



## **Media Release**

### **Jobs delivered already from the RAPAD cluster fencing program with more to come**

Apart from providing jobs for contractors, landholders and their employees, RAPAD cluster fencing has already delivered 6 new jobs to the regions unemployed with plenty more to come according to General Manager of RAPAD Employment Services Qld (RESQ), Tony Rayner, and Andrew Perkins, economist and Director from Williams Hall Chadwick.

Tony said; "So far 6 job seekers have gained employment since we started the fencing program this year, with all of them involved in exclusion fencing construction. Just recently one of the job seekers from the group, who has been fencing on Rotherfield outside Ilfracombe, has secured full time employment with a transport company, and all of the others have casual paid fencing work."

"The wild dog fencing experience has provided valuable applied training in a lifelong skill for a growth sector".

"The job seekers are taught fencing techniques under the supervision of an experienced fencing contractor", said Tony.

"We usually have teams of 3 to 4 job seekers working on fence construction, plus the supervisor, and hours are normally 7.00am to 3.00pm, but this varies on each job. We will be moving to full days shortly to increase the efficiency of time on each job due to the increased demand. RESQ has assisted five properties with support in building wild dog exclusion fencing totalling 35kms. Currently RESQ has 10 cluster groups requesting fencing assistance so we hope more jobs are just around the corner".

Andrew Perkins is similarly bullish about jobs growth back in the region as a result of cluster fencing.

Mr Perkins has been engaged by RAPAD to undertake the projects monitoring and evaluation plan. The plan aims to capture a broad range of economic, environmental and social data during this process and this monitoring and evaluation will not only be limited to successful clusters, but will include communities from across the central west.

Mr Perkins said the initial figures look promising.

“The impact of cluster fencing will enable greater enterprise choice for primary producers, many of whom have had to go out of sheep and wool production due to wild dog predation. I calculate that the potential increase in sheep numbers in the region will create an extra 45 full time equivalents employed in the region. This is worth approximately \$2.5m per annum without further multipliers”.

“Furthermore, for every job created on a property there will be others employed in service and related regional industries. I have estimated an additional service related job created for every direct job. Therefore the total impact on employment is estimated at 90 full time equivalents. The current ratio of total regional population to employed persons is approximately 2, therefore this means that an increase in jobs of 90 FTE's has the potential to increase regional population by approximately 180 persons. Increased jobs in the region will flow into increased demand for accommodation, education and health in the regions.”

“Increased annual gross value of production in the region is estimated at \$13m due to increased sheep numbers and reduced deaths from predation. Of this gross value the increased gross margin in the region is estimated at \$9.5m, which means stronger regional enterprises. The direct Government contribution to the RAPAD cluster fencing program is \$4.85m. This catalyst project will create direct benefits of an increase in the value of production and increased local spend on labour estimated at \$16.3m per annum.”

“For every \$1 of government spending up front there is a projected \$3.35 annual benefit to the region.”

The long term goal is for funding to be the catalyst for growing jobs and achieving significant improvement in the profitability of regional businesses, both rural and non-rural, through the demonstration of the economic, social and environmental benefit of cluster fencing.

RAPAD Employment Services Queensland will contribute community labour for fence construction where support criteria based on community benefit are satisfied. RESQ, which delivers the Australian Governments Community Development Program, has funding which can provide labour, supervision and some equipment for fence construction.

The Queensland Feral Pest Initiative has received funding through the Queensland Government to support the growth of a productive and prosperous food and fibre sector in

Queensland and the Australia Government Agricultural competitiveness white paper, the Australian Government's plan for stronger farmers and a stronger economy.

For more information please contact

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Picture: RESQ job seekers working on "Rotherfield" south of Ilfracombe, one of the clusters funded by RAPAD and QFPI.

Ends.