

15 September 2017

The Hon. Dr John McVeigh MP  
Chair  
Select Committee on Regional Development and Decentralisation  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

ABN: 55 418 618 640

Ph: 02 6369 1600

All Postal  
Correspondence  
PO Box 172  
Orange  
NSW 2800

## **Re: Inquiry into Regional Development and Decentralisation**

Regional Development Australia (RDA) Central West is pleased to provide the attached submission in relation to the Select Committee Inquiry into Regional Development and Decentralisation.

Key messages from RDA Central West, provided in this submission, are that;

- Careful and considered relocation of government bodies to regional areas results in significant economic growth and stronger regional communities, greater synergies, and better partnerships for the government body and the ability to leverage expertise;
- There is broad support for Government and Corporate decentralisation in Central West NSW, with opportunities and successful case studies identified in the agricultural industry (including R&D and finance), health clustering and supply chain logistics;
- Infrastructure needed for decentralisation, especially of corporate entities, requires excellent telecommunications and, in some cases, access to adequate gas and electricity supplies;
- The impacts of decentralisation for communities are overwhelmingly positive, resulting in local economic benefits and opportunities for better skills attraction and retention.

RDA Central West has had preliminary discussions with a number of regional stakeholders, including Central NSW Councils (Centroc), individual councils, businesses and community members, who are highly supportive of the Government's commitment to investigating this issue further and are keen to contribute to regional consultations.

Yours faithfully,

Julia Andrews  
**Executive Officer**



# **Regional Development Australia (RDA) Central West**

## **Inquiry into Regional Development and Decentralisation**

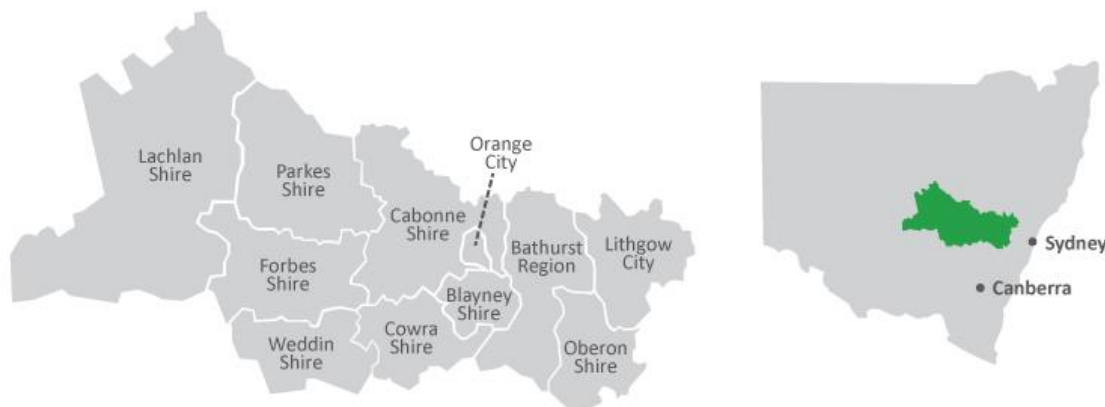
**September 2017**



## Introduction

Regional Development Australia Central West (RDA Central West) is a not-for-profit organisation, funded by the Commonwealth and State Governments, responsible for the economic development and long term sustainability of the NSW Central West region.

Approximately 177,000 people live in the region, which comprises the Local Government Areas of Lithgow, Oberon, Bathurst, Blayney, Orange, Cabonne, Cowra, Parkes, Forbes, Weddin and Lachlan.



Unique in its diversity of economy, the Central West Region of NSW is rich in natural resources with agriculture and mining significant drivers of growth.

There is broad support for decentralisation in Central West NSW, with opportunities and successful case studies identified in agricultural industries (including R&D and finance), health clustering and supply chain logistics.

RDA Central West has had preliminary discussions with a number of regional stakeholders, including Central NSW Councils (Centroc), individual regional Councils, businesses and community members, who are highly supportive of the Government's commitment to investigating Government and corporate relocation opportunities further.

## Terms of Reference

This submission builds on evidence already presented to the recent 'Senate Inquiry into the relocation of government bodies to regional areas' (*The operation, effectiveness and consequences of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability [Location of Corporate Commonwealth Entities] Order 2016*).

Firstly we provide comments, evidence and case studies related to the following Terms of Reference, followed by general comments on other related matters:

- a) Best practice approaches to regional development
- b) Decentralisation of Government entities or functions as a mechanism to support regional development
- c) Corporate decentralisation
- d) Other matters
  - Infrastructure required for decentralisation
  - Impacts of decentralisation



## a) Best Practice Approaches to Regional Development

RDA Central West is encouraged that the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry includes examining best practice approaches to regional development, including ways to better achieve sustainable population growth, skills development, regional economic and employment growth and diversification, improved liveability and community engagement, investment attraction, place-based approaches to decision-making and collective governance.

In our view, the most successful and beneficial regional development initiatives are collaborative in nature and driven by strong partnerships formed between businesses and community groups on-the ground, and supported by the three tiers of Government. This is embodied in the Mission<sup>1</sup> and Guiding Principles<sup>2</sup> of our Organisation, which can be accessed via our website<sup>3</sup>.

We look forward to examining the results of the inquiry, providing a thorough investigation of regional development approaches both locally and internationally.

It is, however, essential that regional development practitioners have adequate resources and staff on hand to be able to effectively carry out initiatives using the best practice approaches identified. We have welcomed the response from the Australian Government's Review into RDA's, to strengthen the Charter for a stronger, more focussed RDA network and moving towards best practice. However funding has not increased and constant tensions remain between competing, but often equally important, regional development initiatives and issues that require attention from regional development organisations. Appropriate resources must also be given to implement initiatives, once best practice approaches have been agreed upon.

It is also essential that Regional Development Organisations have access to better data sources (including government and open data sources) in order to make better regional development decisions and understand the complex array of factors that contribute to place-based issues and potential solutions. Currently, we are unable to access a variety of existing data sources and have limited funds to purchase individual data sets from various suppliers; this is one of the greatest impediments to implementing best practice regional development initiatives which are evidence-based.

## b) Decentralisation of Government entities or functions as a mechanism to support regional development

In our experience, the relocations of Government and corporate entities that have been beneficial for all involved are those where existing regional strengths can be leveraged and synergies can be built.

RDA Central West believes that careful and considered relocation of government entities or particular functions to regional areas results in significant economic growth and stronger regional communities, greater synergies and better partnerships for the government body and the ability to leverage local expertise.

---

<sup>1</sup> RDA Central West Mission : To promote new thinking and partnerships across government, industry and community to realise the region's vision and economic potential

<sup>2</sup> RDA Central West Guiding Principles: Our success is due to the fact that we are unified, diverse, innovative, liveable, inclusive, connected and sustainable, and because we recognise the importance of sharing the benefits of growth across all our communities.

<sup>3</sup> RDA Central West, 2017, 'Strategic Framework and Priorities 2017-2020', Access via <http://www.rdacentralwest.org.au/region/regional-plan/>



Greater synergies result where relocations are in targeted locations that align with existing strengths and comparative advantages. This provides significant scope for closer and more effective partnerships, increased collaboration and innovation with industry, and the ability for both the Government authority and industry to leverage capability and expertise at the source.

The overwhelming benefits of decentralisation for regional areas, when conducted in this manner, is highlighted through the following case studies and research.

RDA Central West is not aware of any major Government decentralisation events in the Central West which have left the region 'worse off'.

### A strong case for Agricultural Industries - R&D and Finance

The NSW Central West region has comparative advantages in agriculture and forestry. The majority of businesses actively trading in Central West NSW are in agriculture<sup>4</sup>. In the vicinity of Orange, there is a significant and diverse horticulture sector, existing food and agri-technology businesses, the NSW Department of Primary Industries and the Orange Agricultural Institute.

Decentralising Government R&D functions has the opportunity to facilitate greater cross-pollination with industries that are regional strengths, a key policy of the National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA)<sup>5</sup>.

The variety of high quality horticultural produce compared to other regions, as well as existing strengths in food and agriculture skills, technology and government, means that the argument for relocation to Orange of related government agencies and organisations such as, for example, the research and development arm of Horticulture Innovation Australia, is compelling.

In a major study into Value Adding to Agriculture in Central West NSW (2016)<sup>6</sup>, RDA Central West found that the Central West NSW is ideally placed to be an innovation hub for research and development in agriculture, in particularly in the fields of biotechnology and functional foods/nutraceuticals, due to;

- the region's diversity of high quality agricultural produce;
- the region's proximity and accessibility to major centres;
- existing horticultural R&D industry confidence in the region with private enterprise biotechnology ventures already operating (see case studies below);
- the location of the NSW Department of Primary Industries'
- the region's close ties with Charles Sturt University;
- the region's attractiveness to higher skilled workers (affordable housing, cost of living, work/life balance, schools and higher educational facilities, medical services and specialists and culture).

---

<sup>4</sup> RDA Central West, 2016, 'Value Adding to Agriculture in Central West NSW', accessed via <http://www.rdacentralwest.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/RDACW-Value-Adding-to-Agricultureweb.pdf>, p.49

<sup>5</sup> National Innovation and Science Agenda, 2017, accessed via <https://www.innovation.gov.au/>

<sup>6</sup> RDA Central West, 2016, 'Value Adding to Agriculture in Central West NSW', accessed via <http://www.rdacentralwest.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/RDACW-Value-Adding-to-Agricultureweb.pdf>



*For business case studies of agricultural R&D in the Central West and the opportunities this presents for regional and industry development, see RDA Central West's Value Adding to Agriculture in Central West NSW, 2016.*

### Regional relocation success story – NSW Department of Primary Industries, Orange, Central West NSW

The NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) relocated from Sydney to a purpose-built headquarters in Orange, Central West NSW, twenty-five years ago. NSW DPI now provides hundreds of jobs for the local community in Orange and injects significant income into the local economy.

Today, NSW DPI is thriving from its Orange headquarters, driving successes in research, extension, policy, biosecurity, resource management and industry development. Rural communities, businesses, local councils and NFPs have benefited significantly from the opportunity to be closer to NSW DPI headquarters and the Department has been able to recruit industry experts into important postings to make their knowledge and expertise more accessible for clients.

RDA Central West has a very strong collaborative and productive relationship with NSW DPI. The location of DPI in the region fundamentally leads to better partnerships and the ability to leverage expertise. For example, RDA Central West is currently working collaboratively with DPI on a project designed to increase e-commerce opportunities for Central West NSW agrifood businesses into China. Similarly, RDA Central West is collaborating with DPI on a project designed to upskill and empower farm based decision makers west of the region in commodity marketing capabilities. Without the networks and relationships RDA Central West has developed with DPI due to its location in the region, these and other projects, that contribute to jobs and growth within the region, would not have been possible.

Additional industry development initiatives, including the Global Ag-Tech Ecosystem (GATE) initiative of NSW DPI, has also only been made possible in the Central West due to the location of the Department of Primary Industries in the region. The GATE is a collaborative research and technology site specifically designed to cultivate and develop ag-tech, offering access to DPI R&D, staff and research capabilities, long-term data sets and research stations to companies and research organisations.

Currently there are very few Commonwealth entities located in the region, apart from the recent announcement of the Regional Investment Corporation to be established in Orange (envisioned to occur in 2018). RDA Central West welcomed this announcement, which we expect will create more jobs and career pathways for regional people, greater investment and networking opportunities, as well as bringing Government closer to the people and communities that it services.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> RDA Central West, 2017, 'Media Release: regional Investment Corporation to be located in Central West NSW', <http://www.rdacentralwest.org.au/media-release-regional-investment-corporation-to-be-located-in-central-west-nsw/>



## Regional relocation story – Forthcoming Regional Investment Corporation (RIC), Orange, Central West NSW

On 26 May 2017 the Australian Government announced the establishment of the Regional Investment Corporation (RIC) in Orange, planned to streamline the delivery of up to \$2 billion in concessional loans for farm businesses and \$2 billion in loans to state and territory governments to fast-track construction of dams and priority water infrastructure projects.

The RIC is expected to provide around 25 jobs for the region initially, and have sought interest for members of the board.

The relocation is expected to contribute to the development of a rural financial hub in the region, building on the corporate decentralisation of Paraway Pastoral to Orange in 2015 and the services provided by the NSW Rural Assistance Authority also in Orange.

RDA Central West has met with the Regional Investment Corporation (RIC) to discuss its establishment and relocation of certain functions, and are extremely positive about the impact this will have on the region and the services delivered.

Information via <http://minister.agriculture.gov.au/joyce/Pages/Media-Releases/seeking-talent-to-lead-ric.aspx>

*For other examples of corporate decentralisation success in the agricultural industry sector see 'Regional relocation story: The Land' and 'Regional relocation story: Paraway Pastoral Co.'*

## A strong case for Supply Chain and Logistics

The Decentralisation of Government-owned supply chain and logistics businesses, with a significant interest in the nation's agricultural supply chain and connectivity to ports, also have the potential to boost growth and prosperity in the Central West.

On an initial assessment, it would be a logical location on the Inland Rail alignment at the national intersection of the main west national rail line.

A multitude of business and growth opportunities arising from the development of the Inland Rail have been identified in RDA Central West's 'Central West NSW Regional Economic Analysis on the Potential Impact of the Proposed Inland Rail'<sup>8</sup>. It found that the Inland Rail could create 491 potential new jobs in the Central West during the construction phase alone, 154 more regional jobs within Parkes, Forbes and Lachlan LGA's post-construction, and an overall \$216 million economic impacts to the Central West over 60 years.<sup>9</sup>

Potential key business opportunities identified in the report<sup>10</sup> include:

1. Rail maintenance and provisioning facilities for carriages, track, containers, etc could also be expanded and established.

<sup>8</sup> RDA Central West, 2016, 'Central West NSW Regional Economic Analysis on the Potential Impact of the Proposed Inland Rail', Accessed via <http://www.rdacentralwest.org.au/initiatives/inland-rail/>

<sup>9</sup> RDA Central West, 2016, 'Central West NSW Regional Economic Analysis on the Potential Impact of the Proposed Inland Rail', Accessed via [http://www.rdacentralwest.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/RDACW-Inland-Rail-Report\\_web.pdf](http://www.rdacentralwest.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/RDACW-Inland-Rail-Report_web.pdf), pp. 28-29.

<sup>10</sup> RDA Central West, 2016, 'Central West NSW Regional Economic Analysis on the Potential Impact of the Proposed Inland Rail', Accessed via [http://www.rdacentralwest.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/RDACW-Inland-Rail-Report\\_web.pdf](http://www.rdacentralwest.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/RDACW-Inland-Rail-Report_web.pdf), p. 5



2. Opportunity for both smaller regional hubs as well as larger intermodal hubs to be expanded and constructed.
3. Parkes National Logistics Hub growth creating more employment opportunities post-construction.
4. Grain handling terminal potentially located in Parkes.
5. Distribution centre development.
6. Business relocations, start-ups, and business clusters.
7. Short-haul freight opportunities in the future.
8. Inland container storage facility providing repair and cleaning services.

Decentralisation of, for example, the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) to Parkes has the potential to ensure regions capitalise on the benefits of nationally significant infrastructure projects, as well as facilitating closer engagement with the NSW Government's Roads and Maritime Services (headquartered in Parkes) along with major logistics businesses at the National Logistics Hub.<sup>11</sup>

### Regional relocation success story - Service NSW, Parkes, Central West NSW

RTA (now RMS) established its Western Region Headquarters in Parkes in 1990, managing the state road network from Lithgow west to Broken Hill, south to Marsden and north to the Queensland Border. In addition to the RMS Western Region presence, Service NSW operates a Licence Processing Centre for all of NSW, and an Agency Business Centre managing all mail registration renewals for the State.

The following extract is from the *Parkes Champion Post*, 26 August 2016;

The 15 dedicated team members at the Parkes Middle Office play an important role in providing specialised assistance and support to the 65 Service Centres located around NSW.

Each year, the Middle Office team receives 25,000 phone calls from Service Centre staff, completes 20,000 vehicle registration renewals, deals with 15,000 mail items, and issues 12,500 vehicle notices of disposal and 1,100 maritime licences or renewals.

Service NSW CEO Dr Rachna Gandhi said the Middle Office have played an important role behind the scenes in helping to ensure customers have a fast, easy and hassle-free experience.

"At Service NSW, our goal is to put the customer at the heart of government services and transactions. We are making it easier, quicker and more convenient to do business with government, and making sure that customers have access to the right specialist support", Dr Gandhi said.

"The Parkes Middle Office is an example of our commitment to delivering outstanding service and streamlining processes for our customers."

Manager of the Parkes Middle Office Christine Kosorukow said "By offering specialised back-office assistance, our team at Parkes Middle Office is able to serve customers

<sup>11</sup> Parkes Shire Council, 2017, 'The National Logistics Hub', <http://www.parkes.nsw.gov.au/business-investment/investment-opportunities/national-logistics-hub/>



regardless of whether they're based in Tweed Heads, Broken Hill, Bondi, Batemans Bay - or anywhere in between."

Extract taken from *Parkes Champion Post*, 26 August 2016, 'Service NSW dishes out astronomical service in Parkes', <http://www.parkeschampionpost.com.au/story/4123414/service-nsw-dishes-out-astronomical-service-in-parkes/>

## A Strong case for Health Clustering

The Health Care and Aged Care sector is a dominant employment sector and an important industry within the Central West.<sup>12</sup>

There is a strong case for encouraging greater public and private sector relocation in the health industry to the Central West, and in particular the health precinct developing around Bloomfield and Orange Base Hospital on Forest Rd. Bloomfield Hospital and many other health services provide a referral centre not only for the region but much of Western NSW.

Greater collaboration between these existing services and Univeristy Schools of Rural Health, with biomedical and health companies that could be encouraged to move to the area would likely benefit not only the region but much of regional NSW through outreach, product and service improvement.

## c) Corporate Decentralisation

Successful corporate decentralisation case studies are also provided below, building on industry strengths already present in the region in both the private and public sector.

### Regional relocation success story - Paraway Pastoral Co. - Orange, Central West NSW

The following article is from the *Central Western Daily*, 8 August 2015:

Operating 3.6 million hectares for the Macquarie Pastoral Fund, Paraway is one of Australia's top five landholders, with enough space for 240,000 sheep, 220,000 cattle and some crop production.

While the closest property to Orange is located at Condobolin, chief executive Jock Whittle said the McNamara Street office (in Orange) was chosen because Paraway needed a regional presence.

"It was a central location to where all our properties are located ... and it's allowed us to attract people with the right skills," he said.

The office will employ 17 staff, which Mr Whittle said was a mixture of employees relocating from Sydney and across NSW, and fresh recruits from Orange.

"There are good education businesses here, really good health businesses and a really good food and tourism and winery industry makes it attractive, and it has good access to Sydney," he said.

<sup>12</sup> RDA Central West, 2015, 'Invest NSW Central West', <http://www.investnswcentralwest.com.au/opportunities-by-region/invest-nsw-central-west/>



“Obviously there are some other significant agricultural resources [like the Department of Primary Industries] and businesses that were part of our consideration.”

*Extract taken from Central Western Daily, 8 August 2015, “Company banking on regional move: 17 staff open Macquarie Bank office,”*  
<http://www.centralwesterndaily.com.au/story/3264736/company-banking-on-regional-move-17-staff-open-macquarie-bank-office/>

## Regional relocation story – The Land, Orange, Central West NSW

In 2015, Fairfax Media’s masthead ‘The Land’ moved a team of its journalists from the newspaper’s headquarters in North Richmond to Orange NSW.

The following extract is taken from *Central Western Daily*, 21 August 2015:

“Plans to move ‘the Land’ newspaper to Orange will strengthen rural links’,  
<http://www.centralwesterndaily.com.au/story/3293400/plans-to-move-the-land-newspaper-to-orange-will-strengthen-rural-links/>

ACM’s NSW Central business manager Sally White said preparations would begin soon to relocate The Land’s senior editorial team from North Richmond in north-west Sydney to Orange.

“This is about placing our newsroom leadership closer to our readers and closer to the communities and industries The Land serves,” Ms White, a former editor of the award-winning weekly newspaper, said.

“Nothing changes about our mission to be a champion for the bush. Indeed we are strengthening those ties by moving more of our journalists closer to most of the state’s farmers.”

The Land, which already has journalists located at Dubbo, Tamworth, Wagga Wagga and the North Coast, will retain senior reporters in Sydney, close to industry leaders and decision-makers.

One journalist will be based in Moree and an Orange-based journalist will be designated to report on agribusiness and property news.

The ranks of ACM’s specialist national agricultural writers, who cover key industry sectors for The Land and its sister publications in other states, will be increased.

Group managing editor Vernon Graham, also a former editor of The Land, said relocation of key editorial staff to Orange would bring the masthead much closer to its readers, as well as key livestock markets, including Carcoar.

The restructure involves total voluntary redundancies of about 16 full-time equivalent positions at The Land, where editorial staff numbers will be reduced by about eight once new group roles have been taken into account.

*Extract from Central Western Daily, 21 August 2015, “Plans to move ‘the Land’ newspaper to Orange will strengthen rural links’,*  
<http://www.centralwesterndaily.com.au/story/3293400/plans-to-move-the-land-newspaper-to-orange-will-strengthen-rural-links/>



### *Government as a 'good customer' to decentralise start up activity*

Government could also drive growth and prosperity in regional areas through encouraging start-up activity in regional areas. As identified in our submission to the NSW Legislative Assembly 'Inquiry into Support for Start-ups in Regional NSW' 2017,<sup>13</sup> the importance of Government as a 'good customer' to small-to-medium enterprises and start-up businesses in regional areas has huge potential to stimulate regional growth. This includes through the accessibility of Government tenders, Government grants and collaboration with Government Departments (for example on trialling technologies to improve service delivery or providing open access to Government data sources).

There is a need to make it easier for start-ups and small businesses to deal with Government. Creating a mandate to encourage collaboration and greater procurement through the start-up sector may be one possibility, if it is important to be considered a 'good customer' by start-ups and small businesses in regional areas. This is particularly pertinent when Government is considered to be one of the biggest potential 'customers' for start-ups and SME's in the region (Public Administration and Safety was the 6<sup>th</sup> largest sector contributing to GRP in the Central West in 2014, at 6.1% of Total GRP).<sup>14</sup>

Steps towards this have been made through the work of the Digital Transformation Agency and the Digital Marketplace, however there is still work to be done for businesses in Central West NSW.<sup>15</sup>

### Infrastructure required for decentralisation

The Government may be able to encourage corporate decentralisation through ensuring the availability of infrastructure, particularly smaller centres who are struggling to secure business relocations due to inadequate telecommunications, electricity and/or gas supply.

RDA Central West is aware that in some locations in the region Councils are finding it difficult to secure business relocations for industrial and manufacturing businesses, for example, due to the high price and unavailability of adequate gas and electrical supply.<sup>16</sup>

In other instances, where the nbn broadband infrastructure does not meet local needs, IT, software and app-development companies are forced to find alternative internet solutions or move away from the region. Whilst inadequate telecommunications can be a deterrent for businesses, on the flip side, fast broadband internet can also be a pull factor for businesses considering relocation.

We currently consider fast, reliable and future-proof telecommunications, which meets local needs, as one of the most important issues for regional development in the Central West. Through the last 18 months of engaging Council, business and community stakeholders in a co-ordinated regional approach to improving Telecommunications infrastructure<sup>17</sup>, we have found that most dissatisfaction arises from inadequate FTTN or nbn satellite services, as well as mobile black spots.

---

<sup>13</sup> RDA Central West submission to the Legislative Assembly, Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development, 'Inquiry into Support for Start-ups in Regional NSW', July 2017.

<sup>14</sup> RDA Central West, 2015, 'Invest NSW Central West',  
<http://www.investnswcentralwest.com.au/opportunities-by-region/invest-nsw-central-west/>

<sup>15</sup> Anecdotal evidence from start-up and SME businesses in Central West NSW communicated to RDA Central West, 2017.

<sup>16</sup> Anecdotal evidence provided to RDA Central West from regional Councils and business stakeholders, 2017.

<sup>17</sup> RDA Central West, 2016-17, 'Telecommunications',  
<http://www.rdacentralwest.org.au/initiatives/telecommunications/>



Funding to rectify priority mobile black spots<sup>18</sup>, and transitioning more business premises and communities off the SkyMuster satellite and onto fixed wireless or fibre options, will assist in improving telecommunications connectivity across the region.

Additionally, there is an urgent need for robust, future-proof and wide-reaching telecommunications capabilities in Central West NSW, in order to capitalise on the opportunities that the start-up and remote working sector presents for regional Australia. This may be enhanced through Government departments committing to facilitating remote working opportunities and supplying contract workers located in regional areas, given adequate broadband technology and digital connectivity platforms. This emerging trend has been shown by Riverina startup Go Remote, experiencing large demand from businesses wanting to find remote workers with specific professional skills.<sup>19</sup>

## Impacts of Decentralisation

### *Economic benefits*

The Regional Australia Institute estimated that for every additional 100,000 Australians who choose to live in small cities rather than the capital cities, around \$42 billion dollars will be released into the economy over the next 30 years through reduced interest payments on mortgages and \$4.9 billion dollars over 30 years through savings in congestion costs.<sup>20</sup>

### *Skills attraction and retention*

Decentralisation also creates more job opportunities, including in emerging industries, not only for local people but also for the attraction and retention of skilled professionals considering moving to the region. An increase in professional, scientific and technical skills, which are one of the greatest imports into the Central Western region<sup>21</sup>, can also strengthen the regional economy and provide opportunities for lateral career moves of young professionals between employers.

However significant skills gaps and issues with recruitment remain for some industries in the region including in electrical, plumbing, and mechanical trades to name a few.<sup>22</sup>

Successful campaigns to attract skilled professionals to the region have been conducted and well-documented by organisations such as Evocities<sup>23</sup> and Central NSW Council's regional health workforce recruitment campaign "Beyond the Range".<sup>24</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> In 2016, there were 369 reported mobile black spots across Central West NSW alone.

<sup>19</sup> Pennie Scott, 25 April 2017, *The Land*, 'Go remote appeals to professionals anywhere', <http://www.theland.com.au/story/4613315/go-remote-appeals-to-professionals-anywhere/>

<sup>20</sup> Regional Australia Institute, 2016, 'Deal of No Deal; Bringing Small Cities into the National Cities Agenda', access via <http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/2016/04/deal-no-deal-bringing-small-cities-national-cities-agenda/> p. 30

<sup>21</sup> RDA Central West, 2009-10 (data), 'Invest NSW Central West', Access via <http://www.investnswcentralwest.com.au/opportunities-by-region/invest-nsw-central-west/>

<sup>22</sup> Anecdotal evidence from business inquiries to RDA Central West during 2017; also noted on the Australian Government Department of Employment, 'Skill Shortage List New South Wales', 2016-17, access via [https://docs.employment.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/skillshortagelistnsw\\_6.pdf](https://docs.employment.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/skillshortagelistnsw_6.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Evocities, 2017, 'Evocities : Regional City Living', <http://evocities.com.au/>

<sup>24</sup> Central NSW Councils, 2015, 'Beyond the Range', <http://www.beyondtherange.com.au/>



It is no coincidence that locations experiencing corporate and Government decentralisation are also popular among professionals making a ‘tree change’ or moving to the region from another regional area. Orange has recently been voted the number one regional suburb for family living<sup>25</sup> and experienced significant growth in housing market popularity.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Fitzsimons, D, 2017, ‘Data Shows Orange is the most desirable regional city in NSW for relocation’, February 22, *The Central Western Daily*, <http://www.centralwesterndaily.com.au/story/4485885/orange-leads-the-way-for-people-relocating-to-regional-nsw/>

<sup>26</sup> Singer, M, 2017, ‘Orange, NSW blossoms for Sydney property buyers’, *The Australian*, 29 April, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/property/orange-nsw-blossoms-for-sydney-property-buyers/news-story/00d60d9e002c98b5f44669b5c43fc7e7>