



An Australian Government Initiative



Regional
Development
Australia
GREATER WHITSUNDAYS



2022-2023 Report Card

Based on the RDA Charter, our regional strategic context, our regional priorities and our regional current issues/opportunities, RDA GW plays a critical lead and/or supporting role in objectives such as:

- Support key stakeholders' project opportunities by supplying information pertaining to grants.
- Participate and provide value to major economic development initiatives.
- Support regional stakeholders in their liaison with the Australian Government and other stakeholders.
- Follow up and provide feedback to all stakeholders on critical regional issues and opportunities aligned to growth, development, trade, and investment.
- Foster cross regional and cross sector partnerships and collaborations across all stakeholders to ensure a balanced approach - additionally the collaborative approach allows for the sharing of resources in support of regional aspirations and, when implemented effectively, gives the Greater Whitsundays region a greater voice.
- Develop consistent regional messaging.
- Promote regional strengths and opportunities.
- Provide regular feedback on critical issues and priority activities for the region to the Australian Government.
- Participate in and contribute to regional economic development studies, initiatives, and forums.
- Liaise with businesses and industry organisations to understand regional growth opportunities and identify regulatory and infrastructure constraints.
- Provide a coordinated approach to regional leadership and advocacy.
- Build relationships and partnerships with all three levels of government and regional organisations.
- Identify projects of regional significance that will deliver economic growth and further opportunity.
- Build a greater array of investment-ready projects throughout the region and connect these project proponents with funding sources, both public and private.

Message from the Chair

The 2022/23 year will be remembered as a year of major challenges stemming from the ongoing recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the emergence of major challenges that underpin liveability within the Greater Whitsunday region, along with the continued pressures and impacts of inflation, interest rate rises and the lack of available workforce to fill required jobs. Combined these economic and liveability pressures are having a profound impact on regional development, growth, trade and investment activity and the implication on the regional workforce and regional population.

RDA GW has and continues to work hard in fostering a collaborative agenda in the Greater Whitsunday region. Within the region many interest groups, economic development agencies and business entities carry some respective responsibility toward achieving regional development and growth aspirations and at the same time seek to ensure their members and stakeholders are supportive of the actions. Working together and directly sharing resources, skills, and capabilities the Greater Whitsunday region can achieve its aspirations. RDA GW's

function is very much focused at supporting and co-leading these collaborative actions to support regional growth and development aspirations.

I take this opportunity to thank the RDA GW Committee and Staff for their ongoing activity and support along with the Australian Government and departments that administer our operations and fund the work we do. I also wish to thank the many stakeholders, state agencies, local government, peak bodies, community, and private businesses that have and continue to work with RDA GW - your efforts in supporting RDA GW and the region are often not fully recognised but we say to you - thank you.

I look forward to continued activity into 2023/24 and beyond.

Jeff Stewart Harris
Acting Chair
Regional Development Australia Greater Whitsundays

2022/2023 Key Projects

RDA GW helped to lead the delivery of the below initiatives:

- Women in Leadership Program
- Greater Whitsundays Regional Housing Alliance
- Greater Whitsundays Agribusiness Futures Alliance Program
- Greater Whitsundays Aquaculture and Agriculture Skills Hub
- Designated Area Migration Agreement Opportunity



2022/2023 Collaborations

RDA GW supported 70 key initiatives, including:



- Advanced manufacturing program and industry and sector transformation
- Aerospace and aviation launch site development
- Aviation Training Academy
- Bio Commodities Research Centre
- Bio-foods investment and development
- Bowen Marine Industrial Precinct
- Bowen Pipeline Project
- Bruce Highway upgrades
- Capricornia Energy Hub
- Clermont saleyards upgrade
- CRCNA Agribusiness Export Study
- Development of Regional METS Export Strategy and Services
- Environmental Infrastructure Program
- Fast track upgrade of Bruce Highway between Rockhampton and Ayr
- Food processing plant feasibility plant in Bowen
- Future digital and mobile capacity needs assessment
- Future of Work Program
- Gas for Regions Project
- Gilmore Space Port
- Greater Whitsundays Bio-futures Precinct (GWBFP)
- Greater Whitsundays Agriculture and Aquaculture Digital Futures Project
- Greater Whitsundays AgTech Futures Project - Regional Strategy and Virtual Hub
- Greater Whitsundays Designated Area Migration Agreement
- Greater Whitsundays Digital Forum Network
- Greater Whitsundays Irrigation Futures Project
- Greater Whitsundays Sports Centre of Excellence
- Housing project - place based housing solutions
- Isaac Trail Network
- Local Jobs Program
- Mackay Isaac Whitsunday Hydrogen Cluster
- Mackay Isaac Whitsunday Jobs of Future
- Mackay Isaac Whitsunday Regional Water Strategy
- Mackay northern access upgrade
- Mackay port access, Bruce Highway to Mackay - Slade Point Road
- Mackay Water Futures Project
- Migration review
- Missing link road works
- Opportunities for sustainable and diversified economic growth
- Peaks Downs Highways upgrade
- Pioneer Burdekin Pumped Hydro Project
- Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Trails
- Prioritisation of mobile black spot projects in MIW region
- Proserpine – Shute Harbour upgrade
- Public space and culture infrastructure
- Queensland Future Skills Partnership
- Regional Connectivity Program and Mobile Blackspot Projects
- Regional Economic Development Road Map
- Regional Flood Levy Projects
- Regional Transport and Freight Strategy
- Regional university hubs
- Resources Centre of Excellence (RCOE) Stage 2 and 3
- Review of the Developing Northern Australian White Paper
- Revolution Aerospace Autonomous Drone Project
- Safety and resilience infrastructure
- SME business skills development
- Social infrastructure development
- Trade and investment opportunities for growth
- Upgrade of Peak Downs Highway
- Upgrade to Hamilton Plains and Goorganga
- Walkerston Bypass
- Waste Mining Water Reuse Project
- Waste to Energy
- Whitsunday Mountain Bike Trails
- Workforce attraction and development

2022/2023 Financial Support

RDA GW invested direct cash resources towards 9 projects:

- Development of Regional METS Export Strategy and Services
- Greater Whitsundays Agribusiness Futures Alliance Program (GWAFAFAP)
- Greater Whitsundays Designated Area Migration Agreement
- Greater Whitsundays Housing Alliance Project
- Options toward a Regional Sports Centre of Excellence
- Regional Economic Development Road Map
- Regional Infrastructure Register
- Split Spaces Business Entrepreneurs Program
- Women in Leadership Program

2022/2023 Partners

RDA GW partners with 79 organisations to support and promote economic development in the region.



2022/2023 Key Statistics

Gross output

\$57.99B/annum

Gross exports

\$35.08B/annum

Total regional imports

\$19.26B/annum

Mining and METS output

\$33.82B/annum

Agriculture output

\$2.97B/annum

Tourisms output

\$1.348B/annum

97,582 jobs in the region

18,884 mining
10,3434 health care and social services
8,680 construction
7,799 retail
7,332 tourism
6,539 agriculture and food production

Population

180,889

4 airports carrying
1.51M passengers
(inbound and
outbound)

Almost 2M visitors
to the region

Home to 8
traditional owners'
groups in the region

More than 25 research
organisations
employing 3,633 people

Emerging and diversifying industries

- **Space Launch Site and Autonomous drone movement testing** - The total market size of the aerospace industry in Australia was estimated to reach over \$7B in 2022.
- **Bio fermentation** - It is estimated the Fermented Future Foods industry could produce close to \$1.1B worth of retail products and up to 2,020 jobs nationally by 2030, and synthetic biology could underpin a thriving Australian bioeconomy worth up to \$27B by 2040.
- **Protected cropping** - The protected cropping industry is the fastest growing food sector in Australia, with approximately 20% (\$1.2B) of the value of total vegetable production in Australia now grown under protective structures.
- **Aquaculture** - Over \$116M per annum in production for the region, which is over 50% of the Queensland aquaculture annual production value.
- **New protein production systems** - Farmed algae.
- **Renewable energy production**
 - 15 current renewables energy plants - 760MW capacity
 - 32 proposed renewable energy plants - 15,811MW capacity
 - 2 under construction energy plants - 454MW capacity

Case Study: Place-based housing solutions

In October 2022, RDA Greater Whitsundays (RDA GW) and Greater Whitsunday Communities (GWC) partnered to deliver a Housing Project to identify potential solutions to the housing needs in the Greater Whitsunday region, at both a social and economic level. Supporting the delivery of the Greater Whitsundays Housing Project was the formation of a Greater Whitsundays Housing Alliance. The Alliance is a collaboration of stakeholder peak bodies from across the housing continuum.



> The Greater Whitsunday Housing Project included:

- Roundtable event (December 2022) – which attracted some 60 leading groups from the region with a direct and indirect role in housing provision across the full continuum. The Roundtable was the precursor activity to establishing the project, the Greater Whitsunday Housing Alliance and being successful with the provision of regional investment to support the project.
- Research project that delivered the Greater Whitsunday Housing Playbook.
- Housing Summit (August 2023) and an Action Plan as an outcome of the Summit.

The Greater Whitsunday Housing Project is now formalising a governance framework for the Alliance, to allow it to continue to operate, receive investment and manage projects and funding. The Alliance has commenced working with public and private parties toward housing solutions that are place-based and meet sub regional needs and priorities and that are aligned with the recommendations in the Playbook and the Action Plan from the Housing Summit. The Alliance is also engaging with Ministers and agencies at local, state and national scale and is providing feedback and views toward a range of housing enquiries, programs and funding initiatives.

Case Study: Women in Leadership Program

Stage 1 of the Women in Leadership Program delivered by RDA GW offered an integrated multi focus program of leadership development. The program offered two distinct leadership development offerings, including participants completing two full day workshops of what are effectively micro credentials. In addition, the program offered all participants access to local and regional leadership mentors, masterclasses, and industry networking opportunities. Mentors were comprised of local and regional individuals who had current or past high levels of leadership experience across business and the community. Local trainers were contracted to facilitate the workshops and masterclasses.



Stage 2 of the Women in Leadership Thrive program provided further personal and professional skill development and consisted of an additional ten months and five 2-hour workshops for the current cohort. Mentoring continued through to completion of the program. The benefits of personal and professional development have been far-reaching for the Women in Leadership Program participants - including career satisfaction and improved mental health.

[!\[\]\(9dfdaff1d86ba3c1f8353b4d1b61b8c5_img.jpg\) Women in Leadership Program - Participant Experiences](#)





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Local people creating local opportunities

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