



**CANBERRA REGION
JOINT ORGANISATION**

Regional leadership connecting our communities

EXTRAORDINARY BOARD MEETING

Friday, 25 October 2024
8.30am – 9.30am
Braidwood Room
Nellie-Hamilton Centre
257 Crawford Street, Queanbeyan

AGENDA AND BUSINESS PAPERS



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Meeting Schedule

Time	Item	Presenter	For	Brief
8.30am	1 - 4	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Noting	Welcome board members to CRJO extraordinary meeting
8.35am	5	Sharon Houlihan, Returning Officer	Decision	Chairperson & deputy chairperson election
8.50am	6 - 10	Chairperson	Decision	Various
8.55am	11.1	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Decision	Nomination of an Audit Risk & Improvement Committee Board Representative
9:00am	11.2	NSW Audit Office	Decision	Presentation of the Audit of the 2023-24 Financial Statements
9.10am	11.3	Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services	Decision	Annual Performance Statement 2023-24
9:20am	11.4	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Decision	Process for CRJO Submission on Changes to Councillor Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice
9.35am	12.1	Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services	Noting	Governance and Compliance
	12.2	Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services	Noting	Post Election Governance Requirements
	12.3	Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services	Noting	Designated Persons Return 2023-24
9.40am	12.4	Jennifer Lang, Chief Financial Office	Noting	Quarterly Finance Status Report
9.50am	12.5	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Noting	Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Quarterly Report
9.55am – 10:00am	12.6	Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services	Noting	NSW Joint Organisation Chairs Forum



Extraordinary meeting to be followed by an induction for the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board:

Time	Presenter	For	Brief
10am	The Hon Kristy McBain Federal Member for Eden Monaro	Address	Welcome to incoming CRJO board
10.15am	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer Scott Ferguson, ex-Mayor Blayney Council and Deputy Chair Central NSW Joint Organisation	Induction	Part 1 CRJO Foundations and Governance
10.45am	Morning Tea		
11.15am	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer Scott Ferguson, ex-Mayor Blayney Council and Deputy Chair Central NSW Joint Organisation	Induction	Part 2 Regional Collaboration and what CRJO does and how we do it
12:30pm	Glenn Capuano, id.profile	Presentation	Canberra Region demographics
12:45pm	The Hon Steve Whan State Member for Queanbeyan	Address	Welcome to incoming CRJO Board (over lunch)
1:30pm	Lunch		



CRJO Board Members

COUNCIL	VOTING MEMBERS	NON-VOTING REPRESENTATIVES
Bega Valley Shire Council	Mayor, Cr Russell Fitzpatrick	Anthony McMahon, Chief Executive Officer
Eurobodalla Shire Council	Mayor, Cr Mathew Hatcher	Warwick Winn, General Manager
Goulburn Mulwaree Council	Mayor, Cr Nina Dillon	Aaron Johansson, Chief Executive Officer
Hilltops Council	Mayor, Cr Brian Ingram	Anthony O'Reilly, General Manager
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	Mayor, Cr Kenrick Winchester	Rebecca Ryan, General Manager
Snowy Monaro Regional Council	Mayor, Cr Chris Hanna	David Rawlings, A/Chief Executive Officer
Snowy Valleys Council	Mayor, Cr Julia Ham	Steven Pinnuck, Interim General Manager
Upper Lachlan Shire Council	Mayor, Cr Paul Culhane	Alex Waldron, Chief Executive Officer
Wingecarribee Shire Council	Mayor, Cr Jesse Fitzpatrick	Lisa Miscamble, General Manager
Yass Valley Council	Mayor, Cr Jasmin Jones	Chris Berry, Chief Executive Officer

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Wagga Wagga City Council	Mayor, Cr Dallas Tout	Peter Thompson, General Manager
ACT Government	David Clapham, Executive Branch Manager, Economic and Regional Policy	
NSW Government	Giles Butler, Director Regional Coordination – South, Delivery and Engagement Group, NSW Premier's Department	

AFFILIATE MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Canberra Airport	Noel McCann, Director, Planning & Government Relations, Canberra Airport	Michael Thompson, Head of Aviation, Canberra Airport
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CRJO Board Attendees

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
NSW Reconstruction Authority	Heidi Stratford, Director Illawarra and South East	
NSW Office of Cross Border Commissioner	Kalina Koloff, NSW Cross Border Commissioner	
Office of Local Government	Louise Taylor, Council Engagement Manager	
Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT	Rowena Abbey, Chair	Olivia West, Chief Executive Officer

STAFF	
Canberra Region Joint Organisation	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer
Canberra Region Joint Organisation	Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services
Jennifer Lang Australia	Jennifer Lang, Chief Financial Officer

GUESTS	
	Scott Ferguson, Former Blayney Shire Council Mayor
Audit Office NSW	Reiky Jiang, Financial Audit (Item 11.2)
Ernst & Young	Irene Tzavaras, Partner (Item 11.2)
Ernst & Young	Tahla Liquat, Senior Manager (Item 11.2)



1. Opening Meeting

The Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) Executive Officer will open the meeting as chairperson given the chairperson vacancy.

2. Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

The following acknowledgement will be made by CRJO Executive Officer.

"I would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to the Aboriginal Elders both past and present, as well as emerging leaders, and acknowledge the traditional custodians of the Land on which we meet today."

3. Apologies

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

The following apologies have been received prior to the meeting:

- Noel McCann, Director, Planning & Government Relations, Canberra Airport
- Michael Thompson, Head of Aviation, Canberra Airport
- Giles Butler, Director Regional Coordination – South, Delivery and Engagement Group, NSW Premier's Department
- Rowena Abbey, Chair, 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 the board at this meeting.

5. Chairperson & Deputy Chairperson Election

Due to the September 2024 local government elections the position of chairperson and deputy chairperson for the CRJO are currently vacant. The first order of business will be the election of a chairperson and deputy chairperson, to be conducted by the CRJO executive officer as returning officer in accordance with Schedule 7 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*.



5.1 Chairperson Voting Authority

Author: Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board resolves if the chairperson is to be a non-voting chairperson.

REPORT

Pursuant to Clause 400V of Part 7 of the Local Government Act 1993, the joint organisation may determine that the chairperson is to be a non-voting chairperson and, if that occurs, the relevant member council is to nominate a councillor to be the voting representative for the council concerned instead of the person appointed as a non-voting chairperson for the period for which the chairperson holds office. The councillor nominated is to be the deputy mayor of the relevant member council or another councillor if there is no deputy mayor or if the deputy mayor is already a voting representative.

400V Chairperson

1. The chairperson of a joint organisation is the person elected to the office of chairperson by the voting representatives on the board from among the voting representatives who are mayors.
2. The chairperson holds office for 2 years and may, if otherwise qualified, be re-elected as chairperson.
3. Despite subsection (2), the term of office of a person elected as chairperson on the occurrence of a casual vacancy is the remaining period of the term of office of the previous chairperson.
4. The office of chairperson—
 - a. commences on the day the person elected to the office is declared to be elected, and
 - b. becomes vacant on the earliest of the following—
 - i. when the person's successor is declared to be elected to the office,
 - ii. on the occurrence of a casual vacancy in the office,
 - iii. the polling day of the ordinary election of councillors of which the person is a councillor.
5. The joint organisation may determine that the chairperson is to be a non-voting chairperson and, if that occurs, the relevant member council is to nominate a councillor to be the voting representative for the council concerned instead of the person appointed as a non-voting chairperson for the period for which the chairperson holds office.
6. The councillor nominated is to be the deputy mayor of the relevant member council or another councillor if there is no deputy mayor or if the deputy mayor is already a voting representative.

This report is seeking a resolution from the CRJO board on the voting status of the chairperson.



5.2 Nominations for Chairperson & Deputy Chairperson

Author: Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

Attachments: 1. CRJO Chairperson & Deputy Chairperson Nomination Form

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board notes the process for nomination for chairperson and deputy chairperson.

REPORT

The purpose of this report is to give notice of a vacancy in the office of chairperson and deputy chairperson of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) and set out the nomination process for the position of chairperson.

This report calls for nominations for the position of chairperson and deputy chairperson for the Canberra Region Joint Organisation for a two-year period (October 2024 – October 2026).

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021, two or more mayors of member councils may nominate a voting representative of the joint organisation board who is a mayor for the position of chairperson and deputy chairperson (one of whom may be the nominee). Nominations must be in writing and the nominee must consent to their nomination in writing.

Nominations must be submitted to the CRJO Executive Officer by email or any other method using the attached nomination form and will be accepted up to the commencement of this agenda item at the post-election extraordinary meeting.



5.3 Chairperson & Deputy Chairperson Voting Method

Author: Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That, following the close of nominations for the position of chairperson and deputy chairperson if there is more than one nomination for each position, the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board resolves the method of voting for the chairperson and deputy chairperson, from one of the following options in accordance with Schedule 7 Local Government (General) Regulation 2005:

- a. Open Voting (i.e. show of hands)
- b. Ordinary Ballot (i.e. secret ballot – place 'X' against preferred candidate)
- c. Preferential Ballot (i.e. secret ballot – place 1, 2, 3 etc against each candidate in order of preference)

REPORT

The purpose of this report is to determine the voting method for electing a chairperson and deputy chairperson for the CRJO Board. In line with the Office of Local Government Joint Organisation Implementation Guidelines, the returning officer must ask for a motion to be put to the meeting by one of the voting representatives of the board on the preferred method of voting. This must then be seconded and voted on by the voting representatives.

If only one voting representative has been nominated for the position of chairperson, the nominee is elected.

If more than one candidate is nominated, the voting representatives must determine by resolution the method of voting for the position of chairperson, by one of the following methods:

a. Open Voting (Show of Hands)

Open voting is the most transparent method of voting. It is also the least bureaucratic and reflects normal council voting methods. The method for open voting is by show of hands. Each voting representative is entitled to vote for only one candidate in each round of voting.

b. Ordinary Ballot (i.e. Secret Ballot – place 'X' against preferred candidate)

The method for ordinary ballot voting is by placing an 'X' against the candidate of the voting representative's choice.

c. Preferential Ballot (i.e. Secret Ballot – place 1, 2, 3 etc against each candidate in order of preference)

The method for Preferential Ballot voting is by placing 1, 2 and so on against the candidate of the voting representative's choice in order of preference for all candidates.

Mayors need to be present at the meeting in person to participate in voting by means other than open ballot.



5.4 Election of Chairperson

Author: Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer and Returning Officer

Attachments: 1. OLG Post Election Guide for Joint Organisations

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board elects the CRJO Chairperson.

REPORT

The purpose of this report is to elect a Chairperson from 25th October 2024 until October 2026, following the Mayoral elections in September 2026 in accordance with the Office of Local Government Post-election guide for councils, county councils and joint organisations - August 2024.

The Chairperson is responsible for the conduct of meetings and shall be elected every two years by the voting representatives of the Board from one of the mayoral representatives. In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair or a person elected at the meeting is to preside at the meeting.

The Chair is the Joint Organisation's spokesperson on strategic matters and will represent the Joint Organisation at regional forums where possible. On specific issues, the Chair may elect to delegate the spokesperson to be the Deputy Chair or the Mayor of a member Council.

Following from the election from the Chairperson, the returning officer will hand the meeting to the Chairperson to Chair the meeting.



5.5 Election of Deputy Chairperson

Author: Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer and Returning Officer

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board elects the CRJO Deputy Chairperson.

REPORT

The purpose of this report is to elect a Deputy Chairperson from 25th October 2024 until October 2026, following the Mayoral elections in September 2026 in accordance with the Office of Local Government Post-election guide for councils, county councils and joint organisations - August 2024.



6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. Confirmation of Minutes

Author: Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services

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

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board adopts the minutes and actions arising from the previous board meeting held 2 August 2024.



11. Reports to CRJO Board: For Decision

11.1 CRJO Audit Risk and Improvement Committee Representative

Author: Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board appoints a representative *<insert voting representative name>* as a non-voting member of the CRJO audit, risk and improvement committee.

REPORT

Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) is required to have an audit, risk and improvement committee (ARIC) and has established this committee previously.

CRJO shares the independent committee members of the audit, risk and improvement committee with Goulburn Mulwaree, Upper Lachlan Shire and Yass Valley Councils, having entered into a shared arrangements as permitted under the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Office for Local Government guidelines for audit, risk and improvement committees state that councils may not nominate a councillor, not the mayor, and joint organisations may nominate a joint organisation voting representative, not the chairperson, as non-voting member of the audit, risk and improvement committee.

This report recommends appointing a joint organisation voting representative as a member of the CRJO audit, risk and improvement committee, noting the decision to appoint is not mandatory.

Should the board opt not to appoint a joint organisation voting representative as a member of the CRJO audit, risk and improvement committee, a resolution to not appoint is recommended.

The shared ARIC is required to meet quarterly, four times per year.



11.2 Audit of CRJO 2023-24 General Purpose Financial Statements

Author: Jennifer Lang, Chief Financial Officer

- Attachments:**
1. CRJO 2023-24 General Purpose Financial Statements
 2. 2023-24 Audit Engagement Closing Report
 3. 2023-24 Management Representation Letter
 4. Draft 2023-24 Report on the Conduct of the Audit
 5. Draft 2023-24 Independent Auditor's Report (requested to be provided as a late report)

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation:

1. adopts, and the chairperson signs, the general-purpose financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2024,
2. notes the 2023-24 management representation letter, ready for signing by the CRJO executive officer and chief financial officer after adoption and signing of the general-purpose financial statements
3. notes the 2023-24 Audit Engagement Closing Report received from the NSW Audit Office,
4. notes the draft 2023-24 Report on the Conduct of the Audit, ready for signing by the NSW Audit Office upon receipt of the CRJO-signed general purpose financial statements and management representation letter, and
5. notes the draft Independent Auditor's Report (requested to be provided as a late report) including the intent to issue an unmodified audit opinion, ready for signing by the NSW Audit Office upon receipt of the CRJO-signed general purpose financial statements and management representation letter.

REPORT

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires joint organisations and councils to have their annual financial reports externally audited by the NSW Audit Office on behalf of the NSW Auditor General.

As the audit of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation's (CRJO) general purpose financial statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2024 year is now complete, CRJO presents the following documents for adoption:

- General-Purpose Financial Statements (GPFS) for the year ended 30 June 2024 with the CRJO Board Chair to sign upon adoption by the board

And presents the following documents for noting:

- audit engagement closing report issued by the NSW Audit Office;
- management representation letter, with the chief executive officer and the chief finance officer to sign upon signing of the GPFS;
- *draft* report on the conduct of the audit, to be signed by the NSW Audit Office upon receipt of the CRJO-signed management representation letter and GPFS;



- *draft* independent auditor's report, to be signed by the NSW Audit Office upon receipt of the CRJO-signed management representation letter and GPFS; and

Financial Result

The financial result as per the GPFS was a consolidated deficit of \$397k at 30 June 2024. The outcome was unfavourable compared to the adopted 2023-24 budget deficit of \$117k and favourable compared to the 'target forecast deficit' of \$537k, as agreed by the board at its meeting of 1 March 2024. CRJO closed the financial year with a cash balance of \$543k.

Result of the Audit of Financial Statements

The audit of CRJO's general-purpose financial statements was undertaken by Ernst & Young on behalf of the NSW Audit Office. The result of the external audit is the issuing of an unmodified opinion by the NSW Audit Office as part of the Independent Auditor's Report.

CRJO received only one finding from the audit which was categorised as a moderate risk and recommended an additional authorising signatory be put in place for bank transactions.

CRJO's management action in response to the recommendation is to review if its bank's banking application and online banking business system allows:

1. approvers to amend payment details for banking transactions, and
2. multiple authorising signatories.

Should both be possible, CRJO management will recommend a board resolution to not implement multiple signatories for banking authorisations given the difficulties associated with timely payment of suppliers' invoices and staff payroll should the second signatory be on leave, noting the very small staffing number within the CRJO.

CRJO already has internal controls in place to ensure a document trail exists outside of the banking application and banking online business system authorisation process as evidence of payment details as well as segregation of payment processor and approver duties.

All prior year audit findings were addressed and closed.

Process Matters

The annual performance statement, to be reviewed and recommended for adoption in a later agenda item for the 25 October CRJO board meeting, together with the audited GPFS, management representation letter, independent auditor's report and report on the conduct of the audit will be published on CRJO's public website in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*.

The audited GPFS, management representation letter, independent auditor's report and report on the conduct of the audit together with the 2023-24 management letter will be provided to the next scheduled meeting of CRJO's audit, risk and improvement committee on 27 November 2024. The committee reviewed the draft general-purpose financial statements at its last meeting on 16 September 2024.

The overall process for audit of the 2023-24 GPFS ran smoothly and efficiently and generally in accordance with the agreed audit engagement plan, ensuring that CRJO will meet the legislative deadline of 31 October 2024 for submission and publication of the audited GPFS for the year ended 30 June 2024.



11.3 Annual Performance Statement 2023/2024

Author: Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services

Attachments: 1. Annual Performance Statement 2024

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board adopts the Annual Performance Statement for 2023/2024 financial year.

REPORT

Under Section 397J of *the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*, Canberra Region Joint Organisation is required to prepare an annual performance statement within five months from the end of each financial year, for that year reporting as to its progress in implementing its strategies and plans for delivering its strategic regional priorities.



11.4 Process for CRJO Submission on Changes to Councillor Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice

Author: Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

- Attachments:**
1. OLG Circular to Councils 24-17 Councillor conduct and meeting practices – a discussion paper
 2. Councillor Conduct and Meeting Practices Discussion Paper
 3. Additional questions to inform CRJO submission on code of conduct and meeting practices

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board:

1. delegates responsibility to the executive officer to prepare a submission from the Canberra Region Joint Organisation to the Office for Local Government regarding the NSW Government's proposed changes to the Model Code of Conduct and Model Code of Meeting Practice for NSW councils, in accordance with the process contained in this report, and
2. delegates responsibility to the CRJO chairperson to sign the Canberra Region Joint Organisation submission on the proposed changes to the Model Code of Conduct and Model Code of Meeting Practice for NSW councils

REPORT

Purpose of report

This report seeks approval of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) board for the executive officer to prepare a submission to the Office for Local Government regarding the NSW Government's proposed changes to the Model Code of Conduct and Model Code of Meeting Practice for NSW councils, in accordance with the process contained in this report, and for the chairperson to sign the submission on behalf of the CRJO board.

Background

The NSW Office for Local Government (OLG) is currently undertaking a review of its Councillor Conduct Framework. As part of the review, changes are proposed to the Model Code of Conduct and Model Code of Meeting Practice for NSW councils.

On 5 September 2024, the Office for Local Government issued a circular to councils (refer attachment 1) regarding consultation it is undertaking on the proposed changes.

A discussion paper (refer attachment 2) sets out the proposed changes and asks a series of questions relating to those changes.

Submissions regarding the proposed changes are invited until 15 November 2024.

CRJO proposal to make a submission

It is proposed that CRJO makes a submission representing its member councils, in addition to submissions being made by individual member councils.

The purpose of the CRJO submission, as for all its advocacy, is to amplify the submissions of individual



member councils and to advocate on behalf of all CRJO member councils, including those without resources to prepare their own submissions, and on behalf of the broader local government sector. Other joint organisations and local government associations around the state are also making submissions.

OLG's consultation opened during the 'caretaker' period ahead of the September 2024 local government elections meaning councils have been unable to adopt resolutions regarding consultation submissions until after their council elections and first meeting are completed.

CRJO's first ordinary board meeting is scheduled for 6 December 2024 which is after the consultation submissions closing date. As such, this report seeks CRJO board approval for the executive officer to prepare a submission to the Office for Local Government regarding the NSW Government's proposed changes to the Model Code of Conduct and Model Code of Meeting Practice for NSW councils.

CRJO Submission Preparation Process

The discussion paper sets out a series of questions regarding design of the proposed changes to the codes of conduct and meeting practice.

I have proposed an additional list of questions to assist with the development of a comprehensive submission (refer attachment 3) which focus on the basic case for change, potential problems with the proposed solutions, referencing the more significant changes.

Recommendation

Given CRJO's first ordinary board meeting is scheduled for 6 December 2024 which is after the consultation submissions closing date, this report seeks CRJO board approval for the executive officer to prepare a submission to the Office for Local Government regarding the NSW Government's proposed changes to the Model Code of Conduct and Model Code of Meeting Practice for NSW councils, and for the chairperson to sign the submission on behalf of the CRJO board.



12. Reports to CRJO Board: For Noting

12.1 Governance and Compliance

Author: Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services

Attachments: 1. Governance and Compliance Calendar 20241018
2. OLG Calendar of Compliance and Reporting Requirements for JOs 2024-25

RECOMMENDATION

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

REPORT

Please see attached the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) Compliance & Governance Calendar. The calendar aims to communicate to board the compliance and governance priorities as set by the NSW Office of Local Government including required actions, responsible parties, and timelines for governance compliance enhancements.

Ongoing Governance Report for 2024-25 Report

In 2024-25, the following request or reports are known relating to CRJO:

Relevant Act	Received	Number	Nature	Status	Requirements
Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009	Nil	Nil	N/A	Underway	Annual report to Local Government Minister and Information Commissioner
Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022	Nil	Nil	N/A	Complete	Annual report to NSW Ombudsman
Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988	Nil	Nil	N/A	External Audit Near Completion	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	Underway	Annual report to CRJO Board and Office of Local Government



12.2 Post Election Governance Requirements

Author: Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services

Attachments: 1. Office of Local Government Post Election Checklist

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board receive and note the post-election governance requirements.

REPORT

This report is intended to inform the incoming CRJO board of its post-election obligations, as outlined in the NSW OLG Post Election Guide Checklist and below.

At the first meeting

- Elections of chairpersons
- Elect councillor member to Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (optional)

Within 3 months

- Lodgement of returns of interests voting representatives of board of JOs

Within 12 months

- Adoption of councillors' expenses and facilities policy
- Review of organisation structure
- Adoption of a code of meeting practice
- Review of code of conduct
- Adoption of a statement of strategic regional priorities

CRJO staff intend on reporting to the board at future meetings, its progress against the post-election checklist.



12.3 Disclosure by Councillors and Designated Persons Return 2023-24

Author: Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services

Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board notes the report on the lodgement of annual disclosures by designated positions for the period ending 30 June 2024.

REPORT

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires joint organisation board members, executive officers and people nominated by the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) as “designated persons” to complete annual disclosures of interest returns. This requirement is also outlined in CRJO’s code of conduct *Part 4.21 – Pecuniary Interest: Disclosure of interests in written returns*.

Board members and Executive Officer

Board members and the executive officer are required to lodge Disclosures by Councillors and Designated Persons forms annually. These requirements are outlined in CRJO’s code of conduct and *Local Government Act 1993*. Each section of the return must be answered. Officers from the Office of Local Government may make inspections from time to time.

Annual Return – Disclosure of Interest		
Title	Reason	Comments
Mayor Bega Valley Shire Council	Board Member	Lodged
Mayor Eurobodalla Shire Council	Board Member	Lodged
Mayor Goulburn Mulwaree Council	Board Member	Lodged
Mayor Hilltops Council	Board Member	Lodged
Mayor Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	Board Member	Lodged
Mayor Snowy Monaro Regional Council	Board Member	Lodged
Mayor Snowy Valleys Council	Board Member	Lodged
Mayor Upper Lachlan Shire Council	Board Member	Lodged
Mayor Wingecarribee Shire Council	Board Member	Lodged
Mayor Yass Valley Council	Board Member	Lodged
Canberra Region Joint Organisation	Executive Officer	Lodged

Independent Audit, Risk & Improvement Committee (ARIC)

In accordance with the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, members of CRJO’s shared audit, risk and improvement committee have been identified as ‘designated persons’ in the ARIC terms of reference and, as such, are required to lodge Disclosures by Councillors and Designated Persons forms annually. Current members of the ARIC are in the process of submitting forms to the executive officer.

Designated Staff Members

The CRJO does not identify any other members of staff as designated persons.

Public Access of Information

Mayors are required to lodge individual returns to their council, same as a joint organisation. For a copy of mayors disclosure of interest returns, please refer to individual council websites. The CRJO has sought advice for the public display of the executive officer and ARIC members returns.



12.4 Finance Status Quarterly Report

Author: Jennifer Lang, Chief Financial Officer

Attachments: 1. Financial Performance Management Report as at 30 September 2024
2. CRJO Financial Statement Q1 July – September 2024

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board:

1. notes the finance report, management report and financial statements for the first quarter of the 2024-25 financial year
2. notes the operating result as at the end of 30 September 2024; and
3. notes the forecasted end of year operating result compared to the adopted budget.

REPORT

Current year year-to-date result

For the year-to-date ending 30 September 2024, the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) achieved a consolidated operating surplus of **\$2,143k**. Of this surplus, CRJO Operations accounts for **\$454k**.

The large surplus at this stage of the financial year is primarily due to unspent grant funding that was carried forward from the 2023-24 financial year and timing of project grant expenditure.

The CRJO Operations year-to-date surplus reflects the upfront receipt of council membership fees in July 2024, which are to fund operational expenditure through to 30 June 2025.

Current year forecasted full year result

On a consolidated basis, CRJO is currently forecasting a full year surplus of **\$59k**. Of this, **\$14k** is from CRJO Operations.

CRJO Internal Audit is forecasting a year end surplus of \$45k. It is anticipated that any forecasted surplus will be reinvested in additional services to member councils who are involved in the shared internal audit function and shared audit, risk and improvement committee arrangement, being the engagement of external resources to undertake specialist or complex audits or to fund member sitting fees for needed extraordinary meetings of the audit, risk and improvement committee (note: these additional services/meetings will be funded from the receiving council's allocated surplus).

Table 1.1 on the following page provides the breakdown of the full year forecasted versus budgeted operating result.



Program	Full Year Forecast Operating Result \$000	Full Year Budget Operating Result \$000	Variance to Budget Operating Result \$000
CRJO Operations	14	(56)	70
CRJO Internal Audit	45	0	45
All Other Projects	0	0	0
Total Operating Result	59	(56)	116

Table 1.1

Cost reductions and financial sustainability

CRJO continues to make significant improvements to its financial position as compared to 2023-24. Off the back of a full year consolidated deficit of \$346k for year ending 30 June 2024, the adopted 2024-25 budget included critical cost saving measures to ensure the ongoing financial sustainability of the joint organisation, in addition to rationalising all other expenditure reductions incurred in 2023-24. The 2024-25 budget reflects the changes required to return to a breakeven position by the 2026 financial year.

As at 30 September 2024, CRJO successfully delivered these measures and exceeded the budgeted cost savings, resulting in a revised full year CRJO Operations surplus of **\$14k**, a \$70k favourable variance against the budgeted CRJO Operations deficit of **(\$56k)**.

Table 1.2 below provides an overview and status of the cost saving measures.

Cost Saving Measure in 2024/25 Budget	Due Date	Status	Additional Cost Savings Achieved \$000
Relocation of office to Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (QPRC)	31-Aug-24	Complete 27-Aug-24	45
Finalise workplace change process and implement new organisational structure	01-Oct-24	Complete 05-09-24	15
Sale of CRJO-owned motor vehicle (Subaru Outback)	31-Jul-24	Complete (delayed) 08-Oct-24	(2)
Change in board sitting fees policy (policy change not assumed in budget)	n/a	Complete 02-09-24	12
			70

Table 1.2

Additional savings were achieved from the office relocation as CRJO had budgeted a three-month break lease fee and a provision for the 'make good' of the premises upon vacating. Neither expenditure was incurred as Canberra Airport waived these costs in lieu of a cash payment for their 2024/25 affiliate membership.

The nature of the new office lease with Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council also presented cost savings under the Accounting Standard AASB16 relating to the treatment of lease costs as interest and depreciation.

Implementation of workplace changes provided additional cost savings of \$15k when compared to



budget as the salary maintenance period was than the conservatively estimated budgeted amount, following legal confirmation of the applicable redundancy period.

At its 2 August 2024 meeting, the CRJO board resolved to remove board member sitting fees (\$267.90 per mayor per meeting for year ending 2024) and retain only the chairperson's annual allowance. Although not included as a measure in the 2024/25 budget, conservatively not pre-empting the board's decision, this option balanced the joint organisation's financial responsibility by reducing the operational cost base, whilst maintaining recognition of the chairperson's significant role.

Cash balances

As at 30 September 2024, CRJO holds a consolidated cash balance of \$2,219k. 62% of this balance is restricted grant funding, only available for the delivery of externally-funded projects and a further 22% is required to pay operations cost for the remainder of the year, with membership fees largely paid upfront at the start of the financial year.

Refer to the attached financial performance management report for a full list of projects and cash allocations.

Table 1.3 details the committed and unrestricted distribution of cash.

Program	Cash Balance 30 Sep 2024 \$000	Restricted	Committed	Unrestricted
CRJO Operations	897	41	483	373
CRJO Internal Audit	(2)	0	(2)	0
All Other Projects	1,324	1,324	0	0
Total Operating Result	2,219	1,365	481	373

Table 1.3

CRJO Operations holds cash totalling **\$897k**, broken down into:

- Restricted – funds only available for the delivery of external grant-funded projects (in this case, funding carried forward for the Office for Local Government Capacity Building grant) **\$41k**;
- Committed – funds needed to cover operational expenditure and liabilities through to 30 June 2025 **\$483k**; and
- Unrestricted – available cash reserves **\$373k**.

It is essential for CRJO to maintain sufficient unrestricted cash reserves to cover not only unexpected expenditure, but also to fund the first or last 10-20% of a project. It is not uncommon for project milestone payments to be paid *after* costs have been incurred, resulting in CRJO Operations making this cash available to tide over until grant milestone payments are made and ensure timely delivery of the project. This was common with past projects such as those from the federal government's Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund (BCRRF) where significant cash reserves were used ahead of first milestone payments.



12.5 NSW Joint Organisation Chairs Forum Minutes

Author: Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services

Attachments: 1. Minutes NSW JO Chairs Forum 08082024
2. Action List NSW JO Chairs Forum 08082024

RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board notes the NSW Joint Organisation Chairs Forum minutes and action list from its meeting of 8 August 2024.

REPORT

The NSW Joint Organisation Chairs Forum meets three times per year in NSW Parliament House, hosted by the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Ron Hoenig MP. The objective of the chairs forum is to meet as regional representatives of Joint Organisations to engage and exchange information on best practice and excellence in the pursuit of strategic regional priorities and collaboration activities to achieve value for the Joint Organisation network.

Attached to this report are the minutes and action list from discussions held 8 August 2024.



13. 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.

14. Close

The chair will close the meeting.

15. Next Meeting

The next Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board Meeting is scheduled to be held Friday, 6 December 2024 at the Canberra Airport.

***** Extraordinary meeting to be followed by an induction for the
Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board *****