

***Report on Scenario Planning Workshops
including a strategic conversation
conducted for
Regional Development Australia (Peel)***



***February and March, 2013
Emeritus Professor Jo Barker***

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Executive summary

In order to assist with the ongoing development of strategy and to gain information from a community group, the facilitator was contracted to run a modified Scenario planning/ strategic conversation workshop by RDA Peel.

The main objectives of the workshops were to provide:-

- the opportunity to hear the ideas and views of community personnel who differ from other decision makers in the Peel, who are normally in leadership roles.
- to form distinct scenarios or narratives of the future of the Peel region over the next 10 years. 2013-2023.
- to assist the RDA Peel form an advisory group of interested participants who could assist future planning for the region.

Process

Following discussion with members of the RDA Peel Board Members the following key issue was formulated, as outside the control of the RDA Peel and as the focus of the workshop.

***“How can the region influence Government policy and strategy to create change?”
A time line of 10 years i.e. 2013-2023 was set for the scenarios.***

Preliminary research

Prior to the workshop, an environmental scanning report on emerging trends and issues related to RDA Peel and its business environment was carried out by Dr.Paul Nicol. PhD (See App.1)

The report had a particular focus on the following issues:-

1. Constraints and improvements impacting RDA's around Australia.
2. Leadership and community engagement.
3. Social capital and communication.
4. Social media
5. Increasing learning and research to a region.
6. Social enterprise.

Prior to the workshop the report was emailed to the 20 participants who had been invited by RDA Peel, from the wider Peel community to take part in two half day workshops. These participants had been selected to provide a gender balance, age differential and wide professional experience to the discussions and were not representative of any particular organisation.

Effort was also made to select new to the Peel participants as well as those who had lived in the region for some time.

The participants were informed of the key question to be answered and asked to keep this question in the forefront of their minds as the process developed.

Conclusion

At the conclusion of the workshops participants had developed three distinct scenarios, each of which addressed the key issue and the time line set. The group had also identified the key forces and major drivers which had a significant impact on the business and economic environment of the Peel and hence those issues which should be considered by RDA Peel when formulating strategies to carry the organisation successfully through the next decade.

The participants were very aware that the lifestyle much valued by many in the Peel requires strong and inclusive leadership and acknowledgement of the natural environment and its attributes. These values were instrumental in the formation of the skeletal scenarios.

A full account of the workshops, discussion and the scenarios follow in the body of the documents.

Introduction

This report outlines the scenario/strategic thinking processes conducted for RDA Peel up to the formation of skeletal scenarios. The procedure provided the participants with an understanding of scenario planning; team interaction through a very participatory process; and a deeper understanding of some of the factors affecting the region in which they live.

Scenarios were described by Peter Schwartz in 1991 as “A tool for ordering one’s perceptions about the future environment in which one’s decisions are played out.”

Scenarios are as the name suggests stories or narratives with a plausible plot which brings into prominence some of the features of a future world which might otherwise be overlooked. Scenarios are developed by a group, through a structured way of thinking about possibilities.

In essence the process is designed to arrive at several parallel hypotheses about the future which can be held at the same time. These hypotheses are given form and are able to be pictured by using them in a story or narrative.

Scenario planning as a management tool has been used by many firms and organisations since the 2nd World War and was designed initially by the Rand organisation. The process gained a great deal of interest in the 1980’s and 1990’s at the start and ongoing development of the Technological revolution, when the pace of change was making organisations concerned that they might put into place strategies which due to instant global communication, could disrupt their ability to compete.

This method has continued to be used by many organisations as a useful way to get participants to view their world in a different way and to help them see the future in our very fast changing world.

Procedure

Participants from the wider Peel region were invited to participate in two half day workshops in February and March 2013 with a three week gap between workshops 1 and 2 to allow research to be completed between each session.

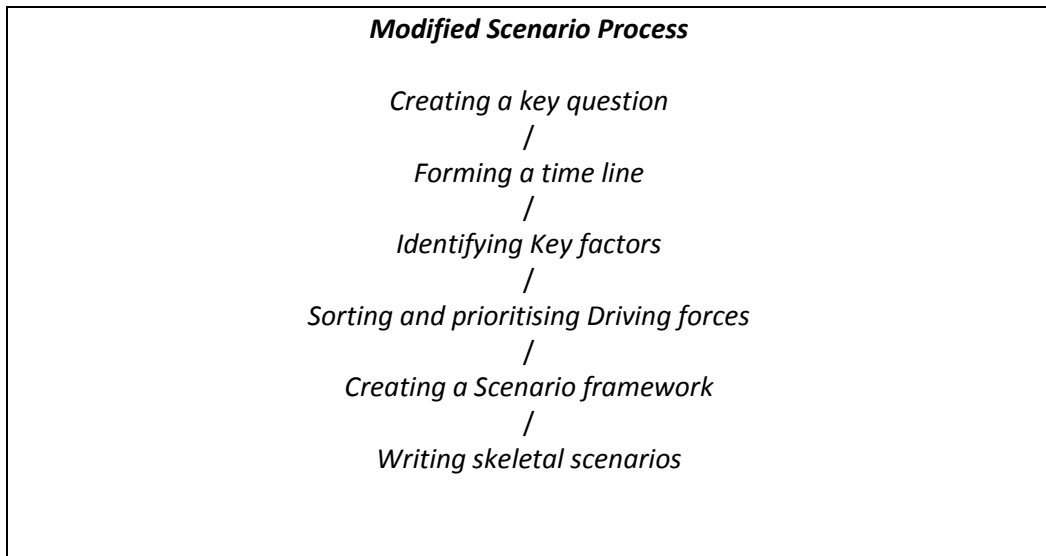
Selection of the participants was carefully managed by RDA Peel to ensure a gender and age balance and to ensure that the people chosen were at variance from those who normally are recognised as the decision makers for the region. This was a deliberate move to gain different view points and ideas. Effort was also made to invite new to the Peel participants as well as those who had been resident for some time.

Prior to the workshops commencing all participants were asked to read an environmental scan prepared by Dr. Paul Nicol PhD’s. The scan covered areas relevant to the key question and gave direction to the following discussion.

Workshop 1

Modified scenario process

Participants were introduced to the methodology of scenario processes to a skeletal scenario stage and the process of holding a strategic conversation was outlined.



The key question which acted as the focus for the scenarios was displayed and discussed, as was the decision made by RDA Peel to take the scenarios out for a 10 year period from 2013-2023 i.e.

How can the region influence Government policy and strategy to create change Time line 2013-2023

In deciding this time line it is acknowledged that some scenario strategies would require a period lengthier than 10 years to come to conclusion but it was felt that the uncertain nature of the regions development made it difficult to envisage an end- state any further forward in time.

Focus questions

Participants were then taken through a series of 7 questions designed by De Gues (1990), modified for this workshop. The questions used are open ended and well tested. The questions were designed to elicit responses concerning issues which the respondents felt uncertain or concerned about within the Peel region and to look at the strengths and pivotal events that had shaped the region.

They were:-

- How would you like to see the region grow and develop in the next 10 years?
- Do you have major concerns/uncertainties which could impact on the region's ability to create the changes required?
- Are there risks involved in creating changes to the region? E.g. is this a good place to start a business or family?
- What pivotal events have impacted the region in the past, good or bad that should be remembered in the future?
- What do you believe are the strengths of the region?
- Are there ways that the region could do better in influencing Government and Government policy?
- Are there opportunities for Regional Leaders to be more progressive and innovative than they have been to date?

From this information key factors were gained and later modified slightly by the author to clarify any ambiguities. These key factors are used later by participants to embroider the scenario stories. Major outcomes from this process were that:-

- There was concern about the number of organisations and local governments within the Peel who plan in isolation. It was felt that there was a real need for planning to come together to make change happen.
- Leadership of the various organisations need to stop competing and work co-operatively to create a real vision for the future.
- Participants felt that the Peel was a beautiful area to live in but needed to provide further education and training opportunities to retain people in the region.
- Additional land needs to be opened and business opportunity expanded with incentives from local and other areas of Government put into place to enhance business opportunity.
- Employment opportunities need to be enhanced-creating local jobs for local people.
- The whole of Peel needs to be marketed in a similar fashion to the South West region, which has international identity. There is a need to Profile the region to make it visually attractive.
- The name, identity, logo and themes for the various areas of the Peel need to be changed to bring a more vibrant focus to the region.
- Should the planned reorganisation of local boundaries occur this could provide a wonderful opportunity for re-branding.
- Improve local transport between regional towns in the Peel.
- Increase technology uptake including social media and the NBN rollout to create a "smart" region.
- Retain and look after the natural environment. The Peel has a unique environment which needs to be managed well.
- Increase housing variability and therefore opportunity for housing low and middle income people.
- Ensure adequate health care for a fast growing population.
- Promote tourism but not at the cost of creating a local environment which retains a permanent population including FIFO and DIDO.

A full list of the major factors can be found in App. 2

Identifying STEEP

STEER (social, technological, economic, environmental and political) drivers impact our future. Participants were asked to identify and discuss drivers under the headings above which impacted the region. Driving forces are important ingredients of the scenarios.

- **Social** drivers may include demographic projections, changing employment structures, recreational pursuits, community involvement.
- **Technological** drivers may include rate of technological change, new technology developments, IT security.
- **Economic** driver may include economic outlooks, macroeconomic trends such as trade agreements, marketing, pricing and changing value of the \$.
- **Environmental** drivers may include international environmental agreements, recycling techniques, public awareness of environmental concerns.
- **Government and political** drivers may be legislative or electoral. They may include issues such as increased litigation, popular distrust of politicians, local or international alliances.

The STEEP determined by the participants can be seen in App.3. These were amended by the author to ensure that the meanings given by the participants was unambiguous.

Division of drivers into Contextual, Transactional and Operational categories

Participants were then asked to form groups and determine which of the STEEP drivers would fit into the following three environments Contextual, Transactional and Operational.

Contextual drivers are outside the control of the region but, by understanding them, participants are better placed to acknowledge the influence and conditions they could impose. An example of a contextual driver is “Global economic downturn” and the impact that world economics have on the Australian financial sector and therefore the region.

Transactional drivers are those factors deemed to be outside the control of the region but that can be influenced by the region. An example is the regions knowledge and understanding of demographic changes and the impact that a change of population can make to regional planning.

Organisational factors are within the regions environment, that is, factors within the control of the region such as maintaining/improving customer service to ensure that the public are well served.

The participant’s choices were then amalgamated together by the author and those chosen by the majority placed in a completed list for further use. See App 3.

This process is undertaken as the scenario matrix completed in Workshop 2 was built from the contextual environment i.e. those important factors which are outside the immediate control of the Region. This is done to give wide ranging scenarios.

Transactional items are used within the scenario stories and Organisational issues are left for the region to implement as required.

Participants were then sent the completed list of contextual drivers and asked to nominate individually the two most important yet uncertain against the key question of **How can the region influence Government policy and strategy to create change?**

With a time line out of 10 years

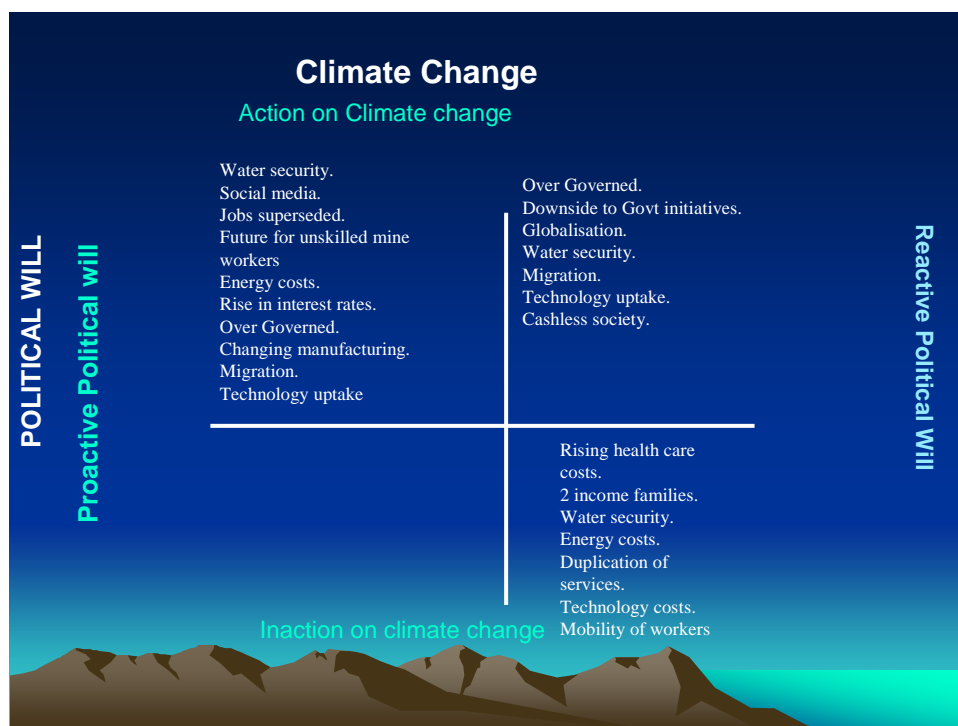
The participants determined that their top priorities in descending order were Climate change; Risk averse Government; Technology uptake; Globalisation change; Lack of Political will and Population change.

Workshop 2

At the second workshop the participants were initially asked to ratify the choice of the two most important and uncertain contextual drivers, i.e. Climate change and Risk averse Governments. On further discussion they determined that Risk averse Governments and Lack of Political will were similar enough to combine into a driver entitled- Political will.

The two contextual drivers were then divided further with parameters indicting quadrants of Action on Climate change versus Inaction and Proactive Political will versus Reactive political will. Additional contextual drivers were added to each quadrant of the matrix. Those drivers that were constant and could affect any and every scenario appeared in more than one scenario such as Water security and Technology uptake. See Scenario Matrix below.

Scenario Matrix



This stage resulted in three matrix parameters which could be developed by the participants into scenarios or narratives.

What if's

“What ifs?” are used to embroider the scenario stories. The participants were asked in a brain storming session to think of those that could fit under STEEP that they felt needed to be included.

Examples:

- Social –Ageing population, a quarter of the Australian population will be 65 or more by 2045, plus the birth rate is falling therefore what will the impact of this be on the future of the region?
- Technological. Energy crisis, will the continued rise in the cost of petrol and other essential services such as food stuffs prevent people having the money to invest in the region?
- Economic- European Economic Community debt. Should the ECC disintegrate and additional member countries be unable to furnish their debt, what will the impact be on the region?
- Environmental-Disaster A tsunami impacts the west coast of WA and floods the Burrup Peninsular, one of Australia’s major mining and mineral resources and a major underpinning of Australia’s economic future. How will this impact the region?
- Political. The Govt of the day demands local governments amalgamate or they will loose funding, how will this impact the region?

The purpose of this exercise was to encourage the group to consider the external and unpredictable forces that could impact dramatically on the region

A list of the final What if’s’ developed by the participants can be found in App 5.

Writing the scenarios

The participants were then divided into groups and chose the quadrant of the matrix they wished to write their scenarios on. They determined whether to begin in 2013 or start at 2023 and work backwards. They thought of a plausible story line and used as many of the contextual items that were suitable and included transactional items as required. They added in any key factors and what if’s to give their stories impact and developed their narratives out to the given time line. Each scenario was given a name to identify the story within.

Two contextual items Water security appeared as a constant in each scenario and Technology uptake in two out of the three.

At the completion they were asked if they have answered the key focus question. The groups then presented their skeletal scenario and identified the opportunities and threats that their scenario posed to the region. The three scenarios developed were entitled:-

- **Peel Vaccine Breakthrough**
- **Blue Sky Thinking**
- **Water, water everywhere**

Scenario 1

Peel Vaccine Breakthrough

Summary

The parameters for this scenario were as follows:-
Reactive Political Will and Inaction on Climate change.

Contextual items included were:-

Rising health care costs	Energy costs
Unemployment	Water security
Duplication of services	Technology costs
Mobility of workers	Two Income families

Set from the year 2013 this scenario focussed on the findings of eminent medical researchers the researchers stated that the combined effects of the decreased number of predators in the Peel Region combined with the effect of climate change could lead to an unexpected outbreak of mosquitoes with complications such as Murray Valley Encephalitis (MVE) and Ross River virus.

It was strongly suggested that this crisis could be averted if there was holistic management of the Peel Region environment and a number of eco solutions put into place- such as environmental restoration and controlled property development.

The researchers stated that with stronger attention to environmental concerns, including water security and property development by local Councils and the myriad of Government departments operating independently in the Peel; an increase in mosquito predators such as micro-bats, frogs, birds, fish and other wild life would assist keep this problem under control, along with additional and frequent aerial spraying with environmentally friendly product.

In 2016 the region was hit with and was unprepared for, higher than expected climatic conditions which consisted of storm surges, high tides and sea level rises – extreme weather events- Along with damage to housing, agricultural areas and businesses and resultant financial concerns including rising interest rates to cover natural disasters, the region suffered a major outbreak of Murray Valley Encephalitis

The result of this has been:-

- A marked decline in population, with many leaving for health reason.
- This in turn has created an economic collapse impacting businesses.
- Increased unemployment and created mobility of workers.
- Severely depressed the property market.
- Slowed down tourism numbers.
- Increased pressure on the already overworked health system.
- Diverted required resources from other planned projects in the region.

To cope with these problems, the major decision makers in the Region, who had been somewhat complacent, realised that they needed to take urgent action and establish best practise to stem the tide. They began to work together through joint local Govt initiatives and with increased co-operation occurring between relevant NGO's. Due to this co-operation both fiscal and in kind which over time developed between all concerned, a Global Centre for

Excellence in Mosquito management and Disease control was planned, funded and established in 2020 in Peel.

The commencement of the joint Centre began to attract world leaders in mosquito and disease control and establish break through research programs which included work on the development of vaccines for Murray Valley Encephalitis, Ross River Virus and Dengue fever.

This centre became a hub for extensive opportunities in medical research and it created employment, both in the Centre and in nearby businesses who had established themselves with products relevant to the research and intensive IT work carried out. University programs in relevant health science and computer studies gave local youth employment opportunities and this in turn has increased the need for additional housing to service the population which is again growing in the Peel. In 2022 the Centre amid world acclaim, announced that they had successfully developed a vaccination for Murray Valley Encephalitis.

In parallel with the establishment of the Centre of Excellence, the Region is now recognised for its work in pioneering environmental restoration in order to mitigate the effects of climate change and its impact on population health.

Biodiversity planting took place throughout the Region and has seen a marked improvement in mosquito numbers. Residents have taken up 40,000 bat boxes and this has resulted in a large increase of micro –bats in the Region, which has also assisted decrease mosquito numbers.

In 2023 the inaugural “Eco Fest” will be held in the Region to highlight the significance of successful environmental projects -addressing the importance of eco-systems management and the creation of climate change communities. Community based environmental groups have spearheaded much of the changes seen, such as water wise gardens, residential habitat creation and increased number of endemic wild life- all of which is increasing the Peel’s attraction as a tourist venue once again.

As a result of the significant investment in medical research and environmental management, along with successful combined planning, local residents have become increasingly aware of climate change impacts and sustainability- their response has to have the highest uptake of solar panels; highest grey water use; and lowest level of domestic water use on gardens in Australia.

Scenario 2

Blue Sky Thinking

Summary

The Parameters of this scenario were Pro-active Political will and Action on Climate change.

The contextual items in the scenario were:-

Over governed	Downside to Government initiatives
Globalisation	Water security
Technology uptake	Cashless society

This scenario is set from 2023 and the Region has risen to the challenges of the past ten years. Climate change as anticipated has ravished the globe but the Peel has managed this change by having a pro-active Government and an engaged civic community, who have aggressively tackled the issues.

The State and local Governments with strong financial support from the Federal Government have realised that cheap and sustainable energy is at the core of modern living and have assisted the population of the Peel to invest heavily in alternative energy.

Capitalising on the natural attributes of the Region and after intensive research and consultation with other countries such as Scandinavia who have successfully met the challenge and are leaders in alternative energy sources; the local Government has installed a cutting edge and innovative wave, photo voltaic geo-thermo wind energy system. This energy system is instrumental in supplying the energy requirements for the whole Peel Region and beyond.

To prevent community backlash and to gain the trust of the population in accepting this new and viable technology, extensive community consultation in the form of forums, chat rooms and social media were used to inform the public.

Initially the concerns raised were of the aesthetic nature of the wind system and its impact on the environment, much of this was allayed when it was explained that the structure would be encased in a synthetic hill, which would provide both an aesthetic appearance and a future tourist potential for the Region. The grassed slopes were used for grass skiing and the building complex housed an art precinct, 24 hour alfresco dining and space for a variety of cultural activities.

This purpose built building began a ground swell of interest in many areas of the Peel in particular in the housing area in producing carbon free energy. Again with Government financial incentives and with property developers becoming very interested in gaining a cutting edge, every new house built in the Peel is carbon neutral which includes such devices as photo voltaic cells; small wind turbines that feed into the grid as well as supplying hot water. The Governments plan is to retro fit over time other buildings in the region to comply with neutral carbon emissions.

Storage of water is now more than 90% captured at the point of use. To assist commercial users the Government has installed a further desalinisation plant that is powered by the alternative energy system.

During the extensive community consultation process which occurred prior to 2023 the imminent impact on the agricultural regions of the Peel through climate change was identified. Old methods of farming and land use had to change and the agricultural community responded by utilising the extensive water ways and agricultural areas of the Region to establish new businesses and create new employment opportunities for those Fly in Fly Out and other unskilled workers who were seeking new positions as jobs in mining were superseded.

Such industries as sustainable farm fishing on the coast, hydroponics and aquaponics in previously broad acre farming areas began to flourish. These new industries changed the way that manufacturing was undertaken in the Region and created new business opportunities and practices.

The National Broadband Network (NBN) was established throughout the Peel commencing from 2013 and realising the potential this could bring to the Region, the Region, with Government financial backing established a new 3D printing industry to service all industries and organisations and help promote the tourism sector of the Peel.

The NBN also became an educational hub for the region offering a variety of innovative on-line courses. These courses were offered to all sectors of the Peel community at minimal course cost. In this way new migrants coming to the community or unskilled workers could up skill their qualifications in courses of choice. Another benefit to the community was that every house, business community group had over the period of 2013 -2023 free access to the NBN thereby moving closer to creating a smarter more connected community.

The Peel over the past ten years has begun to move to the ultimate inclusive society.

Scenario 3

Water, water, water everywhere

Summary

The Parameters of this scenario were Reactive Political Will and Action on Climate Change.

The contextual items in the scenario were:-

Water security	Rise in interest rates
Over governed	Social media
Jobs superseded	Future for unskilled workers
Energy costs	Changing manufacturing
Migration	Technology uptake

It is the year 2023, the Region has over the past ten years seen a review of the boundaries of the Region and amalgamation of the local councils which formed the previous Peel Region. The amalgamation of the local authorities of Murray/Mandurah Councils has provided the opportunity for the Peel to be renamed and an indigenous name, chosen by the people, which clearly described the region's attributes put into place.

This re-naming allowed for a complete review of the potential, the logo, marketing and values of the Region.

In the past decade and for far too long under Reactive Governments Local, State and Federal, the Region had been falling behind the Perth Metropolitan area in terms of investment in new businesses, housing, job creation, viability and vitality.

Local decision making authorities such as the Regional Development Authority and the Peel Development Commission had been moved to Canberra, removing Government layers, but leading to a region characterised by no local decision making authorities.

The Region was suffering and action was badly needed. The revitalisation that began to occur with the change of name and amalgamation of local councils included the need to consider how the Region could reinvent itself and gain back employment opportunities, tourism and make it a place that people were proud to live in and be part of.

The amalgamated Council recognising that Climate change required real consideration if the Region was to retain its major attribute of its waterways and water security which was threatening local living, and keep its flood insurance costs to a minimum, determined to establish housing precincts. These new precincts were well designed, environmentally sound, self sufficient in terms of water energy, utilising solar design, well insulated and energy efficient.

In partnership with well recognised property developers, who were leaders in sustainable housing, the Council utilised land to the east of Mandurah- thus opening up the Region to both high and low level income housing and attracting families and FIFO workers back to the Region.

The Council also attracted overseas venture capitalists, along with State and Federal funds to establish a Regional Aqua biotic Waterways Research Institute and Enterprise Park.

This enterprise, took five years of careful planning working with community groups, urban designers and lead coastal designers who took an integrated approach to the low lying coastal location of Mandurah and parts of the Region. Rising sea levels had caused major concerns and there was a need to ensure flood resilient and safe living environments.

The Institute and Enterprise Park resulted in job generation and supported Regional growth and became very rapidly an Australian Centre for Excellence for Aquaculture. The project followed from over regulation of the water assets of the Region which was previously represented by numerous waterway agencies with little synergy or interest in working cohesively. The State and Federal Governments on the completion of the Institute ceded the responsibility of the management of the Peel Harvey Estuary to the local community through the carefully chosen Board of the Institute.

The institute formed partnerships with a variety of local Universities and with countries such as Dubai, Singapore and Hong Kong where rising sea waters were impacting reclaimed land. This not only provided leading initial research capability the innovative and leading work of the Institute in coastal waterways and climate change adaptation began to attract world leading researchers and students of environmental courses.

The Enterprise Park created alongside the Institute as a mixed use multifaceted Business Park, quickly lead the way in the commercialisation of aquaculture, wave, tidal and offshore wind energy and production of algae for renewable energy. The park also provided real life work experience for University student and was an added attraction for those wanting relevant and hands on environmental education.

To increase the liveability of this revitalised Region, the Council also supported the inclusion of a Desalination Plant and continued to promote and financially support the inclusion of solar panels in older residential areas of the Region.

The Region in 2023 has become a community focussed, well marketed and recognised region. The tourists interest in the Region has been revitalised with clean and fresh waterways a major attraction. The Region had recovered its "Sense of Place."

Conclusion

The three skeletal (robust in their own right) scenarios formed by the participants have developed three different versions of the future of the Region. Based on chosen key drivers of Climate change and Political Will, they have described futures which have looked at Regional leadership and the need for a concerted effort by Regional leaders to work in a cooperative manner to make change happen. In addition they have stated the need to include the community and listen to community voices.

The group have recognised that the natural environment is the most important asset of the Region and can and should be capitalised on, but in a sustainable way.

They have seen the need to increase access to education and training and to partner with a variety of training institutions to allow this to happen.

They have recognised the need to release Regional land for business and housing and to encourage new and innovative sustainable businesses to the Region.

Importantly this group have seen the need to rebrand and revitalise the Region as a whole, to market the attributes of the Region and to look at other nearby regions who are doing this better.

They have looked at future employment needs and the increasing and valuable use of technology, both in social media and in all areas of modern life.

They have recognised the need for a health care system which can cope with a fast growing population.

They have also acknowledged that tourism is an important asset for the Region but that tourism has to be balanced with making the Region a place which people wish to live in and are proud to be a part of.

For RDA Peel the participants have presented pathways which the RDA can pursue and take to fruition in close co-operation with the other decision makers and leaders in the Region. The scenarios themselves as written provide valuable frameworks which can assist the long term strategic direction of the organisation.

Appendix 1

**How can the region influence
government policy and strategy to
create change?**

A Background Report

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February 2013**

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1. Introduction

The information in this document provides background reading for participants prior to a strategic conversation which will investigate the question “How can the region influence Government policy and strategy to create change?”

It appears clear that the government’s policy is to encourage innovative regional development. Simon Crean, Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government, had stated that the federal government wants “communities to be able to take responsibility for charting their economic, social, and environmental wellbeing” (Crean, 2010).

This report provides some examples of ways in which a range of regional agencies have set about creating change which may have relevance to the Peel region. The purpose of the report is to stimulate thinking about innovation and change in the Peel Region.

However, it is not intended to be comprehensive research into all aspects of regional policy and strategy.

2. Executive summary

The purpose of this document is to provide background to stimulate ideas for innovative ways to effect change in the Peel region.

It follows from this that the key to influencing government policy and strategy is effective community engagement and participation in decision-making.

The report examines contemporary thinking on issues of leadership, of community and business involvement, and of other means of effecting innovation and change, at both government and community levels. There are several aspects to this.

First, formal, top-down leadership is replaced with a facilitation role in which leaders develop relationships both with, within and between local government and community groups (including business groups). The leadership approach applies not only to local government and regional authorities but also to community groups. Leadership may be provided by a single individual or a group of people who unite and work together.

Secondly, effective community engagement is indispensable to developing strategy. This involves commitment and understanding of communities, clarity of purpose, appropriate communication and delivery of relevant change. Engagement may be at different levels: informing, consulting, or involving, but current research favours collaboration and empowerment, maximising community ownership, knowledge exchange and capacity building.

Engagement involves investment in social capital, which requires a long-term commitment with an emphasis on trust and on local, meaningful programs. Ideas generated from the community, including the marginalised, are important aspects. Social media is becoming increasingly important in developing relationships.

Recent research (Friedel and Chewings 2011) indicated that strategies to attract business to the region are less likely to result in sustainable development than strategies to develop entrepreneurial skills. This requires investment in education and networking.

Academia has been taking an increasing role in the educational aspects of regional development. This includes ensuring courses adequately meet workplace requirements and the development of research capacity. Research involvement can include local authority staff doing university degrees at minimal cost with research relevant to the region.

A final aspect of regional development is the role of social enterprise i.e. working with businesses which trade, while assisting the community this can be strengthened through collaborative or centralised resourcing and assistance.

It is apparent that change is needed if the effectiveness of regional advocacy and development is to improve. Regional Development Australia (RDA) Committees throughout the country have experienced considerable difficulty in establishing their authority and credibility due to a lack of clarity about their role, confused lines of communication, organisations working in isolation to each other, and a lack of adequate funding. This report explains some of the ways in which regions have sought to overcome these difficulties.

3. What is RDA Peel?

Regional Development Australia Peel Inc. ("RDA Peel") is part of an Australian Government initiative called Regional Development Australia (RDA) Network. This aims to bring together all levels of government to enhance the growth and development of regional Australia.

Briefly, RDA Peel's role encompasses:

- Community advice and consultation
- Contributing to regional planning
- Promoting government programs
- Advising governments of key regional issues reached through consultation
- Advocating for the region
- Assisting with identifying addressing regional needs and issues.

The RDA Peel's goals of addressing the productivity, sustainability and liveability and regional priorities for the next 20 years, as identified by their document *Peel 2032*, are listed in full in *Appendix 1* (Regional Development Australia Peel, 2012).

Importantly they have determined under productivity- local industry and workforce needs; educational access; increasing innovation and research; utilising the National Broadband roll-out; land use; transport; productive businesses are identified.

Under sustainability issues- waterways; climate change; clean energy renewable energy are all seen as very important to the Peel's future growth.

Under liveability issues, the importance of transport links; sustainable industries; employment; infrastructure development and govt investment have been identified.

These aspects are essential parts of the strategic conversation and of informing the future of the Peel region.

Because of the wide-ranging nature of its role, RDA Peel needs to liaise and collaborate with other community, business and government agencies. These include the five shire councils, the Peel Development Commission, the Peel Community Development Group and the West Australian Council of Social Service (WACOSS), as well as non-government organisations such as Community First and many community and business bodies.

RDA Peel's Business Plan also lists additional roles and functions that RDAs have been allocated to perform in the regions. The fifth of these is the subject matter of the focal question for the Strategic Conversation "Community & economic development":

- Act as an advocate for the region
- Build networks and develop leadership within the region
- Broker solution that address regional issues and barriers to development
- Help to broker partnerships which will address the needs and aspirations of regional communities."

In accord with this, one of RDA Peel's priorities for the current year is "supporting lobbying, advocacy and funding requests seeking to address regional issues identified in *Peel 2032*" (<http://www.rdapeel.org.au/projects/>). *This paper identifies ways in which this has been addressed elsewhere to bring about change.*

4. Constraints and improvements

Issues and initiatives for the future: a 2012 study

RDAs in Australia have experienced considerable difficulty in establishing their authority and credibility in regions and at all levels of government. A major reason for the lack of authority has been s stated earlier a lack of clarity about the role of RDAs.

This lack of clarity has been increased by confused lines of communication between RDAs and the three levels of government, so that "RDA staff and committees were unsure about how to connect with each layer of government, "and faced different accountability requirements for each level(Buultjens et al., 2012).

In addition, because of the large number of organisations involved in regional development, stakeholders have been taking different approaches in isolation to each other. The result has been duplication of effort, inefficient resource use, mixed messages to policy makers, and a lack of unity within regions.

Participants in the research for this Buultjens report suggested several measures that would help improve the effectiveness of RDAs. These included:

- cooperation and collaboration between RDAs
- An RDA Advisory body for each State, where the State's RDAs meet together
- A clear and effective statutory framework for RDAs
- Establishment of a communication strategy

- RDA Committees to be local champions in aligning all stakeholders
- Professional development opportunities for RDA staff
- Key Performance Indicators (including qualitative data).

The report also noted that, historically, regional development agencies in Australia have been typically engaged in relatively small-scale activities and failed to focus on a coordinated and strategic long-term approach to regional and local planning and development.

The participants indicated that a lack of adequate funding (to 2010) had prevented RDAs from undertaking many of their intended activities, including being involved in collaborative leadership.

Previous reports

There have been many reports written since 2002, on Mandurah and the Peel region and its future development. These include as examples:- the Peel 2020 study; Peel Away The Mask (1&2); Strategic Plans for the City of Mandurah and other Local Councils in the region; Strategic Plans for the Peel Development Commission, for RDA Peel and for the Chamber of Commerce; and a 2003 scenario planning report on the future of Mandurah.

What is apparent in these plans is a lack of overall communication and discussion between the various leading agencies. Although community input has been sought and many people have contributed a great deal of time to the formation of these reports, there appears to have been a lack of continuity and joint decision making in regional affairs.

Effectiveness in regional economic development

Although there has been a lot of discussion and policy work on how to increase local economic development, there is no clear agreement on what constitutes 'effectiveness' or best practice.

For example, some local government agencies aim to establish new industries, while others focus on promoting the expansion of the firms already within their region. Some are active in labour market training and recruitment, while others emphasise place promotion.

Two types of activities can be distinguished as being useful:

- assisting individual firms and
- promotion of the development of the region generally (Beer, Andrew and Maude, 2002).

An example of the former is a Northern Melbourne report that explores options for establishing a successful local complementary medicine industry (<http://rda.gov.au/news/rda-northern-melbourne-reports-local-viability-chinese-herbs>).

Another example is The City of Casey, a peripheral urban region of Melbourne, which has a problem of development that falls into the latter category above. It is a dormitory suburb with high job leakage, not unlike Peel. A study found that the current government policy and business association programs were not sufficient for the development of self-sustaining businesses in peripheral urban regions like the City (Jain, 2012).

This study found that there had been “limited uptake of the myriads of government support policies on offer, despite high usefulness of the ones taken up.” One reason for this was that “there was confusion not only about the various programs and policies but also business eligibility and program ownership. Businesses seeking government help have to wade through many departments in different layers of government ...with appropriate and relevant information hard to come by.”

Because of the complexity and difficulty of applying for grants, including for start-ups and export, businesses mostly obtained finance from commercial lending and banking institutions.

The most common request for assistance was for marketing and advertising assistance. Manufacturing industry wanted grants, tax reform and more training and export assistance.

The study authors commented that federal government policy was not specific enough for any single local government area. They suggested that, rather trying to attract business, strategies to “attract, generate and nurture entrepreneurial skills” were more likely to result in sustainable development. This would require investment in education and networking.

The study provided other examples of policy measures aimed at reducing the economic gap between peripheral urban regions and CBDs. These included:

- The Gold Coast council (which has a well-staffed business development unit) partnered with Griffith University to develop a high technology precinct;
- Port Macquarie in New South Wales has a partnership with Economic Gardeners Pty Ltd to provide small businesses with a program to build competence in business management;
- Darebin City Council in Victoria developed a successful business incubator.

Overseas examples included:

- The local council in Sheffield (UK) has provided marketing of Sheffield as a preferred business destination, strategic physical development and accelerates growth of knowledge-based businesses;
- The council in Winnipeg (Canada) has offered brokering services for co-ordination with other government departments, marketing, partnerships, project management and support.

The Jain study authors suggested developing peripheral urban centres as satellite regions linked to major employment generating centres such as linking the regional areas of the Peel with Mandurah or Murray could create a viable means of securing a strong business future for these areas. However, this would involve a change in the emphasis of government policy and a desire of the local councils in the region to work co-operatively.

These ideas were echoed by Dabson (2011), who stated that productivity did not depend on what industries a region competed in, but how it competed. He argued that the emphasis should be on upgrading the sophistication of all the industries in a region, through increasing skills and entrepreneurship and the application of innovative ideas and methods.

5. Leadership and community engagement

Collaborative leadership – a change of approach

In the UK and within the European Commission, current thinking is that the model of regional development led by different departments and professions working in silos of expertise (e.g. planners, architects, surveyors, housing professionals, highways engineers, treasurers, legal services) within local government is out-dated.

In this contemporary way of thinking, new policy approaches within a region require holistic thinking and integrated approaches that cross boundaries both within and between the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Local people – including organisations, groups and communities who have historically been excluded – are at the heart of discussions about the places where they live and work.

For leaders, this involves a change of approach. Formal, top-down leadership is replaced with a facilitation role that encourages the development of networks. Leaders develop relationships within local government and with and between community groups. They may find themselves representing a region, with its diversity of opinions, rather than a particular organisation.

Consequently there are more unknowns and less certainty. Increasingly leaders are required to lead initiatives with responsibility but without formal power (Collinge and Gibney, 2010). These initiatives would not necessarily be aligned with government policy priorities (Conway et al., 2011).

The change of leadership approach applies not only to local government and regional authorities but also to community groups. Community groups have perceived regional development agencies as “important conduits for securing government grants.

A consequence of this has been that agencies have tended to follow their own strategies, even if they were not relevant to the regions, in order to secure the funding (Beer, A et al., 2003).

The Bultjens study stated that “a community linked and well-funded RDA network implementing a collaborative and strategic planning approach focused on local solutions to regional development issues could be very effective. However there would have to be some considerable changes implemented for this to occur.” Amongst these changes, RDAs would need to adopt a bottom-up approach, while still operating in the wider environment.

Examples of this type of leadership were demonstrated in a study of the leadership in two regional development cases in the Wheat belt in Western Australia and the Eyre Peninsula in South Australia. Here, leadership was not provided by a single individual.

Instead there was a group of individuals who communicated a vision for transforming their region that was shared by the community. The individual leaders invested both time and intellectual capital in members of the community groups. They also provided a link between the community initiatives and broader government and economic processes (Kroehn et al., 2010).

A further essential element is “integrative leadership.” Integrative leadership changes the meaning of leadership from getting others to follow one's own fixed goals toward one of assisting diverse groups to create shared goals and motivate and inspire people to reach them (Morse, 2010)

For this, “relationship capital,” that is, getting a group to build strong relationships and trust between each which is accumulated over time is essential during times when people may need to be pushed or challenged to continue to create change.

Community engagement

Based on an extensive review of local government community engagement strategies, the UK Audit Commission has identified the following principles underpinning successful community engagement:

1. Commitment to user focus underpinned by core values such as honesty, inclusiveness, fairness and realism
2. Clarity of purpose (i.e. shared understanding about whether the primary purpose is information provision, consultation, encouraging involvement in decisions, etc.)
3. Understanding your communities: careful consideration of the best ways of working with diverse communities of place, population and interest
4. Communicating appropriately: employing a wide and effective range of communication strategies appropriate for diverse audiences.
5. Delivering change: ensuring that the outcomes of engagement strategies have a genuine impact on relevant decisions and outcomes.

Levels of community engagement

The NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change have identified levels of community engagement and appropriate strategies for each. These were:

1. Inform

Education through media, written material, internet, spoken word, activities and/or theatre.

Example: Stormwater education campaign, Coffs Harbour, NSW

To discourage stormwater pollution the Coffs Harbour City Council implemented an integrated information strategy involving media activity, community education projects and reminder resources. Initiatives included:

- A series of educational workshops for developers and builders about the impact of construction work on sediment, the stormwater system and water pollution;
- Media and education campaigns on best disposal methods for lawn trimmings, car washing, fertiliser, animal faeces, on-site septic management and car washing;
- A schools workbook and drain stencilling; and
- Stickers, fridge magnets and a newsletter for ratepayers.

2. Consult

Consulting through community forums, surveys, community panels/juries, focus groups and workshops.

Example: Consultation strategy for Cranbourne Community Plan, Victoria

The community was consulted to develop a holistic long-term plan for Cranbourne. Initiated by council, a partnership group of community service providers, educators and public servants was put together to oversee the project. A quantitative survey was carried out to profile residents. Community agencies helped design strategies to engage the community, for example through 'Cranbourne Speaks' - an interactive, informal meeting. A diverse range of local population groups were consulted.

3. Involve

Include community in all stages of policy development (planning, needs assessment, design, implementation, evaluation, monitoring) to ensure concerns and aspirations are considered and understood.

Example: Sal-Army Community Café, Wodonga, NSW

The Salvation Army saw a need for a food security initiative and envisaged a community café. They consulted with community and developed the project through interviewing residents, having discussions in local cafés and getting local businesses and organisations on board. The local community was extensively involved in planning. There was a strong emphasis on inclusion of all groups likely to be users of the café at all stages, including evaluation.

4. Collaborate and empower

Action to maximise community ownership, knowledge exchange and capacity building

Example: Aboriginal Community-Controlled Ear Trial

A community initiated randomised control trial was carried out to assess the effectiveness of drug treatments for otitis media (a common ear infection with long-term health and wellbeing consequences). Planning and research was culturally sensitive and decision-making and management were controlled by the community. Partnerships were formed between Aboriginal representative organisations and communities, and research agencies. Capacity and resiliency was built into the participating community-controlled services. Action was taken to limit and address power differentials between community members, agencies, researchers and their institutions.

(http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0018/30645/CCCE_Final_Report_Jan_31_2009.pdf)

The Queensland Government has produced an Online Community Engagement Guideline, available at <http://www.qld.gov.au/web/community-engagement/policy-guidelines/guidelines/documents/online-community-engagement-guideline.pdf> as well as consumer and Community Engagement Framework available at www.health.qld.gov.au/hcq/publications/consumer-engagement.pdf

Concerns about community participation

In a study of community participation in the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy (SMS), Mahjabeen et al. (2009) concluded that the participation of poor and disadvantaged groups in planning processes was difficult to achieve, particularly where programs were located in powerful political and bureaucratic structures. The top-down approach in the project had not succeeded in capturing the voices of poor and minority groups and the public

participation process for the SMS had been dominated by the interests of executive government.

The authors suggested that, for community participation to become fair and effective, an adequately funded independent agency, backed by legislation, should set the terms of reference for community participation to ensure participation and input from disadvantaged and minority groups and provide guidelines for community participation forums.

Understanding the cultural context of minority groups is a precursor to developing effective strategies, provided that the research leads to relevant and effective measures. For example, numerous reports and research papers have indicated the need for Indigenous participation in regional governance and engagement. Similarly the particular needs of migrant populations are easily overlooked or misunderstood.

Structures that can elicit the needs and provide the evidence for advocacy to meet those needs are required. The Peel is becoming increasingly multicultural in population, these groups and individuals are important assets in future planning.

Examples of initiating community engagement

Ky Can Do That! This project was a sustainability project funded by the Victorian Department of Sustainability and the Environment that had a local community leaders' steering group involving the local mayor, primary school principal, editor of the local paper, president of Kyabram Land care, local business owners, farmers and Lions Club members. The group devised the *Kyabram Light Bulb Challenge* where participants pledged to buy only energy-saving light globes in exchange for two free CLF globes. This provided an easy first step for engagement with households signing up at local school fetes and formed a wide base of engaged community members for further action.

A local example is the Youth Council at the Mandurah City Council where youth form part of the decision making body of the Council; work closely with the Major; undertake specific community based projects; and learn the decision making processes of Council business. The participants in turn take this information back to their schools and homes.

Sometimes agencies find it helpful to engage outside organisations. For example, West Moreton (Queensland) and RDA Ipswich are developing a comprehensive digital economy plan, using Explore Consulting, a digital futures consulting firm that works with governments and communities. They intend sharing the plan with other regions.

<http://rda.gov.au/news/rda-ipswich-and-west-moreton-planning-well-connected-and-productive-region>).

Coping with change

There are many theories about the best ways to introduce change in an organisation and the way the organisation does business.

One theory holds that change should not be a shock, something radically different to what has happened in the past. To be accepted, new ideas should build on and adapt people's existing ideas. Without that continuity, change is likely to be resisted. (Abrahamson, 2004, Burt, 2003).

This may be especially true when considering change for people and groups with diverse economic or cultural perspectives. It calls for a consultative approach involving all concerned.

6. Social capital and communication

Developing social capital

The role of social capital in promoting sustainable business and community activity should not be underestimated. A study of regional Canadian and South Australian models of sustainable practice found that communities valued community group meetings, multi-sector involvement and the development of strong relationships between the business, not-for-profit and government sectors (Chia, 2011).

The study participants' responses focused on:

- Collaboration and a strategic approach to internal and external communication, and to community engagement made possible by leadership from organisations' directors, communication managers and community leaders;
- Long-term commitment to sustainable practice with an emphasis on trust and on local, meaningful programs that were communicated to the community;
- The increasing role of social media (adding to current role of regional media) in opening up dialogue and focusing on a 'bottom up approach,' where ideas and decisions were generated from the community.

The study concluded that "social capital investment can be successful if

- (i) notions of trust and transparency are integral to all community communication,
- (ii) (ii) the expectations of partner organisations are clarified,
- (iii) (iii) program priorities are negotiated and understood, and where
- (iv) (iv) the marginalised are included as part of a focus on sustainable communities."

Obstacles to successful social capital

Sometimes successful social capital is difficult to achieve. The process can be slow and requires good planning. Shifting populations necessitate transparency and good communication for program continuity.

Businesses sometimes are reluctant to support the 'soft stuff' of community engagement.

Success needs cooperation from many different community members and organisations, as well as champions, i.e., strong leaders who were skilled and committed to community engagement.

One leader said "his success in developing social capital was due to face-to-face meetings, encouraging participation across all sectors and acknowledging each and every contribution that made the community stronger and assisted in its development."

Sustainable funding and in-kind support were other factors facilitating social capital.

Communication and social media

Effective communication is important in developing relationships. This can be achieved through the media, interactive websites, community newsletters, and community meetings (Chia, 2011).

However, although these forms of communication may extend the possibilities of civic engagement, formal meetings might alienate some societal groups who are more comfortable communicating and connecting online (Macnamara, 2010).

Social media such as Twitter, YouTube and Facebook can open up opportunities to communicate with people who are marginalised and often excluded from face-to-face dialogue.

Added to the role of traditional regional media and websites, social media can help open up discussion and focus on a 'bottom up approach' where ideas and decisions with strong local focus were generated from the community (Chia, 2011).

The Chia study participants reported that:

- Social media are giving more community members the opportunity to engage and it is including those who often do not turn up for meetings or for face-to-face discussion;
- Social media for the marginalised need to be managed strategically – they need to be given skills to present their point of view and assisted in communicating in a way that their views are articulated and understood – this is not always apparent;
- Social media can retain community links even when community members move away from a locality;
- Social media opens up media opportunities as community members report and send in photos on YouTube and participate in media blogs and send in local reports – citizen journalism
- Twitter is short, sharp communication and has an important place in communicating core needs, concerns and ideas;
- Social media bring many young people into community discussion and participation- it is their way of communicating.

7. Importance of learning and research to a region

Learning as a focus

As noted earlier in this report on the section on *Effectiveness in Regional Economic Development*, it is suggested that strategies aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills were more likely to result in sustainable development than direct attempts to attract new businesses.

This requires investment in education, training and networking.

Supporting increased learning was found better than direct decision-making, in a case study of a systems approach to tourism and community engagement in regional development in central Australia (Friedel and Chewings, 2011).

The study indicated that a greater focus on the relationships amongst collaborating partners and sharing knowledge between each other would have achieved the purpose of the project more effectively.

Developing effective knowledge networks and management practices depends on building relationships and trust and from gradual sharing of values and beliefs over time.

Educational facilities are increasingly partnering with industry and organisations to ensure that curriculum content meets workplace requirements, to increase entrepreneurship; and to find workplace opportunities for graduates. This move could provide increased opportunity for a wider range of choice for students in Peel, where employment opportunities for youth in the 15-18 year age group are relatively scarce.

Research

Important areas for future research and consideration have been promoted by the Regional Australia Institute (in response to feedback in a survey of RDA Committees in which RDA Peel participated) these are:

1. An examination of population mobility trends in Australia's regions
2. Options for resolving land use conflict in regional development, particularly focusing on current conflicts between the resources sector and agriculture
3. New strategies for regional communities to manage fly-in, fly-out or drive-in, drive-out workforces
4. How we can best manage the long-term challenges of renewal after natural disasters
5. Options to solve the local infrastructure crisis
6. A long-term project is required to develop better sources of usable, accessible and authoritative data on regional development
7. A stock-take of the regional development research in Australia.

In its report, the RAI noted that, "in addition to local networks and knowledge, RDAs rely on government reports and online resources for information and ideas.

They are much less likely to be engaged with academic literature despite the diversity of work available from this source.

The ideas put forward in this study are important issues for the Peel to consider for future in-depth research.

Getting good, up-to-date and relevant information is challenging.

A good example of useful regional research is:- In New South Wales, five councils are participating in collaboration with the University of Wollongong (UOW) to develop the internal research capacities of the local authorities while undertaking research projects driven by the councils' own needs. Council employees undertake research degrees which are HECS-free, so the costs to the councils are minimised while they gain in-house qualified researchers. Councils are expected to share knowledge from the research (Sense, 2012).

Importance of cultural assets

In thinking of the development of a region, cultural assets should not be neglected. In a keynote address given by Chris Gibson, comment was made on the significance and contribution of festivals to rural and regional communities. This paper was given to the Australian Regional Economies Conference in Parkes, NSW, in 2009.

In a blog afterwards, he expressed his view that there was a growing sense among conference participants that cultural assets matter in economic development. "There was a demographic or culture change occurring amongst the conference participants themselves.

There is clearly an older, usually male, generation of regional development thinkers who have not really considered 'culture' a serious part of their universe." But "newbie's" who were "(not always) younger, usually female, with backgrounds in psychology or tourism rather than town planning" were aware of the importance of social processes and cultural knowledge to assist regional development (<http://culturemap.org.au/blog/chris-gibson/culture-regional-development-has-coin-dropped>).

The statement that a region "without culture is a poor one" is very true.

8. Social enterprise

Assisting social enterprise

"Social enterprises are businesses that trade to tackle social problems, improve communities, people's life chances, or the environment. They make their money from selling goods and services in the open market, but they reinvest their profits back into the business or the local community" (Social Enterprise UK)

A good local example is the Bendigo Bank Community partnership movement, including the Halls Head Branch, where the Bank runs a banking business but actively contributes back a % of profit to support community activities.

Simon Crean has indicated that one aim of Government is to empower communities to generate and retain their own wealth. One means of achieving this is social enterprise programs. (Tregilgas, 2010).

An overseas example of social enterprise is Social Enterprise UK a central organisation that provides resources, advice and assistance to social enterprises in the community. It also works with its members and partner organisations, including profit-making businesses supportive of the social enterprise movement, to promote the benefits of social enterprise to the country's decision makers.

The organisation says: “By influencing politicians and the political parties who shape policy development, we aim to remove barriers to social enterprises, and create a business environment that encourages their growth and success.”

(<http://www.engagementplus.com.au/recent-works/community-development>).

To be successful, social enterprises need to be grounded in community values and traditions, with committed people to run them. Governments can enable social and community enterprise through:-

- recognizing and, partnering in specific initiatives,
- building a supportive regulatory environment,
- enhancing access to technical and business assistance,
- providing direct financial assistance and/or
- leveraging investment and social venture capital,
- providing support for research.

(Barraket J. 2010).

9. Conclusion

Government, especially State and Local government, continues to be central to regional governance. A conclusion from a study of regional governance, in a rural and remote region of Central Western Queensland was that there was a need to reduce Federal-State conflict and duplication with Local Govt, to develop framework for regional devolution and coordination and streamline arrangements within the region (Brown and Bellamy, 2010). This conclusion could be applicable to many regions.

However, more effective devolution of resources, authority and coordinating capacity within the region is required. The challenge is how to build this coordinating capacity in a non-competitive fashion, in an environment of limited resources, i.e., building on, rather than at the expense of capacities within the existing institutions in the region.

This report has indicated how collaborative leadership, community engagement and participation and investment in social capital, together with learning and research can help meet the challenge of regional development within the Peel.

Appendix 1 - Peel's regional priorities for the next 20 years

(Source: RDA Peel Business Plan 2012-13)

Productivity issues:

Productivity growth is a national issue. The nation's productivity performance has slowed by one third over the past decade. As Australia's population ages, and this effect is especially felt in Peel with its higher than average proportion of aged people, the need to increase productivity – producing more output with proportionately fewer workers – is key to achieving increased living standards as measured by Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS
Develop a local workforce that meets local industry demands – present & future	Link the skills demands of the region's industries to training and education opportunities	Participate in development of a Workforce Development Strategy
Maximise capacity of residents to participate in education, further education and training and employment in the labour market	Identify and address local issues impacting on education, skills and jobs	Facilitate implementation of the Regional Education, Skills & Jobs Plan
Improve education, training and transition to employment outcomes for all young people	Facilitate implementation of the Partnership Brokers Program	Participate as a member of the Partnership Broker's Peel Reference Group
A culture of innovation and research and development is adopted in the Peel, supported by governments	Developing stronger partnerships with Universities and Government agencies having responsibility for relevant initiatives (e.g. AusIndustry, Enterprise Connect and the WA Department of Commerce)	Facilitate partnerships between agencies and key stakeholders
Maximise the opportunities presented to the region by rollout of the National Broadband Network	Develop innovative service delivery models in telework, e-commerce, e-education and e-health	Facilitate partnerships between agencies and key stakeholders
Land use and transport planning reflects regional needs	Lobbying Government for more effective land use planning strategies relevant to the Region's special needs	Support relevant responses and advice to Government
Effective intra and inter-regional transport links are established	Develop and implement a regional Transport Strategy	Participate in development of a Regional Transport Strategy
Businesses improve productivity	Ensure businesses have appropriate support mechanisms to assist with implementing improving productivity	Facilitate approaches to Federal Government for provision of support mechanisms

Sustainability issues:

Development pressures, combined with decreasing rainfall and the real threats of climate change, particularly to the coastal areas of the region, are placing the unique Peel environment in a position where decisive action is needed by policy makers and the community.

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS
Peel-Harvey catchment and estuary that is healthy, vibrant and sustainable	Develop and implement core enabler projects specified in the Catchment conditions and priorities, Peel-Harvey catchment 2011 report	Support approaches to Governments to fund feasibility studies, project plans and business cases related to core enabler projects
Climate change impacts are understood, adapted to and mitigated as far as possible	a) Commission research into the local impacts of climate change b) implement WALGAs Towards Climate Resilient Communities program c) Conduct erosion and wave monitoring in susceptible coastal areas	Support approaches to Governments to fund research and modelling, support implementation of WALGA Towards Climate Resilient Communities program
Investment from Clean Energy Future package into the region is maximised	Identify potential projects and areas of Clean Energy Future investment	Identify potential Clean Energy Future funded projects and initiatives, support approaches to Federal Government
Use of renewable energy across the region is maximised	Examine potential for use of renewable in the Peel	Identify sources and applications for, and promote use of renewable energy, support approaches to Federal Government
Other regional sustainability improvements	Propose initiatives and projects that directly support regional sustainability improvements	Support, facilitate and advise on development of initiatives and projects facilitating regional sustainability improvements

Liveability issues

Liveable communities offer a high quality of life and well-being which encompasses physical and mental health, happiness and life satisfaction. This includes the need for improved planning to ensure residents and visitors have accessibility - All people should be able to easily meet their education, employment, recreation, service and consumer needs within a reasonable distance of their home. Pressures caused by consistently high population growth in the Peel region mean there is a growing gap between real and ideal liveability conditions

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	ACTIONS
Residents of the Peel region enjoy a high quality of life	Analyse recommendations of PATM II and develop strategies to address issues, including gap analysis	Commence mapping of community, social, education and health sectors, Support approaches to Government for funding to address issues
Effective intra and inter-regional transport links are established Existing industries are sustainable and emerging innovative industries are established in the Peel Peel region has a diversified and vibrant economy	Develop and implement a regional Transport Strategy Develop a prospectus and regional investment plan outlining regional strengths to attract business investment Develop and implement a regional Economic Development Strategy	Participate in development of a regional Transport Strategy Participate in investment plan & prospectus development, Support approaches to Government Participate in development and implementation of a regional Economic Development Strategy
Peel residents have better than average full employment prospects	Develop and implement a regional Economic Development Strategy; Develop and implement a regional Digital Economy Development Strategy; Implement the Regional Education, Skills & Jobs Plan; Facilitate implementation of the Indigenous Economic Development Strategy	Participate in development and implementation of a regional Economic Development Strategy, Develop and implement a regional Digital Economy Development Strategy; implement the RESJ plan; facilitate implementation of the IEDS
Infrastructure development is well planned, based on multi/common-use models	Coordinate infrastructure design and development between stakeholders and developing bodies	Promote opportunities for infrastructure development to Federal Government
Investment from Government sources and the private sector into the Peel region is maximised	Develop projects on a regional needs basis that are able to attract investment under the Clean Energy Future package, Royalties for Regions, the Regional Development Australia Fund, etc.	Assist with project identification and development, Promote developed projects to Federal Government for funding
Aspirational goals of the community are achieved	Conduct progress assessment of Peel 2020 Sustainability Strategy	Participate in assessment

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Appendix 2

Key Factors

Strategic Question 1

Q1. How would you like to see this region grow and develop in the next 10 years:

- More commitment to making the place more beautiful,
- Further opportunities available for quality education & training.
- Retain people to stay in this community.
- See the region grow to the east, improve transportation between the region.
- Grow in stature, market the region
- Growth and development balanced with environmental sustainability
- Not to grow too much more but stay as a rural reasonable getaway location, retaining the identity and historical aspects.
- Peel region goes east & south remember the region as a whole.
- Market the smaller towns. Remember to link the town's not just focus on Mandurah.
- Identity –can't see an identity for Mandurah –themes for the peel region need to be developed.
- Mandurah is seen as the deep south with local town hanging off of the city. Link them as part of Peel.
- Focus on a safe environment
- Integrate FIFO & DIDO into the region.
- Grow the diversity of the business (small & large) for the towns outside of Mandurah.
- Promote cross promotion for businesses not just those based in Mandurah.
- Peel region is not marketed well, e.g. as is Margaret River region. Huge opportunities to promote this region which is rich in activities
- Agriculture is very diverse for the Peel region, need to keep the agricultural area sustainable.
- Identify what products can be marketed, what tools can be used to see what can work. e.g. PCCI, internet, social media, NBN rollout.
- What was the Peel Region named after? Is Peel the wrong name – look at rebadging??
- Brand the region – linked to values, uniqueness
- Choose an area or a couple of areas to become centre of excellence. EG environmental, educational.

- Tourism will have a huge flow on effect to having people want to visit or live in the Peel
- Peel region has 5 local government areas, need to work as one and in close co-operation at regional level.
- Peel requires vibrancy within each town within the region to retain the young people

Strategic Question 2

Q2. Do you have major concerns/uncertainties which could impact on the regions ability to create the changes required?

- The natural environment needs to be looked after by one focus group, which can have multiple partners.
- Federal Government sees the Peel Region as part of the Perth area (particularly Mandurah). Need to find a way to keep the Peel Region as a stand alone region
- Changes to the local government boundaries will impact on future planning.
- There are services which are funded to cover the Peel region as a whole but are unable to logistically reach the outer towns. Lack of outreach.
- If we become part of Perth we will loose Metropolitan development tax, Royalties for Regions funding and other funding applied to regional areas.
- Strong need for good Public transport from town to town within the region
- Residents need to support the identity of the region – buy ins
- Housing – not enough for the population across the board, in particular those with a lower income.
- Residents aren't proud of the region, the identity needs to be stronger and we need to be more vocal and involved and up to speed of the changes
- The Peel lacks visionary leadership

Strategic Question 3

Q3. Are there risks involved in creating changes for the region – e.g. is this a good place to start a business or a family?

- FIFO & DIDO community is large within the region. Many residents are here for a limited time as they believe the mining boom will cease.
- Mandurah is a great area to bring up children, Pinjarra SHS & John Tonkin are IPS, (Independent Public Schools) Coodenup and Halls Head will be IPS during 2013. South Halls Head Primary is IPS. Many private schools in area. Education options are improving. Naplan results are low but improving.
- The region has had rapid population growth with lack of employment opportunities within the region. Need local jobs for local people.

- 25-39 year olds want more from the region, different restaurants, job opportunities etc
- Encourage people to move away then return with new & fresh ideas
- Towns need to answer the question, are they a tourist destination or are they just a town? Expectations of tourists/new residents coming to these towns, eg coffee at 8pm
- Poor Signage (no fwy sign to Dwellingup) or many other places in the region.
- Increased Multi-culturism in the region, which makes for a more interesting population mix.
- Fuel & general cost of living has created a further gap between the high and low income earners.
- Skills development training is required to provide additional employment for youth and FIFO workers who may wish to settle in the Peel.

Strategic Question 4

Q4. What pivotal events have impacted on the region in the past, good or bad that should be remembered in the future?

- Railway Perth-Mandurah
- Extensions to the Freeway
- Logging in Peel region
- NBN rollout
- Environmental – estuary & opening of the cut
- Entertainment precinct MPAC, cinema and other entertainment venues.
- Growth boom
- Marina precinct
- Festivals, eg Crab, Boating, Stretch
- Canals (Mandurah & South Yunderup)
- Re-reversal of Mandurah Terrace
- Bushfires
- Alcoa, BHP, Boddington Gold large industry for the region.
- FIFO
- Waroona Dam closure – reopening
- Healthcare and access to Peel hospital and medical services.
- Funding issues for Aged Care (outlining areas)

- Public Transport to Pinjarra –
- Education (High schools in Mandurah, Universities etc)
- Retail (online)

Strategic Question 5

Q5. What do you believe are the strengths of the region?

- Waterways & rivers
- Natural environment
- Natural knowledge of our mature residents
- Cultural history (Linked in with the waterways/rivers etc), spiritual values
- Proximity to Perth, and to the south west
- Diversity of sea to scarp
- Increased multiculturalism, indigenous understanding
- Performing Arts Centre (in particular the building)/Cultural mix/restaurants
- High level of volunteering (throughout the whole region)
- Solar panels – highest number in WA.
- International events eg Classic 100 (bike race), Fairbridge Festival, Triathlon
- Mineral resources
- Proximity of the towns within the region
- Affordable cost of housing (eg rental or purchase)
- Sporting and recreation clubs within the region
- COM educational program eg sustainability workshops
- Range of facilities for aged people eg Ac Cent, Retirement villages, groups and clubs.

Strategic question 6

Q6. Are there ways that the region could do a better job in influencing government and government policies?

- Speak as one voice for the region
- Reduce the duplication of the Not For Profit service providers within the region
- Amalgamate regional reports and bring them together as a resource
- Community has been engaged in planning for too long and are exhausted!! Get on with the action.

- Improve transparency of outcomes from funded projects – show the evidence & results.
- Profile the region, make it visually attractive
- Major weaknesses within the local media on reporting future growth and development of the region
- Community needs to be educated as to how to lobby to government. e.g. Dwellingup did a “friend raising” event not fundraising. Invited the politician to promote the area, facilities etc
- Review leadership always having to be from the top down and increase inclusivity of community advisory groups to assist planning.

Strategic question 7

Q7. Are there opportunities for regional leaders to be more progressive and innovative than they have been to date?

- Leaders are afraid of failure and do not want to take risks
- Acknowledge the leaders, don't take them for granted
- Involve more age groups/demographics within the leaders group
- Get outside input and explore other opportunities for innovation (more stimulation)
- Form mastermind groups
- Utilise our local Members of Parliament to act as change agents.
- Increase the pool of Local Councillors & CEO's (many of whom are not adequately qualified or trained)
- Broaden the definition of leadership

Appendix 3

Forming STEEP

1. Social drivers include demographic projections, changing employment structures, recreational pursuits, community involvement:

- Population change (migrants, temporary & permanent) FIFO
- Ageism
- Population change
- Social impact on health care e.g. obesity.
- Volunteer organisation
- Mobility of workforce
- Gender roles
- Instant gratification
- Up-skilling of the workforce
- Jobs superseded
- Ramification of people working from home
- Consumerism/Brand materialism
- Cultural Activities – festivals
- Social media
- Connectivity of community & business
- External Family support.
- Migration.
- Family dynamics.
- Substance abuse, alcoholism and gambling

2. Technological drivers include rate of technological change, new technology developments, social media.

- Privacy and Security related to IT
- Technological sophistication
- Connectivity
- Community Expectations eg free WIFI
- Technology moves faster than Govt
- Increase in IT cost
- Ability to innovate

- Changing manufacturing identity
- Acknowledge age differential in use with technology
- Democratisation of the news
- Crowd sourcing
- Cashless society
- Social media –
- Impact of technology on Entertainment/Music
- Online shopping

3. Economic drivers include outlooks, macroeconomic trends such as trade agreements, marketing, pricing and value of the \$, partnership agreement:

- Acknowledging income differential
- Superannuation
- Merging high and low income housing
- Salary differential
- Employees are leaving lower paid jobs.
- Future for unskilled Mine workers
- Rising interest rates to cover natural disasters
- Lack of customer service
- Industry diversity
- Competing markets
- Need for two income families
- Regional infrastructure – close to ports, rail, etc
- High unemployment 15-18yo
- Lack of local available land for large industry.
- Rising Government charges.

4. Environmental drivers include issues such as international environmental agreements, recycling techniques, maintenance and public awareness of environmental concerns:

- energy costs
- Identity of natural environments
- Climate change
- Mosquitoes influx
- Alternative energies.

- Downside to Government initiatives. e.g. solar panel costs
- Fighting inappropriate development
- Wildlife habitat/rehabilitation
- Tied to the environment economically
- Water security
- Sustainable housing
- Water sensitive design
- Industry/household use of water
- Partnering with other environmental groups
- Cultural assets, such as MPAC.

5. Government & political drivers may be legislative or electoral. They include issues such as increased litigation, local or international alliances.

- short time frame between elections – hard to achieve long term planning
- Over governed – too many levels – who is responsible for what
- Duplication of services
- Red tape (stamp duty, land tax, capital gains tax – taxation in general)
- Financial assistance/support for small business (turnover under \$1M) could be lack of marketing
- Lack of political will
- Risk averse of government investing fear of failure
- Legislations with retail industry (eg insurance)
- Legislation impacting indigenous owners (site protection)
- Decision making to be made locally
- Bearcats don't understand the region & their limitations
- Small amounts of money being handed out to many organisations and isn't beneficial
- Globalisation changes
- They promise more than they deliver

Appendix 4

Division of drivers into Contextual, Transactional and Operational categories.

Contextual drivers.

Short time frame between elections
Over governed
Financial support for small business
Lack of political will
Risk averse Governments
Globalisation changes
Legislation impacting retail industry
Population change
Ageism
Mobility of workers
Gender roles
Jobs superseded
Need for Instant gratification
Up-skilling of workforce
Consumerism
Social media
Privacy and security of IT
Technology uptake
Increased costs of technology
Changing manufacturing
Cashless society
On line shopping
Impact of technology on entertainment/ music
Superannuation
Salary differentials
Merging high and low income housing
Rising interest rates to cover natural disasters
Competing markets
Energy costs
Downside to Govt initiatives e.g. solar panel costs
Water security
Need for Two income families
Climate change
Unemployment
Duplication of services
Future for unskilled mine workers
Rising health care costs
Changing family dynamics
Crowd sourcing
Migration

Transactional drivers

Legislation impacting indigenous owners
External Family support
Ramification of people working from home
Connectivity of community and business
Substance abuse, alcoholism and gambling
Small amounts of grant money being handed out to many organisations, non-beneficial
Identity of natural environments
Alternative energies
Fighting inappropriate development
Tied to the environment economically
Sustainable housing
Water sensitive design
Industry/household use of water
Partnering with other environmental groups
Acknowledging income differential
Ability to innovate using technology
Acknowledge age differential in use of technology
Access to health care
Bureaucrats not understanding regional needs
Employees are leaving lower paid jobs
Industry diversity
Regional infrastructure- close to rail, ports etc.
High unemployment 15-18 yr olds
Connectivity with Technology
Community expectation of free technology
Democratisation of the news
Mosquito influx

Organisational drivers

Volunteer organisations
Industry diversification
Lack of customer service
Lack of available local land for large industry
Social impacts of health care e.g. obesity
Wildlife habitat/rehabilitation
Increased costs of maintaining housing developments
Cultural assets such as MPAC
Gender roles in leadership e.g. govt, councils
Cultural Activities and festivals

Appendix 5

What if's

- Superbug plague
- Tidal surges
- Global economic downturn
- Amazing alternative energy
- Wider view (Scandinavia)
- Commercial fish farms
- Move Murdoch marine science to Peel
- Peel “cultural epicentre”
- Internet wipe-out (NBN fails)
- Banking system failure
- Terrorism
- Environmental disaster (extreme drought)
- Foreign ownership
- Agricultural acquisition
- Self-sufficiency (food & energy production)
- Invest in our youth - Gen Y
- Vibrant urban development
- Indigenous reconciliation
- Increased online Education
- Restoration to natural environment
- Cost of health escalates to extreme if we all live to 130
- War
- World Plague

Appendix 6

List of Participants

Monique Powell

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