



# CANBERRA REGION JOINT ORGANISATION

*Regional leadership connecting our communities*

## BOARD MEETING

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Friday, 7 March 2025  
9am – 1pm  
Snowy Hydro | Cabramurra, NSW

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## AGENDA AND BUSINESS PAPERS



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15. Close.....	30
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## Thursday, 6 March 2025 (Tour & Dinner)

Time	Activity	Notes
1.30pm	Arrive at Cabramurra Township <b>Location: Snowy Hydro Upstairs Pool Room, Main building, entry from Town Square.</b>	Welcome by Area Manager Ben Sky Safety briefing and supply of safety equipment/PPE Room: Upstairs Pool Room, Main building, entry from Town Square.
2pm	Tour of Cabramurra and T2 Power Station	Tour of Tumut 2 Power Station and Cabramurra Township
4.30pm	Arrive back at Cabramurra	Return all safety equipment Check in to accommodation.
6pm	Pre-Dinner Drinks <b>Location: Snowy Hydro Upstairs Pool Room</b>	Members pay as you go.
6.30pm	Dinner and Presentation <b>Location: Snowy Hydro Upstairs Pool Room</b>	Dinner <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Three-course meal</li><li>• Full bar - members pay as you go</li></ul> Presentation by Snowy Hydro, Scott MacKillop
9pm	Overnight stay in Cabramurra	The accommodation at Cabramurra is owned and operated by Snowy Hydro.



## Friday, 7 March 2025 (Board Meeting)

Time	Item(s)	Presenter	For	Brief
9am	1-9	Cr Russell Fitzpatrick, Chairperson	Noting	Welcome, acknowledgement of country, apologies
9.05am	10.1	Leanne Barnes, Woolamai Consulting Jillian Kilby, The Stable Group/The Infrastructure Collaborative Heidi Stratford, NSW Reconstruction Authority	Presentation	Blueprint for a Resilient South East NSW Project Update
9.45am	10.2	Cr Anna Reynolds, Lord Mayor Hobart City Council	Presentation	Climate Mayors Initiative
10am	11.1 & 11.2	Various	Noting	Associate and affiliate members and agencies and stakeholder briefings
10:30am	11.3	Rowena Abbey/Olivia West, Chair/CEO RDASNA	Noting	RDASNA regional visioning update
10.40am	12.1	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Decision	Benefit-sharing guidelines – renewable energy
11.10am	12.2	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Decision	Statement of Regional Strategic Priorities
11.50am	12.3	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Decision	NSW parliament house CRJO board meeting preparation
12:05pm	12.4	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Decision	Peak NSW local government bodies' memberships
12.10pm	12.5	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Decision	Regional Australia Institute membership
12.15pm	13.2	Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services	Noting	Governance and Compliance
12.20pm	13.3	Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services	Noting	Post Election Governance Requirements
12.25pm	13.4	Jen Lang, Jennifer Lang Australia	Noting	Finance Status Quarterly Report
12.35pm	13.5	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Noting	Regional Programs Status Report
12.40pm	14-16	Cr Russell Fitzpatrick, Chairperson	Noting	Closed session, close meeting and next meeting date
12.45pm	Lunch			



## CRJO Board Members

COUNCIL	VOTING REPRESENTATIVES	NON-VOTING REPRESENTATIVES
<b>Bega Valley Shire Council</b>	Mayor, Cr Russell Fitzpatrick	Anthony McMahon, Chief Executive Officer
<b>Eurobodalla Shire Council</b>	Mayor, Cr Mathew Hatcher	Stephanie Speedy, A/General Manager
<b>Goulburn Mulwaree Council</b>	Mayor, Cr Nina Dillon	Marina Hollands, A/Chief Executive Officer
<b>Hilltops Council</b>	Mayor, Cr Brian Ingram	Anthony O'Reilly, General Manager
<b>Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council</b>	Mayor, Cr Kenrick Winchester	Rebecca Ryan, General Manager
<b>Snowy Monaro Regional Council</b>	Mayor, Cr Chris Hanna	Stephen Dunshea, A/Chief Executive Officer
<b>Snowy Valleys Council</b>	Mayor, Cr Julia Ham	Jessica Quilty, A/General Manager
<b>Upper Lachlan Shire Council</b>	Mayor, Cr Paul Culhane	Alex Waldron, Chief Executive Officer
<b>Wingecarribee Shire Council</b>	Mayor, Cr Jesse Fitzpatrick	Lisa Miscamble, General Manager
<b>Yass Valley Council</b>	Mayor, Cr Jasmin Jones	Julie Costa, A/Chief Executive Officer
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)		
<b>Wagga Wagga City Council</b>	Mayor, Cr Dallas Tout	Peter Thompson, General Manager
<b>ACT Government</b>	David Clapham, Executive Branch Manager, Regional, Infrastructure, Planning and Transport Branch	
<b>NSW Premier's Department</b>	Giles Butler, Director Regional Coordination, South	
AFFILIATE MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)		
<b>Canberra Airport</b>	Noel McCann, Director, Planning & Government Relations	Michael Thompson, Head of Aviation
	Jordan Fallon, Government Relations & Policy Advisor	



## CRJO Board Attendees

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

STAFF	
<b>Canberra Region Joint Organisation</b>	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer
	Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services
<b>Woolamai Consulting</b>	Leanne Barnes, Project Manager (contractor)
<b>Jennifer Lang Australia</b>	Jennifer Lang, Chief Financial Officer (contractor)

The following invitations have been sent prior to the meeting:

- Mr Justin Clancy MP, Member for Albury (as local member for Cabramurra)



## 1. Opening Meeting

Chairperson, Mayor Russell Fitzpatrick will open the meeting.

## 2. Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

The following acknowledgement will be made by the chairperson.

*"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 chairperson 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:

- Mr Justin Clancy MP, Member for Albury (as local member for Cabramurra)
- Cr Mathew Hatcher, Mayor Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Cr Paul Culhane, Mayor Upper Lachlan Shire Council
- Warwick Winn, General Manager Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Stephanie Speedy, A/General Manager Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Michael Thompson, Head of Aviation, Canberra Airport

## 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. 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.

## 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.



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## 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:** Hayley Chapman, Coordinator Corporate Services

- Attachments:**
1. Minutes - CRJO Board Meeting 6 December 2024
  2. Actions Arising – CRJO Board Meeting 6 December 2024 - Updated February 2025

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board adopts the minutes and actions arising from the board meeting held 6 December 2024.





## 10. Presentations

### 10.1 Blueprint for a Resilient South East NSW project update and transitioning to the State Disaster Mitigation Plan and disaster adaptation planning

<b>Who:</b>	<b>Leanne Barnes, Woolamai Consulting</b> , CRJO Project Manager (Contractor) <b>Jillian Kilby, The Stable Group/The Infrastructure Collaborative</b> (Consultant) <b>Heidi Stratford, NSW Reconstruction Authority</b> , Director Illawarra and South East
<b>Attachments:</b>	1. <a href="#">Blueprint for a Resilient South East NSW</a>
<b>Purpose:</b>	To update the CRJO board as to delivery status of the NSW Government-funded Blueprint for a Resilient South East NSW project and outline next steps to finalise the project and feed in to disaster adaptation planning as proposed by the NSW Reconstruction Authority.

#### REPORT

The NSW Government' Department of Regional NSW (now Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development) and the Commonwealth Government have been supporting the recovery of bushfire impacted communities through funding programs such as the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF) and Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund (BCRRF).

CRJO was awarded a grant in December 2021 of \$2,780,632 to deliver the Blueprint for a Resilient South East NSW project to (in summary):

- develop a *Blueprint for a Resilient South East NSW* document (the Blueprint) and digital version and relevant resources to support resilience building in communities
- assist councils and communities in fire-affected areas assess which wellbeing factors are most impacted by disasters in their area. This will support more resilient communities that are able to prepare for and recover from natural disasters more quickly while maintaining relative wellbeing.
- in conjunction with councils and communities, design, prioritise and deliver targeted training programs, communication tools and projects to support resilience in the region, including networking events, employment of council liaison officers, publication of reports, and similar

The Blueprint was adopted by CRJO board meeting on 20 October 2022.

The project is in its final stage with a digital version of the Blueprint under development for website publishing along with a suite of resources to support community and council resilience deliverables.

Key initiatives of the final phase of the Blueprint project now nearing completion are:

1. Digital version of the Blueprint
2. Local Decision Guides for each local government area
3. Health & wellbeing reports for each local government area
4. Investment readiness prospectus for priority resilience projects in the region



The project will provide a listing of resilience projects and investments needs for funding advocacy for social and community, economic, environmental and assets and infrastructure projects, including an update of councils' priority resilience pipeline of projects via the *PIPE* platform and refresher training for councils for *PIPE* platform use.

Launch events for the digitised Blueprint and disaster adaptation planning commencement will be held towards the end of the current financial year.

This final phase of the Blueprint project is setting up the region up for smooth transition to the NSW Government's new approach of disaster adaptation planning under the NSW [State Disaster Mitigation Plan](#).

Presentations will be made to the board as follows:

**Leanne Barnes, Woolamai Consulting, CRJO Project Manager (Contractor)** – update on the Blueprint for a Resilient South East NSW project

**Jillian Kilby, The Stable Group/The Infrastructure Collaborative (Consultant)** – update on the refresh of councils' pipeline of resilience projects via the *PIPE* platform

**Heidi Stratford, NSW Reconstruction Authority, Director Illawarra and South East** – role of the Reconstruction Authority and the state's transition to the State Disaster Mitigation Plan and disaster adaptation planning approach and how this leads from the Blueprint project in the south east region



## 10.2 Climate Mayors Initiative

<b>Who:</b>	<b>Cr Anna Reynolds, Lord Mayor Hobart City Council</b> , Global Covenant of Mayors
<b>Attachments:</b>	1. Climate Mayor's Initiative – Statement of Support 2. Cr Anna Reynolds Mayor Hobart City Council - Biography
<b>Purpose:</b>	To seek support from Canberra Region Joint Organisation council mayors for the Climate Mayors Initiative via signing the initiative's supporting statement.

### REPORT

#### Context

As a region we are committed to supporting our communities to be resilient and disaster prepared, as well as to promote net zero emissions actions and practices in this region (*Draft CRJO Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028 - 1.4 Resilient Communities and 2.3 Net Zero Emissions*).

Through participation in the Joint Organisation Net Zero Accelerator program, CRJO actively works to support emissions reduction from councils' operations and is working towards being Net Zero Ready for future requirements on councils to report on their greenhouse gas emissions.

Implementation of the *Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023* has begun with the Net Zero Commission established in 2024 and regulations being drafted in 2025.

It is anticipated that the regulations will provide guidance to those entities to whom the legislation applies, which includes councils, providing increased certainty on requirements such as reporting on council greenhouse gas emissions.

With the fast-evolving net zero landscape it is critical that regional mayors are aware of the legislation implications and the greater expectations of local councils in NSW's emission reduction plan.

#### Climate Mayors Initiative

Cr Anna Reynolds is an active advocate for leading climate action on a local government level. In her role as Lord Mayor of Hobart City Council, Cr Reynolds represents the Oceania region on the [Global Covenant of Mayors \(GCoM\) for Climate and Energy](#)'s board.

To increase the coordinated impact of Australian local government leaders, Cr Reynolds has launched a campaign to garner support for the establishment of **Climate Mayors** which proposes to support and coordinate an active network of mayors from around Australia who demonstrate climate leadership.

This network of mayors will build political support in Australia and in our communities for more ambitious action on climate change.

#### Why now?

Mayors and local councils have been undertaking climate action for over 20 years but their voices aren't as present and influential as they could be in national Australian climate debates.

With the United Nations Climate Conference, known as COP31, likely to be hosted in Australia in 2026, the timing is right for mayors to get organised and play a bigger role. Climate Mayors will facilitate mayors having a bigger say in influencing national climate targets and policies and in the international agenda as it moves its focus to our part of the world.



### **Why Climate Mayors?**

Climate Mayors seeks to serve as the platform for mayors to engage on climate advocacy in Australia.

The Climate Mayors model is a tested brand and model that has been operating in the United States for many years (<https://www.climatemayors.org/>).

While there are some local government networks in Australia operating in the region, there is also room for a high-profile, city leadership focused initiative to help drive a more ambitious advocacy agenda in the lead up to COP31.

### **Next Steps**

Over the next 3 years, Climate Mayors will mobilise a network of mayors across Australia to advocate for stronger national policies, and to raise mayors' voices in calling for stronger national and international ambition.

The aim is to:

- Deepen mayoral engagement in national climate advocacy, with the goal of local leaders having more of a say in shaping climate policy and programs.
- Engage with local government associations to increase the work they're doing on climate policy and advocacy.
- Build a partnership between Mayors in the Oceania region (New Zealand and the Pacific) to advance the local cities agenda at COP31 in Australia and beyond.
- Mobilise Mayors to be more visible voices for 100% renewables, phase out of fossil fuels and fairer local funding for urban climate resilience.

We are keen to work together, and with supportive partners, to bring this initiative to life.

To express their interest in supporting the Climate Mayors initiative, mayors are invited to consider adding their names to the growing list of leaders who have signed the Climate Mayors supporting statement (attached).

To date the initiative has attracted the signatures of:

**Lord Mayor Anna Reynolds, City of Hobart**

**Mayor Hannah Fitzhardinge, City of Fremantle**

**Shire President, Julia Meldrum, Augusta Margaret River Council**

**Mayor Christine Cherry, Tweed Shire Council**

**Mayor Moira Were, City of Onkaparinga**

**Mayor, Dr Heather Holmes-Ross, City of Mitcham**

**Mayor Danielle Mulholland, Kyogle Council**



## 11. Briefings to CRJO Board

### 11.1 Associate and Affiliate Members Updates

The following members will provide an update to the board:

- Giles Butler, Director Regional Coordination – South, Delivery and Engagement Group, NSW Premier’s Department
- Dr David Clapham, Executive Branch Manager, Regional, Infrastructure, Planning and Transport Branch, ACT Government
- Noel McCann, Director of Planning and Government Relations, Canberra Airport.

### 11.2 Agencies and Stakeholders Updates

The following agencies will provide an update to the board:

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

### 11.3 Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT – Regional Vision

<b>Who:</b>	Rowena Abbey, Chair Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT Olivia West, CEO Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT
<b>Attachments:</b>	Nil
<b>Purpose:</b>	To update the CRJO board as to the process currently underway Regional Development Australia Southern NSW & ACT to develop a regional vision document.



## 12. Reports to CRJO Board: For Decision

### 12.1 Benefit-sharing Guidelines for Large-Scale Renewable Energy Project Developer Contributions Agreements

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

- Attachments:**
1. New England Mayors Statement of Expectations for Community Benefit Sharing
  2. Armidale Regional Council Community Benefit Framework 2024
  3. [Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure Benefit-Sharing Guideline](#)

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board:

1. notes the NSW Joint Organisations Chairs Forum request for chairs to ask joint organisations' member councils to consider adopting consistent benefit sharing policies in individual councils in NSW regions,
2. notes the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's *Benefit Sharing Guideline – Guidance for large-scale renewable energy projects* published in November 2024
3. notes the potential for a new or increased revenue stream for member councils via benefit sharing agreements
4. gives in-principle support to adopting consistent benefit sharing policies in individual councils in Canberra Regional Joint Organisation regions and
5. refers to the general managers advisory group, consideration of an approach to adopting consistent benefit-sharing frameworks in individual councils across the Canberra Region Joint Organisation region and planning joint working group for consideration as to operationalising such frameworks.

#### REPORT

Many councils have had renewable energy developments such as wind farms, solar farms and battery storage facilities undertaken in the local government areas in recent years. Most developments have occurred without appropriate agreements to ensure local host communities benefit positively from development in their local areas, let alone offset negative impacts of development.

It is within all councils' power and is common practice to require developers to pay contributions to councils for community benefit sharing. There is a need for councils' negotiation of voluntary planning agreements, and in the making of submissions to state government in the case of state-assessed developments, to include requirements for payment by renewable energy developers to councils for implementing projects of benefit to local communities. There is merit to joining up with other councils in a region to agree parameters for such negotiations and submissions and adopt similar policies for community benefit sharing.



On this subject, the NSW Joint Organisations Chairs Forum (JO chairs forum) invited the chair of the Coalition of Renewable Energy Councils (CoREM), Cr Sam Coupland, Mayor Armidale Regional Council, to its 8 August 2024 meeting to present on the successful approach of five New England councils to adopt consistent benefit sharing policies as guidance for negotiating with renewable energy developers in their individual councils.

The mayors agreed a set of expectations to put to the NSW Government with respect to benefit sharing payments by renewable energy developers. Refer attached New England Mayors Statement of Expectations signed by the CoREM councils and provided to state government in 2022.

Coalition member councils then adopted individual council policies or frameworks to implement the agreed expectations and these have evolved over time. Refer attached most recent benefit sharing framework adopted by Armidale Regional Council in May 2024, as an example.

The JO chairs forum agreed that the joint organisations' chairs ask their respective member councils to consider implementing similar policies or frameworks to bring about benefit sharing with local communities when renewable energy developments occur in their local government areas.

In November 2024, the NSW Government Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure published its *Benefit Sharing Guideline – Guidance for large-scale renewable energy projects, November 2024*. Refer attached.

This guideline, published after pressure from councils such as those involved in the CoREM, provides a clear position the individual councils can use for negotiating voluntary planning agreements with renewable energy developers and can be applied by all councils, not just in state government renewable energy zones, and for all renewable energy developments whether council-assessed or state-assessed via council lobbying.

The guideline, despite indicating its applicability to specific types of developments, namely solar farm, wind farm and battery storage on public land projects, and similar guidelines developed for different purposes may also be useful to adopt in council policies and frameworks as the basis for:

- negotiations with developers for voluntary planning agreements for other types of energy-related developments, for example transmission lines,
- submissions to state and federal governments when consents are provided by other levels of government, and
- negotiating for better community outcomes retrospectively to approvals and consents being obtained.

It is recommended that, subject to member councils' in-principle support, this matter be referred to the general managers advisory group for consideration of adopting consistent benefit-sharing frameworks in individual councils across the Canberra Region Joint Organisation region and planning joint working group for consideration as to operationalising such frameworks, should they be adopted with a recommendation from the general managers and advisory group and planning joint working group to come to a future CRJO board meeting.



## 12.2 Statement of Strategic Priorities

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

**Attachments:** 1. CRJO Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board:

1. reviews the refreshed Canberra Region Joint Organisation Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028 and agrees any required changes, and
2. adopts the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028, subject to incorporation of agreed changes.

### ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board reviews the refreshed Canberra Region Joint Organisation Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028 and requests further work on the document prior to adoption.

## REPORT

### Background

In 2023, when work commenced by Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) member councils on reviewing and updating of council community strategic plans ahead of new councils being elected, a process was also undertaken to review and refresh the CRJO's statement of strategic priorities.

This process was completed as an additional 'out of cycle' review beyond minimum legislated requirement for joint organisations to review and adopt a statement of strategic priorities every four years within one year of member council elections.

The CRJO General Managers Advisory Group (GMAG) undertook the update which resulted in a refreshed CRJO Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024 – 2028 (refreshed SSP) which was adopted by the CRJO Board at its meeting of 16 May 2024 and has served as the guiding document for CRJO's work since the start of 2024.

The CRJO Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024 – 2028 is attached.

Activities and achievements against the refreshed SSP were reported in CRJO's 2023/24 annual performance statement, adopted by the CRJO board at its meeting of 25 October 2024.

### Requirement for joint organisations to have a statement of strategic priorities

All joint organisations are required under the *Local Government Act 1993* to review and adopt a statement of strategic priorities after each 4-yearly council election.

The statement of strategic priorities, as per the name, is not an action plan, rather it collates our collective strategic priorities for the region and guides our executive officer as to areas that the CRJO should be working on. The statement is therefore necessarily high-level in nature.





All joint organisations’ statement of strategic priorities must align with their member councils’ community strategic plans and state government’s strategic priorities, these covering a very broad range of areas.

### Review and adoption of the CRJO Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024 to 2028

The refreshed SSP was provided to mayors in the lead up to the 7 March board meeting to enable mayors to read the document, discuss with their general managers and prepare to discuss any feedback, requests for additions, deletions or changes at the 7 March 2025 board meeting before considering adoption of the document.

Some errors and needed updates have been identified by CRJO staff and councils and some mayors have provided feedback ahead of the meeting, collated below.

Feedback Submitter	Feedback Summary	Recommended change
Wingecarribee Shire Council	No success measures included in the document	Develop and includes measures within the document to enable review of success in the priority areas of work
Goulburn Mulwaree Council	Document layout good  All are great priorities - but as a "business" representing all local governments the economy needs to be the focus.	Change the order of regional priorities to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fostering a robust and diverse economy</li> <li>2. Developing resilient and modern infrastructure</li> <li>3. Protecting natural environment</li> <li>4. Enhancing liveability and inclusiveness</li> <li>5. Upholding strong civic leadership</li> </ol>
Queanbeyan Regional Council	Comfortable with refreshed document	Nil
Hilltops Council	Grammatical errors  Business development should be first priority as without businesses you have nothing and can't afford anything.  Affordable housing is a meritorious priority but not achievable due to regulation and bureaucracy.	Rectify all errors in final adopted document  Move “Fostering a robust and diverse economy” to first-listed priority and add business development to the priority.  Remove affordable housing as a priority and include a simple statement of fact that regional housing affordability is better than metropolitan areas and we live in a healthy safe and environmentally friendly community.
CRJO staff	Some government department names are out of date and will continue to be amended due to change of government / machinery of government changes over time	Remove specific department names and replace with more general statements for each jurisdiction’s government such as, for state government,  <i>“The Canberra Region Joint Organisation and the NSW State Government collaborate through departments and agencies across planning, justice, health, rural fire services, emergency management, and infrastructure to achieve impactful results within the region.”</i>
CRJO staff	Typographical and grammatical errors	Rectify all errors in final adopted document



### 12.3 NSW Parliament House Meeting

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

- Attachments:**
1. CRJO Overview for NSW Ministers
  2. CRJO Board Invitation Letter to The Hon. Chris Minns MP 20240322
  3. CRJO Board Invitation Letter to The Hon. Daniel Mookhey MLC 20240322
  4. CRJO Board Invitation Letter to The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP 20240322
  5. CRJO Board Invitation Letter to The Hon. Paul Scully MP 20240322
  6. CRJO Board Invitation Letter to The Hon. Rose Jackson MLC 20240322
  7. CRJO Board Invitation Letter to The Hon. Stephen Kamper MP 20240322
  8. CRJO Board Invitation Letter to The Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP 20240322
  9. CRJO Board Invitation Letter to The Hon. Ryan Park MP 20240322
  10. CRJO Board Invitation Letter to The Hon. Penny Sharpe MLC 20240322
  11. CRJO Board Invitation Letter to The Hon. Tara Moriarty MLC 20240322
  12. CRJO Board Invitation Letter to The Hon. Steve Whan MP 20240322
  13. CRJO Board Invitation Letter Dr Joe McGirr MP 20240322
  14. CRJO Board Invitation Letter Dr Michael Holland MP 20240322
  15. CRJO Board Invitation Letter Mrs Wendy Tuckerman MP 20240322
  16. CRJO Board Invitation Letter Ms Steph Cooke MP 20240322
  17. The Hon. Steve Whan Additional Questions 20240506
  18. The Hon. Paul Scully Additional Questions 20240506
  19. Incoming Correspondence Hon. Penny Sharpe 20240710
  20. Incoming Correspondence Hon. Rose Jackson 20240520
  21. Incoming Correspondence Hon. Ryan Park 20240530
  22. Incoming Correspondence Hon. Steve Kamper 20240518

#### RECOMMENDATION

That Canberra Region Joint Organisation board:

1. agrees NSW ministers, shadow ministers and members of parliament for invitation to attend the annual NSW Parliament House board meeting on 5 June 2025, and
2. considers and advises topics and questions to be included in invitation letters to ministers, shadow ministers and members of parliament.

#### REPORT

In the lead up to the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) annual board meeting at NSW Parliament House to be held on 5 June 2025, preparations are underway for invitations to the NSW Premier, ministers and shadow minister in portfolio areas relevant to local government and local



members of parliament in the CRJO region.

As per last years' process, CRJO will include questions and topics for discussion in invitation letters to allow proper consideration of attendance by the premier, ministers, shadow ministers and their staff and adequate time for them to develop responses to assist with informed discussion.

Proposed questions and topics for discussion are sought from mayors and attendees at the 7 March board meeting.

Refer attached 2024 letters of invitation incorporating questions and topics.

In 2024, the invitations resulted in attendance and discussion topics as summarised below.

Ministers who were unable to attend provided written responses – refer attached.

Topics from last year which remain relevant will be included in invitation letters for 2025, including a follow up request on the Transgrid matter to meet with Minister Penny Sharpe regarding community benefit programs and benefit sharing for the HumeLink project affecting multiple CRJO member councils and that of our neighbours in the Riverina Eastern region.









Thursday, 16 May 2024

SCHEDULE OF MINISTERS FOR THE MAY 2024 CRJO BOARD MEETING

Sydney Parliament House, Preston Stanley Room

9am-4.30pm

8.30am	Arrive at NSW Parliament House, Preston Stanley Room			
9am	MEETING COMMENCES			
	Guest	Portfolio Capacity	Facilitator	Summary of Topics/Questions (refer letters of invitation for full questions)
9am	The Hon. Steve Whan MP (Host)	Member for Monaro, Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education	Mayor Cr Kenrick Winchester Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity building in council workforce shortage areas</li> </ul>
9.30am	Mrs Wendy Tuckerman MP	Member for Goulburn, Shadow Minister for Local Government	Mayor Cr Pam Kensit Upper Lachlan Shire Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local member's strategies to advocate for local government essential infrastructure, affordable housing, improved healthcare access, job creation, and educational opportunities in regional NSW</li> </ul>
9.45am	Break (15mins)			
10am	Dr Joe McGirr MP	Member for Wagga Wagga	Mayor Cr Peter Walker Goulburn Mulwaree Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local member's strategies to advocate for local government essential infrastructure, affordable housing, improved healthcare access, job creation, and educational opportunities in regional NSW</li> </ul>
10.15am	Morning Tea (15mins)			
10.30am	CRJO Board Meeting			
12pm	Lunch (30mins)			
12.30pm	The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP	Minister for Local Government	Mayor Cr Margaret Roles Hilltops Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waste contracts tendering regulatory change</li> <li>IPART review of council financial model (now replaced with NSW Parliament inquiry into ability of local government to fund infrastructure and services)</li> <li>Disaster recovery funding arrangements</li> </ul>

	Guest	Portfolio Capacity	Facilitator	Summary of Topics/Questions (refer letters of invitation for full questions)
1pm	 <b>The Hon. Tara Moriarty MLC</b>	Minister for Regional NSW Minister for Agriculture	<b>Mayor Cr Mathew Hatcher Eurobodalla Shire Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional Development Trust</li> <li>Legacy Grant Programs</li> <li>Agriculture and Aquaculture</li> <li>New Industry Development</li> </ul>
1.30pm	 <b>The Hon. Chris Minns MP</b>	NSW Premier	<b>Mayor Cr Russell Fitzpatrick Bega Valley Shire Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole of government plans to address infrastructure development, planning, economic growth, and community services in regional NSW</li> </ul>
2pm	<b>Afternoon Tea (15mins)</b>			
2.15pm	 <b>The Hon. Paul Scully MP</b>	Minister for Planning and Public Spaces	<b>Administrator Viv May Wingecarribee Shire Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shortage of planners and the need for ongoing Trade Pathways Program</li> <li>Planning portal</li> <li>Additional question: Outcome from the State-assessed Planning Proposal Pathway Program and successful applications</li> </ul>
3pm	 <b>Dr Michael Holland MP</b>	Member for Bega	<b>Mayor Cr Allan McGrath Yass Valley Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local member's strategies to advocate for local government essential infrastructure, affordable housing, improved healthcare access, job creation, and educational opportunities in regional NSW</li> </ul>
3.15pm	 <b>Ms Steph Cooke MP</b>	Member for Cootamundra, Shadow Minister for Water, Shadow Minister for Crown Lands	<b>Mayor Cr Ian Chaffey Snowy Valleys Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local member's strategies to advocate for local government essential infrastructure, affordable housing, improved healthcare access, job creation, and educational opportunities in regional NSW</li> </ul>
3.30pm	<b>Local Government NSW Presentation</b>			
4pm	 <b>The Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP</b>	Minister for Regional Transport and Roads	<b>Mayor Cr Peter Thompson, Wagga Wagga City Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy <a href="#">change</a> Princes Hwy access to Sydney</li> </ul>
4.30pm	<b>MEETING CONCLUDES</b>			



## 12.4 Peak NSW Local Government Body Memberships

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

**Attachments:** Nil

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation writes to Local Government NSW and NSW Country Mayors Association seeking a zero-fee category of membership for joint organisations where 100% of joint organisation member councils are already Local Government NSW and Country Mayors Association financial members.

### REPORT

Both Local Government NSW (LGNSW) and the NSW Country Mayors Association (CMA) have approached Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) to become members of their respective bodies.

There is no category of membership specifically relevant to joint organisations or regional organisations of councils.

Country Mayors Association offers Not-for-Profit Associate Membership of approximately \$1250 per annum.

LGNSW offers associate membership of approximately \$4,000 per annum.

There is concern that the cost of a regional membership by joint organisations effectively duplicates the cost of individual councils' membership.

At the CRJO board meeting of 9 December 2022, the board considered LGNSW membership and determined not to proceed with applying for membership.

General managers have confirmed that all CRJO member councils are financial members of both LGNSW and CMA.

It is therefore recommended that CRJO writes to LGNSW and CMA advocating for a zero-fee category of membership for joint organisations where 100% of joint organisation member councils are already LGNSW and CMA financial members.



## 12.5 Regional Australia Institute Membership

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

**Attachments:** 1. Regional Activators Alliance Prospectus

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board approves joining the Regional Australia Institute's Regional Activators Alliance for the current year and in future years, subject to availability of budget.

### REPORT

Regional Australia Institute has invited Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) to join its Regional Activators Alliance cohort. This is the lowest level of membership offered by the Regional Australia Institute.

The Regional Australia Institute is a members-based organisation which undertakes research, think tanks and advocacy to grow and strengthen Australia's regions. CRJO and its member councils regularly use Regional Australia Institute data and reports to understand trends and changes to inform decision-making, to help attract grant funding and to develop our staff via conferences, working parties and research projects involvement. It is considered that supporting this research body is an appropriate use of CRJO's limited funds.

The Regional Activators Alliance seeks to build a commitment to collectively think about ways to transform regional Australia, ensuring a longer-term agenda can be created and developed in conjunction with all governments. The attached prospectus contains further information.

By virtue of CRJO's membership in the regional activators alliance, our council members will have access to Regional Australia Institute's membership benefits such as research reports, case studies and data to use in advocacy work and discounted conference and events tickets, therefore representing good value compared with individual council membership.

The required investment for Regional Activators Alliance members is \$5,000 + GST annually and membership renewal decision can be made each year with no requirement for continuity of membership, should funds not be available in any given year.

General managers of CRJO member councils have confirmed that individual councils do not currently hold membership of the Regional Australia Institute therefore there is no duplication of membership fees being paid by member councils.

To fund this membership, interest earnings will be used from CRJO cash balance not yet needed which is placed in a term deposit account rather than a transaction account. These interest earnings are projected to be higher than budgeted this year and will result in adequate additional revenue to cover the cost of membership in the Regional Activators Alliance.

It is recommended that CRJO join as members of the Regional Activators Alliance, subject to an annual review of budget availability.



### 13. Reports to CRJO Board: For Noting

#### 13.1 Governance and Compliance

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

**Attachments:** 1. Governance and Compliance Calendar 20250227

#### 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. 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	Ongoing	Annual report to Local Government Minister and Information Commissioner
Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022	Nil	Nil	N/A	Ongoing	Annual report to NSW Ombudsman
Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988	Nil	Nil	N/A	Ongoing	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	Ongoing	Annual report to CRJO Board and Office of Local Government





## 13.2 Post Election Governance Requirements

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

**Attachments:** Nil

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board notes the status of completion of post-election governance requirements.

### REPORT

This report is intended to inform the board of its post-election obligations, as outlined in the NSW OLG Post Election Guide Checklist and provide an update on the progression of items.

#### At the first meeting

- Elections of chairpersons – completed 25 October 2024 extraordinary board meeting
- Elect councillor member to Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee – completed 25 October 2024 extraordinary board meeting

#### Within 3 months

- Lodgment of returns of interests voting representatives of board of JOs - [completed](#) and published

#### Within 12 months

- Adoption of councillors' expenses and facilities policy – scheduled for adoption 5 June 2025 board meeting, in conjunction with adopting 2025/26 statement of revenue and budget
- Review of organisation structure – scheduled for report 5 June 2025 board meeting, in conjunction with adopting 2025/26 statement of revenue and budget
- Adoption of a code of meeting practice – scheduled for 5 September 2025 board meeting, after completion of NSW Office for Local Government council code of meeting practice review
- Review of code of conduct – scheduled for 5 September 2025 board meeting, after completion of NSW Office for Local Government councillor code of conduct review
- Adoption of a statement of strategic regional priorities – general managers refreshed document complete November 2023 ready for board consideration, board review scheduled to commence 7 March 2025 board meeting



### 13.3 Finance Status Quarterly Report

**Author:** Jennifer Lang, Chief Financial Officer

**Attachments:**

1. Financial Performance Management Report 20250131
2. Project Management Financial Report 20250131
3. Financial Reports Combined 20250131

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board:

1. notes the finance report, management report and financial statements for the year to date ending 31 January 2025
2. notes the operating result as at the end of 31 January 2025; and
3. notes the forecasted end of year operating result compared to the adopted budget.

#### REPORT

##### Current year-to-date result

For the year-to-date ending 31 January 2025, the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) achieved a consolidated operating surplus of **\$1,857k**. Of this surplus:

- CRJO Operations accounts for **\$335k**;
- CRJO Internal Audit & ARIC accounts for **\$6k**; and
- Unspent grant funding accounts for **\$1,516k**.

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, forecasted to be **\$316k**. Surpluses in relation to unspent grant funding reflects the upfront receipt of milestone payments and the timing of expenditure for project delivery. Any unspent grant funding at 30 June 2025 will be carried forward into the 2026 financial year.

##### Current year forecasted full year result

On a consolidated basis, CRJO is currently forecasting a full year surplus of **\$63k**, of which **\$15k** is from CRJO Operations. There have been no material changes to the CRJO Operations forecast since the previous Board report.

CRJO Internal Audit is forecasting a year end surplus of **\$47k**. It is anticipated that any forecasted surplus will be reinvested in additional services to member councils involved in the shared internal audit function and shared audit, risk and improvement committee arrangement. For example, the surplus could be utilised to engage external resources to undertake specialist or complex audits or to fund member sitting fees incurred for 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 \$000	Full Year Budget \$000	Variance to Budget \$000
CRJO Operations	15	(57)	72
CRJO Internal Audit	47	0	47
All Other Projects	0	0	0
<b>Total Operating Result</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>(57)</b>	<b>119</b>

*Table 1.1*

#### Cost reductions and financial sustainability

CRJO successfully delivered a number of vital cost saving measures identified in response to the 2023/24 operating deficit of \$346k (please refer to prior CRJO Board reports for full details and circumstances which lead to the deficit) to ensure its ongoing financial sustainability and return CRJO to a breakeven position by 2025/26 financial year.

These measures and the cost savings they contributed to the favourable CRJO Operations full year forecasted variance to budget of **\$72k** is summarised in Table 1.2 below.

Cost Saving Measure in 2024/25 Budget	Status	Additional Cost Savings Achieved \$000
Relocation of office to Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (QPRC)	Complete	45
Finalise workplace change process and implement new organisational structure	Complete	15
Sale of CRJO-owned motor vehicle (Subaru Outback)	Complete	(2)
Change in board sitting fees policy (policy change not assumed in budget)	Complete	13
		<b>71</b>

*Table 1.2*

#### Cash balances

As at 31 January 2025, CRJO holds a consolidated cash balance of **\$2,355k**. 55% of this balance is restricted grant funding, only available for the delivery of externally-funded projects and a further 27% 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 restricted, committed and unrestricted distribution of cash.

Program	Cash Balance 31 Jan 2025 \$000	Restricted \$000	Committed \$000	Unrestricted \$000
CRJO Operations	1,063	41	618	404
CRJO Internal Audit	27	0	27	0
All Other Projects	1,265	1,265	0	0
<b>Total Operating Result</b>	<b>2,355</b>	<b>1,306</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>404</b>

Table 1.3

CRJO Operations holds 45% of total cash totaling **\$1,063k**, 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 **\$618k**; and
- Unrestricted – available cash reserves **\$404k**.

CRJO Operations has placed the unrestricted cash reserves into a rolling three-month Term Deposit with National Australia Bank (NAB) to maximise returns on excess cash (excess cash being defined as cash not required to fund operational expenditure for the following six months). NAB offered an interest rate of 3.95% p.a. for a three-month, \$400,000 deposit.



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## 13.4 Regional Programs Status Report

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

**Attachments:** 1. Regional Programs Status Report March 2025

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board notes the Regional Programs Status Report March 2025.

### REPORT

Refer attached regional programs status report for a comprehensive overview of regional projects' status at the end of the period December 2024 – March 2025.



#### **14. 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.

#### **15. Close**

The chair will close the meeting.

#### **16. Next Meeting**

The next Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board Meeting is scheduled to be held Thursday, 5 June 2025, hosted at NSW Parliament House.