

## Regional Australia Impact Statement

A Regional Australia Impact Statement (RAIS) provides supporting analysis about how a New Policy Proposal (NPP) or Cabinet submission is likely to impact regional communities, industries and local economies to support Cabinet's decision-making process. It also demonstrates how a proposal aligns with the Government's Regional Investment Framework (RIF) to deliver coordinated, transparent and locally informed investment across regional Australia<sup>1</sup>.

The length of a RAIS depends on the nature of an NPP and its alignment with the RIF. It does not need to duplicate information already found within an NPP or submission. A RAIS may be attached to an NPP or Cabinet submission as required when it is going to Cabinet, or a Committee of Cabinet. The RAIS – Information Sources webpage provides resources which can be used to develop an evidence-base for a RAIS.

We recommend you consult the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (the department) early in the development of proposals via [rais@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:rais@infrastructure.gov.au).

For more information please refer to the RAIS guidance material and information on the department's webpage at <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/regional-australia/regional-australia-impact-statements>.

### Identification of Geographical Impact

Include a statement outlining the geographical impact of the proposal. This may be a high-level statement or give detail, depending on your proposal. Considering the following as appropriate may assist you:

- Are specific regions and/or local governments targeted under the proposal or expected to be differentially affected?
- Might there be impacts of a different scale or type between regions?
- Is the proposal expected to impact a large number of applicants, projects or beneficiaries located in regional Australia?
- Is the proposal a national program which affects regions differently to urban areas?
- Is the proposal intended to apply in the non-self-governing territories of Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Norfolk Island and the Jervis Bay Territory?
- Does the proposal impact regions in Northern Australia as per the Northern Australia boundary?
- You may include a map of affected region(s) here, if appropriate.

### Differential Impacts Assessment

You should consider the direct and indirect impacts of a policy, as well as whether it may have different impacts or need to be implemented differently in or across regional Australia. You should also identify any dependencies affecting the successful implementation of the policy across diverse contexts. For example, a proposal may:

---

<sup>1</sup> Where proposals are based in or have a significant impact on Northern Australia, alignment with the Government's Northern Australia Agenda should also be considered. The Northern Australia Agenda is designed to deliver sustainable and resilient economic and social development in the north. The Australian Government defines Northern Australia as all of the Northern Territory and those parts of Queensland and Western Australia that intersect with the Tropic of Capricorn, as well as the Indian Ocean Territories of Christmas, Cocos and Keeling Islands.

- be dependent on local government capacity in the regions or access to a service or enabling environment in order to be implemented
- target issues disproportionately affecting regional Australia or Northern Australia in particular
- be dependent on State or Territory government, support, co-contributions or regulatory mechanisms, noting the non-self-governing territories do not have a state-level Government
- propose a framework, strategy, negotiating mandate or significant policy statement intended to inform future government investment decisions that will affect regions.

If this is the case, the RAIS should address how the policy proposes to address and account for these impacts. The RAIS should also outline any linkages to other programs and existing funding that complement the proposal.

Policy makers should also outline how any potential negative impacts will be mitigated and managed throughout the development and implementation phase. This might include ongoing consultation, engagement or provision of information to local communities, or revision of the proposed program/activity at key points during implementation.

### Alignment with the RIF

You should consider how the proposal is informed by the guiding principles of the RIF:

- How does the proposal build on the unique strengths, needs and opportunities of a region or regions?
  - This may detail the features of a target region/s that have been considered in policy design, or for a program with numerous individual projects, you may prefer to outline the process that has been or will be used to determine which projects to fund
  - This may also highlight addressing particular regional challenges or capitalising on emerging opportunities. These will be important considerations for proposals which seek to support growth of Australia's net zero economy<sup>2</sup>.
- What engagement or partnerships have helped framed the proposal. i.e. has the proposal been developed collaboratively across the Commonwealth Government and with the States and Territories? How will this be sustained through implementation?
- Has the Territories Division of the department been engaged on impacts and implementation arrangements for the non-self-governing territories?
- How have local people and/or organisations including First Nations communities and/or organisations been consulted, or will there be opportunities for them to be consulted as the proposal is implemented?
- If the policy is likely to be implemented through delivery partners, such as local governments or not-for-profit organisations, have the appropriate resources been considered for sustainability of investment, including implementation and maintenance phases?
- What evidence, data, trends, facts or modelling of regional impacts contributed to the development and design of the policy or program?

---

<sup>2</sup> For proposals which are relevant to the transition to net zero, please consult early with the Net Zero Economy Agency via [NZEA-Strategic-Policy@pmc.gov.au](mailto:NZEA-Strategic-Policy@pmc.gov.au)

- What evidence-based monitoring and evaluation frameworks or processes are being considered?
- If relevant, how does the assessment process support merit-based decision making and deliver high standards of transparency and integrity?

You can also consider how the proposal supports investment in one or more of the four priority investment areas of the RIF (below).

**Investing in People (delete this subheading if not relevant to your proposal/submission)**

Investing in people includes working in partnership with First Nations people<sup>3</sup>, advancing gender equality, supporting people with disabilities, respecting cultural and linguistic diversity and considering impacts across factors including age, financial status and sexual orientation and gender<sup>4</sup>.

You should consider, as appropriate, whether the policy:

- builds the human capital of a region including providing access to education, training and leadership building opportunities
- impacts some demographics differently than others, informed by an understanding of the demographic makeup of the areas being targeted, and what additional supports may be needed to ensure equity of access.

**Investing in Places (delete this subheading if not relevant to your proposal/submission)**

Investing in places is essential to the liveability and resilience of regional Australia.

You should consider whether the policy:

- will leverage, impact or is dependent on the unique attributes of affected regional communities including geographic, environmental, disaster affected, and cultural attributes
- creates or reduces infrastructure which impacts amenity, service delivery, community/social connection, cultural or heritage significance in regional Australia
- appropriately considers the connecting infrastructure in or across regions, which may include public and private transport, telecommunications and services which help people connect in their region
- aligns with existing local or State/Territory Government funding/plans.

**Investing in Services (delete this subheading if not relevant to your proposal/submission)**

Investing in services enhances equality across regional Australia, including health, communications, water, and community services, to ensure no one is held back or left behind. It is important the policymakers understand who is using the services and can ensure all cohorts and communities have access to them.

Consider whether the policy:

---

<sup>3</sup> For support in engaging with First Nations stakeholders and communities, please contact the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) via [FirstNationsImpacts@niaa.gov.au](mailto:FirstNationsImpacts@niaa.gov.au)

<sup>4</sup> If your proposal is anticipated to have a different or disproportionate impact based on gender, please ensure you have engaged with the Office for Women via [GIA@pmc.gov.au](mailto:GIA@pmc.gov.au)

- addresses a gap in regional service provisions, including where delivery may be fragmented or affected by thin markets
- impacts, or is dependent upon, supporting infrastructure in regional communities
- allows for travel times, transport modes and distances to make the service accessibility reasonable and manageable for regionally-located people.

**Investing in Industry or Local Economies (delete this subheading if not relevant to your proposal/submission)**

Investing in industries and local economies is crucial to enabling regions to thrive.

Consider whether the policy:

- diversifies the local economies or industries in regional Australia
- builds resilience for local businesses from impacts of disasters in regional Australia, or due to other disruptions such as impacts of climate change or the transition to a net zero economy
- relies on the capacity of local governments
- contributes to job creation/diversification, regional employment opportunities<sup>5</sup>, and/or a highly skilled workforce, in particular the employment opportunities for First Nations people
- has employment implications in regional Australia relating to rates and types of employment (seasonal, part-time or self-employed, fly-in fly-out (FIFO) and drive-in drive-out (DIDO) workers)
- opens up investment and trade, or affects businesses (small-to-medium in particular) in regional Australia
- is targeted at regions in economic decline or transition, including regions subject to coal and gas fired power station closures or other net zero transition related impacts
- supports sustainability and promotes resilience
- supports businesses to contribute to energy transformation.

Policy makers should consider how the proposal fits with the broader economic context of this region.

- Does the proposal take into consideration existing policies and initiatives across government that support regional development?
- Does the proposal leverage other State, Territory or Commonwealth Government investment to support strategic investment in regional growth and ensure equitable access to services?
- Does the proposal support businesses, entrepreneurs and industry to build resilience, develop and grow and/or invest and establish in regional Australia?
- Does the proposal build upon the existing competitive advantages of a region?
- Does the proposal support the competitive advantages of a region – e.g. the opportunities afforded by the energy transition? Does the proposal contribute to promoting regional Australia and/or facilitate population growth?
- Does the proposal remove barriers to innovation and growth in regional Australia?
- Does the proposal align with other strategic interests and investment in the region, e.g. defence or environmental interests?

---

<sup>5</sup> Consider the [Indigenous Employment and Supplier-use Infrastructure Framework](#)