

International delegation wowed by RAPAD's inaugural Outback Aerodrone Symposium

The Remote Area Planning and Development Board's Outback Aerodrone Symposium hosted more than 100 people including a delegation of 10 from Japan over the weekend at its inaugural event in Barcaldine.

RAPAD CEO David Arnold said the event attracted strong interest from locals, to top industry presenters, as well as the Japanese business delegation led by Trade & Investment Queensland (TIQ).

"The registration numbers and calibre of speakers we had on the program was fantastic, but to also have international delegates attend our inaugural event was beyond expectation," Mr Arnold said.

"We've had great support from our speakers and exhibitors who travelled to Barcaldine under their own initiative. Feedback has been extremely positive with one particular business venture to be established in the Central West now in the pipeline," he said.

"The Japanese delegates, representing companies including Mitsubishi and leading drone group enRoute, was a great coup for the region. This is perhaps the first time a Japanese delegation of this kind has visited our region.

"Working with TIQ Business Development Manager, Melissa Inooka, the delegates had identified the opportunity to look at areas that would be of benefit for investment and application in Japan, including our wide open spaces, agricultural industry and responding to disasters.

"The delegates had a great experience and were treated to real Outback hospitality including a tour of a sheep property hosted by David Counsell on *Dunblane* before they returned home," Mr Arnold said.

David Arnold said RAPAD would also be looking for Expressions of Interest from locals who are interested in using their property as a host drone testing venue in the future.

"We have leaders from the industry telling us what they are looking for in terms of testing facilities and Central West Queensland hits the mark with wide open skies, clear horizons and a collaborative mind-set.

"We will be working with locals who meet requirements to harness this opportunity for their benefit and the greater benefit of our region," Mr Arnold said.

RAPAD Chair and Mayor of Barcaldine Regional Council, Cr Rob Chandler, said the event provided a real boost to Barcaldine and will continue to have an affect across the region into the future.

"Barcaldine Regional Council was proud to support and host this first-of-its-kind event. We know that this is something we need to be looking at now and I encourage landholders who are interested in connecting to hosting opportunities to jump on board and work with RAPAD," Cr Chandler said.

“This event was the result of extensive work by the RAPAD team, getting into uncharted territory and establishing valuable networks. The program has set a benchmark for the future delivering relevant for our region, and connected locals to the right information, services and providers.

“Through RAPAD, the seven councils of Central Western Queensland aim to enhance the technology and digital economy of our region.

“As the symposium program says: “the sky’s the limit” and this event certainly goes beyond council boundaries and the outcome will always be a win for the RAPAD region, Outback Queensland and beyond.

“We’re proud to be leading the charge for regional Australia to put the power of these technologies within reach of our communities,” Cr Chandler said.

Outback Aerodrone Symposium 2018 was supported by the Queensland Government through Advance Queensland, and the Barcaldine Regional Council. RAPAD gratefully acknowledges the support of presenters and exhibitors as well as the local community who provided services and support throughout the program.

Further information is available online at www.outbackaerodrone.com.au.

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Contacts:

David Arnold, CEO RAPAD – Mobile: 0428 583 301, Email: ceo@rapad.com.au

Kristine Arnold, RAPAD - Mobile: 0427 649 031, Email: karnold@rapad.com.au

Morgan Gronold, RAPAD – Mobile: 0448 739 759, Email: mgronold@rapad.com.au

Image list

Japanese delegation

001 – Japanese delegates arrive in Barcaldine accompanied by Trade and Investment Queensland Business Development Manager, Melissa Inooka. According to locals it was the busiest Saturday morning for the airport they had experienced.

002 – Japanese delegates were very pleased to receive their welcome gifts including an Akubra by RAPAD Chair and Barcaldine Mayor Cr Rob Chandler, and RAPAD CEO David Arnold.

003 & 004 – David Counsell hosted a tour of his sheep property Dunblane at Barcaldine for the Japanese delegates and other visiting attendees following the symposium. David’s application of technologies including tracking and telemetry systems provided interesting conversation.

005 & 006 – Before departing RAPAD provided a local tour of Longreach with CEO David Arnold. The Lake Eyre Basin and flood cycle was of particular interest coming from Japan where flood mitigation is an important issue.

Symposium images

Hosted at Barcaldine Shire Hall and Gregory Park, Barcaldine.

007 – RAPAD CEO, David Arnold, and RAPAD Chair, Cr Rob Chandler, check out the displays and discuss opportunities for the region with exhibitors.

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008 - Brisbane-based Ninox Robotics representatives included Michael Willey and Dan Vogelnest.

009 – Pieter van Jaarsveld, IDS, and Keith Gordon, Outback Property Solutions, Longreach.

010 – Gabriel Olivares, Tom Chandler and Emilio Bautista from Ace Aviation.

011 – Drew Donald Director, Commercial Program at Inistu Pacific; Rhys Mudford, Chief Pilot at Insitu Pacific gives a safety briefing. The Insitu team were in region in the lead up to the event testing beyond visual line of sight at Gregory Park.

012 – Ben Chandler (left, pictured with Drew Donald) hosted the symposium’s field demonstrations at his property Gregory Park.

013 – Gabriel Olivares from Ace Aviation discusses drone training and other opportunities with RAPAD’s David Arnold and Kristine Arnold.

014 – Gus Corlett from Skies Eye Drone Services showing Tony O’Brien from Emerald a hand-held device.

016 – Fiona Lake gets a handshake from Nick Dyer from Alpha

017 – Tony O’Brien from ‘Daytona’ Emerald, tries out drone headset with Pieter van Jaarsveld from IDS.

018 – Cheryl Thompson from Barcaldine waves to the drone which transmits the imagery to the headset.

019 – Jane and Rhett Webb from Blackall check out the Insitu testing equipment.

020 – Melissa Inooka, Business Development Manager from TIQ translates for the Japanese delegation.

021-022 – Speaker Neil Glentwork, Chair of GWI

023-024 – Fiona Lake trade show attracted interest from attendees.

Social snaps

025 – Christine Heller and Stewart Geiger travelled from near Camooweal to attend the event, pictured with Pieter van Jaarsveld and Coenrad Brand from IDS.

026 – David Counsell, Barcaldine, Fiona Lake, Townsville, Kristine Arnold, Longreach and Tony O’Brien, Emerald.

027 – Keith Gordon, Longreach, Robert Cutting, Longreach and John Whitehead from Corfield.

028 – Gary King from Universal Drone, with Rhett Webb and Jane Webb, Blackall, and Tom Rooney, Barcaldine.