

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Agriculture

Acting Minister for Local Government

Acting Minister for Suburban Development



Monday, 13 September 2021

ON-THE-GROUND SUPPORT FOR VICTORIA'S BORDER COMMUNITIES

The Victorian Government will deploy a team of locally based 'Border Brokers' to support industries and businesses impacted by restrictions on Victoria's borders with New South Wales and South Australia.

Towns split by interstate borders are used to living as one community and we know industries and businesses on the border face unique challenges.

Local challenges need local solutions and that's why we are establishing a team of Border Brokers to work alongside Victoria's Cross Border Commissioner Luke Wilson.

The team will include eight brokers who will work in the Hume, Gippsland, Loddon Mallee, Grampians and Barwon South West regions, which have all been impacted by restrictions on their respective borders.

Brokers will be jointly led by Regional Development Victoria and Agriculture Victoria – which already have strong mechanisms in place to support communities and industry.

This team will ensure locals have a key contact on the ground to advocate on their behalf and will support businesses and industry groups to address issues and challenges.

Border Brokers will work across state and local governments and with chambers of commerce, key agricultural stakeholders, industry, regional tourism boards and community groups to identify and triage issues.

The team will work on solutions to challenges such as access to workforce and help to ensure supply of necessary goods and services to local businesses. The Brokers will also be able to connect locals with the comprehensive support that has been provided by the Victorian Government throughout the pandemic.

In addition, Brokers will be included in the membership of the Border Representatives Reference Group which the Government established last month. The BRRG brings together key stakeholders to identify local impacts and challenges experienced by border communities in response to Victorian/NSW border restrictions.

The Border Broker initiative recognises that border communities have endured challenges as a result of restrictions in place by the Victorian, NSW and SA governments, in order to keep locals safe.

For more information go to rdv.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development and Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"The restrictions in place along our border are necessary to keep border communities safe, but we understand that communities need support – that's why we are responding with a team of Border Brokers."

"The Border Brokers will be a new point of contact on the ground to help our communities impacted by challenges from the pandemic. They will be a crucial step in ensuring our border communities continue to have a strong voice as we recover from the global pandemic."

Quotes attributable to Victoria's Cross Border Commissioner Luke Wilson

"Victorian communities and businesses who live along the borders with NSW and SA have done it tough in the past year and a half – this team will add further support to help them to navigate the challenges."

"The Border Brokers will work with me to ensure a local understanding of the issues and that these local needs are represented across government."

Media contact: Nadia Dimattina 0438 701 306 | Nadia.dimattina@minstaff.vic.gov.au