



**Joint Standing Committee on Northern Australia**  
**inquiry into Preparing for Emerging Industries**  
**across Northern Australia.**

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## 1. Inquiry Terms of Reference

On 28 October 2025, the Minister for Resources and Northern Australia, the Hon Madeleine King MP, referred a revised terms of reference for an inquiry into preparing for emerging industries across Northern Australia.

The Joint Standing Committee on Northern Australia shall inquire into and report on preparing for emerging industries across Northern Australia, with reference to:

- a. The global transition to net zero and furthering renewable energy, decarbonisation, and carbon abatement;
- b. Developing the critical minerals industry;
- c. Supporting the development of export industries;
- d. Supporting the decommissioning industry;
- e. Supporting the defence industry;
- f. Supporting infrastructure;
- g. Managing biosecurity risks;
- h. Training, attracting, and retaining a skilled workforce;
- i. Empowering and upskilling local First Nations people;
- j. Barge landings and marine access for remote communities; and
- k. Research and development.

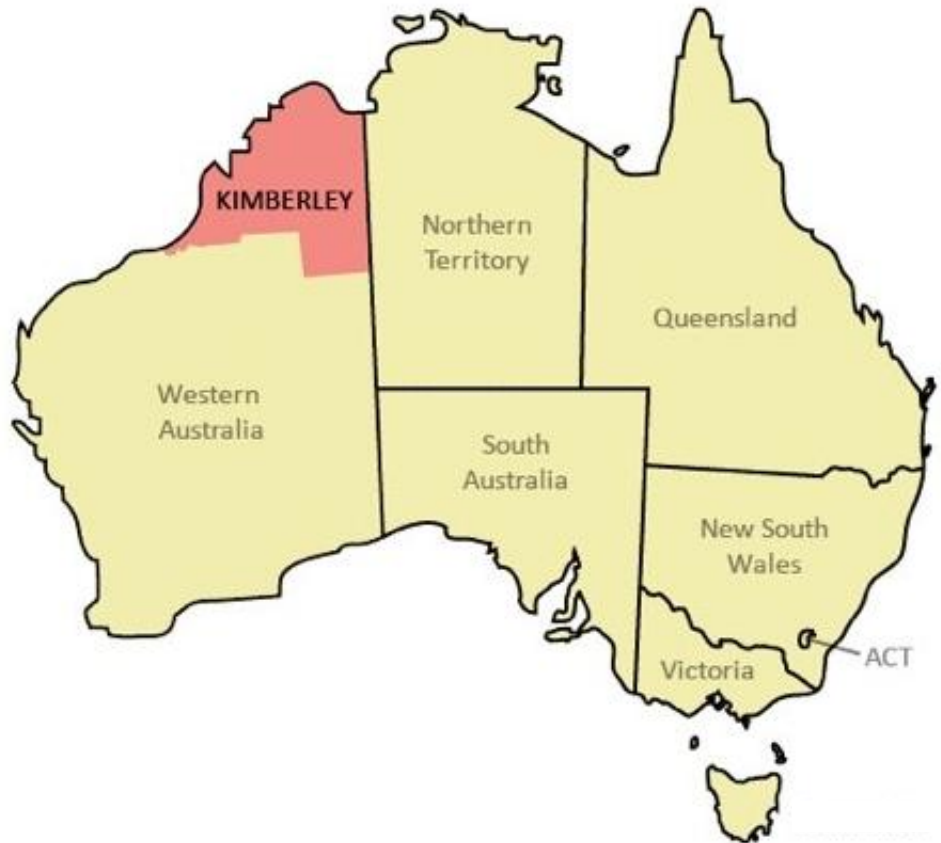
## 2. About the Kimberley Regional Group

The Kimberley Regional Group (KRG) of local governments is an alliance of the four Shires of the Kimberley in northern Western Australia, being the Shire of Broome, the Shire of Derby West Kimberley, the Shire of Halls Creek, and the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley.

Our Vision is to maintain and enhance the rich diversity and liveability of the Kimberley for its people and the world. Collaboratively the group seeks to drive positive impact across the region through improved social, economic, and cultural outcomes.

### Key Kimberley Statistics<sup>1</sup>

- Estimated Resident Population (2024) 39,934 people
- Median age – 33 years
- 40 percent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population
- 6.1 percent unemployment (20% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander unemployment)
- GRP \$8.56B
- Total Area: 420,573 Sq. km
  - One-sixth of Western Australia's land mass
  - 91% Native Title Determination
  - 95% Crown Land
- Coastline: Over 13,000 km (including islands)
- Strategic Location: Bordered by:
  - Indian Ocean (west)
  - Timor Sea (north)
  - Northern Territory (east)
  - Great Sandy and Tanami Deserts/Pilbara region (south)



A map of the Kimberley is contained in Appendix One.

<sup>1</sup> <https://profile.id.com.au/rda-kimberley>  
[data/quickstats/2021/51001](https://data.quickstats/2021/51001)

and <https://www.abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/51001>

## Overview - Kimberley Local Governments

| Shire                  | Estimated Resident Population | Major Towns               | Key Characteristics                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Broome                 | 18,870                        | Broome                    | Broome - Largest town; regional services and logistics hub; tourism, pearling, aquaculture, pastoral industries, offshore oil and gas, regional airport, and Port of Broome |
| Wyndham East Kimberley | 8315                          | Kununurra<br>Wyndham      | East Kimberley services and logistics hub; Ord River Irrigation Area; agriculture and mining; pastoral industries, regional airport, tourism, Port of Wyndham               |
| Derby-West Kimberley   | 8536                          | Derby<br>Fitzroy Crossing | Derby Port, Curtin Airbase, pastoral, tourism                                                                                                                               |
| Halls Creek            | 4213                          | Halls Creek               | Pastoral, mining, and tourism.                                                                                                                                              |

## Climate

- Type: Sub-tropical monsoonal
- Wet Season: November to April (cyclones, intense rainfall, flooding, high humidity)
- Dry Season: May to October (minimal rainfall, moderate temperatures, tourism peak)
- Temperature Range: 25-35°C typical; extreme heat events 40°C+
- Tidal Range: Up to 11 metres in some locations
- Cyclone and Tropical Low Risk:

## Natural Resources

- Water: Abundant surface and groundwater resources
- Solar: Exceptional solar irradiance
- Wind: Coastal and inland wind resources
- Minerals: Critical minerals, mineral sands, potash, iron ore
- Arable Land: Significant potential for agricultural expansion

### 3. Executive Summary

The Kimberley region is uniquely positioned to play a transformative role in the development of emerging industries across Northern Australia. With abundant renewable energy resources, nationally significant critical mineral deposits, extensive water assets, proximity to Asian markets, and strong First Nations land ownership and leadership, the region has the potential to contribute materially to Australia's economic diversification, decarbonisation and long-term national resilience.

Realising this potential, however, will require a deliberate shift in policy settings. Emerging industries in the Kimberley are constrained not by a lack of opportunity or ambition, but by persistent structural challenges including inadequate enabling infrastructure, workforce shortages, high costs of service delivery, fragmented funding arrangements and limited coordination across levels of government. These challenges are amplified by the region's remoteness, vast geography, exposure to extreme weather events and the higher cost base associated with construction, logistics and ongoing operations.

Local governments in the Kimberley play a critical and often under-recognised role in addressing these constraints. Beyond their traditional municipal functions, councils are required to provide enabling infrastructure, support essential services, coordinate agencies, manage disaster response and recovery, and sustain the amenity and liveability of towns that are essential to attracting and retaining a skilled workforce. These responsibilities are fundamental to the viability of emerging industries, yet funding and policy frameworks have not kept pace with the expanding role local governments are expected to perform in remote and regional Australia.

This submission outlines the key opportunities and barriers to emerging industry development in the Kimberley, with a focus on renewable energy and decarbonisation, critical minerals, export industries, decommissioning, defence, biosecurity, research and development, workforce development and supporting infrastructure. It emphasises the importance of a supply-side, place-based approach to planning and investment—one that ensures enabling infrastructure, services and workforce capacity are delivered ahead of or alongside industry development, rather than relying on reactive, project-by-project responses. Also, the need to support foundational work for emerging industry projects in the Kimberley such as feasibility studies, business case development, early-stage engagement and independent assessment.

First Nations people are central to the Kimberley's future. With more than 90 per cent of land subject to determined Native Title, emerging industries must be developed in ways that embed First Nations governance, ownership and economic participation. Empowering and upskilling local First Nations people, supporting Aboriginal businesses, and integrating cultural knowledge into industry development are essential to achieving durable economic and social outcomes.

The submission also highlights risks that, if left unaddressed, will undermine emerging industry growth. These include inadequate disaster resilience and betterment funding, a dysfunctional insurance market that is constraining investment, changes to the Kimberley Designated Area Migration Agreement, biosecurity vulnerabilities associated with increased trade and connectivity, and chronic housing shortages that limit workforce attraction and retention.

The Kimberley Regional Group recognises that governments at all levels are already investing significantly in Northern Australia. However, without improved coordination, funding certainty and recognition of the true cost of operating in remote regions, these investments will continue to fall short of their intended impact. Local governments are ready and willing to act as trusted delivery partners, but require policy settings and funding frameworks that align responsibilities with capacity.

This submission sets out practical, targeted recommendations to support emerging industries in the Kimberley. These recommendations focus on enabling infrastructure, workforce development, First Nations economic participation, disaster resilience, biosecurity, insurance reform and improved intergovernmental coordination. Collectively, they provide a pathway to unlock the Kimberley's potential while ensuring that economic development is sustainable, inclusive and resilient.

## 4. Introduction

The Inquiry's terms of reference recognise that Northern Australia, with the right policy settings and investment, can drive Australia's long-term growth, prosperity and security including through the development of Australia's emerging industries

The Kimberley Regional Group of Local Governments (KRG) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this critical inquiry into preparing for emerging industries across Northern Australia. Comprising the Shire of Broome, Shire of Derby-West Kimberley, Shire of Halls Creek, and Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley, the KRG represents a region of enormous potential to play a transformative role in Australia's economic diversification and transition to net zero.

The Kimberley region possesses unique competitive advantages including abundant renewable energy resources, critical mineral deposits, close proximity to Asian markets, extensive water resources, infrastructure and growing First Nations-led economic participation. At the same time, the region faces well-established structural challenges that constrain the realisation of these opportunities. These include sparse and highly dispersed populations, vast distances, high capital costs associated with freight and logistics, infrastructure gaps, workforce shortages and constrained service capacity. Amenity challenges in regional towns, including limited affordable housing and high cost-of-living pressures, further affect the region's ability to attract and retain a skilled workforce. Many emerging industry projects in the Kimberley are still at a greenfield stage, and there is very little funding available for the foundational work needed to progress them.

To prepare for emerging industries in the Kimberley there should be a focus on supply side planning and delivery, as opposed to a demand side response. The Kimberley needs to be viewed as a region with a focus on integrated system with the planning, co-ordination, and delivery of enabling infrastructure and services to facilitate the growth of emerging industries. Also, early and properly resourced engagement with Traditional Owner groups with most of the Kimberley under determined Native Title.

Realising the Kimberley's potential requires strategic, coordinated investment in foundational work such as feasibility studies, business case development, early-stage engagement and independent assessment. Without this "middle tier" of support, projects struggle to become investment-ready. In many cases, this is an even more immediate barrier than training, as without projects advancing there is limited demand for workforce pathways. Also, investment in enabling infrastructure and access to skilled workers, including international workers through bespoke migration agreements and local workforce development that respects environmental values and empowers local communities, particularly First Nations peoples.

Appropriately funded and adequately resourced local governments are fundamental to this, along with the provision of government services to attract and retain a local skilled workforce.

## 5. The Global Transition to Net Zero and Furthering Renewable Energy, Decarbonisation and Carbon Abatement

The global transition to net zero presents a significant opportunity for the Kimberley to support emerging industries while contributing to national decarbonisation objectives. Renewable energy development in the region has the potential to underpin industrial growth, improve energy security for remote communities, and create long-term employment pathways, particularly for First Nations peoples.

The Kimberley is emerging as a national leader in renewable energy development, particularly through:

- **East Kimberley Clean Energy Project:** A \$3 billion initiative combining approximately 1 GW of solar with existing Ord Hydro infrastructure to produce 40,000-50,000 tonnes of renewable hydrogen annually for conversion to 180,000-250,000 tonnes of green ammonia. This project represents a groundbreaking model where Traditional Owner groups hold majority ownership.
- **Renewable Energy Infrastructure:** The Ord Hydro Power Plant provides a foundation for renewable energy integration, while Lake Kununurra offers fresh water resources eliminating the need for energy-intensive desalination.
- **Solar and Wind Potential:** The Kimberley's solar irradiance and consistent wind patterns create ideal conditions for large-scale renewable energy generation.

The Kimberley is powered by a series of microgrids. The Ord River Hydro Power Plant provides electricity to Kununurra and Wyndham. Broome, Derby, Looma, Fitzroy Crossing and Halls Creek are reliant on trucking Liquefied Natural Gas from the Pilbara. The majority of remote Kimberley communities are dependent on trucking diesel fuel for electricity supply. Diversifying energy sources and enhancing infrastructure resilience are essential to reducing single source energy vulnerability.

The Australian and WA State Government are partnering to deliver the Kimberley Communities Solar Saver (KCSS). This program is installing shared rooftop solar systems on community owned homes. The model uses Distributed Energy Resources Management Systems technology to manage network impacts (e.g. balance supply and demand to maintain grid system stability) and share savings. KCSS is currently funded to be delivered in five Kimberley communities. Warmun and Bidyadanga are the first two communities to participate<sup>[1]</sup>.

KCSS enhances energy security in Northern Australia by:

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<sup>[1]</sup> Solar installations are now complete in Warmun, with 431kW of rooftop solar installed across 41 rooftops and being shared with the 78 properties in the community. This has increased the community's percentage of renewable energy to approximately 25%, with the community sharing in the ongoing savings that come from reducing diesel consumption. The first phase of installations is complete in Bidyadanga. As of 31 December 2024, 290kW of rooftop solar have been installed across 26 homes in the community. This first phase has allowed credits to commence accruing with all 133 households.

- Reducing reliance on diesel generators – by installing solar panels on approximately 300 homes, benefiting more than 430 customers across five remote communities, the program decreases dependence on expensive and less sustainable diesel generators. Improving energy resilience through increased solar penetration means diesel reserves will last longer in these remote communities, especially important during the wet season when road access can be limited or cut off entirely.
- Providing cleaner and cheaper energy – KCSS will deliver cheaper, cleaner energy, resulting in an average \$450 annual savings per household.
- Supporting remote and First Nations communities – the program specifically targets remote and First Nations communities (previously locked out of the benefits of rooftop solar), enabling access to renewable energy solutions and creating a more equitable energy transition.
- Enhancing community resilience – by diversifying energy sources and incorporating solar power, the program strengthens the overall resilience of these communities against energy supply disruptions.

Learnings from the first two communities is informing planning for program expansion to other communities. In total, the KCSS program will install approximately 300 rooftop solar systems with a combined capacity of 2MW, delivering an average \$450 in annual energy cost savings per household for more than 430 households.

The KCSS project closely aligns with emerging themes from the First Nations Clean Energy Strategy (community ownership, empowerment, and creative thinking to deliver solutions for remote communities). By enabling all community members to share in the benefits, KCSS is delivering a culturally appropriate solution – shared asset, shared responsibility and shared benefits.

| Key challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Key opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current energy generation is 94% fossil fuel-based, requiring comprehensive grid transformation</li> <li>• Microgrid standards and policy settings need updating to accommodate renewable integration</li> <li>• Limited grid connectivity across the region creates energy access inequities</li> <li>• Skills shortages in renewable energy installation, operation, and maintenance</li> <li>• Regulatory pathways</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewable Energy Infrastructure: The Ord Hydro Power Plant provides a foundation for renewable energy integration, while Lake Kununurra offers fresh water resources eliminating the need for energy-intensive desalination.</li> <li>• Increased Solar and Wind Potential: The Kimberley's solar irradiance and consistent wind patterns create ideal conditions for large-scale renewable energy generation.</li> <li>• Pastoral land reform – diversification of pastoral leases</li> <li>• 95% Crown Land Tenure</li> <li>• 91% Native Title Determination</li> <li>• Traditional Owner partnerships</li> </ul> |

## Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government:

- **Establish a Kimberley Renewable Energy Transformation Fund to support:**
  - Grid infrastructure upgrades
  - Microgrid development for remote communities, small towns, pastoral stations, and emerging industries
  - Battery storage and grid stabilisation technology deployment
- **Develop a Regional Renewable Energy Training Hub in partnership with North Regional TAFE to:**
  - Train local workers in solar installation, maintenance, and grid management
  - Provide pathways for First Nations people into renewable energy careers
  - Support upskilling of existing workers from fossil fuel industries
- **Increased investment support for feasibility studies, business case development, early-stage engagement and independent assessments**
- **Supports the expansion of the Kimberley Communities Solar Saver program to improve energy security in Northern Australia.**
- **Fast-track environmental and regulatory approvals for renewable energy projects that demonstrate:**
  - Increased support for early and properly resourced engagement with Traditional Owner groups
  - Majority or substantial First Nations ownership and participation
  - Local employment and procurement commitments
- **Support the development of green hydrogen export infrastructure at the Port of Wyndham, including:**
  - Pipeline infrastructure from production sites to port facilities
  - Ammonia conversion and storage facilities
  - Enhanced biosecurity and border control capacity for international exports.

## 6. Developing The Critical Minerals Industry

The global transition to net zero and the increasing demand for secure supply chains have significantly elevated the strategic importance of critical minerals to Australia's economic and national security objectives. The Kimberley region contains a range of critical mineral deposits with the potential to contribute meaningfully to emerging industries, provided that enabling infrastructure, energy access and workforce capacity are in place.

The region hosts a number of nationally significant critical mineral and resource projects, including:

- Northern Minerals' Browns Range Heavy Rare Earths Project (Dysprosium and Terbium)
- Speewah Fluorite Project
- Boab Metals' Sorby Hills Silver–Lead Project
- Sheffield Resources and Yansteel's Thunderbird Mineral Sands Project
- Agrimin's Mackay Potash Project at Lake Mackay

These projects present opportunities not only for extraction, but also for downstream processing, value-adding and the development of local supply chains.

| Key challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Key opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited enabling infrastructure and standards required to support mining and processing operations</li><li>• Workforce shortages and skills gaps across construction, operations and maintenance</li><li>• Limited access to reliable and affordable renewable energy to support decarbonised production</li><li>• Lack of local mineral processing capability, resulting in the export of raw materials</li><li>• High freight and logistics costs due to distance and infrastructure constraints</li><li>• Heavy reliance on FIFO/DIDO workforces, which limits local employment outcomes and places additional pressure on housing, services and community amenity</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Significant critical mineral deposits and projects with long-term development potential</li><li>• Strong opportunities for First Nations partnerships and Traditional Owner-led mining ventures</li><li>• The potential to develop a skilled local workforce, including pathways for First Nations people</li><li>• Emerging local supply chains, including a growing and mature Aboriginal business sector</li><li>• Opportunities to integrate mineral extraction and processing with renewable energy generation to produce lower-emissions or "green" minerals</li><li>• Inland service centre in Halls Creek</li></ul> |

## Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government investigates with industry the potential for mineral processing capabilities to capture value-adding opportunities:

- **Extraction, processing, and value-adding activities near shared infrastructure**
- **Research and development facilities for innovative processing techniques suited to Kimberley mineral characteristics**
- **Integration with renewable energy supplies to produce "green minerals" with premium market positioning**
- **Support Traditional Owner-led mining partnerships through venture models that share ownership and decision-making**
- **Upgrade transport corridors connecting critical minerals to Port of Broome and Port of Wyndham along with renewable energy generation and transmission infrastructure**
- **Establishment of an industrial service hub in Halls Creek.**

## 7. Supporting The Development of Export Industries

Export industries are a critical component of emerging economic opportunities across Northern Australia. The Kimberley's proximity to Asian markets, combined with its port infrastructure and natural advantages, positions the region to support time-sensitive, high-value exports across energy, resources and agriculture. Realising this potential, however, depends on coordinated investment in port infrastructure, biosecurity capacity, energy supply and supporting logistics. Tourism is a key export industry in the Kimberley, with increased opportunity to build on international markets to grow the industry, in particular Aboriginal tourism enterprises.

| Key challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Key opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure limitations at ports and along key transport corridors</li> <li>• Inadequate biosecurity infrastructure and services to support expanded export activity</li> <li>• High energy costs affecting processing and manufacturing competitiveness</li> <li>• High freight and logistics costs associated with distance and limited infrastructure</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close proximity to Asian markets, provides a critical competitive advantage for time-sensitive and high-value exports</li> <li>• First Point of Entry status for Wyndham and Broome Ports</li> <li>• Broome International Airport and East Kimberley Regional Airport</li> <li>• Growth of international tourists and Kimberley tourist destinations.</li> <li>• Cruise ship arrivals and cruise ship servicing at the Port of Broome</li> <li>• Koolan Island and Cockatoo Island deep water ports protected from cyclones and can service large capacity shipping and the export sector.</li> <li>• The development of manufacturing at ports and industrial parks</li> <li>• Emerging opportunities in green hydrogen/ammonia, critical minerals, processed agricultural products,</li> <li>• Ord Valley Food and Fibre Precinct – i.e. maximising opportunities with the Kimberley Cotton Gin, agriculture</li> <li>• Expansion of the Ord River irrigation area to support increased agricultural output</li> <li>• Integrate renewable energy to reduce processing costs and carbon intensity</li> </ul> |

## Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government:

- **Accelerate infrastructure and service upgrades at the Port of Broome to support its First Point of Entry status, including:**
  - Expanded border security and biosecurity inspection capabilities
  - Enhanced import infrastructure to reduce reliance on expensive road freight
  - Expanded cold chain facilities for agricultural and aquaculture exports
  - Deepwater berth capacity for larger vessels
  - Integration with clean energy and critical minerals export opportunities
- **Accelerate infrastructure and service upgrades at the Port of Wyndham to support its First Point of Entry status, including:**
  - Modernisation of wharf infrastructure for contemporary shipping requirements
  - Ammonia export facilities aligned with East Kimberley Clean Energy Project
  - Agricultural export processing and storage facilities
  - Expanded biosecurity and quarantine facilities
- **Accelerate infrastructure upgrades at the East Kimberley Regional Airport and the expansion of international flights at the Broome International Airport.**
- **Ensure appropriate all weather road access to key tourism routes and destinations.**
- **Ensure affordable and reliable aviation service access to regional and remote communities.**
- **Develop an Ord Valley Food and Fibre Precinct as a value-adding and export-enabling platform to:**
  - Co-locate primary production, processing, and cold chain logistics
  - Create export-ready products capturing value-adding opportunities
  - Support cotton and agricultural industries
  - Integrate renewable energy to reduce processing costs and carbon intensity

## 8. Supporting The Decommissioning Industry

As Australia transitions its energy and resources sectors, decommissioning and rehabilitation are emerging industries in their own right. The Kimberley is well positioned to support offshore decommissioning, mine site rehabilitation and land restoration activities, leveraging its proximity to offshore assets, existing skills base and strong Traditional Owner land management expertise.

| Key challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Key opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The absence of a coordinated regional or national decommissioning industry plan</li> <li>• Limited local specialist capability in offshore and onshore decommissioning and rehabilitation services</li> <li>• High costs associated with mobilising specialist contractors from outside the region</li> <li>• Fragmented regulatory and approval frameworks across offshore, mining and pastoral sectors</li> <li>• Limited integration of decommissioning, rehabilitation and carbon abatement policy settings</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oil and gas infrastructure in adjacent offshore waters to Broome – i.e. Browse Basin, northern Carnarvon Basin</li> <li>• Port of Broome and associated infrastructure and services</li> <li>• Aging mine sites requiring rehabilitation</li> <li>• Pastoral infrastructure as the industry transitions to low carbon and renewable energy opportunities</li> <li>• Traditional Owner-led mine site rehabilitation design incorporating cultural land management practices</li> <li>• Potential future decommissioning of fossil fuel power generation infrastructure</li> </ul> |

## Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government:

- **Establish an Offshore Decommissioning Hub based in Broome to:**
  - Provide specialist decommissioning services for offshore oil and gas infrastructure
  - Leverage marine access, existing skills base, and proximity to offshore assets
  - Create employment pathways for workers transitioning from extractive industries
  - Build specialist capabilities in environmental remediation and rehabilitation
- **Facilitate Traditional Owner-led mine-site rehabilitation design incorporating cultural land management practices**
- **Research into native species restoration in tropical savanna environments**
- **Carbon abatement integration through vegetation restoration**
- **Support emerging Pastoral Industry opportunities through:**
  - Assessment of aging infrastructure requiring decommissioning or repurposing
  - Carbon farming and biodiversity credit opportunities on decommissioned pastoral land
  - Traditional Owner land acquisition and management programs

- Heritage conservation of significant pastoral infrastructure

## 9. Supporting The Defence Industry

The Kimberley's extensive coastline, and proximity to Southeast Asia positions the region to contribute significantly to national defence capabilities. As geopolitical dynamics in the Indo-Pacific continue to evolve, Northern Australia plays an increasingly important role in surveillance, logistics, resilience and the protection of critical supply chains and trade routes. Strengthening defence presence and supporting defence-related industries in the Kimberley region would deliver both national security and regional economic benefits.

| Key challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Key opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A comparatively low permanent military presence across a vast and strategically significant area</li> <li>• Limited basing, sustainment and support infrastructure in regional locations</li> <li>• Workforce and housing constraints that affect the ability to expand defence and defence-industry activity</li> <li>• Distance from major defence supply and logistics hubs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curtin Airbase</li> <li>• Two regional airports<br/>North-West Mobile Force (Norforce)<br/>Kimberley Squadron is headquartered in Broome with troops and facilities across the region. These units are part of a high priority team responsible for Army reconnaissance and surveillance in remote areas.</li> <li>• Deep water ports of Koolan Island and Cockatoo Island</li> <li>• Barge Ramp facilities at Derby Port</li> <li>• Wyndham Port and the Port of Broome – with First Point of Entry Status</li> <li>• Yampi Sound Training Area – Kimbolton - jointly managed by Defense and Traditional Owners</li> <li>• Defence vessel maintenance</li> <li>• Fuel and logistics capability</li> <li>• Sealing of the Tanami Road between the NT boarder and Halls Creek providing a new freight corridor from the south into the Kimberley</li> <li>• Regional Aboriginal Ranger Network</li> </ul> |

## Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government:

- **Expand Curtin RAAF Base capabilities including:**
  - Integration with education and regional workforce development,
  - Local procurement, and service delivery opportunities for Kimberley businesses

- **Utilisation of the Yampi Sound Training Area Kimbolton (YSTA)** for increased environmentally sensitive training in partnership with Traditional Owners.
- **Develop Maritime Security Collaboration leveraging:**
  - First Nations ranger networks for coastal surveillance and monitoring
  - Integration of civilian maritime assets (pearling, fishing, tourism) in surveillance networks
  - Marine research and monitoring capabilities supporting biosecurity
  - Port infrastructure supporting naval and auxiliary vessel operations
  - Barge infrastructure at Derby Port
- **Establish Defence Industry Supply Chain Opportunities through:**
  - Cybersecurity and communications infrastructure supporting Defence operations
  - Maintenance, repair, and overhaul capabilities for Defence equipment
  - Renewable energy and resilience technologies with Defence applications
- **Create Defence-related Research and Testing Facilities for:**
  - Remote sensing and surveillance technology in tropical environments
  - Renewable energy systems for remote installations
  - Water treatment and management in austere conditions
  - Biosecurity detection and response systems

## 10. Supporting Infrastructure

Emerging industries across Northern Australia will not succeed without coordinated, enabling infrastructure delivered ahead of demand. In the Kimberley, fragmented logistics chains, infrastructure gaps and increasing exposure to natural disasters continue to constrain industry development, elevate costs and undermine competitiveness.

A shift is required from reactive, project-by-project investment to integrated, supply-side planning that recognises infrastructure as a system rather than a collection of individual assets.

Coordinated investment in transport, ports, airports, energy, water, telecommunications and digital infrastructure is essential to support the transition to net zero, critical minerals development and export industries.

Government has a central role in underwriting common-use infrastructure that individual projects or markets cannot deliver at scale, ensuring that enabling infrastructure precedes or accompanies industry development. This approach strengthens emerging industries while also improving export competitiveness, disaster resilience and biosecurity outcomes.

| Key challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Key opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fragmented logistics chains</li><li>• Critical infrastructure gaps</li><li>• High exposure to cyclones, flooding and climate-driven disruption</li><li>• Lack of east-west transport infrastructure and connectivity across Northern Australia</li><li>• Reactive funding models that prioritise short-term projects over system readiness</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coordinated supply-chain corridors</li><li>• Supply side planning and delivery</li><li>• Building community and natural disaster resilience</li><li>• Industry clusters building on comparative and competitive advantage</li><li>• Major enabling infrastructure to connect northern economies</li></ul> |

### 1. Disaster resilience as enabling infrastructure

The Kimberley region is prone to cyclones and the impact cyclones and of ex-tropical cyclones has led to severe flooding impacting on communities, industries, and local businesses. The impact of climate change is going to increase the frequency and scale of natural disasters.

There needs to be a greater focus on resilience at the Commonwealth and State level on supporting local government to work with their communities to build resilience to natural disasters. Sustained and increased investment in resilience, particularly resilient infrastructure and betterment, will ensure future recovery will be faster and less expensive.

There needs to be better consistency in relation to best practice across Australia. We understand betterment is integrated into the Queensland DRFA. It is not in WA. In some States local government contributions are capped at a certain threshold above which the State government fully funds restoration.

## Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government that there are changes to the Disaster Relief Funding Arrangements (DRFA) including the following:

- **Formal recognition given to resilience as part of the DRFA – improving infrastructure in high-risk areas**
- **Shorter assessment period for DRFA claims and Immediate access to funding to commence works**
- **Eligible costs to include Local Government staff wages and equipment, and the associated “ordinary” use of Local Government plant and equipment.**
- **Improved consistency across jurisdictions, including clearer access to Category C and D funding and cost-sharing arrangements that do not discourage State activation**
- **Betterment funding to make assets more resilient at the time of repair or restoration**

In addition, reforms should address practical delivery barriers experienced by remote local governments, including:

- **More commercial refund and acquittal arrangements, such as reasonable retention levels, to avoid delaying works due to cashflow constraints (example – a retention of say 5% until documentation is correct).**
- **Placement of State or Commonwealth staff within affected local authorities to support response, assessment and claims processing**
- **Funding for local government to assess their level of resilience and for activities in line with the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework**
- **A specific funding pool for Aboriginal communities to build resilience and preparedness**
- **DRFA WA funding for Category C and D and activation of this funding**
- **Recognition should be given to establishing infrastructure that would allow for more efficient delivery of works such as boreholes for water in remote locations and leach drains to dispose of blackwater.**
- **Greater emphasis on place-based capacity building in remote regions to ensure communities are better prepared for future disaster events**

## 2. Priority enabling infrastructure

Many of the infrastructure assets required to support emerging industries in the Kimberley are common-use, essential services rather than commercially viable investments. Airports, telecommunications, energy, water and transport infrastructure are fundamental to workforce mobility, freight movement, service access and emergency response across vast and remote areas. In many cases, these assets operate at a financial loss due to the high cost of delivery and maintenance associated with remoteness, low population density and extreme climate conditions. Despite this, local governments continue to fund and operate critical infrastructure because the economic, social and strategic value to communities and industry far outweighs the operating deficits. Without targeted government investment, these infrastructure systems will continue to constrain industry development and regional productivity.

Broome International Airport partnered with Tourism WA to provide financial support to Jetstar in the initial phase of establishing a direct Broome – Singapore air service. The twice weekly flights commenced in June 2024 and operated in peak seasons until 29 July 2025 when Qantas closed Jetstar Asia and all of the Jetstar Asia routes. In the short timeframe the flights proved to be a popular and affordable entry point into Australia for tourists from Asia and Europe. They also supported liveability for residents in Northern Australia who would have previously flown south to Perth to travel internationally. This has been a long-held ambition for the Kimberley tourism industry, Broome International Airport, and the residents and businesses in Broome who stand to benefit from this service. Consolidation of Broome – Singapore route also provides avenues for future air freight considerations for industry. Efforts continue to secure another international air service.

The Federal and State Government has invested significant funds to seal the Tanami Road between the Northern Territory border and the Great Northern Highway near Halls Creek creating a new inland freight route. There will be benefits to the wider Kimberley region, including reduced logistics and freight costs especially for tourism, mining and pastoral operations. The sealed will improve the resilience of the region's logistics network, providing increased redundancy to the regions network in the event of not uncommon road outages. To support this project, it is critical that there is the planning and development of an inland service hub in Halls Creek to service increased freight, whilst creating new opportunities for emerging industries and employment within the Shire.

## Recommendations:

Targeted investment is required across key infrastructure domains to unlock emerging industries

- **Transport and roads:**
  - Complete the Great Northern Highway Dual Lane Bridge Program, replacing all remaining single-lane bridges with dual-lane structures to:
    - Improve freight efficiency and safety
    - Reduce supply chain costs for agriculture, mining, and retail sectors
    - Enhance resilience during flood events
    - Support growing heavy vehicle movements from emerging industries
  - Continues its ongoing commitment to the sealing of the Tanami Road
  - All weather road access to key Kimberley tourist destinations.
  - Establish a Kimberley Road Resilience Program incorporating key local roads
    - For ongoing maintenance, not just capital works
    - Innovation in materials and construction techniques suited to tropical conditions
- **Ports:**
  - Fast-track biosecurity infrastructure at the Ports of Broome and Wyndham to support First Point of Entry status;
  - upgrade Wyndham Port to support hydrogen and agricultural exports;
  - investigate Derby Port reactivation for minerals, freight and potential defence logistics.

- **Airports:**
  - Invest in a second terminal building at the East Kimberley Regional Airport
  - Invest in airport upgrades at the Hall Creek Airport including a runway extension, new hangers, and a new terminal building
  - Progression of Broome International Airport National Interests Assessment and securing of international air routes.
  - Appropriate investment into aviation infrastructure and services on remote Aboriginal communities.
- **Energy:**
  - Develop a Kimberley Energy Transformation Roadmap including:
    - Renewable energy integration to 60-90% of generation
    - Microgrid deployment for remote communities currently on diesel generation
    - Grid interconnection where economically viable to enable renewable energy sharing
    - Battery storage and virtual power plant development
    - Demand management and energy efficiency programs
  - Establish Kimberley Renewable Energy Zone with:
    - Streamlined approvals for renewable energy projects within designated areas
    - Grid infrastructure investment coordinated with generation development
    - Shared transmission infrastructure reducing individual project costs
    - Integration of renewable hydrogen production as grid-scale storage
  - Support the expansion of the Kimberley Communities Solar Saver program to improve energy security in Northern Australia.
- **Telecommunications and digital:**
  - Accelerate the Kimberley Digital Connectivity Program delivering:
    - Satellite broadband backup for remote communities and pastoral stations
    - Cybersecurity infrastructure supporting Defence, government, and commercial operations
  - Accelerate 4G/5G mobile coverage across all major transport corridors
  - Increase investment in Smart Technologies including sensor networks for environmental monitoring (water quality, fire risk, climate data)
- **Water:**
  - Expand Ord River Irrigation Area (ORIA)
  - Invest in Town Water Security across all Kimberley townships including bore field expansion and water treatment upgrades, Water quality monitoring and management and wastewater treatment and reuse for non-potable applications
- **Inland service centre – Halls Creek**
  - Partner with the Shire of Halls Creek, to plan for and to develop an Inland Service Centre, which would support freight, logistics, mining, exploration and service industries following the sealing of the Tanami Road, while providing economic opportunities for nearby Aboriginal communities.

### 3. Industry clusters

Research indicates the benefits of Industry clusters for emerging industries, particularly in regional development contexts like the Kimberley<sup>2</sup>. Key benefits include increased productivity by fostering innovation, knowledge sharing and maximising shared infrastructure and resource investment.

Clusters are seen to accelerate the transition from isolated projects to sustainable ecosystems by delivering economies of scale and reduced costs. Also, they create pools of specialised labour, suppliers, and services. For emerging industries, this means faster access to the specific expertise and inputs needed to scale.

### Recommendations:

To drive emerging industries in the Kimberley, a clustering approach would maximise infrastructure investment and expertise

- **Renewable energy hub:** Hydrogen production, solar/hydro generation, ammonia conversion, and related engineering services creates shared technical expertise and supply chains
- **Agricultural hub:** Clustering cotton, horticulture, and aquaculture with research facilities, processing, and logistics in the Ord River Agricultural region
- **Aquacultural hub**
- **Inland service centre Halls Creek**
- **Resources and processing:** Co-locating critical minerals with value-adding processing facilities and shared port infrastructure
- **Decommissioning services** for offshore oil and gas Broome

### 4. Infrastructure Coordination

Fragmented planning remains a major constraint on infrastructure effectiveness. Without coordination, investment is inefficient and opportunities for shared use are lost.

### Recommendation

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government:

- **Develops a Kimberley Emerging Infrastructure Plan and Roadmap which:**
  - Identify enabling infrastructure requirements
  - Ensure infrastructure precedes or accompanies industry development
  - Coordinate infrastructure planning across all levels of government
  - Reduce duplication and maximise infrastructure sharing opportunities
  - Engage Traditional Owners in infrastructure planning and design

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2024/01/harness-collaborative-potential-industrial-clusters/>  
<https://hbr.org/1998/11/clusters-and-the-new-economics-of-competition>  
<https://www.id.com.au/insights/articles/clustering-for-innovation/>

- Aligned with workforce availability

## 11. Managing Biosecurity Risks

Unauthorised boat arrivals into the Kimberley from South East Asia have highlighted significant biosecurity risks which would have a devastating impact on the agriculture industry and export markets. Livestock biosecurity for extensive pastoral industry includes the introduction of foot-and-mouth disease, African swine fever, lumpy skin disease. The agricultural industry, including the emerging cotton industry, is at risk of exotic plant pathogens and aquatic biosecurity risks to pearling and emerging aquaculture industries.

To prepare for emerging industries, strengthening biosecurity is critical. This includes increased surveillance systems, laboratories, inspection facilities, workforce training, logistics coordination, and real-time data networks.

| Key challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Key opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Over 13,000 kilometres coastline made up of numerous islands, inlets, and complex tidal flats, remoteness,</li><li>• Vulnerable to boat incursions</li><li>• Close proximity to Southeast Asia</li><li>• High volumes of international fishing vessels in adjacent waters</li><li>• Sealing of the Tanami Road between the NT border and Halls Creek – an additional biosecurity risk</li><li>• Limited local diagnostic capacity, inspection infrastructure and surge workforce capacity</li><li>• The growing expectations by State and Federal government onto local governments in providing disaster response capacity without adequate resourcing</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First Port of Entry Status at the ports of Wyndham and Broome</li><li>• Kimberley Aboriginal Ranger Network</li><li>• Opportunities to integrate technology and real-time intelligence networks to improve early detection and response</li></ul> |

## Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government:

- **Establish Kimberley Biosecurity Centre of Excellence with**
  - Diagnostic laboratory for rapid pest and disease identification
  - Research into biosecurity risks specific to Kimberley industries and environment
  - Training hub for biosecurity officers, inspectors, and First Nations rangers
  - Regional coordination of biosecurity intelligence and response

- **Expand First Nations Ranger Biosecurity Roles including:**
  - Coastal surveillance and monitoring for marine pests and exotic species
  - Terrestrial biosecurity monitoring across vast rangelands
  - Integration with land management and cultural heritage protection programs
  - Rapid response capacity for early detection and containment
  - Community education and engagement in remote locations
- **Enhance Port Biosecurity Infrastructure at Broome and Wyndham**
- **Plan for a new quarantine facility on the Tanami Road facilities between the NT and WA borders.**
- **Enhance Agricultural Biosecurity Programs for Cotton industry, horticultural and agricultural expansion, aquaculture, and the pastoral industry which includes pre-border biosecurity collaboration with regional trading partners**
- **Enhance Marine Biosecurity including ballast water management and Aquaculture site biosecurity protocols**
- **Invest in Technology-Enhanced Biosecurity Surveillance:**
  - Establish Biosecurity Emergency Response Capacity including pre-positioned equipment and supplies for rapid deployment and Trained incident management teams

## 12. Training, Attracting and Retaining a Skilled Workforce

Workforce availability is a binding constraint on the development of emerging industries in the Kimberley. Skills shortages, limited access to housing and workforce accommodation, and high cost-of-living pressures affect both industry delivery and the capacity of governments and service providers to support economic growth.

These challenges are shaped by the Kimberley's unique demographic and geographic context. The region has a population of approximately 40,000 people spread across four shires and vast distances. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise around 40 per cent of the Kimberley population, with this proportion significantly higher in some local government areas - for example, approximately 78 per cent in the Shire of Halls Creek. This demographic profile presents both challenges and opportunities for workforce development. While the limited population base constrains the availability of skilled labour, it also underscores the importance of locally based training pathways, culturally appropriate employment models and long-term investment in First Nations workforce participation aligned with emerging industries.

The Kimberley region is experiencing a surge in major public and private investments across mining, energy, infrastructure, and agriculture. These projects promise economic growth, regional employment, and long-term development in emerging industries. Recent research from the Kimberley Development Commission highlights that the projected \$7.6 billion in capital expenditure will yield over 4,000 construction jobs and 2,100 ongoing operational jobs across the region between 2026 – 2036. Critical staff shortages, particularly in construction, health, childcare, and skilled trades continue to pose a significant risk to delivery and impact.

| Key challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Key opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shortages of skilled trades and technicians required across energy, construction, mining services, ports and logistics</li><li>• Access to workforce accommodation and affordable housing</li><li>• High cost of living and limited amenity, affecting attraction and retention</li><li>• Constraints on the availability of essential supporting services (health, childcare and community services), which underpin workforce stability</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High levels of unemployment within sections of the community</li><li>• Kimberley Designated Area Migration Area (DAMA)</li><li>• Notre Dame University Broome</li><li>• Combined University Centre with locations in Broome and Kununurra</li><li>• North Regional TAFE with campuses across the Kimberley</li><li>• Regional employment and training providers</li><li>• Tax incentives and government subsidies (i.e. regional airfares)</li><li>• Local Aboriginal businesses</li></ul> |

## 1. Training

The development of emerging industries in the Kimberley depends on the availability of a skilled, locally based workforce. While the region has significant economic potential across renewable energy, critical minerals, agriculture, aquaculture and maritime industries, workforce shortages remain a key constraint on project delivery and long-term sustainability.

Training responses must be tailored to the Kimberley's context, combining locally delivered skills pathways with wrap-around support that addresses barriers to participation. This is particularly important for supporting First Nations workforce participation and ensuring that emerging industries create enduring local employment opportunities rather than relying on fly-in, fly-out labour models.

## Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government should:

- **Develop targeted local training pathways with wrap-around support in priority sectors:**
  - Renewable energy (solar, wind, battery, hydrogen and microgrid operations)
  - Mining services and critical minerals
  - Agriculture and aquaculture
  - Maritime, ports and logistics
  - Digital and automation skills relevant to emerging industries
- **Ensure emerging industry projects demonstrate credible workforce plans, including:**
  - local employment and training commitments
  - partnerships with local training providers
  - support for First Nations workforce participation
- **Invest in workforce-enabling foundations, particularly housing and essential services, where these are direct constraints on industry delivery**

## 2. Kimberley Designated Area Migration Area

The Kimberley DAMA Head Agreement with the Australian Government is due to conclude in March 2027. This region-specific DAMA is managed by the East Kimberley Chamber of Commerce and Industry (EKCCI) and is well supported by small to large businesses in the Kimberley. It has continued to grow since the inception as the East Kimberley DAMA to the expansion to the Kimberley-wide DAMA.

The Kimberley DAMA has supported many businesses, not-for-profits and organisations that operate in this space to fill roles that cannot be staffed locally, and where an over-reliance was previously placed on temporary or fly-in fly-out workers.

The WA DAMA commenced on 1 July 2024 and currently operates alongside the four existing regional DAMAs in WA, including the Kimberley DAMA. It is managed by the WA State Government Department of Training and Workforce Development.

The Australian Government's intention to shift towards state-based DAMAs and the concern that the Kimberley DAMA will not be extended beyond March 2027 raises important questions and concerns for Kimberley-based businesses. These concerns relate specifically to the Kimberley's unique regional circumstances, workforce needs, and the social and economic outcomes the Kimberley DAMA is working to achieve:

- The Kimberley's workforce needs are very different from WA more broadly. It is one of the most remote regions in the country, with a small, spread-out population and major challenges in attracting and retaining staff. These issues are much more severe than those faced in more accessible areas like Perth and Peel regions. Rolling the Kimberley into a single statewide DAMA risks losing the tailored concessions that have been created to reflect the realities of our labour market.
- The current Kimberley DAMA includes important, region-specific concessions, e.g. lower English language requirements, broader age limits, and adjusted salary thresholds. This information is contained in Appendix One. (These concessions were not made lightly; they were designed to account for higher cost of living, limited housing, access to services, and the lack of local workers in critical social and care sectors. A one-size-fits-all WA DAMA would likely remove or 'water down' these concessions, making it even harder for Kimberley employers to attract and retain staff, especially when competing with bigger, better-resourced centres.
- statewide DAMA would also mean a loss of local decision-making and flexibility. The EKCCI as the Designated Area Representative provides local support, understands the region, and can respond quickly to what businesses need. Centralising this process in Perth would take away that local connection. It would also likely mean slower responses, less tailored advice, and more red tape for Kimberley employers already under pressure.
- Many essential skilled community roles are filled through the current Kimberley DAMA, including childcare educators, disability support workers, and aged care staff. Without the Kimberley-specific concessions and flexibility, these services could face serious staff shortages, leading to instability, service cuts, or even closures in already vulnerable communities.

The Kimberley DAMA has proven to be a critical tool for local businesses and is delivering results for businesses in one of the most remote and challenging labour markets in Australia. The EKCCI is to be commended for the effort dedicated to the success of this program. RDA Kimberley is keen to ensure that progress is not stalled or disrupted, especially at a time when regional workforce stability is more important than ever. Further information on the Kimberley DAMA is contained in Appendix Two.

## Recommendation

**That the Australian Government progresses discussions with the East Kimberley Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Department of Training and Workplace Development to ensure measures (or schedules) are in place to retain Kimberley-specific concessions and occupations, and to explore a regional-based management model as the Kimberley DAMA transitions to the WA DAMA beyond March 2027.**

### **3. Amenity and liveability – investment in local government sustainability**

To attract and retain a skilled workforce to support emerging industries in the Kimberley, towns need to provide a level of appropriate amenity and community liveability. This includes access to housing, childcare, recreation facilities, community services and essential municipal infrastructure.

Local governments are responsible for a range of infrastructure and services that contribute to local amenity such as libraries, aquatic centres, sports and recreation facilities, parks, and gardens to attract and retain a skilled workforce. Also, for critical services and infrastructure vital to functioning towns such as waste management, animal management, town planning, and public health services. The changing infrastructure and service delivery obligations of local government means that Councils increasingly have had to support critical local services such as childcare.

Inherent features of the remote Kimberley region and the higher cost of living make it difficult for residents to attain a comparable standard of living to people who live in cities or large regional areas and to attract and retain staff.

Council rates are the single most important own source revenue for local governments. In the Kimberley rates fare poorly in the context of providing a growing source of revenue to match growing community demands for services. The returns from rates from Councils with a smaller geographic area are far greater per square kilometre than for Kimberley Councils. As small regional and remote Councils with small population bases, Councils have a limited rate base to finance services and infrastructure. The average rate across the 4 Shires is around \$4000 per year, some of the highest rates in Western Australia.

A key issue for Councils is that the value of the Financial Assistance Grant and the allocation methodology. The cost of service delivery in the Kimberley is estimated at between 50-70 percent more than metropolitan Perth. The size of the FA Grant pool is inadequate to meet the needs of local governments across Australia. Also, the allocation method from the

Commonwealth to the state governments, and the allocation within Western Australia to local governments does not enable Kimberley councils to provide an appropriate amount to operate at an average level of service. There is a need to restore the grants to a level of funding which enables Councils to sustainably manage their assets and financial resources in an efficient manner to meet immediate and long-term financial obligations.

## **Recommendations**

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government:

- **Review the quantum of the Financial Assistance Grant.**
  - Consideration be given to increasing the total Financial Assistance Grant pool to at least 1% Commonwealth Tax Revenue to ensure a more sustainable funding pool for Local Governments and restoration of the
  - Financial Assistance Grant funding lost following the 2014-15 to 2016-17 indexation freeze

- **Develop an appropriate indexation methodology**
  - To ensure that Financial Assistance Grants keep up with the cost pressures faced by local governments, whilst also providing consistency to the funding to enable local governments to better forward plan and budget
- **Reset the payment cycle**
  - with an additional once-off payment to correct the current practice of bringing payments forward and then implement a standard payment schedule that doesn't change each year.
- **Change the method of distribution of funds to the States**
  - from primarily based on population, to one that will enable every local government to provide a similar level of service to their community by considering factors beyond population size.
- **Reconsider the guiding principle of Effort Neutrality in the allocation of funds.**
- **Increased investment in dedicated grant funds for Councils to provide improved community infrastructure and services.**
- **The Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program (LRCIP) is extended to give flexibility for Councils to spend where the community needs the funds spent.**
- **An increase in funding to support rural and regional Councils**
  - to reduce their operating costs through the adoption of green technologies such as battery and solar technology.

### 3. Affordable housing

Access to affordable housing and workforce accommodation is a critical enabler of emerging industries in the Kimberley. The absence of a coordinated housing pipeline limits the ability of industry, government and service providers to attract and retain staff.

The Kimberley Development Commission's *Kimberley Regional Housing and Land Snapshot 2023* outlines the structural causes behind the failure of the Kimberley housing market. It states, *"For the past three years, housing has been characterised by skyrocketing demand, especially for rentals – with as yet no response on the supply side"*<sup>3</sup>

The Snapshot Report shows how and why the Kimberley housing market is unique. Unlike most of Australia, in the Kimberley the Government plays a large role in the direct provision and management of housing. Unlike most housing markets, home ownership across the Kimberley is a small part of the total housing mix, with about half of homes in the region provided through nonmarket mechanisms. This is seen through a high percentage (31%) of social housing and employer provided housing (21%). Owner occupied housing only comprises 25% of the market and private rental homes 23%<sup>4</sup>. This presents unique challenges to creating a functioning housing market in the region, making government policy settings and investment critical to drive new housing supply.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.kdc.wa.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Kimberley-Land-and-Housing-Snapshot-Final-Version-Reduce-Size.pdf>. P 7.

<sup>4</sup> Kimberley Development Commission, PowerPoint Presentation to Kimberley Housing Roundtable, July 2024.

To address this, the KRG have developed a Kimberley housing pipeline – a co-ordinated package of shovel ready projects that will deliver around 350 new homes and 960 residential lots across the region. The Pipeline includes a mix of; Affordable rental housing; Key worker housing; and Shared equity homes for purchase along with social housing, which is critical to support local economic participation. The pipeline leverages partnerships and provides certainty to enable business to invest in plant, equipment and to employ apprentices and trainees.

## Recommendation

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia ensure that there are:

- **Targeted Federal and State Government remote and regional housing grant programs**
- **Targeted investment into a Kimberley Regional Housing Pipeline to deliver the affordable homes to meet current and projected housing demand.**
- **Investment in new key worker accommodation**

### 4. Tax incentives

Taxation assistance programs are a critical policy lever in addressing the structural challenges Kimberley councils face in delivering services, supporting economic development, and attracting and retaining a resident workforce. Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) concessions and remote area assistance provisions help offset the significantly higher costs of living and operating in remote regions. The progressive erosion of these concessions has increased council service delivery costs and weakened workforce attraction and retention outcomes.

Remote area assistance measures, including the Zone Tax Offset (ZTO), are intended to incentivise employment in regional and remote locations. Several Kimberley towns—Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek, Kununurra and Wyndham—are eligible for the ZTO. While the offset alone is not a primary attractor, it forms part of a broader package of incentives that is particularly important for lower-income workers.

The effectiveness of the ZTO has been substantially reduced over time. Rates have not been updated since 1993–94, resulting in a significant decline in real value. This has diminished the offset's capacity to support workforce stability and affordability in remote communities, undermining broader regional development and service delivery objectives.

## Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that the Federal Government

- **Increase tax offsets for remote living.**
- **Reform FBT in remote regional Australia** to incentivise work and living regionally
- **Overhaul of fringe benefits tax** to support the cost of buying or renting a house in regional Australia. For example, expand FBT concessions from 50 to 100 per cent for individuals in regional communities to allow people to buy or rent a house, completely with pre-tax dollars.
- **The WA Government remove stamp duty** on the purchase of homes in the Kimberley and/or introduce a stamp duty rebate for home purchase.

- **Provide tax incentives specifically for remote regions** such as reductions in the luxury vehicle tax for 4x4 vehicles.
- **Review the eligibility for remote area housing salary sacrifice** for rental and home ownership is reviewed to support staff attraction and retention.
- **Remove GST provision** on local governments that construct and provide housing.
- **Increase remote area allowances.**

## 5. Access to government services

Access to essential government services is fundamental to workforce stability and community liveability in the Kimberley. Emerging industries cannot be supported without adequate health, mental health, education, policing and emergency services.

### Recommendation

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that the Federal Government

- **Enhance investment in place-based health, mental health, education, police and emergency services infrastructure and services**

## 13. Empowering And Upskilling Local First Nations People

First Nations peoples are not merely stakeholders in the Kimberley's emerging industries—they are the rightful owners and custodians of Country. Economic development in the region must therefore be grounded in First Nations governance, ownership and self-determination, ensuring that emerging industries deliver meaningful, long-term benefits to Aboriginal communities.

Empowering First Nations people to participate in and lead emerging industries requires more than employment targets. It requires culturally appropriate education and training systems, genuine decision-making authority, support for Aboriginal enterprise development, and pathways that align economic opportunity with cultural values, land stewardship and community priorities.

| Key challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Key opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complex barriers including colonialism, dispossession, discrimination, and systemic disadvantage</li><li>• Current education and training systems not always culturally appropriate leading to poor levels of numeracy and literacy</li><li>• Limited access to wrap-around supports required to translate training into sustained employment</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Large Aboriginal population and workforce</li><li>• Over 91% of land has determined Native Title</li><li>• Strong Aboriginal leadership</li><li>• Cultural knowledge and cultural strength</li><li>• Aboriginal business and community enterprises</li><li>• Government and industry employment and procurement policies</li><li>• Aboriginal Ranger Program</li><li>• Pastoral land reform</li><li>• Renewable energy harnessing solar, wind and hydro power</li><li>• Agricultural growth and development</li></ul> |

## Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government:

- **Embed First Nations Economic Participation Principles in projects**
- **Strengthen government's First Nations Employment and Procurement Policies**
- **Increased investment in culturally owned and led education, training and employment services with wrap around support, linked to real jobs**
- **Expand First Nations Ranger Programs as structured pathways into**
  - biosecurity and environmental management
  - conservation and land rehabilitation
  - tourism and cultural enterprise
  - emerging carbon and biodiversity markets

- **Increase investment for Aboriginal employment, business development and community enterprises including, but not limited to;**
  - Tourism (cultural tourism, eco-tourism, hospitality)
  - Land management and environmental services
  - Arts and creative industries
  - Pastoral industry and agriculture development
  - Construction and civil works
  - Renewable energy operations and maintenance
- **Increased investment for feasibility studies, business case development, early-stage engagement and independent assessments**
- **Expand First Nations Leadership and Governance Programs in the Kimberley**

## 14. Barge Landings and Marine Access for Remote Communities

Many remote Aboriginal communities, pastoral stations, and potential tourism sites lack road access, making marine infrastructure essential for, community resilience, emergency response, and economic participation. Marine access critical for construction, fuel, food, and medical supplies.

Marine access is also critical during the wet season and following extreme weather events, when road access is frequently disrupted. Reliable barge landing infrastructure therefore plays a dual role: supporting day-to-day service delivery and enabling emerging industries, while also strengthening disaster preparedness and recovery.

| Key challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Key opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited all-weather barge landing facilities in remote locations</li><li>• Seasonal accessibility due to extreme tidal ranges (up to 11 metres in some locations).</li><li>• High costs of establishing and maintaining remote marine infrastructure</li><li>• Economies of scale</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strengthen and expand current network of barge landings</li><li>• Reduced transport time and transport costs</li><li>• Building increased natural disaster and community resilience</li></ul> |

### Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government:

- **Conducts a comprehensive Remote Barge and Marine Access Audit**
- **Invests in upgrades to barge landing facilities in priority locations.**

## 15. Research And Development

Research and development are essential to understand and address the challenges and opportunities for emerging industries in the Kimberley, and to develop context-appropriate solutions.

There is a significant opportunity to strengthen place-based research capability in the Kimberley by leveraging existing institutions and partnerships, while ensuring that research activity is better coordinated across industry, government and the education sector. Importantly, the integration of First Nations knowledge systems into research and development offers the potential for more sustainable, culturally appropriate and innovative outcomes across multiple emerging industries.

| Key challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Key opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited and inconsistent investment in regionally based research capability</li><li>• Fragmented research activity with limited coordination across industry and government</li><li>• Insufficient pathways to translate research outcomes into commercial or practical application</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notre Dame University campus</li><li>• Combined Universities Centre</li><li>• North Regional TAFE</li><li>• CRC for Developing Northern Australia</li><li>• Research<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Tropical Agriculture</li><li>◦ Aquaculture and Marine</li><li>◦ Renewable energies</li><li>◦ Savannah systems</li><li>◦ Biosecurity</li><li>◦ Waste innovation</li><li>◦ Climate Adaptation</li><li>◦ First Nations Knowledge Systems</li></ul></li></ul> |

### Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that Government research and development activities should prioritise:

- **Solutions addressing Kimberley-specific challenges and opportunities**
- **Supporting emerging industry development**
- **Environmental sustainability and climate adaptation**
- **First Nations participation, knowledge integration, and benefit**
- **Protecting First Nations data Sovereignty**
- **Translation to commercial application and adoption**
- **Building permanent research capacity and careers in the Kimberley**

## 16. Insurance

Insurance plays a critical role in the functioning of Australia's modern economy. Not only does it protect individuals and businesses from the financial risk of the unexpected happening, holding appropriate insurance cover is increasingly viewed as a mandatory legal or contractual requirement.

The Regional Development Australia Kimberley, Kimberley Insurance Review 2025 highlights that the Kimberley insurance market is dysfunctional and in some parts of the region constitutes a failed market. The report found a lack of choice and affordable of insurance represents a critical constrain on the Kimberley economic resulting in a perverse and sub-optimal decisions being made by businesses and households to manage risks.

The Report found that Kimberley premiums were higher than other parts of northern Australia and more than four times that of Perth. A move to see the Kimberley insurance market return over time to a more appropriate premium level (i.e. twice Perth average) would generate significant economic and social benefits: generating between \$150 and \$300 million of benefits (present value) over the next 20 years for the community and economy of the region.

Also, that the Cyclone Reinsurance Pool does not take into consideration the tropical low events that cross the coast outside of the Kimberley (i.e. in the Northern Territory and Pilbara) come with associated heavy rainfall and flooding that impact the Kimberley and its supply chains.

The report found that to address this market failure and return the Kimberley insurance market to a more appropriate and normalised state, intervention by Government is required and essential. The Report outlines twelve recommendations that would influence broader insurance market improvements for the consumer in the Kimberley and beyond. These are contained in Appendix Three.

| Key challenges                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Key opportunities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insurance premiums significantly higher than comparable regions, with limited competition and choice</li> <li>Evidence of market failure, leading to unaffordable or unavailable cover for households, businesses and community infrastructure</li> <li>High insurance costs undermining the feasibility of emerging industry projects</li> <li>The Cyclone Reinsurance Pool does not adequately account for ex-tropical cyclone events and catchment-wide flooding</li> <li>Increased exposure to climate-related risks, including cyclones, flooding and extreme weather, further compounding insurance affordability issues</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong evidence base provided by the RDA Kimberley Insurance Review 2025 to support targeted policy intervention</li> <li>Potential to normalise insurance premiums over time, delivering significant economic and social benefits</li> <li>Reform of the Cyclone Reinsurance Pool to better reflect northern Australia's risk profile and supply chain impacts</li> <li>Improved insurance affordability could unlock investment across renewable energy, tourism, agriculture, pastoral industries and critical infrastructure</li> <li>Opportunity for government-led market intervention to restore confidence and improve long-term resilience</li> </ul> |

## Recommendations

To prepare for emerging industries across Northern Australia that

- **The cyclone event duration definition is expanded under the Cyclone Reinsurance Pool to account for catchment flooding events and ex-tropical cyclones**
- **There is government intervention to address the market failure in the Kimberley insurance market in line with the recommendations of the RDA Kimberley Insurance Review 2025**

## 17. Northern Australian Infrastructure Facility

The Kimberley has received only 4% of the \$4.4 billion committed by the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF) since its establishment. Only two projects in the Kimberley have had loans approved through NAIF. This includes:

- Kimberley Mineral Sands' Thunderbird Mineral Sands Project in the West Kimberley (up to \$160 million).
- Kimberley Cotton Company's Cotton Gin Project in the East Kimberley (up to \$34 million).

This indicates NAIF needs a different operating model to meet its mandate in the Kimberley. Proponents have provided feedback that the NAIF application and due diligence process is lengthy, cost prohibitive, and requires a scale or 'shovel readiness' that sits at odds with the greenfield nature of many opportunities in the Kimberley. In the Kimberley, there is a major funding gap for businesses between the Kimberley Development Commission's Regional Economic Development Grants (maximum grant value \$250,000) and NAIF (often minimum \$10 million project value).

The development of a small loan facility would suit and benefit the Kimberley and its scale of emerging projects and investment. A small loans scheme for Northern WA is likely to be a catalyst for new project development in the Kimberley. It will play a critical role given that the lack of access to institutional lending continues to be a major inhibitor to private investment and business growth in the region.

The 2024-25 NAIF Act Statutory Review made 21 recommendations. Recommendation 20 is that NAIF continue to work with the state governments of Western Australia and Queensland to establish small loans programs. The Kimberley Regional Group supports all recommendations of the NAIF review.

### Recommendation

**That the Australian Government establishes a NAIF small loans program for all eligible proponents including First Nations enterprises.**

## 18. Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Map of the Kimberley



Map from Regional Development Australia Kimberley

## Appendix 2 - Kimberley DAMA

The Kimberley Designated Area Migration Agreement (**DAMA**) is managed by the East Kimberley Chamber of Commerce and Industry (**EKCCI**) and is well supported by small to large businesses in the Kimberley. It has continued to grow since the inception as the East Kimberley DAMA to the expansion to the Kimberley-wide DAMA.

### April 2022 – December 2022 (East Kimberley DAMA)

|                              |                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Businesses endorsed          | 20                                                                                                                             |
| Number of positions endorsed | 90                                                                                                                             |
| Industries                   | Retail, Construction and Trades, Indigenous services, Agriculture, hospitality and tourism, childcare and aged care, aviation. |

### January 2023 – December 2023 (East Kimberley DAMA)

|                              |                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Businesses endorsed          | 17                                                                                                                          |
| Number of positions endorsed | 48                                                                                                                          |
| Industries                   | Retail, Construction and Trades, Indigenous services, Agriculture, hospitality and tourism, childcare, aged care, aviation. |

### January 2024 – December 2024 (Kimberley DAMA)

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Businesses endorsed          | 100                                                                                                                                                            |
| Number of positions endorsed | 282                                                                                                                                                            |
| Industries                   | Retail, Construction and Trades, Indigenous services, Agriculture, hospitality and tourism, childcare, disability care (NDIS), aviation, Education, Transport. |

### January 2025 – November 2025 (Kimberley DAMA; 10 months only)

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Businesses endorsed          | 116                                                                                                                                                            |
| Number of positions endorsed | 219                                                                                                                                                            |
| Industries                   | Retail, Construction and Trades, Indigenous services, Agriculture, hospitality and tourism, childcare, disability care (NDIS), aviation, Education, Transport. |

## Key differences between the WA DAMA and Kimberley DAMA

|                                                  | Kimberley DAMA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | WA DAMA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>English Language Requirements</b>             | Provides occupation-specific English concessions, often more generous than standard thresholds, accommodating roles that are non-client facing or do not require higher English language skills to perform safely.                                                                                                        | Also includes English concessions for selected occupations, but criteria is generally less flexible and uniformly applied across metropolitan and regional areas, more limited in scope and fewer occupations are eligible.                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Income Threshold Concessions</b>              | Employers in the Kimberley can apply for a Temporary Skilled Migration Income Threshold (TSMIT) / Core Skills Income Threshold (CSIT) concession, sometimes paying as little as 90% of the standard threshold for specified occupations. The TSMIT / CSIT concession is available for all occupations in skill level 3-5. | The WA DAMA does not offer TSMIT / CSIT concessions—workers are still required to meet or exceed standard income thresholds of \$76,515 pa, regardless of skill level.                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Skill &amp; Experience Requirements</b>       | The Kimberley DAMA offers reduced years of experience or qualification expectations, tailored by categories in the occupations list. Some occupations bypass certain skills assessments entirely.                                                                                                                         | Includes lowered work experience requirements (e.g. minimum 1 year for TSS 482, 2 years for SESR 494/ENS 186), but again, uniformly across regions without area-specific adjustment, meaning that the framework doesn't differentiate between the needs of metropolitan Perth, regional and/or remote areas like the Kimberley.                                |
| <b>Occupation List &amp; Flexibility</b>         | The Kimberley DAMA contains a tailored list of occupations, including non-ANZSCO roles and many low skilled and semi-skilled jobs critical to the region (i.e. skill level 1 – 5), that the WA DAMA and other standard lists do not cover.                                                                                | The WA DAMA list covers a larger number of occupations across the State but tends to favour higher skilled formal occupations aligned with metropolitan or large regional needs and with standard migration occupation lists (i.e. skill level 1 – 3). There are fewer semi-skilled and low skilled community-based roles that are critical to remote regions. |
| <b>Local Variation &amp; Ongoing Flexibility</b> | The EKCCI as DAR can seek to vary the Kimberley DAMA head agreement to add specific occupations, increased concessions or change technical elements, that is in response to local changes and needs.                                                                                                                      | The WA DAMA can submit variations; however, these are processed through centralized Migration Services, with less direct input from local industry or regional authorities.                                                                                                                                                                                    |

## Appendix 3 - Kimberley Insurance Review 2025 Recommendations

|   | Recommendation                                                                                | Investing Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Government Responsible                       |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Baseline Insurer Establishment                                                                | Establish a public owned, commercially operated baseline insurer as a market alternative of 'last resort,' particularly to service regional and remote locations, Aboriginal Communities and other segments not fully serviced by the market (e.g. targeting WA or Northern Australia).                                                                                                  | Australian Government<br>WA State Government |
| 2 | Removal of Stamp Duty and GST                                                                 | Targeting WA or northern Australia, remove stamp duty and GST on insurance products. GST, for example, is imposed on top of stamp duty and represents a "compounding tax" that disproportionately undermines insurance premium affordability.                                                                                                                                            | Australian Government<br>WA State Government |
| 3 | Review Allowances for Insurance Costs in Government Contract with Community Service Providers | Review whether current contractual allowances in community service program agreements for insurance-related administrative costs remain appropriate and reasonable given heightened cost of insurance.                                                                                                                                                                                   | Australian Government<br>WA State Government |
| 4 | Natural Disaster Risk Pool                                                                    | Establish a Natural Disaster Risk Pool similar to New Zealand.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Australian Government                        |
| 5 | Review Cyclone Event Duration Definition                                                      | Update the definition of a cyclone event to extend duration to account for catchment flooding events and ex-tropical cyclones.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Australian Government                        |
| 6 | Insurance Product Standardisation and Price Approval Reform                                   | Standardise insurance product tiers in general insurance categories for ease of understanding by consumers. This would enable the Australian Government to empower the Minister to approve increases in premiums for core general and property insurance product (such as house, professional indemnity, and public liability). This is consistent with recent health insurance reforms. | Australian Government                        |
| 7 | Legislation against price walking or price optimisation                                       | As per international examples, legislate against the practice of "price walking" or "loyalty penalties" to help customers in soft competition markets not be penalised for staying with the same provider over time.<br>"price optimisation" where differential prices for the same product are driven by perceived capacity to pay, not underlying risk and need.                       | Australian Government                        |

|    |                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                       |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 8  | Pass Through of Premium Reductions                                                                               | Empower the ACCC to ensure that any premium reductions resulting from government supported reinsurance provision are passed onto customers (i.e. not captured by insurers through profit taking).                                                                                                                                                                     | Australian Government |
| 9  | Universal Insurance Coverage Obligation                                                                          | Establish regulation and/or legislation that insurance providers must provide insurance coverage for households and business/ organisations across Australia, regardless of their location to ensure equity of access and universal coverage.                                                                                                                         | Australian Government |
| 10 | Flooding Resilience Rating Home Self-Assessment App                                                              | Expand the bushfire rating home self-assessment app platform to cover other forms of natural disasters and adverse weather events, including post cyclone flooding events. Insurance providers then offer premium discounts based on app ratings, encouraging investment in infrastructure resilience.                                                                | Australian Government |
| 11 | Kimberley Specific Data Reporting                                                                                | Require all data, analysis and metrics for insurance monitoring and reporting by Australian Government agencies be published for the Kimberley (i.e. Broome – Kununurra CRESTA) and Pilbara separately rather than combined for the north west of WA.                                                                                                                 | Australian Government |
| 12 | Community Service Organisation (CSO) and Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations (ACCO) Insurance Coverage | Investigate the potential for the Insurance Commission of WA or another statutory entity to provide insurance coverage to CSO and ACCOs delivering services on behalf of health, justice, education, community, housing, and other State Government agencies, similar to the Victoria Managed Insurance Authority's Community Service Organisation Insurance Program. | WA State Government   |