Community Resource Centre Program
Function, location and funding of the Western Australian Community Resource Centre Network

Report prepared by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development for the Minister for Regional Development, the Hon. Alannah MacTiernan

July 2018
# Acronyms and Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AWACRC</td>
<td>Association of Western Australian Community Resource Centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B&amp;I</td>
<td>Building and Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC Network</td>
<td>Community Resource Centre Network of CRCs funded through the CRC program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC Program</td>
<td>Royalties for Regions funding and support program for the CRC Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRC/s</td>
<td>Community Resource Centre/s funded through the CRC program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCSPP</td>
<td>Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, or historically any previous State Government department that administered the CRC program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoF</td>
<td>Department of Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPIRD</td>
<td>Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRD</td>
<td>Department of Regional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FaCS</td>
<td>Funding and Contracting Services Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPI</td>
<td>Key Performance Indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>Local Government Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLA</td>
<td>Member for the Legislative Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFP</td>
<td>Not for Profit organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSCOA</td>
<td>National Standard Chart of Accounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDC</td>
<td>Regional Development Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDL</td>
<td>Department of Regional Development and Lands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RforR</td>
<td>Royalties for Regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>Technical and Further Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecentres</td>
<td>WA Telecentre Network Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Trust</td>
<td>Western Australian Regional Development Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WACRN</td>
<td>Western Australian Community Resource Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WALGA</td>
<td>Western Australian Local Government Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WARDT</td>
<td>Western Australian Regional Development Trust</td>
</tr>
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1 Executive summary

The Western Australian Community Resource Centre Program began in 1991 as the WA Telecentre Network Program, and since then has expanded to 105 CRCs located around the State and the Indian Ocean Territories.

There has been a series of major changes to the CRC program since the Royalties for Regions funding was made available to CRCs from 2009. Further change is required to provide an environment for the CRC network to not only be sustainable, but to flourish and maintain good community engagement with a new funding model.

This review is being undertaken to assist in that process. It is focussed on the location, function and funding of the program, with the need to redefine the key deliverables of the program within the parameters of a new funding model that has been developed in response to difficult economic times for the WA State Government. The major catalyst for the change in the program is the reduced amount of funding available in the budget to support the CRC program, moving from $13m to $8m per annum. Whilst this does represent the need for changes across the CRC network, it may also provide an opportunity for the CRC network to redefine and re-establish as a leader in technology solutions and digital connectivity for Regional WA.

The injection of funds into the CRC network over the past nine years has provided the network with many opportunities to enhance the services delivered by each CRC. New or renovated premises, improved and updated equipment and paid staff delivering services in lieu of volunteers has resulted overall in a more professional network and one that has been positioned to market the delivery of a wide range of local services to business and government.

However the emphasis on CRCs delivering against a broad range of social and economic outcomes as part of the Department funding has in some ways caused an “all things to all people identity crisis” within the program, leading to a lack of clarity and definition as to what a CRC really does locally. Is it a government service centre, a community hub, a provider of mental health services, senior health services, driver of economic stimulus within the community, director of major community events, provider of meeting and office spaces, tourism hub, recycling centre, coffee shop, training centre, library, and the list goes on. The answer is not simple and although CRCs will always provide some of these services, because the entire network of CRCs is diverse as they respond to community needs, they cannot provide all of these services all the time in every CRC.

While it is apparent that the CRC network will always have diversity in service delivery, there needs to be consolidation and consistency in the expectations of the services delivered as part of the CRC program and funded through the Royalty for Regions funding. Establishing a better definition of the range of services delivered through the CRC program will help to minimise misunderstandings about what they deliver, improve the quality of service delivery and provide a more reliable platform to market to government agencies and encourage them to use CRCs as part of their work in regional WA.

This will help to link CRC’s with the key areas of need for Government, which is the ability to disseminate information to the public, to keep them informed and provide a gateway for access to government services. With the agenda for government agencies
at the Federal and State level to move information and service delivery to online platforms with a wide range of access tools, there is the challenge to ensure the public can navigate through the growth of this type of service delivery. This needs to be maintained and enhanced as a core aspect of the CRC program.

For example, there is a real opportunity for the State Government to seriously adopt video conferencing as a preferred method of communication when dealing with the regions. Although no specific data could be collated in the time available for this review, it is apparent there is real savings for Government if video conferencing was reliable, accessible and a managed alternative to travel in the regions for meetings. Work can be done at both the government agency and the CRC levels to make use of video conferencing, with CRCs the connectivity experts for government.

Improved access and marketing of video conferencing for regional and remote community members to access health consultations is an opportunity for the CRC network. Video conferenced consultations are already working in communities with regional hospitals and in some CRCs, but has not been developed to its true potential. For this to occur, the Department will need to partner with the network and lead this initiative and demonstrate how CRCs can be a real asset in reducing government and individuals expenses in accessing health and other providers.

The CRC network is strong in the number of locations that are represented throughout the State, and to dilute this would be detrimental to the programs capacity to touch point with many smaller and less accessible locations in the regions. There are times when the closure of a location is inevitable due to relevancy to the community it serves, or due to the capacity of the community to maintain the basic functions of a CRC through other means. It is preferable that because of the community based operating model of a CRC that any closures are recognised and driven by the community and not initiated by government. The budget impact for CRCs will increase the risk of closure due to sustainability, with in some instances a 50% reduction per annum in funding under the recommended funding proposal. Many CRCs receive the majority of their income from the DPIRD contract to deliver services. CRCs have provided the feedback that they may not have the ability to absorb such a reduction from their operating budget over the medium term and once their cash reserves are exhausted if alternative income is not realised then closure is a likely outcome.

The traineeship program, which has provided opportunities for introduction to the workforce, or return to work for many Regional people will continue to be funded. There has been a need to deliver considerable savings in this area to allow for the allocation of funding to CRCs to remain relatively sustainable. It is hoped that opportunities to expand this program back to more appropriate levels will present in outer years.

Budget reductions will establish the conversation between those CRC’s who are able to survive the changes, about identifying ways to support each other to be better linked as a network, to deliver more sustainable services, including initiatives that provide income sharing opportunities, sharing resources and distributing information in a consistent manner that will attract more people to access CRC’s. A strong supportive CRC network in itself will have a greater chance of thriving in a challenging environment than one that is competitive within its own structure and between each entity.
1.1 Summary of recommendations

A summary of the key recommendations associated with this report are:

- All CRCs funded in the 2017/2018 financial year remain funded.

- A Two Tier Model of funding is adopted. Tier 1 CRCs are paid $70,000 per annum ex GST and Tier 2 CRCs are paid $50,000 per annum ex GST. Subsidies also exist for CRCs in Tier 2 who own their own premises or have a commercial lease. Tom Price and Broome CRC locations are also identified as locations eligible for outreach funding.

- A Traineeship program continues to be delivered. To achieve budget the traineeship program is reduced and will be delivered as a competitive grant funding model with approximately 13 trainee placements funded per annum. The current grant program allows for the opportunity for any CRC that can demonstrate the capacity to mentor and develop a trainee to be funded.

- The Department continues to provide a support program to CRCs, in conjunction with its role as administrator of the Royalties for Regions CRC funding.

- The service deliverables under the program focus on:
  - provision and access to Government information and services
  - maximising the potential for the use of video conferencing in Regional WA

- A renewed emphasis on building and maintaining partnerships to increase revenue opportunities for CRCs. With the following suggested activities:
  - A directive via government for all Agencies to review their regional service delivery model and consider engaging and funding CRCs in providing service delivery support.
  - A Senior Officers Reference Group, chaired by the Department, is created to build stronger relationships between CRCs and government agencies with the aim of increasing service delivery through CRCs (with supporting supplementary funding).
  - The Minister for Regional Development writes to the Commonwealth Government encouraging stronger use of CRCs to facilitate commonwealth service delivery – with commensurate levels of financial support.
  - A wider range of for profit businesses are encouraged to extend their service delivery to regional centres via funded service delivery arrangements with CRCs

- That the new funding of CRCs begins from 1 April 2019. That the budget balance for this quarter is used to assist with the transition of the program from the current service delivery model to the new model. That the new program is a grant model in lieu of a contract for service model.

- An internal review of the grant program 24 months after implementation.
All of the recommendations brought forward as a result of this report are made available in Section 7 of this report.
2 Overview of the CRC network

2.1 History of the CRC Network

CRCs originated as Telecentres, with the first centre established in 1991. Telecentres were designed to provide internet access and remote learning centres for TAFEs to access in small to medium regional towns.

Telecentres grew organically based on expressions of community interest in access to technology and learning. By the end of 2008, the Telecentre network had grown to include 103 not-for-profit, community owned and operated Telecentres spread across rural and remote communities within Western Australia, providing a diverse range of services appropriate to their local communities’ needs. Originally, all Telecentres were managed by Not for Profit organisations registered under the Associations Incorporations Act, however, this has expanded over time to include Aboriginal Corporations and Local Government managed centres.

Funding for Telecentres was provided in the form of grant funds, with operational funding of $20,000 per annum, plus the opportunity to apply for additional grant funds for training, equipment, buildings and infrastructure. Telecentres were also provided with training and support — organised and managed by the State Government department that was responsible for the program at the time.

In 2009, Telecentres were rebranded to CRCs and funding was changed from consolidated revenue to Royalties for Regions funding. This injected more funding into the operational area of the CRCs, allowing for a more professional workforce and more CRCs to open around the State. The number of CRCs ranged from 102 in 2009/10 to a peak of 110 during 2010/11. There are currently 105 CRCs in the network, 103 funded through the State and 2 funded by the Commonwealth that are located in the Indian Ocean Territories. This report will focus on the 103 CRCs that are State funded.

The following section includes both an historical and contemporary snapshot of the CRC network. Details of current and proposed future funding levels for each CRC are found in Appendix 1.
Different governance arrangements are present across the CRC network: Shire-operated (12%), Incorporated association (78%) and Indigenous organisation (12%).

On an annual basis, all of the CRCs receive payments from the Department under their respective arrangements. The majority of CRCs have been paid their operational funding through a Community Services Contract from 2014. Appendix 2 provides a summary of payments made to CRCs from 2009/10 to May 2018.

Forty seven CRCs have also received building and infrastructure grants from the Department since 2009/10.

Figure 2: Overview of CRC network by governance type.

Over the past several years, the Department has made payments to CRCs via annual payments and a number of CRCs have also received building and infrastructure grants. During the financial years 2009/10-2017/18, the Department has made payments of approximately $80.1 million to the CRC network (ranging from 11.1 million in 2011/12 to $13 million in 2017/18). This has equated to a yearly average ranging from $105,483 per CRC (2011/12) to $121,789 (2017/18)\(^1\).

Figure 3 Department payments to CRCs ($ ex. GST) during financial years 2009/10-2017/18 See Appendix 2 for more details.

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\(^1\) Details of these payments are available in Appendix 2 of this report.
During the financial years 2009/10-2016/17, building and infrastructure (B&I) grants were made by the Department to 47 CRCs. B&I grant values ranged from $50,000 (Denmark, 2009/10) to $300,000 (Leonora, 2015/16; Hopetoun, 2014/15; Gingin, 2011/12). About half (55%) of the CRCs that have received B&I grants from the Department since 2009/10 have received $50,000 or more – 40% have received greater than $100,000 in B&I grants. This funding has assisted CRCs to contribute to the building of collocated services in Shire owned buildings, renovate existing Shire owned buildings, or buy or renovate buildings owned by the CRC incorporated body. In 2013 the West Australian Regional Development Trust recommended any large (over $50k) building and infrastructure grants should be limited to Government owned buildings.

![Building and infrastructure grant payments to CRCs ($ ex. GST)](image)

Figure 4: Department funded building and infrastructure grant payments to CRCs ($ ex. GST) during financial years 2009/10-2017/18. See Appendix 2 for more details

### 2.2 CRC service delivery

CRC service delivery cannot be likened to a franchise or singular entity model. Each CRC operates independently of any other with variation in management, facilities, staffing, service delivery choice and service capacity.

There are some services that can be found at every CRC that are a requirement of the contract with the Department, in conjunction with other services that are delivered by all CRCs on a fee for service basis. Core services for the Department include access and assistance with State and Local Government information and video conferencing. Fee for service access includes photocopying and printing services and internet access. Most CRCs have a contract with the Department of Human Services to provide a Centrelink Access Point or Centrelink Agency and 31 Libraries\(^2\) are either managed by the CRC or collocated within the same building.

Apart from these core services, CRCs are varied in their focus of service delivery. The activities and service delivery provided is mainly determined by the organisation who

\(^2\) Information supplied by State Libraries May 2018
own the CRC who tailor the services to meet the needs of the community. The contract between CRCs and the Department provides the base funding for many of the social and economic activities and initiatives provided by a CRC, however the decision about what content is delivered is decided at the local level. CRCs receive their income from many sources, with the Department funding providing between approximately 30-70% of total CRC income\(^3\). Income sources for CRCs include fee for service, contracts with businesses, contracts with Government Agencies at all tiers, sponsorship by business and grants from various sources.

Some examples of activities and initiatives that are delivered in CRCs through these various funding mechanisms include:

- Health service providers either renting rooms in the CRC and/or employing the CRC as receptionist.
- Transport licencing service centres.
- Supervision of exams.
- Video conferencing services for Department of Health and/or Justice.
- Facilitating the delivery of accredited courses.
- Pop up shops and cafes.
- Office rental for short or long term to local business.
- Meeting room and equipment rental and catering.
- Event management for large community events, including music festivals, farming conferences and sporting events.
- Tourism centres (usually paid for by Local Government and retail sales).
- Vacation and after school activities, including homework clubs.
- Senior clubs, walking groups, book clubs and hobby groups.
- Community events such as Thank a Volunteer and Seniors Week.
- Community care information including education regarding scams, proactive health activities and financial management.
- Economic development through small business incubation, facilitation of courses for business and business networking events.

### 2.2.1 CRC service delivery under the Community Services Contract with the Department

CRCs are currently asked to deliver against three service level outcomes as part of the community services contract. These service level outcomes link to the Royalty for Regions legislative outcomes:

1. Government and Community Information and Access

\(^3\) Survey of CRCs undertaken by the Department April 2017
This expectation regarding CRCs to deliver against the above related strongly to the change to the program implemented due to the recommendations of the WARDT review of the CRC program in 2013.

Initially a contract from 2014 to 2017 was established to move CRCs from a grant funded operations model to a contract for service delivery model. To assist in this transition the Department created a qualitative service model with a required number of activities/actions for the contracted payment. As most CRCs had never tendered for Government work prior to this contract offer, the simplified tender process allowed for the varied capacity of the CRC network to meet the new requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Level Outcome</th>
<th>Service Level Outcome Volume</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of patrons using Government Access Point</td>
<td>11283⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of advertised public screening of Westlink</td>
<td>1088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of patrons viewing Westlink</td>
<td>2238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hot office bookings (government officers)</td>
<td>1093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of trainees currently employed at the CRC</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of active referral relationships - employment services</td>
<td>1400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hot office bookings (commercial)</td>
<td>3141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of active referral relationships - business development services</td>
<td>1540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of business development initiatives or seminars</td>
<td>584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of participants in business development initiatives/seminars</td>
<td>8076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of business networking events</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of active referral relationships - social development</td>
<td>2782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of general community initiatives or events</td>
<td>1939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of participants in general community initiatives/events</td>
<td>37374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of targeted initiatives or events</td>
<td>514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of participants in targeted initiatives/events</td>
<td>11116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of local community information activities</td>
<td>801</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Volumes of service delivery for contracted CRCs period 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2017.

The development of the new tender for CRCs services for the period 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2020 identified the need for more flexibility of service delivery to better tailor to the needs of the community. With the CRC network becoming more mature in the response to Government tenders, CRCs were provided with the opportunity to make their own tender offer within the confines of the three areas listed above. This allowed for CRCs to determine the quality and quantity of initiatives delivered for the fixed price contract.

⁴ Reduced numbers in the initial year of statistical recording due to CRCs consolidating skills and knowledge to record all data.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Level Outcome</th>
<th>Service Level Outcome Volume</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 October – 31 December 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of patrons using the State Government and Community Information Access Point</td>
<td>10662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Videoconference Services</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Government Hot Office Bookings</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Government Hot Desk Bookings</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Commercial Hot Office Bookings</td>
<td>1187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Commercial Hot Desk Bookings</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Referral Relationships – business development focus</td>
<td>782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of group Training/Workshops delivered - business development focus</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of one on one Training/Workshops delivered - business development focus</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants who attended Training/Workshops sessions – business development focus</td>
<td>1496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of group Information Sessions delivered - business development focus</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of one on one Information Sessions delivered - business development focus</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants who Information Sessions - business development focus</td>
<td>1579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Local initiatives/projects delivered - economic development focus</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants who attended Local initiatives/projects delivered - economic development focus</td>
<td>15892&lt;sup&gt;5&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Referral Relationships – community development focus</td>
<td>929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of group Training/Workshops delivered - community development focus</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of one on one Training/Workshops delivered - community development focus</td>
<td>663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants who attended Training/Workshops sessions – community development focus</td>
<td>3826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of group Information Sessions delivered - community development focus</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of one on one Information Sessions delivered - community development focus</td>
<td>850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants who attended Information Sessions - community development focus</td>
<td>4819</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Local initiatives/projects delivered - community development focus</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants who attended Local initiatives/projects delivered - community development focus</td>
<td>10178&lt;sup&gt;6&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of group Information sessions delivered - Association Support</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of one on one Information Sessions delivered - Association Support</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of participants who attended Information Sessions - Association Support</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of information packs or support material projects distributed – Association Support</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Volumes of service delivery for contracted CRCs for the current contract (two quarters of data currently available).

<sup>5</sup> Large participant number due to Local Initiatives including conferences and expositions that are event managed by CRCs

<sup>6</sup> Large participant numbers due to Local initiatives including major community events including music festivals, end of year community events and sport rallies that are event managed by CRCs
Early in the procurement process the term of contract changed to an end date of 31 March 2019 with possible extensions. This change was due to the budget changes to the program announced in May 2017.

The CRC program has delivered some impressive Business and Social Development undertakings over the five financial years since the contract program has been in place. CRCs have increased their delivery of commercial courses thus reducing the amount of travel for rural businesses and farmers, and have been able to deliver these from the CRC at a competitive cost. A high number of CRCs have focussed their social development initiatives around the areas of improving healthy lifestyles and increased awareness regarding mental health.

There is no doubt that the current contract model for the CRC program has seen evidence of a greater degree of value for money in the offerings delivered by CRCs in comparison to the previous grant model. However there is some duplication of service delivery with CRCs providing services in the areas of economic and social development that would normally be the responsibility of other funded Federal, State or Local Government agencies.

### 2.2.2 Traineeship program

CRCs have been able to apply for funding to support the employment of a trainee. At times the funding has been able to allow multiple trainees per CRC site. The traineeships vary but many focus on customer service, business skills and tourism. From 2009 to 2017 CRCs received a flat payment of $20k per traineeship. It was recognised that the cost of employing trainees increased over this time and funding for trainees is now fully funded up to $20k and a further $15k can be accessed for up to 80% of the trainee wages and course costs. Most CRCs are contributing between $5k and $15k to the cost of the employment of the trainee, with many mature age trainees costing the CRC an average of $50k to employ (including leave allocation and superannuation).

Over the last four financial years 350 regional people have had the opportunity to enrol for a traineeship with CRCs. Of those traineeships that have finalised there is an 80% completion rate with 20% cancellation rate. Cancellation reasons include moving away from the community, to take up other employment or change in personal circumstances. The completion rate has been very positive, and although it is difficult to track the long term employment benefits that have occurred due to the program, there is clear positives in providing people in the regional community work opportunities through traineeships.

### 2.2.3 Support provided by the Department to the CRC Network

The administration of the CRC network has always required a level of support and development from the State Government Department that administers the funding of the CRC program.

Throughout the program, as a Telecentre network and then as a CRC network, an allocation of funding has been used to deliver training and development of the volunteer committees and staff. Support has also been provided in assisting the network to deliver the outcomes of the funding.
In the early years of the Telecentre program, support was focused on assisting the centres with establishment of technology, basic governance and support to plan and deliver services. Telecentres were also encouraged to develop other forms of income to assist in sustainability.

**Community Resource Centres under a grants payment scheme from 2009-2014**

During the transition to CRCs, the support provided under the Telecentre program was extended to include marketing and communications strategies, developing business and strategic plans and increasing the types of services and events that CRCs could deliver under the funding. Two multi day conferences for CRC staff and volunteers were held during this time. The increase in funding also saw an increase in development of paid staff at CRCs and less reliance on volunteers, and the training provided increased to focus on staff development. Training attached to the conferences included events, such as use of tablet technology, strategic planning and further information about building the CRC brand to increase the awareness of the network and make it more attractive for government and business to use as a service provider. During the first five years of Royalties for Regions funding, CRCs received specified amounts for Governance, Professional Development and Information Technology management and planning. CRCs also continued to receive support through networking events, training sessions, access to governance and not for profit organisational management software and templates. Intensive industrial relations and financial services assistance was made available to CRCs when needed.

**Support services under the Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy 2014 to current**

Under the Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy (DCSPP), the majority of CRCs transitioned to payments under a Community Services Contract from 2014. This policy re-defined the relationship between Government and the CRC network to one of client and service provider. The DCSPP identified the operational running of the organisation as the responsibility of the service provider – the CRC. Although the Department endeavoured to adhere to this principle, it became apparent that the CRC network required a greater degree of assistance than just pure contract management. The DCSPP boundaries and recommendations regarding a client/service provider relationship may be appropriate when dealing with larger not for profits, however, the Department found it creates problems for small not for profits who need more support. The Department identified that where the CRC was struggling to deliver the services they were paid for under the contract, there were likely to be underlying issues relating to the organisational capacity.

The level of support required by CRCs increased back to the pre contract period with the need to provide mentoring and support to the CRC network in the traditional sense and also to provide development for the delivery of the more mature services and requirements that are part of a community service contract. The hands off approach initially adopted meant that the delivery of services in some locations were at risk and CRCs with complex staffing or volunteer committee issues required a greater level of triage than outlined in the DCSPP. As the Department is required to look at the health of the network as a whole, rather than each service provider as an individual contract, the increased investment in time and support was necessary and justified. The added investment of support also has longer term benefits as it was found that the resources to support and develop a new service provider, greatly outweighed a short term intensive assistance to an existing service provider to return their organisation to functionality.
Much of the other support continues to be provided through the Department by staff assisting CRCs in the delivery of their contract, planning of services and programs they deliver, mentoring and supporting volunteer committees and paid staff in the broader aspects of running a CRC, and general support through visiting CRCs and providing direction for continuous improvement.

Examples of support provided to CRCs that were directly managed and delivered by the Department in the period July 2017 to June 2018 include:

- Face to face training that was delivered in the regions on how to qualitatively report on community development outcomes as part of the contract, feedback on the reports provided and one on one mentoring to improve capacity in this contract deliverable. A reporting template developed and training delivered on how to complete the template.

- Contract management support and supervision to ensure the services that were tendered are delivered by the CRC. Each CRC has tendered a unique offering to allow for tailored service delivery to their community. This requires tailored contract management in both communication and processes to record all the different services being delivered.

- Face to face training that was delivered in the regions on understanding financial management for small not for profits. The training included governance that relates to running a CRC and what financial reports should be provided at each committee meeting.

- Intensive support to CRCs that had major delivery of service issues. Support was needed where there was a breakdown in the organisational structure, either the committee or staff; or major financial concerns. This support included providing training to new committee members or staff, assisting the CRC to use Linkwest for support, providing mentoring on actions to take. Ongoing follow up and intensive support to ensure the actions have put the CRC back on track.

- Intensive support to new service providers. This included visits to the locations due to the level of one on one support required and due to the new service provider experiencing multiple changes in staffing.

- Delivery of network support services to maintain a network website and network email destinations for all CRCs.

- Provision of a mail service to provide CRCs with brochures and documents to provide information to the community.

- Provision of a traineeship grant program including support on how to apply for and receive a trainee.

- Selection of locations to receive mini audits of service delivery and governance, this service was undertaken by qualified auditors. DPIRD then worked with the CRC to improve any areas identified by the auditor that did not meet compliance standards.

- Representation of the CRC network with other Government and large not for profit agencies.
Support to CRCs and the network is provided through allocation of a dedicated project officer to manage the contract of each CRC. Currently there are four Project Officers to provide support to the 105 locations around regional and remote Western Australia. This includes the two locations in the Indian Ocean Territories, that are funded by the Commonwealth Government. Support is delivered through the following mechanisms:

- face to face meetings
- delivery of training and planning support
- video conference support
- telephone support
- tailored templates and processes to meet contract deliverables
- analysis, review and feedback of performance and annual reports

2.2.4 Support services provided through funded engagement of Linkwest

The CRC program under the grants scheme saw the Department providing the conduit to all support services for the CRC network. From 2015, a range of support services have been delivered through the CRC network peak body, Linkwest. Notably, assistance with accessing expert industrial relations support is now actioned through Linkwest. Currently the Department funds Linkwest between $250,000 and $360,000 per annum for the delivery of information, training, video conferencing platform contract management, support processes and networked conference opportunities. The Department recognises that events such as conferences are best placed with a peak body or a similar organisation rather than being organised and managed by government.

Since 2015, Linkwest provides CRCs with a number of services to assist them in the management of CRCs as not for profit organisations:

- Two hours free assistance in industrial relations or financial management advice per CRC on an as needs basis (full Linkwest members only).
- A dedicated CRC project officer who provides access to a suite of templates for both governance and operational use and advice on how to best use these.
- Training via videoconference sessions.
- Face to face training and development, which is mainly provided as part of the funding of the Linkwest conference which is held every second year, and also each year at the time of their AGM, centrally located in Perth.
- Training on a fee for attendance basis with support from the Department and Lotterywest for travel and accommodation expenses.
- A suite of templates for CRCs to use as a map for an operations manual and the role of the CRC Manager which included job description forms and clarity around the role and responsibilities to assist the volunteer committees in managing their staff.
2.3 Summary of previous reviews

The Telecentre/CRC network has been reviewed numerous times since the start of the program in 1991. Two major reviews have been undertaken since the establishment of the CRC network in 2009. The first, in 2013, was completed by the Western Australian Regional Development Trust and the second was completed by The John Curtin Institute of Public Policy in late 2016.

Previous reviews include Planning for the Future, a report undertaken by the Department of Local Government and Regional Development in 2004, and Review of Community Resource Centres undertaken by the Department of Regional Development and Lands in 2010. The Planning for the Future report is 14 years old and a detailed review of this report has not been included in this summary. The Review of Community Resource Centres report completed in 2010 was a vehicle to determine funding levels by allocating each CRC a classification on the basis of size of staffing, hours of operation and organisational assets. This review did focus strongly on the technological capacity of each location. Due to the age of these reviews, a further summary is not provided in this report.

Each of the major reviews undertaken in 2013 and 2016 are briefly summarised below.

2.3.1 The Western Australian Regional Development Trust Review

In September 2012, the then Minister for Regional Development requested the Western Australian Regional Development Trust (WARDT) undertake an independent, evidence-based review of Western Australia’s CRC network.

A comprehensive examination of the network was undertaken by drawing on written submissions and consultations with key stakeholders and groups of CRCs.

Summary of key findings

The Trust’s review determined that:

- There was evidence that some CRCs had made a consistent and sustained difference to the communities in which they are situated.

- The cost of accessing services was prohibitive for many people within more rural and remote communities, so the CRC became a vital link between individuals and government.

- In general, there was wide but not deep delivery of selected State and Federal Government services, with 90% of CRCs offering at least one service for this level of government.

- The advice of the Economic Audit was to better utilise not-for-profits in the community to facilitate more effective and sustainable service delivery. There was, in 2012-13, no coordinated approach to utilise the CRC network across all relevant agencies for government service delivery, even though the intent of the Network was specifically to fulfil this purpose.

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• There needed to be a lead agency. It should remain RDL\(^8\), because the CRCs fell into the regional policy fields that RDL had responsibility for, and RDL also had great experience in and understanding of the Network, and useful expertise in dealing with it.

• A further policy consideration was that there were specific particular and special needs relating to government service delivery in rural and remote areas populated by Aboriginal communities.

• The clear evidence from the review was that the contribution CRCs had made to their local communities over the last two decades had, in aggregate, been considerable.

• Impediments to growth and performance mostly fell into the four pockets of revenue, premises, personnel and services.

**Recommendations and response**

The Government of the day broadly supported the WARDTs recommendations and named the then Department of Regional Development and Lands as the lead agency in implementing these recommendations.

This review resulted in a number of changes being implemented across the CRC Network. The main change recommended by the WARDT, and implemented in 2014, was to change the funding arrangements for CRCs to Community Service Contracts as per the Department of Finance’s *Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy* (excluding 12 smaller, remote CRCs funded directly by the Department of Regional Development and Lands). In addition, support was provided for the provision of services, including human resources management, industrial relations and governance, to the CRC network through Linkwest.

All of the WARDT recommendations, except for two, were implemented. The two remaining recommendations include the remote CRC model that needs further work and has been on hold while the Regional Services Reform Unit completes the work around the service delivery in Aboriginal remote communities. The other recommendation relates to the location of CRCs and is another body of work that has not been completed and was planned for completion in 2018.

A full list of recommendations, and the Government’s response to each, is at Appendix 3.

**2.3.2 The John Curtin Institute of Public Policy Review\(^9\)**

In 2015, the then Department of Regional Development commissioned the John Curtin Institute of Public Policy (JCIPP) to undertake an evaluation of the CRC Network. The primary intention of the review was to focus on how it worked as a network of community hubs and to establish if the CRCs met community need.

The Department particularly wanted the JCIPP to engage widely with stakeholders and to concentrate a large aspect of the work on community. This focus on community was

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\(^8\) The then Department of Regional Development and Lands – now the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.

to be achieved through a survey of the users of CRCs, so as to gain a perspective from
the end user of the WACRN services.

The methodology included a telephone survey of 2,400 randomly chosen households
within the network ‘footprint’; face-to-face interviews with management, staff and
volunteers of 33 CRCs; interviews with external stakeholders including local
government, government departments and other organisations; and a survey completed
by about a third of CRCs.

The report was commissioned around the time of high change in the CRC network, with
the move from a grants-based payment system to a community development
procurement model — as recommended by the WACRN review — not long
implemented. Due to the major change, many of the stakeholders who worked in CRCs
focussed on this change as their key feedback and did not provide a high degree of
commentary around other aspects of the deliverables of the CRC network and how this
related to their end service delivery.

**Summary of key findings**

The JCIPP review found that:

1. CRCs had very high levels of community awareness and use. In a survey of
2,400 randomly chosen households in regional WA, around 90% of households
were aware of CRCs and almost three quarters (74%) had accessed their CRC
at some stage in the past two years. One third accessed a CRC at least
monthly.

2. Most respondents visited a CRC for personal use, but a significant minority also
cited business use. Most services used were printing or photocopying, computer
and internet use, access to government services, social events and computer
training. However, there were a range of other usages reported including library,
newsletters, health services, banking and postal services.

3. Respondents indicated that CRCs provided excellent service with good
staff and were regarded as essential to retain in the community.

4. Feedback from interviews with community members and local businesses
reinforced the findings of the randomised survey, with strong positive views
being expressed. In addition to access to services, CRCs acted as a community
hub providing news and information, support for sporting and social clubs, social
and wellbeing benefits and places of learning, at reasonable cost and supported
by friendly and capable staff.

5. Businesses used CRCs for promotion, to attend business events, training, and
utilise office space and equipment. Despite this, many CRCs found the focus on
business development in the new contract arrangements were either
inappropriate or excessive.

6. Local governments were important partners of CRCs, often providing cheap or
free rental and utilities, and valued their role in the community.

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10 Source: The John Curtin Institute of Public Policy, Diversity in place, Unity in service: The Effectiveness and

11 Note some minor grammatical edits have been made to the original content from the JCIPP report to improve
readability.
7. Commonwealth and State Government agencies used CRCs to varying degrees to provide access to services. Access to Centrelink services through the myGov website was a particularly important role played by many CRCs.

8. There was considerable potential for State Government agencies to use CRC facilities more strategically.

9. Access to technology (specifically ICT) and printing and publishing facilities continued to be a key role for CRCs, reflecting the continued inadequacies in telecommunications and internet access in regional Western Australia.

10. The involvement of Linkwest in supporting the program was welcomed, but the full potential of the network had not yet been realised.

11. Fee-for-service had increased and generally been accepted by communities.

12. Determining the real cost of service delivery was impossible utilising the current accounting infrastructure. It was also unwarranted, given the diversity of CRCs, the inapplicability of unit costing, and the cost-benefit of conducting a comprehensive costing and pricing exercise.

13. Each CRC responded to local need as it manifested, and each locality was diverse in terms of key priorities. However, the fundamental operational arrangements of CRCs were broadly uniform and would benefit by their strategic outcomes being connected to regional strategic plans.

14. The current contract was too activity and output driven and did not adequately link these to strategic outcomes.

Recommendations and response

The report made ten recommendations around the management of the network and the work the Department was then undertaking with the network. The recommendations were wide ranging and, while some were agreed to and endorsed for implementation, many were outside the control parameters of the Department. In summary:

- As CRCs are locally owned and operated, the department did not have the power to enforce some of the recommendations, but encouraged CRCs to implement these, with some assistance from the Department.

- Other recommendations did not align with the policy of community services procurement and so were not agreed upon but, where possible, were reviewed to see if partial implementation could be undertaken.

This covering response to the report focuses on the recommendations, rather than commenting on the overall content of the report. This response also looks at the procurement of this evaluation report and the effectiveness of the process and if there are any learnings to be had following the delivery of the report.

See Appendix 4 for the full list of JCCPP Review recommendations and the Department’s response.
## 3 Options considered for future CRC funding

Decisions regarding the funding levels, the location and function of CRCs are necessary as part of the implementation of the budget reduction for the program from 13 million to 8 million per annum. Before the function of the CRCs could be considered a number of options regarding future funding and size of the CRC network was considered. With a budget drop of 39%, from $13m to $8m per annum, direct payments to CRCs would need to change unless a corresponding number of CRCs were not funded. If the network was to maintain the current, or similar number of locations, then the allocation of budget per location would need to reduce, and with that the expectation of deliverables provided by each CRC would need to correspondingly reduce.

The decision was made to approach the CRC network with a proposed funding option that would also provide some background as to what each CRC would be expected to deliver for the funding allocated and what support the CRCs could expect in the delivery of the services outlined. A number of options were considered before the preferred option was sent to CRCs to garner feedback. This table provides a snapshot of the proposed options and the main risks attached to each option. Option 1 of the table below was sent to CRCs and Stakeholders for feedback.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options considered prior to feedback from the CRC network and stakeholders (to improve the chance of the CRC program remaining sustainable and relevant in the medium to long term)</th>
<th>Risks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Option 1**  
Proposal sent to the CRC network for feedback  
All CRCs funded in the 2018/2019 financial year continue to be funded.  
Two tier model of funding CRCs. A CRC located within 30km of another CRC and/or Regional Centre and/or has a population greater than 3000 is funded $50k per annum, all other CRCs receive $70k per annum. Outreach funding available for Tom Price and Broome CRCs due to location. See attachment XX  
Budget would be:  
- Direct payment to the network: $6.75m  
- Traineeship grant scheme: $0.55m  
- CRC program support: $0.7m | Sustainability of some CRCs due to the amount of funding not meeting minimum requirements for CRCs to remain viable.  
Traineeship grant scheme funding allocation will create a strong competitive aspect to the funding per trainee. CRCs may not wish to allocate resources to applying for a grant that will only be available for 16 traineeships a year. |
| **Option 2**  
Each CRC would receive operating funds of $75k  
Remove funding for 18 CRCs. These have been identified as communities who have less than 200 people and are within 60 kms from another CRC; or any size community within 60 kms of a Regional City or Perth CBD.  
Budget would be:  
- Direct payment to the network: $6.5m  
- Traineeship grant scheme: $0.8m  
- CRC program support: $0.7m | Community backlash from the towns that have had funding removed. |
## Options considered prior to feedback from the CRC network and stakeholders (to improve the chance of the CRC program remaining sustainable and relevant in the medium to long term)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Risks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 3</strong>&lt;br&gt;Each CRC would receive operating funds of $60k</td>
<td>All CRCs funded in the 2018/2019 financial year continue to be funded. Funding allocation across all CRCs would be the same allocation. Traineeship program would allow for up to 22 trainees per annum. Budget would be: &lt;ul&gt; &lt;li&gt;Direct payment to the network: $6.5m&lt;/li&gt; &lt;li&gt;Traineeship grant scheme: $0.8m&lt;/li&gt; &lt;li&gt;CRC program support: $0.7m&lt;/li&gt; &lt;/ul&gt;</td>
<td>Sustainability of the CRC program due to the funding not meeting minimum requirements for CRCs to remain viable. Possible closure of CRCs in the medium to long term, this could occur in locations where the services are of greater need. Traineeship grants may not be accessed by CRCs due to the time required to manage the trainee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 4</strong>&lt;br&gt;Each CRC would receive operating funds of $70k</td>
<td>All CRCs funded in the 2018/2019 financial year continue to be funded. Budget would be: &lt;ul&gt; &lt;li&gt;Direct payment to the network: $7.3m&lt;/li&gt; &lt;li&gt;Traineeship grant scheme: $0.8m&lt;/li&gt; &lt;li&gt;CRC program support: $0.7m&lt;/li&gt; &lt;/ul&gt;</td>
<td>No Traineeship grant scheme would see a loss of economic investment in regional WA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 5</strong>&lt;br&gt;Each CRC would receive operating funds of $80k</td>
<td>Include option 3 and increase the reduction of funding by another 5 who are within close proximity of another CRC. This would be choosing which 5 out of the 10 to close. Budget would be: &lt;ul&gt; &lt;li&gt;Direct payment to the network: $6.5m&lt;/li&gt; &lt;li&gt;Traineeship grant scheme: $0.8m&lt;/li&gt; &lt;li&gt;CRC program support: $0.7m&lt;/li&gt; &lt;/ul&gt;</td>
<td>Community backlash from the towns that have had funding removed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Option 6</strong>&lt;br&gt;Each CRC would continue to receive the current funding and contract would remain in place until 30 June 2020</td>
<td>Reduce the network by 40 locations. This would include the recommendations in option 2 and identifying a further 17 CRCS that are within 60-75 kms of other CRC towns. Decisions would need to be made about which centres would be funded and which would not. Budget would be: &lt;ul&gt; &lt;li&gt;Direct payment to the network: $6.5m&lt;/li&gt; &lt;li&gt;Traineeship grant scheme: $0.8m&lt;/li&gt; &lt;li&gt;CRC program support: $0.7m&lt;/li&gt; &lt;/ul&gt;</td>
<td>Community backlash from the towns that have had funding removed. Towns that need the services may be included in the funding cuts. Dilution of the network to an extent that it no longer has relevance to regional WA.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Overview of proposed CRC funding options.
4 Considerations for the future function of CRCs

4.1 Proposed model service delivery functions

The proposed model sent to CRCs for feedback stipulated that the CRC network maintains the same number of locations and the budget reduction is shared amongst the 103 CRCs funded through the State Government Royalties for Regions fund. This proposal indicates on average each CRC receiving 68% of the previous funded amount. When the Tier model is factored in, this has Tier 1 receiving just under 73% and Tier 2 receiving just under 54% (not including outreach payments considered for Broome and Tom Price CRC locations).

Due to the reduction per location, regard as to what can be expected to be delivered for this budget allocation needs to be considered. Each CRC has fixed costs related to staffing, insurances and in most instances utilities. The Department identified core services that have always been delivered by CRCs on behalf of State Government that needed to continue. The areas where CRCs had more fluctuation in costs and more control over whether these costs were continued was in the areas of the delivery of initiatives for economic and social development. This was identified as the area where CRCs could reduce their input in the communities they serve. It is also noted that there are multiple service providers in the market delivering against economic and social development and this is not the sole responsibility of CRCs to deliver these services into their community. The challenge for each CRC is to clearly determine what they should be delivering, as against what others are also delivering.

In the proposal it is expected that the future functions of CRCs would focus on the delivery and facilitation of government, health and/or community information and services. This will reduce the duplication of effort in the areas of economic and social development.

Regional and remote Western Australia could benefit from improved use of online service delivery from Government service providers, through building the capacity of individuals in the use of technology. CRCs have always played an important role in assisting their community in the use of online tools and this would continue to be a major role, particularly as the use of technology is becoming so embedded into the delivery of services into regional areas.

There is also an opportunity to improve the delivery of services and to better connect Government to regional and remote Western Australia through a greater emphasis on the use of the video conferencing and online portals. To facilitate this, further development of CRC staff in the area of technology use and upskilling of community members in using technology would be a major focus. The Department would also need to take a lead in marketing this service to Government agencies and end users as a viable alternative to face to face meetings and/or consultation services. A renewed energy in marketing and improving the service delivered by CRCs in the use of video conferencing is an opportunity to provide a valuable service that will have ongoing cost benefits across Government Agencies.
4.2 Proposal

A two-tier system of funding is proposed for the CRC network.

Table 4: Summary of proposed agreement for Tier 1 CRCs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The CRC Service Delivery Agreement (or Grant Agreement) would contain the following minimum service for the DPIRD payment:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs open 25 hours per week for 50 weeks per annum (or an agreed pattern that delivers 1250 hours over the course of a calendar year).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs provide service to the community during those hours in the delivery of Government and community information, referral to service providers who service the town or the nearest available service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs provide one on one assistance to community members on how to access online Government services, set up basic requirements to access online services such as email accounts, government service accounts such as Water Corporation accounts and possibly internet banking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs (bandwidth allowing) provide video conferencing facilities and expert assistance to community members to use video conference as a conduit to undertake Government or health related business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs organise once per quarter a community information event that promotes wellness in the community (wellness could be health, safety or fiscal wellness). The event should be around Government services such as health, consumer protection, justice, transport etc. For example, a session on the latest online scams, how to make a will, safety for towing, skin cancer awareness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs organise once per annum a promotional event to engage with stakeholders such as Local Government, State Government Agencies, Not for Profit, Businesses and Members of Parliament to market their CRC and the service delivery offered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs would be expected to provide statistics quarterly on the delivery of these services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs would be expected to have minimum insurances for public liability and workers compensation, at the same level as present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs would be expected to use the National Standard Chart of Accounting (NSCOA) for financial recording.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CRCs would be offered $70,000 ex GST to deliver the above service.
The following arrangements would apply to those CRCs falling into the Tier 2 category.

Table 5: Summary of proposed agreement for Tier 2 CRCs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs opened 18 hours per week for 50 weeks per annum (or an agreed pattern that delivers 900 hours over the course of a calendar year).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs provide service to the community during those hours in the delivery of Government and community information, referral to service providers who service the town or the nearest available service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs provide one on one assistance to community members on how to access online Government services, set up basic requirements to access online services such as email accounts, government service accounts such as Water Corporation accounts and possibly internet banking.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CRCs would be expected to use the National Standard Chart of Accounting (NSCOA) for financial recording.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CRCs in the Tier 2 category would be offered $50,000 ex GST to deliver the above service. Two CRCs in the Tier 2 category, Tom Price and Broome would also have access to a further $20,000 ex GST to support outreach services.
4.3 Support of Government to CRC Network

4.3.1 Administration of funds and options for service engagement

The overarching role of the Department is to administer and disburse the funds to the CRC network. Consideration has been given around how the funds could be administered and what possible funding modality would be used to facilitate payment and service delivery outcomes. The two possible options are community service contracts through the DCSPP, or grant schemes under a financial assistance agreement as utilised prior to 2014.

Currently the majority of CRCs are funded through community service contracts. The contracts through the DCSPP procurement pathway are expected to be between 3-5 years in length. Normally the operational funding of CRCs would fit within the framework of the DCSPP procurement and CRCs would be asked to tender for the work. There are some impacts that affect the ability of the Department to start the new program under this procurement method:

- The contracts through the DCSPP procurement pathway are expected to be between 3-5 years in length.
- There is limited lead time to prepare the CRC network for the tender process.
- Due to the major changes to the program deliverables there is a need to assess the changes and ensure this is the correct service delivery model for Government to request CRCs to deliver.
- With the regular changeover of volunteer committees this can be an onerous and time consuming effort for a volunteer management committee to manage and take control of.

Due to these reasons it is recommended that the funding will initially be rolled out on a grants scheme basis, which in the past has worked successfully.

4.3.2 Commencement date for the CRC program changes

In addition to the way in which CRC services are procured there is also a need to determine when the new funding program will commence. The current contracts with CRCs end on 31 March 2019 and this provides the Government with some options for the disbursement of funds in the final quarter of the 2018/2019 financial year.

There is an option for the new funding to begin from 1 April 2019 (which is recommended) or in the next quarter from 1 July 2019. Due to the budget change from 1 July 2019 this is the latest that the change could be implemented.

With the high degree of change expected of CRCs due to the program changes there will be an initial period of intense support to the CRC network. This is expected to be in the area of service delivery regarding video conferencing, governance regarding the adoption of the national chart of accounts, support to properly plan for the delivery of services and possibly upskilling of staff to achieve both of these requirements. If the program change occurred on 1 April the reduced budget costs would provide additional resources to the Department to support CRCs through these changes. Support could be through the engagement of specialised service providers in the areas of industrial
relations and finance management, possible upgrade of video conference hardware and training to assist staff to be more comfortable in the use of video conference use.

An extension of the current contract to each CRC would see another quarter of a higher income and assist CRCs in providing more time for transition to a leaner funding model and to put in place changes to manage community expectations regarding their service delivery.

4.3.3 Support to the CRC network to achieve deliverables

DPIRD has identified that the following support is the minimum requirement moving into the new phase of the CRC program:

- Industrial relations, business planning and governance support on an identified needs basis. Due to the reduction in the CRC program budget, CRCs may require more than 2 hours free before a fee for service is put in place. This is the current arrangement through the services delivered by Linkwest on behalf of DPIRD.
- Access to at least 1 training opportunity per annum where CRCs can gain skills and network with other CRCs. To reduce cost, this could be offered as a series of workshops delivered in the regions rather than all the network converge on one location. This would allow up to 10 CRCs to network at one time. Follow up video conferences would be included. Currently (not including external facilitation costs when required) each workshop cost DPIRD on average $4000 including travel reimbursement.
- Support to new CRC managers and new volunteer committees. DPIRD has found that this is not effective through video conferencing and requires face to face meetings and training support provided at the CRC location. Where there is little to no corporate knowledge left, DPIRD will pay another CRC manager to mentor the new CRC manager in conjunction with enlisting assistance from Linkwest.
- Provision of training in video conferencing platforms that will be introduced as part of the new focus for the program. From previous experience in installing new technology into CRCs, DPIRD has found that initial training and support at the CRC location is the most effective. This is then followed up by video conference, email, FAQs and telephone assistance.
- Undertaking a minimum of 5 audits of the network per annum. CRCs will no longer be required to undertake full financial audits by a qualified auditor as part of the funding by DPIRD (CRCs may be required to by the Associations Incorporation Act [2015]).
- DPIRD project officers to provide a greater degree of assistance regarding the operations and governance of each location due to the reduced audit requirements of CRCs. This could be further supported by Regional Development Commission staff trained in the governance and operations of not for profit organisations.
- Support on how to deliver against the new program of services, how to report and acquit funding.
- DPIRD to take a lead role in identifying other service delivery opportunities to the network and assisting in the development of contracts for the CRC network, either as a whole or regionally.
- Undertake work to research which video conferencing platforms will provide CRCs with the best access to business from Government in this area and look at the most cost effective way these could be provided to CRCs.

It is identified that, with the reduced budget, CRCs will have less resources to allocate to professional development and improving organisational capacity and governance. DPIRD will need to continue to be an accessible source of support for the network to
transition to the new program deliverables and continue to provide value and relevance to their regional community.

4.4 Factors determining the proposal

The key principle underpinning this proposed funding model is that all existing CRCs will be offered funding and none will be defunded.

The following criteria has been applied to establish which CRCs will be allocated Tier 2 funding:

- The size of the population of the community serviced by the CRC - is over 3000;
- and/or location in relation to other CRC service providers - is less than 30 km between towns;
- and/or location in relation to regional centres – is less than 30 km from the regional centre.

The proposal is that all CRCs that fall outside the above Tier 2 criteria would be offered Tier 1 funding.

The following factors were taken into account in determining the above criteria:

- Where there are multiple CRCs within a close radius reduced services can be offered as customers can access more than one outlet.
- Where a CRC is in close proximity to a regional centre (or is located in a regional centre) then other service provider options are available.
- Where a CRC has a large available population there is the opportunity to access other income sources, and/or other service provider options may be available.
- The trainee program would not have enough budget to allow for every CRC to have a trainee at any given time. The trainee program will need to be reviewed to develop new grant guidelines.
- There would be a reduction in the requirement for the delivery of training and development activities by CRCs in the area of economic and social development.
- Some of the training may be able to be continued in a user pays system with the CRC including the amount the Department funds added to the user and still remain viable. These are likely to be the CRCs commercial courses.
- CRCs could possibly offer some community development services to their Local Government as a contract for service delivery.
- CRCs could also tender for community development services through the Department of Communities programs.
- CRCs could also access grants to deliver community development events such as Neighbourhood Week, Seniors Week and Thank a Volunteer day.
• CRCs could save between $3000-$5000 per annum if they choose not to conduct an independent audit.

• The Department will explore ways in which the tender for State Government services to regional areas can encourage the service providers to use CRCs as part of their service delivery model in their tender offer. With this cost included in the tender price, CRCs can charge the service provider for room hire (or video conferencing), marketing and promotion of the service.

A current list of CRC Tier allocation is provided in Appendix 1 of this report.
5 Feedback on the new funding proposal

5.1 Overview of feedback approach

The Department sought feedback on the new funding proposal from three primary sources:

1. A paper-based survey was issued to all 103 CRCs on 30 April 2018 with responses requested by 20 May 2018. In total 84 (82%) CRCs provided a written response.

2. An online survey was issued to all 68 local governments where the CRC is owned and operated by an independent not for profit association or Aboriginal corporation (i.e. not operated by the shire). The survey was issued on 29 May and closed on 5 June. In all, 29 local governments (43%) responded.

3. A mix of face-to-face and telephone and email discussions and communications were held with a variety of external stakeholders as detailed in Appendix 6.

In addition, unsolicited written feedback was received from:

1. Linkwest;

2. Volunteering WA;

3. The Shires of Carnamah and Kojonup — neither have funded CRCs within the shire boundary so were not asked for input but, nevertheless, provided a response;

4. Members of the Wandering and Williams communities who attended meetings organised by their respective CRCs to discuss the new funding proposal; and

5. A staff member employed by the Member for Roe (feedback was provided in a personal capacity but with the knowledge of the Member for Roe).

Details of feedback participation at the individual CRC level are found in Appendices 7 and 8 of this report.
5.2 Feedback responses

Where relevant, qualitative data analysis software (NVivo) was used to support the systematic analysis of feedback.

5.2.1 CRC feedback

The department asked the CRCs to answer four questions relating to the accompanying letter that detailed the funding recommendation:

1. What aspects of the recommendation concern you?
2. What aspects of the recommendation do you like?
3. Do you have any other suggestions that could be adopted within the allocated budget?
4. Do you have any other comment you would like to make?

After the survey was issued to CRCs, the Department became aware that Linkwest had also provided CRCs with a ‘template’ response for their optional use which outlined their preferred answers for the CRCs to respond with. The following graphic demonstrates the extent to which the Linkwest template was used by CRC respondents as opposed to providing their own independent response to the questions asked by the department.

![Level of template use](image)

Figure 5: Overview of submission types received from participating CRCs (n=84)

In light of the predominant use of the Linkwest provided ‘template’ response, the CRC analysis has been broken into two categories:

1. non-templatized response
2. templatized response
This approach facilitates the distinction between preferences, concerns and/or suggestions which are specific to a particular CRC, from those which are endorsed by the CRC Network, as articulated by Linkwest.

Non-templated CRC responses

As reflected in Figure 5 above, 48% of CRC survey respondents either provided an independent response or accompanied their own input with a limited amount of the Linkwest provided template in their response.

The following section summarises the non-templated responses from these CRCs. A more detailed description of the CRC feedback is provided in Appendix 7.

Table 6: Summary of independent/quasi-independent responses from CRCs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding decision</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can still deliver with less funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some CRCs appreciate the funding being made available, and believe they are able to continue to operate within this new level of funding. This response was from Tier 1 CRCs only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need more clarity regarding future commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One CRC was relatively positive about the short-term future of their centre but expressed concern about longer-term prospects. They did not express confidence in the longer-term commitment of the Government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Contract management**                       |
| Opportunity for practical reporting          |
| Changes in contract management are viewed positively, with CRCs commenting that both reduced reporting and reduced contractual obligations will free up time and allow for programming to be more proactively pitched to community needs. |
| Services via videoconference is not so straightforward |
| The focus on video-conferencing is welcomed by some but comes with some caveats |
| Training and investment in CRC people        |
| The likely increase in governance, HR and other training is seen as positive by some respondents |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding decision</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not consulted, not considered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key concerns are around the funding cuts, impact on opening hours and service delivery, and lack of consultation with and consideration for CRCs and the communities they represent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions about funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions were raised about the lack of transparency around funding allocation. Concerns were expressed about the funding term and long-term vision toward CRC funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact on local employment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pushes people to other economic centres</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trainee program reduction decreases employment opportunities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Videoconferencing is not the simple solution</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remoteness impacts on local community access</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reliance on volunteers is problematic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary of other concerns</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional suggestions and comments</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Templated CRC responses

This section provides a high-level summary of the responses that reflected the suggested response by Linkwest (their ‘template’ response) that was used either in full or predominantly by the majority of CRC respondents. As reflected in Figure 5, 66% of CRC respondents used the Linkwest provided template to form the majority of their response. The following section summarises the templated responses from these CRCs with a more detailed summary and a copy of the full templated response both at Appendix 8.

Table 7: Summary of ‘templated’ CRC responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Like</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The template response states only that:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• “[name] CRC does not support the funding cuts and does not want DPIRD to misinterpret any feedback as “a positive” to agreeing to the funding cuts. Therefore [sic] we do not see anything positive in this proposal as it is reducing services to our community”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerns</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Budget allocation lacks transparency; is divisive and does not take into account previous CRC reviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opening hours not sustainable; in conflict with opening hours required in contracts with external service contracts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of clarity re contract management – contract extension or re-tendering?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Occupational health and safety requirements mean two staff required to be on duty at all times and a trainee is not equipped to act as one of these two)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Funding changes contradict government policy - does not meet Department of Finance’s Delivering Community Services in Partnership policy; nor Royalties for Regions funding requirements in relation to economic, social and business development outcomes required to be achieved</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Changes “[imply] that auditing and good governance practices are not a priority…[which is] irresponsible and morally bankrupt…”; seeking guarantee of minimum standard of care in relation to governance and IR issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Suggestion that more volunteers be engaged in service delivery is cost shifting; will reduce professionalism and result in loss of skills and the “integrity of the network”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Reporting should be reduced to six or 12 monthly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Funding should be maintained at the current level ($13m) through to 2022 to allow a “comprehensive independent review of the CRC “Program [to be undertaken by] June 2012 for budget considerations commencing July 2023. The review to include the resources and capacity of DPIRD to provide the level of research, work and support indicated in the current proposal”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The Department should market CRCs as an opportunity to reduce expenditure to Government agencies providing economic and social development services in regional WA;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Proposal has generated significant stress within impacted communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

12 Note that one CRC in the “non-templated” response category (Augusta) reported that their only full-time employee is their trainee.
5.2.2 Local Government feedback

A survey was emailed to all shires, where CRCs are in the local government area but operate independently of the shire. Shires that are responsible for operating CRCs in their local government area were excluded from this survey as they were provided an opportunity for feedback separately (i.e. CRC feedback paper survey).

A total of 33 responses\textsuperscript{13} to the shire survey were received. Of the 33 responses, two different respondents replied on behalf of two shires (Bridgetown/Greenbushes and Nannup) – in other words 31 actually participated in the survey. In addition, two of the 31 responding shires (Kojonup and Carnamah) had not been invited by the department to participate as they do not have a state government funded CRC operating in their local government area.

The 29 ‘eligible’ shires that responded have 42 of the 103 CRCs (representing 41% of total CRCs) within their local government area.

Where the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the shire, or in one case the deputy CEO of the shire, did not complete the survey, staff members completed the survey on their behalf.

The 14 ‘other’ participants included staff members with shire positions that included management or coordinator/ officer titles relating to library services, community wellbeing and development, economic development, shire councillor, strategic projects, and/or corporate/executive services. The remaining 18 participants were CEOs of the respective shire.

\textsuperscript{13} One of the 33 responses was submitted anonymously.
Importance and value of CRCs for the LGA

When given the opportunity to provide further comment regarding the importance and value of CRCs in their community, a number of participating shires provided this information.

The three more popular functions that CRCs provide to the community included (in rank order):

1. Government services
2. Technology assistance and support
3. Information

Table 8: Breakdown of common rank (mode) and average cumulative score (mean) for each response option provided to survey item "Please rate in order of importance the overarching functions that CRCs would currently provide in your community."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service provided to community</th>
<th>Average score</th>
<th>Most common rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide government services to the community (n=32)</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide information to the community (n=32)</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide technology assistance and support to the community (n=32)</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead organisation to deliver local initiative and/or projects (n=31)</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver Community Development events (n=32)</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>5(^{14})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Hub (n=30)</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver Economic and Business Development (n=29)</td>
<td>4.93</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{14}\) This was the lowest common rank provided. Other higher ranks were equally common.
Providing services for the Shire

Only a small number of shires reported that a CRC/s provided library services (n=12), and payment services (n=6).

![Bar chart showing responses to questions regarding library services and payment facilities.]

Figure 8: Responses of shire survey participants to questions relating to library services and payment facilities.

Working for community development outcomes

When given the opportunity to respond to questions regarding CRC contribution to delivering community development outcomes, most respondents (25 out of 33) confirmed that CRC worked with the shire.

![Bar chart showing responses to questions relating to community development outcomes.]

Figure 9: Responses of shire survey participants to question relating to Community Development outcomes.

The frequency and nature of the collaboration appears to vary by CRC and by LGA. Considering some responded twice, and two shires without CRCs participated – this means that 23 out of the 29 responding shires identified that this was a function of their relationship with the CRCs in their LGA.
Among the 23 shires, almost all of them reported meeting with the CRCs staff more than 4 times a year. More details are described in the next section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of times per year the shire meets with CRC staff for community development discussions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than four times a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10: Number of times shire survey participants indicate that the shire and CRC meet

A list of additional comments are provided (verbatim) in Appendix 9. The comments highlight the diverse views of shire survey respondents relating to the value and relevance of the CRC network. They are predominately supportive of their continued role within the regions. A summary of the comments made by the shires is provided in Table 9 overleaf.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional information provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Providing services to the CRC in the local government area</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Providing services for the Shire</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shire comments on library services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shire comments on payment services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Working for community development outcomes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional suggestions provided</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Commonly suggested services included:
- Health and other government services
- Tourism and community welcoming duties
- Education and training support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training and development that DPIRD could provide to CRCs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A number of shires listed specific training and development suggestions – relating to leadership, governance, communications, technology and fundraising.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many noted that training on revenue, organisation and community development was valuable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One noted concern for budget allocation to fund any substantive CRC training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The following shires answered 'No' to this question: Wickepin, Merredin, Coorow, Northampton, and Bridgetown-Greenbushes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The following shires expressed uncertainty regarding training and development needs: Denmark, Wagin, Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Boyup Brook, Mount Marshall, Nannup and Pingelly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional supports for CRCs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial management and business planning is key to sustainability; Partnership and co-location service provision; Governance and leadership; Develop an enhanced government service network; and Endorsement of CRC services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: One raised a concern regarding the understood removal of audit requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.3 External Stakeholder feedback

The following table provides high level details of external stakeholder correspondence with the Department during 2018 relating to the CRC recommendations.

On 23 March 2018, Minister for Regional Development, Hon. Alanah MacTiernan, met with various CRCs from across the Great Southern and South West regions, including

- Bremer Bay CRC
- Frankland River CRC
- Gnowangerup CRC
- Jerramungup CRC
- Pingrup CRC
- Tambellup CRC
- Walpole CRC
- Wellstead CRC
- Yongergnow- Ongerup CRC

In addition, the following CRC site visits were completed by Department representatives including DPIRD Deputy Director General, Niegel Grazia. CRCs visited included:

- Serpentine Jarrahdale CRC
- Wandering CRC
- Wickepin CRC
- Kondinin CRC
- Narembeen CRC
- Bruce Rock CRC
- Quairading CRC
- York CRC.

In May 2018, The Hon. Robyn Clarke MLA, Member for Murray-Wellington also invited CRC representatives from Pinjarra CRC, Waroona CRC, Yarloop CRC, Harvey CRC, Brunswick CRC to her offices to discuss the funding decision.

A series of in-person, by email and/or by telephone discussions were also during the consultation period with:

- Linkwest CEO, Jane Chilcott
- Department of Communities Narelle Edmonds
5.2.4 Other feedback

This section briefly summarises unsolicited feedback received from Linkwest, Volunteering WA, the Goldfields-Esperance Regional Development Commission; the communities of Wandering and Williams and a staff member writing in her personal capacity but identifying herself as being employed by the Member for Roe. The full copies of all the following feedback is at Appendix 11.

**Linkwest**

Although consulted with directly, Linkwest also completed the paper-based survey issued by the Department. Their written feedback mostly comprised content also used in the suggested template response provided by Linkwest to its CRC members with some additional content. The templated response has been summarised elsewhere so is not summarised again here.

**Volunteering WA**

One-page letter strongly supporting the role that CRCs play in their local communities – “they are highly valued assets within our communities, enriching local life and providing a place of belonging for our local people to flourish”. Also states that for each staff member employed by a CRC there are “at least two volunteers”. Seeks a reconsideration of the decision and a re-instatement of previous funding.

**Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission**

The Commission wrote to the Deputy Director General of the Department to provide feedback on the review. It has 10 CRCs within its boundary and highlighted the current arrangements applying to several of these. The Commission’s key message is that “The proposed funding reduction to CRC’s will impact on the level of service offered and lead to potential job losses and lower utilisation of facilities that were developed with funding from the State Government.”

**Community of Wandering**

The Wandering CRC attached a response prepared by a local community representative following a CRC consultation evening reported as have been attended by 15% of the local community. The response includes written contributions made by around 25 community groups; businesses and individuals (including several children). The full transcripts are included in Appendix 10 but clearly show the community strongly values the services and support provided by their local CRC.

**Community of Williams**

The Williams CRC attached a summary of local community feedback sourced via an information session held on 3 May 2018 which was attended by 46 community members. Comments such as “it’s our google”; “helps community groups to function”;

- Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA) - Kristie Davis
- State Library of Western Australia - Margaret Allen (CEO) and Sue North; and
- Representatives of the Regional Development Commissions

Further details of the engagements listed above are provided in Appendix 6.
“keeps our community together” and “library is invaluable to me” suggests the CRC provides a well-regarded service.

**Personal representation**

Ms Sally Haslam of Popanyinning provided a two-page personal response but indicated she is employed to manage the electorate office for the Member for Roe, Mr Peter Rundle MLA. Mr Rundle had given permission for Ms Hansen to provide input into the review. She has indicated there are 16 CRCs within the electorate which covers over 100,000 square kilometres.

Ms Hansen gave several recent and quite diverse examples of where CRCs had provided information being sought either by Mr Rundle or the electorate office. Lack of public transport was highlighted as a barrier to accessing services in other towns – even if relatively nearby. Ms Hansen argued that the CRCs play a vital role particularly in communities dealing with “seasonal devastation” and suggested that rather than looking at the reduction in funding as a budget repair initiative the funding of CRCs should instead be seen as a “budget contribution”.

A number of CRCs have identified existing partnerships and relationships with a range of external organisations, including the Department of Human Services, banks and smaller businesses offering a range of services of interest to their community (e.g. medical, accounting etc.).

The Department has in the past identified work that can be delivered by CRCs, such as research for the Regional Price Index on a fee for service on top of the operational funding already supplied to CRCs. Most recently the following opportunities are being explored:

- Discussions have been undertaken on behalf of the network about the opportunity for CRCs to be venue and video conference providers to assist Regional Development Commissions to deliver local content initiatives.

- The Wheatbelt Business Network, a not for profit business association has been funded by the Department to look for future opportunities for business sustainability of CRCs in a broader sense and hold discussions with a group of CRCs to determine some of the barriers and how these may be overcome.

- Linkwest Inc. is undertaking a body of work to engage with the Australian Federal Government to identify the cost of services delivered on behalf of Federal Government by CRCs and to negotiate the contract value paid to CRCs.

- Further discussions with the WA Country Health Service to promote and expand the use of CRCs as providers of Telehealth locations where a regional hospital is not located.

- The Digital Economy team of the Department are also looking at ways in which CRCs can be an integral part of the digital economy strategy for smaller regional towns. A discussion paper from the Digital Economy team is available at Appendix 10.

However, feedback provided as part of this review also highlights there is an opportunity for CRCs to be supported in both continuing to build new relationships and, just as importantly, better capitalise on existing relationships. Expanding CRC engagement with Western Australian state government agencies appears to be a particularly relevant opportunity. The following Table outlines several options for consideration.
**Table 10: Options for further investigation into income opportunities for CRCs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>A directive via government for all Agencies to review their regional service delivery model and consider engaging and funding CRCs in providing service delivery support.</td>
<td>This will be enabled through the Department’s work with CRCs that is intended to increase training in, and uptake of, videoconferencing services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>A Senior Officers Reference Group, chaired by the Department, is created to build stronger relationships between CRCs and government agencies with the aim of increasing service delivery through CRCs (with supporting supplementary funding).</td>
<td>Similar to above, an increased capacity within the CRC network to utilise videoconferencing facilities should enable more government agencies to engage more strongly with regional communities. Travel related savings should be re-allocated to supporting CRCs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The Minister for Regional Development writes to the Commonwealth Government encouraging stronger use of CRCs to facilitate commonwealth service delivery – with commensurate levels of financial support.</td>
<td>Existing contracts between CRCs and the Commonwealth should be reviewed to determine that contractual arrangements are fair and equitable. A contract template for use by CRCs (with optional variations built in) be developed to ensure CRCs are getting value for money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>A wider range of for profit businesses are encouraged to extend their service delivery to regional centres via funded service delivery arrangements with CRCs.</td>
<td>Several CRCs referred in their feedback to supporting commercial enterprises including, the Bendigo Bank and professional services (accounting, medical services etc). Contracts could be reviewed to ensure CRCs are receiving value for money for the support provided to commercial entities. A standard contract template (with optional variations) could be developed to assist CRCs in contract negotiations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7 Recommendations

7.1 New program model

7.1.1 Proposed funding approach

The funding approach was reviewed following the consideration of feedback referred to in Chapter 6 of this document.

The funding approach is to maintain all the current locations and allocate the largest portion of the $8m directly to CRC operational funding to allow for sustainability of CRCs and reduce the risk of closure of locations. There is a clear overall preference by stakeholders and the CRC network for CRC locations not to be singled out and defunded. To achieve the funding of the network at the current size there are some substantial reductions in direct payments to CRCs, the traineeship program and CRC program support to meet the new budget.

A large portion of the feedback provided by CRCs and stakeholders was concern over the ability for CRCs to be sustainable over the medium to long term with the pressure of fixed expenses. This was expressed by CRCs in the request for the funding to remain at the existing $13 million per annum. Much of this feedback was generic and did not provide context of local situations, however there were some themes related to specific expenses not affecting all CRC locations. On examination of the feedback, there is a clear concern for CRCs who fall within the Tier 2 bracket who have made the commitment to own their own premises or who are not able to secure a peppercorn lease of a Shire owned building. The additional costs of building insurance, maintenance, commercial lease and/or mortgage costs show the ability for a CRC to be sustainable with a funding reduction by the Department of approximately 50% to be problematic unless substantial income from other sources was attainable. This concern has been taken into account for the recommended funding proposal for each location.

To address this concern, some funds have been re-directed from the original proposed allocation to the Traineeship grant scheme to allow for a subsidy grant scheme for CRCs who own their own premises or who have a commercial lease. In the recommended funding model CRCs who fall within Tier 2 can apply for subsidy grant funding up to $20k per annum. The budget of $8 million per annum does not allow for this subsidy to be extended to include Tier 1 CRCs who may have the same expenses.

There is concern regarding the Tier 2 locations and the ability to remain viable, with feedback from CRCs and stakeholders stating that this reduction in funding will be difficult for CRCs to absorb. Fixed expenses which are increasing above the CPI such as wages, insurances, power and water place CRCs in a precarious position unless they are able to find another income source in the short term to assist in covering these costs. Within the current budget allocation of $8m per annum for the program there is little option to increase the budget to reduce the risk of closure of locations.

The trainee program under the new funding model will see a substantial drop in the number of available traineeships. In the 2017-2018 financial year a total of 79 traineeships were funded through the program. Under the new budget this will reduce to 13 traineeships at maximum funding allocation for each traineeship (or 16 based on the
The previous budget of $2m accommodated for funding of 57 traineeships at the maximum funding amount.

The traineeship program budget allocation is limited to allow for a larger portion of the budget to be directed to the funding of CRC operations, with the understanding that CRCs that are not sustainable would not be in a position to employ trainees. Feedback from CRCs and stakeholders show concern regarding the change to the program where not all CRCs would be in a position to have a trainee. Currently any CRC who has the capacity and wishes to employ a trainee is able to do so, however this will be a competitive grant funding model for traineeships into the future. Further funding opportunities for traineeships through CRCs may need to be explored for this aspect of the program to continue to have the impact that it currently achieves in Regional WA.

Table 11: Recommended option for funding CRC program - abridged

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended Option</th>
<th>Risks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All CRCs funded in the 2018/2019 financial year continue to be funded. Two tier model of funding CRCs. A CRC located within 30km of another CRC and/or Regional Centre and/or has a population great than 3000 is funded $50k per annum, all other CRCs receive $70k per annum. Subsidy grant available to those CRCs in lower funding bracket to offset the cost of Commercial Lease or CRC owned premises. Outreach funding available for Tom Price and Broome CRCs due to location. Budget would be:</td>
<td>Sustainability of some CRCs due to the amount of funding not meeting minimum requirements for CRCs to remain viable. CRCs who have been allocated to Tier 2 are at a high risk of closure. Traineeship grant scheme funding allocation will create a strong competitive aspect to the funding per trainee. CRCs may not wish to allocate resources to applying for a grant that will only be available for 13 traineeships a year. There is a risk that the traineeship program will no longer be viable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Direct payment to the network: $6.75m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Traineeship grant scheme: $0.45m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· Subsidy grant scheme: $0.1m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>· CRC program support: $0.7m</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a result of the feedback provided through the consultation process, the following changes have been made to the original tier allocations:

- A subsidy for Tier 2 CRCs who own their premises or who have a commercial lease.

- 2 CRCs (Boddington CRC and Wandering CRC) had been incorrectly allocated to Tier 2 based on a less accurate distance data available to the Department at the time.

The corrected list of Tier allocations for each CRC is found in Appendix 1.
The recommendation provides the majority of the funding allocated directly to CRCs with a large drop in the budget for support of the program. Currently the support provided to the CRC program has a budget allocation of $1.8m. This reduction in budget allocation will mean that support services will need to be prioritised and the most cost effective options will be sourced. The DPIRD staff attached to this program are not funded through the CRC program budget, with the resource allocation to manage and support the CRC network throughout the program being paid through the DPIRD budget. From 2013/2014 financial year, an amount of $300,000 was allocated from the CRC program to assist DPIRD in the cost of the program management. A reduction of this amount in line with the overall program budget reduction will result in an allocation of $180,000 to DPIRD to assist in supporting the CRC program.
7.1.2 Proposed service delivery

Following the feedback from stakeholders and CRCs, the following service delivery expectation for the funding is recommended.

A two-tier system of funding is proposed for the CRC network.

Table 12: Summary of recommended service agreement for Tier 1 CRCs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The CRC Grant Agreement would contain the following minimum service</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>for the DPIRD payment:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CRCs open 25 hours per week for 50 weeks per annum (or an agreed pattern that delivers 1250 hours over the course of a calendar year).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CRCs provide service to the community during those hours in the delivery of Government and community information, referral to service providers who service the town or the nearest available service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CRCs provide one on one assistance to community members on how to access online Government services, set up basic requirements to access online services such as email accounts, government service accounts such as Water Corporation accounts and possibly internet banking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CRCs (bandwidth allowing) provide video conferencing facilities and expert assistance to community members to use video conference as a conduit to undertake Government or health related business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CRCs organise once per quarter a community information event that promotes wellness in the community (wellness could be health, safety or fiscal wellness). The event should be around Government services such as health, consumer protection, justice, transport etc. For example, a session on the latest online scams, how to make a will, safety for towing, skin cancer awareness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CRCs organise once per annum a promotional event to engage with stakeholders such as Local Government, State Government Agencies, Not for Profit, Businesses and Members of Parliament to market their CRC and the service delivery offered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CRCs would be expected to provide statistics six monthly(twice per annum) and a short report once per annum on the delivery of these services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CRCs would be expected to have minimum insurances for public liability and workers compensation, at the same level as present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- CRCs would be expected to use the National Standard Chart of Accounting (NSCOA) for financial recording.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CRCs would be offered $70,000 ex GST to deliver the above service.
The following arrangements would apply to those CRCs falling into the Tier 2 category.

**Table 13: Summary of recommended service agreement for Tier 1 CRCs.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The CRC Service Delivery Agreement (or Grant Agreement) would contain the following minimum service for the DPIRD payment:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- CRCs opened 18 hours per week for 50 weeks per annum (or an agreed pattern that delivers 900 hours over the course of a calendar year).
- CRCs provide service to the community during those hours in the delivery of Government and community information, referral to service providers who service the town or the nearest available service.
- CRCs provide one on one assistance to community members on how to access online Government services, set up basic requirements to access online services such as email accounts, government service accounts such as Water Corporation accounts and possibly internet banking.
- CRCs (bandwidth allowing) provide video conferencing facilities and expert assistance to community members to use video conference as a conduit to undertake Government or health related business.
- CRCs organise once per annum a community information event that promotes wellness in the community (wellness could be health, safety or fiscal wellness). The event should be around Government services such as health, consumer protection, justice, transport etc. For example, a session on the latest online scams, how to make a will, safety for towing, skin cancer awareness.
- CRCs organise once per annum a promotional event to engage with stakeholders such as Local Government, State Government Agencies, Not for Profit, Businesses and Members of Parliament to market their CRC and the service delivery offered.
- CRCs would be expected to provide statistics six monthly (twice per annum) and a short report once per annum on the delivery of these services.
- CRCs would be expected to have minimum insurances for public liability and workers compensation, at the same level as present.
- CRCs would be expected to use the National Standard Chart of Accounting (NSCOA) for financial recording.

CRCs in the Tier 2 category would be offered $50,000 ex GST to deliver the above service.

Tom Price and Broome locations would receive an additional $20,000 to assist with outreach services.

CRCs in Tier 2 category who own their own premises or who have a commercial lease will be able to apply for a grant subsidy to assist with these additional costs up to $20,000 per annum.
7.1.3 Recommended role of the Department

The feedback identified a preference for support to continue from the Department and to be considered an integral part of the funding of the program.

Concern was raised in the feedback regarding the removal of the requirement for CRCs to undertake their own independent audit as a funding requirement. To address this concern the number of minimum audits per annum have been increased to 10 in lieu of 5, with a budget allocation to allow for spot audits of locations where the Department may have concerns about financial management and/or governance.

As this is the area of the budget that has been most impacted by the program budget changes, it is recommended the Department identify and employ the most cost effective solutions to deliver support services.

The recommendation is for the following support of individual CRCs and the broader network to be continued or implemented as part of the new program functions:

- The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development administer the CRC program budget including the distribution of funds.
- The Department to take a lead role in identifying other service delivery opportunities to the network and assisting in the development of contracts for the CRC network, either as a whole or regionally as outlined in Chapter 6 of this report.
- Industrial relations and governance support on an identified needs basis to CRCs.
- Access to at least 1 training opportunity per annum where CRCs can gain skills and network with other CRCs. To reduce cost, this could be offered as a series of workshops delivered in the regions rather than all the network converge on one location. This would allow up to 10 CRCs to network at one time. Follow up video conferences could be offered.
- Support to new CRC managers and new volunteer committees. The Department to continue to provide face to face meetings and training support provided at the CRC location. Where there is little to no corporate knowledge left, the Department will pay another CRC manager to mentor the new CRC manager (at the Departments discretion).
- The Department will undertake work to research which video conferencing platform/s will provide CRCs with the best access to business from Government in this area and look at the most cost effective way these could be provided to CRCs.
- Provision of training in video conferencing platforms that will be introduced as part of the new focus for the program. Where possible initial training and support will be provided at the CRC location. Follow up will be supplied by video conference, email, FAQs and telephone assistance.
- The Department will undertake a minimum of 10 audits of the network per annum. CRCs will no longer be required to undertake full financial audits by a
qualified auditor as part of the funding by the Department (CRCs may be required to by the Associations Incorporation Act [2015]).

- Department project officers to provide a greater degree of assistance regarding the operations, planning and governance of each location due to the reduced audit requirements of CRCs. This could be further supported by Regional Development Commission staff trained in the governance and operations of not for profit organisations.

- The Department to provide support to CRCs on how to deliver against the new program of services, how to report on deliverables and acquit funding.

### 7.2 Transition to the new CRC program

The change to the new CRC program has some risks that can be partially mitigated by a transition plan. To assist this the following is recommended:

- The new program start date is 1 April 2019.
- The budget for the financial year 2018/2019 to remain at $13m and the surplus money from the last quarter is allocated to transitional costs including but not limited to:
  - Training for the CRC network related to the program change.
  - Hardware required for the CRC network related to the program change.
  - Improving engagement and partnerships.
  - Assistance to transition CRCs to the use of the National Standard Chart of Accounts and associated costs for bookkeeping.
- Continued work with relevant stakeholders and service providers to improve the engagement and partnership program for CRCs
- An internal review of the grant program 24 months after implementation. This is to allow a settling in period to identify if the service delivery model for CRCs is correct, and if the core funding focus will deliver the outcomes. This review is to include a transition plan to move the program to a DCSPP contract model in lieu of a grants scheme.
Appendix 1 Summary Table of all Current CRCs

A summary table of all 103 current CRCs and their option-related details (in alphabetical order). This is based on the option communicated to CRCs – with a correction made to Boddington CRC and Wandering CRC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Organisation type</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>CRC survey</th>
<th>Shire survey</th>
<th>Current contract $</th>
<th>Proposed contract $</th>
<th>% of current contract</th>
<th>Reason for Tier 2 allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Augusta</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>South West</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>$97,812</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beacon</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$92,491</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bencubbin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$91,526</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverley</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>$99,941</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bidyadanga</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indigenous organisation</td>
<td>Kimberley</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$96,000</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boddington</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Peel</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$91,699</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boyup Brook</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>South West</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$92,491</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bremer Bay</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>South West</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>$92,491</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Tier</td>
<td>Organisation type</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>CRC survey</td>
<td>Shire survey</td>
<td>Current contract $</td>
<td>Proposed contract $</td>
<td>% of current contract</td>
<td>Reason for Tier 2 allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgetown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>South West</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$97,812</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>17km from Greenbushe s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookton</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>$99,941</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20km from Pingelly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broome*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Kimberley</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$107,892</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruce Rock</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>$94,620</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunswick Junction</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>South West</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$92,298</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>25km from Bunbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coolgardie</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Shire operated</td>
<td>Goldfields-Esperance</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$100,911</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coorow</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Mid West</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$92,491</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrigin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Shire operated</td>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$92,491</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cue</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Mid West</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>$109,618</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cunderdin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$92,491</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalwallinu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$92,491</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Tier</td>
<td>Organisation type</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>CRC survey</td>
<td>Shire survey</td>
<td>Current contract $</td>
<td>Proposed contract $</td>
<td>% of current contract</td>
<td>Reason for Tier 2 allocation</td>
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<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dandaragan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$92,491</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Great Southern</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$97,812</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djarindjin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indigenous organisation</td>
<td>Kimberley</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$96,000</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dongara</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Mid West</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$97,812</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donnybrook</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>South West</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>$91,699</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dowerin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>$92,491</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>24km from Goomalling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumbleyung</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$92,491</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitzroy Valley</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Indigenous organisation</td>
<td>Kimberley</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>$96,000</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankland River</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Great Southern</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>$86,710</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gascoyne Junction</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Shire operated</td>
<td>Gascoyne</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$96,000</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gingin District</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>Wheatbelt</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>$92,491</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Tier</td>
<td>Organisation type</td>
<td>Region</td>
<td>CRC survey</td>
<td>Shire survey</td>
<td>Current contract $</td>
<td>Proposed contract $</td>
<td>% of current contract $</td>
<td>Reason for Tier 2 allocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gnowangerup</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Incorporated association</td>
<td>South West</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>$99,941</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
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<td>Reason for Tier 2 allocation</td>
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<td>% of current contract</td>
<td>Reason for Tier 2 allocation</td>
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<td>% of current contract $</td>
<td>Reason for Tier 2 allocation</td>
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<td>% of current contract $</td>
<td>Reason for Tier 2 allocation</td>
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<td>54%</td>
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<td>70%</td>
<td>20km from Brookton</td>
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<td>Name</td>
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<td>Region</td>
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<td>% of current contract</td>
<td>Reason for Tier 2 allocation</td>
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*An additional grant of $20,000 is allocated to each of these CRCs to contribute to the centre’s outreach requirements.*
Appendix 2: Payments made to CRCs since 2009/10

Based on information used in Department response to a parliamentary questions relating to CRC funding.

Table 2: Summary of payments made by the Department to CRCs during the financial years of 2009/10 – 2017/18. All amounts are ex GST.

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Table 3: Summary of building and infrastructure grant payments made by the Department to CRCs during the financial year 2009/10-2015/16. All amounts are ex GST.

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## Appendix 3 Summary of WARDT Review of CRC Network

### 2013 Review of the CRC Network by the Western Australian Regional Development Trust - Recommendations and Government Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Government Response</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Agreed and fully implemented</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Trust recommends that the Minister, subject to Recommendation 2:</td>
<td>The Government supports this recommendation. The 2013-14 year will allow CRCs to operate with a level of certainty whilst changes are developed and implemented. The changes will take effect in the 2014-15 year and a review of these will be welcome in the 2016-17 year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Does not commence any material changes to the Royalties for Regions (RforR) funded CRC program until 1 July 2014 (unless earlier changes are generally welcomed by the Network);</td>
<td><strong>Action</strong>: No further action required.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Continue the CRC program at least at currently proposed budget levels for 2013-14;</td>
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<td>- After any reforms, give certainty to the Network by assuring RfR funding over the 2013-2016 budget cycle; and</td>
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<td>- That the effect of changes to the CRC program arising from this Review be assessed at any time prior to the 2017 budget round.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Agreed but needs research before can be implemented</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The Trust recommends that the Minister and Premier, taking into account the report of the Economic Audit Committee, and taking into account evidence to the Review and the Trust’s findings, take steps to identify:</td>
<td>The Government notes this recommendation and supports exploring ways that CRCs can be utilised to deliver government information and services into regional communities. Consistent with Recommendation 6, the delivery of services to regional communities will need to be funded on a fee for service basis. This outcome may however be difficult to negotiate given the limitations of most agency budgets. The support of government decision makers to promote the benefits of reaching regional clients via the CRC Network will be needed. The Government understands the benefit of building human capacity to support the business, economic and social development of the regions. This is a complex area to implement and will need initiatives beyond the CRC Network. The CRCs may be used as part of the delivery methodology of a state-wide initiative. The CRCs can initiate and implement</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. What role CRCs should play in enabling regional development through:</td>
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<td>i. Enhancing access to, and delivering, government services; and</td>
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<td>ii. Building human capacity to support local development initiatives</td>
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<td>b. How government policy should be adjusted to support these roles</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Further, the Trust recommends that RDL continue to be the lead agency in delivering the CRC program, and in so doing investing RfR funds.</td>
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|   | The Trust recommends that the Minister, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Minister for Local Government and Communities, and the Premier, taking into account evidence to the Review and the Trust’s findings, over and above the matters identified in Recommendation 2:  
1. Identify what additional support role CRCs could and should play in enhanced government service delivery for indigenous and non-indigenous remote communities; and  
2. What government support and resources should be provided with respect to those CRC premises (including consideration of fixed, mobile, satellite and hub and spoke CRC models), staff, governance and funding. | Agreed but needs research before can be implemented | The Government notes this recommendation taking into consideration the difficulties experienced to retain fully operational centres in remote communities due to staffing and governance issues. This recommendation needs further research to explore various models that could support the delivery of government information and services into remote communities in a sustainable manner. The CRCs could be utilised more fully in coordinating agency visits to remote communities to reduce duplication, minimise costs, and ensure the best value for the community. This requires willingness to collaborate and commitment from other government agencies. This recommendation should be referred to the Aboriginal Affairs Committee established by Cabinet, and the Aboriginal Affairs Coordination Committee, for information and advice.  
**Action:** RDL will continue to identify appropriate action/s to be taken. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | The Trust recommends that the Minister, subject to the outcome of recommendation 2, and taking into account evidence to the Review and the Trust’s findings, task RDL to prepare for the Minister’s approval;  
1. Better definition of the role of the Network, on an outcomes-basis;  
2. Better definition of the role of, and relationships between, the three levels of government and CRCs and the AWACRC; | Agreed but needs research before can be implemented | The Government notes this recommendation understanding that this incorporates the key changes to be implemented by Regional Capacity. An outcomes-based definition will be advantageous for the CRCs, the AWACRCs, other agencies, and RDL in developing the funding model and performance measures to assess the effectiveness and return on government investment. The spread of CRCs needs to be |
- A revised segmentation of CRCs by capacity, type, service, and potential;
- Alignment of the funding model to better reflect the CRC role, government roles and CRC segmentation;
- Development of strategies to measure performance, effectiveness, reach, and community need;
- Support of CRC development on a strategically planned basis to maximise impact and outcomes;
- Development of strategies to identify CRCs with potential, and increase support; and also identify those CRCs that are under-performing, and either support to improve, or cease funding; and
- Proposals to increase the number of CRCs in under-serviced areas and decrease the number of CRCs in over-serviced areas.

| Page 77 |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| 6 | Subject to the outcome of Recommendation 2, the Trust recommends that the Minister require RDL to take into account evidence to the Review and the Trust's findings, to prepare a proposal for his approval for CRC funding that moves RforR to fee-for-service funding, supported by a RforR grants pool for projects, premises and equipment. For purposes of funding, RDL should be required to segment CRCs on a capacity, prospects and outcomes basis, and indicate why some CRCs might be a case for special need. RDL should indicate the criteria under which CRCs will no longer be funded. | Agreed and to be fully implemented | The Government supports this recommendation. A fee-for-service funding model will achieve clearer outcomes and provide a mechanism to ensure government priorities are addressed in regional communities. This will assist with measuring the return on investment and provide a way for government to deliver key information and services into regional communities. The key will be articulating the services required and formulating fair remuneration for these services taking into consideration the range of costs and overheads. Research will need to be undertaken to more accurately understand individual communities and to develop mechanisms to reflect special needs with appropriate responses. Specific criteria that provide evidence of when to cease funding to a CRC will be useful in providing objective substantiation of decisions and will also be useful in providing support to a centre prior to ceasing funding. **Action:** A review of individual community needs and CRCs funding to be conducted by RDL. |
| 7 | The Trust recommends that the Minister task RDL to ensure greater value for money from RforR funding of CRCs, by taking into account evidence to the Review and the Trust's findings, and supporting the Network in developing services, plans and pricing systems that will make it possible for CRCs to earn more income, and some CRCs to shift to greater self-sufficiency: | Agreed and to be fully implemented | The Government supports this recommendation in developing a funding model that is linked to service delivery ensuring the measurement of the return on investment. A guide should be developed to outline how to price services and products on a more professional basis; however the uptake of this will be at the discretion of the CRC and may be assessed against a range of criteria, not just geographic location. This recommendation will require further analysis. **Action:** RDL to conduct a review required of outcomes-based business model and the development key changes to be implemented Regional Capacity. |
- Firstly, by earning funding on a performance basis that elicits a contractual fee for service, so moving away from operating subsidies.
- Secondly, by developing services and pricing on a more professional business basis.
- Thirdly, by expanding the range of services CRCs are either paid to deliver, or charge to deliver.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Flexible dependent on their overheads. RDL should continue to promote the CRC network and explore opportunities for income generation based on the delivery of services. Action: A review of funding model to be conducted and price/services guide to be developed by RDL.</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Trust recommends that RDL ensure a tighter link between CRC funding and measurable RforR outcomes, and in addition better integrate CRCs into relevant RforR programs such as SuperTowns and Pilbara Cities. Agreed and to be fully implemented The Government supports this recommendation noting that integration with other RforR programs will be dependent on the program and the capability of the individual CRCs. The tighter link with RforR outcomes will be integrated in the funding process ensuring identifiable business, economic and social outcomes. Action: No further action required at this time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Trust recommends that, subject to the outcomes of Recommendations 2 and 3, the Minister task RDL to take into account evidence to the Review and the Trust’s findings, and to prepare a proposal for the Minister’s approval for the funding of new CRCs or the cessation of funding for some existing CRCs over the medium term, based on whether any geographic or population areas are under or over-serviced or not serviced at all, without regard to whether the population is below or above a set size. Agreed and to be partially implemented The Government partially supports this recommendation noting that large regional towns often have the range of services available in a CRC and the program endeavours to reduce duplication. The Government supports the assessment of each CRC application on its merits and not restricting access to the program to towns below a population threshold. The cessation of funding to CRCs carries some risk and this will need to be handled in a sensitive manner. A change in funding model may address this recommendation in whole or in part. Action: RDL to conduct review of CRCs to assess funding or cessation of Centres, subject to Ministerial approval.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Trust recommends that RDL, taking into account evidence to the Review and the Trust’s findings, reviews: a. The Community Resource Network funding and business models to ensure they are outcomes-based; b. The role and function of RDL staff that deal directly with CRCs and AWACRC, to ensure these roles are clear, relevant and outcomes-based; and c. The support for and funding of the AWACRC, to strengthen its role as a peak body and source of professional advice to the Network. Agreed but needs research before can be implemented The Government supports this recommendation. The fee-for-service funding model will change the way CRCs are funded and can be developed to ensure activities are outcome based and ensure a tighter link between CRC funding and RforR outcomes. It is timely to review the role of Regional Capacity staff to ensure all positions add value to the network and have clear, outcomes-based activities. Any changes to positions or job descriptions will need to be planned in line with human resource policies and procedures. The AWACRC needs specific attention and assistance in understanding their role and potential in supporting the Network. Providing only funding has not been effective in developing a strong association to date, so other support and...</td>
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<td>Training will need to be developed. This recommendation requires the willingness of the independent Association to engage in activities alongside RDL staff. <strong>Action:</strong> RDL to conduct a review of service funding model to facilitate change to outcomes-based model.</td>
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### Appendix 4 Summary of JCCPP Review of CRC Network

#### 2016 Review of the CRC Network by the John Curtin Centre for Public Policy Summary of Recommendations and Departmental Response

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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Given the widespread recognition and utilisation of CRCs and the positive feedback from community and business users, the CRN program should be continued.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>DRD should remain the lead agency for the delivery of the CRN program.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>A third party should be engaged in order to more fully realise the benefits and opportunities presented by the network functions of the CRN, such as: business development, co-governance, learning, network support and advocacy and peak representation. This party would work with DRD, the Association of WA CRCs and individual CRCs to establish a CRN strategic framework that would then drive local goals and seek to prioritise those goals according to regional and state priorities. This strategic framework may also consider CRC location and primary focus areas in the medium to longer term. Advantages of engaging such a party include:</td>
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a. They would be an independent driver of outcomes;  
b. They would develop a comprehensive knowledge of the CRN and be in a position to develop State-wide strategies with CRCs; and  
c. This would lead to better outcomes based planning practice and more effective, strategic prioritisation of objectives.
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<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>DRD Response</th>
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<td>its member base to deliver business development, learning, network support and advocacy. Although DRD sees Linkwest in the position to implement and drive points b. and c. of the recommendation, it is too early to determine if point a. will be realised. As an advocate of the WACRN, it may have a conflict of interest regarding the expectations and delivery of outcomes to Government from the WACRN. <strong>Action:</strong> A review of CRC locations to be undertaken by DRD prior to June 2020, subject to Ministerial approval.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The process for developing future procurements should commence with a clear statement of the overall identity, strategic direction and purpose of the CRN. A core part of the rationale for CRCs should continue to be community development, along with service provision for individuals, families, groups and businesses. Outcome and output measures would then be driven by the strategic purpose of the CRN program and developed with each CRC to reflect the needs and circumstances of the communities in which each CRC operates. To assist with performance and contract management, groupings of similarly-situated CRCs should be identified in terms of community demographics and service needs/gaps. These groupings should be regionally-sensitive and enable like-for-like comparisons where possible. However, they may also be problem-centric in that some CRCs—regardless of their regional location—may have similarities in terms of service priorities which may see them more logically grouped in this way rather than by geography. <strong>Partially agreed and implemented</strong> Community hubs by their very nature will be organic and will develop based on the needs and capacities of the individual communities and the organisations that services them. The current contract with CRCs and the new procurement does commence with a clear statement of identity and direction and the purpose of the CRN. The delivery of this purpose is then tailored by each individual CRC to meet the local need. DRD provides direction to CRCs where they see the direction the CRC is taking is more about personal pursuits than community need. The WACRN currently has a small contingent of CRCs who work together either due to geographic or shared community need. This needs to be driven from a local level. DRD encourage this collaborative approach by offering joint grant opportunities and stakeholder engagement and partnership training. The WACRN will need to mature further for the development of a regional procurement program to be considered. <strong>Action:</strong> No further action required at this time.</td>
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<td>5. Procurements should be driven by community need, which is most appropriately measured by mapping information about existing service provision (by governments and NFPs), population size, demographic characteristics, isolation, economic activity, employment etc., and prioritised at the CRN level. This will assist in determining where service gaps (and overlaps) exist, where the needs are greatest, and where resources ought to be directed for best outcome across the State’s priority areas. <strong>Agreed and partially implemented</strong> The current funding basis for CRCs is based essentially on this model, but with some core funding identified to make operation viable. Currently there is no move to close down any CRCs where service delivery overlaps, however, higher funding is allocated where the need is identified as greatest. <strong>Action:</strong> No further action required at this time.</td>
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<td>6. A working group of key service agencies from State and local governments, and Not-for-profit organisations, should be formed to assist DRD in undertaking this mapping process, in order to prioritise support <strong>Not agreed and not implemented</strong> Further work on the locations of future CRCs needs to be commissioned, and to identify those locations that would no longer be funded if the service delivery provider should choose</td>
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<td>Recommendation</td>
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<td>for existing and new CRCs. This will allow DRD to take into account the plans of other agencies and NFP service providers in each regional community. This will likely impact service types, service resourcing and CRC location over the medium to longer term.</td>
<td>to wind up their operation. Part of this work would involve the consultation with the identified parties. It is expected that this work will be commissioned in the 2017-18 financial year. <strong>Action</strong>: A review of the locations of CRC to be undertaken by DRD prior to June 2020, subject to Ministerial approval.</td>
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<td>7 A two-tier funding approach for the CRN should be considered, consisting of: a. Block funding to provide the basic service delivery platform infrastructure for each CRC (venue, meeting and training rooms, government information, videoconferencing facilities, etc.); and b. Additional funding for service provision as determined in negotiations between DRD and each CRC, based on community need, realistic service outcomes and CRN priorities, as informed by the needs-based analysis undertaken through Recommendations 5 and 6.</td>
<td>Not agreed and not implemented Funding is currently based on the need of the location with a number of demographic variables used to identify which category each CRC falls under for each procured service level outcome. This is a more mature model than the one proposed by JCIPP. DRD is also bound by the delivering community services in partnership policy, and the community services procurement process. This process is overseen and endorsed by the Department of Finance Community Services Procurement Review Committee (CSPRC). The CSPRC endorsed the DRD last procurement for 2014-2017 and the new procurement framework for 2017-2020. The next funding model for CRCs for any contracts out from 2020 will take into account any Government policies that are in place to ensure compliance with policies and practices. <strong>Action</strong>: No further action required at this time.</td>
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<td>8 There is a need to develop and deliver sector-specific financial management training capacity in order to refine and enhance the financial decision making capacity of the CRCs which would then allow them to more effectively manage resource allocation and efficiency development.</td>
<td>Agreed and partially implemented DRD provided pricing and costing your services training to CRCs in 2016. Take up for this training was reasonable, however, DRD is not in the position to enforce CRCs to send attendees to training. DRD also provides governance training and assistance through Linkwest to the WACRN. Further work with the WACRN is planned by DRD as a high to medium priority. <strong>Action</strong>: DRD will continue to identify and deliver training for CRCs, as considered appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Building on recommendation 8, the adoption of the National Standard Chart of Accounts (NSCOA), as mandated by the WA Department of Finance, would allow for better financial data to be developed and for better financial assessment of sustainability and efficiency.</td>
<td>Agreed but not implemented DRD would like to provide further opportunities for CRC finance officers and Treasurers to improve their financial processes. The DRD will look at providing further training in this area during the current and the next contract. DRD recognises that it does not have the control to enforce the implementation of this chart of accounts, but can only suggest it as best practice. <strong>Action</strong>: DRD will continue to identify and deliver training for CRCs, as considered appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>DRD Response</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A communications plan aligned with DRD’s strategic objectives for the CRN program should be instigated. This would assist in removing the instances observed in this study where miscommunication resulted in misinformation being reported by a number of interview participants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DRD has a clear communication plan in place with CRCs and with the peak body, Linkwest. DRD has been acknowledged by the Department of Finance (DoF) Funding and Contracting Services Unit (FaCS) regarding the high level of stakeholder engagement and support service it provides the WACRN. DRD identifies that it is dealing with a core service group with a broad capacity base, and the challenge of the service providers scattered throughout the State. Despite a clear communication process, an intranet portal with all documentation available and a 24 hour turnaround time as a KPI for replying to CRCs, it is identified that some service providers will not fully understand or will not fully engage with DRD.

DRD will continue to look at its communication plan with CRCs as a continuous improvement process and this is a key focus area for DRD.

**Action:** No further action at this time.
Appendix 5: Tier allocations as communicated to CRCs

Based on all the factors outlined in Section 4 of this report, the following allocations were originally proposed to the CRC network. Details of each CRC previous funding level are found in Appendix 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposed Tier 1 allocation ($70,000 ex GST)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CRC location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augusta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bencubbin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bidyadanga</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boyup Brook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bremer Bay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bruce Rock</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coolgardie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coorow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corrigin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cunderdin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalwallinu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dandaragan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djaridjiin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dongara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumbleyung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitzroy Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankland River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gascoyne Junction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Proposed Tier 1 allocation ($70,000 ex GST)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRC location</th>
<th>CRC location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gingin</td>
<td>Quairading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gnowangerup</td>
<td>Ravensthorpe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halls Creek</td>
<td>Shark Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopetoun</td>
<td>Southern Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyden</td>
<td>Tambellup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrunytji</td>
<td>Tjuntjuntjara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerramungup</td>
<td>Wagin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurien Bay</td>
<td>Walpole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalannie</td>
<td>Wellstead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalbarri</td>
<td>West Arthur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalumburu</td>
<td>Westonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kambalda</td>
<td>Wickepin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellerberrin</td>
<td>Williams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koorda</td>
<td>Wongan Hills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Grace</td>
<td>Wyalkatchem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lancelin</td>
<td>Wyndham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laverton</td>
<td>Yongergnow</td>
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</table>

As outlined above, 76 CRCs were originally allocated to Tier 1.

The following 27 CRCs were originally allocated to Tier 2.

## Proposed Tier 2 allocation ($50,000 ex GST)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRC location</th>
<th>CRC location</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boddington</td>
<td>Manjimup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgetown</td>
<td>Merredin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookton</td>
<td>Mount Barker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broome</td>
<td>Noonkanbah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunswick Junction</td>
<td>Pingelly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC location</td>
<td>CRC location</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Pinjarra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donnybrook</td>
<td>Serpentine - Jarrahdale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dowerin</td>
<td>Tom Price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goomalling</td>
<td>Toodyay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenbushes</td>
<td>Wandering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvey</td>
<td>Waroona</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katanning</td>
<td>Yarloop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kondinin</td>
<td>York</td>
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<td>Kulin</td>
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</table>
Appendix 6 Summary of stakeholder engagement relating to funding options

Table 4: Summary of communications with stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Meeting type</th>
<th>Summary of communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Linkwest CEO       | Various  | Face to Face and telephone | Minister’s meetings with Linkwest CEO and some Board members meet on two occasions with the Minister for Regional Development to discuss the CRC program funding reduction.  
                       |          |                       | * The first meeting was at the request of Linkwest to seek clarification from the Minister and to lobby/advocate on behalf of the CRC network for the reduced funding to be reinstated.  
                       |          |                       | * The second meeting was a follow up meeting requested by the Minister to discuss the criticism and active advocacy being undertaken by Linkwest.  
                       |          |                       | DPIRD discussions with Linkwest  
                       |          |                       | * DPIRD held several phone discussions with Linkwest’s CEO. The first couple of discussions were broad and focused around the reduced funding and the process to be undertaken to provide a report and recommendation to the Minister to bring to effect to funding reduction.  
                       |          |                       | A more detailed phone discussion was held with Linkwest’s CEO on 14 June. This discussion covered:  
                       |          |                       | * Linkwest’s position in relation to the CRC program funding reduction and its advocacy/lobbying role – The CEO advised that Linkwest had recently surveyed its members about “what they wanted” and is currently analysing the feedback and will report to the Linkwest Board shortly to clarify its position going forward. The CEO emphasised that regardless, Linkwest will continue to look at “opportunities for CRCs moving forward”.  
<pre><code>                   |          |                       | * Linkwest’s working relationship with DPIRD (now and in the future) – The CEO expressed concern that Linkwest was not being kept in the loop about the future funding reduction implementation. |
</code></pre>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Meeting type</th>
<th>Summary of communication</th>
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</table>
| Minister for Regional Development with various CRCs located in the Great Southern and South West | 23 March | Face to Face | • The recent visit to CRCs by senior DPIRD staff. The CEO complemented the action taken.  
• Discussions with the Wheatbelt Business Network (WBN) about a potential pilot project in relation to State and Commonwealth Government agencies use of CRC – The CEO initially expressed concern that the WBN were being used and Linkwest being excluded, but subsequently advised that she had recently met with the WBN CEO and was in discussion about collaborating on the proposed work.  
• The current grant between Linkwest and DPIRD to provide governance, HR/IR and videoconferencing support to CRCs – The CEO provided a brief summary of recent work undertaken consistent with the grant agreement and undertook to arrange a more detailed project catch up discussion in mid-July 2018. |

The Minister for Regional Development, the Hon. Alannah MacTiernan met with the following CRCs at the Gnowangerup CRC:  
- Bremer Bay CRC  
- Frankland River CRC  
- Gnowangerup CRC  
- Jerramungup CRC  
- Pingrup CRC  
- Tambellup CRC  
- Walpole CRC  
- Wellstead CRC  
- Yongergnow- Ongerup CRC  
Also in attendance was a senior DPIRD officer and the Minister’s Principal Policy Advisor– other details included:  
• A total of 23 participants representing staff and committee members of the CRCs.  
• The Minister met with the CRC representatives for two hours, asking about the activities of their centres and what they delivered to their communities. The Minister was particularly interested in the use of Videoconferencing to reduce...
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Meeting type</th>
<th>Summary of communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Development Commissions</strong></td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>Emails and telephone</td>
<td>unnecessary travel to specialist appointments in Perth or for use to reduce travel associated with Court proceedings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The Minister made an undertaking to provide an offer to CRCs. This was presented as a proposal to CRCs on 30 April and for them to provide feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPIRD sent an email to the CEOs of the Regional Development Commissions on 30 April with a copy of funding proposal letter sent to CRCs. In the email DPIRD offered to discuss the matter further.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow up contact was made by:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Goldfields Esperance Development Commission approached DPIRD by phone seeking further information which was provided by return email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• South West Development Commission approached DPIRD by emails seeking further information, which was provided by return email.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Great Southern Development Commission – No direct response was received regarding the email on 30 April about the funding proposal. However the Project Officer for the GEDC Katanning office attended the meeting with the Minister and CRCs in Gnowangerup on 23 March 2018. Follow up discussion regarding the meeting occurred to discuss the impact to CRCs in the area. No specific suggestions regarding the budget reduction apart from a reluctance to see the closure of any centres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Peel Development Commission contacted DPIRD by email seeking further information, which was provided by return email.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• An email was sent by DPIRD to Commission Chairs on Monday 8 May and DPIRD met with the Chairs on 21 June to discuss the funding reduction further.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Communities</strong></td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>Emails</td>
<td>Assistance in providing appropriate content to be used in the draft reply to be sent to the Minister for Community Services about the CRC program budget reduction. A summary of the proposal sent to CRCs about the future funding allocation to address the reduction in program funding was provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Follow up emails were exchanged with the Department to see if any further assistance was required with the Ministerial correspondence and whether her Department would like a briefing in relation to the matter. Advised no further advice/information was required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Meeting type</td>
<td>Summary of communication</td>
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</table>
| Western Australian Local Government Association (WALGA)                | 10 May  | Emails, telephone and face to face | • WALGA emailed the Minister for Regional Development's office on 8 May 2018 advising that the State Council had considered the budget reduction to the CRC program and that, as a result, a letter to the Minister on this matter was being prepared. WALGA asked if the Minister's office had any “insight” it wanted to provide prior to the letter being sent. The Minister's office referred WALGA to DPIRD. DPIRD subsequently phoned WALGA and arranged to meet to discuss the matter further.  
• DPIRD met with WALGA on 10 May 2018. A detailed overview of the CRC program, the funding reduction and the proposal sent to CRCs was provided by DPIRD. WALGA advised that it would likely write to the Minister expressing concern about the budget reduction, but commit to working with Local Government Authorities to support them implement changes to accommodate the reduced funding.  
• WALGA emailed DPIRD on 1 June 2018 providing a copy of the paper that had been prepared for the State Council and the letter sent to the Minister. The background information in the paper provided the detail DPIRD provided to WALGA in the earlier discussion. |
| State Library of Western                                              | 9 April | Face to face and emails           | • DPIRD met with State Library's CEO on 9 April 2018 to discuss the CRC budget changes and to receive an update on the State Libraries in the regions. The CEO saw strong synergies between the activities undertaken by CRCs and the State Libraries. In particular the assistance in finding Government information online.  
• A follow up meeting was held on 22 May at which DPIRD explained in detail the progress with the work being undertaken to provide options for the Minister to consider on the future funding of CRC and the proposal sent to CRCs to consider.  
• The meeting discussed the future of libraries in regional Western Australia and how CRCs might be included in future discussions. As a result, it was agreed that a follow up meeting be arranged to include WALGA and the Department of Local Government to further consider opportunities.  
• Subsequently, it was agreed that this group meet with the Public Libraries Strategy Working Group on 25 June. |
DPIRD Deputy Director General (DDG) visited 8 CRCs over a two day period. The CRC visits were arranged primarily for DDG to engage with CRCs and better understand their operations and to discuss the impact of the proposed reduced funding.

The CRCs were selected to maximise the number visited over the two day period and to see the variability of CRCs in terms of capability of staff and, Committees, buildings and community support.

The following is a summary of the comments made at the CRCs that were visited:

**Serpentine-Jarrahdale**
- The CRC manager and several committee members attended the meeting.
- A summary of services and activities was provided.
- If the new funding provided is $50,000, as proposed, the CRC will have to shut its door.
- One of the committee members recently spoke to the Premier and, as a result, he expected the CRC will move to Tier 1 funding
- CRC has a poor relationship with the Shire.
- CRC does not have a relationship with the Peel Development Commission.
- The CRCs “innovation” concept was raised and concern expressed by the CRC that no interest has been shown.

**Wandering**
- The CRC manager and Shire CEO attended the meeting.
- The CRC is a Shire managed CRC.
- A summary of services and activities was provided, with an emphasis on the very small size of the Wandering community, the low rate payer base and the dependence on, and support for, the CRC.
- Clarity provided by DPIRD that in the proposed funding model Wandering would in fact be Tier 1.
- CRC emphasised how the program had evolved over the years to meet community needs.
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<th>Contact</th>
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<th>Summary of communication</th>
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<td></td>
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<td>o The Shire CEO advised that the Shire is determined to “make it work” whatever the funding outcome is, but it will be very difficult.</td>
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</table>

**Wickepin**

- The CRC manager, Committee members and the Shire CEO attended the meeting.
- A summary of services and activities and a tour of the CRC premises was provided.
- The CRC emphasised that the community is only small in number, but the CRC makes a big impact.
- The Shire CEO also highlighted that the CRC generally covers more than the Wickepin Shire.
- It was requested that the future funding model be kept simple and flexible.

**Kondinin**

- The CRC manager and Chairperson attended the meeting.
- A summary of services and activities and a tour of the CRC premises was provided.
- CRC has a positive and productive relationship with the Shire.
- The CRC emphasised that the community is only small in number, but the CRC makes a big impact.
- The CRC is very concerned with the significant reduction in funding under the proposed new model and will have to reduce hours as a result, but is speaking with the Shire to see if additional support can be provided and will also look to source more other grant funds.

**Narembeen**

- The CRC manager, Shire CEO and 2 other senior Shire staff attended the meeting.
- The CRC is a Shire managed CRC.
- A summary of services and activities and a tour of the “new” temporary CRC premises was provided.
The Shire CEO emphasised that the CRC is integral to the community (helps keep the community healthy) and has strong community support.

- Discussed the collaboration underway with the Wheatbelt Business Network to help with future opportunities for CRCs.
- The Shire CEO advised that the funding reduction will hurt, but the Shire is committed to absorbing the funding cut and ensuring the community does not notice and reduction in services.

**Bruce Rock**
- The CRC manager and committee attended the meeting.
- A summary of services and activities and a tour of the CRC premises was provided.
- Strong relationships and collaborations exist between the CRC, Shire, school and Police.
- Shire considers the CRC to be the hub of the community.
- Looking at alternatives to replacing the proposed funding reduction, including farmers “putting in a crop”.

**Quairading**
- The CRC manager and Chairperson attended the meeting.
- A summary of services and activities and a tour of the CRC premises was provided.
- The CRC is viewed as the hub of the community and is well supported by the Shire and the community generally.
- The committee is active and well connected to the community.
- The CRC will be running a forward planning session shortly to look at how to manage the proposed reduced funding, but will need to examine alternative funding sources.

**York**
- The CRC manager and committee attended the meeting.
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<th>Contact</th>
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<th>Summary of communication</th>
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|         | 18 May     | Face to face | • The Member for Murray invited representatives from CRCs in her electorate to a meeting in her office to discuss the reduction in funding to the CRC program. The Member for Murray explained that the Government had to make some tough budget decisions and that whilst she recognised that this will result in difficulties with CRCs to deal with the funding reduction they will experience, that the decision had been made and would not change. She asked the CRCs to consider how they can work together collaboratively to support and complement each other.  
• DPIRD explained the progress that was underway to help the Minister decide on how the reduced program budget would apply to CRCs and discussed in detail the proposal sent to all CRCs.  
• The meeting was generally focused on opportunities and ways forward and the CRCs undertook to work together to consider how they can work together more effectively in the future. |

Robyn Clarke MLA, Member for Murray-Wellington and CRC representatives from Pinjarra CRC, Waroona CRC, Yarloop CRC, Harvey CRC, Brunswick CRC and DPIRD |
Appendix 7 Summary of non-templated CRC responses

The following is a more detailed summary of responses provided by those CRCs that provided more ‘independent’ comment (i.e. completely independent or minor use of the Linkwest provided template. Note that where direct quotes have been used any spelling errors or significant grammatical errors have been corrected to aid readability – changes have not varied content or intent.

What aspects of the recommendation do you like?
Funding decision

Can still deliver with less funding

The following quotes from CRCs demonstrates that not all view the proposed funding allocation negatively. They appreciate the funding being made available, and believe they are able to continue to operate within this new level of funding. It is worth noting that all of the CRCs listed below are Tier 1 funding recipients.

“We…believe that what we are being asked to deliver for $70,000 is realistic and achievable” and “It is good that we can still deliver an expanded service, providing we can source alternative funding and/or the community is willing to pay for the service”. (Mullewa)

“The level of funding for Level 1 Centres is sufficient to provide basic services for most communities”. (Menzies)

“We are relieved that [we] will continue to receive funding...We always do the best we can with the funding we receive. We will continue to operate in the same way”. (Bidyadanga)

“Overall I believe the reduction of funding provided for the programme has been well handled. The outcomes required will be far easier to achieve than a budget based acquittal programme.” (Menzies)

Need more clarity regarding future commitment

Another was relatively positive about the short-term future of their centre but expressed concern about longer-term prospects. They do not express confidence in the longer-term commitment of the Department:

“We are happy that our Centre will remain open and may be able operate with the funding supplied, however, we are concerned for our future and implore the government not to reduce our funding in the future. There will be a severe impact on our community if that does happen”. (Beacon)

Contract management

Opportunity for practical reporting
Changes in contract management are viewed positively, with CRCs commenting that both reduced reporting and reduced contractual obligations will free up time and allow for programming to be more proactively pitched to community needs. For example, “removing the need for a full financial audit will help reduce costs”.

On the other hand, at least one CRC requested that the Department ensure that, “unlike the current contract”, reporting requirements be established prior to contracts being signed.

**Services via videoconference is not so straightforward**

The focus on video-conferencing is welcomed by some but comes with some caveats (as reflected in more detail below – see Error! Reference source not found. section below):

> “The recognition of the core role of CRCs in building the capacity of individuals in the use of technology and online tools, including government online service delivery, is welcome”. *(Northcliffe)*

> “… we do appreciate the increased focus on videoconferencing. Our remote location means that this technology significantly improves our service delivery capacity and connectivity. We hope that the focus will be shared across government departments which have previously been highly uncooperative in working together via videoconference.” *(Ravensthorpe)*

> “Kalumburu is the most remote community in the Kimberley region if not Australia... For a tradesperson or an IT person to fly into Kalumburu to undertake repairs and maintenance requires a charter so it can carry their equipment and materials. Funding should include teleconference facilities ... [and] for IT specialist to visit the community every quarter to look over equipment and provide training to CRC Manager and interested community members.” *(Kalumburu)*

**Training and investment in CRC people**

Finally, the likely increase in governance, HR and other training is seen as positive by some respondents in the “non-templated” cohort:

> “I like DPIRD’s commitment to providing ongoing training to staff employed at the CRC’s. To date I am yet to see any training offered by the DPIRD to staff in relation to networking, governance and IR support however this would be warmly welcomed.” *(Mowanjum)*

**What aspects of the recommendation concern you?**

**Funding decision**

**Not consulted, not considered**

Not surprisingly CRCs have generally raised more concerns than likes. The following comments sum up (albeit more strongly worded than some) the key concerns around the proposed changes:
“The funding cut concerns us in general, the consultation, delivery and details are all lacking and communication has been abysmal.” (Newdegate)

“The recommendation [for funding cuts] appears to have been prepared without any consultations with the CRC Network, stakeholders or the communities ... that will be affected or [without] any understanding of individual community’s demographics, needs and circumstances.” (Merredin)

A number of respondents highlighted the impact that reduced funding would have on opening hours and therefore service delivery:

“The reduced funding will limit our opening hours and the delivery of the regular programs, workshops and services that our community, our local businesses, community groups and visiting travellers / tourists of all ages and nationalities have embraced and benefitted from.” (Coolgardie/Kambalda)

“The reduced hours proposal would not work for us, as we have other service agreements that require us to be open full-time, which do not bring in any substantial income but are an important service for us to provide to our community.” (Frankland River)

Questions about funding

Several respondents voiced questions about the reduction in funding and transparency around funding allocation. There is concern about the funding term and long-term vision toward CRC funding.

“There is a gap between the end of the current contract which ends on the 30th March 2019 and the commencement of the new “funding agreement” on 1st July 2019. What financial support with DPIRD offer the CRC Network in the interim?” (Koorda)

Impact on local employment

Some commented on the likely expectation to do “more with less”; others reflected on the impact of a reduction in employment especially where the local CRC is considered a significant employer:

“Reduced hours will also make it difficult to continue employing three young staff members who all need full-time employment. There aren't many other avenues in any small town for employment.” (Bruce Rock)

“We currently employ 2 local indigenous ladies who have worked on a permanent part time basis for the past 8 months [and their hours will need to be reduced].” (Mowanjum)

“If staff numbers are reduced, safety of lone staff needs to be addressed. It is likely funding cuts will see significant job losses in the regions and this will have a negative multiplier effect on regional communities.” (Moora)
“CRC’s are also significant employers across the regions and the loss of funding will most likely result in loss of jobs.” (Goomalling)

**Pushes people to other economic centres**

While others commented on the flow-on effect reduced hours may have on the broader community:

“*The minute you close the doors for any length of time, people travel elsewhere to access services they require and whilst there, attend to other needs such as banking, food shopping, agricultural parts etc, which has a negative impact on our local businesses it’s a flow on effect.*” (Perenjori)

“*Staff cuts would also threaten the viability of the local, Shire-run daycare as several CRC staff utilise this service.*” (Ravensthorpe)

**Trainee program reduction decreases employment opportunities**

Many expressed concerns that removing the trainee program from smaller CRCs would reduce employment opportunities, for women in particular, in regional and remote areas; others queried whether the CRCs would have an opportunity to provide input into the future of the trainee program:

“*Young women in country towns have little administrative employment opportunity and our CRC has always provided for their employment opportunities. If the KCRC takes a 50% funding cut and the trainee program/funding is not made available to all of us, it will increase community disadvantaged and eliminate potentially retaining local staff.*” (Kulin)

“*This is of major concern, as the traineeship program has been of intense value, not just to the individual CRCs, but also to the wider community. As they are highly trained, with excellent skills, they become sought after workers to local businesses.*” (Dalwallinu)

**Videoconferencing is not the simple solution**

Some CRCs highlighted that even the Department does not make good use of existing videoconferencing facilities (and by implication, therefore, over-visits). Despite their visits, CRCs indicate there is a general lack of understanding of the role CRCs play at a local level:

“*We wish that before the decision was made to cut funding by such a great amount, Government representatives actually travelled out to all of the CRCs and saw firsthand the difference we make within our communities.*” (Bruce Rock)

A number of respondents referred to the strong emphasis on the use of videoconferencing with queries or concerns around:

- The multiplicity of platforms being used across government – and a general unwillingness of government agencies to use the facility (including the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development)
- Bandwidth issues (in some locations)
- The use of video-conferencing as a technology vs. other platforms (e.g. Go To Meeting, Skype.)
- The level of staff training and ongoing support that would be required to ensure high quality service delivery
- Costs of upgrading and maintaining video-conferencing equipment and facilities, and who is responsible for covering these costs

**Remoteness impacts on local community access**

Several CRCs referred to the lack of adequate access and/or public transport to the nearest regional town, and expressed concerns that this would impact on their community:

- Remoteness for some CRCs means they experience higher costs for good and services
- Lack, or absence of, adequate public transport means that, for some communities, travel to the nearest regional CRC is difficult. Limited accessibility for people with mobility problems, and the problems associated with travel for older people has not been taken into account.

**Reliance on volunteers problematic**

A number of CRCs expressed concerns about implementing a volunteer workforce as a staffing (and cost cutting) solution, and that this option needed to be revised as:

- new volunteers are often difficult to recruit
- in country areas, it is very difficult to recruit volunteers as people often volunteer for multiple activities, organisations, sporting groups, community groups, and social services
- volunteer burnout is a common problem in small communities in regional/remote areas. People either work and volunteer, or volunteer for multiple organisations/committees.
- the reliance on a volunteer workforce will reduce the level of professionalism and skills in CRC staff due to the loss of an experienced, skilled and knowledgeable workforce

**Summary of other suggestions and comments**

In broad terms, other concerns regarding the revised funding proposal centred around the fact that:

- fixed costs (e.g. insurances and utility costs) are unlikely to vary even if opening hours changed
- equipment replacement will be difficult within the new allocation
- there will be flow-on effects to other contracts for services, e.g.:
o several commented on being funded by the Australian Government Department of Human Services (amongst others) which requires them to open for a minimum number of hours – hours which will exceed the operational hours possible under the proposed new Western Australian funding arrangements with no likelihood of increased Commonwealth funding to compensate.

o Others referred to the impact on visiting professions (chiropractor, optometrist). No respondents reflected on the potential to renegotiate those existing contracts.

- the proposed Tier system for funding based only on population and location does not adequately take into consideration each individual CRC community’s socio-economic status, access (or lack thereof) to public transport, access to services, social development, or community needs.

- while changes in contract management are generally supported, a small number of this cohort believe that reporting six monthly would be more appropriate given the proposed reduction in overall contractual requirements.

**Additional suggestions and comments**

Only a relatively small number of additional suggestions or comments were made. The following focuses on suggestions not already reflected in the above analysis. An emphasis was placed on recognising the potential for improving collaboration between CRCs but also highlighted the value for other departments and government and community services to leverage the CRC, and/or the CRC network. They note industry and government services having a role to play in enhancing the capacity and capabilities of the CRCs.

- One CRC (Beacon) referred to an expansion of its Health and Community Information services including providing workshops on safety on farms, mental health and men's health initiatives which it is keen to continue and sees as “extremely necessary in a local setting”;

- Another (Menzies) “would like to see some support for youth or children’s services, and inclusion of community sport or physical activity. Funding from Sport and Recreation is for clubs and organised sport. Where the community is too small to field a team or have a club, all sources of funding are scarce”;

- The “increased focus on CRCs sourcing their own program funding through grants, Local Government contracts, Tenders, etc [means it] would be beneficial to have DPIRD support in this area in recognition that to complete the paperwork required for applications, administration and acquittals takes an enormous amount of time on top of actually delivering services”. (Mullewa);

- “Provide advice/support on future tenders where regional service providers would need to be included in the response. Assist CRC’s in sourcing and prior notification of these tenders and then possible partnerships that can be built into these responses” (Augusta);

- The Augusta CRC also posited that the improved mining sector outlook could possibly “be used to continue funding in its current form”.
• One CRC is in “discussion with our local shire is assisting us to gain their perspective on where our centre sits in the community, how we can fill the gaps, and where they believe our focus could be redirected to increase our opportunities to diversify these income streams” (Harvey);

• “We ask that consideration is given to exploring funding from other government departments that will be receiving financial benefits (cost savings) through their proposed use of the CRC’s as hot officers / video conferencing, and staff resourcing” (Kellerberrin);

• The Koorda CRC suggested that “workshops can be planned and passed on in a circuit so that different workshops are organised by different CRC’s, but shared in a regional area so that CRC’s are not working on the same workshops etc.”;

• One CRC suggested a focus on migrant support services. “The Manjimup community … [has] growing migrant families and itinerant harvest workers, equal access should be a priority for all. Discussions with existing Migrant Resource Centres such as Albany, Katanning, Mirrabooka, could provide partnership opportunities with mutual benefit.”

• “The recent inclusion of “My Health” for all Australian residents should provide an opportunity for DPIRD to negotiate with WA Health, who are currently engaging with CRC’s to promote educational workshops… CRCs could be a key to regional success by being funded to provide access and support to [assist their communities to] access this service” (Manjimup);

• One CRC suggested that “offer[ing] more training and skills for the community to gain employment for the younger generation” would help support community workforce and skills development in regional towns” (Morawa);

• “Create specific areas of additional income options relevant to the various regions, with an opt in / opt out capability to best deliver services on behalf of all levels of government. Currently, several Government departments or related agencies request CRCs to advertise, promote, roll out initiatives on their behalf – without allocating or considering that CRCs do not have a budget or sometimes ability, to support their requests… Reflect the role of CRCs to government departments by education and requiring them to be ‘user pays’” (Dowerin);

• “Could traineeship funding be co-founded with another department? For example, many CRCs offer tourism services. Can/would funding form the Tourism budget be available to upskill locals in the tourism industry via CRCs?” (Dumbleyung);

• One CRC suggested that “each CRC must be able to negotiate the services and delivery under the proposed allocation of funding per Tier, in order to response to the grassroots needs of each community. This ensures the Government’s return on investment represents value for money and allows the community to value-add this investment.” (Greenbushes)
Appendix 8 Summary of responses based on Linkwest provided template

Note this section is followed by the full transcript of the Linkwest provided template.

What aspects of the recommendation do you like?

The template response states only that:

"[name e.g. Augusta] CRC does not support the funding cuts and does not want DPIRD to misinterpret any feedback as “a positive” to agreeing to the funding cuts. Therefore we do not see anything positive in this proposal as it is reducing services to our community”.

What aspects of the recommendation concern you?

- Two-tiered funding will be divisive, and the criteria used to develop the two tiers has not taken into account all factors and is not evidence-based;
- Lack of transparency around the allocation of the full $8m budget;
- Proposal does not meet Department of Finance’s Delivering Community Services in Partnership policy;
- Proposal does not take into account results of previous CRC reviews;
- Proposed minimum hours of operation are not sustainable and are likely to be in conflict with the minimum opening hours specified in other service contracts (with external contracts unlikely to sufficiently fund the gap)\(^1\);
- Reduction in opening hours will limit service delivery;
- Two staff required at all times for occupational health and safety reasons (and a trainee is not equipped to act as one of these two) (Note that one CRC\(^2\) in the “non-templated” response category reported that it’s only full time employee is their trainee);
- The proposal “implies that auditing and good governance practices are not a priority…[which is] irresponsible and morally bankrupt…”;
- Marketing of video conferencing capabilities will be ineffective if opening hours are reduced and there is limited past evidence this will be successful based on the Department’s own limited use of video conferencing to communicate with CRCs;

\(^{15}\) This minimum-hours stipulation is described further in the Error! Reference source not found. section under non-templated responses.
The push to engage more volunteers to support CRC services is “cost shifting”, will reduce professionalism and result in loss of skills and the “integrity of the network”; 

No information has been provided on whether services will continue to be delivered via an extension of current contracts or will require re-tendering; 

Information gaps in relation to key features including:
  o Whether tiered system will be permanent, or will current system be reinstated once budget repair has been completed?
  o Will funding be indexed?
  o When will contract term end and what will be the process that follows?
  o Will funding continue as contracted funding or revert to grant funding?
  o What funding will be available to CRCs between 1 April and 30 June 2019?

Seeking a guarantee of minimum standard of care in relation to governance and IR issues; 

Proposal assumes local shires have the capacity to address any service shortfalls; and 

The removal of social and economic initiatives exposes CRCs to being vulnerable to further funding cuts and relevance under the umbrella of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development [by implication Royalties for Regions funding]. 

Summary of other suggestions and comments

In the absence of information about the allocation of the full $8m budget, other suggestions for its use are not possible; 

Each CRC must be able to negotiate services/delivery under the new tiered funding arrangements to ensure grassroots needs are met; 

Given the reduction in funding and the “dictatorial service requirements” reporting should be reduced to six or 12 monthly rather than quarterly; 

Feedback provided should not be interpreted as endorsement but is aimed at encouraging the Minister/Department to consider the ramifications of proposed cuts and revise proposal; 

The Department should market CRCs as an opportunity to reduce expenditure to Government agencies providing economic and social development services in regional WA; 

The current funding proposal does not meet Royalties for Regions funding requirements in relation to economic, social and business development outcomes required to be achieved; 

The 40% cut to CRC funding has caused a “huge amount of stress for both staff and committees and anxiety throughout communities”; and 

Funding should be maintained at the current level ($13m) through to 2022 to allow a “comprehensive independent review of the CRC “Program [to be undertaken by] June 2012 for budget considerations commencing July 2023.
The review to include the resources and capacity of DPIRD to provide the level of research, work and support indicated in the current proposal.

Full Transcript of CRC survey’s “templated” response provided by Linkwest to CRCs

1. What aspects of the recommendation concern you?

Separating the network into two tiers serves to divide the network and fosters competitiveness between individual CRCs. It creates opposition and competition between CRCs and does not acknowledge the importance of the network as a cohesive unit.

The proposal does not provide full details of the entire CRC Program allocation of $8 million. To ensure true consultation and receive informed feedback, full transparency in regard to the whole program must be provided.

This proposal does not meet the guidelines of the Department of Finance Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy, where it aims to rebalance the nature of the relationship between the public and not-for-profit sectors, and focus on the achievement of outcomes and improving services and support for vulnerable and disadvantaged Western Australians. CRCs and peak body Linkwest has experienced a significant imbalance of power when dealing with the State Government, and previous improvement and excellent service delivery has not been taken into consideration. The process has not acknowledged the importance of partnering with the not-for-profit sector in the planning, design and delivery of human services. There has been no or very little consultation with individual CRCs and the communities they serve, and what little consultation there has been was not duplicated in all regions. It has increased the burden imposed on CRCs across the state engaged to deliver services and does not ensure services are funded and procured in a sustainable manner. CRCs will have to bear the cost of these funding cuts, which is unsustainable and will result in CRC closures.

The proposal does not appear to take into consideration the results of any previous reviews over the CRC network.

The criteria used to split CRCs into two tiers has been determined without consideration of multiple factors of community need, such as services available, public transport, or demographics, nor does it take into consideration any previous reviews conducted over the CRC Network. There is no evidence to suggest the criteria used was an informed decision.

The two tiers of funding outline a minimum number of hours required to be open, and there are many issues in this regard. It is simply unsustainable to run a CRC on this level of funding for these hours (assuming no other funding streams are available). The attached calculation sheet outlines the minimum costs to run a CRC, assuming two staff should be present at all times.
(which is a minimum standard, considering safety concerns and customer service requirements). Fixed costs, in addition to paying two staff members a reasonable wage under the SCHCADS Award will shift exorbitant costs to the CRC (and ultimately the community).

Adding to the financial difficulties of this model, many CRCs earn income to fill the current contract gap from other State and Federal agencies (such as Centrelink, Department of Transport etc.). Many of these contracts stipulate minimum opening hours, however the funding received does not cover these hours over and above hours funded under the tier system. To reduce CRC opening hours may void these contracts entirely, hence rendering CRCs unable to earn additional income from other State & Federal Government departments, and unable to provide necessary services to their communities.

A reduction in opening hours also promotes instability amongst clients in the community. Community members may not experience reliability or continuity of services due to changing operating hours, and changed service delivery. Client satisfaction may deteriorate. Having CRCs open different days and times does not show the network in a professional way and could easily have a negative effect on not only community members using the CRCs, but State Government and businesses.

A reduction in operating hours limits the CRCs opportunity to deliver business and community services out of the CRC, such as external groups, hot offices and support groups, hence adding to financial difficulty.

The proposal implies that auditing and good governance practices are not a priority. It is irresponsible and morally bankrupt for the Government to fund services across the state and not expect standards of good governance, and not require adequate reporting on finance or outcomes. The department over many years has pushed CRCs to practice good governance, and has always insisted on yearly audits or reviews. To reduce or completely remove the necessity to report financially to the department is a step in the wrong direction and will risk financial and organisational mismanagement.

The estimated audit fee savings in the proposal are not an accurate reflection of the cost to audit a CRC. Likely the saving for a CRC would be $1,000, rather than the estimated $3000-$5,000.

The proposal has stated DPIRD will market VC capabilities to other government departments, however a reduction in hours also limits the opportunity to deliver this service and there has been little evidence in the past that the department is capable or willing to market these services within the Government. Moreso, DPIRD rarely uses this service to communicate with CRCs, and spends funds within the budget travelling to CRCs repeatedly throughout the year.

The Minister has stated that more volunteers should be working in the CRC, which is a clear cost shift of yet more dollars to our community. Most regional community members are already
offering the time they have to volunteer for multiple organisations within the community, such as Ambulance and Fire Brigades, services which are provided in metro areas by the Government. CRCs already underpin their current contract delivery with volumes of volunteer hours, including volunteer management committee members.

More volunteer hours within the CRC will also result in a loss of professionalism. Skilled workers will not be able to earn a living working part time, and a reliance on volunteers will be unstable, resulting in a loss of skills and integrity of the network. Expertise that has been honed from years of training, workforce and professional development will be lost.

Under the Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policy (DCSPP) it is unclear whether current contracts will be extended or will require re-tender. The change in terms would be very significant - nothing like existing contract agreements.

There is no information available to say how long CRCs will be contracted under the new funding model.

- Will the tier system be permanent?
- Will funding levels increase with indexation?
- Will current funding be reinstated once the budget deficit has been reduced?
- What will be the process at the end of this contract term and when will that end date be?

As the proposal is dictating terms of contract - both the amount to be paid and the service level required, will it no longer be seen as a contract and in instead be offered as a grant?

It is unclear what the CRC be funded in the period between 1 April 2019 and 30 June 2019.

DPIRD has previously stated it is not the role of government to provide support regarding governance and IR, this is the role of the peak body. We are not confident that DPIRD has the expertise or capacity to deal with a range of governance and IR issues that may arise. Will the Minister and Department be able to guarantee a minimum standard of care?

If DPIRD is to manage good governance and HR, will the department also put together resources, training and templates that Linkwest is currently responsible for? Linkwest has built the capacity of the network and it is expected that this development of the sector will continue to the same standard.

The possible addition of a trainee further complicates matters. A trainee is not equipped to act as one of two experienced staff members, so will be in addition. Time will be needed to train, taking staff away from clients even more. Furthermore, CRCs open for 18 or 25 hours a week may not have the hours to employ a trainee at all.
The Minister’s perception of the local Shire being responsible for picking up some of the service delivery that will no longer be provided by CRCs assumes the Shire of [xxx] has the resources, capacity and willingness to step in and fulfill these roles.

The new funding proposal now has social and economic initiatives removed. The absence of these important regional development initiatives will make us open to further criticism for our service delivery and relevance under DPIRD and vulnerable to further funding cuts.

After so many years of building a rapport with community members and encouraging engagement and participation with the CRC, working in our own towns to deliver the priorities in their community, it is a great shame that we now risk the capacity, resources or knowledge to provide this.

2. What aspects of the recommendation do you like?

[xxx] CRC does not support the funding cuts and does not want DPIRD to misinterpret any feedback as “a positive” to agreeing to the funding cuts. Therefore we do not see anything positive in this proposal as it is reducing services to our community.

3. Do you have any other suggestions that could be adopted within the allocated budget?

As per Question 1, we again note that we have not been provided all costings for the whole program. As such, we are not able to provide further suggestions as to how to allocate funding. We request a detailed breakdown of the entire proposed $8 million funding allocation.

The CRC must be able to negotiate the services and delivery under the proposed allocation of funding per Tier, in order to respond to the grass-roots needs of each community. This ensures the Government’s return on investment represents value for money and allows the community to value-add to this investment.

The proposal states we will still be required to report quarterly, considering the reduction of funding and the dictatorial service requirements, should this not be 6 monthly or annually?

4. Do you have any other comment you would like to make?

The feedback provided above is not an endorsement of the proposal. It has been provided with the sole intention to encourage the Minister and DPIRD to revise the funding cuts to CRCs and consider the ramifications of the current proposal.

On the website for DPIRD it states “The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development is committed to building vibrant regions with strong economies through jobs growth, economic growth and capable people. In partnership with the Regional Development Portfolio the Department is responsible for the effective planning, coordination and delivery of the
State Government's regional development agenda. This includes the management of the Royalties for Regions investment program and maintaining effective relationships with key partners across government, industry and the community."

We request DPIRD research which government agencies (both State and Federal) are delivering economic and social development services to regional WA, and market CRCs as a way to reduce expenditure under portfolios, and deliver much needed services.

The funding for CRCs is based on Royalties for Regions which clearly states it is to achieve economic, social & business development outcomes. This is not reflected in the current proposal and therefore the proposal does not fulfil the requirements of Royalties for Regions.

When reporting on the feedback to this proposal, it should be clearly noted that not all information regarding the entire allocation of program funding was provided.

The announcement of the proposed 40% funding cut to the CRC program came with no warning in the September 2017 Budget and therefore as a Network, has caused a huge amount of stress for both staff and committees and anxiety throughout communities. The Network understands the need for government to review financial budgets, however to make a decision to reduce a budget by 40% without any consultation or review of the need or importance of the services and outcomes is not reasonable or practical.

We are the hub of the community, what we really do is not a statistic, it’s not measured by numbers through the door. We care about people and we help. Numbers and statistics don’t always work in regional communities, but the services do.

The [xxx] CRC requests the Minister leaves the CRC Program funding at the current level of $13 million for the next 3 years (2019-2022), with the aim of undertaking a comprehensive independent review of the CRC Program by June 2021 for budget considerations commencing July 2023. The review to include the resources and capacity of DPIRD to provide the level of research, work and support indicated in the current proposal.
Appendix 9 Summary of shire survey responses to open text items

Providing services to the CRC in the local government area

When given the opportunity to provide further comment regarding the services they provide to CRCs in their LGA area, a number of participating shires provided this information.

Some chose to detail the nature of the lease agreement between the shire and the CRC and various in-kind donations provided by the shire to the CRC.

Councillor representation on Board, Advocacy, Access to Community Committees, Assistance with projects, project partnerships & resources; event management assistance & funding for Youth & operational Programs (Harvey).

Free use of building, utilities except phone charges paid by Shire, building maintenance provided by Shire. (Broomehill-Tambellup)

The peppercorn lease is based on the amount of money the CRC spent on the upgrade to the building ($90,000 spent = 5 years no rent). (Merredin)

Premises at negotiated lease (Katanning)

Only one CRC receives subsidised maintenance of grounds and building. (Gnowangerup)

Others, list the various tasks and duties involving the shire and CRC working collaboratively, or where opportunities are made available.

CRC are eligible to seek funding from the Shire, but have not made applications to previous rounds. (Broome)

Partnership opportunities (Nannup)

Opportunity to undertake services for Shire - e.g. Cleaning arrangements, Library Services. (Dandaragan)

Providing services for the Shire

Only a small number of shires reported that a CRC/s provided library services (n=12), and payment services (n=6).

When given the opportunity to provide further comment regarding the library services or payment facilities the CRCs provide for the shire, a number of participating shires provided the following information.

Shire comments on library services

In some cases, library services are contracted out to a CRC in the local government area. Where there are a number of CRCs operating in the local government area, not all are operated by the CRC.
Brunswick Junction. (Harvey)

Contract service - $35,000 pa (Broomehill-Tambellup)

The Shire of Manjimup - Pemberton Public Library is working in partnership with the Pemberton CRC and Pemberton Visitor Centre to work towards a single co-located operating entity. Northcliffe CRC - is located in the same building as the public Library, Visitor Centre and Gallery. (Manjimup)

Only one of the two [CRCs] (East Pilbara)

One CRC has a MOU with Shire for delivery of library services (Bridgetown-Greenbushes)

One respondent noted that one of the CRCs enhance the services outside of normal library operating hours:

The Gnowangerup CRC checks books in and out when the library staff are not there and on Wednesdays when the library is closed. (Gnowangerup)

Two shires highlight the vital nature of the CRC for their respective communities:

In our smaller town, Greenbushes, we have a large number of seniors who cannot drive to Bridgetown to access the Library; this is a key service for those residents. (Bridgetown-Greenbushes)

Council uses this service as a means to contribute to the operating costs of the CRC as it is a vital part of the community providing technological access and other portal type services like Centrelink and Medicare, license training and an ATM. (Kent)

One shire noted that there is duplication of services between their shire and the CRCs operating in the local government area:

There are some minor examples of duplication of services between the Shire of Broome Library and CRCs within the local government area. These include photocopying, scanning, faxing, exam supervision, meeting space and internet access/WIFI. Given the size of the Shire, the Shire believes that the provision of these services in different locations is necessary to address community accessibility and practicality. (Broome)

Shire comments on payment services

A small number of shires detailed the payment services provided for them by a CRC in the local government area – indicating that services are on both an ad-hoc and ongoing basis.

Licencing and venue hire for Greenbushes Town Hall are provided to Greenbushes residents via the Greenbushes CRC. (Bridgetown-Greenbushes)

Room hire, gym memberships. (Quairading)

For specific events and activities, including the community bus (Nannup)
**Working for community development outcomes**

When given the opportunity to respond to questions regarding CRC contribution to delivering Community Development outcomes, most respondents (25 out of 33) confirmed that CRC worked with the shire.

The frequency and nature of the collaboration appears to vary by CRC and by LGA. Considering some responded twice, and two shires without CRCs participated – this means that 23 out of the 29 responding shires identified that this was a function of their relationship with the CRCs in their LGA.

Among the 23 shires, almost all of them reported meeting with the CRCs staff more than 4 times a year. More details are described in the next section.

**Other comments on community development outcomes**

When given the opportunity to provide further comment regarding the library services or payment facilities the CRCs provide for the shire, a number of participating shires provided the following information.

Most describe a collaborative, productive and organic relationship between the shire and the CRCs in the local government area.

*The Shire have an excellent rapport with all three CRC’s which includes, Youth Program support; Art Project partnerships; Emergency Relief support & advice; Funding application support & advice; Councillors & staff sit on committees & board; Community Development program support & advice. The Shire have worked very closely with Yarloop & Harvey CRC’s in respect to the Bushfire Recovery program which is ongoing. Building, Maintenance & grounds staff have regular contact.* (Harvey)

*The CRC’s have an important and significant outreach community development role for the Shire and offer a central community events and ideas hub for the smaller communities. Across the Shire CRC and Shire work together as stakeholders, project partners, and as project team members.* (Manjimup)

*We meet to discuss strategic issues, service delivery and opportunities to grow the CRC.* (Denmark)

*We meet regularly to discuss partnering arrangements and events.* (Gnowangerup)

*We partner with the CRC as much as possible.* (Nannup)

*Because of the nature of operating in a small community, conversations with the CRC can be ongoing and fluent.* (Irwin)

Some describe the relationship as informal and/or dependent on need:

*Weekly, sometime daily,... depending on the support required. We have a close working relationship with the CRC, even though they are completely autonomous.* (Westonia)

*At an officer level in an informal way.* (Dumbleyung)
Meetings are ad-hoc between CRC staff and Shire staff. (Bridgetown-Greenbushes)

While meetings are irregular the CEO has significant contact with regard to how the CRC and Council can improve services, invest in tourism and progress services and outcomes for the local community. (Kent)

As required. A shire staff member sits on the CRC committee. (Cunderdin)

Some describe the relationship and/or the CRCs as ineffective:

Kojonup CRC in name only which is misleading. Organisation has not met accreditation for 3 - 4 years, governance questionable and basically undertake photocopying and printing functions. Facility being propped up by local donations and Koji News. Council would prefer organisation to cease as operations can be absorbed into Council functions. (Kojonup)

Ad-lib and not highly productive as the CRC’s staff capability is limited. (East Pilbara)

The Shire has had minimal interaction with the Broome CRC. There has been some interaction with the Bidyadanga CRC in the past. The Shire has not had any engagement with the Djarindjin CRC. (Broome)

One shire that does not have a CRC in their LGA noted the following:

The CDOs from the Shires across the district meet with the North Midlands Project directors and plan service delivery. (Carnamah)

Additional suggestions provided by the shires

The following questions were also asked at the end of the survey:

1. Are there any services you would like to see the CRC deliver on behalf of the Shire that are not currently being done?

2. Is there any training and development that DPIRD could provide to CRCs that you think would be of value?
   a. Current and most recent training includes; Pricing and Costing CRC services, training in understanding not for profit financials, Community Development, How to tender for Government services, and qualitative reporting on community development outcomes.

3. Is there any additional support that you think CRCs would benefit from?
   a. Currently DPIRD provides access to individual CRC Governance support, operations processes and Industrial relations support on an as needs basis.

Are there any services you would like to see the CRC deliver on behalf of the Shire that are not currently being done?

A number of shires confirmed there were not any services the shire would like to see the CRC deliver on their behalf (other than those already being delivered): Manjimup, Merredin, Boyup Brook, Broome, Wickepin, Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Dandaragan, Wagin, Coorow, Dawallinu, Northampton, and Mingenew.
Some shires were quite emphatic:

**NO the CRC is at full capacity delivering current services.** *(Pingelly)*

**No...staff capability not sufficient to even consider an expansion of services** *(East Pilbara)*

**No. The previous question and most of the comments in this survey relate to Greenbushes which has no other service delivery provider for any government services in the town.** *(Bridgetown-Greenbushes)*

Others noted that they did have any thoughts on any specific needs at the time of the survey:

**Not at present but Yarloop CRC will be the anchor tenant in the new Community Centre (once built) & it is proposed that they will manage facility hire on behalf of the Shire for that building.** *(Harvey)*

**No. The CRC has recently taken on the production of a Shire-wide newsletter which incorporates a previous town-based newsletter.** *(Broomehill-Tambellup)*

Other shires readily provided suggestions, and some were even in current discussion with their respondents.

**Health and other government services were common**

*Yes, Health Care* *(Cunderdin)*

*We would be happy for the CRCs to take over the provision of licensing services. They could also deliver other services such as electoral.* *(Mount Marshall)*

*No, but other government funded initiatives are suggested. CRC will need to find $30-40k just to keep the existing service delivery & hours.* *(Westonia)*

*Transport, Medicare, Centrelink, housing and other govt. agencies services* *(Carnamah)*

**Tourism and community welcoming**

*Tourism* *(Gnowangerup)*

*We will be investigating tourism/visitor servicing whilst establishing the new Destination Marketing Organisation.* *(Denmark)*

*Economic and Business Development Services; Tourism and Area Promotion; Business Innovation; Migrant Services and support.* *(Katanning)*

**Education and training support**

*Community capacity building, business and club support* *(Quairading)*

*A volunteer register* *(Irwin)*

*More training on social media, technology for seniors, after school tutoring for young people* *(Nannup)*
CRO is in regular contact with the CRC regarding what it may be able to offer and at the moment we are investigating an increased role in Community Development that may work much closer with Council and perhaps some partial extra funding to do so. (Kent)

One shire highlight concern for a previously funded CRC that continues to operate in their LGA:

I would argue that functions listed in Q 7 not presently being met by organisation in Kojonup. Council prepared to operate CRC as state requires if re-accredited (Kojonup)

Is there any training and development that DPIRD could provide to CRCs that you think would be of value?

Again, a number of shires listed specific training and development suggestions – relating to leadership, governance, communications, technology and fundraising.

Leadership & management skill development. Ongoing training in communication & technology. (Harvey)

All training mentioned above would be of value, need to make available to new CRC employees where staffing has changed. Training in business planning and development would be beneficial. (Broomehill-Tambellup)

Incorporation and constitutional governance. Grant submission skills. (Manjimup)

Regional economic development (Carnamah)

Economic Development. Project Management. Events Management. Strategic Planning. (Katanning)

Qualitative reporting on community development outcomes. (Irwin)

Board level training for overseeing the CRC’s strategy and direction. Understanding the boards role for overseeing the Coordinator. Understanding recurrent funding impacts. (Dandaragan)

There needs to be a clearer understanding by CRC staff of what they are expected to do in their day-to-day role and what skills sets they need to perform those tasks to a reasonable standard. DPIRD staff with appropriate skills should have close and regular contact and offer mentoring services to CRC staff where it is apparent that the skills sets are lacking. (East Pilbara)

Many noted that training on revenue, organisation and community development was valuable:

Advice/training on accessing and delivering other income streams (Dawallinu)

Training to assist CRCs with their ongoing financial sustainability – e.g. financial management for NFPs, how to tender for government services. (Broome)

Options for managing on reduced funds - ideas (Gnowangerup)

Maintaining of traineeships (Quairading)
Definitely. Such as delivering Tender Services and Community Development within Shires. It’s a huge market. (Cunderdin)

Pricing and costing CRC Services. Community Development (Mingenew)

Community Development training would be well placed from our perspective. (Kent)

One noted concern for budget allocation to fund any substantive CRC training:

We do not see any budget allocation from the Dept (DPIRD) to fund any substantive training. CRC’s are going to be required to find additional funds to survive so training in finding new funding sources is key. (Westonia)

The following shires answered ‘No’ to this question: Wickepin, Merredin, Coorow, Northampton, and Bridgetown-Greenbushes.

The following shires expressed uncertainty regarding training and development needs: Denmark, Wagin, Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Boyup Brook, Mount Marshall, Nannup and Pingelly.

Without discussion with the CRC it is difficult to answer this question. (Nannup)

Our CRC would be best placed to answer this as they know the level of skill in their staff and volunteers (Pingelly)

I am not in a position to answer this. It would depend on what outcomes the state government wants CRC’s to deliver. (Bridgetown-Greenbushes)

Again, the Shire of Kojonup re-highlighted concerns about the formerly-funded CRC:

Present organisation - members too old and not interested if not done their way. (Kojonup)

Is there any additional support that you think CRCs would benefit from?

Financial management and business planning is key to sustainability

External financial management audits and financial planning support. (Dandaragan)

Only financial (Mount Marshall)

Training on business models to encourage sustainability. Ongoing training in grants & sponsorship. The inability for CRCs to obtain DGR status makes it difficult for them to obtain funding from a range of sources so some sort of exemption in this area would be helpful. (Harvey)

Support for business development and planning (Broomehill-Tambellup)

Partnership and co-location service provision

Capital funding support for modernising and co-location optimisation. (Manjimup)
There are opportunities for partnerships with government agencies or private/corporate businesses that the CRC Network could peruse to ensure sustainability. Having DPIRD work in partnership with the Network and the Shires would be beneficial. (Merredin)

Governance and leadership

The governance aspects and understanding roles and responsibilities would benefit all NFPs. (Denmark)

Governance support needs to be bolstered and where CRCs are struggling it needs to be mandated rather than voluntary. (East Pilbara)

More support on the Governance side of things (Wickepin)

Develop an enhanced government service network

Encouraging government departments to use the CRCs as their regional base for service delivery. (Gnowangerup)

See answer 9. Training and support needs to be in the regions, not just regional centres and at the more isolated centres. (Westonia)

Greater use of video conferencing for Government agencies. Maintain current levels of funding. (Bridgetown-Greenbushes)

Endorsement of CRC services

Council at times has provided similar support and would always continue to do so. The services that the CRC provides are important enough for us, and I would hope the Department, to offer any support possible given the remote nature of our location. (Kent)

Please advocate on behalf of CRCs. The current offer will result in CRCs being less able to deliver very necessary services and we fear that it will result in many CRCs closing, in the near future or as a result of being able to offer less and thus losing relevance. Rural communities rely on CRCs for far more than IT support and government services. We also fear that the proposed cut is the first of many and is a deliberate strategy to force CRCs into a position where they cannot remain open and viable. (Dalwallinu)

Overview of other comments

One raised a concern regarding the understood removal of audit requirements:

Concerned about audits no longer being a requirement. Will not be able to afford the current $3,000 charge for an audit once cuts are made. Could you contract an accounting firm to audit all CRCs at a reduced rate? Is there an alternative in between option? (West Arthur)

The following shires selected to answer ‘No’ to this question: Northampton, Cunderdin, Mingenew, Coorow, Irwin, Quairading, and Bridgetown-Greenbushes.

A few shires expressed uncertainty, particularly in the absence of a conversation with the CRC: Wagin, Boyup Brook, Nannup.
One notes awareness of and satisfaction with DPIRD and Linkwest provided training:

No it is my understanding they are happy with the level provided by Linkwest and DPIRD (Pingelly)

Again, Kojonup shire emphasised interest in supporting a funded CRC:

Council would welcome opportunity once existing organisation folds (Kojonup)

The Shire of Carnamah also made this comment:

Should remain under management of Shire CEO or enabling project such as North Midlands Project direction (Carnamah)

Would you like to add any further comment to assist us in identifying the functions of CRCs and the support services they have available?

All CRC’s in the Shire of Harvey provide valuable & much needed services particularly with respect to the lack of public transport available for people to allow access to regional centres & neighbouring towns.

There are no buses; taxis are expensive, few in number and based in Harvey; the train only runs twice a day.

CRCs provide a centralised location for service providers such as government agencies, NGOs & local community groups to provide support, emergency & welfare relief & counselling.

They have been an important element in the Recovery program since the 2016 Waroona, Yarloop and Harvey bushfire disaster. They are leaders in technology support & initiate community development programs & events that reach out to the most vulnerable in our community.

Many people particularly those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, the elderly, indigenous communities & people with disabilities, some of whom do not drive or have vehicles, rely on these centres for varying support e.g. Centrelink, Homeswest & other online applications.

They provide employment, leadership opportunities, advocacy & develop programs specific to the needs of individual communities.

They are also a resource for community volunteers & volunteer groups. They have good local knowledge which is an asset for the Shire, government agencies & service providers particularly in times of crisis or emergencies.

In this time of increased pressure for people to be literate in the use of mobile phones, computers & online applications & services, these centres are needed more than ever. (Harvey)

The Shire of Manjimup is over 7000sqkm in size with 4 towns and 6 smaller communities. The CRCs play a core function for communities - a ‘go to’ point for advice and information and coordination.

Reducing core funding will likely see the quality and value of the CRC to the community diminish. Realistically revenue making in small communities whilst do-able is limited by the rural and remote location of many services. Co-locating
visitor servicing, CRCs and public libraries is an excellent way to secure the efficiency and long-term sustainability of all three services for smaller communities (especially in an era of tighter economic times) - to achieve this though funding is likely required to co-locate the entities in a suitable venue. This would be a strong option for the government to invest in capital with the longer-term aim of reducing operation costs.

CRCs have all contributed to youth development across the shire via the many traineeships that have been offered. If they can no longer recruit trainees this will be a significant loss to the rural community. (Manjimup)

The telecenter here provides more meaningful services than a traditional CRC. I believe but still need to include the usual CRC services. (Carnamah)

To quantify some questions - Q5, Q6 and Q7

Q5 - The Shire delivers as much as it can within budget and resources available and the CRC endeavours to fill any gaps through sourcing external funding and/or partnering with other organisations.

Together we have determined our roles so that events do not clash and projects/initiatives are not duplicated. The CRC being responsible for two community events - Australia Day Breakfast and Seniors Luncheon in Seniors Week and the CRC being the lead organisation for encouraging, supporting and training and recognition of volunteers.

Q6 - Community Development: The Shire and the CRC communicate on a regular basis in regard to community events, projects and initiatives and offer support to each other.

Q7: The CRC is the only organisation that provides technology assistance and support to members of the public who have difficulties with IT devices and providing free computer/phone training to seniors. The CRC has a vast array of government and community information, referral systems in place and operate the Centrelink Agency 5 days a week between 9.30am to 1pm which is a vital service for Merredin and surrounding towns.

Economic and Business Development - the CRC coordinates the largest event in the Central Wheatbelt (Merredin Show) which delivers economic development opportunities for the town and region. The CRC supports and partners with the Wheatbelt Business Network to deliver business development events in Merredin. Provide Information to the Community - with Fairfax closing the Wheatbelt Mercury Newspaper in 2016, the CRC took on the role of delivering a fortnightly regional glossy newspaper (12 communities) which is very well supported and has been a great way to inform the community. (Merredin)

The services delivered are essential. They do not replicate what local government delivers. (Denmark)

CRCs are no longer relevant. They may have been 20 years ago but now are an impediment to commercial growth by excluding private enterprise investing in that field. (Nannup)

Local Pharmacy willing to take on Medicare portal and ATO/Centrelink portals can be accommodated in council admin/library. Community Hub can be
established in council admin/library building as well as at the Kodja Place. We have options other than what existing organisation presents to public. (Kojonup)

I could never understand why they were set up as a separate organisation when the State already had Local Governments throughout the state which already had much of the machinery need to deliver the services. In the Metro Area LGs met many of the community needs, that telecentres appeared to have been set up to meet, through their libraries.

Many rural LGs could have done the same. Now with the State reviewing its telecentre/CRC initiative these groups are looking to LG to keep them going, or at least ours is, yet there will be no funding assistance to LG to do so. The State has raised community expectations, that is the community based management committees, and the customers, of a subsidised level of service that LG may not be able to afford to provide, yet community expectation will be that the LG would do this and its rates, fees and charges would not increase accordingly.

The fact that the State is surveying LG at this time indicates, to me at least, that there is an expectation from the State that LG would increase support for CRCs to compensate for diminished state funding. (Boyup Brook)

No (East Pilbara)

The Shire of Broome values the role of CRCs in regional areas. In the instance of the Broome townsite, the Shire would be open to discussions with DPIRD regarding opportunities to reduce duplication in service delivery between the Shire’s Library and the Broome CRC. (Broome)

I think in towns like Greenbushes where there are no other service providers located in the town priority should be provided in terms of funding resources and training to staff (Bridgetown-Greenbushes)

The shire has an 80% volunteer rate and our volunteers are worn out. There is no capacity to increase the number of volunteers at present. (Gnowangerup)

All identified functions in Q 7 are ranked very highly by the Shire (Quairading)

Both of our CRCs work closely with their communities to deliver services that the community desires (Bridgetown-Greenbushes)

Our CRC coordinates medical services for our community. They act as the receptionist for visiting professionals and are often the conduit between visiting medical professionals and the community - ensuring needs are met etc. (West Arthur)

The function of a CRC should take into account community need at a grass roots level and not be determined by a location on a map. Our community demographics has significant unemployment and low income levels which is compounded by a high aging in place population which sees our CRC having to deliver a lot of one on one support to community members. Function of a CRC should be driven by community need that has been identified through genuine consultation. (Pingelly)
The Nannup CRC is a critical service to our community and Council has a good relationship with the CRC, partnering at every opportunity to deliver services and programs. Council does not support funding cuts to CRCs. (Nannup)

They play a significant role in the development of trainees and providing disadvantaged segments of the community with information and support. (Dandaragan)

The new proposed requirements from DPIRD state that audits are not required, but suggested, yet no funding is allocated for this. Any other Govt grant requires a full audit process. This seems irresponsible on the Govts behalf and opens up the door for fraud and other issues. DPIRD needs to mandate audits and fund them. (Westonia)
Community Resource Centres in Western Australia are valuable community assets providing opportunities for education, access to computers and the Internet, government services, library facilities, health and family resources, amongst others. Yet, to thrive in regional Australia in the 21st Century now requires new skills and access to new levels of technology and connectivity.

Emerging communication technologies now present unique opportunities to leverage existing assets of CRCs that can multiply their value for their communities in ways that would have been all but impossible only a few years ago.

Such applications include: (but are not limited to)

1. Drop Points for gigabit Internet capacity, earmarking each CRC location as a hub where the highest speed, highest capacity Internet connectivity in any region is available to all.

2. Co-working environments in CRCs which are rented to regional entrepreneurs, providing access to the world-class broadband in the facilities and generating rental income for the CRC.

3. In turn, access to this capacity permits regional resident to access a vast array of previously inaccessible resources through the Internet such as free training and education; access to computing resources and expertise available only in capital cities but now accessible through enterprise-grade broadband connectivity.

4. Development of Social Enterprise centres assisting communities with creating new startups with global marketing and sales reach, helping with new business development and teaching residents how to more effectively compete in the global marketplace using online resources.

5. Digital Literacy centres – a hub location for acquiring the latest digital skills, taught initially by teams of Digital Flying Squads, who circulate amongst CRCs, teaching local residents and training local trainers to train others; then, after the trainers leave, the local trainer carries on with the training.

6. Relay drop-off points to relay high-speed Internet to other facilities in regional or remote towns where they too can then access high speed connectivity.

CRC’s are ideally positioned to take on this new role of both digital connectivity hubs and centres of Digital literacy, as they are generally located in or near regional town centres, placing them in close proximity to any available communications infrastructure—though ironically, in their current configuration, few are actually are now capable of accessing the capacity that may literally be underneath their feet on the footpath outside their doors. Most regional towns in Western Australia are destined to receive their Internet services from the National Broadband Network through Skymuster satellite. Though Skymuster has
a place in serving remote Australia, it is simply insufficient for meeting regional WA’s needs for 21st Century global competitiveness. By enabling CRCs with enterprise-grade broadband connectivity, primarily via innovative new Fixed Wireless technology which uses low-cost equipment and where possible existing telecommunications towers, to relay connectivity from the core communications network (generally the local telecom exchange) to the roof of the CRCs, many new opportunities and applications will emerge. The current cost constraint is the cost of ‘backhaul’ – connecting the regional communities from the local level back to Internet services in metropolitan data centres. However, this price will drop with the deployment of developing, competitive backhaul providers (e.g., ‘WA Supernet’) that are expected to emerge over the next few years and extend their reach from the WA Wheatbelt into other, more remote locations. The cost of delivering this capacity is dropping dramatically and will fall even more dramatically over the next few years. This program proposes a cost-effective approach to boost social and economic value to regional communities, create new businesses and new jobs and can be implemented in incremental stages. The combination of physical locations and skills of existing staff CRCs is perfectly aligned to take the CRCs to the next level and deliver a pivotal change that will maintain Western Australia’s competitive advantage in the Digital 21st Century.

While regional Western Australia is sparsely populated, regional Western Australians punch above their weight with production income value per resident exceeding Perth. [*] Existing CRC locations are ideally placed to be easily-accessible to regional businesses and community to introduce them to the resources that they will required to thrive in the 21Century digital world.

CRC V2.0 can occur primarily with existing staff resources, boosted by itinerant “Digital Flying Squads” – a small group of digital experts from around the State who travel amongst CRCs, training local staff, local business people and the community in 21st Century digital skills by utilising the existing skills and upskilling staff to take on a new role in the communities as “Mini Social Enterprise Centres”, smaller versions and proven models of organisations which already exist, such as the Pollinators/City Hive Social Enterprise Hub in Geraldton or the Space-Cubed facility in Perth, outcomes of which have been showcased in the globally-recognised West Tech Fest awards.

Regional Australia deserves a seat at the same table, and programs such as this can bring both the skills and the technology to regional people to enable them to compete in the global marketplace. For this to occur, CRCs need access to world-class, high-speed digital infrastructure and services – severely lacking in the current environment due primarily to the failure of the nbn to deliver to regional areas. In a great number of existing locations, this gap can be cost-effectively and sustainably remedied with existing, affordable technology, delivered by existing regional and local organisations, with only incidental State Government financial trigger funds.

World-class connectivity in CRCs can also become an attractor to larger corporations operating in the regions, who will discover that access to such connectivity makes booking co-working space in CRC facilities an attractive proposition, increasing income for regional CRCs. Others in regional towns may also be attracted to hiring space in co-working environments where they can brainstorm with like-minded individuals solving similar problems, all the while generating income from space rental for the CRCs.
This program proposes to supply, where possible, (at first to easily-deliverable locations, then later as backhaul becomes increasingly available) gigabit capacity into CRC locations using best-fit technologies, so that CRC locations become hot-spots of digital capacity for their regions, centres of excellence in Digital Literacy and hubs of community ‘Social Enterprise’ development.

Existing CRC personnel are well-qualified to take on new roles as digital educators, digital advocates and champions of 21st Century skills in this program. Western Australia’s CRCs are perfectly positioned to take on the essential role of maintaining WA’s regional communities as globally-competitive locations where more people are attracted to work, to live, to learn and to play.

27 June 2018
Appendix 11 Other stakeholder feedback

This appendix contains the full transcripts of unsolicited feedback received from Linkwest, Volunteering WA, the Goldfields-Esperance Regional Development Commission; the communities of Wandering and Williams and a staff member writing in her personal capacity but identifying herself as being employed by the Member for Roe are attached.
Contact: Kris Starcevich

23 May 2018

Niegel Grazia
Deputy Director General
Industry and Economic Development
Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
Level 12, 140 William Street
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Niegel,

Further to the State Governments funding review of Community Resource Centres (CRC), the Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission (GEDC) provides the following information to assist the Department with the State-wide review, specifically around the Goldfields-Esperance Region.

There are currently ten (10) CRCs in the Goldfields-Esperance Region and the GEDC has undertaken a high-level review of the centres and has identified some risks relating to facilities funded through Royalties for Regions (RfR), service delivery and jobs.

The Hopetoun CRC is currently operating in the Hopetoun Community Centre, one of the first projects completed under the Goldfields Revitalisation Fund (GER) accessing $2.7 million of Royalties for Regions (RfR). The centre employs five staff including a trainee and is open six days a week.

$1.6 million in RfR has been allocated by the Government for the development of a new cultural, visitor and community precinct in Norseman. It is proposed that the Norseman CRC will operate in this precinct. The centre has two employees and is open five and a half days a week.

The Leonora CRC was granted $60,000 from Regional Development and Lands in 2013 to assist in the development of the architectural and engineering plans required to relocate into the Northern Goldfields Office and Administration Centre. The Shire of Leonora was later provided with $4.62 million in RfR towards the Northern Goldfields Office and Administration Centre, which had a total project value of $7.2 million. The CRC is currently operating out of this facility, employs two staff members and is open five days per week.
The proposed funding reduction to CRC’s will impact on the level of service offered and lead to potential job losses and lower utilisation of facilities that were developed with funding from the State Government.

Efficiencies in terms of reducing the numbers of centres has been considered particularly around the Shires which have two centres; including the Shire of Ravensthorpe and Coolgardie, however the GEDC believe that based on the distances from major centres, population numbers and current challenges local governments have in servicing their communities, reducing the number of centres in our region would not be appropriate.

We trust this information will assist with the review and if you need further information, please contact Shane Liddelow, Senior Business Development Officer on 90832202 or email shane.liddelow@gedc.wa.gov.au

Yours sincerely

Kris Starcevich
A/Chief Executive Officer
CRC Feedback – a personal viewpoint. May 2018

I am employed by the Western Australian State Government to run the Electorate Office for Peter Rundle MLA. I am apolitical in my role and consider it a privilege to provide a service for the constituents of the Electorate of Roe. This feedback for the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development is mine and the thoughts are mine only. I have been given permission by Peter Rundle MLA to submit my feedback however it is not given under his name.

This role is extremely varied and a diverse range of questions and issues arise on a daily basis. I need to be able to find information for Peter, constituents, industry representatives, Local Governments and NGO’s on a regular basis.

Almost without exception, my first phone call will be to a CRC. And again without exception, they are able to provide me with not only the information I was asking for, but most probably more information from local knowledge that no one else could provide.

For instance, the following points of reference have occurred in the past two days:

- There were two deaths on the road in a local shire and we wanted to know the names of those who were killed so Peter could deal with this and understand the circumstances. The CRC gave me the information.
- Local seniors have come in because the booklets they had previously been sent as a Seniors Card Holder are now no longer produced so they have no way of finding out what they are eligible for – the CRC’s provide this service now not from a direct funding requirement, but because it is what they do – they find a gap and they fill it.
- A local community was holding a forum which Peter wanted to attend – I needed to know more information about it and the CRC was able to assist me with this.
- I needed contact information on a private business for a constituent that had no listing in the local phone book or on their website and the CRC was able to provide this information.

This list of enquiries is not isolated – it is ongoing and varied.

CRC’s are not a luxury for these communities. There is a very good reason why the funding increased over the years since inception. At the beginning when the Telecentres opened, the idea of a computer hub accessible by the community was embraced and celebrated. It is only natural that this idea has evolved into the service we know today. Within constrictive funding, the CRC’s and the Committees have thought carefully about how their communities would benefit from further services and therefore each CRC is strategically aligned with their own unique set of circumstances that their community reflects.

The Tier approach of geography influencing funding has very little relevance since there is no public transport in the regions. While it may seem easy for someone with transport to travel more than 30km to another service, for those who live in the town and have no transport, they will be unable to access the service if it is not local and open.

It has been stated that any service that is 100% reliant on Government funding is always at risk of losing that funding. While this is true for services that are funded on projects (NFP’s),
the same cannot be said for a service such as the CRC. The CRC’s were given adequate funding to support the core requirements to function and then it was up to them how they attracted volunteers and other services which would give them the opportunity to provide the services the communities needed. To reduce this funding now will not only diminish the role they play, but the way this Government is seen in the context of regional support. If this decision reflects the strategic planning of regions for the future, along with other sinister decisions in education, then we can only assume that future decisions made about the regions will be swift and lethal.

This network is the envy of other States and the slow decimation of the role they play in the regional communities will have long lasting repercussions. Community coherence is due to effort not luck, and the Government has a role in facilitating a positive quality of life for regional communities. Sometimes this role cannot be quantified and it certainly cannot be supplemented by other avenues of income. The nature of the service is not an income making stream – it is the duty of the State Government to provide the assistance the CRC’s need as part of their perceived and real commitment to the regions.

The Electorate of Roe comprises 16 CRC’s. The Electorate has an area of over 106,000 square kilometres which equates to one CRC for every 6,625 square kilometres. It is a vast area of farming communities whose contribution to the economy of this State far outweighs the funding that is returned from the State Government. The communities don’t ask for a lot in return, but when there is a service that is valued and at risk, they will fight for its survival.

Discussion around mental health and the contribution CRC’s have in dealing with local mental health issues is not rhetoric. Seasonal devastation is real and re-occurring. The CRC’s are on the ground, monitoring the locals, knowing what is happening and can react incredibly quickly to crises and breakdowns. They have support services at their fingertips and can broker assistance quickly and effectively.

The local knowledge, ability to react to different issues and the knowledge of support services cannot be quantified. But it can be respected by those who distribute the funding and CRC Managers know exactly what they need to fulfil the community expectations. The State Government may find that the domino effect of this reduced funding will become evident as more and more businesses and towns lose their communities.

Instead of looking at the CRC’s as an opportunity for ‘budget repair’ perhaps the Government could change the way they perceive this service as budget contribution. By bringing on the CRC’s to provide extra services in the regions on behalf of the State Government while maintaining their level of funding, they will find a cost effective source of willing advocates.

Sally Haslam

Popanyinning
CRC Recommendation Feedback Form

This feedback is provided by Linkwest

Please type your feedback into the form, or if you wish to complete as a hardcopy you may need to expand the space between questions. Once completed, please have your CRC representative sign the form and scan and return to DPIRD at crcreports@dpird.wa.gov.au.

Please note that we are seeking feedback that will assist us in the development of an options paper with recommendations within the budget constraints. Feedback about the change to the CRC program budget is outside the scope of this work.

Linkwest as the Peak Body which represents 85 CRCs across the state has serious concerns about how these funding cuts will impact on the economic and social wellbeing of regional, rural and remote communities in WA. We hope that each CRC has taken the opportunity to provide feedback. Whilst we have not been included in this consultation we are submitting some overall sector issues we believe should be considered by DPIRD in relation to the contracts and the future viability of the Centres. Linkwest welcomed the opportunity to meet with Minister MacTiernan on Friday 18th May and wish to continue our conversations with the Minister, DPIRD and the whole of government for the best outcome for regional, rural and remote WA communities.

1. What aspects of the recommendation concern you?

80 CRCs funded at $70,000 per annum = $5,600,000
23 CRCs funded at $50,000 per annum = $1,150,000
This amounts to program costs of $6,750,000 per annum. This leaves $1,250,000 of the budget unaccounted for. Please could a breakdown be provided for the reminder of the budget. We are concerned about the level of funding for traineeships and sector support for the CRC network.

Funding for support services to CRCs is essential for the future of the network whether provided by Linkwest or another NFP service provider. Evidence shows that a NFP service provider would have the contacts for partnerships, indepth knowledge of the sector (such as ACNC, HR/IR, Associations Incorporations Act 2015), cross sector relations with other peaks to promote more services into regional WA. For example the partnership with the Wheatbelt Community Legal Centre to deliver outreach services to regional communities via video conferencing.

DPIRD has previously stated it is not the role of government to provide support regarding governance and IR, this is the role of the peak body. DPIRD staff are contract managers and providing support services is a conflict of interest
Linkwest has spent considerable resources working with a number of Centres to resolve long standing IR issues which has resulted in a significant improvement in the service delivery of the Centres concerned.

Linkwest has worked closely in partnership with DPIRD contract staff to support Centre committees to resolve conflicts and address governance issues. This has been successful due to the separation of roles between sector support and contract management. This is a model that has been developed and works well with the Dept of Communities funded neighbourhood centres.

Linkwest sought legal advice via Jobs Australia as to the correct industrial instrument for CRC staff. The advice was that CRCs are constitutional corporations and therefore come under the federal Social and Community, Home and Disability Services Modern Award 2010. The social and community element of this award has an Equal Remuneration Award attached to it. This ERO will result in increases of 4.1% (in December 2018, 2019 and 2020) for a level 5 classification on the SCHADS Award. This in addition to the minimum award increase determined for 1st July each year. The indexation attached to human services contracts such as the CRC contracts is predicted to be less than 1% for the next three years.

A Classification of level 5 has been determined as the most appropriate level of classification for a small CRC by a recent analysis conducted by an HR expert. Larger CRCs will employ staff at higher levels which attract bigger ERO increases.

The diagram below provided by WACOSS shows the increases in CPI (bottom line) against the predicted wage increases for an employee on Level 5 SCHADS Award (green line second from top).
CRCs have already absorbed these increases for the last 5 years as the ERO increases commenced in December 2012 and will finish in December 2020.

There is considerable concern across the NFP sector about the ERO and the financial sustainability of NFPs. Any decrease in funding will compound the burden of these significant wage costs not to mention the increase in utility costs. This an issue both WACOSS and Community Employers WA are raising with funding agencies and government.

Health and Safety of CRC staff – it is unsafe and also operationally impossible for a staff member to work alone in a CRC. Elected members have advised us that due to the risks to their staff they do not allow their staff to work alone. CRC staff are frequently dealing with distressed people. Therefore, two staff must be rostered.

There is a crisis in volunteering in regional, rural and remote WA. These additional hours cannot realistically be covered by volunteers. Most regional community members are already offering the time they have to volunteer for multiple organisations within the community, such as Ambulance and
Fire Brigades, services which are provided in metro areas by the Government. CRCs already underpin their current contract delivery with volumes of volunteer hours, including volunteer management committee members.

An article in The Conversation published just this week highlights this crisis in volunteering in regional, rural and remote Australia. Data for this article was provided by the WA Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development


One of the recommendations was for state governments to reinvest in local essential services which would relieve pressure on volunteers. This funding cut is not only putting a greater burden on local volunteers but also removing the support and essential services provided by CRCs to local volunteer groups with the loss of the funding for social outcomes from the current CRC contract. Therefore, a double hit.

The possible addition of a trainee further complicates matters. A trainee is not equipped to act as one of two experienced staff members, so will be in addition. Time will be needed to train, taking staff away from clients even more. Furthermore, CRCs open for 18 or 25 hours a week may not have the hours to employ a trainee at all.

2. What aspects of the recommendation do you like?

Linkwest does not support the funding cuts and does not want DPIRD to misinterpret any feedback as “a positive” to agreeing to the funding cuts. Linkwest does not see anything positive in this proposal. The criteria to determine the tiers is arbitrary and does not take into account local community needs, the reduction in services to regional communities will seriously impact the social and economic wellbeing of those communities.

3. Do you have any other suggestions that could be adopted within the allocated budget?

Linkwest has not been provided all costings for the whole program. As such, we are not able to provide further suggestions as to how to allocate funding. We request a detailed breakdown of the entire proposed $8 million funding allocation.

Linkwest believe that DPIRD needs to work with the sector to determine the most suitable outcomes for the program rather than imposing such arbitrary outputs. The WA State Government has stated it wants to measure impact with outcomes. There is an opportunity to combine the outcomes framework to be created by Dept of Communities for neighbourhood centres with those of CRCs. In addition, we would like to see outcomes that align with the outcomes and priorities identified under Royalties for Regions.
The funding for CRCs is based on Royalties for Regions which clearly states it is to achieve economic, social & business development outcomes. This is not reflected in the current proposal and therefore the proposal does not fulfil the requirements of Royalties for Regions.

Department of Communities contracts require reporting half yearly. We believe quarterly reporting is an unnecessary burden considering the level of funding for CRCs now let alone the proposed new levels of funding.

Linkwest as the Peak Body would like to receive the consolidated feedback from the progress reports on an annual basis to enable us to provide improved services to the sector and to identify emerging issues. Again, this is provided by the department of Communities for our Neighbourhood Centres. This feedback also helps the individual services identify how they are tracking in comparison to the sector as a whole.

4. Do you have any other comment you would like to make?

The feedback provided above is provided to help DPIRD and the Minster understand some of the issues across the NFP sector that impact particularly on the ability of CRCs to operate particularly in the light of the proposal.

Since last May, the network has been in a state of constant uncertainty, given very little information and there has not been a genuine attempt to consult either with the network or Linkwest. In fact Linkwest has been excluded from all correspondence and discussions. All attempts to meet with the DG of DPIRD have been ignored. This makes working in partnership and having a shared understanding of the issues and concerns very difficult. In return we would invite the DG and senior staff to visit and get to know the CRCs funded by the department. We acknowledge the work of the DPIRD staff such as Rob Leicester and his team in their contract management of the CRC program.

Linkwest would like to see a level of consultation similar to that undertaken by the Department of Communities for the Empowering Communities Program. The final document created as a result of the consultation recognises the value of place based, grass root community organisations and the vital role they play in building community capacity. It has enabled both parties (government and the sector) to have a shared understanding of the strengths and opportunities of the Neighbourhood Centres. There was an opportunity for both the DPIRD and Department of Communities to work in partnership across the two programs. This would have resulted in breaking down the silos. Linkwest is concerned that the current trajectory will result in CRCs having to manage multiple complex contracts across delivering services across the whole of government. We believe there is an opportunity for an integrated funding model which is flexible enough to allow the local communities to do it for themselves, and find solutions to local problems.

Linkwest would like to work with government and seeks a cross government approach and consider an integrated funding model and reporting framework. In addition, it would make recommendations for a more strategic framework and future of the network that would build vibrant regional and rural communities.
Signed: Jane Chilcott
Name: Jane Chilcott
Position in the organisation: CEO
Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC  
Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food  
11th Floor, Dumas House  
2 Havelock Street  
West Perth WA 6005

Dear Minister

I write to express my concern regarding the reduction of funding allocation for the Community Resource Centre (CRC) program from July 2019.

For many years CRCs have served local people and organisations, providing essential services and information to their local communities. They are highly valued assets within our communities, enriching local life and providing a place of belonging for our local people to flourish.

CRCs provide a network for service delivery, allowing people to connect with local and government services, social groups, events and educational opportunities. For every paid staff member there are at least two volunteers supporting the CRC. These champions trigger a ripple effect of involvement, enhancing the community’s vibrancy and health. Many of these community members volunteer in multiple organisations such as the Bush Fire Brigade, St John Ambulance, as well as environmental, aged care and disability services.

Cutting funding to the CRCs could jeopardise community involvement and the flow-on benefits enjoyed by a healthy, engaged community. The social connection and indirect mental health support provided by CRCs must not be underestimated.

We hope that you will reconsider this decision and reinstate the previous funding levels.

Yours sincerely

Tina Williams  
CEO  
Volunteering WA

9 May 2018

Copy to:  
crcreports@dpird.wa.gov.au  
Hon Mark McGowan MLA, Premier of Western Australia  
Hon Mick Murray MLA, Minister for Volunteering
Wandering Community CRC Consultation Evening

Conclusion

Our meeting was a very successful one with 15% of the population in attendance! At 7am on Wednesday 16th May 2018, the Minister for Regional Development announced that Wandering had indeed be categorised under the wrong funding tier and would instead be placed under the Tier 1 category. As our Shire President, Brendan Whately, rightly pointed out on ABC Great Southern Radio shortly after, this is still not sufficient to maintain the plethora of facilities available through the Wandering Community Resource Centre.

The Wandering community have clearly demonstrated their support for the Community Resource Centre and the numerous facilities it supports and provides. It has been suggested that they really should be rebadged as Community Development Centres as they are so multifunctional and multifaceted in a small town such as Wandering.

I would like to implore to the Wandering Council that the future of the Community Resource Centre must have a high degree of importance when making decisions for the future of our town as the community demonstrated their support of this vital community asset. Questions need to be asked how these services will be maintained: through rates rises, government protests, or reprioritising structures of Shire spending? We now have evidence across a large demographic from our residents that the CRC is worth fighting for. Our funding should not be cut and, if anything, should be increased to cope with the ever increasing red-tape requirements and society needs.

The onus the State Government is putting onto the regional communities to make up for the shortfall in funding by volunteering for basic government services is unjust, as volunteer positions do not always take priority over personal life or personal business. Who will suffer the cost of police checks for the volunteers handling sensitive data? Will the community want a long list of volunteers knowing their private data? In the city, are volunteers used to service Government contracts? It would also be interesting to note the basic salary of a full-time Medicare or Centrelink employee, and compare it to the funds being offered to our CRC; would Tier 1 or Tier 2 funding cover staff costs at a minimum? Would our State Government be responsible for mass redundancies in the Regional areas?

I thank you for your assistance in making our community meeting a success, but there is still much to be done to ensure that our town’s future is secure for years to come. Below is a list of submissions that have been made to support your application to government, with a brief (I) outline of the important topics that the Wandering community have found the CRC provides them.

Many thanks for your time,

Nicola Kelliher
Community Representative

350 Wandering-Pingelly Road
Wandering WA 6308

08 98841550 / 0429 841550

Submission to council
17th May 2018
Wandering Community CRC Consultation Evening

Submissions received

Community groups represented (7):
Wandering Annual Fair Committee Inc.
Wandering CWA
Wandering Cricket Club
Wandering-Hotham Declared Species Group
Wandering Golf Club
Wandering Tennis Club
Wandering Playgroup

Business submissions (2):
Wandering Smash Repairs
Wandering Clover Fed™ Beef

Personal submissions (13):
Jacqui Schorer
Julie Ferguson
Ashley Nelson
Leanne Rose
Simon Dexter
Nicola Kelliher
Stephen and Judy Bullock
Melanie Hauwert
Annabelle Kelliher
Denise Clarke
Lucille Kelliher
Lee Muller
Shane Kelliher

Total: 22 Submissions

Important topics raised in the submissions include.

Tourism
Secretarial support
Grant writing
Value for money assisting at grass root level
Constitution writing assistance
Local newspaper – business advertising and local news
Vehicle licensing
Library
Social gatherings – mental wellbeing
Visiting doctor – physical wellbeing
Fitness groups in many forms
Traineeships
Intergenerational café
Seniors’ trips – mental and physical wellbeing
School holiday entertainment – excursions to museums etc, incursions of authors
Evening social interaction – Meet The Author nights
Creche facilities
Computer and printing facilities
A friendly ‘place’ to go to for emotional support – loneliness and mental stress eased

Business Development courses

Social and business networking opportunities

Children’s social opportunities – social and physical isolation

Government facilities

Creativity classes – craft for children and scrapbooking lessons for adults

First Aid courses – individual and town healthy security in our isolated town

Financial burden of volunteering

Social gatherings across the demographic – farmers, business owners, government staff,
children etc can all interact

Interactive learning opportunities – Better Beginnings, National Story Time

Toy library

Afterschool sports programs – health and fitness for children

Computer assistance to navigate ‘red tape’

Regular business hours are important

Regions need the CRC to continue to generate wealth for the State

Employment opportunities – trainees and small business development

Coordinating catering for functions

Small home business showcasing products

Shopping delivery service for fresh produce

Liveability of our town

‘Safe’ place for children to be and learn

History of our town – old Agricultural Hall

Basic facilities that a city community take for granted

RAC safe driving course – changing tyre etc
Community Consultation Evening
6.30pm 14th May 2018

Name: Julie Ferguson
Email address: JulieFerguson@bigpond.com

How the CRC assists me in our community:

After our Community Consultation Evening in Wandering on the 14th of May it occurred to me what a wide variety of services and age groups that our CRC caters for. Approximately 18-20 years ago when the CRC (formerly Telecentre) was established in Wandering, I opened my first email account on one of the Centre’s shared computers. We did not yet have a home computer and I wanted to learn more. Computers were hugely expensive at the time and internet on farms was still in early stages of development. I knew that a computer would be a beneficial step in progressing our farm business by making us more efficient both with our planning and book keeping. This time period also coincided with the introduction of the GST and businesses were now obligated to accurately record all of our GST related income and expenditure for the ATO. The CRC offered various computer courses such as Excel workshops, MYOB workshops and Agrimaster workshops which improved my skills and enabled me to take on this role in our farming operation. Eventually in time, we were able to purchase our own computer equipment and when internet became more readily available, we were able to do this through our home office.

As we all modernized into a more digital society, the CRC evolved and offered a variety of different services which have been valuable to our community such as vehicle licensing, Centrelink access point, Medicare access point, Library Services, business workshops, health classes, fitness classes, social media courses, craft sessions etc. I particularly enjoyed the yoga classes and scrapbooking sessions. Also, of enormous value to the community was the First Aid course organized by the CRC last year. Now we have more citizens that can assist in an emergency situation. I noticed that in attendance at the First Aid course were local farmers, business owners, office staff, school staff, mothers, fathers and volunteers including several Volunteer Fire Brigade Officers. Being so far from emergency services, this is knowledge that could assist in saving a person’s life as it can take over 45-60 minutes (sometimes longer) for help to arrive to Wandering.

With 3 children, I have been actively involved in the community volunteering for various roles including Wandering Playgroup President and Wandering P&C Vice President and Secretary. We have used the CRC building as a venue for fundraising events, meetings, as well as utilized the CRC office equipment to create flyers etc. and other promotional advertising for events. I believe it is very important to ensure our community members, who volunteer their valuable time, don’t suffer financial burden in performing their various roles and duties. The CRC has supported our community groups and volunteers offering advice, printing services, venue hire, assistance with grant applications, and advertising in the local community paper plus more.

Cont.
Each community group has different needs but the CRC is versatile in the ways in which they can help.

For my children, the CRC holds school holiday workshops, incursions and excursions to name a few. This provides an opportunity for our isolated children to connect with their peers for things such as movie nights and author visits. My children not only have a brilliant time but they also get to go places such as a bus trip to the city. During the time my children were involved with the Wandering Primary School, the CRC worked cohesively with the school to provide and access learning-based activities, excursions, and events such as Banners on the Terrace and a Hotham Valley Train Ride (which was in conjunction with our local Seniors). They also provide after school craft activities and sport activities on a regular basis.

My husband and I both have aging parents in Wandering and would be delighted to see more aged care and health services available, eliminating the need to travel 35kms away or even as far as Perth. Our parents have thoroughly enjoyed the Senior outings that the CRC organizes. I have noticed a significant improvement in their mental well-being after these trips.

The CRC plays an important role with the planning and implementation of community projects that improve our local facilities and services by networking with community members, groups, volunteers, businesses, as well as nearby communities. Throughout the years I have watched the CRC grow and adapt with the times and I am certain if given the opportunity, it will continue to do so. During the last 20 years, our community and our government have invested a considerable amount of time, effort and money towards the CRC. It is such a ridiculous notion to comprehend that after all of that investment, our current Premier, Hon Mark McGowan MLA, together with our Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food, Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLA, are going to reduce the funding which will inevitably have a negative impact on the viability of the CRC and the services it provides. I believe the CRC is vital to support our residents and should be given even MORE government funding to enable them to further increase their potential and offer important services to accommodate our resident's needs. The CRC is more than just a smartphone. It provides job opportunities, fund-raising opportunities, small business opportunities, learning opportunities, health opportunities and much more. Opportunities that allow our community to keep thriving and flourishing. Our CRC is a success story.

#CRCismorethanjustasmartphone #ilovemyCRC #savemyCRC
To Whom It May Concern,

I am a volunteer and also Secretary/Treasurer of the Wandering/Hotham Declared Species Group. Our group has been actively involved in eradicating Feral Pigs in the shire of Wandering and Boddington since 2007. The funding for this group has been sourced originally from local land holders and then progressed to grant funding from Federal Government/State Government and mining companies who operate in the area.

Due to the way our funding sources now require grant proposal’s to be filled out we have used the local Wandering CRC to help us with these application’s. These applications are very complex and require information to be collated from a number of sources plus be supported by other Government and non-Government groups. To put it plan and simply our group would cease to exist without this support provided by the Local CRC in Wandering. We as a community group do not have the expertise or time to undertake the arduous task of seeking funding from State and Feral Government. The application is also only half the work …as these grants need to be acquitted when they run their term – once again a job which is undertaken by our local CRC.

Our group which is entirely run by volunteers, looks after a problem which comes entirely out of uncontrolled feral pests which reside in WA State controlled forestry. We are doing the hard work looking after regional bio-security from an uncontrolled invasive species. Since our inception we have dispatched more than 3,000 feral pigs which left uncontrolled would have had a devastating ongoing effect on our region.

Having the CRC constantly on the lookout for future funding opportunities has in large allowed us to continue our work, which as I mentioned is pretty much a problem that exists because of State Government’s failure to control feral invasive species in the land they control which adjoins private land holdings in our shires.

The WHDSG feel that with the work of the Wandering CRC the volunteer hours and in-kind input that is contributed by the local ratepayers creates hugely beneficial outcomes for both the Shires of Wandering and Boddington but also the State Government as well. We need to maintain a status quo of funding to the CRC to allow our group to still be access the services it provides us and other local community groups.

Paul Treasure
Secretary/Treasurer
Wandering/Hotham DSG
Name: Shaun Brand, Wandering Smash Repairs

Email address: workshop@wanderingsmashrepairs.com.au

How the CRC assists me in our community:

As one of the few small businesses in the area this topic is a real important to sustaining our future, without the CRC we will lose community interest in the area which will reflect on our business substantially.

Wandering Smash Repairs uses social networking, community gatherings, social events and word of mouth to keep in touch with the Wandering community and surrounding towns for any past and future jobs.

Wandering Smash Repairs uses 4 Community resource centres in the area for advertising in phonebooks and newsletters without the correct funding or funding all together this decision will impact my business. thanks
Community
Consultation Evening
6.30pm 14th May 2018

Name: Wade Gowland

Community Group: Wandering Annual Fair Committee Incorporated

Role in Community Group: Chairperson

Email address: janetandwade@bigpond.com

How the CRC assists our group:

These funding cuts have been made without due consideration or care for the communities involved. The results from funding cuts seem obvious to us and it is frustrating that it is not so to you.

On behalf of the Wandering Annual Fair Committee I would like to express how vital the Community Resource Centre is to our community group.

The contribution that the Wandering CRC has made to our local community and specifically our group over the last 8 years has been considerable. We operate to promote tourism to our region, provide opportunity for and foster regional businesses as well as contribute to improved levels of social inclusion and interaction.

The CRC has: Enabled access for and assisted with locating, planning and submission of grants. Without which our group and event could not take place. Provided local availability for fundamental logistical services including printing of promotional documents and advertising. Offered community promotion through word of mouth along with local advertising opportunities to promote tourism to our event and regional area. Provided a connection point for our members.

Travel to another centre for any of the above services is both substantial and would result in higher running costs for our group, the loss of community connection and reduction in promotional opportunities for our town and regional area.

The role the CRC plays in tourism to regional areas has been significantly undervalued in this local government decision. Encouragement and support of local community participation is central to the sustainability of our tourism industry. Reductions in hours and services will surely result in reduced development in regional communities in a social and economic sense. Without the continuation of funding there will be reduced access to information and cessation of community-based services to local people, local businesses and visitors in regional Western Australia.

Reconsider.
14th of May 2018

Re: Letter of Support: Wandering Community Resource Centre

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of the Wandering Cricket Club I would like to express our support in retaining the funding and services for our community resource centre.

The Wandering Cricket Club has been a long serving sporting club in the Wandering local community since 1894. In more recent times the club has moved associations to the Upper Great Southern due to the local Williams Association folding. Since being affiliated to the Upper Great Southern the Wandering Cricket Club has had great success being the 2016 B Grade Premiers, moving into the A Grade competition the following year and of more recent in 2018 becoming the A Grade minor premiers.

On the dawn of the 2015/2016 Cricket season the club’s cricket wicket was in an unserviceable state. A local company was offering community grants to local sporting clubs and the Wandering Community Resource Centre played an exponential part in conducting the administration and support in the process for obtaining a new cricket wicket for our club. Without this support, the grant potentially may not have been approved and an opportunity missed. With the cricket wicket non-functional and a club not financial enough to fund it repair this could have potentially resulted in the club being no longer. This would have been disastrous for the community as a sporting club of the local community for excess of 100 years.

We believe the Community Resource Centre not only is an asset to all clubs and associations, but the people of the community also. Losing funding for the support the Community Resource Centre provides could be damaging to the small county community we all call our home.

Kind Regards

Carl Garrick

Secretary/Treasurer Wandering Cricket Club
Community Consultation Evening
6.30pm 14th May 2018

Name: Stacey Garrick
Community Group: Wandering Playgroup
Role in Community Group: ..........................................................
Email address: ......................................................................

How the CRC assists our group:

The importance of the Wandering CRC is very viable to our small Wandering playgroup. Some really core services are provided to the young aged children and we rely on these activities not only for the fun and interaction but the huge impact it has with the development of early childhood learning for our young children prior to heading into Primary years of schooling. Some key points of the weekly interaction between the CRC & Playgroup

* Crafts
* Story time
* Toy library
* Library (Books/DVDs)
* Intergenerational Cafe (We hold our Playgroup here once a month)
* Children’s Events (Movie Nights/Plays)
* Boogie Roos (Gym style activity)
* Crèche (Whilst Mothers boot camp)
* Community Computer - Photo copying & printing of any play group documents

It would be very disappointing for our community to see these services no longer available.

Wandering Playgroup
THE COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA (INC)

Date: 14 May 2018

Branch/Committee:
Wandering CWA
PO Box 29
Wandering WA 6308
wanderingcwa@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern

Support of the Wandering Community Resource Centre

The Wandering Community Resource Centre is an integral part of our local area providing services that contribute to a vibrant and involved community. The members of the Wandering CWA are very concerned and disappointed at the prospect of the proposed funding cuts that would directly affect our local CRC.

Our CRC routinely provides assistance to our small community group in the form of providing everyday services such as printing and photocopying, support in the promotion of our fundraising events, use of the facility and building to host community orientated functions as well as providing general socialisation opportunities to our members and their families.

We are greatly concerned that any reduction in funding for our local CRC will have a negative impact upon community groups such as ourselves, in the support and services that would be able to be offered. With such a drastic reduction in funds being proposed, there is simply no way for 'business as usual' to continue and our community as a whole to not suffer.

Yours sincerely

Leanne Rose
Secretary
Wandering CWA
Why the CRC is important to me.

As the Secretary of the Wandering Golf Club the CRC...
- Provided guidance and support with creating a new Constitution.
- Collated and printed the Constitution.
- Provided guidance and support with Grant Applications, many being successful.
- Wandering Golf Club weekly results were printed freely in the local Echo, keeping the community up to date.

As President of The Wandering Tennis Club
- Provided guidance and support with creating a new Constitution.
- Collated and printed the Constitution.
- Provided guidance and support with a successful grant application.
- Tennis news and notices were published free in the local Echo.

As a Community member/resident of Wandering
- Having an efficient, competent Licensing Branch at the CRC, four days a week, is invaluable.
- Community library is well stocked and I use it regularly.
- All Community events run by the CRC are essential for a small country town. They are diverse (health, information, enjoyment, social) and cover all ages, men and women.
- Fitness sessions been made available to the Community including yoga, bootcamp and Pilates.

Traineeship
- The traineeship provided by the CRC each year provides a young local person the opportunity to seek employment in their home town.
- The traineeship Program has been highly successful, with 6 inexperienced adolescents, completing their year at the CRC and successfully finding further employment.

Jacqui Schorer
Wandering Clover Fed Beef is the only retail food provider in the Shire of Wandering; providing premium, boutique, locally produced beef. As well as providing local produce to local customers within the locality, the Wandering Clover Fed™ brand has been recognised by top restaurants in Perth as being synonymous with a product that is clean, green and environmentally sustainable.

It gives me great pride to promote our town to my city consumers, and they delight in the farming stories I provide on my business Facebook page.

My business Facebook page was created before I attended a Social Media course held at the Community Resource Centre in Wandering, but this course assisted me to understand the Insights section within the page and to understand the core demographic of my audience, as well as understanding the Editor and Admin differences which I put to good use.

When you are in a large office environment digital change is learned almost by osmosis, so getting out of the kitchen and embracing technology can be a challenge at the best of times with 4 children. The Community Resource Centre provided me with the opportunities to learn that gave me courage to advance my small business further.

The Community Resource Centre has a commercial kitchen that has been upgraded by use of government grants and is a facility I look to utilise in the near future to expand my business. If the restrictive costs imposed by the State Government – whether Tier 1 or Tier 2, are endorsed, it will limit innovation within the Regional areas.

Previous State Governments of both political persuasions have had the long-term wisdom to invest in the valuable infrastructure of the Community Resource Centres, and yet now, in the flick of a pen, the current Minister for Regional Development has chosen a short-sighted view instead which would see the destruction of development in Regional areas.

Having a small business in Regional areas requires grit and dedication to contend with the logistics and distances involved in making your business viable. The Minister for Regional Development needs to take heed of the submissions made against these cuts and reverse her decision, for the funding cuts are completely at odds with the position title and will do nothing for Development in the Regions.
Name: Annabelle Kelliher, aged 10
Email address: KelliherBros@bigpond.com

How the CRC assists me in our community:

Not one child in the Wandering community likes the fact that the government is closing down our CRC. The children of Wandering will be devastated and they will never have the opportunities they had at the CRC or in our town again.

The CRC organises movies days where we can dress up, and excursions to places such as a LEGO exhibition in the school holidays. We get to use the library to read books and borrow DVDs, and my mum gets our shopping delivered to the CRC so she doesn’t have to drive to Narrogin. I get to meet my friends in the school holidays when the CRC puts little activities on for us.

The government shouldn’t take money away from our CRCs, it should be giving MORE money so we can have more activities like the kids in the city get to have. Thank you for listening to what I have to say.
As a 37 year resident of the Wandering Shire I first came to the town as a young bride in 1982. I went from working in the heart of Perth City, to living on a farm 20 kilometres from the town. I suffered from severe bouts of loneliness and was quite bored with life until I embraced the country way of living. I was involved in the process of obtaining permission to convert our old, to be condemned, Agricultural Hall into one of the first Telecentres in the region. This involved a dedicated group of people, including our children, scraping, sanding, polishing, painting, re-enforcing and beautifying this old building to a stage where it could be used to welcome the public.

The centre was a place for people to come and have a chat while their children coloured in or played in the corner, to a place where courses were organised for educational purposes or people could access Medicare, Centrelink or several of the other Government Agencies on offer without having to travel some 100 kilometres to do so in person.

This quickly became a hub of the town that people have relied upon for very practical purposes and also for very personal reasons. Wandering has no shops and very few services at its disposal, so a very valuable resource such as the local CRC has become an integral part of our towns functioning. The closure or even cutbacks to the funding of the centre, I believe, would be extremely detrimental to a small regional town like Wandering which is already suffering. Although our population is very small, a facility such as the CRC provides its population with just a small portion of the access to facilities that our country cousins consider basic.

Lee-Ann Muller
I liked it when I got to do Father’s Day craft and they let us watch movies and they took us to Lego Land. When I was being home schooled I got to read lots of different books to learn things about plants and rainbows. They never exclude anyone and they are really really nice. They let us borrow toys, books and movies. They always give people opportunities to have fun together with friends and have a more fun life. The CRC makes me feel safe and I always get excited as they always make us do fun stuff and I never get bored.

If there was no CRC in Wandering I would feel really really sad and get bored and I would also feel annoyed that we wouldn’t get to do fun things on the holidays. I would not be able to read books to find out the details for the things I am interested in. I won’t be able to watch movies with all my friends and I always like it as we get treats so we don’t get hungry and we also get to do a craft when we watch the film. If the government shut it down I won’t be able to have as much fun as the city children can, as they have a library in their town, and that’s the only one in Wandering and if they shut it down we won’t be able to sit on the comfy chair and read books.
Community Consultation Evening
6.30pm 14th May 2018

Name: Melanie Hauwert
Email address: 0438426735

How the CRC assists me in our community:

I spent 6 years in Wandering and have recently moved, but would love to move back as my husband still works in the region. The CRC has provided so many services to the community over the years. My children loved attending the library and the many activities throughout the year that the CRC provided for us. It provides us with licensing options, Medicare and centrelink and many more services so we don’t have to drive over 100km to get to one. Families that don’t have access to computers or internet can go and use the CRC and also have printing options.

It became a place local Home businesses could showcase their products. It was a meeting place for surrounding areas to come and have a cuppa and catch up on what’s happening within the shire. This is a service that is needed and used daily by many locals.

I hope to move back to Wandering in the near future and it would be such a shame to not have this wonderful facility to use.
Name: Nicola Kelliher

Email address: KelliherBros@bigpond.com

How the CRC assists me in our community:

In the 13 years I have lived in Wandering, I have noticed the increased facilities being offered by the Community Resource Centre and have delighted in how the liveability of our town has vastly improved.

I grew up in a ‘small’ town of 20,000 people in the UK and vividly remember watching my parents vote in general elections and discuss the potential changes that a new Budget would bring to the economy. At no time at all was I aware of any changes that would directly affect me as a child.

So now, it is heartbreaking to watch my children’s frustration as they realise the changes that will be affecting them and declare that they are unfair and unjust. My children are part of a minority group who already suffer social and physical isolation, so the funding cuts are more than just a financial burden — they are a direct attack on the future generations of the regional population.

The State Government will not be the ones who have to suffer the damages these cuts will make to their family lives, as they will not be affected by the outcomes of their policies. Regional Development comes in all forms, but the development of the child must not be ignored.
The CRC services for me are critical as the staff are able to wade through the government protocol to simplify the procedures required when dealing with government departments. I cannot do these tasks online unless I improve internet reception where I live in the rural areas. Being able to attend the CRC in regular and normal business hours is important also.

CRC generate social functions are huge opportunities to create community in our diminishing regions and from these regions we are generating wealth for the state.

There is also the creation of work opportunities and casual employment. That comes with the community activities generated by the CRC particularly in catering, crèche and bus services.

Stephen and Judy Bullock
I was the Chairman of the initial Wandering Telecentre Committee in 1997 when the State Coalition Government, at the time, showed great initiative by setting up the Telecentre network. This fantastic project was headed by Nationals Leader, Hendy Cowan, with the aim to give ALL people in Regional and Rural areas access to computers and the internet. The Committee received a grant to renovate the disused agricultural hall and fit it out with computers, printer and laminator. It ran basic computer courses for those of us who didn’t have computers.

Over the last 20 years, we have seen this grow into a vibrant hub in the community, adapting to provide a wide range of services driven by the specific needs of the community. The CRC has coordinated driver training courses, first aid courses, chemical handling courses, men’s health assessments, women’s health assessments... these are all essential things related to health and safety in a community – these are all things that an urban community would take for granted. These are all things that would be funded in an urban community.

Any agency in Perth offering government services would be open – at the very least, 9am-4pm, five days a week. Yet, even with our current funding rates, we are not able to have our CRC open for normal weekly business hours. Currently, our CRC only operates four days a week, so the Tier 1 or Tier 2 funding will only further limit the business hours available to residents in Wandering.

The people who will suffer the most from these cuts are the people who are the most disadvantaged and most vulnerable in the Regions

The Labor Government have lost what, they consider, is one of their core values. that is, standing up for the underdog, the vulnerable, and the disadvantaged.

This short-sighted approach shows absolute disregard for regional communities and highlights the ignorance of the State Labor Government to the value of rural communities in underpinning the State’s economy.

It is clearly evident that the Minister for Regional ‘Development’ has determined that the Regions do not extend beyond Metronet, unless it’s in a Labor-held electorate.
Name: Simon Dexter
Email address: Simon-dexter@yahoo.com.au

How the CRC assists me in our community:

The CRC assists me with planning my vehicle, boat, caravan etc.
The CRC provides and houses the library where I borrow books, movies and DVDs.
The CRC has an experienced person to help me with computer skills and even a friendly face to talk to when times are tough and need some help with Government Red Tape etc.
There are community events and Seniors trips and lots of other things. Our nearest CRC if wandering shuts is 33 km away in Boonah, which is not good enough especially for the elderly and people without their own transport. As we have no public transport.
To whom it may concern.

I am a community member of the Wandering Shire, and was annoyed at the severity of the funding cuts to our local CRC and other CRC's around the state. To expect a “Community Resources Centre” to deliver an effective service to the residents of our shire “Community” is at best Ridiculous. The service the centre supplies allows the community to participate in activities that brings our Senior Citizens together for outings, inter generational get togethers, BBQ's, mental health nights and more. Our Children get involved with activities that the CRC organises like after school sports, craft Boogie roo’s, Holiday activities and outings which would not be available otherwise. Other gatherings like movie nights and BBQ's where our community can get together, where farmers, business owners workers and families can socialise away from there day to day chores. Along with all the other services that the CRC’s supply our family utilises the library and the computer services and other programs. Reducing the funding for Community Resource Centres will directly impact the rural towns ability to attract people if essentials services can not by supplies in an effective manner like the services that are available at our, and other CRC’s, in a time that our farming community’s are struggling, cutting back on services that they now need, more that ever by reducing funding to our Community Resource Centres. Your time is appreciated in listening to my concerns.

Yours Sincerely

Ashley Nelson

Get Outlook for iOS
Name: Rose Family
Email address: rosedale.76@live.com.au

How the CRC assists me in our community:

The Wandering CRC is an essential part of our small regional town, and we greatly oppose any funding cuts. We regularly use the library services, attend social functions, and seek general advice from the staff on a variety of matters. The CRC provides an interactive space for the younger members of our community as well (toy library, 'better beginnings') and works cooperatively with our local primary school and its students also (school holiday activities, craft and sports after school programs). We should not have our access to everyday services limited in any capacity, neither have our social opportunities as a small community reduced either.
Community Resource Centre

Consultation Evening
6.30pm 14th May 2018

Name: [Handwritten text]
Email address: [Handwritten text]

How the CRC assists me in our community:

[Handwritten text]

Amazed, e.g., how the CRC has helped me...

[Handwritten text]

Wandering, service, staff, etc.

[Handwritten text]
ABN 18 744 119 409
(Not registered for GST)

President: Maurice Sewell
Secretary: Diane Warburton

14 MAY 2018

Shire of Wandering
22 Watts Street
WANDERING WA 6308

Dear Amanda,

On behalf of the Wandering Golf Club we would like to show our support for our local CRC.

As a Club we utilize the CRC in many ways, to promote upcoming events, keep the community updated with the results of past events and to get help with the submissions of grants/forms/flyers etc. They also assist clubs with online courses, such as RSA’s and coaching clinics if required. The local CRC staff are very community minded and happy to help our club when required.

They also hold Men’s health and Women’s health days, these are very important to our community, creating a good environment and awareness of the mental and physical health problems and how to deal with them. It would be a great shame to lose such a facility.

Regards,
WANDERING GOLF CLUB

D Diane Warburton
Secretary
0429884100
Warby17@westnet.com.au
ABN 18 744 119 409  
(Not registered for GST)

President: Maurice Sewell  
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14 MAY 2018

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Regards,

WANDERING GOLF CLUB

D Diane Warburton  
Secretary  
0429884100  
Warby17@westnet.com.au
Feedback from Williams Community Resource Centre Information Session – Thursday 3rd May 2018.

46 community members in attendance and 20+ apologies.

What does Williams CRC mean to you?

- Means everything
- It’s our Lifeline
- Keeps our community together
- Library is invaluable to me
- Helps community groups to function – prints club fixtures- event support, community group support, promotes local events via social media / paper.
- Early learning support - Better Beginnings, Rhyme time, Mums & Bubs, Partnership with Early Childhood Nurse
- Assistance in everything – “it’s our google”
- Good commercial level printing in acceptable timeframes
- Information on community events
- Business support, allows locals business to access services (timely)
- Meeting place
- Sense of security – sense of trust – driven by locals
- Training – TAFE – accessibility for those that don’t drive
- Centre of Social Capital – warm service