

WA Regional Development Framework

October 2023



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

Minister's Foreword

WA Regional Development Framework

The importance of regional Western Australia to our country's economy and cultural identity cannot be understated.

From the mining riches of the Pilbara and Goldfields, to the record grain exports from our agricultural region and our world-class indigenous tourism experiences - the long-term success of our nation relies heavily on industries based in regional WA.

The Cook Government is proud of our regions and we're committed to making sure they remain fantastic places to live and work for generations to come.

Our Government is focused on building sustainable, vibrant and liveable regional communities, through initiatives like the Regional Economic Development Grants, the Regional Airfare Zone Cap scheme, and the Country Age Pension Fuel Card - just to name a few.

Our significant investment in regional infrastructure, service delivery, health and housing continued into the 2023-24 State Budget, with \$11.2 billion committed to important projects which support strong economic development, diversification and job-creation.



Hon. Don Punch MLA

Minister for Regional Development,
Disability Services; Fisheries;
Seniors and Ageing; Volunteering

The regions also have a significant role to play in WA's climate adaption and driving the transition to a cleaner, affordable and reliable energy future. Our Government is committed to enhancing climate resilience and supporting regional businesses to thrive in a low carbon future.

As we invest in new industries, technology and infrastructure, it is also vital that we engage and partner with local Aboriginal people and strive to achieve better outcomes for indigenous Western Australians.

While job creation and strong economies can draw people to regional living - housing, connectivity, appropriate service levels and community vibrancy are all essential components to building and retaining our communities and regional workforce.

The Cook Government is committed to seeing prosperity across our regions and I'd like to acknowledge the State's nine Regional Development Commissions and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, who work tirelessly to build resilient regional communities, with diverse economies that benefit all Western Australians.

Vision

That WA has sustainable, vibrant and liveable regional communities, supported by strong and prosperous economies.

A framework for regional development for Western Australia

Regional development is fundamentally about the people who live, work and invest in our regions. It is about the community and economies in these regions, and how they contribute to a growing and sustainable future for all Western Australians.

At the heart of regional development is quality of life. Quality of life comes from the interaction of health and wellbeing, economic diversity and growth, community pride and resilience, the natural environment, educational and career opportunities, and access to appropriate services.

Many factors influence quality of life in the State's nine regions. Current common factors include:

- Availability of land and access to quality affordable housing and accommodation
- Worker shortages
- Cost of living
- Access to education and training from early childhood to tertiary options
- Economic participation and empowerment of Aboriginal people
- Need for economic diversification
- Transitioning to a low carbon economy
- Changing climate
- Digital access and inclusion.

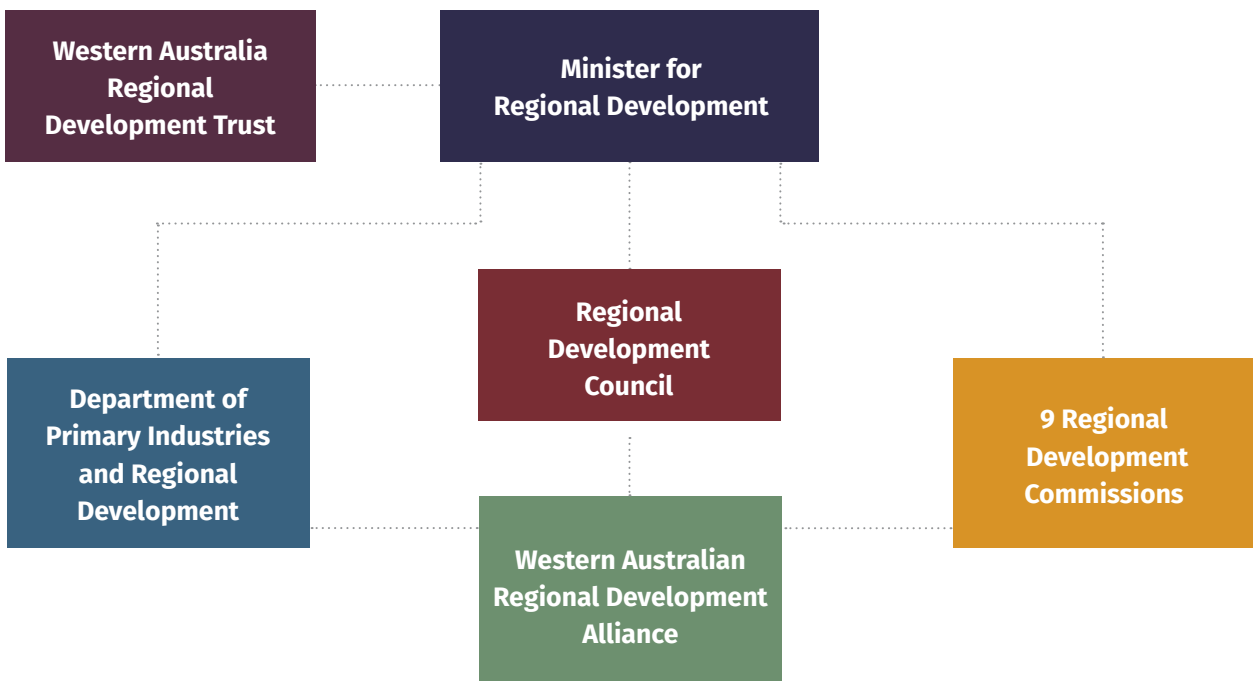
Regions are complex economic and social systems, and better outcomes often require place-based consideration, collaboration and engagement by government, community and industry.

Underpinning our approach to regional development is a focus on enhancing climate resilience, maintaining biodiversity, and environmentally sustainable development.

Regional Development Portfolio

The nine Regional Development Commissions and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development are the operational team for the Regional Development Portfolio.

The Regional Development Council and Western Australian Regional Development Trust have statutory advisory roles to the Minister for Regional Development.



Legislative Framework

Functions of the Portfolio are established under the *Regional Development Commissions Act 1993* and *Royalties for Regions Act 2009*, outlining these objectives in our regions:

- Maximise job creation and improve career opportunities
- Develop and broaden the economic base
- Identify infrastructure services to promote economic and social development
- Promote business development
- Ensure the general standard of government services and access to services is comparable to the metropolitan area
- Encourage, promote, facilitate and monitor economic development



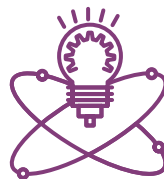
Our Focus

We have five areas of focus which respond to regional need and align with Government priorities and our legislative framework.

We will impact these areas through collaborative, coordinated and aligned actions that draw on our collective expertise and are tailored for regional difference.



Regional Liveability



Economic Development, Diversification, and Innovation



Climate Resilience & Low Carbon Transition



Aboriginal Empowerment and Prosperity



Organisational Excellence



Regional Liveability



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Regional Liveability

Making our regions good places to live is critical for the wellbeing of regional residents, and underpins labour market and community resilience.

Economic Development, Diversification and Innovation

Diversification must leverage existing strengths in resources, primary industries, and tourism, and seek to develop and support new industries and careers.

Climate Resilience and Low Carbon Transition

A changing climate alongside the global transition to a low carbon economy provide risks and significant opportunity for diversification and job growth in our regions.

Aboriginal Empowerment and Prosperity

Partnerships and engagement with Aboriginal people, strong accountability and culturally responsive working will enable regions to realise a ‘future in which all Aboriginal people, families and communities are empowered to live good lives and choose their own futures from a secure foundation.’¹

Organisational Excellence

The success of the Portfolio will be determined by the way it works together to deliver strategic initiatives and build organisational excellence in collaborative and cooperative delivery of regional development.




Organisational Excellence

1. Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy - 2021-2029

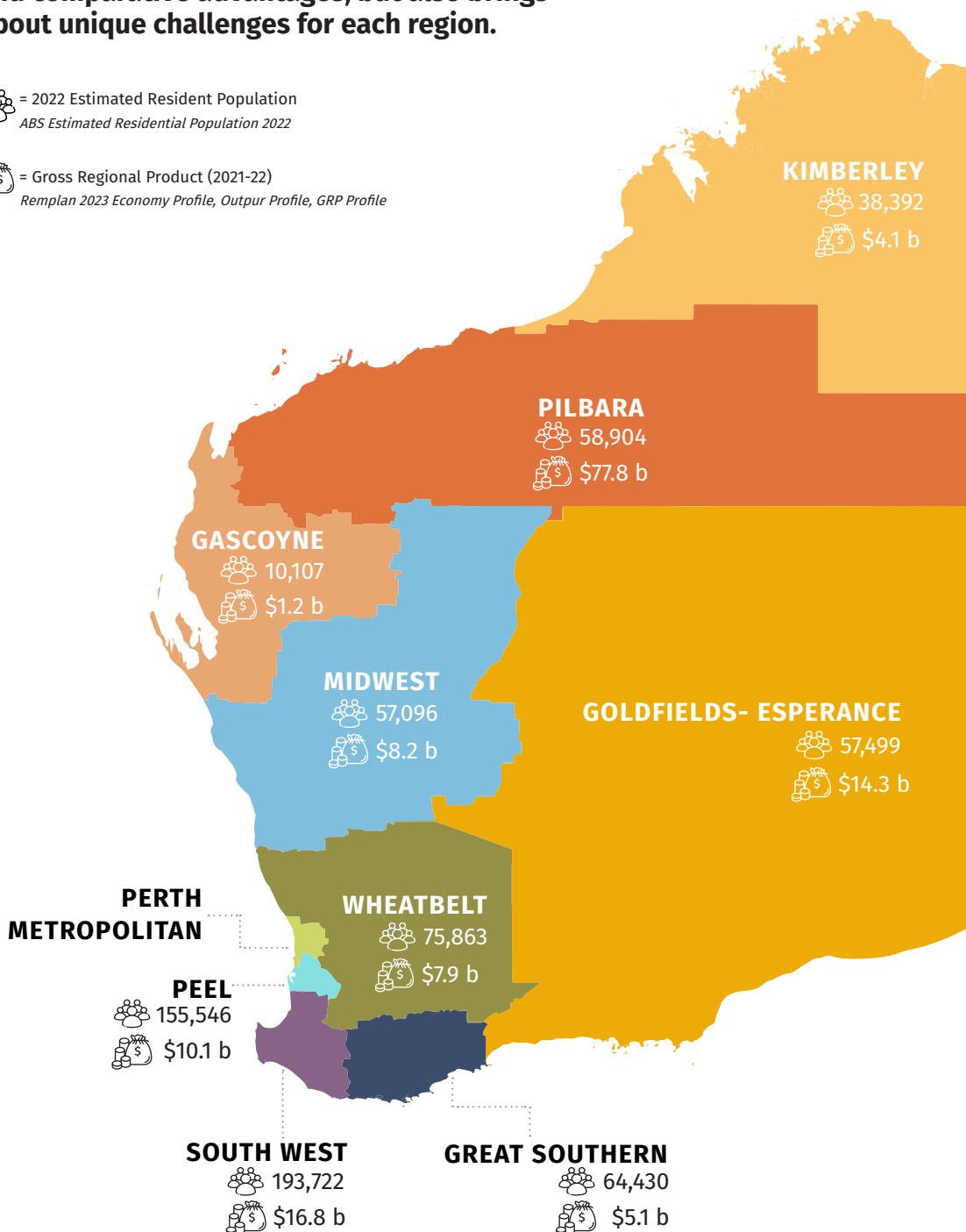
Our Regions

WA's nine regions are diverse – differing in population size, demographic make-up, service availability, industry focus, geography, and natural resources.

This diversity can create regional competitive and comparative advantages, but also brings about unique challenges for each region.

 = 2022 Estimated Resident Population
ABS Estimated Residential Population 2022

 = Gross Regional Product (2021-22)
Remplan 2023 Economy Profile, Output Profile, GRP Profile



Value proposition

Western Australia's nine regions are critical to the State's prosperity and liveability. Whether it's the transition to the low carbon economy, building new industries or Closing the Gap, regions contribute significantly to statewide outcomes.

The Regional Development Portfolio can help deliver on the ambitions of community, industry and government through its capabilities, expertise and relationships.

Commissions are unique place-based entities that provide an integrated and granular view of each region's economic and social system. Each Commission can join up the State's objectives in the operating context of the region for which they are the expert.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development is the lead agency for regional development, connecting across all levels of government and building statewide programs.

Across the Portfolio, there is a deep understanding of regional needs, opportunities and priorities. Built from regional intelligence, insights and analysis this understanding can inform community, industry and government action.

In each region, the Portfolio provides senior executive leadership, and flexible and responsive entities, that have strong relationships and can take up opportunities, respond to crises, and collaborate on place-based solutions. We know the people, know the issues and can facilitate solutions.



Contribution to State Government

The Portfolio drives the strategic direction of regional development in Western Australia.

It creates the link between State Government priorities and regional communities. The portfolio works in alignment with a range of State Government plans including:

- Diversify WA & Future State
- WA Innovation Strategy
- WA Climate Policy
- WA Climate Adaption Strategy
- WA Sectoral Emission Reduction Strategy
- WA Hydrogen Strategy
- Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy 2021-2029
- Jina Plan (WA Aboriginal Tourism)
- State Infrastructure Strategy – Foundations for a Stronger Tomorrow
- WA Planning Commission – Regional Planning Strategies
- Primary Industries Plan 2020-2024
- Regional Development Commission Strategic Plans

How do we deliver?

This Framework describes the vision, focus and structure of the Regional Development Portfolio.



Initiatives and monitoring to progress the vision are initiated by Portfolio entities through strategic and business planning, and the State Budget process. Collaboration and coordination is set and monitored via the Regional Development Council and WA Regional Development Alliance.

Data and strategic intelligence is provided through a regional data hub and regular publications.

How we work together

The Portfolio has defined how we work together in an effective way to deliver optimal outcomes. These are described as:



Collaborate

A Portfolio-wide commitment to a small number of actions or issues where implementation is through collective effort.



Coordinate

A Portfolio-wide commitment to actions or issues where implementation is through individual member effort.



Align

Region specific actions or issues that may or may not relate to the Portfolio-wide commitments.

Appendix A, figure:

Our vision for WA’s economy and communities



Appendix B, table:

*Members of the
Regional Development Portfolio*

Portfolio Member	Roles and Responsibilities
<p>Western Australian Regional Development Trust</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established under part 3 of the Royalties for Regions Act 2009, the Trust provides advice and recommendations to the Minister on matters to do with the Royalties for Regions Fund and other matters referred to it by the Minister. Facilitates analysis of Royalties for Regions expenditure. Members are appointed by the Minister and include at least one Chair of a Regional Development Commission.
<p>Regional Development Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established under section 33 of the Regional Development Commissions Act 1993, the Council is a statutory advisory body. Provides advice and recommendations to the Minister on all regional development issues. Provides leadership and strategic direction to the Portfolio. Is the custodian of the WA Regional Development Framework and supports coordination and collaboration across the Regional Development Commissions and Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to implement the Framework. Members include the Chair of each Regional Development Commission and three persons appointed by the Minister.
<p>Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports to the Minister. As the State lead agency for regional development, works collaboratively across all levels of government, regional industries and community organisations in the development and delivery of regional programs, policy and services, including administration of the Royalties for Regions Fund. Works to grow, protect and innovate Western Australia's agriculture, aquaculture, food and fisheries sectors and build vibrant regions with strong economies. Assists the Minister to administer the Government's Regional Development Portfolio.
<p>Regional Development Commissions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established under part 2 of the Regional Development Commissions Act 1993, Commissions comprise a CEO, staff and Board, and report to the Minister. Lead agency in region specific regional development. Encourage, promote, facilitate and monitor community and economic development in their regions. Work collaboratively across all levels of government, regional industries and community organisations in development and delivery of regional programs, policy and services. Each Commission has a strategic plan aligned to the Regional Development Framework and drives the implementation of initiatives relevant to their region.
<p>Western Australian Regional Development Alliance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advises the Regional Development Council. Works cooperatively to harness operational and strategic effort to develop Western Australia's regions. Coordinates across the Regional Development Commissions and Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to facilitate implementation of the Framework. Members include the CEO of each Regional Development Commission and the Director General and Deputy Director General of the Department.