

BPA Chair Person Report 2023

This year, Business Port Augusta proudly celebrated its 25th year of operation. The current Board wishes to express gratitude and acknowledgment to those esteemed business individuals who have played a pivotal role in contributing to the enduring success of BPA over the past 25 years.

Comprising local business leaders, the BPA Board is composed of dedicated volunteers who generously offer their time to advocate for and represent the interests of small and local businesses in Port Augusta.

Our Board is a passionate collective deeply engaged in the community, striving to foster economic growth for the benefit of all local businesses and small business owners. These committed representatives actively participate in board meetings, organise networking events, and provide feedback to various entities, including local and state governments, other chambers, and the media.

The primary objectives of Business Port Augusta are:

- **Recognising excellence in business through the implementation and hosting of the annual Outstanding Business Awards.**
- **Supporting the development of local business networks through regular functions, including informal gatherings and business showcasing events.**
- **Encouraging collaboration within the Port Augusta business sector to share knowledge and promote new business growth.**
- **Cultivating positive partnerships with Port Augusta City Council, Business SA, Regional Development Far North, and other industry groups to serve as the representative voice of business in Port Augusta.**
- **Advocating for improvements in designated areas of need within the Port Augusta business community.**
- **Providing support and mentoring to emerging and young entrepreneurs.**
- **Marketing Port Augusta's strengths to attract businesses to the town.**
- **Promoting economic growth and prosperity in the business community and its region.**
- **Facilitating training opportunities to support local individuals in building or enhancing their businesses.**

Throughout 2023, BPA has actively disseminated information from various stakeholders, increased its social media presence, and maintained information bays to offer local businesses an opportunity to promote themselves effectively. Notably, our networking events and sponsorships, such as the Port Augusta Family Race Day the Umeewarra Music Festival and our Cyber Security event have proven to be impactful endeavours.

As part of our ongoing efforts, we have engaged with Port Augusta City Council, state government representatives, and other stakeholders to address business issues and contribute to the development of the region. We have actively participated in initiatives such as the Port Augusta Safety and Wellbeing service, the Port Augusta Liquor Accord, and the strategic direction of Port Augusta.

BPA actively contributed to lobbying the Port Augusta City Council, facilitating the successful application for the 2025 Masters Games by coordinating sporting groups, gathering their interests, and subsequently presenting a compelling case to the council.

We persist in fostering constructive relationships with key entities such as the Port Augusta Council, RDA Far North, TACTIC, Business SA, and various stakeholders. This year, we made a presentation to the council, and we eagerly anticipate an enhanced partnership with the council, including a pivotal role in the formulation of a master plan for the CBD and Foreshore development. Our engagements extend to meetings with government representatives from both the Labor and Liberal parties, where we have drawn attention to critical business issues in the region. In a recent encounter, we engaged in discussions and advocacy with the Department of Infrastructure and Transport, specifically addressing the imperative upgrade of the Port Augusta Wharf.

Our administrative support role, Cathy George, who was appointed in 2022 and has taken a lot of pressure off of the Board roles and is assisting us to deliver on our strategic objective and other marketing and management

functions of BPA including driving more involvement from local business via memberships, attendance at events and representation on our board.

The Rowe Partners Port Augusta Business Awards, a highlight of our year, garnered significant participation and showcased the outstanding achievements of numerous businesses and individuals in various categories. Additionally, the success of the charity auction and the induction of new members into the Port Augusta Business Hall of Fame underscored the positive impact of our initiatives.

As a result of the awards auction, Business Port Augusta has been able to establish the Business Port Augusta Advancement Scholarship. This initiative offers financial support to individuals seeking to enhance their skills, ultimately contributing to the improvement of their own business or a local business they are associated with. In 2022, we proudly awarded the scholarship to our inaugural four recipients. We are pleased to announce the upcoming opening of applications for this program, and we look forward to unveiling the successful candidates in February.

Last year we brought back the Augusta Market and we are currently organising them once again in December. Additionally, we are collaborating with the Port Augusta Council to draw major events to the city, with the aim of fostering increased economic activity.

Our commitment extends to diligently providing enhanced networking and training opportunities for our members. In partnership with the Regional Development Australia (RDA), we are actively engaged in the development of programs that emphasise business improvement, compliance, and innovation. Furthermore, BPA played a consultative role as a member of the advisory group for the "Business Community Resilience Toolkit," a collaborative effort delivered by the Department for Industry, Innovation, and Skills.

Our board members have successfully undergone Committee Basics Training and actively participated in a Business Associations planning day which was facilitated by RDA Far North. This strategic session was dedicated to exploring avenues for augmenting the participation and overall presence of BPA.

The prospects ahead shine brightly for businesses and the community of Port Augusta, as a substantial wave of infrastructure development, significant industrial projects, and the establishment of new businesses is set to unfold in the near future. This optimistic outlook is reinforced by the regional business confidence indicator released in November. Notably, the Upper Spencer Gulf stands out as the most confident region overall, witnessing a notable increase of 1.7 points in business confidence, soaring from 114.2 to 115.9 points. This places it at the forefront as the most confident region for business in regional South Australia.

Looking ahead, BPA remains steadfast in fostering economic activity, providing networking and training opportunities for members, and collaborating with relevant entities to help business to thrive and prosper by providing tailored support in areas such as growth strategies, operational efficiency, and sustainable practices. A strategic review planned for January 2024 reflects our commitment to continuous improvement and value provision to the business community.

Despite the positive outlook for Port Augusta's businesses and community, we face the challenge of a declining membership. We emphasize the critical role of active memberships in sustaining the continued success of BPA. As a not-for-profit organisation, our financial obligations are met through active memberships, and we urge the local business community to support BPA by becoming members, joining, or volunteering as board members or contributors. If you are a current member, we sincerely thank you for your ongoing support.

We also extend an invitation to individuals who share our vision for community betterment to consider joining our board. It's not an onerous commitment; rather, we value individuals who bring fresh perspectives and great ideas to the table. We believe that diversity in thought and experience enriches our decision-making processes and contributes to the overall success of our initiatives. If you are someone with a vision for positive change, a collaborative spirit, and a desire to make a meaningful impact, we welcome you to explore the opportunity to join our board and contribute to the growth and success of our organisation.

Together, let us ensure the enduring success of Business Port Augusta and contribute to the prosperity of the Port Augusta business community and its future growth.



Virginia Lloyd, Chairperson, Business Port Augusta Inc