

SUSTAINING REGIONS

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Foreword

Your editor apologises for the lateness of this issue. Despite your editor's concern that 2014 will be a challenging year for Australian regions the news is not all bad, following the Audit Review and the Australian Budget. The Regional Development Australia program funding continues, sometimes under a different name. The infrastructure spending in urban and non-urban regions is welcome. Of course the delays and difficulties affecting implementation of the Budget introduce uncertainty.

Australian Budget and Audit Review

The Australian Budget has continued funding infrastructure in regional Australia using a mixture of new and existing programmes. See <http://investment.infrastructure.gov.au/funding/>

The Australian Government budgeted investment in infrastructure is divided across a wide variety of projects. These include National Projects, Off-Network Projects, Roads to Recovery, Black Spot

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Programme, Funding for Local Roads, Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Programme, Innovation and Research, Liveable Communities Programme, National Smart Managed Motorways Programme, and the Bridges Renewal Programme.

In addition grants include Community Development Grants Programme, Indian Ocean Territories Community Development Grants Programme, La Trobe Valley Economic Diversification Programme, South Australian Murray River Sustainability Programme, Tasmanian Jobs and Growth Package, and the National Stronger Regions Fund.

“The Government’s new \$1 billion National Stronger Regions Fund will provide funding over five years from 2015–16. The Fund will support investment in priority infrastructure that creates economic development opportunities across Australia's regions.

“Funding will help communities, particularly those with poor socioeconomic circumstances and higher than average unemployment, by improving local facilities, creating local jobs and building needed infrastructure.

“Organisations, including councils and community groups, will be able to apply for grants between \$20,000 and \$10 million, to meet up to half the cost of community building projects.

See <http://investment.infrastructure.gov.au/funding/NSRF/index.aspx>

In this issue we review progress of the Australian Parliamentary Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia, and provide extracts from the Green Paper.

Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia

The House of Representatives Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia provided an interim report to Parliament in June 2014.

<http://www.aph.gov.au/~media/02%20Parliamentary%20Business/24%20Committees/244%20Joint%20Committees/JSCNA/Interim%20Report/FullReport.pdf>

This Newsletter covered some submissions to the Joint Select Committee in the previous edition. The terms of reference have been extended to consider policies for developing the whole of Northern Territory and the parts of Western Australia and Queensland which lie north of the Tropic of Capricorn.

The work of the Joint Select Committee is now complemented by a Green paper.

In this section we review both documents.

Inquiry into the Development of Northern Australia, Interim Report.

Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia, *Inquiry into the Development of Northern Australia, Interim Report*. The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, June 2014

The Joint Select Committee describes the inquiry as:

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“part of an overall policy commitment by the Government, setting out the *Coalition’s 2030 Vision for Developing Northern Australia*, to pursue the development of Northern Australia. The 2030 Vision, released in June 2013, drew attention to Australia’s geographic position between ‘the two great regions of global economic and population growth—the Asian region and the Tropical region.’ The paper predicted that the rise of these regions would create significant opportunities for Northern Australia to capitalise on its strengths and unlock major economic value for the benefit of all Australians.” (Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, June 2014, *Inquiry into the Development of Northern Australia, Interim Report*, Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia: Canberra. p.4)

“The development of Northern Australia has been the subject of numerous reviews over a long period of time. For example, in 1947 the Northern Australian Development Committee published its report on the Development of Northern Australia (Coombes, H.C. 1947. *Development of Northern Australia*, Report of the Northern Australian Development Committee, Canberra.). In 1992, Professor Percy Harris of James Cook University presented ‘A Strategy for Promoting the Economic Growth of Northern Australia, Report to the Commonwealth Government’ (Centre for Applied Economic Research and Analysis, JCU, Townsville) containing approaches for economic development that still have currency today.”

“These reports focussed on:

- Commonwealth/State co-operation
- A review of taxation
- Promoting exports
- Developing infrastructure
- Improving land use and land access
- Reducing transport costs
- Recognising regional variation in the development of policy.”(p.2)

“The Committee on Darwin, *Report of the Committee on Darwin*, (Australian Government Printing Service, Canberra, 1995.) noted that the region must generate economic growth through a private sector which competes internationally rather than relying on proximity to East Asia, population growth and government spending. (p.2)

<https://www.pm.gov.au/media/2014-02-28/northern-australia-white-paper-underway-0>

White Paper on Developing Northern Australia – Terms of Reference

“The Government will produce a White Paper on Developing Northern Australia within 12 months. The White Paper will set out a clear, well-defined and timely policy platform for realising the full economic potential of the north, including a plan for implementing these policies over the next two, five, 10 and 20 years.

“Northern Australia is broadly defined as the parts of Australia north of the Tropic of Capricorn, spanning Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland; an area of approximately three million square kilometres with a population of around one million people.

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“The north has some natural advantages relating to agriculture, mining, energy and tourism. It also has geographic advantages from its proximity to the fast-growing Asian and Tropical regions, presenting opportunities in services such as education and health. The north also has strategic importance, with defence having an important role in the security and development of northern Australia.

“However, it faces significant economic, environmental and social challenges, including a sparse population; infrastructure, transport and service delivery costs; competition for skilled labour; harsh and extreme weather; and possible constraints around water resource development.

Purpose

“The White Paper will:

- produce a stocktake of Northern Australia’s natural, geographic and strategic assets, and the potential for further development of the region’s minerals, energy, agricultural, tourism, defence and other industries, as well as a comprehensive assessment of risks and impediments to growth;
- set out agreed policy actions to: harness opportunities which capitalise on the region’s strengths, including ways to advance trade, cultural and investment links with the Asia Pacific region and provide a regulatory and economic environment that is conducive to business investment, competitiveness and competition.
- manage impediments to growth, including from regulatory frameworks, land access arrangements, environmental constraints, the lack of coordinated planning, participation of Indigenous people in the economy and access to markets, skills and services, and
- create the right conditions for private sector investment, innovation, enterprise growth and business formation (including in and for Indigenous communities);
- identify the critical economic and social infrastructure needed to support the long-term growth of the region, and ways to incentivise public and private planning and investment in such infrastructure; and
- include consideration of the policy options identified in the Coalition’s *2030 Vision for Developing Northern Australia*.

Green Paper on Developing Northern Australia

Commonwealth of Australia, 2014, *Green Paper on Developing Northern Australia* (PDF) 978-1-922098-38-2 www.northernaustralia.dpmc.gov.au

Source: Licensed from the Commonwealth of Australia under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia Licence. The Commonwealth of Australia does not necessarily endorse the content of this publication.

“Unlocking the potential of northern Australia will require government leadership that fosters private sector investment and ingenuity. ...

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“While government commitment and coordination is important, private sector initiative will be essential. The role of government in developing the north will be to create a regulatory and economic environment that fosters viable private sector investment.

“In view of the challenges, strengths and opportunities that characterise northern Australia, the Government has identified six broad policy directions that could be pursued in the White Paper. These broad policy directions would build on existing initiatives and streamline consideration of any new initiatives proposed for the White Paper.

Table 1: Six broad policy directions for northern Australia

INFRASTRUCTURE	LAND	WATER
Productive new infrastructure	Diverse and longer pastoral leases	New infrastructure to support industries and communities
Better use of existing infrastructure	Flexible leases for Indigenous landholders	Comprehensive water resource assessments
Better planning and understanding of infrastructure opportunities and benefits	Efficient native title processes	Best practice planning and management
	More accessible information	Water markets
BUSINESS, TRADE AND INVESTMENT	EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION	GOVERNANCE
Deregulation agenda for the north	Building capabilities and skills	Collaboration across governments
Workforce availability and skills that meet business needs	Partnerships with world leading institutions	Effective engagement with, and presence in, northern Australia
New markets and greater trade links	More international students	Efficient service delivery
Innovative business-friendly policies	Effective engagement with international development in the region	Capable and sustainable local institutions

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Section D Policy Directions (Green Paper, p.43)

“The Government has identified six possible policy directions to develop northern Australia.

- **Delivering economic infrastructure:** including through planning and prioritising projects and identifying effective ways to fund and finance them, particularly through leveraging private sector investment.
- **Improving land use and access:** including through more flexible and longer term tenure, greater consistency across jurisdictions, new ways for Indigenous Australians to use their land for development, efficient native title processes and more accurate information.
- **Improving water access and management:** including through better understanding of systems, planning and investing in new infrastructure (such as dams) and reforming water management and planning, including functional water markets.
- **Promoting trade and investment and strengthening the business environment:** including through boosting population, improving labour availability, cutting red tape and increasing trade, especially with Asia.
- **Fostering education, research and innovation:** including through developing research networks, improving local workforce and industry skills and engaging with international education and training markets.
- **Enhancing governance:** including through better coordinating government and non-government activities, greater engagement with the north and building local capacity.

“These directions are not mutually exclusive. For example, industries such as agriculture, tourism and mining all stand to benefit from reduced business costs, productive infrastructure, secure land tenure and reliable access to water.

“The actions needed to drive development in the north coalesce around major themes, including:

- the specific opportunities for industries, particularly agriculture, tourism and mining
- the importance of well functioning cities as the economic engine rooms of the north
- the critical role of Indigenous communities in northern development.

“Developing northern Australia is not an exercise for the Australian Government alone — many policy responsibilities do not rest with the national Government. All governments need to act and work together, along with the private and community sectors, to implement practical plans with timeframes to achieve this vision.

Source: Green Paper pp. 43-44

The deadline for submissions has passed.

Green Army Launched 2 August 2014

‘Green Army Project Guidelines Round 1 Commonwealth of Australia 2014’.

“The Australian Government has committed to establishing a Green Army to help local communities deliver environment and heritage conservation outcomes across Australia. Projects delivered by Green Army Teams will be guided by local community needs and contribute to Australia’s environmental priorities and obligations to conserve and rehabilitate Australia’s natural, historic and Indigenous heritage assets.

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“The Programme is a voluntary programme available to a broad range of young Australians aged 17-24, including Indigenous Australians, school leavers, gap year students, graduates, and job seekers. It will provide young Australians with opportunities to develop skills, undertake training and gain experience in the delivery of conservation projects. Through this, Participants will enhance opportunities for careers and further training in conservation. ...

“The Programme has a strong focus on achieving real and practical environment and heritage conservation outcomes, and will help thousands of young Australians explore career opportunities whilst gaining practical and hands-on skills, training and experience.

“The Programme aims to engage, train and deploy a total of 15 000 Participants to Projects between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2017, commencing with 2500 Participants in 2014–15, 5000 Participants in 2015–16 and 7500 Participants in 2016-17. From 2018–19 the Programme will engage 15 000 people per year. p.1

“A Project involves a Team of up to nine Participants and a Team Supervisor engaged over a period of 20-26 weeks to deliver a suite of activities ...that support environmental and/or heritage conservation outcomes.

“Projects may be carried out across urban, regional and remote Australia, on Public Land, Indigenous managed lands, or private land where there is a clear community and environmental and/or heritage benefit. p.5.

Regional Australia Institute

The Regional Australia Institute has announced the expansion of [In]Form: Australia’s online library of regional research. Check it out here:

<http://inform.regionalaustralia.org.au/>

CURRENT RESEARCH

News from Beyond the Black Stump

In this section we hope to provide space for reviews and references covering off-beat events, studies and observations from the wide-world of regions.

Notes from the Off-Beat Academic

Some unusual Demography/Labour market work from the National Vocational Education and Training Authority (NVETRA).

We are accustomed to NVETRA analyses of training, apprenticeships etc. but their June 14th

Newsletter had two studies that bear directly on regional and northern development:

Atkinson, G & Hargreaves, J. An exploration of labour mobility in mining and construction: who moves and why.

http://www.ncver.edu.au/wps/poc?urile=wcm:path:ncver_shared/Publications/2703

Labour mobility is a complex concept because people change jobs for a variety of reasons, in different ways and with different outcomes for their lives and careers. This study explores what motivates people to change jobs and examines the influence of their employer, occupation or industry, and investigates their geographic

mobility on either a permanent or temporary basis.

The project also explores the extent to which qualifications or licensing requirements represent a barrier for workers considering mobility, particularly in the mining and construction industries. Combining a broad literature review with a small qualitative analysis capturing the views of employers, labour hire and recruitment firms, this study reflects the diverse range of factors affecting the supply and demand for skills.

The study finds that the majority of labour mobility decisions are driven by the personal priorities of the individual, including family commitments.

Nichols, A. & C. Shah, C. Incentives for relocating to regional Australia: estimates using a choice experiment.

http://www.ncver.edu.au/wps/poc?urlile=wcm:path:ncver_shared/Publications/2727

How individual and job characteristics are related to a willingness to move location for work is the focus of this study, which is unique in that it estimates the monetary value of incentives required. A discrete choice experiment analyses the stated preferences of a sample of people from two states in Australia. The findings indicate that some groups require a wage incentive to move, while others do not. Policies promoting geographic labour mobility are more likely to succeed if demand-side factors such as the skills and experience that employers need are taken into account. This work is one of three projects undertaken by the Centre for the Economics of Education and Training at Monash University as part of their three year (2011-13) research partnerships with NCVER to explore the geographical dimensions of social inclusion and VET in Australia.

Papers in Regional Science

ABSTRACTS Vol 93(3) August 2014

pp.: 557-575

Human capital in firms and regions: Impact on firm productivity

Michaela Bachman

Jönköping International Business School, Centre for Entrepreneurship and Spatial Economics (CEnSE), Jönköping, Sweden

This paper analyses the importance of human capital for firm productivity and makes a clear distinction between the role of human capital inside and outside of the firm. A multilevel model is used for the business service sector in Sweden controlling for heterogeneity across the industry and municipal level. Human capital in firms in terms of education, experience, and cognitive skills and the firm's overall access to human capital has a positive impact on firm productivity. In addition, firm attributes explain the largest proportion of firm productivity variance.

pp. 577-594

Does religious affiliation affect migration?

Pablo Neudörfer and Jorge Dresdner,

Department of Economics, Universidad de Concepción, Chile

We test whether social networks at the origin, measured by religious affiliation, affect out-migration. The basic idea is that a social capital loss is attached to the decision to out-migrate, and said loss increases migration costs because benefits received from the local network at the origin disappear. To test this hypothesis, we estimated conditional and mixed logit models for the decision to out-migrate. The results supported the hypothesis: members from

religious organizations with strong intra-community and weak intercommunity ties tended to out-migrate less than others. This result was highly significant and robust to model specification and estimation methods.

pp.: 619-642

The economic effects of facilitating the flow of rural workers to urban employment in China

Yinhua Mai, Xiujian Peng, Peter Dixon and Maureen Rimmer

Centre of Policy Studies, Monash University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Using a dynamic computable general equilibrium model of the Chinese economy we investigate the economic effects of relaxing China's household registration system over the period 2008 to 2020. The modelling results show that reducing the institutional restriction to rural labour movement will encourage rural workers to move from agricultural and rural non-agricultural sectors into urban sectors. This enhanced labour movement will not only increase China's GDP and real consumption of households but it will also raise the real wages of agricultural and rural non-agricultural workers. Although the real wage of rural migrant workers will increase at a slightly lower rate than in the baseline scenario, rural migrant workers remain considerably better paid than agricultural and rural non-agricultural workers.

pp. 643-662

Serving regional demand in facility location

Jing Yao and Alan T. Murray

GeoDa Center for Geospatial Analysis and Computation, School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ, USA

Location modelling is employed in urban and regional planning to site facilities that provide services of some sort. Issues to be considered usually include the number of facilities to locate, where to site those facilities and how demand is to be served. Given the geographic nature of location problems, a key issue is how to represent facilities and demand in geographic space. Traditionally, spatial abstraction as discrete demand is assumed as it simplifies model formulation and reduces computational complexity. However, errors in derived solutions are likely not negligible, especially when demand varies continuously across a region. This paper discusses a single facility location problem that considers demand to be continuously distributed and allows a facility to be located anywhere in space, the continuous Weber problem. An approach for dealing with continuous demand is proposed that is integrated through geographical information system (GIS) functionality. Empirical results highlight the advantages of the developed approach and the importance of solution integration with GIS.

pp.: 663-683

A Bayesian approach to hedonic price analysis

David C. Wheeler, Department of Biostatistics, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA, USA

Antonio Páez, School of Geography and Earth Sciences, McMaster University, Ontario, Canada

Jamie Spinney, Department of Geography, St. Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, and

Lance A. Waller, Department of Biostatistics and Bioinformatics, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, USA.

Two important objectives in hedonic price analysis are to predict sale prices and delineate

submarkets based on geographical and functional considerations. In this paper, we applied Bayesian models with spatially varying coefficients in an analysis of housing sale prices in the city of Toronto, Ontario to address these objectives. We evaluated model performance and identified patterns of submarkets indicated by the spatial coefficient processes. Our results show that Bayesian spatial process models predict housing sale prices well, provide useful inference regarding heterogeneity in prices within a market, and may be specified to include expert market opinions.

pp.: 685-701

Mapping average equivalized income using robust small area methods

Enrico Fabrizi, DISES, Università Cattolica, Piacenza, Italy

Caterina Giusti, DSMAE, Università di Pisa, Pisa, Italy

Nicola Salvati, DSMAE, Università di Pisa, Pisa, Italy, and

Nikos Tzavidis, Southampton Statistical Sciences Research Institute, University of Southampton, Highfield, Southampton, UK

Measures of economic well-being are often needed for geographically small areas, as economic indicators may be distributed unevenly among the subsets of relatively small regions. We consider small area estimation of average equivalized income. Disposable household income data are usually available only for a sample of households, typically too small to provide reliable estimates for small regions. We consider a small area estimation technique that is robust to outliers, produces results consistent with design weighted estimates obtained for larger areas and yield maps with approximately no shrinkage. The proposed methodology is applied to the Local Labour Systems in Tuscany (Italy).

New Books

HANDBOOK OF RESEARCH METHODS AND APPLICATIONS IN SPATIALLY INTEGRATED SOCIAL SCIENCE

Edited by Robert Stimson, The University of Melbourne, Australia

Building on the foundations of human geography and regional science, there has now emerged a powerful theoretical basis that underpins a spatially integrated approach in social science research. This approach explicitly recognizes the key role that geographical (or spatial) concepts – such as distance, distribution, location, proximity, connectivity, place, neighbourhood and region – play in human society and the behaviour of individuals, groups and organizations. It also promotes research that advances the understanding of spatial patterns and processes.

The chapters in this unique Handbook provide broad coverage of the theoretical foundations and methodologies that typify research using a Spatially Integrated Social Science (SISS) approach. This insightful volume is intended chiefly as an introduction for students and budding researchers who wish to investigate social, economic and behavioural phenomena by giving explicit consideration to the roles of space and place. The majority of chapters provide an emphasis on demonstrating applications of methods, tools and techniques that are used in SISS research, including long-established and relatively new approaches.

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Accessible and packed with key instructions on organising SISS research, the book is structured into five distinct parts which give the reader a unparalleled overview of the field:

- A Spatially Integrated Social Science Approach
- Setting Up Your Research
- Data Sources, Data Collection and Information Generation
- Research Tools and Techniques and Applications
- Producing Research Output

This volume will appeal to all students and researchers with an interest in understanding the techniques, method and application of the spatial dimension of social sciences.

Contributors include: Imran Azeezullah, Irfan Azeezullah, A. Beer, M. Bell, D. Brown, C. Brundson, P. Chhetri, J. Corcoran, G. Daraganova, D. Faulkner, M. Goodchild, K. Grossner, A. Harding, K.E. Haynes, B.W. Head, G. Hugo, D.G. Janelle, L. Mazerolle, R. McCrea, T. McGee, P. McGuirk, W. Mitchell, A. Murray, K. O'Connor, P. O'Neill, P. Pattison, J. Piajulir, J. Poot, K. Risley, D. Rohde, T.-K. Shyy, A. Sorensen, R.J. Stimson, R. Stough, R. Tanton, M. Watts, M. Western, R. Wickes

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Beyond the North–South Culture Wars: Reconciling Northern Australia's Recent Past With Its Future

Allan Dale, explores the conflicts which exist between northern and southern Australia. Increasingly, Australia's agriculturalists are looking to the nation's north to escape the decline in southern Australia's water and soil resources. Booming mineral and gas development is also helping to drive the nation's economic success. At the same time, the south's conservation sector would like to see much of the north preserved as iconic wilderness.

Both conservation and resource development interests alike are often at odds with the interests of the north's traditional owners, many of whom remain trapped in welfare dependency and poverty. Indeed, to the ire of north Australians, the past four decades of north Australian history have indeed been characterized by these national-scale conflicts being played out in regional and local communities.

Beyond the North–South Culture Wars explores these conflicts as well as the many emerging opportunities facing the development of the north, suggesting that a strong cultural divide between northern and southern Australia exists; one that needs to be reconciled if the nation as a whole is to

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benefit from northern development. The author first explores where these historical conflicts could take us without a clear forward agenda. A story-based personal narrative from the author's long and diverse experience in the north gives life to these themes. Finally, the book draws on these stories to help shape a cohesive agenda for the north's future.

Associate Professor Allan Dale is the Research Leader in Tropical Regional Development with James Cook University's Cairns Institute and an Honorary Professorial Research Fellow with Charles Darwin University's Northern Institute. He has research, management and policy experience in regional development and natural resource governance, including in northern Australia's pastoral, fishing, forestry, tourism, and mining sectors. Before joining the Cairns Institute, Allan was the CEO of one of the nation's leading community-based regional natural resource management bodies, Terrain NRM. Allan is also Chair of Regional Development Australia (Far North Queensland and Torres Strait).

Allan Dale, *Beyond the North–South Culture Wars: Reconciling Northern Australia's Recent Past With Its Future*. Springer 2014, 148 p., 12 illus., 6 in colour. Hardcover € 49,99 | £ 44.99 | \$ 54.99. ISBN 978-3-319-05596-1 Also available as an eBook

Contact: Joan Robinson | Springer | tel.: +49-6221-487-8130 | joan.robinson@springer.com

Alternatively, visit the book home page on:

<http://www.springer.com/earth+sciences+and+geography/geography/book/978-3-319-05596-1>

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ABOUT ANZRSAI

ANZRSAI Annual Conference 2014



ANZRSAI invites people who are interested in any aspect of regional science, regional development or regional policy to participate in its 38th annual conference, which will take place this year in Christchurch, New Zealand, 1-4 December 2014.

The central business district of Christchurch was devastated by a series of earthquakes in 2010 to 2012, but is now well on the path to recovery (see the short video by Future Christchurch at <http://vimeo.com/105076491>). Earlier this year, the *New York Times* listed Christchurch as one of its top places to go in 2014, saying that “the city is experiencing a rebirth with creativity and wit – thanks to the ingenuity of its hardy residents” (<http://nyti.ms/1gtasH9>).

Our location provides the inspiration for the core theme of our conference “Regions in Recovery: Research, Practice and Policy”. This theme includes examples where regions have found themselves needing to recover from a natural disaster, but it also points to the way in which policymakers in different parts of the world are rediscovering that national goals often require regional initiatives.

The conference will begin with a cocktail reception hosted in the Mayor’s Lounge of the Christchurch City Council. Four keynote addresses will be given during the conference, all focused on regions in recovery. The first is by the Mayor of Christchurch, Lianne Dalziel; the second is by Professor Andrew Beer, currently President of the Regional Studies Association in the United Kingdom; the third is by Tom Hooper, the CEO of the city’s agency for economic development; and the fourth is by the Regional Australia Institute based on their



major report *From Disaster to Renewal*.

There will be a feast of contributed papers presented at the conference, covering a wide range of topics in regional science theory, regional development practice and regional planning policy. The Awards Dinner on Wednesday 3 December will announce the winner of three awards sponsored by the **Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics**. The conference finishes with a panel discussion and workshop on the links between recovery and long-term sustainable growth in the context of the Christchurch rebuild.

The conference venue is the Novotel Hotel in Cathedral Square at the heart of Christchurch city. ANZRSAI has arranged a special rate of

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NZ\$195 per night for delegates who would like to book their accommodation at the Novotel hotel.

Further information is available at <https://www.anzrsai.org/conference/conference-2014/>. We look forward to welcoming you to Christchurch in December.

ANZRSAI Council 2014

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