 10,000 houses available for immediate sale in the region and a further 1,400 properties available for rent, Wide Bay Burnett already has the critical infrastructure required to support this growth.

The immediate opportunity to accommodate the population growth for Gladstone is through Bundaberg, Monto and the Fraser Coast. Bundaberg’s location of less than 200km to the LNG hub presents an enormous opportunity to house and supply services to Gladstone, which is already experiencing the pressures of greater demand than supply. Monto also presents opportunity to supply some of the housing needed to cover the overspill from Gladstone. Monto is located about 160km south west of the LNG Hub in Gladstone, and is also already housing workers from the Bowen Basin. Fraser Coast region can additionally act as another “Access Hub” given its location of less than four hours from Gladstone, as well as the existing infrastructures available.

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The Bowen Basin, an area rich in coal and gas deposits, extends southwards from Collinsville (near Bowen) to Emerald and Moura (west of Bundaberg). This area is 60,000 to 75,000 km², over a length of about 650 km. The basin is shaped like an inverted Y: the single stem of the Y runs from Collinsville to Dysart, a land corridor seldom wider than 50 km, where the majority of mines are worked. The two subsidiary stems run south-west to Emerald and beyond, and south to Moura and Theodore.

The Bowen Basin contains the largest coal reserve in Australia. This major coal producing region contains one of the world's largest deposits of bituminous coal. The Basin contains much of the known Permian coal resources in Queensland including virtually all of the known mineable prime coking coal.

Mackay is already heavily populated with the Bowen Basin workforce. With the expected expansion of the Basin, Mackay is unlikely to be able to supply the housing infrastructure required to accommodate the population growth. FIFO is already used widely as a mode of transport to the Bowen Basin, which creates greater momentum for Wide Bay Burnett to capitalise on this new opportunity market. Due to the region's current capacity, median rental prices for four bedroom houses in Mackay is already more than Brisbane. This cost of living alone creates opportunity for western areas to accommodate some of the workforce, which has evolved the DIDO and BIBO markets for the Bowen Basin.

Given that the Bowen Basin holds the largest coal reserves in Australia, an extensive network of infrastructure already exists. Further growth in this economic zone is still expected to produce almost 10,000 construction jobs and over 8,000 operational jobs in major projects. Construction and expansion of the Bowen Basin sites is expected up until 2017, and possibly beyond.

The Bowen Basin presents a number of FIFO opportunities for the Wide Bay Burnett's major airports, linking local labour force with the high growth number of resource jobs expected. The ability to then house the proposed workforce is again highlighted through the existing housing infrastructure currently available in the Wide Bay Burnett. In the North Burnett there are over 400 properties available for sale to support FIFO workers and their families. Further DIDO opportunities exist for Monto to welcome new resource sector families requiring access to the Bowen Basin.

Currently, a major portion of employees that work in the Bowen Basin also live in the Mackay region. The median rent prices for three and four bedroom homes in Mackay are higher than Brisbane, at $400 and $480 respectively each week. These figures are more than 30% higher than those of the Wide Bay Burnett.
The Galilee Basin is the last remaining major coal province yet to be developed in Queensland and holds significant reserves of coal potentially suitable for underground coal gas (UCG). The Galilee Basin is gaining significant focus for Queensland in terms of the region’s abundant coal resource which holds substantial employment, economic development and growth opportunities for the regional and state economies. The Galilee Basin spans an area of over 247,000 km² and is estimated to contain over 14 billion tonnes of coal.

The location of the Galilee Basin presents a true opportunity for a FIFO workforce. The opportunity for a FIFO workforce generates sustainable growth in already established communities. The use of FIFO allows communities to absorb the growth experienced as a result of the resource sector. Given the Galilee Basin’s early life, existing infrastructure and services are minimal. FIFO highlights itself as the short term solution to the region in being able to provide a readily available and accessible workforce.

The sustainable and cost efficient method of housing the workforce generated from the Galilee Basin is to accommodate the workers and families in already established communities. Existing communities in the short term have facilities to deal with population growth. In the long term, maintenance costs on existing communities can be justified, compared to the maintenance and social costs associated with temporary cities.

GALILEE BASIN OPPORTUNITIES

Unlike the Surat and particularly the Bowen Basin, the Galilee Basin is a relatively new resource area which is still in the stages of early growth. With this in mind, the region is still estimated over the next five years to generate nearly 20,000 construction jobs and following this over 12,000 operational jobs in major projects.

Again, like the Bowen and Surat Basin opportunity zones, critical infrastructure in these regions is inadequate to handle the labour force demand. FIFO can again be utilised through our region’s existing airport infrastructure to provide efficient access to the mine sites. The available and affordable housing infrastructure makes the Wide Bay Burnett an attractive region for workers and their families as an “Access Hub” to the Galilee Basin.

Being a source of housing to the resource sector is not the sole opportunity that the Wide Bay Burnett can leverage from. Providing further support for employment to the mining industry will assist in the transition of workers to the sector. Doing this will allow better management around the movement of the region’s workforce.

The region has almost 4,000 part-time skilled workers in industries such as manufacturing and construction. The region’s capacity to sustainably back fill vacated jobs, caused through resource sector movements, leaves our existing industries in a strong position.
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TOTAL WORKFORCE REQUIRED: 61065 28614
Labour Force

Wide Bay Burnett’s labour force of approximately 130,000 people includes around 12,000 in the manufacturing and 9,500 in the construction sectors with retail, health and education rounding out the top five industries.

A further 9,000 people are employed in primary production and over 3,000 in utilities (electricity/gas, etc). Of note, some 3,000 people are employed directly or indirectly in the mining sector. It is estimated that approximately 1,000 of these workers are employed outside the region through FIFO/DIDO arrangements of their own (there are currently no direct FIFO connections to/from the Wide Bay Burnett).  
(Source ABS May 2011)

The key occupations in the Wide Bay Burnett labour force include some 20,000 technical/trades workers, 20,000 labourers and over 10,000 machinery operators/drivers. These occupations offer a range of relevant skill sets for the resources sector in both the construction and operational phases.

Two of the major centres for Indigenous population within the region, Cherbourg (96.9% Indigenous) and Eidsvold (20.1% Indigenous), are ideally situated for access to the mining and resource sectors. Both of these areas have experienced high unemployment with extremely limited employment opportunities.

The majority of the Wide Bay Burnett region’s Indigenous labour force are employed as labourers. The job experience gained in these positions is transferable to the requirements for mining and resource sector employment opportunities.

As of August 2011 unemployment in Wide Bay Burnett stood at around 14,500. Wide Bay Burnett currently has the highest unemployment rate in Australia, with the region’s unemployment sitting at 11.2%. Together with a relatively low labour force participation rate of 53.1%, there is a large pool of workers to train for resource sector positions or backfilling of existing workers hired by the resource sector. (DEEVR and ABS data).

The region’s training sector has the broad capacity to meet many of the needs of the resources sector, upskilling the existing labour force to specific job requirements. This includes a regional TAFE network with campuses in Gympie, Maryborough, Hervey Bay, Kingaroy and Bundaberg; University campuses in Bundaberg and Hervey Bay; a range of private sector RTOs; and school-based Trade Training Centres coming on line in Bundaberg and Maryborough.

Upskilling the current unemployed and underemployed will provide a large labour pool for resource sector positions and backfilling existing workers who are hired by the resource sector.
Housing the Workforce - Availability

One of the critical issues faced by the resource sector is the availability and affordability of housing in the current dominant areas such as the communities of the Surat, Gladstone and Mackay.

Wide Bay Burnett understands how it can be part of the solution for the expected increase in demand for housing. Major centres such as Gympie, Fraser Coast and Bundaberg currently have almost 9,000 houses/apartments/units available for sale. This figure speaks volumes when comparing the available housing and costs associated with the towns and regions that already have experienced significant growth from the resource sector.

Due to the early stages of development of the Surat and Galilee Basins, local communities are yet to fully realise the pressures generated by resource sector growth. Activity and growth created in Gladstone has already caused infrastructure issues. Gladstone has experienced unsustainable growth due to the resource sector. Given that activity in Gladstone is expected to increase dramatically over the coming years, Wide Bay Burnett is well positioned to be a centre for sustainable workforce and community development.

Looking at current housing figures, Gladstone currently has less than 1,000 houses/apartments/units available for sale and approximately 110 properties available for rent. It is clear that Gladstone will not have the ability to provide the expected facilities and services required to keep up with the some 20,000 jobs that are to be created.

Wide Bay Burnett understands this and the region can offer itself as an access hub to northern neighbours. Bundaberg is less than 200km away from Gladstone via road, and also has available housing. Bundaberg currently has almost 2,750 houses/apartments/units for sale, with over 400 properties available for rent. The average median house price in Gladstone is $120,000 more than Bundaberg.
Currently there are two major issues affecting the continued growth of the resource sector in Queensland;

1) Where will the workforce and their families be accommodated and;
2) How can housing affordability be maintained.

Mackay, being an already established mining region, has first hand experience in what a resource boom can do to the housing market. Here property rental median prices for three and four bedroom houses are more than Brisbane median prices. Gladstone is another region facing the same growth. Median rental prices for Gladstone are almost on par with Brisbane, with $10 separating the average rental prices.

Wide Bay Burnett is able to not only house some of the resource sector workforce, but can comprehensively do it cheaper. On an average, the Wide Bay Burnett’s median house price is $123,000 less than Gladstone or Mackay. Further to this, the region is approximately $230,000 cheaper than Brisbane in median house prices.

The region’s capacity to absorb regional growth through the resource sector is strong. The ability to offer more affordable housing when compared to Brisbane, Mackay and Gladstone is consistent in both rentals and purchases. Wide Bay Burnett is positioned to advance on the opportunities provided through the resource sector.

Housing the Workforce - Affordability

Mean Rental Prices ($ per week)

Mean Prices of Properties for Sale ($)

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<th>Two bedroom unit</th>
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<th>Three bedroom houses</th>
<th>Four bedroom houses</th>
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<tr>
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**Bundaberg Region Snapshot**

The Bundaberg Regional Council has grown in size since its establishment and includes the economic centres of Bundaberg City, Bargara, Childers and Gin Gin. The Local Government Area of Bundaberg Regional Council accounts for 0.4% of the total area of Queensland, encompassing a total area of 6,449km².

Bundaberg city is a thriving regional centre. The Bundaberg Regional Council covers a region that spans across coastal, city and country areas with a population of around 97,000 — about half live in the city. Bundaberg’s city centre is a colourful and bustling precinct with modern shopping centres well represented with national retail chains, a good selection of dining options, two cinemas, a theatre for live productions and a regional art gallery.

The Bundaberg region, encompassing Childers and Gin Gin has become one of the largest fruit, vegetable, nut and herb growing regions in the country with over 16,000 hectares under production, returning half a billion dollars at the farm gate annually.

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**Fast Facts:**

- Population: 2.1% of Queensland population – 96,936 persons (2010)
- Projected growth rate of 1.7% per annum (Queensland 1.8%) between 2011 – 2031. Population to total 139,350 in 2031.
- Gross Regional Product for 2009/10 was $3,309.6 million, with an annual growth rate of 3.5%.

**Key Features:**

- The region comprises four major service centres including Bundaberg, Bargara, Childers and Gin Gin.
- Bargara is the tourist and commercial hub of the Coral Coast strip of the region, linking the southern and northern coastal townships. Burnett Heads provides the southern most access point to the Great Barrier Reef.
- Located on the Bruce Highway, Childers and Gin Gin both play an important role in the region in terms of rural service provisions for the hinterland and drawing tourists off the highway into the region.

**Local Opportunities:**

- Bundaberg airport aviation industries and related uses.
- Port of Bundaberg and adjacent Fairymead are identified as industrial growth areas.
- Positioned to leverage from its geographical location in relation to Gladstone where the ability to capitalise from the emerging CSG/LNG industries will prove vital.
- Almost 2750 houses/apartments/units are estimated to be available for sale currently within the region, with a further 400 properties available for rent. Properties can be utilised to highlight “Access Hub” opportunities.
- Capitalising on job growth and job creation through all industries by investment in the emerging CSG/LNG and existing coal industries.
- The total labour force available is approximately 3,000.
Cherbourg Region Snapshot

The Local Government Area of Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council encompasses an area of 31.6km² and has a permanent population between 1,300 to 2,000 residents.

Its main tribal groups are the Wakka Wakka people (who originally lived in the area between Dalby and Maidenwell) and the Culidy people (who originally lived in the area between Roma and Quilpie). However, representatives of many other tribal groups from western Queensland, the Cape and Burdekin areas also form part of the population. Cherbourg is located close to Murgon but is an independent local government authority, separate from Murgon Shire.

One part of Cherbourg’s economy revolves around tourism. Cultural Heritage Centre is a museum and art gallery that shows visitors what life was like for people living under the Aboriginal Protection Act during the first half of the 20th century. The displays also provide an experience to show people the many wonderful aspects of traditional Aboriginal culture and contemporary Cherbourg life.

Fast Facts:

- Estimated resident population of Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council at 30 June 2010 was 1,260 persons.
- Projected growth rate of 1.7% per annum (Queensland 1.8%) between 2011 – 2031. Population to total 1,781 in 2031.
- A figure of 96.9% approximately (Queensland 3.3%) represents the total of Indigenous population in the Shire.
- 32% (Queensland 50.4%) of persons aged over 15 years are recognised with a qualification.

Key Features:

- The Cultural Heritage Precinct (including the Ration Shed Museum) welcomes all visitors to experience and embrace the community’s lifestyle and people, to view photographs and watch video footages to show and tell how much has changed since then.

Local Opportunities:

- The region of Cherbourg has a strong culture.
- The small businesses and industries in the region to further leverage off opportunities presented through culture and tourism.
- Cherbourg to continue to build further relationships with South Burnett Regional Council to create more widespread sustainable opportunities.
- Capitalise on job growth and job creation through all industries by investment in the emerging CSG/LNG and existing Coal industries. The majority of the Wide Bay Burnett Region’s Indigenous labour force is employed as labourers, which is no different in Cherbourg. Existing skills already held in these labour areas are ones that are transferable to suit the needs of mining and resource sector workforce opportunities.
- Training programs are underway to up-skill the Indigenous population in the areas of building, cattle farming, commercial vegetable growing and fencing.
- Locals are being skilled to supervisory levels.
- Fully trained and working fencing gangs are available to undertake work across the region.
Fraser Coast Region Snapshot

The Fraser Coast Regional Council includes the economic centres of Hervey Bay and Maryborough. The Local Government Area of Fraser Coast Regional Council accounts for 0.4% of the total area of Queensland, encompassing an area of 7,117.2 km².

Whether you are a visitor or a local - there is no place like the Fraser Coast when it comes to the range of interactive natural experiences and outstanding attractions on offer.

The Fraser Coast provides a lifestyle that is safe to live, learn, work and play, celebrates through festivity, embraces the arts and is supported by quality community services and social networks.

Fraser Coast celebrates, values and protects cultural diversity by recognising it is an asset to the economy, its education and cultural life.

Fast Facts:
- Estimated resident population of Fraser Coast Regional Council at 30 June 2010 was 102,080 persons, an increase of 2,567 persons or 2.6 per cent over the year.
- Population was 2.3% of Queensland’s population.
- Projected growth rate of 2.3% per annum (Queensland 1.8%) between 2011 – 2031. Projected population to total 164,143 in 2031.

Key Features:
- The Fraser Coast region contains The Great Sandy Marine Park which protects at least 2,500km² of seagrass habitat.
- The region includes the world’s largest sand island, Fraser Island which was listed as a World Heritage Area in 1992.
- Service centres of Maryborough and Hervey Bay.
- Agriculture, tourism and manufacturing are the region’s traditional economic drivers.

Local Opportunities:
- Growth opportunities across sectors such as mining and aviation services, advanced manufacturing focusing on road, rail and component manufacturing, aquaculture, food processing, marine industry, construction and service industries.
- Positioned to leverage from its geographical location to the resource sector in surrounding Economic Zones of opportunity.
- Almost 4000 houses/apartments are estimated to be available for sale currently within the region, with a further 600 properties available for rent. Properties can be utilized to highlight “Access Hub” opportunities.
- Capitalising on job growth and job creation through all industries by investment in the emerging CSG/LNG and existing Coal industries.
- Total labour force available is approximately 3200.
Gympie Region Snapshot

The Gympie Regional Council includes the economic centres of Gympie, Rainbow Beach, Tin Can Bay and Imbil. The local government area of Gympie Regional Council accounts for 0.4% of the total area of Queensland, encompassing 6,898.3 km².

The Gympie region includes specific geographical locations of interest, particularly within the Cooloola area. The 60,000ha Cooloola section of the Great Sandy National Park is the largest remnant of coastal vegetation on the southern Queensland mainland. Other significant areas of Cooloola are those found within the ‘Great Walk’ including Lake Cooloomera, Rainbow Beach, Poona Lake, Carlo Sandblow and Teewah Beach.

Urban development is concentrated in Gympie, with additional coastal and hinterland living opportunities. Gympie will remain a major centre of growth within the region, with opportunities to attract growth in population and business.

Fast Facts:
- Gross Regional Product value for 2009/10 was $1.7 Billion. This contributed 0.7% to the Gross State Product of Queensland.
- Projected growth rate of 1.6% per annum (Queensland 1.8%) between 2011 – 2031. Projected population to total 67,373 in 2031.

Key Features:
- The Gympie region has many well established industry sectors including timber processing, tourism, agriculture, retail and manufacturing.
- The timber industry supplies 57.2% of Queensland’s pulpwood and 27.2% of Queensland’s total hardwood output.
- Major tourist attractions include gold mining heritage, coloured sands of Rainbow Beach, national parks and state forests, access to Fraser Island, surfing, boating and fishing activities. Tourists spend approximately $26 million each year in Gympie’s local community.

Local Opportunities:
- Proximity to major centres on the Sunshine Coast and Brisbane.
- Unique natural environment and abundant natural resources.
- Positioned to leverage from geographical location to the resource sector, in particular the Surat Basin and the CSG/LNG projects associated.
- Almost 3000 houses/apartments/units are estimated to be available for sale currently within the region, with a further 400 properties available for rent. Properties can be utilised to highlight “Access Hub” opportunities.
- Capitalising on job growth and job creation through all industries by investment in the emerging CSG/LNG and existing Coal industries.
- Total labour force available is approximately 1,500.
North Burnett Region Snapshot

The North Burnett Regional Council includes the economic centres of Biggenden, Eidsvold, Gayndah, Monto, Mount Perry and Mundubbera. The Local Government Area of North Burnett Regional Council accounts for 1.1% of the total area of Queensland, encompassing an area of 19,704.5km².

The North Burnett has a rich and diverse cultural heritage, beautiful natural environment and a strong Aboriginal presence. With fertile soil and a major river system, fruit production is a key industry, particularly citrus in Mundubbera and Gayndah, together with beef cattle, mining and a myriad of smaller industries.

The North Burnett is fortunate to have an incredible amount of creative and cultural talent providing an opportunity for the region to become a creative hub. Arts and culture are a vital part of the social make-up in the North Burnett providing not only great enjoyment, but also contributing to the social and economic structures of the community.

Fast Facts:

- Population: 0.2% of Queensland population – 10,805 persons (2010).
- Projected population to total 15,100 in 2031.
- Forecast of additional dwellings to total 1,900 by 2031.

Key Features:

- Service centres include Biggenden, Eidsvold, Mundubbera, Monto, Mount Perry and Gayndah.
- Existing gold mining operations currently support the town of Mount Perry.
- There is also potential for a new coal mining operations near Monto, and significant mineral resource developments at several sites in the eastern part of the North Burnett.
- North Burnett region supports a substantial rural sector of predominantly grazing and citrus agriculture.

Local Opportunities:

- Primary production and rural industries
- Existing gold mining
- Positioned to leverage from geographical location to the Surat and Bowen Basins where the region will capitalise on jobs and growth through investment in the emerging CSG/LNG and existing coal industries.
- Almost 450 houses/apartments are estimated to be available for sale currently in the North Burnett. Properties can be utilized to highlight “Access Hub” opportunities.
- Capitalising on job growth and job creation through all industries by investment in the emerging CSG/LNG and existing Coal industries.
- Total labour force available is approximately 250.
- Tourism through greater food, arts and culture promotions.
South Burnett Region Snapshot

The South Burnett Regional Council includes the economic centres of Kingaroy, Nanango, Murgon and Wondai. The Local Government Area of South Burnett Regional Council accounts for 0.5% of the total area of the Queensland, encompassing 8,397.9km².

The South Burnett region offers many exciting and unique attractions and experiences. The region welcomes over 65,000 visitors every year from all over Queensland, Australia and overseas. The region is probably best known for peanuts, the Bunya Mountains National Park and wineries.

The South Burnett is the stage for a number of major annual festivals which draw visitors from all over Australia. They include Nanango Funfest, the iconic Peanut Festival, Wine and Food in the Park Festival, Burrandowan Races, Wondai Garden Expos (Autumn and Spring) and the Dairy Museum 'Kids Kapers'.

Fast Facts:
- Population: 0.7% of Queensland population – 33,040 persons (2010).
- Projected population to total 44,100 in 2031.
- Regional Council owned assets total almost $450 million.

Key Features:
- South Burnett is home to a number of geographical locations of interest, including Lake Boondooma and Yallakool Park on the foreshore of Bjelke-Petersen Dam, and the Bunya Mountains National Park to the south.
- Service centres of Murgon, Nanango, Kingaroy and Wondai.
- Kingaroy will continue to house a greater proportion of the region’s growth, with additional capacity for growth provided within the urban footprint at Murgon, Nanango and Wondai.

Local Opportunities:
- Primary production and rural industries
- Positioned to leverage from geographical location to the Surat Basin where the region will capitalise on jobs and growth through investment in the emerging CSG/LNG industries.
- Almost 1100 houses/apartments are estimated to be available for sale currently within Kingaroy region alone, with a further 150 properties available for rent.
- Capitalising on job growth and job creation through all industries by investment in the emerging CSG/LNG and existing Coal industries.
- Total labour force available is approximately 900.
- Continued growth through the expansion of Tarong Energy.
- Further opportunities explored through the region’s tourism sectors including wineries and the Bunya Mountains.
Next Steps

1. Apply for funding for a Wide Bay Burnett Fly In - Fly Out (FIFO) Coordinator
2. Establish a regional Resource Sector steering committee
3. Engage a Wide Bay Burnett Fly In - Fly Out (FIFO) Coordinator
4. Establish critical links between regional jobseekers and industry
5. Undertake a social and economic impact statement
6. Attract resource sector workers and their families to live in the Wide Bay Burnett