JOBS FOR THE REGIONS
A McGowan Labor Government believes that more should be done to deliver skilled jobs in regional WA.

The State Government has a role to play in building community sustainability and economic diversity, including supporting local business, developing skills and creating jobs.

Many parts of regional Western Australia have not experienced the full benefits of government purchasing with missed opportunities to use infrastructure development to grow local businesses, skill up local people and create local jobs. A McGowan Labor Government will continue to support Royalties for Regions (RFR) however there are many examples of RFR projects that are missed opportunities to create jobs in the regions.

There are many positive outcomes when investing in local businesses. Local businesses employ and train people in regional areas who then reinvest directly back into the towns and regions they live in. This has the effect of boosting the local economy and creating further opportunities in the regions.

Regional areas often have higher levels of unemployment, especially youth and Aboriginal unemployment. Good policies to enhance local content policies on programs such as RFR can assist in alleviating this situation.

This will have a huge social and economic impact in those communities. Local companies employing local workers should have priority in much of the work in regional areas. Local businesses often have local knowledge and can provide a service that best suits the region they are located in.

- A McGowan Labor Government is committed to ensuring more local content in State Government purchasing and on building and construction projects to better support local business and communities and create more jobs in regional WA.

Maximising Local Content

WA Labor's Plan for Jobs outlines our commitment to ensuring that we maximise the number of local jobs created through government contracts and in the resources sector. This includes a commitment to maximise the number of jobs created in regional WA.

A McGowan Labor Government will introduce the Western Australian Industry Participation Plan (WAIPP). WAIPP’s are supported by legislation and will increase the amount of local content delivered as a result of government contracts. All government agencies will be required to include local content and local jobs as a key criterion in tender evaluation and other relevant procurement processes.

Specifically the WAIPPs will apply to procurement activities in construction or major projects in regional cities and the rest of Western Australia that meet or exceed more than $500,000 for procurement activities undertaken in the supply of new equipment, services or capital investments.

In regional WA the WAIPPs will be implemented in conjunction with an enhanced Buy Local policy.

Read more about our plan at page 78.
• A McGowan Labor Government will maximise the amount of local content in the regions in government purchasing and projects through the application of the WAIPPs and the Buy Local Policy.

Loopholes that exist in the current buy local policies means regional WA is not experiencing the full benefit of investment in the regions. A recent analysis shows that the regional business preference eligibility was applied to just 17 per cent of the worth of projects in regional WA.

• A McGowan Labor Government will close existing loopholes in government policies to ensure the Buy Local guidelines on the use of local businesses and workers are applied to regional projects and tender arrangements including to head contractors.

A McGowan Labor Government is also committed to introducing a Skilled Local Jobs Bill that will require a skilled work agreement to be implemented on all major resources projects in WA.

The requirements of the skilled work agreement would demonstrate how local businesses would have the equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of the project and to tender and compete for any aspect of the work. It would also identify how much work is being undertaken in WA, which region the services would be carried out in and the number and type of apprenticeships and trainee positions that would be required.

• A McGowan Labor Government will introduce a Skilled Local Jobs Bill which will include a requirement that a skilled work agreement will identify how much work is being undertaken in the regions.

Aboriginal Procurement Supporting Jobs in the Regions

A McGowan Labor Government is committed to supporting Aboriginal owned businesses and driving jobs growth for Aboriginal communities in the regions.

A policy will be implemented that will result in the State Government increasing the number of contracts awarded to Aboriginal businesses focussed on developing entrepreneurship and business opportunities for the regional Aboriginal community.

The WA Government previously had a policy for increasing opportunities for Aboriginal owned businesses called the ‘Open and Fair Procurement Policy’. This policy has encouraged a small number of contracts but at the very small end of tender values.

The Commonwealth Government in 2015 has now adopted a much stronger procurement policy of three per cent of all government contracts be awarded to Aboriginal businesses by 2020. A McGowan Labor Government will follow this example by setting a percentage target of actual contracts awarded as opposed to value.

• A McGowan Labor Government will adopt the Aboriginal Procurement Policy of awarding three per cent of all government contracts to Aboriginal owned businesses by 2020.

The Aboriginal Procurement Policy will provide real opportunities for Aboriginal owned businesses to develop and expand.

Read more about our plan at page 83.
Apprentices and Trainees in the Regions

A McGowan Labor Government is committed to expanding the Priority Start Policy to ensure that the opportunity to create apprenticeship and trainee positions is maximised. The success of the Priority Start policy will also be supported through the implementation of WA Labor’s Western Australian Industry Participation Plan (WAIPP).

In regional WA this will result in more young people having access to training and skilled jobs.

- **A McGowan Labor Government will maximise the number of apprenticeships and traineeships in regional WA by expanding the Priority Start policy.**

Read more about our plan at page 96.

Back to Primary Schools for Science

A McGowan Labor Government will invest $17 million in schools to roll out science labs and equipment in up to 200 public primary schools. This will include an investment in regional primary schools.

Science labs engage students and if we are serious about diversifying our economy then we must start at a school level to prepare students for jobs beyond the resources industry. WA Labor’s proposal is to focus on science at a primary school level and that focus needs a science lab with appropriate resources and equipment.

- **A McGowan Labor Government will invest $17 million to roll out science programs in up to 200 public primary schools including funding to convert existing classrooms to science laboratories and upfront grants for resources to make science a more diverse and engaging experience for students.**

Expressions of interest will be invited from all public primary schools to apply for the program. In the initial phase, up to 200 schools will be upgraded to ensure that they have appropriate facilities and will include an allocation for regional primary schools.

- **An allocation of $12 million will be made available to convert classrooms into science labs.**

- **A further $5 million will be provided in grants of $25,000 to enable schools to buy resources to equip those labs.**

The teaching of science should start as early as possible in a child’s education however each school will have the flexibility to manage how they integrate the new science lab resources into their school curriculum. We will work with teachers and Scitech on appropriate professional development for teachers to focus on teaching science in schools. A focus on science will support the diversification of the economy and is an investment in the jobs of the future.

Read more about our plan at page 51.
New Industries Fund

There will be a $4.5 million investment to attract and foster Startups in regional WA.

- **A McGowan Labor Government will invest $4.5 million from the New Industries Fund in regional WA.**

Our commitment to an engagement strategy will capture important trade and investment opportunities for the Startup and gaming sector to grow business opportunities in regional Western Australia.

*Read more about our plan at page 47.*

Regional Technology Parks: Jobs in the Community

Under the auspices of the Industrial Lands Authority a McGowan Labor Government will drive the development of serviced industrial land and technology parks in the regions.

In towns like Bunbury, Geraldton, Albany, Collie, Kalgoorlie, Karratha, Port Hedland and Broome, the WA Government either directly or through its various agencies holds significant and critically located tracts of land.

Currently, some regional towns have industrial parks developed or highlighted for development by Landcorp. Sites such as the Onslow Industrial Support Facility and the Port Hedland Industrial Area are clearly in need of the benefits that can be obtained from a single government owned, commercially minded ownership structure that has the capacity to incentivise and stimulate local, national and international investment.

All these sites are straightforward commercial developments by a government agency constrained by the restrictions set out in Landcorp’s Act of Parliament. Currently there is little power or capacity to incentivise investment in regional industrial parks. Accordingly, many parks have struggled to attract investors and have done little to diversify the types of industries that would create meaningful long-term jobs.

- **A McGowan Labor Government will bring the development of industrial land in the regions under the auspices of the Industrial Lands Authority and develop serviced, ready to use industrial land at locations such as Shotts in Collie, Lumsden Point in Port Hedland and Kemerton Industrial Park near Bunbury.**

The Industrial Lands Authority will promote, assist or offer incentives to attract regional business investment, under the broad economic provisions of the Industry and Technology Development Act 1998.

Companies at last will have a single government body to deal with. This will improve relations with existing businesses and tenants in industrial parks and encourage meaningful investment in regional WA and create new job opportunities throughout WA.

*Read more about our plan at page 75.*
Brand WA

Regional WA is as diverse as it is unique. But how we sell ourselves to the world is not working as well as it could.

We currently have a government strategy where agencies develop numerous marketing materials, duplicating effort and competing for market share.

Western Australia needs an overarching consistent brand that can be used by both the public and private sector as we seek to promote our regional attributes to the rest of the world. WA Labor is committed to working with industry stakeholders to implement a consistent but flexible approach to marketing WA as a brand.

Brand WA will provide a global toolkit of consistent concepts, packaging and messaging that will promote our wonderful State to the rest of the world.

Echoing the WA Birthmark program, developed in the 1960’s, Brand WA will ensure we capitalise on every marketing dollar we spend. Brand WA will create a connection between all of the efforts of the public sector and private sector and ensure our messaging voice is interpreted the same way around the world.

• A McGowan Labor Government will consult with industry to fast-track Brand WA enabling a consistent but flexible approach to marketing regional WA as a brand across all industries to secure a greater share of growing markets.

A McGowan Labor Government is committed to working with industry stakeholders to implement a consistent but flexible approach to marketing WA as a brand. There are many examples of globally successful brands that have built market share through a global toolkit of consistent concepts, packaging and messaging such as Red Bull, World Wildlife Fund and Coca-Cola.

The economic benefits that come from a Brand WA have a broad contribution to the regional economy in terms of manufacturing, business investment, job creation, agriculture, hospitality and export opportunities.

Hospitality in the Regions

Tourism WA estimates that about 1.1 million visitors took part in food and wine experiences in 2013, with local specialties a key attraction. Western Australia can do more to capitalise on the boom in food and alcohol tourism, especially in promoting regional specialties.

We need to encourage a more tourism-friendly hospitality culture by allowing such simple measures as making it easier for restaurants to sell alcohol without a meal and letting accredited tour operators offer an alcoholic drink on their tour, like a beer at the end of a tough bushwalk or champagne while watching the famed Western Australian sunset.

• A McGowan Labor Government will allow accredited tour operators to sell and supply alcohol under prescribed circumstances, such as a glass of champagne at the start of a tour.

We need to make it easier for tourists to try our unique local products by freeing up the regulations around regional collectives and farmers markets. Currently, regional collective cellar door facilities can showcase wine and beer from a particular region, but not distilled alcohol products.

1 Tourism Research Australia, Food and Wine Tourism in Western Australia, 2014, p4
• **A McGowan Labor Government will allow regional wineries, brewers and distillers to sell their products at regional farmers’ markets and cellar door collectives including producers in the Swan Valley.**

Read more about our plan at page 62.

**Tourism in the Regions**

Regional WA offers tourists a unique experience.

Destination marketing campaigns in the past have promoted events such as the Margaret River Gourmet Escape, Experience Extraordinary Campaign and Channel 7’s Sunrise program showcasing a variety of tourism experiences in the regions and will continue to be used to promote the unique tourism opportunities available throughout our regions.

Event tourism has supported projects in regional WA such as the Albany ANZAC Centenary Commemoration, the Ironman WA and the IGA Taste Great Southern event, to name a few, and will continue to support events in the regions.

However, WA competes with the other states in Australia to attract both interstate and overseas visitors. In recent years Victoria, Queensland and NSW have significantly increased their tourism spend. This increase in the funding available for events and marketing will have a positive boost for their economies and drive their share of the tourism market. It is important that WA is not left behind.

Destination marketing includes: business events, domestic marketing and international leisure. This marketing is delivered through the Perth Convention Bureau, Regional Tourism Organisations and Tourism WA directly.

The Liberal National Government allocates much of this funding for tourism through tied grants over short periods of time. The nature of the tied funding makes it difficult for organisations to forward plan and secure the best outcomes for the economy. This includes the capacity of Tourism WA to maximise the return on investment from both public and complementary private sector investment in tourism.

A McGowan Labor Government is committed to ensuring that the model of funding provides certainty and security for the tourism industry by providing a $425 million injection over four years. This will maximise the return on investment and grow jobs in this important part of the economy including in regional WA.

• **A McGowan Labor Government will:**

  **Restructure the Tourism WA budget by consolidating the multiple tied budget lines into three budget lines, these being: Destination Marketing, Events Tourism and Tourism Infrastructure and Investment.**

  **Invest $45 million per annum for five years for Destination Marketing including business events, domestic marketing and international marketing, delivering $225 million in secure funding to grow this industry.**

  **Invest $40 million per annum for five years including Event Tourism, delivering $200 million in secure funding to grow this industry.**

Read more about our plan at page 59.
Cruising Regional Ports

Passenger Cruise Ships visiting the many ports of Western Australia are a rapidly growing tourism sector, contributing $275.3 million towards the WA economy in 2014-15.¹

In 2015, Busselton welcomed six ships, the first cruise ships to visit the regional city with most other regional ports reporting an increase in the number of visiting ships. Esperance, Albany, Bunbury, Augusta, Geraldton, Exmouth, Port Hedland, Broome and now Busselton make up the nine cruise destinations enjoying the dividends of this industry.

The cruise ship sector provides regional WA with an opportunity to value add to this significant growth industry by developing more landside destination options that can be presented to visitors before, during or after their cruise experience.

- **A McGowan Labor Government will work with industry to develop more landside destination options to the cruise ship sector thus generating additional visitor spend and more local jobs in regional WA.**

As passenger cruise ships visit our regional ports more regularly, it provides regional WA the opportunity to sell the many and varied shore excursion options for cruise ship visitors. For example; the Ferguson Valley or the many wineries and breweries of the South West. Generating additional visitor nights has positive economic benefits for our regional communities.

Western Australia has some of the most unique and oldest Aboriginal art, culture and heritage in the world. A McGowan Labor Government will work with the WA Aboriginal Tourism Operators Council (WAITOC) and relevant stakeholders to expand opportunities for Aboriginal tourism to be packaged for the cruise shipping sector.

- **A McGowan Labor Government will work with WAITOC and communities to strengthen and diversify the range and quality of Aboriginal tourism offerings to meet the demand of the cruise shipping sector.**

With more coordination between WA's cruise sector, tourism operators, communities, local government and the private sector, a wider range of experiences can be packaged for the consumption of the cruise ship industry.

Role of Regional Development Commissions

There are currently nine Regional Development Commissions (RDCs) covering the Kimberley, Pilbara, Gascoyne, Goldfields-Esperance, South West, Great Southern, Peel, Mid West and Wheatbelt. The RDCs are established as statutory authorities of the State Government and have a mandate to lead and support sustainable development in regional WA.

The role of the RDCs should be enhanced by requiring them to take a more proactive role in ensuring that the value of the local content on RFR programs and other state government contracts is increased.

- **A McGowan Labor Government will ensure that Regional Development Commissions take a more proactive role in maximising the value of local content delivered on RFR programs.**

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¹Cruise Down Under, Economic Impact Assessment of the Cruise Shipping Industry in Australia, 2014-15
A McGowan Labor Government will require all departments and head contractors carrying out government funded projects in regional areas to advertise all tenders and job openings on the respective Regional Development Commission’s website. This will allow local businesses and job seekers to have a single portal to access opportunities in their region.

• **A McGowan Labor Government will ensure that all tenders, contracts and job vacancies on government funded projects in regional areas are advertised on the Regional Development Commission’s websites.**

Regional TAFEs supporting Regional Job Growth

Regional TAFEs have felt the brunt of the cuts by the Liberal Government to the training sector. In the last four years enrolment numbers at regional TAFEs have dropped by 8,000 students. In 2015 there were 128 less people employed on regional campuses compared to 2014. 40 courses offered at regional TAFEs in 2014 have been cancelled in 2015. This has an impact on the training opportunities for people living in the regions and their capacity to access skilled jobs.

A McGowan Labor Government is committed to ensuring that there are expanded course options at regional TAFEs, linked to regional jobs. An independent review of the training sector commissioned by the Liberal Government has identified the need to be more responsive to the needs of regional WA when developing the State Priority Occupation List (SPOL). The creation of the list is used to determine which courses are delivered and the level of government funding different courses will attract. The Liberal Government rejected this recommendation to better align the SPOL to the needs of regional WA.

This decision affects the annual funding allocations by the Department of Training including the allocations to regional TAFEs on training priorities. The report found that this has significance not only for workforce development in the regions but also for the sustainability of the TAFEs (State Training Providers) themselves. ¹

• **A McGowan Labor Government will ensure that the State Priority Occupation List will be more responsive to the employment needs of the regions and ensure regional TAFEs are delivering training that aligns with future job growth in the regions.**

The Independent Review also recommended that consideration be given to a five-year project under the heading VET Regional Partnerships Program for regional State Training Providers that are looking to embark on new, innovative and long-term partnerships for the benefit of their institutions and their communities.

• **A McGowan Labor Government will implement a VET Regional Partnerships Program to provide an opportunity for regional TAFEs to invest in new and innovative long term partnerships to create training and job opportunities in the community.**

A McGowan Labor Government is also committed to the ongoing role of TAFE, will reinstate its brand and transform TAFE Colleges into Industry Skill centres.

Read more about our plan at page 92.

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¹Independent Review of the Vocational Education and Training Sector in Western Australia 2013-14, Final Report (Extract)Emeritus Professor Margaret Seares
Valuing the Agriculture Sector

With the growth in the world’s population and the demand for high quality food and products, WA has an opportunity to grow and export our agricultural sectors into the Asian region.

Agriculture is WA’s second major export industry. Wheat, wool, beef and lamb are but some of the products Western Australia exports as one of the most disease and pest free agricultural production areas in the world. In 2013-14 financial year, agriculture, forestry and fishing contributed a 59 per cent increase to gross state product growth.

Agricultural production in WA has a gross value of $11 billion (2013-14) and is the State’s second largest employer providing employment for more than 30,000 Western Australians.1

The grains industry is the largest agricultural sector in the State and the fourth largest export industry after iron ore, oil and gas, and gold.2 The value of wheat production rose 41 per cent with volumes of grain up 36 per cent in 2013-14 and it is estimated that the 2014-15 season will again see significant growth in the production and export of WA grains.3

Agrifood production includes agriculture, forestry and fishing industry products, pearls and food and beverage manufacturing. Exports in the 2013-14 financial year rose ten per cent to $7.6 billion.4

The growing trend in agricultural niche markets has positioned WA well for a burgeoning Asian middle class where premium products are most desirable.

Organic, genetically modified (GM) free, gluten free and free-range are great examples of niche markets that consumers are becoming more familiar with and demanding more of.

The work being done by the Department of Agriculture and Food’s Food Industry Innovation Project assisting regional agriculture and food businesses to capture premium domestic and export market opportunities is acknowledged. However, more can be done.

A McGowan Labor Government will consult with the agricultural industry on future growth and employment opportunities including making this a priority as part of our Asian Business Strategy.

Australia accounts for less than 3 per cent of global food trade. Western Australia exports almost 80 per cent of its agricultural production to countries such as China, Indonesia and Vietnam. In 2014-15, WA exported an estimated $7.22 billion in agricultural products.5

The challenge of feeding the world’s population which is expected to reach nine billion by 2050 ensures the industry will continue to present opportunities for growth in food production, food security and areas of technology, research and development, sustainability and human resources.

But population growth isn’t the only reason we will need more food. The spread of prosperity across the world, particularly in India and China is driving an increased demand for wheat, rice, meat, eggs, dairy and feed for cattle, pigs and chicken.
If current trends continue, the increased demand for our agricultural goods will also mean an increase in the growth of agricultural service industries in the areas of agronomists, agribusiness professionals (finance) and grain marketing.

Our agricultural industry offers the State an enviable opportunity to further diversity the economy, create more employment and contribute to domestic and international demand.

Kemerton Food Hub Growing Jobs

Food hubs or Co-ops work directly with farmers to assist in the marketing and distribution of their projects making it easier for local businesses and communities to access fresh local food.

Many farmers are challenged by the lack of distribution and processing infrastructure of appropriate scale that would give them wider access to retail, institutional and commercial food service markets where demand for local and regional foods continues to rise. A regional food hub allows them to gain entry into new and additional markets that would be difficult or access on their own.

A food manufacturing hub located in Kemerton could bring together the packaging, distribution and transport of food products for the South West and Great Southern Region.

- **A McGowan Labor Government will engage with stakeholders on the proposal for a food hub in Kemerton.**

Livestock Precinct at Boyanup

Global demand for high quality safe animal protein and products is why Western Australia is a world leader in live exports, dairy and pork products. WA has high animal welfare standards which will continue to be reassessed in conjunction with industry.

Livestock saleyards are important social and economic infrastructure for regional Western Australia. Sale days attract local and regional visitors to the area providing an economic boost to local economies. They are also important for monitoring animal welfare and provide the social opportunities for growers to connect.

In 2008, the WA Labor Government committed to progress a saleyards assistance package to develop regional saleyards at Katanning, Mt Barker and the South West following the sale of the Midland Saleyards.

In 2010, the Liberal Government committed to progress the WA Saleyard Strategy to update key regional saleyard infrastructure. Both Katanning and Mt Barker facilities were upgraded, but unfortunately, the $2.2 million set aside to kick start a replacement for the Boyanup cattle facilities were ‘expended elsewhere’ after the Liberal National Government decided it should be funded by private investment.

The Boyanup Saleyards are located in the centre of town on prime residential land. They are owned and operated by the WA Livestock Salesman’s Association on land leased from the Shire of Capel. This lease will expire in 2022 and the Shire wish to develop this land to cope with the continuing expansion of the Boyanup town site.
• **A McGowan Labor Government will work with the Shire of Capel on a suitable location for a Livestock Precinct to replace the current Boyanup Saleyards.**

To date, livestock farmers in the South West are counting down the time when they will face hefty transport costs to Muchea or Mt Barker Saleyards and are concerned for the welfare of their animals.

A Livestock Precinct in the South West will replace the aging facility in Boyanup. It will benefit producers, buyers, livestock agents and the community. A Livestock Precinct will generate jobs and ensure the industry will grow.

• **A McGowan Labor Government will fast-track a proposal for a Livestock Precinct in the South West to replace the current Boyanup Saleyards.**

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**Fishing is COOL**

Australian consumers are becoming increasingly aware of the sustainability challenges facing world fish stocks. Consumers want to know that the seafood they purchase is of high quality and originate from well-managed sustainable fisheries. This increasing community awareness is an opportunity for WA's local seafood industry to further promote its credentials as a world leader in fishery management.

Currently, seafood sold in supermarkets and markets must have country of origin labelling. However this rule does not apply to the restaurant and café industry.

In October 2014, a Commonwealth parliamentary report on the inquiry into country of origin labelling for food was released with recommendations to ‘provide clear information to consumers who wish to make an independent choice to support either Australian farmers or food manufacturers’. However, neither the Federal nor State Liberal Governments have moved to address this issue.

Western Australian consumers are saying that when they sit down to a meal, they have a right of choice to decide whether they order seafood grown locally or from another country or region. Given that choice, we believe that many Western Australians would choose to eat locally sourced and sustainably farmed seafood. The flow on effect is higher demand for locally sourced and/or sustainably farmed seafood that will grow local jobs and the local industry.

• **A McGowan Labor Government will introduce Country of Origin Labelling (COOL) requirements for seafood sold in restaurants.**

In a survey by Australian Made, Australian Grown, 89 per cent of consumers said that it is ‘important’ or ‘very
important’ that the fresh food they buy is Australian."¹ The Australian Made Campaign Limited also stated the Australian consumers are “becoming increasingly concerned about the origins of the food they eat, and that those concerns are driven by economic, health and safety, ethical and environmental factors.”²

The WA fishing industry already generates thousands of jobs across the State both within the industry and through food service and support industries. That will grow if consumers are able to exercise an informed choice to buy local.

Country of origin labelling for all seafood was introduced in the Northern Territory in 2008. It has proved a great success for both the fishing industry and restaurateurs who have reported increased sales of premium local products.

WA’s fisheries are some of the best managed in the world. We pride ourselves on high quality and high levels of sustainability. COOL will allow WA fisheries to reach their full potential while at the same time giving consumers the information they want about the food they eat.

²Quoted in the report on the inquiry into country of origin labelling for food, from the AMCL submission p1