

# **RURAL AND REMOTE EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (RREAC)**

## **ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT**

**2010-2011**



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RURAL AND REMOTE EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL:  
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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

RREAC consists of representatives from various community groups who are consumers of, or have a strong vested interest in, rural and remote education in Western Australia. Members of the Council are appointed by the Minister for Education. A list of members for this reporting period is provided at section 1.10.

The Hon Brian Ellis MLC was appointed Chair and the Hon Mia Davies MLC, Deputy Chair of RREAC.

During this reporting period the Chair and Deputy Chair met with the Minister for Education and Training on a regular basis.

The Rural and Remote Education Advisory Council (RREAC), initially established in 1997, was re-constituted by the Minister for Education in early 2010 with a new Chairperson and a new Deputy Chairperson. The RREAC membership comprises representatives from various consumer/community and funder/provider groups with a strong interest in rural and remote education in Western Australia. Members use their experience, skills, attributes or qualifications to perform their advisory function. The funders/providers of educational services in Western Australia are ex-officio members of RREAC.

In 2010 RREAC was given new terms of reference and directions by the Minister for Education that focus the Council's attention on three Government priorities. The Terms of Reference provide the Minister with evidence-based and solutions-focused, strategic advice on education and training issues and developments in rural and remote areas of the State. In addition, the Minister has referred the following specific directions to the Council:

- ▮ Provide advice on how the Government should be addressing the emerging need to have more qualified staff available for rural and remote education settings, such as child care and early education, in order for the State to meet COAG's new national requirements and standards.
- ▮ Provide advice about the future uses of technology in the delivery of education in rural and remote education settings.
- ▮ Provide advice about access to and provision of higher education in rural and remote settings, following the *Review of Regional Loading*.

The first meeting of the re-constituted RREAC was held in August 2010. Overall, RREAC is scheduled to meet six times per year. The April 2011 meeting was conducted in Geraldton to coincide with the opening of the Meekatharra School of the Air that was attended by RREAC members.

## 1.2 FUNCTIONS OF THE RURAL AND REMOTE EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

**RREAC's Terms of Reference for this reporting period were:**

- To provide the Minister for Education with evidence-based, and solution-focused strategic advice on education and training issues and developments in rural and remote areas of the State.
- To provide specific strategic advice on the education services that give senior secondary students in rural and remote areas equitable opportunities for compulsory participation in education and training.

- To advise about rural and remote community and consumer interests in education and training.
- To ensure strategic advice is provided from a cross-sectoral perspective across the schools, training and higher education sectors and encompasses both the public and private provision.

### **Minister's Directions**

1. Provide advice on how the Government should be addressing the emerging need to have more qualified staff available for rural and remote education settings, such as child care and early education, in order for the State to meet COAG's new national requirements and standards. (Initiatives such as *Welcome to the Bush*).
2. Provide advice about the future uses of technology in the delivery of education in rural and remote education settings.
3. Following the *Review of Regional Loading*, provide advice about access to and provision of higher education in rural and remote settings.

### **1.3 OUTCOMES**

During 2010/11 RREAC met on the following occasions:

- Friday 6 August 2010
- Friday 26 November 2010
- Friday 25 February 2011
- Friday 8 April 2011
- Friday 24 June 2011
- Friday 19 August 2011
- Friday 14 October 2011
- Friday 25 November 2011

Each meeting was for the entire day, usually commencing at 8.30 am and concluding at 4.00pm.

The following people presented information at RREAC meetings during this reporting period.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position/Organisation</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
Mr Terry Werner	Director, Higher Education & Legislative Review , Department of Education and services (DES)	Review of Regional Loading	06/08/2010
Mr Mark Brown	Director, Director, Education and Training Regulation, Department of Education Services	National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care	06/08/2010
Mr David Ansell	A/Executive Director, Office of Early Childhood, Department of Education	National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care	06/08/2010
Ms Nola Poland	Wheatbelt Organisation of Children's Services (WOCS)	Wheatbelt Organisation of Children's Services (WOCS) – Early childhood Education and Care	22/10/2010
Dr Sandra Hesternam	Lecturer, Early Childhood Education Academic Program Advisor, Murdoch University	Development of ECE in Western Australia from 1830's through to present	22/10/2010
Mr Don Boyd	Curtin University; Society for the Provision of Education for Rural Australia	Developing Strategies at the Pre-service Level to Address Critical Teacher Attraction and Retention Issues in Australian Rural, Regional and Remote School.	26/11/2010
Dr Sue Trinidad	Dean Teaching and Learning   Humanities; Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor, Curtin University	Developing Strategies at the Pre-service Level to Address Critical Teacher Attraction and Retention Issues in Australian Rural, Regional and Remote School.	26/11/2010
Mr Phil Brown	Executive Officer, Country Education Project Victoria	Overview: Country Education Project Victoria	26/11/2010
Mr David Ansell	Executive Director Office of Early Childhood Development and Learning	<i>Wrap Around</i> full service Department of Education model for Early Childhood in Pilbara and Kimberley locations.	25/02/2011
Mr Clint Glendinning Ms Joanne Allan	Project Officer Project Officer	Department of Education – Remote Teaching Service	25/02/2011
Mr Terry Werner	Director, Higher Education and Legislative Review	Update – Higher Education Provision in Western Australia	25/02/2011
Mr Richard Miles	Manager, Higher Education Policy and Planning	Update – Higher Education Provision in Western Australia	25/02/2011

Dr Tania Broadley	On-line Education Development, Curtin University	Repsonding to the Higher Education needs of Curtin's Regional Students	25/02/2011
Mr John Scott Mr Malcolm Goff	Managing Director Consultant	C Y O'Connor Institute	25/02/2011
Mr Robert Edwards	Principal of Curriculum Beaumaris Primary Bchool	Technology and Delivery of Program in primary cluster – beaumaris. Coorow, Three Springs & Perenjori	24/06/2011
Mr Kevin Woods	Director Yesteachme	On-line teaching modules – Yesteachme	24/06/2011
Ms Debbie Bevan	Manager, E-Schooling Department of Education	E-Schooling	19/08/2011
Mr Jim Wyatt	Manager, Digital Economies	NBN	19/08/2011
Mr Bradley Ford	Consultant, ICT Infrasturcture CEOWA ICT Team Catholic Education	Catholic Education Net (CathEdNet)	19/08/2011
Mr Alan Hamilton	Manager, Statewide Telehealth WA Country Health Service	Overview of Statewide Telehealth	19/08/2011
Mr Sam Oriti	Consultant, Learning Mangement Systems, Catholic Schools	Catholic Education Net	19/08/2011
Ms Valerie Gould	Executive Director, Association of Independent Schools	Overview ICT in AISWA	19/08/2011
Ms Catherine Robinson	Facilitator, Solum Wheatbelt Business Solutions	Technology Facilitator	19/08/2011
Mr Roy Duncanson	Managing Director Primary Advocates Pty Ltd	Muresk Institute	14/10/2011
Mr Bruce Dixon	Founding Director IdeasLAB, Co-Founder, Anytime Anywhere learning Foundation	Anytime Anywhere Learning	14/10/2011
Mr Mary Paynter	Coordinator, Great Southern Cluster of Schools, Department of Education	Great Southern Cluser – Video Conference and Collaborative Curriculum Provision	14/10/2011
Mr Ray Willis	Chief Finance Officer, Department of Education Services	Overview – Budget / Finances in relation to RREAC	25/11/2011
Mr Alan Kidd	Principal Kingston Primary School	Scholarship Program – Teacher Education	25/11/2011



During 2010/2011 RREAC explored key issues relating to early childhood education and care, access to and provision of higher education and the future uses of technology in the delivery of education in rural and remote settings.

The initial phase of RREAC's work involved collecting evidence in relation to the issues it has identified. The second phase involved RREAC developing draft discussion papers on early childhood education and care and higher education. Following feedback from RREAC members and input from the Department of Education Services two reports were finalised.

In line with its terms of reference and the Minister's directions, RREAC presented the final reports on higher education and early childhood education and care to the Minister in August 2011.

RREAC is currently finalising the third paper/briefing on the future uses of technology in the delivery of education in rural and remote settings.

#### **1.4 PROVISION OF ADVICE TO THE MINISTER**

Advice / Correspondence to the Minister during this period included:

1. Response to recent changes within the Department of Education and changes to the Department's representation on the Rural and Remote Education Advisory Council.
2. Report - Early Childhood Education and Care in Rural and Remote Western Australia. In relation to early childhood education and care, a number of strategic priorities have been identified along with five key recommendations. Refer to Appendix 1.
3. Report - Access to and the Provision of Higher Education in regional and remote locations identifies and provides an overview of some of the issues, concerns and challenges with regard to the provision of higher education to students in regional and remote areas of Western Australia. Strategic priorities and three key recommendations have been included. Refer to Appendix 2.

#### **1.5 FINANCIAL PROVISION**

The expenses of RREAC are provided from within the annual budget of Department of Education Services (DES).

RREAC has a separate line item within DES's accounts.

For the financial year 2010/2011 RREAC was allocated a budget of \$154 000 including salary costs.

#### **1.6 MEMBER'S RENUMERATION**

No RREAC members receive a salary or sitting fee

Travel and accommodation allowances are provided to non-public sector members who live beyond the metropolitan area.

Travel is by air where possible (cheapest fare). A rebate is provided for those Council members who need to drive to meetings from country locations based on the size of the motor of the vehicle.

## **1.7 EXECUTIVE STAFF**

As part of the 2010 restructure the Council was provided with two part time officers – administrative support and principal executive officer.

RREAC's staff also provide support to DES on a needs basis.

## **1.8 FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

RREAC reports under the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997, through the Department of Education Services' Annual Report and Financial Statement.

## **1.9 OUTLOOK FOR 2012**

The Hon Dr Elizabeth Constable MLA Minister for Education attended the RREAC meeting held on Friday 26 November 2010. The Minister noted that RREAC is an important advisory council and that there are many challenges that we need to come to grips with especially the needs of students/parents/communities where the challenges are dynamic and constantly changing particularly in rural and remote areas.

The Minister noted the three directions that RREAC will need to provide advice on:

1. How the Government should address the emerging need to have more qualified staff available in rural and remote settings e.g. Early Childhood Education and Care.
2. Future uses of technology in the delivery of education in rural and remote education settings; and
3. Access to and provision of higher education in rural and remote settings.

It is vital that RREAC provides advice as it is important to note opportunities and inform the budget process.

In terms of ICT the Minister referred to the project involving Beaumaris; Three Springs; Perenjori and Coorow Primary schools. ICT (e-learning) is being used to bring expertise into classrooms of smaller schools.

The Minister also referred to the Higher Education model in Western Australia where Universities have satellite campuses as no regional centre is large enough to sustain a regional university as exists in other states. At this stage, this is deemed to be the best model for WA – where metro universities go out to centres ECU – Bunbury; Notre Dame – Broome. As such, we must be creative and work out and come up with some solutions as to what we can do in WA for rural and regional areas.

The Minister invited comment from RREAC Council members regarding issues that are most pressing for the communities / organisations they are representing.

Overall, the Minister encouraged all to “think outside of the box” – all ideas would be

welcome.

## 1.10 MEMBERS

### STAKEHOLDERS

TITLE	NAME	OCCUPATION	NOMINATED BY
Hon	Brian Ellis	Member for the Agricultural Region	Chairperson
Hon	Mia Davies	Member for the Agricultural Region	Deputy Chairperson
Ms	Anne Gisborne	President, SSTUWA	State School Teachers' Union of WA Inc (SSTUWA)
Mrs	Brenda Williamson	President, Yuna CWA (teacher)	Country Women's Association of WA Inc
Mrs	Deborah Rice	Director, Community Resource Network	Department of Regional Development and Lands
Mrs	Emma Foulkes-Taylor	President, ICPA (WA)	Isolated Children's Parents' Association of WA State Council
New nomination in process		Awaiting completion nomination of new candidate	The WA Farmers Federation Education Portfolio Holder
Ms	Kay Gerard	Chief Executive Officer	Food, Fibre and Timber Industries Training Council (WA) Inc
Mrs	Anne-Marie Schelfhout	Representative	Parents and Friends' Federation of WA Inc
Mrs	Kylie Catto	President, WACSSO	WA Council of State School Organisations
New Nomination in process		Awaiting completion nomination of new candidate	WA Aboriginal Education and Training Council
Ms	Wendy Newman	CEO Wheatbelt Development Commission	Regional Development Council
		Awaiting receipt of nomination of new candidate	The Chamber of Minerals & Energy WA
Mr	Mr Christopher Mitchell	Executive Officer (Regional Development Australia-Kimberley)	Western Australian Local Government Association

### Funder/Providers

TITLE	NAME	OCCUPATION	NOMINATED BY
Ms	Carol Geurts	Regional Officer and Principal School Advisor	Catholic Education Office of WA
Mr	Richard Strickland	Chief Executive Officer	Department of Education Services
Ms	Valerie Gould	Executive Director	Association of Independent Schools of WA
Mr	Lindsay Hale	A/Executive Director Statewide Planning and Delivery	Department of Education
Prof	Sue Trinidad,	Dean of Teaching & Learning,	Faculty of Humanities – Curtin University & WA Universities
Ms	Pamela Wheeler	Program Manager – VTEC, Esperance Campus	Department of Training & Workforce Development

## APPENDIX 1

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### **Addressing the emerging need to have more qualified staff available for rural and remote child care and early education**

##### **Background**

The Early Childhood Education and Care report identifies and provides an overview of some of the issues, concerns and challenges with regard to emerging needs in early childhood education and care in regional and remote areas of Western Australia.

When the restructured Council first met in August 2010, RREAC noted the new terms of reference and directions by the Minister for Education that focus the Council's attention on three Government priorities including the need for more qualified staff for early childhood education and care in regional and remote areas of Western Australia.

Over the last six months RREAC has devoted time to researching and gauging opinions on the issues, challenges and developments associated with early childhood education and care. In doing this RREAC has: drawn on member organisations to provide information; consulted with senior executive at the Department of Education Services; consulted relevant research material; and, consulted various Commonwealth Government Policies and Consultation papers on early childhood education and care.

RREAC understands that regional and remote communities have been disadvantaged in engaging in shaping new directions due to restricted access to various discussions and consultations which have been facilitated to raise awareness and understanding of the proposed reforms, as most of this has occurred in the metropolitan area.

##### **Current Situation**

Early Childhood Development agencies recognise that the family is the most important factor in children's lives and development. Supporting families is therefore central to ensuring longer-term educational outcomes for children. Access to high quality early childhood education and care plays an important role in improving educational and developmental outcomes for children. High quality, accessible and affordable child care also enables parents to feel confident to participate in the workforce and the broader community.

The proposed reforms in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) are significant and comprise:

- Establishment of strong national quality standards for ECEC.
- A quality rating system to drive continuous improvement and provide parents with robust and relevant information about learning and care.
- Streamlining or integrating licensing and accreditation arrangements.
- A national Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

The seven Quality Areas in the *National Quality Standard* in ECEC provision focus on improving quality services, programs and practices and include improved staff-to-child ratios and requirements for educational qualifications for the workforce.

In light of this, RREAC has identified the following issues that impact on early childhood education and care: Attracting, training and retaining quality and qualified children's services staff; fragmentation of children's services; access, equity & sustainability; Indigenous students (especially in remote communities where schools are often sole providers of kindergarten and care as well as education); 0-3 provision; cost to communities/families including Neighbourhood Model Occasional Care (NMOC) and part time Long Day Care and transport.

### **RREAC Strategic Priorities**

In line with the Terms of Reference and the Minister's Directions RREAC notes the significance of attracting and retaining quality professional children's services staff, including teachers, presents demanding challenges for regional government and remote communities alike. The Council has identified strategic priorities to address the issues arising from the emerging need to have more qualified staff available for regional and remote settings. Other priorities relate to the structure and provision of early childhood education and care.

RREAC recognises the importance of linking the strategic issues identified in this paper to state planning and regional development and the need for fundamentally different solutions to achieve different outcomes.

#### ***Attracting, training and retaining quality and qualified staff***

1. That the Government of Western Australia works with education systems and sectors, Deans of Education, TAFE and with community/interagency organisations to create a productive partnership/network for a professional development plan for all staff involved in early childhood education in regional and remote locations.
2. School education systems and sectors encourage new and existing teacher/carer participation in working in regional and remote areas by:
  - providing early access to information/instruction regarding working in rural/remote areas;
  - providing mentoring programs to encourage and advise those who express an interest in working in these areas; and
  - provision of further incentives such as quality housing, professional and community support and creating positive perceptions about working '*in the bush*'.

#### ***Fragmentation of children's services***

3. Support structures such as the highly successful Wheatbelt Organisation of Children's Services be resourced to ensure a consistent approach to the development and implementation of high quality child care services in the regions.
4. Creation of regionally based collaborative working groups, working across services and trained to mentor/monitor teachers and ECE workers to ensure provision of a continuous delivery of services within the region.
5. Provision of professional learning opportunities and training should be made available locally, within regions, and across agencies, to increase equity and participation in professional learning for all staff (the main issue as identified in Recommendation 1 is upgrading qualifications, not just for teachers but all "educators" involved in ECE (that is, in ECE centres - contact staff – 50% Diploma and above; 50% Certificate III and at least one with First Aid).

#### ***Access, Equity & Sustainability***

6. Support structures such as the highly successful Wheatbelt Organisation of Children's Services be resourced to ensure a consistent approach to the development and implementation of high quality child care services in the regions.

7. Agencies ensure the continuation of a viable operating service in areas of smaller population, by:
  - the provision of a cohesive collaborative working teams (within regions/across services) to mentor/monitor all staff, to enable the attraction and retention of a continuous flow of professional staff into regions (local governance model);
  - researching and resourcing highly successful support structures as in *recommendation 8*; and
  - building partnerships with family members rather than targeting children alone.
8. That the Government review the school and other transport systems to enable access to long day care / part time day care for all eligible children, including those with disabilities, in regional areas.
9. That the Government strongly support small numbers of children/children with disabilities/part time day care by enabling attendance to ECEC facilities on a regular basis.
10. Review the location of service delivery where there is flexibility for delivery away from schools and child care centres.
11. Promote the implementation of outreach services (e.g. play sessions and parenting programs) to encourage higher participation.

### ***Participation of Indigenous Children in ECEC***

12. That as the social and economic planning to improve Aboriginal participation in ECEC is vital, the Government further investigates and researches current facilities with a view to including a “case-management” model (e.g. structures are put in place to ensure that agencies work together - infant health; speech therapy; health; psychology) in all future developments. Individual communities to provide governance for these services and programs delivered to be determined by community – no ‘one size fits all’ approach.

### ***0-3 Provision***

13. As part of its education policy, the Government of Western Australia working with education systems, sectors and schools, needs to continue to work to ensure “universal access” to ECEC services by providing adequate resources (teachers, availability, centres, resources).

### ***Cost to communities/families***

14. State/Federal commitment to financial support be sought to ensure continued funding for occasional care centres located across Western Australia. Interim measures should be implemented to ensure alternative quality service provision.
15. A review of the implications of removing time-lines regarding exemptions and quality of service?
16. That long term strategies be put in place to overcome the possibility of insufficient teachers or not being able to meet the new qualifications in the required time frame due to inaccessibility of professional learning or other issues, that will impact on continuity of quality children’s services during this period.

### ***Infrastructure***

17. Review of planning and policy in collaboration with the Department of Transport with regard to transportation of students in the Kindergarten and Pre-primary years of schooling.
18. Support flexible service delivery, including mobile services and the use of technology and support programs to assist ‘at home’ carers and educators.

## Recommendations

1. That the state government be urged to consolidate government early years functions of government as a priority.
2. Within small regional and remote communities, alternative models of provision for 0-3 year olds, in partnership with the Department of Education and the Department for Communities and private providers, be investigated and implemented where appropriate.
3. That the Government initiates forward planning with all stakeholders to ensure availability of ECE workers required to staff rural and remote schools/service deliveries with well qualified and supported staff.
4. The Minister supports RREAC continuing to pursue the issue of early childhood education and care good practice to provide ongoing feedback to inform the Minister of emerging issues and developments.
5. When the Minister notes issues or developments in regional early childhood education and care it is referred back to RREAC for further action.

Hon Brian Ellis MLC  
Chair RREAC  
Member for Agricultural Region

Hon Mia Davies  
Deputy Chair RREAC  
Member for Agricultural Region

## APPENDIX 2

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### **Access to and the Provision of Higher Education in Regional and Remote Settings in Western Australia**

##### **Background**

The report, access to and the provision of higher education in regional and remote locations identifies and provides an overview of some of the issues, concerns and challenges with regard to the provision of higher education to students in regional and remote areas of Western Australia.

When the restructured Council first met in August 2010, RREAC noted the new terms of reference and directions by the Minister for Education that focus the Council's attention on three Government priorities including access to and the provision of higher education in regional and remote Western Australia.

Over the last six months RREAC has devoted time to researching and gauging opinions on the issues, challenges and developments associated with access to and the provision of higher education in regional and remote WA. In doing this RREAC has: drawn on member organisations to provide information; consulted with senior executive at the Department of Education Services; consulted the state's Regional Development Policy and other relevant research material; and, consulted various Commonwealth Government Policies and Consultation papers on higher education provision.

Within the context of the provision and access to higher education, RREAC has a particular interest in the articulation between universities and the school sectors, especially in the light of increasing aspiration and broadening pathways for students in regional and remote areas.

##### **Current Situation**

Based on RREAC's evidence-based approach to reviewing the current situation with access to and the provision of higher education in regional and remote Western Australia, the Council acknowledges that:

- There is a consistent view across both the Australian and Western Australian Government that higher education should, amongst other things, provide opportunities for people from all backgrounds to participate to their full potential and where necessary be supported to do so.
- One of the first barriers confronted by universities in WA providing access to higher education in regional and remote locations is the vast size of the state and its sparsely diverse population.
- Participation in university education by regional and remote Western Australians is significantly lower than in the metropolitan area.
- Physical access to university is challenging with a limited number of campuses located in larger regional areas and, in many instances, choices are limited even further by the reality of restricted course provision available.
- There has been a significant increase in the development of online learning environments to complement units offered face-to-face and units offered in a fully online mode.
- The building of partnerships with local communities and providers in other sectors for example Training, to develop institutional cross-collaboration and partnerships across



sectors is necessary to develop more flexible and sustainable higher education provision in Western Australia

- Raising the aspirations of regional and remote students to participate in higher education must be an immediate priority.
- Ensuring that students from rural and remote locations, once engaged in higher education, successfully go on to complete studies requires consideration and support through a range of mechanisms.
- Considerable effort has gone into improving the articulation between the schools and training sectors. Part of this work has been developing “pathways”, providing students with a clear understanding/picture of how studying certain units/courses at school “link” to further training and education beyond school.
- Regional loading must address issues of fairness and equity for both students and universities.

### **RREAC Strategic Priorities**

The work undertaken by RREAC identified a number of issues in relation to higher education. In line with RREAC’s Terms of Reference, the council has identified strategic priorities that could be applied as a means to address the identified issues and challenges.

The delivery of higher education in the regions is fundamentally linked to regional development.

RREAC recognises the importance of linking the strategic issues identified in this paper to state planning and regional development, and the need for fundamentally different solutions to achieve a different outcome.

#### ***Access / Participation / Choice / Delivery***

1. Strategic planning involving the engagement of key stakeholders (students, providers and industry) in terms of access, participation and choice, supported by Government.
2. A realistic approach where technology plays an important part in educational delivery. RREAC’s position is that there needs to be a physical presence to support technological flexible delivery. This is consistent with the Regional Development Council’s Higher Education Policy for Western Australia.
3. Maximise the use of existing regional infrastructure. RREAC does not see the need for significant expenditure on capital infrastructure but to use TAFE and other facilities where available.

#### ***Aspiration / Achievement (Attainment)***

4. Universities participate in developing “Outreach Programs” with the State Government providing funding to support this.
5. Aspirant programs must link into the strategic planning recommended previously.

#### ***Pathways to Higher Education***

6. Increasing pathways through collaboration for higher education delivery to address barriers created by distance and thin markets.
7. Strategic and collaborative planning between sectors to enhance precincts and develop stronger pathways between schools, training and higher education.
8. Research is undertaken also to improve articulation arrangements between vocational training providers and universities

9. Research is undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of education precincts and pathways with questions around the extent to which education precincts and pathways have:
  - impacted on decisions students make to access training and/or university from school; and
  - provided access to university after completing a training course.

### ***Funding***

10. In collaboration with key stakeholders clear and inclusive criteria be developed to determine regional loading and that this regional loading be more flexible in terms of how it can flow to regional education facilities delivering higher education courses
11. Regional and rural students be supported to achieve tertiary qualifications, especially if they need to relocate to the metropolitan or a large regional centre.
12. Funding that better supports flexible learning in terms of the cost of curriculum development, technology infrastructure and student support systems that are required.

### **Recommendations**

1. That these significant regional issues are advanced through the development of a state strategic response to higher education and that RREAC be represented in that process.
2. The Minister supports RREAC continuing to pursue the issue of higher education good practice to provide ongoing feedback to inform the Minister of emerging issues and developments.
3. When the Minister notes issues or developments in regional higher education it is referred to RREAC for further action.

Hon Brian Ellis MLC  
Chair RREAC  
Member for Agricultural Region

Hon Mia Davies  
Deputy Chair RREAC  
Member for Agricultural