

MEDIA RELEASE

30th March 2022

Businesses in the City of Karratha and Town of Port Hedland can now look to fill critical labour shortages with Federal immigration minister the Hon Minister Alex Hawke MP signing a Pilbara Designated Area Migration Agreement (DAMA).

The Pilbara DAMA is a five-year agreement between the Commonwealth and Regional Development (RDA) Australia, in partnership with the [City of Karratha](#) and the [Town of Port Hedland](#). The Pilbara DAMA provides new pathways for employers to sponsor skilled and semi-skilled overseas workers for positions they are unable to fill with Australian workers.

City of Karratha Mayor Peter Long said the City was delighted to offer a solution for recruitment and retention issues to local businesses.

“Attracting and retaining staff is a major issue facing our business community,” Cr Long said. “The Pilbara DAMA is a key part of the City’s efforts to support local business navigate recruitment challenges.”

“While not traditionally a Local Government responsibility, helping businesses attract and retain workers is a priority for us, particularly where business haven’t been able to find workers locally.”

“The new Pilbara DAMA will help fill gaps in the labour market and bring huge benefits for both the local community and migrants.”

Town of Port Hedland Mayor Peter Carter said the DAMA supported the local business community by pro-actively addressing critical labour shortages.

“Speaking with local businesses, it’s clear that labour shortages continue to be a challenge impacting operations and growth.

“The Pilbara DAMA will enable Hedland based businesses to recruit skilled and semi-skilled overseas workers in certain occupations to meet demand.

“This DAMA is the beginning of a unique partnership opportunity to work collaboratively across different levels of government to bring benefit to our business community.”

Regional Development Australia Pilbara Chief Executive Officer Tony Simpson said RDA is excited by the opportunity to help businesses fill seats which have been vacant for too long.

“More than 50% of the occupations listed on the DAMA are roles which service our community. The DAMA is more than just mining and industry, and aims to build a stronger community.”

Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs Alex Hawke said “The establishment of the Pilbara DAMA will play a significant part in building the region, drawing highly skilled workers to reside locally and support diversification of the local economy by providing opportunities for critical support services for the region.”

Regional Development Australia (RDA) Pilbara will administer the process for accessing the DAMA, with businesses in the City of Karratha and Town of Port Hedland able to apply from 9 May.

