

**1 JULY 2013**

## **RUN WELCOMES NEW MINISTERS**

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) welcomes Senator Kim Carr back as Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Higher Education, and congratulates Catherine King on her promotion to cabinet as Minister for Regional Australia, Local Government and Territories.

The Chair of RUN, Professor David Battersby, congratulated the new ministers and thanked the former Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research, Dr Craig Emerson, for his contribution.

"The Innovation, Industry, Science and Higher Education and Regional Australia portfolios are both extremely important to regional universities," Professor Battersby said. "RUN universities are benefitting from the boost to research given by the Collaborative Research Networks (CRN) program implemented during the time Senator Carr was previously Minister for Science and Research.

"The extension and possible expansion of the CRN program after 2015 would play a major role in further enhancing the research and research training capabilities of Australia's regional universities, as stated in our policy document Smarter Regions, Smarter Australia. "The regional development portfolio is also of critical importance to us. RUN calls for a new systematic, national strategy that harnesses the remaining untapped potential of regional universities to further drive regional development.

"We thank Dr Emerson for his contribution during the time he was Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Science and Research. "The former minister's decisions to conduct a review of university red tape, the release of the national research priorities, and release of the discussion paper Assessing the wider benefits arising from university-based research are all noteworthy achievements.

"We encourage Minister Carr to follow through on these initiatives.

"The new Rudd Government offers an opportunity to rethink the massive cuts to higher education funding and student support announced over the past nine months. We urge the Government to revisit these decisions," Professor Battersby said.

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