

25 years of investing in people

MIKE Logan says that his participation in the Australian Rural Leadership Program (ARLP) was key to his proudest achievement.

Mike is a graduate of the first ARLP intake in 1993. He is a seasoned rural leader from Narrabri with experience in executive and governance positions across various industries. Mike is a shining example of the impact the ARLP has had on rural Australia.

When he was originally tapped on the shoulder to apply, Mike had no idea what the ARLP was or the contribution it would play in his personal and professional life. "When I applied, I couldn't explain to you what leadership was. I had no idea what the program was going to be," he said.

Mike was selected, along with 30 other leaders from agriculture, fisheries, rural communities and agri-business. They would undertake over 50 days of development through exposure to a wide range of encounters with national and international issues.

As a group, they travelled to different locations across Australia over eight sessions and were exposed to real-life situations with the vision of creating strategic alliances to create stronger links between rural commodities, industries and communities.

The ARLP for Mike was an experimental journey during which his horizons were broadened. "I discovered a whole world of agriculture, of people who were trying to do what I was doing," he said.

Course 1 participants were affectionately labelled the 'laboratory rats' by Course 2, and Mike reflects that it's amazing how little the program has changed, with Course 24 commencing later this year. He said, "the basic tenets of Course 1 are still there. The Kimberley experience is still an integral, significant and uniting aspect of the course."

Mike attributes the ARLP as 'the key' to one of his proudest achievements, driving the establishment of the best management practice program within the cotton industry in 1997. He was



Mike Logan.

inspired by other people in his group and experiences, particularly learning from the timber and wine industries.

"So after the ARLP, I completed an environmental program, and helped convince the cotton industry to develop a best management practice program," he said. The program is still going strong and was relaunched as an online system in 2010.

For Mike, the ARLP has meant the establishment of life-long friends throughout Australia and a network which he utilises. "It has helped me personally, with friendships across the country that are so diverse and in a range of industries," he said.



Australian Rural Leadership Program, Course 1, April 1993 to September 1994.



The Kimberley experience is still part of the program.

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Taking a rest in a Kimberley gorge.



The first ARLP course in the field.

The impact the ARLP has had on leadership in agriculture has been evident to Mike. "When I would look at people in leadership roles in the cotton industry, many of them are graduates of the ARLP. From the cotton perspective, the ARLP has been a wonderful investment," he said.

Various other industries have also benefited from Mike's experience. He was the Chief Executive Officer of Dairy Connect and has served on the boards of numerous organisations, including the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation which delivers the ARLP.

Mike was sponsored by the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC). RIRDC was involved in the establishment of the foundation to deliver the program. The foundation is a not-for-profit organisation and continues to develop leaders with the support of its many generous sponsors, including RIRDC.

The Foundation will celebrate 25 years of developing courageous, influential and ethical leaders for the greater good of rural, regional and remote Australia, at its Gala Dinner on October 20, 2017 in Canberra.



This cotton harvest, be aware of overhead powerlines.

Photo by Margie McLelland. Courtesy of Cotton Australia.

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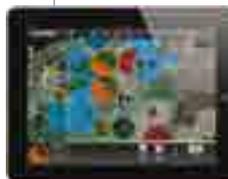
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