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MEDIA RELEASE

REDC Welcomes the State Government's Regionalisation Plan

During the Qld Growth Management Summit yesterday the Premier Anna Bligh announced a commitment to a regionalisation plan for the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac region, including a \$10 million package for the Bowen Basin to support future growth.

REDC CEO Narelle Pearse, welcomed the announcement and the focus on regional Queensland for population growth to help with the skills shortages.

"A focus on regionalisation by the State Government is essential if we are to overcome the challenges our region is facing."

"The region has experienced significant growth over the past 7 years, and we do not expect growth to slow. By 2031, based on a high growth series we will see approximately 280,000 people living in our region, and this is most likely a conservative estimate, given the amount of jobs that will come onto the market in the next few years."

"We have \$32 billion in projects that are under study in the region, which potentially equates to 200,000 jobs across all industries in the region. Currently our workforce is 95,000 and as these projects emerge, we need to be planning for more skills through population attraction strategies".

REDC has plans to undertake a "population shift" project under the State Government's QRDI funding which will look at localised strategies around affordable housing, future developments, and how we position our region on the national stage to attract people.

"It is wonderful to see that regionalisation is now a priority of the State Government which clearly matches our local priorities".

"It is important when undertaking these types of projects that they are conducted via a bottom-up approach because each region is different and requires local knowledge and input if they are to be successful."

"We look forward to working very closely with the State Government to achieve the best outcomes for the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac region."

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