



**CANBERRA REGION  
JOINT ORGANISATION**

*Regional leadership connecting our communities*

# BOARD MEETING

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Friday, 2 August 2024  
9am – 1pm  
Snowy Valleys Council,  
76 Capper St, Tumut NSW 2720

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# AGENDA AND BUSINESS PAPERS



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## MEMBERS

Bega Valley Shire Council	Cr Russell Fitzpatrick, Mayor (Chair) Anthony McMahon, Chief Executive Officer
Eurobodalla Shire Council	Cr Mathew Hatcher, Mayor Warwick Winn, General Manager
Goulburn Mulwaree Council	Cr Peter Walker, Mayor Aaron Johansson, Chief Executive Officer
Hilltops Council	Cr Margaret Roles, Mayor Anthony O'Reilly, General Manager
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	Cr Kenrick Winchester, Mayor (Deputy Chair) Rebecca Ryan, General Manager
Snowy Monaro Regional Council	Cr Chris Hanna, Mayor David Hogan, Chief Executive Officer
Snowy Valleys Council	Cr Ian Chaffey, Mayor Steven Pinnuck, General Manager
Upper Lachlan Shire Council	Cr Pam Kensit, Mayor Alex Waldron, Chief Executive Officer
Wingecarribee Shire Council	Mr Viv May, Administrator (PSM) Lisa Miscamble, General Manager
Yass Valley Council	Cr Allan McGrath, Mayor Chris Berry, Chief Executive Officer
Wagga Wagga City Council (associate member)	Cr Dallas Tout, Mayor Peter Thompson, General Manager
ACT Government (associate member)	Dr David Clapham, Executive Branch Manager, Economic and Regional Policy
Canberra Airport (affiliate member)	Noel McCann, Director of Planning and Government Relations

## GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND CANBERRA REGION JOINT ORGANISATION

NSW Premier's Department (non-voting member)	Giles Butler, Director Regional Coordination – South, Delivery and Engagement Group, NSW Premier's Department
NSW Office of Cross Border Commissioner	Kalina Koloff, NSW Cross Border Commissioner
NSW Reconstruction Authority	Heidi Stratford, Director Illawarra and South East
Office of Local Government	Louise Taylor, Council Engagement Manager
Regional Development Australia Southern NSW and ACT	Rowena Abbey, Chair Olivia West, Chief Executive Officer
Canberra Region Joint Organisation	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer Hayley Chapman, Director Corporate Services Jennifer Lang, Jennifer Lang Australia, Chief Financial Officer



## 1. Opening Meeting

The chair will open the meeting.

## 2. Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

The chair will welcome members and guests and make an acknowledgment of country.

## 3. Apologies

The chair will call for any apologies. CRJO will resolve to accept any apology and may grant leave of absence.

The following apologies have been received prior to the meeting:

- Cr Mathew Hatcher, Mayor, Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Warwick Winn, General Manager, Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Lisa Miscamble, General Manager, Wingecarribee Shire Council
- Chris Berry, Chief Executive Officer, Yass Valley Council
- Aaron Johansson, Chief Executive Officer, Goulburn Mulwaree Council
- Kalina Koloff, NSW Cross-Border Commissioner, NSW Office of the Cross-Border Commissioner
- Heidi Stratford, Director Illawarra and South East, NSW Reconstruction Authority
- Noel McCann, Director, Planning & Government Relations, Canberra Airport

### Additional Attendees

- Hamish McNulty, Acting General Manager, Wingecarribee Shire Council
- Julie Costa, Director Planning and Environment, Yass Valley Council
- Brendan Hollands, Director Corporate and Community Services, Goulburn Mulwaree Council
- Rowena Abbey, Chair, Regional Development Australia Southern NSW and ACT
- Olivia West, Chief Executive Officer, Regional Development Australia Southern NSW and ACT

## 4. Disclosure of Interests

With reference to Chapter 14 *Local Government Act 1993*, and CRJO's Code of Conduct, members are required to declare any conflicts of interest in the matters under consideration by CRJO at this meeting.

## 5. Notice of Rescission

Pursuant to Clause 372 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a voting representative may lodge a notice to rescind a motion for the CRJO's consideration.



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## 6. Notice of Motions

Pursuant to Clause 10.2 of the Code of Meeting Practice, a voting representative may lodge a notice of motion for the CRJO's consideration.

## 7. Urgent Business

Pursuant to Clause 9.3 of the Code of Meeting Practice, the chair will call for any additional business. Any additional business to be discussed requires a board resolution or a ruling by the chair that the matter is of great urgency.

The CRJO board may resolve to accept any late item, information or urgent business to be discussed and/or determined at this meeting.

## 8. Chair's Minute

Pursuant to Clause 9.6 of the Code of Meeting Practice, the chair, without notice, may put to the meeting a minute on any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the CRJO.

## 9. Confirmation of Minutes

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

- Attachments:**
1. Minutes of CRJO Board Meeting 16 May 2024
  2. Actions Arising from 16 May 2024 Board Meeting

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board adopts the minutes and actions arising from the previous board meeting held 16 May 2024.

## 10. Presentations to CRJO Board

### 10.1 Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) Briefing

**Who:** Bruce Fitzgerald, Acting Deputy Director General, ACT City Services  
Dr Margaret Kitchin, Executive Branch Manager, ACT NoWaste

**Attachments:** Nil

**Purpose:** The intent of this presentation by ACT Government's City Services Directorate and NoWaste Branch is to provide an update on the progression of the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) located within the Hume Resource Recovery Estate, ACT.



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## 10.2 Audit Risk and Improvement Committee End of Year and Term Briefing

**Who:** Stephen Coates, Chair Audit Risk and Improvement Committee

**Attachments:** 1. CRJO ARIC Chair End of Year and End of Term Report 2024

**Purpose:** The intent of this presentation by Stephen Coates, chair of the CRJO Audit Risk and Improvement Committee, is to provide an update to the CRJO Board on its activities during 2023-24 and the council term ending September 2024.

## 10.3 Shadow Minister for Water and for Crown Lands

**Who:** Ms Steph Cooke MP

**Attachments:** Nil

**Purpose:** The intent is to provide an opportunity for Ms Steph Cooke MP to address the CRJO board and discuss matters of interest to local government, following the board's visit to NSW Parliament House in May when Ms Cooke was unable to address the board due to competing matters.

## 11. Briefings to CRJO Board

### 11.1 Members

The following associate and/or affiliate members will provide verbal updates:

- Dr David Clapham, Executive Branch Manager, Economic and Regional Policy, ACT Government

*(Noting apology received from Noel McCann, Director, Planning & Government Relations, Canberra Airport)*

### 11.2 Government Agencies

The following NSW state government agencies will provide verbal updates:

- Giles Butler, Director Regional Coordination – South, Delivery and Engagement Group NSW Premier's Department
- Louise Taylor, Council Engagement Officer, NSW Office of Local Government

*(Noting apologies received from Kalina Koloff, NSW Cross-Border Commissioner, NSW Office of the Cross-Border Commissioner and Heidi Stratford, Director Illawarra and South East, NSW Reconstruction Authority)*



### 11.3 Regional Development Australia Committee

The chair of the Regional Development Australia Committee will provide a verbal update:

- Rowena Abbey, Chair, Regional Development Australia Committee Southern NSW and ACT
- Olivia West, Chief Executive Officer, Regional Development Australia Committee Southern NSW and ACT



## 12. Reports to CRJO Board: For Decision

### 12.1 Governance Policies Review

**Author:** Hayley Chapman, Director Corporate Services, Canberra Region Joint Organisation

**Attachments:** 1. Charter  
2. Code of Meeting Practice

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board:

1. Notes the report from the Director Corporate Services on the governance policies review.
2. Adopts the following as Canberra Region Joint Organisation's policies:
  - a. Charter
  - b. Code of Meeting Practice

#### REPORT

This report presents two of Canberra Region Joint Organisation's (CRJO) governance policies that have been reviewed in terms of regulatory requirements, relevance and content. These policies are the Charter and Code of Meeting Practice.

#### Charter

Boards of joint organisations are required to have a charter that outlines the key operational and governance structure of the organisation. This charter includes provisions for topics such as non-voting representation, requirements for decision making and financial contributions from member councils.

The reviewed charter (refer attachment) has the following changes:

- Reformatted to align with NSW Office of Local Government Joint Organisation Charter template
- Amended vision to align with the CRJO Statement of Regional Strategic Priorities as endorsed at the 1 March 2024 board meeting.
- Updated associate membership to remove reference to East Gippsland Shire Council and changes within state government
- Aligned non-voting representatives to the Office of Local Government template and provided clarity on the role of non-voting representatives
- Removed reference to annual remuneration for the chairperson, as this is not intended to be an inclusion in joint organisation charters as detailed within the Office of Local Government's template for the charter for joint organisations (Note: the matter of chairperson's remuneration along with sitting fees for board members is covered in the CRJO Expenses and Facilities Policy)
- Added current joint working groups
- Removed reference to CRJO operational procedures





### **Code of Meeting Practice**

The aim of the code of meeting practice is to ensure meetings are conducted in an organised, efficient and transparent manner, promoting fairness and equal participation among members. It helps streamline the meeting process, making the best use of time and resources while complying with legislative requirements.

The reviewed policy (refer attachment) has the following changes:

- Formatting and numerical changes to align with the Office of Local Government’s Model Code of Meeting Practice 2021.
- Additional points (in yellow) to cover voting representatives’ participation by audio visual link, as detailed in the Office of Local Government’s Model Code of Meeting Practice 2021.

The Code of Conduct for CRJO was not reviewed at this time as it remains current after its adoption in September 2023.



## 12.2 Board Member Sitting Fees and Chairperson Allowance

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

**Attachments:** 1. Expenses and Facilities Policy

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board:

1. Notes the report and recommendation from the Executive Officer on board member sitting fees review,
2. Endorses the recommended option 2: remove board member sitting fees and retain chairperson allowance, and
3. Adopts the amended Expenses and Facilities Policy incorporating option 2: remove board member sitting fees and retain chairperson allowance.

### REPORT

A thorough review of all Canberra Region Joint Organisation expenditure has occurred to ensure financial responsibility and bring about financial sustainability of the organisation. The review identified cost-saving measures, while maintaining the effectiveness and compliance of the organisation.

The purpose of this report is to provide options and a recommendation for a change to board member sitting fees and chairperson remuneration as stipulated in the current, adopted Expenses and Facilities policy. The board is presented with three options for consideration.

Under the current policy, the sitting fees and allowances for board members and the chairperson are as follows:

- **Board Members (excluding chairperson):** \$250 per meeting attended
- **Chairperson:** \$10,000 annual allowance

The policy also stipulates that the above entitlements be indexed in accordance with the annual percentage determined by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal each year.

All areas of CRJO's operational expenses have been reviewed with cost savings identified and being implemented across many areas including a reducing the number of and salaries/levels of operational positions, reducing the number of vehicles and relocating to lower cost office accommodation.

Consideration of member sitting fees and chairperson remuneration is subject to a board decision given that these are stated in the board-adopted expenses and facilities policy.

Options for consideration include:

- **Option 1: maintain current board member sitting fees and chairperson allowance** whereby board members would continue to receive \$250 (as indexed) per meeting attended and the chairperson continues to receive a \$10,000 (as indexed) annual allowance, subject to board members and the chairperson choosing to claim the sitting fees and allowance respectively



- **Option 2: remove board member sitting fees and retain chairperson allowance** whereby board members will no longer receive sitting fees and the chairperson will continue to receive the \$10,000 (as indexed) annual allowance, subject to the chairperson choosing to claim the allowance
- **Option 3: remove board member sitting fees and chairperson allowance** whereby neither board members nor the chairperson will receive sitting fees or allowance respectively

After careful consideration, it is recommended that the board endorses **option 2: remove board member sitting fees and retain chairperson allowance**. This option balances financial responsibility with recognition of the chairperson's significant role and maintains some level of compensation for leadership while reducing overall costs.

If endorsed, implementation of option 2 will require updates to the current expenses and facilities policy to reflect the changes in sitting fees and allowances.



## 13. Reports to CRJO Board: For Noting

### 13.1 Correspondence Following 2024 Board Meeting at NSW Parliament House

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

- Attachments:**
1. Thank You Letter Hon. Chris Minns MP
  2. Thank You Letter Hon. Paul Scully MP
  3. Thank You Letter Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP
  4. Thank You Letter Hon. Tara Moriarty MP
  5. Thank You Letter Hon. Steve Whan MP
  6. Thank You Letter Wendy Tuckerman MP
  7. Thank You Letter Steph Cooke MP
  8. Thank You Letter Michael Holland MP
  9. Thank You Letter Joe McGirr MP
  10. Thank You Letter Hon. Ron Hoenig MP
  11. Incoming Correspondence Hon. Penny Sharpe MP
  12. Incoming Correspondence Hon. Rose Jackson MP
  13. Incoming Correspondence Hon. Ryan Park MP
  14. Incoming Correspondence Hon. Steve Kamper MP

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board notes incoming and outgoing correspondence to/from the NSW premier, ministers and members of parliament following the board meeting held 16 May 2024 at NSW Parliament House.

#### REPORT

On 16 May 2024, Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) held its board meeting at NSW Parliament House.

NSW government ministers at the board meeting were:

**The Hon. Chris Minns MP**, Premier

**The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP**, Minister for Local Government

**The Hon. Paul Scully MP**, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces

**The Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP**, Minister for Regional Transport and Roads

**The Hon. Tara Moriarty MLC**, Minister for Regional NSW, Minister for Agriculture

**The Hon. Steve Whan MP**, Member for Monaro, Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education

Other members of parliament at the board meeting were:

**Ms Steph Cooke MP**, Member for Cootamundra, Shadow Minister for Water, Shadow Minister for Crown Lands



**Mrs Wendy Tuckerman MP**, Member for Goulburn, Shadow Minister for Local Government

**Dr Joe McGirr MP**, Member for Wagga Wagga

**Dr Michael Holland MP**, Member for Bega

Invitees who were unable to attend were:

**The Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC**, Treasurer

**The Hon. Stephen Kamper MP**, Minister for Lands and Property

**The Hon. Ryan Park MP**, Minister for Regional Health, Minister for Illawarra and the South Coast

**The Hon. Penny Sharpe MLC**, Minister for Energy

**The Hon. Rose Jackson MLC**, Minister for Water, Minister for Housing

Attached, for noting, are copies of correspondence sent to all attending ministers and members of parliament and correspondence received from ministers who were unable to attend.



## 13.2 2023/24 Financial Statement and Finance Status

**Author:** Jennifer Lang, Jennifer Lang Australia

**Attachments:** 1. CRJO Financial Statement July 2023 – June 2024

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board:

1. Notes the financial statements for 2023/24
2. Notes the operating results as at the end of 30 June 2024; and
3. Notes the operating result compared to adopted 2023/24 budget and adopted 1 March 2024 'Target' operating result for CRJO Operations.

### REPORT

For the year to date ending 30 June 2024, the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) achieved an overall, consolidated operating deficit of **\$344k**.

CRJO Operations achieved an operating deficit of **\$397k** for the full financial year and has a closing unrestricted cash reserve of **\$871k**.

The 2023/24 financial year saw many challenges for the CRJO notably, a considerable decline in the financial position of the organisation. Throughout the later part of Q2, significant risks were becoming evident in relation to the security of CRJO's management fee revenue, on which it relied heavily to fund growing corporate overheads associated with a higher than usual number of externally funded projects and project officers.

In addition, the CRJO Operations budget was required to support project resources that were subsequently deemed ineligible under project funding deeds.

The 2023/24 forecast in January indicated a 'worst case' deficit of **\$756k**, requiring immediate corrective actions to reduce the deficit. The implementation of these immediate actions brought the year-end forecasted deficit down to **\$538k**, which was agreed at the 1 March 2024 CRJO board meeting as a 'Target' deficit for CRJO Operations for 2023/24.

Also at the 1 March 2024 board meeting, a cost-savings approach was endorsed whereby all operational costs were to be reviewed and savings identified for implementation in 2023/24 where possible and incorporation in the 2024/25 budget.

CRJO Operations achieved an operating deficit of **\$397k** for the full 2023/24 financial year, which compares favourably against the 1 March 'Target' deficit of **\$538k** and unfavourably against the 2023/24 budget deficit of **\$117k**.

### Notes for year ending 30 June 2024:

- CRJO achieved a favourable variance of **\$141k** against the 'Target' deficit of **\$538k**. In addition to the core cost saving approach agreed with the board, including council contributions



toward the councils' community strategic plans component of the Regional Community Strategic Plan project; selling select motor vehicles; and moving unfunded Corporate Services resources to funded positions, CRJO confirmed the receipt of a 15% management fee from the circular economy project which was the primary contributor to the favourable variance [this was historically reported as a high risk to the approved budget and subsequently removed from the forecasts].

- In accordance with the accounting standards, total unspent grant funding of **\$1,928k** has been carried forward to the 2024/25 financial year. This incorporates surplus funds from all ongoing projects at 30 June 2024, plus new funding grants received for Household Chemical Cleanout 2024, Net Zero Acceleration Fund Round 2, Food Rescue Network and Food Waste Partnership projects.
- CRJO finished the financial year with an abnormally high accounts receivable balance of **\$2,411k**. This balance is reflective of the funding due following grant acquittals and variations finalised during May/June (notably the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund), and invoices sent for the first payment of new projects commencing in 2024/25.



Table 1.1 below provides a breakdown of the operating surplus across each program.

Program	Operating Result 23/24 \$000	Target Forecast 23/24 \$000	Variance to Forecast 23/24 \$000	Surplus Funds Carried Forward into 24/25	Status
CRJO Operations	(397)	(538)	141	41	Ongoing
CRJO Internal Audit	53	0	53	0	Ongoing
Trade Pathways Innovation	0	0	0	80	Ongoing
<i>Recovery &amp; Resilience</i>					
Drought Resilience	0	0	0	0	Awaiting Acquittal
BCRRF - Vulnerable Contaminated Lands	0	0	0	0	Complete
BCRRF - Blueprint	0	0	0	0	Complete
BCRRF - Blueprint	0	0	0	0	Complete
BLERF - Economic Recovery	0	0	0	581	Ongoing
DRRF – Disaster Recovery	0	0	0	39	Awaiting Acquittal
<i>Waste Programs</i>					
Regional Support Fund*	0	0	0	409	Ongoing
Household Chemical Cleanout 2024	0	0	0	200	New
Contaminated Lands	0	0	0	133	Awaiting Acquittal
Circular Economy	0	0	0	0	Awaiting Acquittal
ECC – Net Zero	0	0	0	0	Complete
ECC – Net Zero Round 2	0	0	0	180	New
Bin Trim Networks	0	0	0	50	Ongoing
Illegal Dumping Prevention	0	0	0	70	Ongoing
Food Rescue Network	0	0	0	85	New
Food Waste Partnership	0	0	0	60	New
<b>Total Operating Result</b>	<b>(344)</b>	<b>(538)</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>1,928</b>	

Table 1.1

\*Includes the following programs: Regional Waste Education, Household Chemical Clean-Up 2023 and CRC Education.





### Cash Balances

As at 30 June 2024, CRJO holds a cash balance of **\$543k**. Table 1.2 below provides a summary of the distribution of cash across the core Programs.

Programs	Opening Balance 1 Jul 2023 \$000	Cash Receipts \$000	Cash Outgoings \$000	Closing Balance 30 Jun 2024 \$000	Risk To Cashflow
CRJO Operations	1,104	1,242	1,475	871	Medium
CRJO Internal Audit	0	307	332	(25)	Low
Trade Pathways Innovation	0	400	314	86	Low
<b>Recovery &amp; Resilience</b>					
Drought Resilience	(80)	0	20	(100)	Medium
BCRRF - Vulnerable Contaminated Lands	(39)	39	0	0	n/a
BCRRF - Simtable	(28)	28	0	0	n/a
BCRRF - Blueprint	(96)	96	0	0	n/a
BLERF - Economic Recovery Fund	(226)	0	626	(852)	Low
DRRF – Disaster Recovery	175	280	413	42	Low
<b>Waste Programs</b>					
Regional Support Fund*	196	439	207	428	Low
Household Chemical Cleanout 2024	0	0	0	0	New
Contaminated Lands	152	0	19	133	Low
Circular Economy	801	0	958	(157)	Low
ECC – Net Zero	56	46	114	(12)	n/a
ECC – Net Zero Round 2	0	0	1	(1)	New
Bin Trim Networks	0	100	50	50	Low
Illegal Dumping Prevention	0	104	24	80	Low
Food Rescue Network	0	0	0	0	New
Food Waste Partnership	0	0	0	0	New
<b>Total Cash on Hand</b>	<b>2,015</b>	<b>3,081</b>	<b>4,543</b>	<b>543</b>	

Table 1.2

\*Includes the following programs: Regional Waste Education, Household Chemical Clean-Up, CRC Education.

### Risks to cashflow:

- **CRJO Operations:** The risk to unrestricted operational cash has been reduced to medium risk due to the finalisation and/or approval of project acquittals and variations, meaning that project expenditure has been accepted by the funding bodies with less risk that ineligible expenditures are to be funded out of CRJO Operations.
- **Drought Resilience:** The Drought Resilience project cash remains a medium risk as the CRJO awaits further review of the Drought Resilience document prior to the final milestone payment being made.



### 13.3 Regional Programs

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

**Attachments:** 1. Regional Programs Board Report August 2024

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board notes the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Program Board Report.

#### **REPORT**

Please find attached the report on CRJO's regional programs for the period May - August 2024, including projects in development.



### 13.4 Governance and Compliance

**Author:** Hayley Chapman, Director Corporate Services

**Attachments:** 1. Governance and Compliance Calendar 2023/24 and 2024/25  
2. OLG Calendar of Compliance and Reporting Requirements for JOs 2024-25

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board notes the governance and compliance report.

#### REPORT

Please see attached the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) Compliance & Governance Calendar for 2023/24 and 2024/25. The calendars aim to communicate to the board CRJO's status against compliance and governance priorities as set by the NSW Office of Local Government including required actions, responsible parties, and timelines for governance compliance enhancements. Also attached is the Office of Local Government's joint organisations compliance and reporting requirements for 2024/25, for the board's information.

#### Ongoing Governance Report for 2023-24 Report

In 2023-24, the following request or reports are known relating to CRJO:

Relevant Act or similar	Received	Number of reports/ requests	Nature	Status	Reporting Requirements
Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009	Quarter 3	1	Not to be disclosed	Complete	Annual report to Local Government Minister and Information Commissioner
Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022	Quarter 2	1	Not to be disclosed	Complete	Annual report to NSW Ombudsman
Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988	Quarter 2	2	Purchases for non-business purposes Engagements beyond tendering limit without tender	Complete Complete	NSW Audit Office required to report any ICAC referrals they become aware of during annual audit of financial statements to Office of Local Government
Model Code of Conduct	N/A	Nil	N/A	Complete	Annual report to CRJO Board and Office of Local Government

No known new matters were reported since 1 March 2024.



### 13.5 Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Quarterly Report and Minutes

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer  
Stephen Coates, Chair CRJO Audit Risk and Improvement Committee

**Attachments:** 1. ENDORSED ARIC Meeting Minutes CRJO 27 June 2024

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board notes the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee quarterly report and minutes from its meeting of 27 June 2024.

#### REPORT

The purpose of this report is for the board to notes the audit, risk and improvement committee's (ARIC) quarterly report and minutes from its meeting of 27 June 2024.

Effective 1 July 2024, all NSW councils and joint organisations were required to have an ARIC in place, in compliance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021* as amended by the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees) Regulation 2023* (the regulation).

CRJO established an ARIC in 2022 via recruitment of independent committee members. The ARIC has been meeting quarterly since March 2023. CRJO's ARIC shares its committee membership with three CRJO member councils being Goulburn Mulwaree, Upper Lachlan and Yass Valley.

Under the Office for Local Government's *Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government in NSW Guidelines – November 2023*, the ARIC must provide an update to the board of its activities and opinions after every committee meeting, covering:

- the ARIC's committee's assessment of any audits conducted, including any breaches or deficiencies in controls that require an immediate response from the council
- progress on the implementation of corrective actions
- opportunities for longer-term improvement, and
- any key opinions or 'take-outs' from the committee's meeting.

The ARIC met on 27 June 2024. Minutes of the meeting are attached.

At the meeting, the ARIC determined that the following items should be reported to the CRJO board in its quarterly report along with provision of the meeting minutes:

- ARIC assessed the internal audit conducted on the contaminated lands project and did not consider there were any control breaches or deficiencies that require an immediate response of council
- ARIC assessed corrective actions as contained in a monitoring tracker put in place by CRJO which includes actions arising from internal audits, annual external audits of general purpose financial statements and any other reviews or investigations and noted satisfactory progress



on all actions

- ARIC noted improvement actions underway with respect to addressing key risks of financial sustainability of the joint organisation and cyber security following the serious fraud incident in 2022
- ARIC noted management’s positive steps towards achieving financial sustainability and transparent, high-quality reporting to the board and the ARIC



### 13.6 Executive Officer Report

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

**Attachments:** Nil

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board notes the executive officer's report.

#### REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) board as to activities, achievements and challenges of the executive officer since the last board meeting, for noting.

#### Meetings and Stakeholders:

Executive officer met with the new chief executive officer of the Regional Development Australia Committee Southern NSW and ACT and agreed to introduce RDA attendance at CRJO board meetings commencing August.

General Managers Advisory Group meeting on 28 June 2024.

**Joint Organisations' Executive Officers Forum** monthly meetings covered establishment of a water loss management hub as a pilot project in Central NSW and recommendation for expansion to other regions / joint organisations, net zero statewide program update and extension to second year of program, advocacy submissions and upcoming inquiries and legislative changes, financial sustainability of joint organisations, updates from **Brett Whitworth, Deputy Secretary Office for Local Government**, TAFE NSW stakeholder engagement update from **Alison McGaffin, Stakeholder Engagement Manager, TAFE NSW**.

Regular meetings attended with **Canberra Airport, ACT Government, Office for Local Government, Regional NSW** and **Local Government Procurement**.

Executive officer attended **Canberra Airport Planning Coordination Forum** on 5 June 2024, **Telstra regional roundtable and networking event** on 13 June 2024 and **Department of Regional NSW's Regional Leadership Executive** meeting held on 20 June 2024.

Executive officer attended Regional NSW's last **Regional Leadership Executive Forum, South East Region** on 20 June 2024 before state machinery of government changes resulted in further combining of NSW regions as part of move of regional coordination function to Department of Premier and Cabinet. Farewell to Anthony Body, Director South East and Illawarra Shoalhaven and welcome to new director, Giles Butler who has responsibility for regional coordination of councils falling within Canberra Region Joint Organisation, Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation (ISJO), Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) and Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils (REROC). Met with **Giles Butler, Director Regional Coordination – South, Delivery and Engagement Group, NSW Premier's Department** on 18 July 2024.

Other meeting with stakeholders including:

- National Emergency Management Agency



- 
- Regional NSW Public Works
  - Regional Development Australia Southern NSW and ACT Committee new CEO
  - Local Government Procurement

Executive officer attended the regional forum of the **Australian Local Government Association's annual conference** on 2 July 2024, as well as a breakfast of Australian states and territories cross-border commissioners and stakeholders.

Attended **NSW Reconstruction Authority's Disaster Adaptation Planning Guidelines consultation** on 18 July 2024.

**Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee, Internal Audit and Risk Management:**

CRJO audit, risk and improvement committee (ARIC) meeting held on 27 June 2024, along with ARIC meetings for CRJO member councils which have entered into shared arrangements for ARIC.

Procurement and accounts payable internal audits underway for CRJO. Grants management investigation for the EPA Contaminated Lands grant completed by internal audit and reported to audit, risk and improvement committee.

Tracker developed and reviewed by internal audit for actions from internal audits, external audits and reviews and included in expanded internal audit function reporting to the ARIC.

Internal audit and ARIC shared services budget and services scope agreed in writing between CRJO and member councils participating in the shared arrangement, to be formalised via shared arrangements agreements.

Working with shared **ARIC chair and committee members** to develop a four-year strategic plan and quarterly and annual reporting to councils and CRJO board, supported by a meetings calendar, to ensure ARIC compliance with new Local Government (General) Amendment (Audit, Risk, and Improvement Committees) Regulation 2023 due to come into effect 1 July 2024.

**Advocacy:**

Advocacy submissions collated and made by CRJO to the **NSW Parliament's inquiry into the ability of local government to afford infrastructure and services**, **NSW Parliament's inquiry into assets, premises and funding of the NSW Rural Fire Service** and the **Australian Parliament's inquiry into local government financial sustainability**. Thank you to council members who provided copies of individual council submissions to enable CRJO to amplify your submissions and ensure those member councils unable to make individual submission are also represented in the consultations.

Productivity Commission meeting of CRJO mayors, general managers and water utilities directors held on 4 June 2024 in response to CRJO submission to **Productivity Commission's review of funding models for local water utilities**.

Chair and executive officer attended public hearing for **NSW Parliament's inquiry into the ability of local government to fund infrastructure and services** on 23 July 2023.

**Compliance:**

**Audit of CRJO's 2022-23 general-purpose financial statements** complete and submitted to the OLG, CRJO ARIC (out of session), presented the CRJO board at its 16 May 2024 meeting and published on



website. Audit engagement plan issued 20 June 2024 for audit of 2023-24 financial statements.

Independent Commission Against Corruption, **ICAC investigation** matters closed.

All Office of Local Government compliance calendar items complete.

**Projects:**

Refer program status report in GMAG agenda for further information:

MC/facilitation of Disaster Risk Reduction Fund embedment of resilience thinking in IP&R workshop and presentation of engagement findings for Regional Community Strategic Plan and councils' community strategic plans on 3 June 2024

**Grant applications:**

Joint Organisations Net Zero Acceleration (JONZA) Round 2 program, Environment Protection Authority Food Rescue Grants program and Business Food Waste Partnerships program and Local Government Procurement Capability Building grant applications submitted as endorsed at GMAG meetings. Thank you for councils' letters of support.

**Finances:**

Exceeded (favourably) **2023-24 target forecast** as agreed by board at 1 March 2024 board meeting.

**Cost reductions actions** underway regarding:

- Staffing: formal notification, consultation, decision and implementation of workplace changes process underway
- Office accommodation: decision made to relocate to Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council following Canberra Airport's advice that suitable alternative accommodation unable to be found, relation to occur end of August. Thank you to Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council for offer to co-locate and assistance with planning for CRJO relocation.
- Vehicle sales: four vehicles sold by end June 2024
- ICT services: review underway. Thank you to Goulburn Mulwaree Council for initial review.

2024-25 budgeted \$57k operating surplus in CRJO Operations. Targeting break even operating result from 2025-26.

Agreed new 2023-24 memorandum of understanding with Local Government Procurement.

**Human Resources**

- CRJO salary system 2023-2-26 adopted approved by GMAG
- Completed review of safety management system and commenced working through SafeWork NSW safety toolkit in consultation with staff





## 14. Reports to Board: For Discussion

### 14.1 End of Term Presentation

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

**Attachments:** Nil

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board receives the end of term presentation and notes the highlighted range of projects and programs delivered by the joint organisation during the board term from December 2021 to September 2024.

#### **REPORT**

While formal end of term reports are not legislatively required to be delivered by joint organisations, a presentation will be made to the final meeting of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board, highlighting projects and programs of CRJO over the term of the current board from December 2021 to September 2024.



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## 14.2 Induction Planning for New Board

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

**Attachments:** Nil

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board notes the proposed approach for inducting the incoming board in October 2024 and provides suggestions for inclusions in the regional perspectives component of the induction.

### REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek board members' input to the design of Canberra Region Joint Organisation's (CRJO) induction program for the incoming board to be held in October.

After the September local government elections and mayoral elections, CRJO will have a new board made up of the incoming mayors of its eleven member councils along with a representative of ACT Government's Chief Minister and Canberra Airport's chief executive officer.

On Friday 25 October 2024, there will be an extraordinary meeting of the CRJO board for the purpose of inducting the new board, electing a chairperson and approving the 2023-24 general purpose financial statements. The meeting is to be preceded by a board welcome dinner on Thursday 24 October.

We propose to provide the induction in two parts.

The first part of the induction will cover:

- purpose of joint organisations
- governance arrangements and relevant legislative requirements of joint organisations,
- responsibilities of joint organisation board members,
- audit, risk and improvement committee of CRJO
- CRJO's charter, code of conduct and code of meeting practice,
- CRJO's statement of strategic priorities and review and adoption required within board's first year
- CRJO's 2024-25 budget and statement of revenue policy
- CRJO's expenses and facilities policy and any other policies initially relevant to the board
- highlights of CRJO's achievements, challenges and opportunities from the previous board term
- current CRJO projects, services and advocacy
- other matters of relevance to the board's functioning



The second part of the induction will present regional perspectives around various themes which need and benefit from regional collaboration.

Aiming to build an appreciation of regional perspectives beyond local government and state boundaries, we propose to hear from relevant presenters and explore regional themes such as:

- disasters and resilience
- roads, connectivity and the freight task
- cross border priorities
- major economic industries including tourism
- Canberra airport and precincts
- water supply and management
- land use and transport planning
- waste management and reduction
- circular economy
- telecommunications and connectivity
- emissions reduction
- other relevant themes

We are seeking input from current board members about themes and potential presenters to participate in the regional perspectives section of the new board's induction.

## 15. Closed Session

CRJO must resolve to move into closed session to deal with any items under s10 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Nil items for closed session.

## 16. Close

The chair will close the meeting.