

24 MAY 2012

RUN VALUES AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) is committed to playing its part in lifting the interest and education of students in science and maths, an issue raised in the Chief Scientist's report Health of Australian Science released on 23 May.

The Chair of RUN, Professor David Battersby, said that the network's institutions played a key role in training professionals in regional Australia and maths and science were an important part of this education.

"An understanding of maths and science is critical to people studying health and wellbeing, engineering, environmental and agricultural science, information technology, management, commerce and education," Professor Battersby said.

"RUN's universities have significant enrolments in these areas – in education we have 14 per cent of the national total, in information technology 13 per cent, in agriculture, environment and related fields 11 per cent, and in management and commerce 10 per cent. Among domestic students, enrolments in initial teacher training and nursing account for 14 and 13 per cent respectively of the national total.

"Our institutions are keen to collaborate across the network in the delivery of maths and science, and will shortly commence a stocktake of our capacity in these areas. Collaborative delivery of courses will allow the complementary teaching of various subjects where there are specialisations across RUN, and address the issue of getting a critical mass of students in some fields.

"We are committed to increasing enrolments in relevant areas.

"We welcome the recent budget initiatives to improve participation in the study of maths and science at school and university. RUN hopes to participate in the programs to support innovative teacher training in these fields and outreach activities to schools to inspire an interest in maths and science," Professor Battersby said.

For media enquiries:

Dr Caroline Perkins, Executive Director, Regional Universities Network, 0408 482 736

www.run.edu.au