

MEDIA RELEASE

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Stronger RDAs, Regional Deals and Decentralisation recommended in new Regional Development Report

Central NSW Councils (Centroc) and RDA Central West welcome a Federal Government report into regional development and decentralisation, which recommends a new approach to developing regional economies emphasising long-term policy making, decentralisation and human capital.

The NSW Central West region contributed significantly to the national inquiry which resulted in the *Regions at the Ready: Investing in Australia's Future* report released this week.

“We particularly welcome the Government’s recommendation to strengthen the Regional Development Australia (RDA) network,” said Chair of RDA Central West, Christine Weston. “RDAs – as regionally-based not for profit organisations with considerable experience and expertise – have been identified in the Report as lead organisations to identify regional priorities, work across all levels of government and collaborate with community and industry.”

“One of the reasons RDA Central West is so effective is its strong collaborative relationship with local government through Centroc. We all work more effectively as a team and it is a significant strength of Central West NSW,” said Ms Weston.

“It is clear from this Report that the thinking of this region has been influential,” said Cr John Medcalf, Chair of Centroc. “Recommendations for more infrastructure investment based on better planning through a strengthened RDA network are welcomed by Centroc. Centroc and RDA Central West have a proud history of collaboration on delivering support to our Councils and communities on the priorities of the region. This includes telecommunications, agriculture and transport.”

Centroc and RDA Central West also welcome the recommendation to roll out Regional City Deals similar to those recently announced in Western Sydney.

“Centroc is keen to work with RDA Central West to progress a Regional Deal that recognises all levels of government make a co-investment designed to build the economy,” said Cr Medcalf.

“We also welcome stronger universities and more proactive decentralisation of Federal agencies,” said Ms Weston.

The Chairs of the two Boards look forward to advocating together in support of the recommendations in this report when meeting at Parliament House in Canberra next month.

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