



Regional
Development
Australia

P I L B A R A



An Australian Government Initiative

Business Plan

2021-2022



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Disclaimer

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Executive Summary

Our Plan – 2021-2022

The Business Plan 2021-2022 (and Budget) builds on Regional Development Australia's (RDAP) work in the last financial year and the strategic directions outlined in RDAP's *Strategic Plan 2021-2024*, endorsed by the RDAP Committee and Local Stakeholders. The Strategic Plan and Business Plan reflect high level responsiveness in leveraging the Pilbara's significant competitive advantages, addressing key enablers of growth, and mobilising regional talent, skills, and assets to achieve sustainable economic development.

Key focus areas align to the economic priorities and activities in RDAP's Charter,¹ drawn from the Commonwealth's regional development policy. Regional Development Australia's (RDA) Charter was amended by the Federal Government in 2020 to redirect the focus of RDA Committees from planning, to leveraging State, regional and local planning through an increased focus on brokering and negotiating regional outcomes. RDAP's Strategic Plan reflects this shift with a strong emphasis on intelligence-based decision-making and successfully leveraging partnerships across the region. The latter being key to further facilitating Pilbara economic outcomes and strategic positioning necessary to ensure sustained economic growth, both in the context of shifting commodity markets and economic resilience to better resist economic shocks (highlighted by Covid-19).

While the previous mining boom and subsequent downturn and Covid-19 Pandemic have given rise to economic uncertainty, both have consistently identified vulnerabilities in the performance of the Pilbara economy including limited economic sectors and markets; a volatile cyclical housing market; and access to a skilled work ready workforce. While these are foreseeable elements that must be addressed, RDAP and its partners are also operating in a unique global crisis marked by a rapidly shifting environment which commands adaptability and adoption of measured approaches. This complexity must be addressed collectively through identifying and understanding current

¹ Government of Australia, Regional Development Australia, *Regional Development Australia Charter*. Available at: <https://www.rda.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/rda-charter.pdf>

and emerging economic opportunities and risks and developing appropriate responses to their management (see 'Strategic context and regional priorities' for further information).

The foundations of growth outlined in RDAP's *Strategic Plan 2021-2024* are:

- Business development and economic diversification incorporating leveraging existing industry strengths, identifying diversification opportunities, establishing the Pilbara as a centre for excellence in renewable energy, and promotion of investment opportunities.
- Skilled workforce attraction and development incorporating skills identification and development and Government advocacy for initiatives that build sustainable skilled and unskilled human capital.
- Evidenced-based and targeted infrastructure and services' investment incorporating affordable housing and insurance, social and economic infrastructure, and programs that build strong, capable and inclusive communities.
- Leadership and collaboration to maintain a strong strategic focus on economic development in the region and effective partnerships to maximise achievement of economic development outcomes in the region.

RDAP's Business Plan adopts an integrated and multi-faceted approach synonymous with economic growth, incorporating strategies, programs, projects and good governance. Core elements of RDAP's role in implementing the plan include:

- targeted distribution of evidenced-based data, knowledge and funding resources relevant to the Pilbara economy;
- facilitation, leadership or participation in strategic partnerships to identify and progress priority economic enterprises that deliver sustainable results; address impediments; and leverage strategic investment and shared resourcing;
- leadership or participation in strategic forums that support communication and understanding of RDAP's role and Federal (and State) priorities; encourage open information exchange; and identify regional outcomes and partnerships to maximise the effectiveness of project delivery;
- aligning economic activities with Federal (and State) Government policy priorities; keeping the Federal government apprised of emerging economic challenges and opportunities; and advocating for legislative or policy amendments or new policy platforms that maximise economic growth;
- effectively coordinating and assessing the performance of the West Pilbara Communities for Children initiative in building strong, capable and inclusive communities; and
- achieving continuous improvement in governance practices including but not limited to, effective risk management practices, operational policies, comprehensive project plans and efficacy in performance measurement and reporting.

RDAP Committee

The performance of RDAP in economic (and social) development of the Pilbara is in strong part, reflected in:

- the strength of the Committee, including its capacity to bring varied and relevant strategic and technical expertise to the table and oversee effective governance and accountability;
- the governance and operational capability of the Director Regional Development; and
- the Committee and Director's depth of understanding of the region and its relationship to the broader legislative and policy environment; influence of macroeconomic trends; evidenced-based practice; and ability to establish and maintain strong networks and productive working relationships.

The Pilbara is an extremely dynamic economic (and social) environment and a key focus of State and Federal policy initiatives given its contribution to State and Federal revenue and Covid-19 recovery. The complexity of economic performance commands diverse skills and leadership in governance and strategy.

Applications were invited for new Committee members in January 2021 consequential to expiration or impending expiration of Committee terms of office. In March 2021, Nerida Kickett was appointed to the role of Chair along with five new Committee Members, with Rod Evans reappointed and continuing service since 2020. Appointments occurred in compliance with the *RDA Appointments Guide*.

Nerida Kickett has extensive resource sector, education, finance, marine services and non-profit organisational experience, including holding a number of management positions. She is also a long-term Pilbara resident.

The Committee are representative of the four local government areas in the Pilbara and collectively bring strong cross-sectoral experience in business, local government, education, accounting, advisory, Aboriginal culture and land ownership, and innovation, which are invaluable skills in supporting RDAPs 2021-2022 strategic directions.

As at 30 June 2021, the RDAP Committee comprised:

Position	Name	Term of Office
Chair	Nerida Kickett	30/06/2025
Deputy Chair	John Lally OAM	30/06/2025
Member	Anthony Middleton	30/06/2022
Member	Chantelle King	30/06/2022
Member	Frank Ye	30/06/2022
Member	Lorraine Injie	30/06/2022
Member	Mark Bradley	30/06/2022
Member	Rod Evans	30/06/2022

The Chair is tasked with providing strategic leadership to the Committee to deliver high value regional outcomes, ensuring effective corporate governance and networking, and advocating to address regional challenges and opportunities and facilitate investment.

The Deputy Chair assumes the role and duties of Chair in the Chair's absence; supports the Chair in the delivery of day-to-day matters; and chairs sub-committees, as established.

Committee members assume an active role in supporting the Chair and Deputy Chair by:

- working collaboratively as a committee to ensure the Committee's work accords with RDA's Charter, governance policies and practices, and regulatory and performance compliance requirements;
- actively contributing to informed discussion and decision-making to facilitate high value regional development outcomes, including through leveraging local networks; and
- acting in accordance with the Code of Ethics, demonstrating integrity, maintaining confidentiality, and avoiding conflicts of interest.

The Committee may also undertake priority activities for the Australian Government as directed.

The Director Regional Development is responsible for managing the operations of the organisation, implementing the strategic directions of the committee, the RDA Charter, and RDAP's *Strategic Plan 2021-2024* and *Business Plan 2021-2022*.

RDAP would like to thank the contribution of the former Chair, Ms Fiona White-Hartig, Committee members, and staff for their invaluable contribution to realising regional development outcomes in the Pilbara.

Key achievements and learnings (2020–2021)



RDAP Strategic Plan 2021–2024

RDAP adopted its *Strategic Plan for 2021–2022*. The Strategic Plan provides key regional insights including comparative strengths, challenges, enabling factors and strategic priorities to achieve a better connected, better resourced and more diversified, liveable and prosperous Pilbara economy. It is a living document, subject to annual review to ensure its alignment with the current and forecast economic landscape. RDAP's *Annual Business Plan 2021–2022*, incorporates an outcome-based work plan, including timeframes, targeting RDAP's strategic objectives.



Learnings from 2020–21

The 2020–2021 Business Plan focused on six priority areas for the Pilbara. In brief, these included business and community recovery post Covid-19 restrictions; facilitating infrastructure investment; economic diversification and harnessing resource sector competitive advantage and proximity to Asia; sustainable private sector investment; business development; and advocacy to support sustainable practices and development in the Pilbara.

For the prior two years the Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted and devastated Australian (and global) communities and regional planning has accelerated in an environment that has given rise to an exceptionally wide range of macroeconomic forecasts. During 2020–2021, significant financial and employment impacts were evidenced in the Pilbara in the small-medium sized business economy, particularly tourism-related sectors, and in crude oil and gas industries. On the other hand, record iron

ore prices and export volumes were achieved due to global stimulus packages, with marked exceedance of economic forecasts.

The pandemic has tested and laid bare the strengths and weaknesses of governance and organisational capabilities across regional organisations and again highlighted the value of collaborative, strategic and practical approaches to meeting emerging challenges. Over the prior financial year, RDAP worked closely with partner agencies to ensure the Federal (and State) Government remained apprised of pandemic impacts and recovery opportunities for the region. The inherent resilience of the community, collective support, and value of place-based approaches to recovery were strongly apparent in the establishment of industry-specific action groups to drive tailored recovery activity and the emergence of support packages across tiers of Government and industry to support impacted businesses.

The value of quarterly economic updates in the Pilbara, in giving investment insights and identifying threats and opportunities, in an environment of pervasive uncertainty, was apparent. The cyclical issues of housing affordability, chronic skills shortages, inflated wages, and economic diversification emerged, collectively symptomatic of a burgeoning economy, supply chain disruptions and largely singular reliance on China as a market for iron ore.

The pandemic and crisis in affordability exemplified the importance of the West Pilbara Communities for Children initiative in building social and emotional resilience and strong family structures so participants can achieve economic independence and benefit from the economy.



RDAP supports sustainable economic development through adoption of approaches that incorporate both build and non-build elements. While RDAP works across both domains, it has an integral role in assisting applicants in identifying and developing priority projects in areas of greatest impact, to facilitate long-term growth in the Pilbara. In 2020-2021, RDAP provided guidance to eight submissions to Round 5 of the Building Better Regions Fund. Central to this process was comprehensive analysis to establish a strong foundation for Commonwealth infrastructure investment in the Pilbara and alignment with Commonwealth regional development priorities; maximise the dollar spend under the program; and deliver targeted and sustainable project opportunities.

RDAP's *Climate Change and the Pilbara Economy: An Overview* report, completed in October 2020 highlighted high level infrastructure impacts and the negative effect that inadequate climate change action by businesses could have on the Pilbara's competitiveness for international investment. It further evidenced the importance of industry emissions reduction, including through renewable energy sources.



Other achievements included:

- released the annual West Pilbara Children and Families Community Directory;
- issued Four Pilbara Quarterly Economic Updates;
- released four e-News letters updating subscribers/website visitors on RDAP activities and grant opportunities;
- completed the Cost of Doing Business in the Pilbara publication, distributing it to over 600 contacts and publishing it on the RDAP website;
- supported the Yara Pilbara Hydrogen Project in the Pilbara;
- participated in strategic meetings with Ministers and Members of Parliament, tiers of Government, economic and trade agencies, industry, Aboriginal organisations and the Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund to facilitate economic development opportunities;
- advocated to the Northern Australia Insurance Inquiry for reduced insurance premiums in the Pilbara and informed the new five-year plan under the Developing Northern Australia White Paper;
- commenced a review of the RDAP's website to strengthen the presentation, navigation and accessibility of information; and
- hosted a stakeholder forum on Asset-based Community Development.

Strategic context and regional priorities

RDAP recognises the importance of sound regional and strategic profiling to better understand economic drivers, barriers and priority initiatives. As referenced above, RDAP and its partners operate in a rapidly shifting environment where significant strategic risks are evident, commanding strong strategic awareness and adaptability.

The shift in strategic focus in the RDA Charter will see regional priorities focused less on investment in issues-based reports and more on leveraging collective expertise, resources, and funding through partnership arrangements for significant initiatives that realise high level economic outcomes in the Pilbara.

RDA regional stakeholders will be key to the identification and realisation of strategic initiatives under the Annual Business Plan.

Stakeholders

RDAP's major stakeholders are:

- Representative members of Parliament
- Pilbara communities
- Regional infrastructure planning bodies
- Regional economic (and other) development bodies
- Pilbara Regional Development Commission
- Pilbara local government authorities
- Pilbara Chambers of Commerce and Industry
- Non-government and community organisations
- Industry and regional industry peak bodies
- Education and employment providers
- Aboriginal corporations

Members of Parliament – Members have a key role in legislating, developing and debating public policy, and advocating for constituency issues. RDAP works closely with regional members of the Federal and State Parliaments to facilitate better understanding of regional economic issues and inform investment priorities.

Communities – the relationship RDAP fosters with Pilbara communities is key to informing and evaluating the effectiveness of RDAP's strategic directions and ensuring community support for initiatives. Broader regional representation by Committee members, hosting committee meetings in Pilbara local government areas, and increasing the frequency of public communications, will enhance regional knowledge of RDAP's roles and functions and support two-way information exchange. RDAP will consult formally with communities as required.

Pilbara Development Commission (PDC) – is a State regional body tasked with coordinating and promoting economic development in the Pilbara. PDC is a key partner agency for evidenced-based data sharing; achieving strategic alignment between State and Commonwealth regional development strategies and funding priorities; and is a conduit for advice to and from the State Government on regional development matters.

Local government authorities – the four Pilbara Councils incorporate a broad strategic and delivery function that includes economic development, infrastructure provision, local strategic and lands planning and development approvals. Local governments have proximity to their respective communities and are strongly community-centred and highly consultative. RDAP works actively with Pilbara local governments to identify opportunities, resolve challenges, and deliver priority economic development (and social capacity building) projects.

Chambers of Commerce and Industry, industry and industry peak bodies – these organisations collectively represent the voice of the resources industry (being the dominant economy in the Pilbara) and small-medium sized businesses which are key to essential service and supply chain delivery and support a viable local economy in a downturn. Together they provide significant insights into economic trends, challenges and opportunities and are key partners in project definition and delivery.

Non-government and community organisations – are central to supporting workforce physical and mental health. Further, while the Pilbara reflects significant advantage evidenced in higher average weekly wages, this overshadows a significant level of disadvantage, predominantly amongst Aboriginal communities. Non-government and community organisations realise health and wellbeing outcomes and build capacity for meaningful economic participation, a key focus of the 2020 Closing the Gap initiative² and the Developing the North White Paper.³ Select non-government and community organisations are service providers under the West Pilbara Communities for Children initiative. RDAP works collaboratively with these organisations to ensure they remain viable and effective, particularly in an environment with a fluctuating cost structure.

Aboriginal Corporations – the Pilbara is home to traditional owners and other Aboriginal residents. Aboriginal Corporations are key to ensuring inclusivity of Aboriginal people in economic decision-making, project design and approval, and infrastructure investment. RDAP works with Aboriginal Corporations in project planning and delivery.

Regional infrastructure and economic development bodies – this includes Federal and State Government Trading Enterprises, economic development agencies and independent infrastructure advisory bodies such as Infrastructure Australia and Infrastructure Western Australia, which facilitate regional development. Two-way information exchange and advocacy are key roles for RDAP in collaboratively securing outcomes for the Pilbara, within the parameters afforded by organisations' operations.

2 Government of Australia, *Closing the Gap Report 2020*. Available at: <https://www.pmc.gov.au/domestic-policy/taskforces-past-domestic-policy-initiatives/developing-northern-australia-white-paperhttps://ctgreport.niaa.gov.au/sites/default/files/pdf/closing-the-gap-report-2020.pdf>

3 Government of Australia, *Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing Northern Australia*. Available at: <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/nawp-whitepapersummary.pdf>

Regional profile

The following information expands on the regional profile included within RDAP's *Strategic Plan 2021-2024*.

Data drawn from ABS Census statistics is caveated given impending release of 2021 data (hence reliance on 2016 data) and the pace and lack of certainty around some aspects of the economy such as impacts on iron ore trading.



Western Australia's land mass

507,896 km²



Location

The Pilbara region located approximately 1200km north of Perth is one of the largest regions in Western Australia, comprising 507,896 km or 20 percent of Western Australia's land mass.⁴

The region extends from the Indian Ocean to the Northern Territory border and hosts the City of Karratha, Town of Port Hedland, and the Shires of Ashburton and East Pilbara local government areas.

⁴ Government of Western Australia, Pilbara Development Commission, *Our Region*. Available at: <https://www.pdc.wa.gov.au/our-region/region-pilbara>

Population and people

The population of 62,841 comprises approximately 13.95% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.⁵ Aboriginal people are concentrated predominantly in the coastal towns of Karratha, Port and South Hedland, and Onslow as well as inland towns of Tom Price, Newman and Paraburdoo and in remote Aboriginal communities. The residential population comprises 23,118 in the City of Karratha; 15,471 in the Town of Port Hedland; 13,331 in the Shire of Ashburton and 10,921 in the East Pilbara.⁶ The median age in the Pilbara is 34 years with family composition dominated by couples with children comprising 29.03% and couples without children 18.53%.⁷ The population of the Pilbara grew 16% from 2008 to 2020.⁸

WA Tomorrow population data prepared by the WA Government forecasts the resident population in the Pilbara to achieve 63,870 and 70,395 by 2031⁹ under a median and high growth scenario respectively. The Pilbara's growing population combined with impacts from the pandemic is increasing demand for housing and other services, including early childhood education and childcare.¹⁰

Caution needs to be applied as population levels in the Pilbara fluctuate in line with economic growth and contraction and is therefore not always linear. A pandemic and associated economic and social impacts bring with it major uncertainties. However, chronic housing affordability issues and other relevant factors



62,841 total population



13.95% Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people

currently experienced across Pilbara towns are symptomatic of rapid population growth associated with an economic upturn and are likely to be reflected in forthcoming Census statistics. International and State border closures and chronic skills shortages also need to be factored going forward.

FIFO workforces are not formally measured under ABS Census statistics, and there are variable FIFO workforce estimates; however, the Pilbara hosts the highest number of FIFO in Australia. In 2018, the Minerals Council of Australia reported to a House of Representatives Inquiry that in 2015-16 (a period of economic downturn), mining accounted for 46,697 jobs in the Pilbara, the majority FIFO.¹¹ With the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation reporting for 2020 a 19% increase in direct full time equivalent employment in Western Australia's Iron Ore

5 Remplan Community, Pilbara, *Population*. Available at: <https://app.remplan.com.au/pilbararegion/community/population/indigenous?g=au2016lga&state=kmv6UpIRpdESP8JKH89gJWS29jE8CWCJFIQyTQRVocGFrFPWT3FluvsNP7>

6 Ibid, *Population*. Available at: <https://app.remplan.com.au/pilbararegion/economy/trends/population?state=Kp9MIN!2o4NUIzjFjV3pXcY5W3DUbUzhEDLFvh6hAtBSzSeij>

7 Ibid, *Families*. Available at: <https://app.remplan.com.au/pilbararegion/community/families/family-composition?g=au2016lga&state=jgvKH2iNjgNTXk15uy5O7XCQM4RZTWCnFWO0cJJNGFbFLFZPUNFQuqsKIV>

8 Government of Western Australia, Pilbara Development Commission, *Annual Report 2020-21*, p50.

9 Government of Western Australia, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, *Western Australia Tomorrow Population Forecasts: Local Government Area*. Available at: <https://www.dplh.wa.gov.au/information-and-services/land-supply-and-demography/western-australia-tomorrow-population-forecasts>

10 Government of Western Australia, Pilbara Development Commission, *Annual Report 2020-21*, p5.

11 Parliament of Australia, House of Representatives Standing Committee on Industry, Innovation, Science and Resources, *Keep it in the Regions*, p9. Available at: <https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/download/committees/reportrep/024209/toc.pdf/keepitintheregions.pdf;fileType=application%2Fpdf>

Industry to 57,055,¹² and a further 11,696¹³ in battery minerals (not all concentrated in the Pilbara) and reports of extreme skills shortages in the resource sector, FIFO numbers are likely substantially higher. Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA forecasts that WA's mining and resource sector could require 40,000 additional workers by mid-2023.¹⁴



Economy

The Pilbara contributes significantly to the State and national economies and is globally recognised as an 'economic powerhouse' of the minerals and petroleum sector. In brief the Pilbara:

- has \$170 billion plus in projects either under construction, committed or under consideration for commencement over the next 10 years.¹⁵
- supports approximately 63,850 jobs with the mining sector supporting an estimated 29,151 jobs followed by construction at 11,212 jobs;¹⁶
- has an estimated economic output of \$76.711 billion of which the mining sector comprised 73.31%;¹⁷
- contributes Gross Regional Product of \$49.093 billion, representing 14.9% of Gross State Product and 2.4% of Gross Domestic Product;¹⁸
- pays an estimated \$9 billion in wages and salaries;¹⁹
- is estimated to represent 36.5% (\$63.475 billion) of the value of regional exports generated in Western Australia and 12.5% of the value of regional exports in Australia;²⁰

¹² Government of Western Australia, Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, *Iron Ore Profile September 2021*, p4.

¹³ Government of Western Australia, Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, *WA Battery Minerals Profile*, p3.

¹⁴ Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia, *WA mining and resources sector could need another 40,000 workers over the next two years*, Media Release, 21 June 2021. Available at: <https://www.cmewa.com.au/media-release/wa-mining-and-resources-sector-could-need-another-40000-workers-over-the-next-two-years/>

¹⁵ Government of Western Australia, Pilbara Development Commission, *Annual Report 2020-21*, p48.

¹⁶ Remplan Economy, Pilbara, *Employment*. Available at: <https://app.remplan.com.au/pilbararegion/economy/industries/employment?state=Ma5Rix!K5KLHIOrzHMvI2dSNp7AEiMU9hML6TRaVa3F49O9Ackhvoh!SLgtJS88PaSNg8>

¹⁷ Ibid, *Output*. Available at: <https://app.remplan.com.au/pilbararegion/economy/industries/output?state=Ma5Rix!qMjoc3NdofOPEYJSdMIZvtU3hrI8S8L5LOHvWGWghEhd5cXSpDtMSWWlpCDJa>

¹⁸ Ibid, *Gross Regional Product*. Available at: <https://app.remplan.com.au/pilbararegion/economy/industries/gross-regional-product?state=Ma5Rix!GRL8C5mrMT6YRr8sWBln5hmU9h6pEu4hVhptoh8DI>

¹⁹ Ibid, *Wages and Salaries*. Available at: <https://app.remplan.com.au/pilbararegion/economy/industries/wages-salaries?state=Ma5Rix!YqZOHV2NLC87qk4ixDGZ9HrUehDRBF5P8Pnc6vyv5hLh7BsmhYSGGBKsa7D>

²⁰ Ibid, *Regional Exports*. Available at: <https://app.remplan.com.au/pilbararegion/economy/industries/regional-exports?state=Ma5Rix!YqZOHV2NLC87qk4ixDGZ9HrUehDRBF5P8Pnc6vyv5hLh7BsmhYSGGBKsa7D>

- generates 15.6% (\$46.536 billion) of value-added in Western Australia and 2.5% in Australia; and²¹
- in 2020, Iron ore accounted for 67% of the value of WA minerals and petroleum sales, LNG 11% and Gold (10%).²²

Exports

A recent economic profile has been provided in RDAP's *Strategic Regional Plan 2021-2024* based on data available mid-2021. Predominant exports are as follows (**Source: Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (JTSI), Economic Profiles, September 2021, and Office of the Chief Economist, Resources and Energy Quarterly, September 2021**):

Iron Ore – Australia is the largest global supplier of iron ore (39% of supply)²³ and iron ore exports earned a record \$153 billion in 2020-21.²⁴ In 2020, Western Australia accounted for 28% of global crude iron ore reserves.²⁵ The predominant markets are in Asia, principally China. WA has about \$10 billion in major projects committed or under construction with \$455 million expended on exploration in 2020-21 (up 30%).²⁶

Liquid Natural Gas – Australia is the largest global exporter of LNG, accounting for 22% of exports in 2020 and \$19.3 billion in sales in 2020 (down 30% primarily due to pandemic impacts but is evidencing recovery).²⁷ Western Australia has a 50 million tonne export capacity per annum across five LNG export projects.²⁸ Asia is also the predominant market, with Japan the largest market. Major investment projects in LNG are outlined in JTSI's publication *Western Australia LNG Profile*, September 2021.²⁹

Battery minerals – Western Australia is the world's largest producer of mined lithium and produces most other battery minerals (i.e. Nickel, Vanadium, Cobalt, Copper, etc). The State also has globally significant reserves of battery minerals of a quality suitable for manufacturing. Western Australia accounted for 49% of global Lithium production in 2020. Prices for Lithium have dropped recently due to the Covid-19 pandemic while Nickel, Cobalt and Copper have either remained reasonably stable or risen slightly. Demand for Lithium, Copper and Nickel are forecast to increase over coming years.³⁰

Other resources include Gold where significant exploration has commenced in the Malina and Paterson Provinces in the East Pilbara; salt and renewable energy sources.

21 Ibid, *Value Added*. Available at: <https://app.remplan.com.au/pilbararegion/economy/industries/value-added?state=Ma5Rix!YqZOHV2NLC87qk4ixDGZ9HrUehDRBF5P8Pnc6vyv5hLh7BsmhYSGGBKSa7D>

22 Government of Western Australia, Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, *WA Economic Profile*, p14.

23 Government of Western Australia, Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, *WA Iron Ore Profile*, September 2021, p1.

24 Government of Australia, Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources, September 2021, p36.

25 Government of Western Australia, Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, *WA Iron Ore Profile*, September 2021, p2.

26 Ibid., pp 2/4.

27 Government of Western Australia, Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, *WA LNG Profile*, September 2021, pp1/3.

28 Ibid., p2.

29 Ibid.

30 Government of Western Australia, Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, *WA Battery Minerals Profile*, September 2021, pp1-4.



Competitive advantages

The Pilbara economy has a number of competitive advantages outlined in RDAP's *Strategic Plan 2021-24* including, in brief:

- significant projected growth in Asian commodity and service demand coupled with Australia's relative proximity;
- Pilbara's abundant high-grade ore reserves, reserves of petroleum and other minerals, and lower shipping costs and delivery timeframes to Asian export markets;
- world class technical expertise in mining, equipment, technology and services, a stable skilled workforce and excellent safety record;
- abundant renewable energy resources and commitments by some of the large miners to an aspirational target of net-zero emissions by 2050;
- production increases and cost reductions associated with process and supply chain optimisation and automation;
- value capture from minerals extraction;
- demand for battery minerals aligned to uptake of electric vehicle technologies;
- direct imports and exports on general cargo from Pilbara Ports (Port of Port Hedland and Port of Dampier);
- potential of initiatives under the Northern Beef Futures Program which prioritises infrastructure to increase the value of the Northern Beef Industry;
- ancient geological formations, Aboriginal culture and identity, unique biodiversity, and pastoral and industrial heritage;
- potential to apply water from mine dewatering to agricultural enterprises and stockfeed; and
- an enabling policy and funding environment that can be leveraged across the battery value chain, hydrogen, diversified industries and mineral opportunities, climate change, and Asian engagement.

Strategic landscape

Well-formulated, recent strategies have been prepared by the Federal and State Government to support and diversify economic growth. Key strategies have been detailed in RDAP's *Strategic Plan 2021-2024*.

Economic volatility

Some threats to the economy exist and need to be considered including:

- the impact of changes to Australia or Western Australia's Covid-19 pandemic-controlled border arrangements or delays in the vaccine roll out;

- further Covid-19 outbreaks of vaccine resistant variants restricting global movements;
- downturn in China’s demand for steel due to real estate saturation, normalisation of supply chain demand as recovery stimulus packages recede, emissions reduction, trade wars, and alternate source markets for iron ore;
- growing congestion at Chinese ports due to Covid-19 protocols impacting delivery timeframes;
- global inflation and higher interest rates;
- supply chain issues (potentially coupled with Covid-19 outbreaks) risking increased producer and consumer prices or reduced demand for goods;
- Australia’s resource sector emissions policy position;
- extreme weather events;
- high spot prices for LNG trade limited by many LNG contracts being linked to the oil price;
- international agreements (Paris Agreement) or regulatory arrangements (i.e. OPEC)
- workforce shortages exacerbated by prescription on internal migration; and
- skilled residential work ready workforce, local economic development and diversification limited by a high-cost structure, affordable housing, insurance costs and limited activation of strategic industrial sites.

Human Capital and Skills

Level of education

The following data evidences the level of education by percentage of workforce for the resident population of the Pilbara, with predominance in certificate level qualifications

(Source: Remplan Pilbara, Community, ABS 2016 Census Place of Work Employment [scaled]).

Level of education	Pilbara Region	Western Australia	Australia
Postgraduate degree	2.02%	5.20%	6.91%
Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate	1.10%	2.74%	2.83%
Bachelor Degree	10.68%	19.90%	21.03%
Advanced Diploma and Diploma	8.96%	10.90%	11.17%
Certificate	45.14%	25.41%	23.34%
Level of education not adequately described	0.52%	0.83%	0.80%
Level of education not stated	1.61%	1.74%	1.71%
Not applicable	29.96%	33.29%	32.21%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Employment

Industry sector overview

The Pilbara economy supports an estimated 63,850 jobs, equating to 5.48% of workers in Western Australia. The Shire of Ashburton hosts the highest number of workers at 39%.

The dominant industries in the Pilbara are mining (45.66%) and construction (17.56%). While other sectors are markedly below the percentage employment rate of the aforementioned industries, they are critical to the local economy and provide a degree of economic stability during downturns. Many also afford entry level positions for the Pilbara workforce, not otherwise employed in the mining sector, community support services and Indigenous arts and cultural enterprises.

The following data provides an industry sector overview

(Source: Remplan Pilbara, Economy, ABS 2016 Census Place of Work Employment (Scaled), ABS 2017 / 2018 National Input Output Tables, and ABS June 2020 Gross State Product).

Industry sector	Pilbara Region (%)	Western Australia (%)	Australia (%)
Mining	45.66	6.87	1.74
Construction	17.56	10.38	8.93
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	4.86	4.85	4.89
Accommodation and Food Services	4.37	6.72	7.23
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	4.35	6.70	7.60
Administrative and Support Services	3.67	3.42	3.58
Education and Training	2.82	9.08	9.07
Health Care and Social Assistance	2.75	12.23	13.23
Public Administration and Safety	2.54	6.49	6.97
Retail Trade	2.47	9.92	10.32
Other Services	2.17	4.13	3.91
Manufacturing	2.00	5.82	6.70
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	1.44	1.22	1.13
Wholesale Trade	1.09	2.65	3.02
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	1.07	1.81	1.78
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	0.53	2.58	2.61
Arts and Recreation Services	0.28	1.66	1.73
Financial and Insurance Services	0.25	2.45	3.77
Information Media and Telecommunications	0.14	1.02	1.76

Employment by size

The following details staff size for actively trading businesses at June 2020 and only includes businesses which actively traded goods and services. Caution should be applied to these statistics as intrastate travel restrictions were imposed on 31 March 2020 and continued through to the end of May 2020. June 2021 data is not available until early 2022. The non-employing and 20-199 staff employment businesses experienced the greatest upward movement over the prior two years.

(Source: Remplan Pilbara, Economy, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, Cat. 8165.0. (Jun 2018, 2019 & 2020, released 16 Feb 2021).

Staff size	June 2020
Non-employing	1,252
1-19	816
20-199	104
200+	5
Total	2,177

Skilled labour shortages

Skilled labour shortages impact growth and development prospects in the minerals and energy sector and the local economy during economic upturns. While a cyclical issue in the Pilbara, State and Federal border controls and competition for labour in the interstate resource sector (predominantly Queensland) have significantly constrained workforce migration.

When skills shortages occur in the resources sector, this creates competition for labour within the non-resource sector as well as in local resource sector supply chain businesses. Associated wage inflation, and inability to effectively compete through staff incentivisation measures, drives the cost of doing business upwards and impacts the viability of these industries. This in turn can have a marked impact on the local business economy and non-government operated health and wellbeing services.

The following evidences current skills constraints in the Pilbara:

- Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIWA) *Business Confidence Survey* June 2021 reported skills shortages as the single largest barrier facing the WA business community with 97% of businesses in the Pilbara reportedly affected by skills shortages, a significant barrier to business growth.³¹
- Housing shortages discussed under 'Housing Affordability' below.
- Goods producing industries accounted for 56% of Western Australia's GSP in 2019-20 with mining accounting for 43% (\$135.3 billion).³²

³¹ Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia, *CCIWA Business Confidence Survey. June Quarter 2021*, p2.

³² Government of Western Australia, Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, *Western Australia Economic Profile*, September 2021, p1.



- Western Australia's employment reached its highest level on record in August 2021 (along with total hours worked) rising by 12,309 employees to 1.42 million in August 2021 on the back of a rise of 0.4% of 5,505 workers in July 2021. This represents over 40,000 additional workers above its pre-Covid peak in February 2020.³³
- Western Australian State budget 2021-22 forecasts a further rise in employment of 2.5% and 1.5% in 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 respectively.³⁴
- ABS Job Vacancy Survey identified that Western Australia had 52,100 job vacancies in the September 2021 quarter, up 5,900 from the previous quarter and up 19,900 from one year prior.³⁵
- Western Australia accounted for 23% of Australia's private new Capital Expenditure in 2020-2021, including 58% of Australia's mining industry new capital expenditure and in March 2021, Western Australia had \$36.8 billion of major resource projects under construction or committed and \$102.8 billion under consideration.³⁶
- Exploration expenditure is also highest in the nation, accounting for 65% of Australia's minerals exploration expenditure in 2020-2021 (up 21.2%).³⁷
- Iron ore export values rose 47.5% in 2020-21.³⁸
- \$363 million in building approvals were approved in 2020-21 for the Pilbara and offshore.³⁹
- Unemployment rate for the Pilbara for March 2021 quarter was 2.4% compared to a 6.37% unemployment rate for Australia and 6.20% for Western Australia.⁴⁰

CCIWA reports the impact of critical skills shortages as increased pressure on existing staff; project delays; and reputational impacts around capacity for business to perform. Interestingly, CCIWA also notes that approximately half of employers are boosting wages and applying incentives to attract new employees, particularly in the resources sector.⁴¹

The CCIWA survey commentary concludes that many of the businesses wanting to fill positions require at least 3.3 years of training and/or experience and therefore that the crisis 'cannot be solved without overseas workers.' It further asserts that unless access to overseas workers is provided, 1 in 5 jobs are likely to go unfilled.⁴²

33 Ibid., p4.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid., p6.

36 Ibid., p8.

37 Ibid., p9.

38 Ibid., p11.

39 Ibid., p16.

40 Remplan Pilbara, *Economy, Jobs and Business Insights, Unemployment*. Available at: <https://economy.id.com.au/port-hedland/Employment-capacity/>

41 Chamber of Commerce and Industry Western Australia, *CCIWA Business Confidence Survey*, June quarter 2021, p4.

42 Ibid., p3.



Connectivity and infrastructure

Connectivity

The mining sector generally has access to best-in-class telecommunications infrastructure and networks, including via a sub-sea cable which cannot be applied for low latency, high bandwidth applications.

The Covid-19 pandemic and working from home arrangements have further highlighted the importance of digital connectivity.

Good digital connectivity is a key enabler in an environment where changes to business practices; access to, and optimisation of, supply chains; digitisation of government services; demand for diversification, business enterprise development and skills and learning; data for value creation in infrastructure planning; and incorporation of smart technologies are present. Further, where social connection to support a residential workforce and achieve social equity, is necessary.

The 2018 *Regional Telecommunications Review* report focused on meeting the needs of regional, rural and remote areas to maximise economic and social benefits and included reference to economic modelling which demonstrated significant economic returns in productivity from digitisation.⁴³

The Australian Digital Inclusion Index also evidenced that Indigenous Australians have relatively low levels of digital inclusion across domains of access, affordability and digital ability, a factor identified for remediation under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.⁴⁴ Improving digital technology in the non-mining sector is key to the local economy, economic participation and social wellbeing.

The recently released Draft Western Australian State Infrastructure Strategy (IWA Strategy), which is subject to finalisation and State Government response, referenced data indicating that the competitiveness of Australia's information and communications technology sector is declining.⁴⁵ The Draft IWA Strategy provides a useful summation of connectivity issues in regional Western Australia including:

- limited commercial viability for private providers of telecommunications infrastructure in some regional areas due to regional density and population size prescribing delivery of adequate connectivity, particularly mobile services; and
- NBN's multi-technology mix model which has some limitations 'due to frequent service dropouts, bandwidth (speed and contention) and latency issues, [posing] challenges in meeting current and future connectivity demand.'⁴⁶

43 Government of Australia, *2018 Regional Telecommunications Review: Getting it right out there*. Available at: <https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2018-12/apo-nid209271.pdf>

44 Government of Australia, National Indigenous Australians Agency, *Indigenous Digital Inclusion Plan – Discussion Paper*, September 2021, pp4 and 6. Available at: <https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2021-09/apo-nid314263.pdf>

45 Infrastructure Western Australia, *Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow: State Infrastructure Strategy* (draft), July 2021.

46 Ibid., p52.

It concludes that many regional areas experience poor quality mobile coverage, limited choice of providers and higher broadband service costs of limited variability. The report recommends development of a prioritisation framework for telecommunications infrastructure investment by the State Government, collaborating with the Federal Government or private sector to leverage opportunities and incentivisation to facilitate private sector investment.⁴⁷

The Federal Government budget 2021-2022 allocates significant funding for improved digital connectivity and has committed to developing place-based telecommunications infrastructure projects in regional, rural and remote communities;^{48 49} as well as committing to developing an Indigenous Digital Inclusion Plan.⁵⁰

Transport infrastructure

Rail, road and Port infrastructure dominate transport infrastructure in the Pilbara. The significant inter-reliance between elements of the freight network necessitates cross-modal efficiency to maximise export competitiveness in the region.

Rail infrastructure in the Pilbara is privately operated and services resource sector operations, predominantly between mines and Port facilities. Roy Hill and Pilbara Infrastructure Pty Ltd's (utilised by Fortescue Metals) railway lines that transport iron ore to the Port of Port

Hedland are subject to the Western Australian Rail Access Regime, facilitating shared access subject to commercial agreements.⁵¹ Heavy haul railways operated by BHP and Rio Tinto Iron Ore are excluded.⁵²

Roads' infrastructure (except privately maintained roads associated with mining operations and pastoral stations) form a significant part of State and local governments asset programs. In the Pilbara, road networks are extensive and geography, heavy haulage, weather events and funding constraints makes roads management challenging.

Various major roads projects have also been delivered pursuant to Federal funding initiatives such as the Northern Australia Roads Program for high priority roads deemed essential to movement of people and freight to support economic development.⁵³ Individual Pilbara local governments have also prioritised heavy vehicle haulage road networks to facilitate economic outcomes and improve safety between heavy and light vehicles.

The Federal Government's fuel excise levy is the single largest source of roads funding. Alternative revenue sources will need to be determined given the impacts on revenue due to emissions reduction initiatives and the transition to electric vehicles or hybrid technologies.

The Infrastructure Australia Priority List outlines investment opportunities that can deliver nationally significant benefits to Australia. Projects are listed for the Pilbara including

47 Ibid., p59.

48 Hon Michael McCormack MP, Parliament of Australia, House of Representatives, *Regional and Rural Budget 2021 Address*, 13 May 2021. Available at: <https://www.michaelmccormack.com.au/speeches/2021/5/13/regional-and-rural-budget-2021-address-13-may-2021>

49 Government of Australia, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Telecommunications, *Regional Connectivity Program*. Available at: <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/media-technology-communications/internet/regional-connectivity-program>

50 Government of Australia, National Indigenous Australians Agency, *Indigenous Digital Inclusion Plan – Discussion Paper*, September 2021, p26. Available at: <https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2021-09/apo-nid314263.pdf>

51 Government of Western Australia, Economic Regulation Authority, *Railway Owners*. Available at: <https://www.erawa.com.au/rail/rail-access/railway-owners>

52 Government of Western Australia, Department of Treasury, *Draft Decision Paper*, [undated], p6. Available at: <https://www.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-02/wa-rail-access-draft-decision-paper.pdf>

53 Government of Australia, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, *Northern Australia Roads Program*. Available at: <https://investment.infrastructure.gov.au/projects/key-projects/northern-australia-programs.aspx>

upgrades to Pilbara Ports capacity, Karratha to Tom Price Road and road access improvements for remote communities.⁵⁴

The Draft IWA Strategy proposes the development of 20-year plus regional transport plans to incorporate freight supply chains across all modes; addressing the future loss of fuel excise revenue including through alignment of vehicle usage and impact with pricing; and targeting regional maintenance and freight productivity programs to provide fit for purpose networks.⁵⁵

Pilbara Ports Authority manages the Ports of Port Hedland, Dampier, Ashburton, and Veranus Island. New greenfield ports are also under planning at Anketell, Balla Balla, Cape Preston East and West and Uralla. Pilbara Ports Authority managed ports predominantly ship iron ore, Liquid Natural Gas and salt. The Ports Authority has prepared a *Port Development Strategy 2030*⁵⁶ and masterplans for the Ports of Port Hedland, Ashburton, and Dampier, to guide land use and infrastructure development over the period of the plans. The Pilbara Ports Authority is the parent entity for the Hedland Maritime Initiative which will oversee planning of a maritime precinct in the West End of Port Hedland.⁵⁷

Feasibility studies identified that substantial revenue returns for the State and businesses would be achieved from direct shipping from

Asia to northern ports. Direct maritime freight shipping has commenced at the Port of Port Hedland and Port of Dampier pursuant to delivery of quarantine facilities.^{58 59} Growth in cargo volumes could impact the capacity of port facility infrastructure, and heavy freight road networks.⁶⁰ Construction of the Lumsden Point General Cargo facility at the Port of Port Hedland has commenced.

Strategic industrial areas

The Pilbara region affords light and general industrial areas, designated areas for transport logistics, and heavy industrial areas, with access to key heavy transport freight corridors and ports. Road realignments, removal of rail crossings, and pavement and aligned infrastructure upgrades have been undertaken to improve the efficiency and safety of the freight network.

The demand for resources is expected to remain strong and diversification across renewable energies, value-chain capture, direct beef exports, METS and introduction of new technologies will impact demand for Strategic Industrial Areas and influence their operations. The State Government recently released a 10-year Industrial Lands Strategy for coordinated development and long-term operation of industrial areas to meet market demand and ensure delivery of required infrastructure.⁶¹

54 Government of Australia, Infrastructure Australia, *Search the Priority List*. Available at: <https://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/search-priority-list-map>

55 Government of Western Australia, Infrastructure Australia, *Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow: State Infrastructure Strategy* (Draft), pp188, 189, 191.

56 Government of Western Australia, Pilbara Ports Authority, *Port Development Strategy 2030*. Available at: [ppa-port-development-strategy-2030 \(pilbaraports.com.au\)](https://pilbaraports.com.au/ppa-port-development-strategy-2030)

57 Government of Western Australia, Pilbara Ports Authority, Hedland Maritime Initiative. Available at: <https://hedlandmaritime.com.au/about/>

58 Government of Western Australia, *Inaugural Pilbara direct maritime freight services begins*, Media Release. 16 October 2020. Available at: <https://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/Pages/McGowan/2020/10/Inaugural-Pilbara-direct-maritime-freight-service-begins.aspx#:~:text=A%20long%2Dheld%20economic%20aspiration,freight%20service%20into%20the%20region>

59 Government of Western Australia, Pilbara Ports Authority, *Direct shipping to the Pilbara opening up new markets*, Media Release. Available at: <https://www.pilbaraports.com.au/about-ppa/news-media-and-statistics/news/2021/august/direct-shipping-to-the-pilbara-opening-up-new-mark>

60 Government of Western Australia, Infrastructure WA, *Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow*, State Infrastructure Strategy (Draft), p199.

61 Government of Western Australia, Industrial Land Steering Committee, *10-year Industrial Lands Strategy*, June 2021. Available at: <https://developmentwa.com.au/images/projects/ILA/industrial-lands-steering-committee-10-year-industrial-land-strategy-2021->

Service infrastructure

Energy

The North West Interconnected System comprises an interconnected network predominantly under the ownership of Horizon Power, Alinta Energy and Rio Tinto. The State Government is progressing major reforms to the network including regulatory changes to enable third-party access to designated electricity network assets and establishment of an independent operator not for profit company (Pilbara ISOCO) comprising the aforementioned primary operators. The draft IWA strategy speaks to fragmentation of the system and recommends Pilbara ISOCO develop a strategic plan to plan for long term energy generation, demand and infrastructure network requirements. As noted, recommendations in this report are subject to consideration and adoption by Government.⁶²

In the energy sector, renewable sources will be a significant focus going forward due to emissions reduction. Renewable energy sources coupled with appropriate and more affordable battery storage will create a degree of independence from the main network or decentralisation of control. Renewable hydrogen is a key opportunity to decarbonise and achieve a green energy economy. The Federal and State Government are both positioned to attract hydrogen market investment, with the Federal Government announcing a \$1.9 billion 10-year investment package in the 2020-21 budget

‘to establish Australia at the forefront of low emissions technology innovation.’⁶³ Funding has also been allocated to assist businesses to reduce emissions.⁶⁴ The Pilbara has significant competitive strengths to leverage these strategic investment opportunities given vast solar and wind renewable energy resources and land to support major hydrogen precincts alongside industry clusters.⁶⁵

Water

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has prepared groundwater allocation plans for the Pilbara.⁶⁶ Climate change will likely impact the availability of water in the region given high temperatures, increased water usage, reduced rainfall impacting groundwater recharge, and infrastructure strain. Potential exists to examine mine dewatering for agricultural and feedstock enterprises; however, consideration will need to be given to proximity of source to demand, construction and operational costs for treatment and supply; operational period of the source (mine life) and water quality management.⁶⁷

[05-13-devwa-0316.pdf](#)

62 Government of Western Australia, Infrastructure WA, *Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow*, State Infrastructure Strategy (Draft), pp154/155.

63 Government of Australia, Budget 2021-22, *Building a more secure and resilient Australia*. Available at: <https://budget.gov.au/2021-22/content/resilient.htm#six>

64 Ibid.

65 Government of Western Australia, Infrastructure WA, *Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow*, State Infrastructure Strategy (Draft), pp149-150.

66 Government of Western Australia, Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, *Pilbara Groundwater Allocation Plan*. Available at: <https://www.water.wa.gov.au/planning-for-the-future/allocation-plans/north-west-region-allocation-plan/pilbara-groundwater-allocation-plan>

67 Government of Australia, *Climate Change and the Pilbara Economy. An Overview*. Available at: http://www.rdapilbara.org.au/resources/site/General/Publication%20Reports/Climate%20Change%20and%20the%20Pilbara%20Economy_20201124.pdf

Amenity and liveability

Social infrastructure and lands planning

Local government authorities, State Government, industry partners and other stakeholders are integral to achieving improved amenity and liveability in the Pilbara. The quality of infrastructure and urban design are key to skills attraction and retainment and therefore population growth within the regions to support economic growth.

The past 10 years has seen considerable investment in community, service infrastructure and land release pursuant to Royalties for Regions funding, Building Better Regions, Land Booster programs, industry and other investment schemes.

Infrastructure investment has been a key policy tool for the Federal and State Governments in stimulating the economy with various projects committed under recovery plans and other investment programs. The Infrastructure Western Australia Strategy as a long-term plan will guide State Government priorities for infrastructure and related investment over the next 20 years (build and non-build components) and will be subject to an annual State Infrastructure Program with a 10-year outlook and monitoring of performance in delivery of projects.

The City of Karratha, Town of Port Hedland, and the Shire of Ashburton have recently prepared new Local Planning Strategies and Local Planning Schemes, endorsed by the Western Australian Planning Commission, with the new Shire of East Pilbara's strategy currently subject to consultation. These evidenced based strategies have an outlook of approximately 10-15 years, are highly integrated across lands planning and infrastructure and address challenges and opportunities.⁶⁸

Towns generally have a significant backlog of infrastructure assets requiring renewal or replacement that can constrain growth (i.e. a chronic childcare infrastructure shortage). Councils have also delivered or are preparing economic and tourism development strategies and a range of other critical plans to improve liveability and foster economic development. The requirement to deliver infrastructure within the context of a broad asset portfolio, limited rate base, high-cost structure and competitive and fragmented funding environment is challenging for local governments.

The State Government has endorsed the West End Improvement Scheme No.1⁶⁹ in Port Hedland, establishing a development control area within the area designated by the Scheme. Under the Hedland Maritime Initiative this will see revitalisation and new infrastructure investment in the West End of Port Hedland.

68 Government of Western Australia, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, *Local Planning Strategies, Local Planning Schemes and Structure Plans*. Available at: <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments-of-planning-lands-and-heritage/local-planning-strategies-schemes-and-structure-plans>

69 Ibid.

Housing affordability

The housing market in the Pilbara can be volatile with sales and rental prices fluctuating in accordance with economic demand. The majority housing in the Pilbara is company owned or leased and is used as an incentivisation measure to attract and retain skilled staff and secure housing affordability in an economic upturn. Rapid escalation in costs synonymous with significant commodity demand and high pricing can limit the ability of small-medium sized businesses to house workforces or preclude low to medium income earners from participation in the housing market. The Pilbara Development Commission's *Pilbara Half Yearly Housing and Land Summary*,⁷⁰ June 2021 (six months to June 2021) evidences the following affordability issues in the Pilbara:

- Median sale price (house) rose by 27.13% (\$410,000) and units by 41.45% (\$244,000), and dwelling sales listings decreased by -13.55% compared with the first half of 2020 (H1) across the Pilbara.
- Dwelling weekly rentals increased by 17.99% to \$563, and rental listings by -11.17% per week over H1 across the Pilbara.
- In the City of Karratha, House sales prices were up 16.6% to \$493,750 and units by 40.65% over H1 2020 to a median \$272,500 and a four-bedroom house achieved a median rental of \$863 and a five (plus)-bedroom house \$1100 per week.
- In the Town of Port Hedland, the median house price rose 50.87% compared to H1 2020 to \$347,125 with the median dwelling rent by 42.19% over the same period to \$569 per week. Rental values for four and five-bedroom homes in Port Hedland were marginally lower than Karratha. Port Hedland also evidenced a significant decrease in dwelling listings for sale and lease.
- The Shire of East Pilbara has experienced a significant reduction in sales listings, an increase in the median sales price of houses of 21.56% to \$273,500 with dwellings listed for lease declining by 41.86% and rents increasing by 21.74% over H1 2020, with a four and five bedroom home achieving \$606 and \$698 per week in rent respectively.
- The Shire of Ashburton has realised a -41.07% decrease in dwelling sales listings, and while houses have increased, units have climbed by 93.33% to \$290,000 over H1 2020. Lease listings have declined by -48.72% with rental values down slightly although still high at \$748 per week for a four-bedroom home.

Land prices do not reflect upward movement, potentially due to State Government management of the majority subdivisions in the Pilbara and focus on stimulating growth in the regions through release of affordable lots.

The Draft IWA Strategy addresses the issue of social and affordable housing, recommending preparation of regional housing plans to support social and affordable housing and the conduct of a pilot program to address management challenges.⁷¹ Delivery of these plans is contingent on Government adoption of these recommendations circa late 2022.

70 Government of Western Australia, Pilbara Development Commission, *Pilbara Half-yearly Housing and Land Summary*, June 2021. Available at: <https://www.pdc.wa.gov.au/our-focus/knowledge-hub-2>

71 Government of Western Australia, Infrastructure WA, *Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow*, State Infrastructure Strategy (Draft), p211.

Advantage and disadvantage

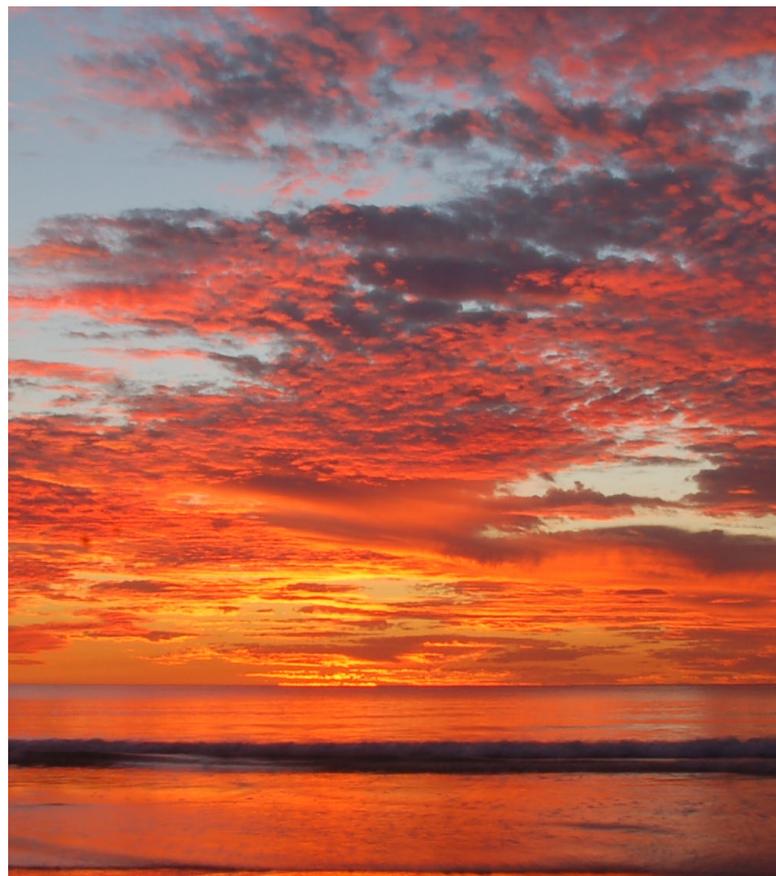
While the proportion of workforce earning over \$2,000 per week is high in the Pilbara, this can overshadow significant disadvantage within some sectors of the community and the cost of doing business for family and child centred programs. A focus on strengthening individuals and families facilitates opportunities, including economic participation and social inclusion.

While not confined to Aboriginal peoples, higher level disadvantage is experienced amongst Aboriginal communities in the Pilbara. Improving health and life expectancy is a key focus of the Closing the Gap initiative and inherent in establishment of the Indigenous Australians Agency in 2019.

The 2016 Census reflects very low Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) scores (significant disadvantage) in the South Western portion of the West Pilbara and remote part of the East Pilbara with poor educational attainment and lower incomes than other regions.⁷² Aboriginal people in the Pilbara have high:

- rates of teenage births, child hospitalisation for acute and chronic conditions and notifiable diseases, and suicide (15-24) for males and females;
- rates of alcohol and tobacco related hospitalisation and preventable hospitalisation and access to mental health services;
- rates of avoidable diseases and mortality; and
- proportions of children vulnerable on one and two domains in the Australian Early Development Census (2018) across majority Pilbara towns and remote areas.⁷³

There has been a significant Federal and State focus on enhancing Aboriginal economic participation, including but not limited to initiatives under the Developing the North White Paper, Closing the Gap initiatives, recovery plans, facility and service infrastructure upgrades in remote communities, and various capacity building and social wellbeing initiatives.



⁷² Government of Western Australia, WA Country Health Service, *Pilbara Health Profile*, November 2018, p4. Available at: https://www.wacountry.health.wa.gov.au/-/media/WACHS/Documents/About-us/Publications/Health-profiles-and-service-plans/Pilbara_Health_Profile_2018.pdf

⁷³ Ibid.

Environment

There are a range of government and not-for-profit agencies that regulate, secure environmental protection outcomes and/or deliver environmental improvement initiatives, including but not limited to the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment (Cth), Environmental Protection Authority (WA), Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Pilbara Ports Authority, local governments, the Rangelands Natural Resource Management, and industry. An independent review has been conducted of the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act which has delivered a raft of recommendations including a full suite of National Environmental Standards to strengthen environmental outcomes for matters of national environmental significance.⁷⁴

As noted, a key area of focus in the Pilbara is effectively managing or adapting to climate change impacts. This includes ensuring Australia's resource sector competitiveness, infrastructure maintenance and build, water availability, and preparedness and response measures for extreme weather events.

Considerable research, analysis and strategic planning is being undertaken at the Federal, State and local government levels to better understand and respond to climate change and reduce emissions. The Environment Ministers are currently working to develop the Australian Government's 2021 *National Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation Strategy*⁷⁵ as a roadmap for building national climate change resilience. The Federal Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources has introduced a raft of measures for emissions reduction including supporting the hydrogen industry and large-scale energy storage mentioned above, as well as carbon capture, use and storage and supporting zero emissions vehicles. The *State Planning Policy 2.6 – Coastal Planning*⁷⁶ guides land use and development decision-making within the coastal zone with local governments preparing Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation plans for coastal townships along with a raft other planning and implementation of adaptive measures. Associated costs present a significant challenge for local governments.

74 Government of Australia, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, *Independent Review of the EPBC Act*. Available at: <https://epbcactreview.environment.gov.au/resources/final-report/executive-summary>

75 Australian Government, Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, *National Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation Strategy*. Available at: <https://www.environment.gov.au/climate-change/adaptation/strategy>

76 Government of Western Australia, Western Australian Planning Commission, *State Planning Policy 2.6 – Coastal Planning*. Available at: <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/state-planning-policy-26-coastal-planning>

Strategic priorities

Priorities and activities for 2021–22 were determined by the RDAP Committee giving due consideration to the following:

- the RDA Charter and Federal regional development priorities;
- identified regional priorities that have cross-sectoral support and will realise high-value economic (and social) outcomes;
- alignment to key regional development, Federal and State strategic and funding priorities;
- capacity to improve productivity, create competitive advantage and capture emerging opportunities for a diversified economy;
- building on initiatives commenced in 2020–21; and
- build the capacity of disadvantaged and lower income earners to participate actively in economic development opportunities.

Performance measures applied are outlined in the financial agreement between RDAP and the Commonwealth.

RDAP has identified the following five strategic priorities for 2021–2022. Alignment to strategic goals outlined in RDAP's *Strategic Plan 2021–2024* is referenced below:

1

Hydrogen Hub (Strategy 1 – Business development and diversification and Strategy 4 – Leadership and collaboration)

The Federal Government has committed to reducing Australia's emissions through investment in technology.

In 2019, the Federal Government released the *National Hydrogen Strategy* 'intended to deliver a clean, innovative, safe and competitive hydrogen industry, and help Australia become a major player in the hydrogen market by 2030.'⁷⁷ The subsequent First Low Emissions Technology Statement 2020, prioritises developing hydrogen and carbon capture capabilities.

In April 2021 the Federal Government announced \$275.5 million for the development of four additional clean energy hubs in regional Australia, funded in the 2021–22 budget.⁷⁸ The investment will also provide for up to 10 hydrogen feasibility studies and legal reforms (clean hydrogen certification) to facilitate trade.

This follows on from \$70.2 million in the 2020–21 Budget to support the development of a technology-neutral regional hydrogen export hub.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Parliament of Australia, Research Paper, *Emissions Reduction and Hydrogen*. Available at: https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/BudgetReview202122/EmissionsReductionHydrogen

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Government of Australia, *Australian Renewable Energy Agency*. Available at: <https://arena.gov.au/funding/renewable-hydrogen-deployment-funding-round/>

Renewable energy plays a significant role in decarbonisation of high energy consumptive industries like the resource sector and projects of this type have significant potential for the local sector and international markets. The Pilbara has competitive advantages that would position it as an ideal location for a hydrogen hub, including but not limited to:

- Proximity to Asia which ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) forecasts to be Australia's largest export source of regional supply by 2040.
- Affords coastal industrial clusters of industry adjacent to Ports to support upscaling of hydrogen production for export and domestic use.
- Significant land availability, backup energy supply, technical capability and skilled workforce.
- The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) awarded Engie Renewables \$42.5 million towards a 10-megawatt electrolyser project to provide hydrogen in Yara Pilbara Fertiliser's ammonia facility in Karratha, scheduled to commence production in 2023.
- Good fleet and freight and corridors, with potential access to the Dampier to Bunbury gas pipeline.
- Transition of energy networks to meet emissions commitments pursuant to State Government and large-scale miners committing to aspirational targets of net-zero emissions by 2050.

As indicated, a Pilbara Hydrogen Hub is a significant value proposition for Australia's hydrogen industry and to ensure global competitiveness of Pilbara industry through low emissions production. RDAP will collaboratively prepare a submission for Hydrogen hub funding.

2

Designated Area Migration Agreement (Strategy 2 – skilled workforce attraction and development and Strategy 4 – Leadership and collaboration)

Designated Area Migration Agreements (DAMA) constitute a formal agreement between the Commonwealth Government and a designated area representative (DAR), with the latter either a State/Territory Government or regional body such as local government or an RDA. A DAMA facilitates enhanced access to a range of skilled workers not otherwise available through existing skilled visa programs, by providing for variations to standard occupation and skills lists and concessions to visa requirements. Employers are required to sponsor overseas workers and may only access worker categories incorporated within the DAMA agreement.

The agreement is generally five years and applies the Temporary Skill Shortage and Employer Nominated Scheme visa programs. The DAMA is complementary to other strategies which provide jobs for Australian's first.

With over 800 jobs advertised for the Pilbara on Seek.com and a highly competitive labour market, the DAMA supports a tailored approach to alleviating chronic skills shortages to support the viability and growth of Pilbara based businesses.

The City of Karratha and Town of Port Hedland are preparing a joint application for a DAMA which includes consultation with Pilbara based businesses to determine skills categories for incorporation in the agreement. RDAP will lead this initiative as the dedicated DAR for the region.

3

Affordable Housing (Strategy 3 – Infrastructure and services and Strategy 4 – Leadership and collaboration)

As noted, the issue of affordable housing during an economic upturn is cyclical and creates inequity in access to accommodation in the Pilbara. Federal taxation incentives support FIFO workforce arrangements over residential accommodation, company owned housing over rental or mortgage subsidies, with very few taxation benefits available for lower income workers. This is coupled with other issues such as the availability of subdivided land (in some areas of the Pilbara); high construction costs due to remoteness and the requirement to meet cyclone code; coastal hazard and inundation risks; and extremely high insurance costs.

While insurance costs have been comprehensively reviewed by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission through the Northern Australia Insurance Inquiry, the causes of housing affordability as evidenced, are highly complex and multi-faceted and require evidenced-based and innovative responses to meet the current crisis and deliver long-term sustainable approaches to temper the housing market.

Significant opportunity exists for RDAP to investigate short and longer-term strategic and practical solutions to housing affordability and impediments and opportunities to facilitate investment.

4

Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub (Strategy 1 – Business development and economic diversification)

A consortium of NT and WA partners under the lead of Charles Darwin University are applying to the Federal Government to establish a Northern WA and NT drought resilience adoption and innovation hub. A representative board will provide strategic direction and corporate governance of the hub. A Research and Adoption Committee will assess the feasibility of projects associated with the hub which will be delivered by a dedicated team according to best practice project management principles. A Supporting Partner program will apply to support information exchange about projects and to facilitate opportunities for project engagement and participation in workshops and an annual conference.

The hub aims to support primary producers through developing a knowledge base of effective drought resilience strategies; identify reliance needs, gaps and options to support resilience planning; enhance natural capital within rangelands; and build water security and efficiency.

As part of the initiative, RDAP will examine the feasibility of applying mine dewatering surplus to support agricultural enterprises and sustain stock levels.

5

Regional investment report (Strategy 1 – Business development and economic diversification and Strategy 4 – Leadership and collaboration)

A collaborative project with RDA Perth, the report will identify competitive advantages of new business developments and investment in the regions. The report will focus on regional market investment opportunities and in this regard is an evidenced-based information tool for prospective investors. Secondly, it will identify potential barriers to future investment in WA regions for Government planning.

6

West Pilbara Communities for Children Initiative (Strategy 3 – Infrastructure and services and Strategy 4 – Leadership and collaboration)

RDAP has signed a further five-year agreement 2021-2022 to 2025-2026 as a facilitating partner for delivery of the West Pilbara Communities for Children Initiative. The program delivers tailored local level approaches to support family and child wellbeing, with a focus on families experiencing vulnerability and multiple complex needs. Service delivery is evidenced-based to ensure alignment to identified need with partner organisations contracted to deliver services in West Pilbara communities. Through carer capacity building, supporting child health, education and development, and collaborating with key service providers, the program aims to achieve improved socio-economic outcomes for predominantly disadvantaged communities.



Operations

Funding and governance

RDAP received approved funding of \$369,663 from the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development for the 2021-2022 financial year. Unspent funding from the 2020-2021 year of \$70,000 was carried forward.

RDAP will be reviewing its existing policies to determine updates or opportunities to strengthen corporate governance including, risk management, business continuity and occupational health and safety.

Communications Plan

RDAP has in place a *Communications, Consultation and Marketing Policy* which is available on request. The following structural and operational changes are intended to enhance stakeholder consultation and investment attraction:

- ensuring board composition reflects all four LGAs and has strong cross-sectoral experience;
- strengthening policies and practices to reconfirm the boards strategic responsibilities in leading the organisation, including as a conduit for community and stakeholder information;
- convening monthly (as opposed to bi-monthly) meetings in different LGAs to facilitate two-way information exchange; networking and partnerships; and to remain abreast of emerging challenges and opportunities;

- instituting monthly newsletters, incorporating 'real-time' economic updates; RDA project/partnership reporting; and to disseminate information on funding and investment opportunities;
- updating the RDAP website to be more easily navigated and information accessible;
- facilitating opportunities for networking or professional development;
- leading, brokering and negotiating high value regional projects with key partners in line with the shift in focus of the RDA Charter;
- establishing further strategic partnerships with Commonwealth and State agencies to maximise the opportunity to leverage emerging economic development opportunities and investment platforms; and
- participating more actively in formal and informal meetings/networking arrangements with the Pilbara Development Commission, regional local governments and regional Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Outcomes and activities

What will we do?	RDA's role	Timeframe	Expected outcomes
Strategic objective 1 – Business development and economic diversification <i>New diversified industry opportunities maximise economic returns, improve Australia's market competitiveness, stabilise fluctuations in the economy, and create a thriving and prosperous small business economy.</i>			
1.1 – Submission to the Commonwealth Government for the establishment of the Pilbara as a regional clean energy hub.	Lead/champion Lead collaborative alliance of key stakeholders to prepare an evidenced based submission	Q2	Establish a centre of excellence in hydrogen technologies to attract investment and create sustainable jobs in the Pilbara. Establish the Pilbara's reputation as a centre for clean energy, significantly reducing emissions and improving the resource sector's global competitiveness. Reduce the cost of low-carbon hydrogen pathways. Leverage existing production and transport infrastructure and cluster demand, for hydrogen. Grow a hydrogen economy for the domestic market and exports (leveraging proximity to Asian export markets). Improve energy safety outcomes in the resource sector.
1.2 – Submission to the Federal Government to establish a Northern WA and NT drought resilience adoption and innovation hub.	Contributed to - RDA is a partner in the NWANT and contributes financially	Q2-	Improve drought resilience of pastoralists through improved water management for agricultural enterprises.

What will we do?	RDA's role	Timeframe	Expected outcomes
<p>1.3 - Co-deliver a regional investment report to identify market investment opportunities in the Pilbara, and potential barriers to future investment in WA regions.</p>	<p>Contributed to –</p> <p>RDA is a partner agency in the project which is led by Perth RDA</p>	<p>Q2-Q3</p>	<p>Facilitate investment by prospective investors through identification of evidenced-based investment opportunities in the Pilbara.</p> <p>Identify impediments to market investment for Government, to facilitate a strong enabling environment for investors.</p> <p>Grow the Pilbara economy based on identified competitive advantages.</p>
<p>Strategic objective 2 – Skilled workforce attraction and development <i>The Pilbara has sustained access to skilled and unskilled human capital in the region to meet current and emerging demand.</i></p>			
<p>2.1 - Prepare a submission to the Commonwealth Government for a Pilbara Designated Area Migration Agreement.</p>	<p>Lead/champion</p> <p>Lead the Pilbara DAMA, working collaboratively with the City of Karratha and Town of Port Hedland in consultation with Pilbara operated businesses.</p>	<p>Q2</p>	<p>Support employment for Australian citizens and permanent residents as a first priority.</p> <p>Provide access to tailored employment solutions otherwise unavailable under the standard skilled migration program.</p> <p>Address existing and forecast specified industry skills shortages through a business led approach to skills identification.</p> <p>Temper cyclical skills shortages and wage inflation in the Pilbara through facilitating opportunities for settlement of skilled workers in the region.</p> <p>Support the viability and expansion of Pilbara businesses, including new investment attraction.</p>

What will we do?	RDA's role	Timeframe	Expected outcomes
<p>Strategy 3 – Infrastructure and services <i>Infrastructure and services investment is evidence-based and targeted to deliver sustainable, liveable and economically vibrant communities.</i></p>			
<p>3.1 – Prepare an investigative research report on evidenced-based and innovative responses to meet the current housing affordability crisis in the Pilbara and deliver long-term sustainable approaches to temper the housing market.</p> <p>Support implementation of the recommendations of the Northern Australia Insurance Inquiry</p>	<p>Lead/champion</p> <p>RDA will lead through project management of the report.</p> <p>Scope will be formulated jointly with key stakeholders i.e. PDC and Pilbara local government authorities.</p>	<p>Q3 and Q4</p>	<p>Inform stakeholder strategies for delivery of affordable housing based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - best practice approaches to construction and financing and their applicability to the Pilbara. - identification of impediments or incentives for investment. <p>Realise economic development outcomes by facilitating affordable housing for a skilled work ready residential workforce.</p> <p>Reduce costs of residential insurance in the Pilbara.</p>
<p>3.2 – Facilitate delivery of the West Pilbara Communities for Children Initiative.</p>	<p>Lead/champion</p> <p>RDA is the facilitating partner for the West Pilbara Communities for Children Initiative, delivering the program in partnership with contracted service providers across Ashburton, Karratha and Roebourne.</p>	<p>Q1-</p>	<p>Facilitate improvement in family wellbeing, increase economic engagement and deliver more cohesive communities.</p> <p>Program performance requirements of the five-year funding agreement are achieved.</p>

What will we do?	RDA's role	Timeframe	Expected outcomes
Strategy 4 – Leadership and collaboration <i>A productive and cohesive region where key stakeholders share experiences, knowledge and skills and prioritise strategic initiatives to maximise economic development in the Pilbara.</i>			
4.1 – Implement the RDA Pilbara Strategic Plan 2021-2024	Lead/Champion RDA will lead the implementation of the Strategy, with evidenced-based practice and partnerships key to the Strategy's delivery.	Q1 -	Australian Government's regional priorities are realised. By June 2024, the Pilbara will be better connected, better resources and have taken significant measurable steps towards achieving a more diversified, liveable and prosperous economy.
4.2 – Support proponents in delivering funding submissions, business cases and initiatives that realise priority projects in the Pilbara.	Lead/Champion - (i.e. hydrogen Hub) Contribute to – Commonwealth grant initiatives, State-Commonwealth projects, local government realisation of public infrastructure, etc	Q1-	Infrastructure investment is aligned to need and effectively delivers economic, social and environmental outcomes in the Pilbara. Efficiency in the use of infrastructure is maximised.
4.3 – Deliver or contribute to research projects that support priority business growth strategies and integration of new technologies	Lead/Champion Contribute to	Q1 -	Best practice approaches are adopted to address emerging issues that may support or constrain economic growth. The feasibility, sustainability, cost effectiveness and risks associated with projects are determined prior to investment.

What will we do?	RDA's role	Timeframe	Expected outcomes
<p>4.4 – Advocate and communicate with Parliament, Ministers, Members of Parliament, Commonwealth and State agencies and GTEs and other key stakeholders to leverage sustainable and diversified regional development and investment outcomes in the Pilbara</p>	<p>Lead/Champion Targeted advocacy</p>	<p>Q1 –</p>	<p>Commonwealth and State Governments remain abreast of initiatives, challenges and opportunities in regional development in the Pilbara and can adjust policy, legislative and investment priorities accordingly.</p> <p>Stakeholders are assisted (where required) in navigating governmental systems.</p> <p>Multi-stakeholder supported outcomes are achieved, aligned to identified priorities.</p> <p>Regional development outcomes are evidenced-based and sustainable.</p>
<p>4.5 – Prepare, distribute and promote economic investment, diversification and growth in the Pilbara.</p>	<p>Lead/Champion – Easily digestible economic data Grants opportunities Current initiatives Information produced in different formats and disseminated across different mediums</p>	<p>Q1 –</p>	<p>Facilitate investment opportunities and leverage partnerships for economic growth and diversification in the Pilbara.</p> <p>Improved social media presence for enhanced dissemination of information.</p> <p>Enhanced newsletter subscription base.</p>

What will we do?	RDA's role	Timeframe	Expected outcomes
<p>4.6 – Enhance governance processes to strengthen the strategic performance of RDAP, stakeholder engagement, and partnerships,</p>	<p>Lead/Champion Review of policies, processes and practices</p>	<p>Q1</p>	<p>Committee's direction setting for economic development in the Pilbara is strengthened.</p> <p>Greater proximity to the community is achieved through direct committee and operational engagement.</p> <p>Partnerships for leveraging existing and emerging economic development opportunities and investment platforms are identified and strengthened.</p> <p>RDAP's brand; community understanding of roles, responsibilities and initiatives; and intersect with the Commonwealth regional development agenda are strengthened.</p>

Annual Budget 2021-2022

GST exclusive amounts	RDA program funding (incl. all \$ in FA and schedules)	
	Budget 1 July 2021 – 30 June 2022	Actual to 30 June 2022
Income		
Surplus funding carried forward from previous financial year	\$70,000.00	
Funding for this period	\$369,663.00	(1)
Interest on Commonwealth funds	\$750.00	
Total RDA program income (A)	\$440,413.00	
Expenditure - major budget items ^		
Employee salaries	\$112,500.00	
Employee entitlements	Included in Employee Salaries	
Other employee expenses	\$35,750.00	
Office lease and outgoings	\$15,500.00	
Vehicle costs	\$10,800.00	
Operational	\$8,750.00	
Financial, legal and professional	\$13,900.00	
Marketing	\$11,000.00	
Asset acquisition	\$2,000.00	
Committee costs	\$62,500.00	
Project Funding:		
Hydrogen Conference	\$50,596.00	
Hydrogen Hub Project	\$20,000.00	
Drought Resilience Hub	\$6,667.00	
Strategic Investment Plan	\$5,500.00	
Monthly Economic Update	\$35,000.00	
Direct Area Migration Agreement	\$20,000.00	
Housing and Living Affordability	\$20,000.00	
Other supplementary funding (if any)	\$0.00	
Total RDA program funding expenditure (B)	\$440,413.00	
Surplus / Deficit of RDA program funding (A-B)	\$0.00	(2)
If surplus, percentage of RDA program funding unspent = (2)/(1)*100 (See Note 1, below)		0%



An Australian Government Initiative

