

16 January 2017

## ***RDA-Riverina welcomes new Executive Officer***

RDA-Riverina is delighted to welcome a new Executive Officer, as announced today by RDA-Riverina Chair, Diana Gibbs. Ms Gibbs said “Rachel Whiting has joined our team, starting work today based in our Wagga Wagga office.”

Ms Gibbs said that Rachel was appointed because of her special skills and experience, and commended “we are fortunate to have found someone with Rachel’s background, at this particular point in the environment facing Regional Development Australia committees in NSW. We need to develop a new business model, moving away from a dependence on government funding, and finding a sustainable future for our unique organisation. In a previous role, Rachel has done exactly that, when she acted as CEO of The Business Centre Pilbara, in Karratha WA.”

Ms Gibbs added “Rachel has a wide range of experiences and expertise, and during her time in Karratha was able to more than double revenue for The Business Centre. She has also worked with rural communities over three States, and so has an impressive depth of knowledge of a wide range of regional issues. She comes from a farming family, and has also worked with RDA Committees.”

Ms Gibbs also acknowledged the contribution made by Lani Houston, a previous EO of RDA-Riverina, in saying “Lani Houston has been acting as Interim EO for RDA-Riverina since October when Mark Ritchie left us, and her deep understanding of the needs of the position has enabled us to continue to work effectively for the Riverina Region. We are very grateful to Lani for coming back to us on a part-time basis, and also for being available to assist the hand-over to Rachel”.

“The recent announcement by Minister Barilaro that our State funding is to be continued until the end of 2017 is also welcome news”, Ms Gibbs said. “With a new EO, and secure funding for 12 months from both the State and Australian governments, we look forward to an exciting time working with regional businesses to continue to stimulate strong growth in the Riverina.”

For more information please contact:

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