



Part 7: Future of the Gascoyne

Summary of proceedings

Thursday, 5 November 2015
11.00am to 5.00pm
Carnarvon Civic Centre

Supported by CEDA members:

Series sponsor



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Regional Development**



Major sponsors



LANDCORP



For the better

This document is based on discussions and presentations at CEDA's Future of the Gascoyne event held on 5 November 2015. This document reflects the presentations delivered by speakers at the event, which do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of CEDA, the series sponsors or the event sponsors.

Regional Overview

The Gascoyne region is part of Western Australia's beautiful Coral Coast and boasts two World Heritage Areas: Shark Bay in the south and Ningaloo Reef in the north. It covers the dolphin attraction at Monkey Mia and the spectacular Ningaloo Marine Park, famous for the passage of whale sharks along the north-west coast of the state. In addition, the region stretches 500 kilometres inland, embracing Mount Augustus (also known as Burringurrah) a 715-metre-high monoclinal, which overlooks the surrounding sand plain.

Despite being a small regional economy, the Gascoyne's gross regional product increased from \$454 million in 2003-04 to \$978 million in 2013-14 (Department of Regional Development (DRD) based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data).

The Gascoyne's economy was based on a workforce of 4,736 people in 2010-11, which increased by an average annual growth rate of 3.1 per cent, reaching 5,354 in 2014-15. By contrast, Western Australia's workforce only grew 2.9 per cent per year for the same period (Australian Government Department of Employment).

The economy of the Gascoyne

- The largest industry driver for the region is tourism. The region averaged approximately 253,600 visitors per year over the last three years, generating \$263 million in annual tourism expenditure (DRD based on Tourism WA data).
- Mining and mineral processing is also an important contributor to the regional and state economy. Mining in the Gascoyne increased from \$72.8 million in 2004-05 to \$132.6 million in 2014-15, an average annual growth rate of 6.2 per cent over the 10-year period (Department of Mines and Petroleum).
- Agriculture also contributed to the regional economy, increasing from \$69 million in 2003-04 to \$80 million in 2013-14, dominated by livestock and horticultural crops (ABS).
- Consumer confidence in the region reflects the increase in mean taxable income from \$37,150 in 2002-03 to \$58,255 in 2012-13, an average annual increase of 4.6 per cent, per year over the 10 year period (Australian Government Department of Employment).
- Retail turnover further reflects the increase in consumer confidence, increasing from \$81.5 million in 2004-5 to \$109.4 million in 2014-15, an average annual increase of 3.0 per cent per year (DRD based on ABS data).

Summary of Proceedings

Session 1: Vision for Gascoyne

Blueprint for the Gascoyne region

Tony Beard, Chairman of the Gascoyne Development Commission, welcomed everyone to the forum. He spoke of how exciting it is to work in such a diverse region with so much going on. He highlighted the

growth in tourism in the area and the high profile projects currently underway, including the Gascoyne Food Bowl Initiative.

Mr Beard said that a strategy to grow the population, expand current industries and attract new investment underpin the vision of the Gascoyne Regional Investment Blueprint. He introduced the Minister and thanked him for attending and for launching the Blueprint.

State Government's vision

The Hon. Terry Redman MLA, State Minister for Regional Development; Lands; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, said that since 2008 the Government has spent and committed \$6.1 billion of Royalties for Regions funds to regional Western Australia. This has made a fantastic difference and it is important to understand the scope of what this actually means across the whole community.

The Minister emphasised that it is easy to talk about big ticket items like the Ord River Scheme or the development of Busselton Airport, but it is equally important to invest in small, locally important projects. Small projects often only cost a few thousand dollars and sometimes it is the little things that make a substantial difference and have a footprint of influence on rural Western Australia. The reopening of the new facilities at Gascoyne Junction, washed away by major floods in 2010, was an example of such success. The new facilities make a big difference to people living in a very isolated part of Western Australia.

In the Gascoyne, a \$150 million Revitalisation program has been underway, under the guidance of the Gascoyne Development Commission, rolling out a suite of projects including:

- > Exmouth – health campus with tele-health facilities; foreshore development; commercial wharf and marina
- > Ningaloo Centre project
- > Carnarvon – Fascine, High Street, high school, health campus with emergency department
- > Shark Bay recreational jetty upgrade
- > Monkey Mia jetty and foreshore developments

The Minister launched the Gascoyne Regional Investment Blueprint (Blueprint), produced by the Gascoyne Development Commission. The Blueprint identifies potential growth areas to deliver significant benefits to both the region and state, aligning with the Gascoyne Development Commission's aspirational target of increasing the population to 23,000 by 2050. The Minister emphasised that the Blueprint is set by the region, for the region; it establishes regional priorities to boost agriculture, tourism and small developing businesses, to help create jobs and drive economic growth through informed investment decisions. It will also facilitate economic development and place the region in a strong position to seize opportunities for long-term, sustainable growth.

What stands out in the Blueprint?

- > Agriculture: The Gascoyne region is looking at opportunities to capitalise on the growing Asian market, consistent with the \$300 million Royalties for Regions 'Seizing the Opportunity Agriculture' program. Importantly, a \$60 million investment for flood mitigation works, comprising \$45 million of Royalties for Regions funding, it is now completed.
- > Horticulture: This presents a particularly strong opportunity, with the region currently contributing

\$80-100 million of gross value production with the potential to double. Some of the most efficient farmers in the state are in the Gascoyne. The Blueprint and ensuing investment are essential for this increase in production to occur.

- > Pastoral diversification: 87 per cent of Western Australia is rangelands, of which approximately 34 per cent is pastoral lease. Legislative changes are being made that will allow for diversification in land use in the rangelands estate. Potential diversification might include tourism or conservation initiatives. Pastoralism currently contributes \$35 million to the economy and, if managed carefully, more value can be derived out of the pastoral estate whilst maintaining the iconic conservation values that are so important to the Gascoyne.
- > Service hub: The Gascoyne could become a service hub for the resource sector. Exmouth is already seeing some benefit from this, with more possibilities to be explored. Geographically, the region is well located.
- > Defence: The Gascoyne has a defence presence, including the communications station at Exmouth and RAAF Learmonth base. It is strategically located and still significant today. The Pilbara will soon be producing 40 per cent of national exports so it makes sense to have a stronger defence presence in northern Western Australia and would also provide an economic opportunity.

The Minister stressed the importance of getting the businesses and people in Perth connected with the regions and understanding the regions are recalibrating themselves and doing things differently. It is a place where people see opportunity and want to be part of a growth through development. The Blueprint is laying out a plan to make the Gascoyne region successful well into the future.

Aboriginal leadership

Ben Roberts, Co-Chairman, Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation, is a Thudgari traditional owner who lives in Carnarvon. He was the first Aboriginal tour guide in Western Australia. He explained that Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) represents around 25 different Aboriginal traditional owner groups, each with their own distinctive country, culture and identity. They provide professional services to the traditional owners of the Murchison Gascoyne (Yamatji) and Pilbara (Marlpa) regions. Their primary services are assisting with native title claims, land access agreements and heritage protection issues. YMAC is run by an Aboriginal Board of Directors, with regional committees to deal with issues specific to that area.

With respect to tourism and business development, Mr Roberts said that tourism presents big opportunities for the Gascoyne. There is a growing interest in culture tourism and the Aboriginal people's intimate knowledge of the land and culture can be used to promote tourism in the region. Businesses and the Aboriginal community need to establish good working relationships to help grow the local businesses and the tourism sector.

Mr Roberts discussed the importance of Aboriginal involvement in culture, the arts and pastoral industries and said he thought Gwoonwardu Mia Gascoyne Aboriginal Heritage and Cultural Centre was important for the future to preserve local history and needed to be reopened.

Mr Roberts said YMAC were using knowledge partnerships to support traditional owners and stakeholders by listening to changing and growing needs. They assist with:

- > Business development and strategic planning;
- > Staff training for employment;

- > Cultural business support; and
- > Educational packages.

In conclusion, Mr Roberts said the Aboriginal community is eager to see the region grow and looks forward to contributing to it.

Session 2: Development in the Gascoyne

Energy

Craig Julian, General Manager, Non Interconnected Systems, Horizon Power, explained that his company supplies high-quality, safe and reliable power across regional and remote Western Australia.

Horizon Power's main challenges in the Gascoyne are:

- > Weather: Cyclone Olwyn resulted in 160 power pole and various other equipment and infrastructure replacements.
- > Economies of scale: the size and remoteness of Gascoyne communities increases the cost of service provision and small power stations always cost more to run.
- > Renewables: in towns such as Carnarvon where energy is cheaper to produce, solar has become popular; however in small more remote locations where it is needed, people tend not to take up solar. This may be socio-economic driven, and Horizon Power is seeking to encourage the uptake of this renewable energy.

In terms of renewables, Mr Julian said:

- > Solar energy is very important but still requires a permanent, capital-intensive infrastructure backup to maintain base load power standards.
- > Battery storage technology is being looked at but is still in its early stages.
- > Renewal Energy Buyback is supported by Horizon Power and is based on their avoided cost of producing energy. It's currently only available to some but will be expanded. Towns have a flat buyback rate based on individual circumstances such as remoteness and population size.

In talking about the future for Horizon Power, Mr Julian highlighted:

- > New customer connections: there is a need to review this system so that the first customer does not pay for the entire connection. It is proposed that the first customer pays into a fund for utilised infrastructure only, which would encourage connections and development in communities.
- > Standalone systems that are self-sufficient 24 hours a day are becoming more common. Solar and battery technologies are becoming cheaper and can improve customer service reliability and lower maintenance costs for Horizon.
- > Advanced meters: Horizon intends replacing every meter in the Gascoyne by mid-2016. New meters help achieve efficiencies, address occupational health and safety concerns, provide system demand data and are more accurate, improving information accumulation and resulting in more accurate bills for customers.

Dampier Salt

Marnie Finlayson, General Manager, Operations, Dampier Salt, shared insights into the operations of her

company.

Dampier Salt reliably produces consistent quality salt and has been at Lake MacLeod since 1978. The company has a 100 per cent residential workforce and does not use FIFO arrangements in Carnarvon, supporting local businesses whenever possible for all site works.

The site itself is enormous at over 2,000 square kilometres and the lake is the size of approximately 75,000 football ovals. It is an evaporative basin that uses the Gascoyne's hot, dry climate to crystallise the salt. The mine has a very long life as it uses sea water, so it is a renewable, low cost resource. The wash plant technology ensures good quality, 'cheap to produce' salt and access to deep ports assists with supplying growing Asian markets.

Dampier Salt is mainly used in plastics and caustics, road de-icing, glass, detergents and soap, industrial chemicals (interestingly, Barbie dolls are actually made out of salt!) and a small percentage is used in food processing.

Ms Finlayson said that Dampier Salt is focused on four key areas believed to drive better outcomes and results: safety; productivity initiatives; inclusion and diversity in employment opportunities; and community relationships. This ensures the viability of Dampier Salt's operations in the Gascoyne for a sustainable future. By building strong links with the community, Dampier Salt hopes to share its success with local and regional businesses.

Dampier Salt is also passing on their learnings and experience to the local communities. It actively engages with suppliers and contractors in Carnarvon to ensure they are aligned with Dampier Salt's safety and values, working together for safer outcomes; for example, making available site emergency and response capability if and when required.

The company has a strong commitment to the Gascoyne and how it works in the region. It has been there for many years and looks forward to many more years of successful operation. Community partnerships, apprenticeship programs and scholarships are all run within the Gascoyne. At Carnarvon community college, Dampier Salt participate in the 'Follow the Dream' Partnerships for Success program, and was very proud to help with the cyclone clean-up in early 2015 and allowed all employees to support the community to do this.

Ms Finlayson stated that people are important to the company and recognised that a diverse and included work culture means better business practices and outcomes leading to future improvements. It means that all people are valued and respected in their workplace. They have female and indigenous initiatives, school-based trainees, apprentices and flexible arrangements for people with families.

Water

The Hon. Mia Davies MLA, State Minister for Water, Sport and Recreation and Forestry, spoke of the unique challenges faced by the Gascoyne agricultural sector, relying on a river delta with limited access to water to produce more than \$80 million of produce each year from less than 12GL of water.

The Gascoyne climate is challenging. Carnarvon experienced its driest period in over 100 years followed by Cyclone Christine in 2014, which provided much needed river flow. This was then followed by the destructive Cyclone Olwyn in March 2015. The community is, however, resilient and always optimistic. While the town of Carnarvon has recovered, there is work still being done to recover on the plantations and

the government is ready to assist the community moving forward.

The government recognises the importance of mitigating the risks and assisting the community to grow businesses and the agricultural sector. The State government aspires to diversify the economy and an integral part of that equation is doubling or tripling the agricultural sector by 2050. 'Seizing the Opportunity Agriculture' is a \$300 million Royalties for Regions funding initiative. It directs State government investment into crucial areas, including market development, science, infrastructure and maximising water for productive use. 'Water for Food' has been allocated \$40 million, with \$2.6 million of that for projects in the Gascoyne.

Under the Gascoyne Irrigation Precinct (GIP), the State and Commonwealth governments, together with local growers, have invested significantly in infrastructure, water planning and management, with \$104.7 million spent or committed. The principle investment was \$60 million for flood levies, of which \$45 million came from Royalties for Regions to avoid a repeat of the devastation of the mega floods of 2010.

The Gascoyne Irrigation Pipeline Project involved expenditure of \$17.1 million on infrastructure to deliver a 31km pipeline funded through Royalties for Regions, local growers and the Commonwealth government.

The Gascoyne Food Bowl Initiative is a \$25 million investment to expand the Carnarvon horticultural area from 1,200 hectares to 1,600 hectares. Groundwater investigations have identified an extra 4GL per annum to support expansion and to underpin the existing horticultural footprint.

Despite the ingenuity and tenacity of growers, when the seriously dry years hit it became clear there was a need for short, medium and long-term plans for the sustainability of the GIP. In 2013 the Carnarvon Ministerial Advisory Committee (CMAC) was created to provide advice to government and industry for the resolution of key issues to progress the Gascoyne agricultural sector and manage the challenges of having little to no water. This included water management governance and strategic coordination of all water infrastructure projects.

CMAC took on the task of examining the current structures and systems of this complex water system and provide recommendations to government and industry to optimise resources and work in partnership with regional stakeholders for a long-term, sustainable water future.

The Minister thanked the CMAC for their hard work on a challenging process and advised that Cabinet had approved release of the final report and its recommendations, providing direction for industry and government.

Two key recommendations Minister Davies highlighted from the 17 in the report are:

- > Governance of bulk water supply for the irrigation scheme to be consolidated into one single organisation; and
- > Further significant investment into the infrastructure required to optimise the system.

The Minister expressed her commitment to exploring the concept of a single entity to supply bulk water. New models will need to demonstrate efficiencies for growers, be properly resourced and have sufficient independence to set prices at a financially sustainable level. The task is to channel this into a Business Case providing the State and Commonwealth Governments with the confidence to make investment decisions to take the Carnarvon horticultural precinct to the next level.

Agriculture provides a major opportunity for the Gascoyne and there is a focus at a State and Federal level for investment in irrigated agriculture. Funds from the Water for Food initiative have been allocated to ensure the Gascoyne has everything prepared to take advantage of that.

The Middle Gascoyne Water for Food project is about diversification opportunities and water for pastoralists to grow fodder for drought-proofing. No project runs in isolation and as a result of the CMAC recommendations, the government is creating a holistic framework for integrating all Gascoyne projects and building a case for further investment.

Land tenure changes will unlock potential for future development. Currently less than 50,000 hectares in Western Australia is irrigated, including the Ord irrigation area. Potentially 10 million hectares of irrigable land across the state has been identified, providing great opportunities, including in the Gascoyne. An established agricultural GIP with a strong blueprint will help the Gascoyne move forward effectively.

Session 3: Future industries in the Gascoyne (growth)

Small business sector

Kristan Pinner, Vice President, Carnarvon Chamber of Commerce and Industry, posed five key questions about the Gascoyne's small business sector:

1. What role do small businesses play in the local economy and community?
2. What challenges do businesses in the Gascoyne face?
3. Where do opportunities to further grow the business sector in Carnarvon and the Gascoyne lie?
4. What is required to attract more people to the Gascoyne region and ensure long-term sustainability for the business sector?
5. What is the vision for the Gascoyne business sector in 20 years' time?

Mr Pinner stated that the Gascoyne region is unique, having multiple economic drivers – horticulture, pastoral, fishing, mining, tourism and huge retirement opportunities. Small businesses supported all of these sectors and provided employment, training, services and facilities to local residents. They inject money into the local economy through sponsorships, donations and voluntary work.

Mr Pinner said the key to increasing local business activity and sustainability is increasing the population. He spoke of a recent incidence where a state government agency awarded a maintenance contract to a non-local company and how this had adversely affected several local small businesses like plumbers, painters and carpenters.

One of the biggest challenges the Gascoyne faces is attracting and retaining staff and families. Mr Pinner suggested the lack of quality affordable accommodation and of high level education opportunities were issues causing young families to move away. Specific local training is required to ensure local career paths. Local government needs to work harder to engage with the community and assist small business with innovation and growth to deliver a more positive culture.

How do we combat the Gascoyne's challenges and create opportunities to grow? Being in an ideal location in Western Australia with multiple economic drivers, Mr Pinner felt Carnarvon had an opportunity to become a major transport and services hub. However, an upgraded road network, right up to the Great Northern Hwy to link the inland with the coast, and a major upgrade to air services was needed. This infrastructure would not only support tourism but facilitate the connection of Carnarvon's

horticulture, fishing and pastoral industries with the growing demands of the international market.

With arguably the most ideal climate on the west coast with average temperatures of 27 degrees, the Gascoyne region would be a great place for retirees. Each retiree indirectly employs 2.5 people to service them, so if 500 retirees moved to the region it would increase the population significantly. Retirees would increase demand for health and associated services, housing and general food and retail services. This would create enough momentum across industry, especially small business, to help propel the Gascoyne into the future.

So where would this leave the region 20 years from now? With the support from all levels of government, improved health care provision, increased level of educational choice, an upgraded road network and air service, Carnarvon can be a major centre for all services to the North West. This region should be able to reach a static population of up to 20,000 in the next 20 years and a larger population would encourage families to stay, not move away. Small business has the ability to make small steps towards the future to entice large business and government to promote a bigger vision and outcome. This region can give more back to Western Australia than it has received.

Pastoral

Ian Randles, Director, Pastoralists and Graziers Association of Western Australia (PGA), said pastoralism in the Gascoyne remains an important and consistent contributor to both the regional and State economies with livestock production the mainstay.

Transport is very important to the region and pastoralists, who rely on land transport to get livestock to market. They need increased use of triple road-trains to enable quicker, more efficient access to Perth. Currently these road trains can only drive on restricted access route 10, which is insufficient. The Muchea to Wubin upgrade of the Great Northern Hwy to take these larger road trains will be significant.

The Gascoyne was once the heart of the pastoral industry in Western Australia, one the State's largest wool producers and a major economic centre. In 1999, the wool industry contributed \$14 million to the region's economy, whereas today the value is about \$4.5 million. Over the same period, livestock disposals, slaughter and live export, went from \$8 million to \$24.5 million as many pastoralists moved from wool to beef, sheep and goat meat production.

The impacts of the wild dog problem are huge. Wild dog control is vital to attract investment to capitalise on emerging opportunities. There are an estimated 60,000 wild dogs in Western Australia with 42,250 stock losses reported in 2012; a loss of over \$7.7 million to the pastoral industry and the Western Australian economy.

Wild dogs also attack local fauna, significantly reducing native animal populations, and can carry disease. Dogs are an issue for mining companies, appearing close to sites and camps raising significant OSH concerns and for railway crews, due to numerous encounters at night when coupling trains.

The PGA and the pastoral industry is pressing for funding to construct dog proof fences, continued access to poisons, such as 1080, and the implementation of bounty programs to support opportunistic shooting. There is no one fixed solution to controlling wild dogs; it requires a multitude of options to deal with a pest that has a rapid rate of reproduction, is difficult to trap, hard to find and constantly moving.

How can the Gascoyne increase its productivity? There are 80 pastoral stations in the Gascoyne and

their average size is an area larger than Tasmania.

To develop secure incomes and improve sustainable use of the land, stations are diversifying from meat and wool production to take advantage of opportunities in goats, horticulture, inland aquaculture and outback tourism, but are restricted due to the limitations of our pastoral lease system.

Without land tenure reform pastoralists aren't able to undertake broader activities, which will improve the financial efficiency and bankability of pastoral leases and attract greater investment in the region.

The PGA is encouraged the Western Australia government is proposing reforms to pastoral leases, providing greater security of tenure and future tenure options, such as rangelands leases. The State Government needs to guide pastoral leaseholders and native title holders towards new tenure arrangements that satisfy and deliver benefits to all.

Horticulture

Bruce Munro, President Carnarvon Growers Association (CGA), said that Carnarvon grows a huge variety of crops over the whole year and the mix is changing all the time. Bananas used to be the main crop; at one stage, over 1 million cartons were sent annually to Perth. Increased competition and bananas needing twice as much water as other crops led to a decline in the banana crop, as high yields were required to remain viable.

There are around 170 small farms in Carnarvon generating \$80-100 million, using less than 10 hectares of land with 5GL of water – these are impressive statistics. Nowadays tomatoes are the largest crop and are produced over a much greater season than ever before. A gap in the market was identified for onions and Carnarvon now supplies tonnes of onions to Perth every year.

The last five years have been challenging. In 2010 and 2011 Carnarvon experienced severe floods rendering water too salty to use. There were also long periods of no river flow and the bores started to struggle with demand. Water restrictions were put in place which made things very difficult. These events meant the growers fairly quickly realised the true value of water.

Early 2015 saw a wonderful river flow until Cyclone Olwyn arrived, packing winds of up to 200km per hour. This caused widespread destructive damage, with bananas, tomatoes and small crops blown out of the ground. The industry is still in recovery; some growers are now producing crops but bananas will not be back until March 2016.

Mr Munro said the keys for future development were:

- > Water security: improved infrastructure was needed to secure access to affordable water supply with capacity to deliver and be maintained into the future.
- > Marketing, supply chain and collaboration across the industry: the Sweeter Banana experience and their achievements are quite remarkable; it should be used as a model by all growers. It goes to show how a number of small growers working together with the commitment and a workable marketing plan can turn an industry around.
- > Capacity and innovation: new crop trials and extended season growing with productivity increases, investment into improved infrastructure.
- > Industry pest management: the Gascoyne is aiming to be fruit-fly-free, opening up markets internationally and interstate.

There are a number of initiatives that can be put into place – branding, exporting, supply chain

management – but first water security and pricing stability has to be established. This will give growers the confidence to trial new crops and invest in the future.

The CGA's vision for 2020 is for a \$150-200 million per annum industry on sustainable, fruit-fly-free farms, in collaboration with each other, supplying direct to markets with a strong brand presence and be the largest employing sector in the Gascoyne.

Tourism

Tony Pickworth, Executive General Manager, Brand and Tourism, Royal Automobile Club (RAC) of Western Australia, explained the RAC has a regional presence with contractors all over the state. Auto clubs in Australia and throughout the world talk about coverage and are quite staggered when they hear how far RAC's contractors often travel to assist members in Western Australia.

Investment in tourism assets is a new business venture for the RAC, designed to enhance the lifestyle of its members and strengthen the brand presence. The RAC bought three outstanding assets in the Gascoyne region: Exmouth Cape at Ningaloo Reef; Coral Bay Resort; and Monkey Mia Dolphin Resort. The RAC has been involved in tourism for a long time, producing the first touring map of the south west in 1911 and still providing advice to tourists, especially international tourists through international Auto federations.

Tourism is a significant driver in the region and the RAC firmly believes there is potential for growth. It has invested \$34 million in the region and will be investing more as it develops these sites. The plan is to expand Monkey Mia Resort dramatically within the next two years, providing a wider variety of accommodation and improve the general amenity, including for staff. Ningaloo is a wonderful piece of land but the property is dated and needs investment and developing. In the future, RAC intends to develop Exmouth Cape Holiday Park, with accommodation ranging from four-star level to backpackers quarters all located in the town site.

This is a great marketing opportunity for the region and the RAC plans to encourage its members to get out of Perth and up to the Gascoyne instead of Bali. The RAC is a long-term tourism investor and intends to develop and maintain these assets using local businesses. It will promote what this region has to offer and work collaboratively with local government and local bodies to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Session 4: Capitalising on opportunities

Moving the Gascoyne forward

Jack Archer, Chief Executive Officer, Regional Australia Institute (RAI), explained that RAI provides a nationwide view of what is happening outside Australia's major cities, exploring the economy, trends, changes expected and policy responses needed.

Carnarvon, although isolated and a long way from Perth, has people doing some really innovative things. Mr Archer said the Gascoyne needs to:

- > Sort out basic land tenure issues
- > Get water rights in place so they can be managed
- > Create space for development to house 20,000 people, new tourism and business
- > Make sure we bring indigenous communities and native title holders into the economy and give

them opportunities for the future

- Create capability, skills and investment opportunities.

The region has been privileged with Royalties for Regions investment but regional development is not about going back to government for money continuously. The region needs public investment and good services but government investment alone will not set the region up for a strong, resilient future. To be part of that vision, the Gascoyne needs to move away from public investment towards generating a self-sufficient economy. Transition to smaller investment is essential; we must get past big investments.

How are we going to drive private sector innovation in the Gascoyne? It is great to see the investment by RAC in tourism assets, which will generate jobs and economic growth. It is also great to see what Sweeter Bananas are doing in terms of picking up horticultural growers and collectively giving them more capacity.

High-growth small businesses, at around 2-3 per cent of the business sector, contribute 50 per cent of new jobs, so you need to find these. They may be an innovative grower in the delta or a tourism business in town, but where else are those businesses going to come from? Have we got the conditions to really make it easy for people already here, or want to be here to do something entrepreneurial to be successful?

Mr Archer highlighted the following things that are important to get right:

- Land tenure rights legislation
- The right people in the region
- Collaboration for economies of scale
- Seek out investment opportunities and welcome them
- World-class tourist services for international visitors
- World-class production standards for high value market success
- Improved technology and its use
- Indigenous community engagement and involvement

The Gascoyne has a great opportunity and should remain optimistic. Mr Archer said the Gascoyne can have success with agriculture and tourism. Mr Archer said he hopes the region, in taking these opportunities, will find high growth small businesses led by indigenous people and create jobs across the community.

Future of the Gascoyne

List of speakers (in order of presentations):

- Tony Beard, Chairman, Gascoyne Development Commission
- Hon. Terry Redman MLA, State Minister for Regional Development; Lands; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development; Leader of The Nationals (WA)
- Ben Roberts, Co-Chairman, Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation
- Craig Julian, General Manager, Non Interconnected Systems, Horizon Power
- Marnie Finlayson, General Manager, Operations, Dampier Salt
- Hon. Mia Davies MLA, State Minister for Water; Sport and Recreation; Forestry
- Kristan Pinner, Vice President, Carnarvon Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Ian Randles, Director, Pastoralists and Graziers Association of Western Australia
- Bruce Munro, President, Carnarvon Growers Association
- Tony Pickworth, Executive General Manager, Brand and Tourism, Royal Automobile Club of Western Australia (RAC of WA)
- Jack Archer, Chief Executive Officer, Regional Australia Institute

Gascoyne region, WA



GASCOYNE REGION

KEY FEATURES

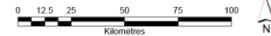


Government of Western Australia
Department of Regional Development



Government of Western Australia
Department of Water
This map is a product of the Department of Water, Spatial Services and was printed on 06/05/2013.
The map was produced with the intent that it be used for display purposes at the scale of 1:700000 when printed at A3.

Data and Projection Information
Vertical Datum: Australian Height Datum (AHD)
Horizontal Datum: Geocentric Datum of Australia 94
Projection: GDA94
Spheroid: Australian National Spheroid
Project Information
Client: Regional Development and Lands
Map Author: Patricia Farah
Project: Regional Development and Lands
File Name: Perspective_Gascoyne
Compilation date: 06/05/2013
Edition: 1



DATA DICTIONARY		
THEME	SOURCE	DATE
Towns	LANDGATE/ABS	May 2013
Road Centrelines	LANDGATE	September 2012
Hydrography	LANDGATE	August 2009
Tenure	Department of Conservation	July 2013
Important Resource Projects	DMP - Modified from MINEDEX Database	July 2013