

Shout A Mate

Kieran Wicks

Shout A Mate program

When the founder of Shout A Mate first started the project in 2011 she did not expect that she would be attending this conference and sharing stories with you.

Giving our 'country cousins' a hand up, not a hand out is our motto.

It co-exists alongside our 'Visit Australian Small Towns' sister network, to bring awareness of rural issues and attributes to wider Australia.

The ethos of the VAST Network is that if only 10% of Australians headed inland for a holiday, instead of going overseas, our economy would be fixed in a jiffy!

Shout a Mates' mission is to bring social and mental respite to rural and remote communities who are suffering from isolation, drought, economic or social decline.

Mental and social wellbeing is paramount in rural and remote communities where members of the community often suffer isolation and depression is increasing.

It has been noted that the suicide rate within small communities rises once the football season has finished as often those involved feel a sense of isolation post-season.

It has also been noted that isolation, and economic and social decline also contributes to mental health, family breakdown and unfortunately suicide.

We all must help kick that black dog!

Through music and laughter our programs are able to connect with young and old.

The combination of patron musician Kieran Wicks and celebrity comedian Chris Franklin is just one example of a program that has proved successful. Giving adults the opportunity to laugh and 'chill out' at a show is priceless. Shout A Mate shows are produced specifically for each communities' needs.

These unique social occasions can be made possible through community-minded organisations and individuals who recognise the importance of 'chilling out' and socialising with friends.