

**AUSTRALIAN FRONTIERS IN THE NEXT DECADE – OPPORTUNITIES AND PROSPECTS
FOR REGIONAL AUSTRALIA
THE OUTBACK WAY- AUSTRALIA'S LONGEST SHORTCUT**

Patrick Hill, Chairman, Outback Highway Development Council

Abstract

The Outback Way- Australia's Longest Shortcut links Perth to Cairns through the heart of the nation and delivers economic and social opportunities for many regional and remote communities and people.

The Outback Way will play a significant part in the development of Australia over the next decade and beyond. Connecting the east to west providing a journey that is 1600km shorter for the mining, pastoral, freight and tourism sectors. The Cost Benefit Analysis for upgrading and developing the Outback Way is 1:2- for every dollar spent two dollars will be earned. This is genuine nation building infrastructure that will continually grow regional WA, Central Australia and Regional Qld and offers an infrastructure corridor for future water and gas needs from east to west. Traffic numbers have tripled in the last 5 years and the trend will continue particularly as the mining sector recovers, tourists discover this brand new adventure route offering extensive tourist attractions and indigenous tourism experiences and communities initiate and benefit from the economic development opportunities the Outback Way offers. The Outback Way is more than just a road, it is the life blood of the 20 aboriginal and isolated communities that are along and rely on the Outback Way for quality of life and services.

The Outback Way is fundamentally changing the dynamics of our nation by bringing east and west closer in proximity than ever before. The opportunities are significant by developing the heart of our nation.

Biography

Patrick Hill- A finalist in the 2009 Governors Award for regional Development in WA, Chairman of the Outback Highway Development Council for the last 11 years, and a Councillor on the Shire of Laverton, Patrick's dedication to the future of regional Australia focusing on the big picture and working on nation building projects is self evident. As Chairman of the OHDC Inc he has overseen a \$20million upgrade of the Outback Highway and the \$487,390 tourism development on the Outback Way- working with 7 Shire councils, 2 states 1 territory and the federal government.