



REGIONS
RISING

NATIONAL SUMMIT

2024

the new

FRONTIER

EVENT PROGRAM

13-15 August 2024

National Convention Centre
Canberra, ACT



**REGIONAL
AUSTRALIA**
INSTITUTE



REGIONS RISING 2024 NATIONAL SUMMIT PROGRAM

Theme: Regions Rising - The New Frontier

Dates: Tuesday 13 – Thursday 15 August 2024

Venue: National Convention Centre, Canberra

DAY 1 SUMMIT COCKTAIL PARTY

Date: Tuesday 13 August 2024

Time: 5.30pm – 7.00pm

Venue: National Convention Centre, Canberra

| Time | Duration | Item |
|---------|----------|---|
| 5.30 pm | | Function begins |
| 5.30 pm | Ongoing | Food and beverage service |
| 6.00 pm | 5 mins | Welcome – Madeleine Morris, MC |
| 6.05 pm | 5 mins | RAI Welcome – Liz Ritchie, CEO, Regional Australia Institute |
| 6.10 pm | 5 mins | Senator The Hon Anthony Chisholm, Assistant Minister for Regional Development & Assistant Minister for Regional Education |
| 6.15 pm | 5 mins | Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie, Senator for Victoria |
| 6.20 pm | 5 mins | Bob Katter MP, Member for Kennedy |
| 6.25 pm | 10 mins | Formalities conclude |
| 7.00 pm | | Event concludes |



DAY 2: CONFERENCE

| Time | Duration | Item |
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| 7.30 am | 30 mins | Registration, networking and exhibition |
| 8.00 am | 5 mins | MC Welcome and Housekeeping – Madeleine Morris |
| 8.05 am | 10 mins | Welcome to Country, Aunty Violet Sheridan, Senior Ngunnawal Elder |
| 8.15 am | 15 mins | Ministerial Address The Hon. Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories |
| 8.30 am | 10 mins | Q&A |
| 8.40 am | 20 mins | Liz Ritchie – CEO, Regional Australia Institute |
| 9.00 am | 5 mins | Q&A |
| | 50 mins | Panel 1 – Realising the ambition of regional Australia <i>Two years on from the launch of the RAI-led holistic plan for regional Australia, has the nation shifted the dial on addressing the inequalities between metropolitan and regional, rural and remote Australia? Business, community and government voices deliver the verdict from their patch and share insights on how to supercharge meaningful change towards rebalancing the nation.</i> <i>Facilitator: Madeleine Morris</i> |
| 9.05 am | | Professor Barney Glover AO, Commissioner, Jobs and Skills Australia |
| | | Martijn Wilder AM, Chair, National Reconstruction Fund |
| | | Georgie Dent, Executive Director, The Parenthood |
| | | Kate Fielding, CEO, A New Approach |
| | | Bridget Cama, UNSW Sydney |
| | 25 mins | Keynote Address |
| 9.55 am | 15 mins | James Holloway, Deputy Head of Economic Analysis, Reserve Bank of Australia |
| 10.10 am | 10 mins | Q&A |
| 10.20 am | 30 mins | Morning tea, networking and exhibition |
| | 45 mins | Panel 2 Transforming policy dreams into reality <i>Responsible for the implementation and to a degree, the success, of government policy, senior public officials share the balancing act of their</i> |



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| | | <p><i>day jobs: turning policy vision statements into real-world positive outcomes for regional Australians.</i></p> <p><i>Facilitator: Mark Vaile, Director, Regional Australia Institute</i></p> |
| 10.50 am | | Steve Orr, Secretary, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development |
| | | Professor Mehdi Doroudi, Chief Executive, Dept of Primary Industries and Regions, SA |
| | | David Mackay, Deputy Secretary, Regions, Cities and Territories, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts |
| | | More speakers announced soon |
| | 25 mins | Keynote Address |
| 11.35 am | 15 mins | Sam Dimarco, General Manager Regional and Remote, nbn co |
| 11.50 am | 10 mins | Q&A |
| 12.00 pm | 60 mins | Panel 3 – The great tech race <i>The sum of the intelligence of a diverse cohort of the brightest business and science minds equals an insightful take on how technology, in all its forms, is changing the face of the regions and how the benefits are shaping up to be anything but artificial.</i> <i>Facilitator: Sam Dimarco, General Manager Regional and Remote, nbn co</i> |
| | | Dr Brad Tucker, Astrophysicist & Cosmologist, Australian National University |
| | | Andrew Leong, Executive General Manager – Technology & Solutions, nbn co |
| | | Jack Growden, Founder and CEO, LiteHaus International |
| | | Damian Kassabgi, CEO, Tech Council of Australia |
| | | Hannah Wandell OAM, First Assistant Coordinator General, National Emergency Management Agency |
| | | Sarah Nolet, Co-Founder & Managing Partner, Tenacious Ventures |
| 1.00 pm | 45 mins | Lunch, networking and exhibition |
| | 25 mins | Keynote Address |
| 1.45 pm | 15 mins | John Cleland, CEO, Essential Energy |
| 2.00 pm | 10 mins | Q&A |
| 2.10 pm | | Delegates move to breakout rooms |



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| 2.20 pm | 60 mins | In focus <i>Summit delegates select their own interest area in a series of concurrent sessions that explore the context and solutions to the most contemporary issues before regional Australia.</i> |
| | | Breakout 1 – Home grown housing solutions A cross-section of experts representing regional Australia’s housing diverse landscape share their thoughts and experiences in working towards a regional Australia where a home is a given, not a luxury. <i>Facilitator: Diwa Hopkins, RAI Senior Economist</i> Kerren Crosthwaite, First Assistant Secretary, Housing Division, Commonwealth Treasury Greg Muller, Chair, Nestd Nick Lane, Executive Director and Founder, Passive Place Robert Pradolin, Co-Founder and Director, Housing All Australians Michael Crosby, Head of Public Policy, Airbnb Australia and New Zealand |
| | | Breakout 2 – The building blocks of education - getting the foundations right From early education to vocational training, a diverse panel of experts, share their thoughts on what’s working and what’s not, in giving our regional kids and students the best start in life. <i>Facilitator: Amalie Smith, Chief People Officer, Essential Energy</i> The Hon. Fiona Nash, Regional Education Commissioner Jenny Dodd, CEO, TAFE Directors Steph Trethewey, Founder, CEO and Executive Director, Motherland Australia Andrew Paterson, CEO, Family Day Care Australia Hacia Atherton, CEO, Empowered Women in Trades |
| | | Breakout 3 – Taking care of people first A growing and ageing population is putting increased pressure on regional health and aged care. Our panellists are bucking the trend delivering sustainable regional care services that put people first. Tanya Forester, CEO, Macquarie Health Collective Kate Sowden, Executive Director, Work + Stay Dr Rod and Deborah Martin, Co-Founders, Observa Care Jane Pickering, CEO, Eldercare SA Professor Faye McMillan, Acting National Rural Health Commissioner |
| | | Breakout 4 – Innovation Hubs The Federal Government’s Future Drought Fund is investing \$520 million over eight years to prepare farmers and communities for the inevitable |



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| | | <p>droughts of the future. Find out how, in the second round of the Fund, the FDF's Drought Resilience Innovation Hubs are focussed on community resilience. Plus learn from the findings of the University of Canberra's Resilient Communities Project on what contributes to drought-ready towns.</p> <p><i>Facilitator:</i> Cindy Cassidy, CEO, Southern NSW Innovation Hub Brent Finlay, Chair, Future Drought Fund Dr Rob Mellor, Regional Economies Centre of Excellence, University of Southern Queensland John Gladigau, Farmer; Creative Director, ifarmwell Prof Jacki Schirmer, University of Canberra Hon Dr John McVeigh, Executive Director, Southern Queensland, Northern NSW Hub Simone Cameron, Senior Policy Manager - Northern Australia, Cotton Australia</p> |
| 3.20 pm | 25 mins | Keynote Address |
| | 15 mins | Mark Allison, CEO, Elders Limited; and Hannah Speers, Operations & Support Specialist, VicRiv Region, Elders Limited |
| | 10 mins | Q&A |
| 3.45 pm | 40 mins | The 2025 Federal Election: <i>A panel of political insiders looks forward to the 2025 Federal Election and the role regional Australia will play in the campaign and ultimate success of either party.</i> <i>Facilitator: Madeleine Morris</i> |
| | | John Scales, Founder, JWS Research The Hon. Joel Fitzgibbon, Former Federal Member for Hunter Kerry Chikarovski, Founder and Director, Chikarovski & Associates |
| 4.30 pm | 30 mins | Close |



SUMMIT DINNER FUNCTION

Date: Wednesday 14 August 2024

Time: 6.30pm – 10pm

Venue: National Convention Centre, Canberra

| Time | Duration | Item |
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| 6.30 pm | | Function begins |
| 6.30 pm | Ongoing | Drink service – Exhibition Area Entertainment Exhibition |
| 7.00 pm | | Guests seated |
| 7.15 pm | 5 mins | Welcome – MC |
| 7.30 pm | 45 mins | Dinner service |
| 8.15 pm | 5 mins | RAI Welcome and Introduce Dr Haines, Christian Zahra AM, Chair, RAI |
| 8.20 pm | 10 mins | Parliamentary Address The Hon Dr Helen Haines MP, Independent Member for Indi |
| 8.30 pm | 5 mins | Maryanne Graham, Executive General Manager of Corporate and Stakeholder Affairs, Transgrid |
| 8.35 pm | 20 mins | Leila McDougall, Director, VAM Paddock Productions |
| 8.55 pm | | Dessert service |
| 10.00 pm | | Event concludes |



DAY 3: CONFERENCE

| Time | Duration | Item |
|----------|----------------|--|
| 8.00 am | 25 mins | Registration, networking and exhibition |
| | 30 mins | Opening remarks |
| 8.25 am | 5 mins | MC Welcome and housekeeping |
| | 25 mins | Keynote Address |
| 8.30 am | 15 mins | Rachel Yangoyan, CEO, QantasLink |
| 8.45 am | 10 mins | Q&A |
| 9.00 am | 15 mins | Ministerial Address |
| | 15 mins | The. Hon David Littleproud, Leader of the Nationals |
| | 10 mins | Q&A <i>Facilitator: Rob Kerin, Director, RAI</i> |
| | 50 mins | Panel 4 – Power struggle <i>Regional Australia is the epicentre of Australia’s energy transition and decarbonisation journey where the uncertainty of change meets a future-shaping opportunity. A panel of experts from right across the energy continuum unpack how regional communities are the real powerbrokers in the nation’s pursuit of net zero.</i> <i>Facilitator: April Cavanagh, Director and Acting CEO, Toowoomba Surat Basin Enterprise</i> |
| 9.25 am | | Samantha McCulloch, CEO, Australian Energy Producers |
| | | Dan Cass, Director, Rewiring Australia |
| | | Katherine Teh, Executive Chair, Spektrum Mining |
| | | Michael Frangos, Chief Executive Officer, Indigenous Energy Australia |
| | | Kristy Walters, Chair, Haystacks Solar Garden |
| | | Dr Simon Wright, Senior Research Fellow, Energy & Circularity, Charles Sturt University |
| | 25 mins | Keynote Address |
| 10.15 am | 15 mins | Rob Wheals, CEO, Squadron Energy |
| 10.30 am | 10 mins | Q&A |
| 10.40 am | 25 mins | Morning tea, networking and exhibition |



| Time | Duration | Item |
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| | 25 mins | Keynote Address |
| 11.05 am | 15 mins | Ben Thompson, CEO and Co-Founder, Employment Hero |
| 11.20 am | 10 mins | Q&A |
| 11.30 am | 5 mins | Delegates move to breakout rooms |
| | 60 mins | Breakout Sessions |
| 11.35 am | | How to influence government: hear from those who do <i>A cohort of effective communication, policy professionals and advocates share their experience on how to achieve positive policy outcomes from government.</i> <i>Facilitator: Christian Zahra AM, Chair, Regional Australia Institute</i> Robbie Sefton AM, Founder, Seftons Advisory Rachael Sweeney, Collective Position Simon Banks, Managing Director, Hawker Britton Rob Kerin, Director, RAI and former South Australian Premier |
| | | The future of work <i>The ability to work away from head office has meant many Australians can now live where they love, not live where they work. Here, representatives of corporate Australia dedicated to remote work arrangements and business strategists, hatch a plan to ensure the WFH movement is here to stay.</i> <i>Facilitator: Sandra Harding, Director, Regional Australia Institute</i> Ben Gursansky, Head of Regional & Rural Affairs, Telstra Zara Tonkin, Chief of Staff, Employment Hero Sam Treloar, Founder, Dpartmnt Liz Jakubowski, Director, Digital, Jobs and Skills Australia |
| | | Community legacy: Making hay while the sun shines <i>Regional Australia will be the engine room of Australia's energy transition home to new renewable energy projects; a rapidly expanding critical minerals sector and supporting industries. It's a momentum not to be squandered; one in which we must leave a legacy for communities.</i> <i>Facilitator: Anna Stephenson, Education & Regional Impact Director, Regional Australia Institute</i> Nils Hay, CEO, Mid West Development Commission WA Fiona Davis, Director, Currie Communications Ali McLean, Economic Development Manager, Hay Shire Council Michael Lloyd, Acting Program Director Stakeholder Relations Major Projects, Transgrid |
| | | The New Frontier <i>In this panel, local leaders of three of the most isolated regions in the country share how an abundance of in-demand natural resources is</i> |



| Time | Duration | Item |
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| | | <p><i>unlocking their potential. Northern Western Australia; North West Tasmania and the region where South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales meet, are at the epicentre of the nation's new renewable energy and critical minerals industries. The challenge is how to harness the incoming prosperity for the long term and to create enduring, positive legacy for communities.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: Stephen Tighe Paul Rosair, NAJA Business Consulting Services Regional Capitals Alliance WA and Kimberley Regional Group of Councils James McKee, CEO and Director, Regional Development, RDA Tasmania Glenn Stewart, Manager, Robinvale Euston Workforce Network</p> |
| 12.35 pm | 50 mins | Lunch, networking and exhibition |
| | 25 mins | Keynote Address |
| 1.25 pm | 15 mins | Lisa Lalande, CEO, Century Initiative |
| 1.40 pm | 10 mins | Q&A |
| | 50 mins | Panel 5 – Big regions: purposeful population growth <i>The RAI has a target of 11 million people living in regional Australia by 2032, an increase on the forecast population of 10.5 million, adding \$13.8 billion in GDP to the nation's bottom line. How as a nation do we attract and enable this growth and plan for a bigger, sustainable and prosperous regional Australia? A National Population Plan is a critical starting point.</i> Facilitator: Liz Ritchie |
| 1.50 pm | | Elizabeth Collett, Global Fellow, Migration Policy Institute |
| | | Professor Barbara Norman, Chair, Urban Policy Forum |
| | | Mayor Kylie King, Chair, Regional Capitals Australia |
| | | Ray Haeren, National Vice President, Planning Institute of Australia |
| | | Jim Gall, CEO, RB Sellars |
| | | Joseph Mitchell, Assistant Secretary, Australian Council of Trade Unions |
| | 10 mins | Closing remarks |
| 2.40 pm | | Liz Ritchie – CEO, RAI |
| 3.00 pm | | Day 2 Close |