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RUN CONGRATULATES NEW GOVERNMENT, WELCOMES NEW MINISTRY

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) congratulates the Abbott Government on its victory in the election and welcomes the new ministers to their portfolios.

Of those with particular relevance to RUN we note the appointments of the Deputy Prime Minister, The Hon Warren Truss MP as Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, The Hon Christopher Pyne MP as Minister for Education, The Hon Sussan Ley MP as Assistant Minister for Education, Mr Jamie Briggs as Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, and Senator Scott Ryan as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education.

The Chair of RUN, Professor Peter Lee, warmly welcomed the new appointments.

"Education, including higher education, is of great importance to regional Australia and the nation, and the ministerial appointments reflect this" Professor Lee said.

"We particularly welcome the appointment of Christopher Pyne as Minister for Education – his appointment recognises the importance of education in regional Australia, including improving higher education participation, to ensure the economic, social and cultural development of regional communities"

"We urge the Government not to further cut funding to universities or student support, and to retain the student demand driven system which is integral to lifting higher education participation in regional Australia.

"The Hon Warren Truss' appointment as Minister for Regional Development will provide a great opportunity for a new approach to the issue.

"RUN is a strong advocate of putting regional universities at the centre of facilitating and strengthening regional economic development.

"RUN is keen to explain its policies outlined in "Smarter Regions, Smarter Australia" to the new Ministers. Our priorities are putting regional universities at the centre of regional development, implementing policies to attract domestic and international students to regional universities, and building research capacity in strategic areas" Professor Lee said.

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