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ADELAIDE HILLS, FLEURIEU AND KANGAROO ISLAND

For immediate release

RDA AHFKI Announces Departure of CEO

May 2024

Regional Development Australia Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island (RDA AHFKI) today officially announced the departure of CEO, Mr Damien Cooke, who will be departing from the role at the end of June 2024 after 11 years of dedicated service.

During his tenure, Damien has been instrumental in shaping RDA AHFKI into one of South Australia's leading RDA organisations, leaving behind a legacy of innovation and progress that has fostered strong partnerships within the community. Under his leadership, the organisation has flourished, becoming one of South Australia's leading RDA committees.

For Damien, RDA AHFKI's involvement in recovery efforts for both COVID and the 2019/20 bushfires have been proud highlights. However, after 11 years at the helm, he felt it was time for a new set of ideas to be introduced.

The biggest highlight for me in this role was bringing this RDA from a position of real uncertainty, to one of the most secure and successful RDA's in the country. From what was an organisation facing various challenges, this RDA is now the envy of most others with its financial strength and efficient structure.

The time is right for a change. I know that I leave the organisation and the region in a strong and prosperous state, and thank the dedicated staff and Board members, both past and present, who I have served with along the way.

~ Damien Cooke, CEO, RDA AHFKI

James Sexton, Chair of RDA AHFKI, expressed his gratitude, stating:

Damien has been an outstanding CEO to work with in achieving so many projects for our region. The endorsement from Federal Minister Kirsty McBain, attributing RDA AHFKI's success as one of the best in Australia to his leadership, is a testament to his exceptional abilities. I will be sorry to see him go and wish him good luck for the future.

~ James Sexton, Chair, RDA AHFKI

Victoria MacKirdy, Deputy Chair, added:

Damien will leave behind a legacy of innovation and progress that has been instrumental in shaping RDA AHFKI. We express our gratitude for his dedication and wish him every success in his future pursuits. I have no doubt he will continue to make a positive contribution to our region.

~ Victoria MacKirdy, Deputy Chair, RDA AHFKI

RDA AHFKI take this opportunity to officially announce that Mr Stephen Shotton will be taking on the leadership role as Director Regional Development. As the organisation transitions through this period, the team and board remain committed to maintaining its collaborative relationships with stakeholders to further develop the region's economy and liveability.

For further inquiries or information, please contact the RDA AHFKI office.

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