

NOTES TO SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE INQUIRY - JOBS FOR THE FUTURE IN REGIONAL AREAS

- Nationally - regions across Australia in transition in terms of jobs – shifting from agriculture and manufacturing to health, education, tourism/food/accommodation (RAI work) and will **continue to shift into future**.
- **Myths** – no jobs in the country and people leaving regions for the capitals – refer RAI work vacancies and mobility
- Since 2016, internet vacancies have been growing at a faster rate in regional Australia compared to capital cities. In July 2019, there were 46,324 job vacancies outside the mainland state capitals, across a range of occupation and skill levels. Most vacancies are in professional medical and engineering jobs, and in automotive and engineering trade jobs
- USG – very much a region in transition from heavy industry, coal-fired power
- Regions in transition – identity crisis
- **USG Map - over \$15 billion investment** and potentially several thousand jobs – many won't eventuate, but either way, whether they happen or not is largely out of the hands of the community. Decisions are made in other places or countries.
- Not there yet – region at a **vulnerable** time – community 'cynically optimistic' – been through the cycle before
- Main interest by LG/SGC is how to use this private investment/growth and leverage lasting benefits, so if/when future downturn occurs, we have at least **built our local capacity and resilience** to bounce back a bit quicker each time.
- Central governments need to help us achieve this – not just facilitate the economic investment itself.
- There are **30 regional centres in Australia** with a population of over 30,000 – none are in South Australia. The three Upper Spencer Gulf cities have strong local support and capacity to grow. Require a strong partnership and genuine effort from all levels of Government to ensure this can be achieved and the benefits for our communities maximised.
- Still face a number of **intractable challenges** including:
 - Need to **diversify economy** – Remain vulnerable to large, single industries
 - **Improving Liveability** - Negative external perception and image of the three cities
 - Need more tailored, regionally driven solution - High **unemployment** and socio-economic disadvantage
 - **Duplication** and lack of coordination across agencies and levels of govt (ie three of everything)
- Must plan for and invest in the enabling infrastructure and services to underpin the economic growth.
- This includes **optimising our strategic transport** infrastructure across the road, rail, air and sea port network; providing locally supported **access to higher education**; improving liveability of our three regional cities; protecting our natural assets and **landscapes** and strengthening regional decision making and governance.
- Seeking strong government collaboration around workforce, infrastructure and development planning to ensure **flow-on impacts and any unintended consequences** of this new investment are managed and positive benefits for the local community are maximised.
- Balancing access to **short-term construction and longer-term permanent workforce**;

- Ensuring the right mix of worker and family **accommodation**;
- Strengthening local input into state **development planning** processes;
- Allowing Councils to **rate major development** and thus contribute towards local infrastructure and services;
- Managing **waste and circular economy** opportunities from this growth;
- Ensuring enough local recreation, community and health **services** to service the increased workforce;
- Managing the increase in **construction and commuter traffic**;
- Minimising impact of short term workforce on **existing sectors such as tourism and defence**.
- USG **already facing a skills shortage** for a wide range of skilled and unskilled roles. (vacancies health, medical, professionals, trades)
- (RAI - In the medium term, the health care and social assistance industry is expected to require another 85,000 workers in the regions through to 2023, followed by education (32,000 workers). This will mean intensifying competition across the regions to secure the people that each region needs in order to grow.
- **Migration** to fill short term gaps – how do we plan for this and encourage permanent relocation to also help boost population.
- **'Growing our own' workforce** - longer-term investment into improving locally delivered and industry relevant higher education and training
- Future jobs will **require higher levels of skills/qualifications**, but RRR has a huge gap already and not improving - **Naphine report** – highlights current university system is failing regions.
- **COTEC/Uni Hub** – local solution, backed by Federal Regional Study Hubs/University Centre – critical to ensure they succeed and are linked closely to delivering university qualifications to meet local industry need.
- Also need state support – workforce development, not just 'university study' – NSW a good example in supporting **CUC's \$17 million**
- (Highlight Study Hubs application process \$16m into 8 hubs – then the rules changed, so we were shortchanged)
- High and persistent **unemployment** – not easy to fix and not a straight match for vacancies now and into future – needs to be a more tailored, personalised, regionally driven solutions.
- Employment Facilitator Services and the **Regional Employment Trials** program in 10 disadvantaged regions, including Yorke and Mid North. Want to extend that to the USG (Pirie, Port Augusta, Whyalla)
- SA Govt awarded Federal contract to deliver a pilot/trial 2018-2020.
- \$200k pa to employ local facilitator to work with local businesses, service providers, job seekers to develop local solutions, plus access to 1m for local projects (Local Employment Initiative fund)
- Significant progress and positive outcomes – supporting over 350 job seekers.

Upper Spencer Gulf – Top Five Industries of Employment:

- **Port Augusta** - Correctional and Detention Services (4.6%), Hospitals (4.1%), Primary Education (4.0%), Supermarkets (3.6%), Takeaway Food Services (3.0%)
- **Port Pirie** - Copper, Silver, Lead and Zinc Smelting and Refining (10.1%), Aged Care Services (4.4%), Hospitals (4.2%), Supermarkets (3.5%), Social Assistance Services (3.2%)
- **Whyalla** - Iron Smelting and Steel Manufacturing (12.3%), Iron Ore Mining (7.3%), Hospitals (4.2%), Supermarkets (3.9%), Primary Education (3.4%)

Upper Spencer Gulf – Data Snapshot:

2016 Census	SA
Total residents	1,676,649
Aboriginal population	2.0%
Unemployment	7.5%
Bachelor level qualifications	18.5%
Current university study	16.2%
Vocational level qualifications	25%
No motor vehicle	7.5%
No internet at home	17%
Homeless rate per 10,000 people	37
SEIFA Index of socio-economic disadvantage (state decile)	
SEIFA Index of education and occupation (state decile)	
Employment in Professional Roles	20.3
Council Data	
Rate income 2020	
Rateable properties	
Infrastructure Assets	

PORT AUGUSTA	PORT PIRIE	WHYALLA
13,808	17,364	21,828
18.3%	3.6%	4.7%
9.7%	10.7%	12.4%
7.9%	7.1%	8.6%
3.1%	4.3%	5.7%
24%	25%	28%
9.6%	9.5%	12.7%
27%	28%	25%
77	39	40
1	1	1
1	1	1
14.7	13.7	14.7
\$19.9m	\$18.4m	\$21.1m
7,740	10,286	12,034
\$187m	\$258m	\$259m