

Growing Geospatial Capabilities in Regional Australia: Cultivating Growth and Opportunity

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SUMMARY

The growing value of geospatial and Earth observation technologies to the Australian economy is becoming increasingly recognised, as evidenced in the 2024 Geospatial Council of Australia (GCA) “Economic Impact of Geospatial Services in Australia” report. These technologies and services offer significant economic and strategic opportunities across a wide array of sectors, with significant impact in mining, agriculture and across infrastructure. However, realising this value is conditional on nurturing “a favourable operating environment” and regions may risk missing out on the full benefits of this shift unless they actively engage in the development of geospatial capabilities and industries. □ □ This paper examines how regional areas can cultivate the potential of geospatial technologies by developing proactive initiatives. It discusses several key factors for success, including focusing on industries of high value to the region alongside priority growth industries, fostering community and collaboration among local practitioners, leveraging research capabilities, and providing support for emerging geospatial businesses. Drawing on experiences in Queensland working with regional geospatial initiatives, both through FrontierSI and the Queensland Earth Observation Hub, we will highlight practical examples of how regional geospatial initiatives can drive the development of a highly digitally skilled workforce and deliver local economic impact. □ □ Additionally, we will introduce a geospatial Hub model for regional implementation, offering a structured framework for the coordination of geospatial initiatives. This model provides a data infrastructure, and capabilities based focal point for regional stakeholders, including research and end-user industries, to collaborate, build geospatial capacity, and contribute to the broader national and global geospatial economy. □

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