

MEDIA RELEASE

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Attention: News Editor

Katanning's story in print

Katanning's experiences welcoming people from diverse cultures are contributing to the national discussion about sustainable growth in regional areas.

The Great Southern town has been home to people from a wide range of cultural and language backgrounds since ethnic Malays from the Cocos and Christmas Islands started arriving there in the 1970s to work in the meat processing industry.

Since then, successive waves of immigration have brought workers and their families from Afghanistan, China, Burma, Burundi and Congo.

Katanning's story has earned a chapter in a new book about sustainable growth in regional areas called *Regional Advantage and Innovation: Achieving Australia's National Outcomes*.

The book is a publication of Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia (SEGRA), a network of organisations focused on economic activity in regional areas.

Katanning's chapter is based on a paper delivered at the 2010 SEGRA conference by the Great Southern Development Commission (GSDC) and Regional Development Australia – Great Southern (RDA-GS).

Regional Advantage and Innovation was launched in November at the 2012 SEGRA conference in Terrigal, New South Wales.

The Katanning chapter was co-authored by GSDC Regional Project Officer Jessica van der Waag, the Shire of Katanning and RDA-GS and is titled *A Case Study of Katanning: Innovation for Cultural Dividend*.

GSDC Board Chairman Peter Rundle said Katanning was recognised as a successful community of cultural and linguistic diversity.

"Government and non-government organisations in Katanning supported efforts by the community to welcome migrants in the 1970s," Mr Rundle said.

"Responding constructively from the beginning has helped Katanning to build a strong community and to secure the long-term productivity of its largest employer.



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“It is an interesting angle on the town’s participation in the SuperTowns program and bodes well for Katanning’s response to future population growth,” Mr Rundle said.

The case study of Katanning will lead to further research work this year on the sustainability of this key feature of the Katanning community.

Media contact: Bruce Manning, ph. 9842 4888



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Albany Pyrmont House, 110 Serpentine Road, PO Box 280, Albany WA 6331. Phone: (08) 9842 4888 Fax: (08) 9842 4828 Email: gfdc@gfdc.wa.gov.au
Katanning 10 Dore Street, PO Box 729, Katanning WA 6317. Phone: (08) 9821 3210 Fax: (08) 9821 3334 Email: katanning@gfdc.wa.gov.au
Web: www.gfdc.wa.gov.au