

theextra

SERVING THE GREAT SOUTHERN REGION

Friday April 5, 2013

18,178 copies distributed in Albany, Denmark and Mt Barker

 A West Australian Newspapers publication

Dog boom

RSPCA seeks homes for cute canines

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Albany Cup

Crowds flock to day at the races

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Easter win

Special day of golf on Easter weekend

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Cash for region in doubt

■ Keir Tunbridge

The future of the Federal Government's \$1 billion Regional Development Australia Fund is uncertain since the sacking of Simon Crean, according to RDA Great Southern executive officer Simon Lyas.

Mr Crean, formerly Federal Minister for Regional Australia, was demoted by Prime Minister Julia Gillard on March 21 after calling for a leadership spill.

Mr Lyas said he and his colleagues at other regional WA RDA offices were "anxious" to find out whether the program would continue past rounds three and four.

"One could guess we'd be lucky to get it, but Simon Crean was adamant (round five) was going to be announced," he said.

"With him out of the picture now, and with them continuing to look for budget cuts, I'm not so sure."

Mr Lyas said he harboured con-

cerns the Great Southern and WA as a whole may not get an adequate slice of the funding pie in rounds three and four, which are running concurrently at the moment.

The Great Southern missed out on gaining any funding last year as part of round two of the program.

Only four projects in WA were funded in that round, compared with 15 in New South Wales.

"We had some really good projects (in rounds three and four) so I

can only cross my fingers and hope that they do stack up when the final assessment is made," Mr Lyas said.

He said with a Federal election looming, announcements could be made for political reasons.

"I'm not suggesting there is going to be any pork barrelling involved but there are bound to be announcements in Labor seats that suit them," he said.

Applications for round three

closed March 27 while the deadline for round four is next Thursday, April 11. Round three candidates include smaller community projects in Mt Barker, Denmark, Bremer Bay and Katanning, while round four candidates include multi million dollar sport and recreation projects in Albany and Mt Barker, as well as the Great Southern Community Housing Association's Norman House student housing project.

Autism issue