

1. Overview

Chairman's Message



I am pleased to present the Pilbara Development Commission's 2015/16 Annual Report.

The Pilbara continues to punch above its weight, and the same could be said for the Pilbara Development Commission (the Commission). For an organisation of 21 staff members, the Commission has been responsible for securing \$61.8 million in Royalties for Regions funding for 23 projects in 2015/16. This includes the Karratha

Arts and Community Precinct, the East Pilbara Innovation Centre and the Paraburdoo Community Hub, which were successful in securing funding through the Pilbara Cities initiative. Meanwhile, the annual Regional Grants Scheme and Community Chest Fund continued to provide valuable support for grass roots community projects, such as the Pilbara Destination Guide, Newman Town Square Activation and Karijini Experience event.

The Pilbara's transformation since the launch of the Pilbara Cities initiative in 2009 has been nothing short of remarkable and heralds a new era of normalisation for the region. The Pilbara is now characterised by first-class community facilities, and high quality education and health services, infrastructure and land supply are meeting the needs of the growing population, and there are new opportunities for business growth and diversification. The Pilbara is a place people are choosing to call home and to raise a family. The Pilbara Cities initiative has laid a solid foundation for this transformation, and the Pilbara Regional Investment Blueprint (the Pilbara Blueprint), launched in October 2015, formalises our stakeholders' aspirations for continued growth and prosperity to 2050.

The Commission enters the new financial year with a refreshed strategic plan, guiding cultural values and a dynamic team under strong leadership. In July 2016, we welcomed the formal appointment of Mr Terry Hill as Chief Executive Officer following an 18 month tenure acting in the role. The Commission, under Terry's leadership, has strengthened its relationships with key stakeholders and partners which places us in a good position to deliver the Pilbara Blueprint.

In 2015/16, we welcomed five new Board members; Cr Jeton Ahmedi, Cr Gerry Parsons, Mr Owen Hightower, Dr Alan Eggleston and Cr Julie Arif. The diversity and experience of the Board is an asset to the Commission and the region, and I'm privileged to work among such passionate and experienced individuals.

The tenures of Cr Robin Vandenberg, Cr Lynne Craigie, Ms Gloria Jacob and Cr Fiona White-Hartig concluded over the last 12 months. I take this opportunity to thank them for their commitment and dedication to the economic and social development of the Pilbara.

I would like to thank the Minister for Regional Development, the Hon. Terry Redman, and his staff, for their ongoing support and advocacy for regional Western Australia, and in particular the Pilbara.

Finally, thank you to the businesses and residents of the Pilbara for making the region a vibrant and exciting place to live and work. I congratulate you for your resilience during changing economic times and encourage you to continue to ensure the story of the “new Pilbara” is heard. The pipeline of future investments in new industries such as agriculture, tourism and renewable energy present exciting opportunities for businesses. I can confidently say the Pilbara is well placed to capitalise on these opportunities that will strengthen and diversify the region’s economy.

It is a privilege to be serving as Chairman of the Pilbara Development Commission and I look forward to your continued support in the coming financial year.

Chris Gilmour
Chairman

Executive Summary

Key highlights 2015/16

July

- Karratha Youth Shed Stage 2 completed

August

- Expression of Interest released for Millstream-Chichester ecotourism development

September

- Pilbara Water Resource Assessment study completed

October

- Pilbara Regional Investment Blueprint officially launched by the Minister for Regional Development
- Committee for Economic Development Australia (CEDA) Pilbara State of the Regions Forum held in Karratha
- New Pilbara Development Commission website launched

November

- REMPLAN investment portal launched
- Construction commenced on Health and Community Services Training Centre

December

- Commission refreshed organisational values

January

- New rounds of Community Chest Fund and Regional Grants Scheme announced
- Established internal working group to support young emerging leaders in the region
- New internal operating model introduced with resources aligned to the Pilbara Blueprint pillars

February

- Onslow Business Investment Guide launched
- Construction commenced on St Luke's Performing Arts Centre

March

- Newman Chamber of Commerce's new website launched
- Funding announced for Roebourne Victoria Hotel redevelopment
- Funding announced for two year creative business partnership
- New staff development tool, MyPlan, implemented

April

- East Pilbara Arts Centre in Newman officially opened

May

- Inaugural Aquaculture Western Australia State Forum hosted
- East Pilbara Innovation Centre funding announced
- Funding announced for Karratha Arts and Community Precinct
- Funding announced for Newman Hospital redevelopment

June

- East Pilbara Arts Centre awarded a finalist at the Institute of Public Administration Australia Awards
- Youth Involvement Council HQ in South Hedland officially opened
- The Quarter development in Karratha opened
- Karratha Health Campus earthworks and site preparation completed
- Funding announced for Pilbara Heavy Haulage Girls Training Institute
- Funding secured for Paraburdoo Community Hub