



SEGRA 2013 Challenge: Attracting Business Migration to Regional Queensland

As part of the SEGRA Challenge, my purpose was to take an innovation to a group of interested participants and challenge our group collectively to make something of it, with the freedom to take it in any direction that our group process took us in on the day.

With the group's permission, I used a neuro-scientific based meeting format which I have learnt but not mastered (Peter Burow: Neuropower. www.neuropower.org) and which I have tested with variable results. Anecdotally, I would say that this was one of the less striking of my trials but I was grateful for the go-ahead from the group to try something subtly different which might have made a transformational difference, but in this case, did not....

Our starting challenge: How might we attract business migration to regional Australia?

The one-liner had the attached background papers as a starting point. One paper was, admittedly, a fairly parochial starting point, focussed on my region, which did have the advantage of seeing how one rural town might incorporate business migrants as a segment of their economic development strategies. The other is a more general policy paper which had some input from an LNP senate candidate for Queensland.

We had a geographical and skills mix in the group of about 15. One professional migration agent was part of the group and he had considerable influence on the discussion.

We had some very experienced and strategic thinkers. In a short time, through a collaborative process we came up with a few action suggestions:

- ❖ Delegations
- ❖ Create a pilot program to establish and send a small targeted delegation to a specific overseas location to forge the business links which might make matches of potential business migrants with rural towns
- ❖ If one town (rural cluster of similar towns) host and create the pilot.
- ❖ Chose a town that has a local migration agent.
- ❖ Assess its small businesses which are ready for sale or investment.
- ❖ Scan where there might be an overseas target city which would make match-making as easy as possible.
Some assessment considerations:
 - Population
 - Ethnicity and language (native English by preference)
 - Constitution of business types, legal system, similarity to Australia
 - Limit countries and cities under consideration
 - Only target cities where previous links exist (e.g. sister city, COC, personal connections, even Commonwealth)
 - Try to find a desirable travel destination! (that delegation ---which might be a delegation of one) will need some kind of carrot or possibly be self-funded.
- ❖ Work up prospectus and presentation around the businesses for sale/investment, the town/area, the region, Australia. Include full business migration information.
- ❖ Apply to include a Business Migration for Rural/Regional town's forum at SEGRA 2014 to work on other alternatives as well as report on progress on establishing and sending delegation.