



**Regional
Development**
Australia

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MEDIA RELEASE

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\$1.4 Billion for Regional Development

The Federal Minister for Regional Development the Hon Simon Crean MP, announced the new Regional Development Australia Fund of \$1.4 Billion last week at the Regional Development Australia (RDA) National Forum in Canberra.

Designed to boost economic development in the regions, Mr. Crean said "the allocation of funding will be competitive, merit-based and only applications that have the backing of local RDA Committees will be considered".

"Resources from the Fund will be allocated over 5 years and the Fund has been established as part of the agreement struck with the Independents last September," Mr. Crean said.

RDA Great Southern Chairman Milton Evans JP, who attended the Forum in Canberra with Executive Officer Simon Lyas said "Great Southern councils and not-for-profit groups will have access to millions of dollars for worthy regional projects" but he warned that funding guidelines would have to be met including:

- Delivery of concrete economic and social benefits;
- Commitment to innovation and building capacity in local communities;
- Linking regional communities across traditional boundaries; and
- Ability to leverage additional funding across government and the private sector.

Mr. Evans said "Mr. Crean also announced an additional \$25,000 for each of the 55 RDA committees in Australia who would have a central role in assessing applications for the Regional Development Fund".

The network of 55 RDA's was also advised that they should start looking into the NBN rollout which will be delivered over a number of years.

Mr. Evans said "those regions which get broadband first will be those which are prepared; that means local government approvals, local training and infrastructure audits among a number of things that need to be examined. RDA-Great Southern will investigate what it can do to smooth the path for the NBN."

Mr. Lyas said "the RDA Great Southern committee expects to brief stakeholders on the new Fund in the near future and will be launching its Regional Plan shortly".

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