

MEDIA RELEASE

WRI WELCOMES REGIONAL POLICY ANNOUNCEMENT REGIONS 2030: UNLOCKING OPPORTUNITY

WRI welcomes the Government's recently launched policy statement for rural, regional and remote Australia: Regions 2030 Unlocking Opportunity.

"We believe this is an important attempt to link-up programs across key outcome areas and to create a more integrated regional development framework. It's pleasing to note the more confident approach to promoting the economic and social role regions play in delivering prosperity to cities and the nation." said WRI General Manager, Wendy Mason.

The Regions 2030 statement outlines the government's vision for regional Australia and the key initiatives helping to achieve that vision through investment and activity across five areas:

- jobs and economic development;
- infrastructure;
- health;
- education; and
- communications.

"Recognition that a 'one size fits all' approach to regional policy does not work is also a positive step towards effective policy that respects and acknowledges the different needs and experience of inland communities," said Ms Mason.

An Independent Review into Regional, Remote and Rural Education is welcome as it will consider the challenges that impact on the learning outcomes of students in regional, rural and remote communities. Due to report by the end of 2017, we look forward to insights about innovative ways to help these students succeed at school and in their transition to further study, training and employment.

This expanded focus on skills, alongside infrastructure with a review of health and medical education, and the plan to open more integrated medical and health schools in regional areas is particularly positive. With an ageing population, higher incidence of chronic disease and workforce challenges around access to primary health care and aged care services, this will expand opportunities for regional students, deliver better services and support increased inbound investment into regional economies.

BACKGROUND

WRI is the only dedicated think-tank and economic consultancy in Australia dedicated to supporting regional economic development and jobs growth in inland Australia. Our goal is to give inland Australia a stronger voice about its future in public policy.

If you would like to talk to WRI about how it can help your business, organisation or community with their economic research needs, please contact our consultants on (02) 6333 4000.

For interviews with Wendy Mason, General Manager of the Western Research Institute, please call 02 6333 4000.