



12 September 2019

Select Committee on the effectiveness of the Australian Government's Northern Australia agenda
Northernaustralia.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary

RE: Northern RDA Alliance Submission

The Northern Regional Development Australia Alliance (the Alliance) was established in 2014 and comprises nine organisations whose regions collectively make up northern Australia. This network includes:

- RDA Mid West Gascoyne;
- RDA Fitzroy and Central West;
- RDA Northern Territory;
- RDA Far North Queensland and Torres Strait;
- RDA Townsville and North West Queensland;
- RDA Kimberley;
- RDA Pilbara;
- RDA Mackay-Isaac-Whitsunday; and
- Indian Ocean Territories Regional Development Organisation.

The Alliance provides strategic input to the Australian Government on issues affecting economic development across Northern Australia. Our aim is not only to support all governments to develop policies and prioritise investment opportunities, but also to work collaboratively with regional partners to contribute directly to strategies that strengthen the region.

On behalf of the Alliance I provide the following feedback on the effectiveness of the Australian Government's Northern Australia agenda:

- The Alliance continues to strongly support the need for an explicit Northern Australia agenda to assist with realising the full potential of this under-developed region for the benefit of the whole nation.



An Australian Government Initiative

- We acknowledge that the sustainable development of Northern Australia is long-term commitment and the implementation of the Northern Australia White Paper is still in its early stages.
- The responsiveness to feedback demonstrated in the review of, and changes to, NAIF is applauded. However, the emphasis on 'shovel ready' initiatives sits at odds with the greenfield nature of many development opportunities in Northern Australia. There is still much to be learned about supporting economic growth in the context of undeveloped, isolated and culturally complex regions.
- The members of the Alliance are committed to working with each other, with the three tiers of government, and with our communities to grow Northern Australia collaboratively and sustainably.
- We continue to explore methods by which we might better support relevant agencies and programs, including the Office of Northern Australia, Austrade, NAIF and the CRCNA.
- In the meantime, we support the development of Northern Australia at a grass roots level through the projects and initiatives of each RDA, as well as through the assistance we provide the hundreds of stakeholder organisations who are work at the coal face to service and grow Northern Australia.

If you have any questions in relation to the Alliance please do not hesitate to contact Kate Peake, RDA Northern Territory,

Yours Sincerely

Steve Edgington
Chair NRDA