



CANBERRA REGION JOINT ORGANISATION

**CRJO Annual Performance
Statement 2023-2024**

Annual Performance Statement

2023-2024

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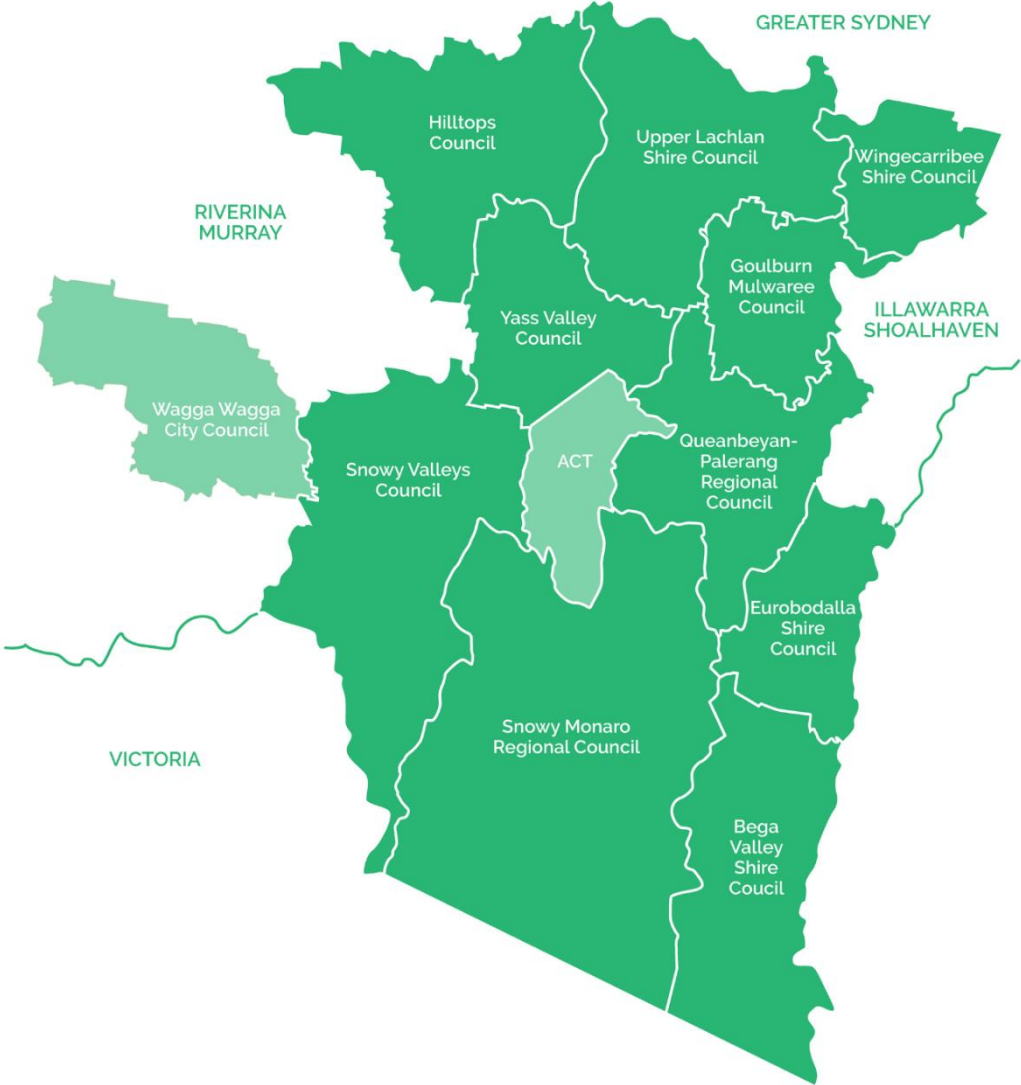
Profile

In 2017, amendments to the *Local Government Act* were passed to enable Joint Organisations to be established. Joint Organisations are local government entities with legal powers established by proclamation designed to bring regional and rural councils together for better regional outcomes. The Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) was proclaimed a corporate entity within the NSW Local Government Act on 1 July 2018.

The Canberra Region is situated in south-eastern New South Wales and envelops the ACT. The region extends from the picturesque south-west slopes, through the dynamic Sydney-Canberra Corridor, across the scenic Eurobodalla, down to the vibrant Sapphire Coast, and up into the majestic Snowy Mountains.

Characterised by its unique and diverse geography, the Canberra Region boasts a predominantly rural landscape. The region also encompasses a mosaic of smaller townships and villages, alongside expanding residential and rural residential areas, especially near Canberra and the coastal regions.

The topography of the region is remarkably varied, spanning from the coastal plains to the alpine areas in the southwest, and across the rolling tablelands in the west. This diverse landscape defines the region's natural beauty and shapes its community and way of life.



Role and Purpose

Our Role

The CRJO provides a forum for councils, state agencies and other stakeholders to work together at a regional level to identify shared priorities; delivering important regional projects and better outcomes for communities.

CRJO's core objectives, established in accordance with the legislated principal functions of all joint organisations, are to:

- Establish strategic regional priorities for the joint organisation area and develop strategies and plans for delivering these priorities.
- Provide regional leadership for the joint organisation area and to be an advocate for strategic regional priorities.
- Identify and take up opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation on matters relating to the joint organisation area.

Vision & Principles

The vision of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation, '**Diverse, Inclusive, Connected,**' embodies the unique identity of the Canberra region and sets it apart as a dynamic and forward-thinking region.










This vision captures the essence of the region's diverse landscape, which spans from the picturesque south-west slopes to the majestic Snowy Mountains and the vibrant coastal stretches of the Sapphire Coast. It reflects our commitment to embracing and celebrating the rich cultural tapestry and heritage that define our communities.

'Connected' not only refers to our robust physical and digital infrastructure that links towns and cities but also to the strong sense of community and collaboration that underpins our approach to regional development.

The inclusiveness aspect of our vision underscores our dedication to ensuring that every individual and community, regardless of background, has equal access to opportunities and a voice in shaping the region's future.

Together, these elements create a distinct identity for the Canberra Region, one that is grounded in respect for our natural and cultural heritage and driven by a collective spirit to innovate and prosper.

Our Region

 <p>11 Member Councils</p>	 <p>68,149km2 Area</p>	 <p>815,418* Population <small>(ACT 453,800. CRJO LGAs 361,528).</small></p>
 <p>10.3% of NSW Population</p>	 <p>\$16.23B GRP</p>	 <p>31,302 Local Businesses</p>
 <p>2 Special Activation Precincts</p>	 <p>\$4.69B Visitor Economy <small>(end 2019)</small></p>	 <p>16,000 Daily Commutes to ACT</p>

Source: Canberra Region .id Profile website, ABS Census, Canberra Region Economic Development Strategy.
*All population figures are 2022 ERP, except Snowy Valleys Council (2021 ERP) and ACT (2021 URP) Profile ID.

Message from the Chair



I am pleased to share this annual report, highlighting the great achievements we made together as members of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) during the 2023/24 financial year.

This year, the board took an important step by adopting an updated CRJO Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028 in March 2024. This document helped us focus our efforts on five key areas: community, environment, economy, infrastructure, and civic leadership. It was inspiring to see our councils align on these important issues, enabling us to advocate effectively for the benefit of our region. Our incoming board will review this updated statement of strategic priorities after the 2024 NSW

local government elections.

Our collaborative spirit continues to be an essential aspect for coordination between state and local government. By working together, we ensure that the voices of our communities are heard, allowing us to advocate and make decisions that truly reflect our regional needs. Our partnership with the Canberra Airport, ACT Government, NSW Government, and the federal government continues to enhance our impact and encourages us to work together as we strive to effectively address the unique challenges and capitalise on the opportunities of our region.

A key CRJO project this year saw the preparation of draft community strategic plans for all ten CRJO member councils, following extensive community consultation across all local government areas' communities. These draft community strategic plans are ready for consideration by incoming new councils and the project is a great example of working together across the region to deliver in a cost effective and collegiate way.

The joint organisation has also made progress in supporting our members at a regional level through various state government-funded programs. Our work program this year included initiatives in the areas of waste education, waste reduction and resource recovery, circular economy, contaminated land management, net zero emissions, disaster resilience, and training for future council planners. The ongoing delivery of these programs not only improves sustainability across the region but also provided valuable resources and support to our members, fostering collaboration and resilience.

I want to acknowledge the excellent work of the outgoing CRJO Board during their term. It was a privilege to lead this passionate group of council mayors together with their general managers, and work alongside the dedicated CRJO staff. Together, we made significant strides for our communities, and I look forward to seeing where our continued efforts will take us in the future.

Cr Russell Fitzpatrick
Mayor Bega Valley Shire Council
Chair, Canberra Region Joint Organisation

Strategic Regional Priorities

The CRJO Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028 was adopted by the CRJO board at its 1 March 2024 meeting, after a process to review and refresh the strategic regional priorities by the CRJO general managers advisory group. This Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities 2024-2028 encompasses five vital pillars:

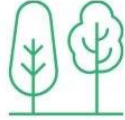
Our Community



Liveability, wellbeing, and inclusion.

We are a network of vibrant, inclusive and diverse communities that value our rural lifestyle.

Our Environment



We appreciate our range of rural landscapes and habitats and are stewards of the natural environment for future generations.

Our Economy



We have a strong regional economy experiencing sustainable growth, which provides for a diverse range of employment opportunities.

Our Infrastructure



Our community is well serviced and connected to built, social and communications infrastructure.

Our Civic Leadership



Our leaders operate ethically and implement good governance.

These five pillars demonstrate the overarching strategic goals for the region and are supported by several priority actions for their actualisation.

Of the priority actions, the following were delivered in the 2023-2024 financial year and represent the culmination of actions against this plan. The strategic regional priorities must be reviewed and adopted or re-adopted by the incoming CRJO board within twelve months after the 2024 local government elections.

Our Community

...enhancing the liveability and inclusiveness of our communities

Where do we want to be?

1.1 Quality and affordable housing is available and in good supply.

1.2 Health services are accessible for all.

1.3 Communities are supported to address cost of living pressures.

1.4 Resilient communities.

Actions

Quality and affordable housing is available and in good supply

1.1.1	Lobby for state and federal government investment and legislation that delivers in affordable housing initiatives.	CRJO’s annual board meeting held at NSW Parliament House, in May 2024 involved the NSW Premier and the Minister for Planning, amongst others, with the Minister for Crown Lands and Minister for Housing also invited. Blockers to housing supply such as the need for a pipeline of qualified planners and problems developing on Crown lands were raised before, during and after the advocacy session with the Premier and ministers and the board has requested to invite the Minister for Crown lands to a future board meeting to follow up regarding the need for facilitating cross-portfolio addressing of the barriers to developing on Crown land.
1.1.2	Coordinate the efforts of local planning regulations to increase affordable housing development.	The CRJO joint working group of council members’ planning professionals has been re-established to support coordination of planning functions. State planning agencies are participants in this group and are taking a lead role with respect to finalising the regional plan.
1.1.3	Collaborate with developers, not-for-profits, and other stakeholders to facilitate affordable housing development.	While CRJO members work directly with developers, CRJO has supported capacity-building in its member councils through the ‘Women in Planning’ project which saw 38 member council employees fully-funded via a state government grant to CRJO to undertake study towards a planning qualification at certificate 4 level, at NSW TAFE, or diploma level, at University of New England. Building the pipeline of planning professionals in regional NSW is an important way to resource the needed planning work to enable development of future housing.
1.1.4	Understand the regional housing needs, identify innovative housing models and share best practice.	CRJO is working with other joint organisations across NSW to identify innovative housing models for potential recommendation for implementation within Canberra Region. An example is the Spare Capacity in Housing Project undertaken by Central NSW Joint Organisation.

Health services are accessible for all		
1.2.1	Support local health districts to develop service and infrastructure plans that meet regional needs.	CRJO has not been involved with regional health services or infrastructure plans in 2023-24. CRJO's work with health providers has included the state-government funded Bin Trim program which covers all regional hospitals with each facility being offered, at no cost to them, a waste management assessment and action plan, including potential infrastructure and network improvements to address the volume of waste being produced and increase circularity of materials used in the sector.
1.2.2	Lobby state and federal governments for better health services in their region. This includes advocating for more funding, improved infrastructure, and increased staffing to address the primary, tertiary and aged care gap.	CRJO's May 2024 board meeting, held in NSW Parliament House, involved the NSW Premier and the Minister for Regional Development, amongst others, with the Minister for Regional Health also invited. Questions to the premier and minister focussed on the region's health workforce needs including worker housing and the barriers local government and private developers are experiencing attempting to develop worker accommodation and housing more generally. Follow up correspondence to and from the Minister for Regional Health continue to advocate for solutions to the region's health worker shortages which are universal across regions.
1.2.3	Advocate for the increase to the number and skills of healthcare professionals in the region through training initiatives or incentives to attract health workers.	
1.2.4	Work together to increase the chance of securing grants or other financial support for health projects.	CRJO's 2023-24 work with grant funding providers has focussed on completing the significant number of funded projects that were in train and acquitting existing grants. No new grants sought regarding health projects.

Communities are supported to address cost of living pressures		
1.3.1	Advocate to state and federal governments for policies and funding that directly reduce the cost of living, such as subsidies for utilities, public transport, or health care.	Cost of living arguments continue to place downward pressure on council rates and councils' financial sustainability has therefore been a focus of state and federal government and CRJO advocacy in 2023-24. Submissions were made by CRJO to federal and state inquiries into local government financial sustainability and ability of local government to fund infrastructure and services. Cost shifting from state government to local government, such as passing on cemeteries and crematoria fees, has exacerbated both cost of living problems and councils' financial sustainability. CRJO and member councils continue to advocate against such cost shifting.
1.3.2	Identify and share programs that encourage local government and residents to buy locally to stimulate the local economy and reduce costs.	CRJO's Economic Development and Tourism Joint Working Group continued to meet actively during 2023-24, bringing together member councils economic development professionals who are the main link between local government and local businesses to support local buying and investment. The joint working group is also attended by the Regional Development Australia Southern NSW and ACT Committee.

Resilient communities

1.4.1	<p>Ongoing engagement with those communities prone to natural disasters to identify risks and opportunities that will aid better planning and preparedness.</p>	<p>In 2023-24, CRJO has undertaken a regional community strategic planning project to develop draft community strategic plans for each of CRJO's ten core member councils. Engagement with all ten local government areas' communities occurred under the project with draft community plans ready handover to incoming councils following the 2024 October council elections so they can develop and finalise their community strategic plans as per legislative requirements. Not only is this an extremely cost-effective way for CRJO's member councils to develop their key community strategic planning document, it builds a regional approach which strengthens the strategic nature of councils' community strategic plans.</p> <p>A key focus of the regional community strategic planning project for 2023-24 was community resilience in light of increasing natural disasters. Engagement with communities sought to draw out resilience concerns and priorities for increasing resilience. For councils to effectively increase community resilience to natural disasters, it is necessary for council's integrated planning and reporting documents, starting with community strategic plans to incorporate resilience-building.</p>
1.4.2	<p>Based on the data collected, develop tools and resources that are easily understood and accessible to the community.</p>	<p>CRJO developed a toolkit, launched and workshopped in June 2024, to help councils embed resilience into their Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP&R) processes as part of the state-funded Disaster Risk Reduction Fund project.</p> <p>As part of the continuation of the Resilience Blueprint project during the period of 2023-24, CRJO has received approval to develop a public facing website that will primarily act as a digitised, interactive version of the South East NSW Resilience Blueprint document developed in 2022 by CRJO. The website will include additional resources developed by CRJO during previous grant funded resilience projects. It will have a multi-hazard focus, allowing both councils and communities access to information and resources to help increase their resilience and preparedness for natural hazards.</p> <p>During 2023-24 period CRJO was successful in acquitting the state-funded SIMTable project. The SIMTable is a bushfire modelling community engagement and education tool. During 2023-24, CRJO negotiated a permanent management solution for the SIMTable within the NSW Reconstruction Authority based in Wagga Wagga. The SIMTable will remain accessible to CRJO member councils for use in engagement and education programs, as well as to councils from Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation, Central NSW Joint Organisation and Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils.</p>

Resilient communities continued

1.4.3	Identify programs of work that can be undertaken to help communities be better prepared and facilitate the smooth execution of the disaster recovery plans across the region	<p>Continuation of the Resilience Blueprint project during 2023-24 saw CRJO receive approval to develop a public-facing website to act as a digitised, interactive version of the South East NSW Resilience Blueprint (2022) document. The website will include resources developed by CRJO during previous grant funded resilience projects. It will have a multi-hazard focus, allowing councils and communities access to information and resources to increase resilience and preparedness for natural disasters.</p> <p>CRJO's May 2024 application for funding from the federal government's Disaster Ready Fund program was successful and the 2025 and 2026 project aims to support development of disaster adaptation plans, on a local government or regional scale. The development of these plans will increase communities' resilience and preparedness for natural disasters, as well as facilitate the smooth execution of disaster recovery efforts.</p> <p>CRJO engaged the University of Canberra to include resilience indicators in their 2023 Wellbeing Survey for the CRJO region, to provide CRJO's member councils a baseline of current wellbeing and resilience. This data will help to inform the development of disaster adaptation plans across the region from 2025-2028, as well as aid councils and communities identify priority areas relating to disaster resilience.</p>
1.4.4	Work with councils to communicate and embed the plans and processes into its day-to-day operations.	<p>CRJO developed a toolkit to aid council staff embed resilience into their Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP&R) processes as part of the state-funded Disaster Risk Reduction Fund project. To support the use of the toolkit, CRJO held a workshop in June 2024, including a hands-on component for council attendees to look at ways each council can practically embed resilience into their IP&R processes. The toolkit was distributed to each council for use during their community strategic plan finalisation process using CRJO-developed draft plans, following October 2024 local government elections.</p> <p>CRJO's continuing work to digitise the Regional Resilience Blueprint document is a key to embedding and making accessible resilience-building tools and planning and preparedness processes.</p> <p>CRJO has successfully attracted federal funding from the Disaster Ready Fund Round 2 program which includes the establishment of a joint Regional Resilience Working Group with representatives from each of CRJO's member councils. This working group will act as a forum to share learnings and resources, as well as to build capacity within councils so they may embed disaster resilience into IP&R processes and day-to-day operations.</p>

Our Environment

*...protecting and nurturing
our natural environment*

Where do we want to be?

2.1 Best practice waste management.

2.2 Our natural environment is protected.

2.3 Net Zero Emissions.

Actions

Best practice waste management

2.1.1	Review and implement the Waste Management Strategy to reduce waste generation and improve recycling and resource recovery	<p>CRJO continues to deliver a range of waste reduction and resource recovery projects and programs. The NSW Environment Protection Authority’s regional coordination funding secures regular, ongoing collaboration between CRJO member councils’ waste managers and waste educators. Yearly programs include a school waste education program delivering waste education in 30 regional schools, access to participate in national campaigns like ‘Garage Sale Trail’ and ‘Plastic Free July’.</p> <p>In 2023-24, CRJO prepared regional submissions regarding the state government’s proposed introduction of the mandated collection of source-separated food organics and garden organics (FOGO) and review of the Environment Protection Authority waste levy.</p> <p>Other grant funded waste management projects delivered included community education around use of community recycling centres, enforcement and surveillance initiatives to reduce cross-border illegal dumping and the ‘Bin Trim’ program to help regional businesses and health services reduce waste going to landfill.</p> <p>In 2023-24, CRJO secured funding for continued community recycling centre education and events across the region to receive household chemicals for disposal.</p> <p>CRJO successfully attracted new state-government grants under the Business Food Waste Program 2024-26 and the Food Rescue Program 2024-26 and included disaster waste planning in the successful federal government Disaster Ready Fund grant application for 2025 and 2026 delivery.</p> <p>Circular economy initiatives and strategic planning featured in 2023-24 with a Circular Economy Roadmap substantially developed and business cases prepared for potential projects in three waste streams. Still maturing, CRJO’s circular economy strategic work will continue in the upcoming year.</p>
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Our natural environment is protected		
2.2.1	Implement strategies to protect native flora and fauna, including controlling invasive species and supporting native species.	CRJO's 2023-24 work with grant funding providers has focussed on completing the significant number of funded projects in train and acquitting existing grants. No new grants sought in 2023-24 regarding weed and pest management projects.
2.2.2	Support initiatives and programs to promote healthy water ways and enhance catchment and water quality.	<p>NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water attended CRJO general managers advisory group meeting in June 2024 to consult with respect to the NSW Murray Regional Water Strategy and Murrumbidgee Regional Water Strategy, under development.</p> <p>Via the statewide NSW Joint Organisations Chairs Forum, statewide forum chaired in 2023-24 by CRJO's chairperson, Cr Russell Fitzpatrick with CRJO providing secretariat support for the year, an agenda item presenter has been sourced for 2025 regarding the Murray Darling Water and Environment Research Program.</p> <p>CRJO worked with Yass Valley Council, Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council and the ACT Government to deliver an illegal dumping program targeting cross-border illegal dumping on rural lands and kerbside dumping issues. This included 2 roadside enforcement campaigns targeting truckloads crossing the ACT-NSW border into Yass and QPRC areas, in collaboration with HWY Police, the NHVR, the NSW and ACT EPA's and Councils. Illegal Dumping continues to be a source of contamination including potential hazardous materials like asbestos.</p> <p>CRJO has agreed with the NSW Environment Protection Authority to continue providing training and support to member councils to improve management of contaminated lands and underground petrol storage systems until the state funding is exhausted in March 2025.</p>
2.2.3	Implement strategies to protect our built heritage.	CRJO's 2023-24 work with grant funding providers has focussed on completing our significant number of funded projects and acquitting existing grants. No new grants sought regarding built heritage projects.
2.2.4	Enhance climate action in the region, including increasing resilience to natural hazards and protecting diverse environmental assets	<p>The state-funded Joint Organisation Net Zero Accelerator (JONZA) program, which funded CRJO for a one-year program in 2023-24, and recently re-funded CRJO for a second year, provides the opportunity for member councils to share climate change resilience and mitigation education resources to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as part of preparation for mandatory reduction targets to be legislated. The shared resources and support will assist in fast tracking climate action which in turn will increase understanding, and resilience to future climate impacts.</p> <p>The NSW Environment Protection Authority's Regional Waste and Resource Recovery Coordination Program has funded CRJO and its predecessors for more than ten year and enhances environmental protection by encouraging better waste management practices and improving regional resilience of the waste management network.</p>

Net Zero Emissions		
2.3.1	Work with stakeholders to promote/recommend zero emissions actions and practices in this region.	<p>The state-funded Joint Organisation Net Zero Accelerator (JONZA) program 2023-24 and 2024-25 is working to build emissions reduction capacity within CRJO’s member councils, ensuring that each council develops the appropriate internal response to monitoring and reporting on their operational emissions.</p> <p>CRJO developed a Net Zero Readiness Matrix in 2023 and accompanying Net Zero Council Guide which provides a guide for member councils wishing to embed net zero intent into their operations. The matrix and guide will be reviewed in 2024/25 in order to keep providing best practice guidance for members.</p> <p>Most CRJO Regional Waste and Resource Recovery projects are working towards reducing emissions from waste management, for example encouraging collaboration between councils to share learnings from the introduction of food organics and garden organics waste management services or the introduction of gas capture infrastructure at the regional landfills.</p>
2.3.2	Develop and support net zero programs and actions within the region in alignment with government expectations and targets.	<p>CRJO established a joint Net Zero Working Group in 2023 which continues to thrive with full representation from our members. The group meets quarterly and as a group we run multiple projects to facilitate councils’ operational net zero journeys.</p> <p>The projects are currently focused on getting councils’ operations ready for greenhouse gas emission monitoring and reporting to align with the state government’s legislated targets.</p> <p>The CRJO Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2022-27 identified priority actions regarding improvements of waste management operations. All waste-related projects work towards the NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy targets – reducing waste production, improving waste separation and reuse, getting organics out of landfill by introducing food organics and garden organics waste management and reducing other waste-related environmental impacts.</p>

Our Economy

*...fostering a robust
and diverse economy*

Where do we want to be?

3.1 The Canberra Region Economic Development Strategy – A Prospectus for Collaboration (CREDS) fully implemented.

3.2 Championing a circular economy.

Actions

The Canberra Region Economic Development Strategy – A Prospectus for Collaboration (CREDS) fully implemented

3.1.1	Support existing and emerging industries in the region.	<p>A key focus of the CRJO regional community strategic planning project, which has created in 2023-24, draft community strategic plans for CRJO’s ten member councils, is “growing, diversifying and strengthening local economies”, with different member councils working in different ways to undertake economic development.</p> <p>CRJO’s work in 2023-24 to implement the Canberra Region Economic Development Strategy has also focussed on circular economy opportunities and addressing the need for strategic planning in this emerging area of economic development by developing a Circular Economy Roadmap, a strategic document which sets the direction for working towards circularity in business, enterprise and industry in our region.</p>
3.1.2	Promote the skills and innovation required to secure the region’s long-term success.	<p>CRJO welcomed attendance of the chair and CEO of Regional Development Australia (RDA) Committee Southern NSW and ACT at CRJO board meetings and joint economic development and tourism working group meetings. Our regional RDA committee’s involvement in these groups’ meetings commenced in 2023-24 after changes to RDA committee boundaries resulted in closer alignment between CRJO and RDA boundaries. Federally funded RDAs, with their focus on economic and social regional development, are an important regional stakeholder with similar objectives to CRJO including for skills development.</p>
3.1.3	Develop a visitor economy, in partnership with stakeholders, on a regional level.	<p>CRJO supported, via significant financial sponsorship in 2023-24, the Canberra Region Tourism Industry Awards, a key way to support the region’s visitor economy products and providers.</p>
3.1.4	Work with the state government to leverage regional economic development strategies for local businesses.	<p>State government investment programs and departmental structures with respect to regional development have seen significant change over 2023-24 with the establishment of the Regional Development Trust Fund and advisory group under new state legislation. Opportunities for regional economic development investment from this fund will be identified under these new arrangements.</p>

Championing a circular economy		
3.2.1	Work as a region to support Circular Economy industries.	CRJO started the Bin Trim Networks Program which offers free waste assessments to 200 businesses and regional hospitals in the region, to improve resource recovery and reduce waste going to landfill. Focus areas are food waste, textiles and plastics. The program identifies local or regional opportunities to improve circularity of (waste) streams and what infrastructure would be required to achieve that.
3.2.2	Develop and promote a regional circular economy strategy that identifies gaps in regional waste and recycling infrastructure, with the aim advocate for investment to address those gaps.	CRJO undertook extensive work to identify opportunities and understand regional potential to develop a circular economy. Funded by Regional NSW, CRJO completed a material flow analysis to understand volumes and types of waste materials in the region. CRJO developed a Regional Circular Economy Roadmap focussed on waste management, reducing business input costs and greenhouse gas emissions.

Our Infrastructure

*...developing resilient
and modern infrastructure*

Where do we want to be?

4.1 Reliable and safe water supply.	4.2 Strategic freight and transport linkages that connect the communities and support industry.	4.3 A comprehensive telecommunications network and smart technologies.	4.4 Transformative and region enhancing infrastructure.
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Actions

Reliable and safe water supply

4.1.1	Develop and support regional water management strategies, focusing on sustainable water use, allocation and conservation, considering future growth.	A joint Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP) was developed for CRJO members councils, Hilltops and Upper Lachlan Shire, as part of a pilot phase of the state government’s Regional Drought Resilience Planning program. The plan was completed in 2023-24 and includes ten actions that have been pre-scoped and endorsed by both councils and the CRJO. CRJO is the suggested action lead for 5 of the 10 actions and implementation funding has been announced by the state government.
4.1.2	Work together to find efficiencies in the development and renewal of water and sewer infrastructure, including treatment plants and distribution systems, to maintain efficiency and sustainability.	CRJO is working with other joint organisations across NSW to identify innovative housing models for potential recommendation for implementation within Canberra Region. An example is the replicable Water Loss Management Hub model established in the Central NSW Joint Organisation region.

Strategic freight and transport linkages that connect the communities and support industry

4.2.1	Advocate for the implementation and supporting funding for the South East Tablelands Regional Transport Strategy, including East-West freight linkages.	State government is yet to endorse its South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2021 and has changed its direction with respect to development of regional transport plans, announcing, during 2023-24, new strategic regional integrated transport plans for consultation and development. CRJO submission was made to the previously drafted regional transport plan’s development and CRJO facilitated a meeting of CRJO member councils’ general managers with state department heads in June 2024 regarding the new integrated regional transport plan which will be the major avenue for determining road funding priorities by state government.
4.2.2	Participate in regional transport and freight planning forums.	CRJO has re-established its Infrastructure Working Group bringing together the assets and infrastructure directors of all member councils to work on regional infrastructure improvement initiatives, share information and provide professional networking and support across member councils. CRJO member

		<p>councils participate in regional transport advocacy and planning forums including ‘SEATS’ (South East Australian Transport Strategy Inc).</p> <p>As part of the Disaster Risk Reduction Fund project during 2023-24, CRJO was involved in a Transport Working Group which included representatives from seven regional NSW joint organisations and Transport for NSW. This working group focused on advocacy for resilient transport networks across regional NSW. In addition, the working group contributed to the development of Customer Journey Resilience Plans that were in development by Transport for NSW during this period.</p>
4.2.3	<p>Take a regional approach to improving infrastructure, including for electric vehicles.</p>	<p>CRJO’s state-funded Regional Resilience Blueprint project saw the development of a ‘blueprint’ for building resilience of regional communities in light of increasing frequency and duration of natural disasters. As part of the project, the ‘PIPE’ business system was implemented to collate priority regional infrastructure projects including those related to building resilience of the road network. The initial process to populate PIPE with priority projects was completed in July 2023 and an update will occur in early 2025. Member councils, via the CRJO Infrastructure Working Group will need to determine if ‘PIPE’ is the best approach to identifying and maintaining our regional list of priority projects into the future.</p> <p>The NSW Electric Vehicle Strategy outlines the NSW Government’s plan to accelerate uptake of electric vehicles (EVs) use. Greenhouse gas emissions from council fleets represent around 20% of councils’ operational emissions and is therefore the fourth most urgent emission source to address.</p> <p>To assist in transition to EVs, CRJO council members, via the Joint Organisations Net Zero Accelerator program, received support from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water to do public EV charger site assessments, to inform applications for destination charger grant funding.</p> <p>CRJO and eight other joint organisations attracted funding for 2025 delivery of projects to fast track electric vehicle infrastructure installation throughout the regions.</p>

Strategic freight and transport linkages that connect the communities and support industry continued

4.2.4	<p>Advocate for delivery of the improved Canberra to Sydney rail network catering for fast trains.</p>	<p>The memorandum of understanding between CRJO and the ACT Government includes improvements to the Canberra to Sydney rail service as a key joint priority. CRJO has continued its advocacy efforts in 2023-24 to improve Canberra to Sydney rail services via ensuring inclusion of this priority in the NSW regional integrated transport plan currently under development and by including this priority in advocacy letters to the NSW Premier and Minister for Transport ahead of CRJO’s May 2024 board meeting, held in NSW Parliament House which involved the NSW Premier and the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads.</p>
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A comprehensive telecommunications network and smart technologies

4.3.1	Advocate for telecommunication infrastructure improvements to deliver reliable services and eliminate telecommunications blackspots.	<p>CRJO is in discussion with nbnCo with respect to the potential for mapping of regional connectivity gaps in the Canberra Region, a key action needed prior to telcos applying for regional connectivity improvements funding under federal programs.</p> <p>Telstra attended general manager advisory group meeting in Juen 2024 to discuss opportunities for co-investment and co-planning for regional mobile investment priorities.</p>
4.3.2	Seek opportunities to support members to develop and embrace smart technology programs and infrastructure.	<p>Essential Energy attended CRJO general manager advisory group meeting in June 2024 to discuss opportunities for use of Essential Energy infrastructure such as street light poles for telecommunications improvements.</p> <p>Advocacy is underway across the joint organisations network with Essential Energy and other non-local government owners of road network infrastructure for asset / component improvements to reduce costs and energy emissions of the street lighting network for councils.</p>

Transformative and region enhancing infrastructure

4.4.1	Review and update the CRJO Infrastructure Priority Prospectus.	<p>'PIPE' business system was implemented by CRJO in mid-2023 working with member as part of a state-funded project and is being trialled as an alternative to a CRJO Infrastructure Priority Prospectus. 'PIPE' has been used to collate priority regional infrastructure projects including those related to building resilience of the road network. The initial process to populate PIPE with priority projects was completed in July 2023 and an update will occur in early 2025. Member councils, via the CRJO Infrastructure Working Group will need to determine if 'PIPE' is the best approach to identifying and maintaining our regional list of priority projects into the future and the best method of documenting the Canberra Region's infrastructure priorities for advocacy purposes.</p>
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Transformative and region enhancing infrastructure continued

4.4.2	Advocate for regional enabling infrastructure.	<p>CRJO’s advocacy included making submissions or providing input to the following planning, consultations and inquiries being undertaken by state and federal governments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South East and Tablelands Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan and its predecessor regional transport plan • Australian Government inquiry into the implications of severe weather events on the national regional, rural and remote network • NSW parliamentary joint select committee on protecting local water utilities from privatisation, result was legislation being passed to protect local water utilities from privatisation (in line with CRJO submission) • NSW Productivity Commission review of funding models for local water utilities, resulting round table invitation for all CRJO members with Productivity Commissioner an recommendations for alternative funding models being made providing improved options for local government <p>Advocacy letters to the NSW Premier and Minister for Transport ahead of CRJO’s May 2024 board meeting, held in NSW Parliament House which involved the NSW Premier and the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads included reiteration of regional road infrastructure priorities such as the need for prioritising the addressing of freight movement pinch points along the Princes Highway over the highway duplication agenda.</p>
4.4.3	Develop a Regional Critical Infrastructure Betterment Prospectus to support a more resilient region.	<p>CRJO has successfully attracted federal funding from the Disaster Ready Fund Round 2 program which includes development of Critical Infrastructure Resilience Plans for each member council over the next two years. The development of these plans will follow a template previously created by CRJO for a regional critical infrastructure resilience plan. These plans go beyond council infrastructure and also consider other critical infrastructure such as communications and electricity.</p>
4.4.4	Advocate for the NSW Government to develop integrated regional infrastructure growth plans that adequately address growth pressures.	<p>State government is yet to endorse its South East and Tablelands Regional Plan 2021 and has changed its direction with respect to development of regional transport plans, announcing, during 2023-24, new strategic regional integrated transport plans for consultation and development. CRJO submission was made to the previously drafted regional transport plan’s development and CRJO facilitated a meeting of CRJO member councils’ general managers with state department heads in June 2024 regarding the new integrated regional transport plan which will be the major avenue for determining road funding priorities by state government.</p> <p>CRJO member councils directly sharing boundaries with the ACT in regional growth areas are working with the ACT Government and NSW Cross Border Commissioner on a regional growth strategy that aims to agree appropriate growth and settlement locations and approach for servicing growth areas.</p>

Where do we want to be?

<p>5.1 Long-term financial sustainability of CRJO.</p>	<p>5.2 Opportunities for regional councils and stakeholders to work together to achieve a common goal.</p>	<p>5.3 Initiatives that can deliver better value to our members.</p>
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Actions

Long-term financial sustainability of CRJO

<p>5.1.1</p>	<p>Ensure CRJO policies and processes demonstrate a high level of transparency and accountability</p>	<p>In the 2023-24 financial year, CRJO reviewed and the CRJO board adopted several key policies, including the Code of Conduct, Expenses and Facilities Policy, Procurement Policy, and Statement of Revenue Policy. Additional policies, the CRJO Charter and Code of Meeting Practice, were reviewed by CRJO in 2023-24 for adoption in 2024-25.</p> <p>Internal staff procedures, including for procurement, recruitment and utilisation of casual staff, flexible working arrangements and various ICT procedures, were also reviewed to build transparency and accountability.</p> <p>CRJO's internal audit function and audit, risk and improvement committee have continued to strengthen CRJO's transparency, governance and accountability by coordinating regular reviews, identifying risks, and recommending ongoing improvements to processes and procedures.</p> <p>CRJO provides an internal audit function to four member councils and shares common independent committee members of its audit, risk and improvement committee, as part of a four-year shared services arrangement in place since 2022-23.</p>
<p>5.1.2</p>	<p>Develop and maintain Risk Management Framework with a clearly identified risk appetite.</p>	<p>Risk management work in 2023-24 was prioritised, by agreement with the CRJO board, to address key risks of financial non-sustainability and insolvency of the joint organisation. Focussed actions implemented in 2023-24 to reduce operational expenditure include workplace change regarding organisational restructuring, asset disposal and downsizing of office accommodation. CRJO is now sustainable, albeit marginal, with operational costs in future years in line with operational revenue.</p>
<p>5.1.3</p>	<p>Ensure decisions are in line with the CRJO core objectives risk management framework and underpinned by sound business cases ensuring stringent financial discipline.</p>	<p>A long-term financially sustainable budget has been developed inclusive of reduced operational costs and membership fees which reflect increasing wages and on-costs. To maintain financial and operational sustainability, a more manageable target level of externally-funded projects needs to be built in to the long-term financial plan than was included previously.</p>

Long-term financial sustainability of CRJO continued

5.1.4	Implement clear lines of communication and reporting to our board, our stakeholders, and the wider community.	In 2023-24, CRJO maintained strong communication channels with the board, general manager advisory group, stakeholders, and the wider community. We reviewed reporting processes and established clear lines of communication on financial sustainability, including budget forecasting, grant-funded program updates, and governance compliance reporting. Key stakeholders, including NSW and federal ministers, Telstra, Essential Energy, and the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Environment, were invited and attended various CRJO board and general manager meetings, maintaining important regional collaboration networks. CRJO’s website continues to be reviewed and updated to enhance lines of communication to the wider community.
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Opportunities for regional councils and stakeholders to work together to achieve a common goal

5.2.1	Participate in key forums including Regional Leadership Executive, Destination Networks, Joint Organisation Network and Forum, and with the NSW Cross Border Commissioner and OLG	<p>CRJO’s Executive Officer has attended all of the state government’s NSW South East Regional Leadership Executive meetings on behalf of CRJO member councils.</p> <p>State government implemented changes in 2023-24 to how it conducts regional coordination across state and local government, now managed in the NSW Premiers Department with four previous southern NSW regions – Canberra, Illawarra Shoalhaven, Riverina and Murray and Riverina Eastern – combined under one executive director with combining of regional leadership executive forums to follow.</p> <p>CRJO participated in an Illawarra South East region planning exercise conducted by the (former) Department of Regional NSW along with Destination NSW Southern Sydney Surrounds and Destination NSW Southern NSW, NSW Cross Border Commissioner and Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation.</p> <p>CRJO’s chairperson, Cr Russell Fitzpatrick, Mayor Bega Valley Shire Council, also served as the 2024 chairperson of the NSW Joint Organisations Chairs Forum, a statewide forum of all joint organisations across the state, and CRJO provided a secretariat service to this forum, contributing to the broader statewide regional local government advocacy agenda.</p> <p>CRJO maintained close contact with other major local government advocacy bodies, the NSW Country Mayors Association, Local Government NSW and Australian Local Government Association sharing advocacy submissions and letters across organisations and joining up to amplify the sectors voice into other levels of government.</p> <p>A very successful way of working that has strengthened in 2023-24 has been concurrent submissions by multiple joint organisations across the state for federal and state grant funding. This has been a well-received and successful approach with grant programs able to reach many more councils if funding resources and projects via joint organisations rather than directly to councils. Examples include the Joint Organisations Net Zer Accelerator program and the federal government’s Disaster Risk Reduction Fund and Disaster Ready Fund.</p>
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Opportunities for regional councils and stakeholders to work together to achieve a common goal continued

5.2.2	Collaborate with ACT Government in delivering priorities identified in the Canberra Region Economic Development Strategy and the priorities in the Memorandum of Understanding between CRJO and ACT Government.	<p>CRJO, ACT Government and NSW Government have together developed a draft Circular Economy Roadmap which is the Canberra Region’s first attempt at agreeing a regional approach to moving towards circularity, incorporating waste reuse, emissions and cost reductions for operations of landfills and economic development via utilisation of waste as business and industry inputs. Work continues on the circular economy roadmap with the aim of tripartite signing of a regional circular economy strategy by ACT Government, NSW Government and CRJO member councils.</p> <p>CRJO member councils directly sharing boundaries with the ACT in regional growth areas are working with the ACT Government and NSW Cross Border Commissioner on a regional growth strategy that aims to agree appropriate growth and settlement locations and approach for servicing growth areas. Specific work to address needed services including water provision is also underway for new housing estates located within NSW regional areas.</p>
5.2.3	Coordinate active networks within member councils to share learning, skills, and resources to build capacity.	<p>In 2023-24, CRJO refined its support to member councils in coordinating active local government networks. There are now ten, self-managed joint working groups across CRJO’s member councils, bringing together local government professionals in important council functional areas. Working groups are in the areas of economic development and tourism, human resources, procurement, information and technology, infrastructure, town planning, waste and resource recovery (grant-funded, CRJO-led), net zero emissions (grant-funded, CRJO-led), and integrated planning and reporting (part of a grant/member-funded project, CRJO-led). Where there is no grant funding, CRJO fosters collaboration and sharing of skills by providing meeting templates and facilitating reporting to the general manager advisory group and CRJO Board. These efforts help build capacity among our member councils via networking between councils.</p>

Initiatives that can deliver better value to our members

5.3.1	Explore opportunities to create regional procurement opportunities.	<p>In 2022, CRJO set up an internal audit function to both satisfy the joint organisation’s own compliance requirements and to offer internal audit as a shared service to CRJO member councils.</p> <p>Member councils availing themselves of the shared internal audit service are Goulburn-Mulwaree, Snowy Monaro, Upper Lachlan Shire & Yass Valley Councils, as well as the CRJO organisation itself.</p> <p>Three member councils, Goulburn Mulwaree, Upper Lachlan Shire and Yass Valley, and CRJO also share independent committee members for their audit, risk and improvement committees. The committees meet quarterly and provide effective oversight over the governance & risk management of the involved councils & the joint organisation.</p> <p>In 2023-24, CRJO led the negotiation and establishment of a documented shared arrangement agreement with involved member councils formally articulating the agreed level of service and to meet legislative</p>
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		<p>requirements for entering into shared agreements for internal audit and audit, risk and improvement committees.</p> <p>CRJO delivered a joint procurement process in 2023-24 enabling councils to arrange kerbside bin audits without having to go through individual procurement processes. CRJO also undertook a regional tender process for delivery of Household Chemical Cleanout events in member council areas in 2024, with the potential to extend this contract to 2025 and 2026, again saving councils the time and cost of running individual procurement processes. Joint procurement often means smaller CRJO member councils are able to participate in these types of initiatives when they would may not ordinarily have resources or capacity to do so.</p>
5.3.2	Continue to provide training and opportunities to build member councils capacity.	<p>During 2023-24 CRJO continued to deliver the Women in Planning project as funded under the Trade Pathways Innovation Grant, giving council staff an opportunity to study, via TAFE NSW, units of competency to use as credit towards town planning or building qualifications. CRJO delivered five in-person group study sessions for participants to collaborate, network, and complete their assessments. 38 member council employees enrolled in the program and were fully-funded to undertake their study.</p> <p>CRJO worked with Yass Valley Council, Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council and the ACT Government to deliver an illegal dumping program targeting cross-border illegal dumping on rural lands and kerbside dumping issues. This program included capacity-building for council rangers and environment health officers in illegal dumping regulations and operation of surveillance equipment.</p> <p>CRJO completed preparatory work for 2024 delivery of fee-free Certificate 3 and 4 in Waste Management qualifications for 45 member council waste officers by Academy Green Registered Training Organisation.</p> <p>The CRJO collaborated closely with member councils to enhance the capacity of their procurement teams. This was accomplished through support from the procurement staff of member councils, allowing the CRJO to reach out to local suppliers for the refresh of the Local Government Procurement Minor and Major Works Panel. The CRJO also assisted community members in registering for Local Government Procurement information sessions and offered guidance on becoming approved suppliers. As a result of this pilot project, additional local suppliers were added to the Local Government Procurement Minor and Major Works panel, providing Council staff with access to a vetted pool of suppliers through the Local Government Procurement.</p> <p>The CRJO successfully delivered Governance Essentials for Local Government with Australian Institute of Company Directors training for 12 member councillors. The course aimed to assist councillors, identify the duties and responsibilities of a Councillor, examine leadership in action within a Council context, outline the Councillors' roles with respect to financial statements and financial reports, recognise the link between corporate strategy and financial performance, identify the Councillor's role in formulating and monitoring strategy, and identifying and assessing risk.</p>

5.3.3	Work with members councils to assess operational pain points and identify other opportunities for regional collaboration and shared services.	For ongoing consideration and planning with CRJO member councils
5.3.4	Develop and implement an Advocacy Strategy to advance the Statement of Strategic Priorities.	<p>Advocacy strategy for development in future years of the CRJO Statement of Strategic Priorities implementation.</p> <p>Advocacy submissions made by CRJO in 2023-24:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South East and Tablelands Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan and its predecessor regional transport plan • Australian Government inquiry into the implications of severe weather events on the national regional, rural and remote network • NSW parliamentary joint select committee on protecting local water utilities from privatisation, result was legislation being passed to protect local water utilities from privatisation (in line with CRJO submission) • NSW Productivity Commission review of funding models for local water utilities, resulting round table invitation for all CRJO members with Productivity Commissioner an recommendations for alternative funding models being made providing improved options for local government • NSW Environment Protection Authority’s proposed introduction of the mandated collection of source-separated food organics and garden organics (FOGO) • Review of the NSW Environment Protection Authority waste levy • Australian Parliament’s House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport’s inquiry into local government sustainability • NSW Parliament Public Accounts Committee inquiry into assets, premises and funding of the NSW Rural Fire Service • NSW Parliament’s inquiry into the ability of local government to fund infrastructure and services • NSW legislation amendments regarding local government waste contracts tendering – letter to Premier, Minister for Local Government and Minister for the Environment prepared by CRJO on behalf of statewide NSW Joint Organisations Chairs Forum

Statutory Statements

Issues Raised by Anti-Slavery Commissioner

No issues were raised by the Anti-slavery Commissioner concerning the operations of the CRJO.

Procurement of Goods and Services

To ensure that goods and services procured by and for the joint organisation were not the product of modern slavery, within the meaning of the Modern Slavery Act 2018, procurement practices of the CRJO require vendors operating above thresholds required under the Act to provide their specific Modern Slavery Statement.

Overseas Travel Nil

Expenses & Provision of Facilities to Board Members

The Payment of Expenses Provision of Facilities and Allowances to Board Members Policy was endorsed at the CRJO Board meeting of 16 May 2024. Costs and expenses related to CRJO Board members for the 2023-24 year are outlined below:

Provision of dedicated office equipment allocated to Board Members.	Nil. Refer clause 5.4 of policy.
Telephone calls made by Board Members.	Nil Refer clause 5.4 of policy.
Attendance of Board Members at conferences and seminars.	\$1,220 (ex GST) Refer clause 5.4 of policy.
Interstate visits, including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses.	Nil. Refer clause 5.4 of policy.
Overseas visits, including transport, accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses.	Nil.
Expenses of any spouse, partner or other person who accompanies Board Members in the performance of his or her civic functions.	Nil Refer clause 5.3 of policy.
Expenses involved in the provision of care for a child of, or an immediate family member of a Board Member.	Not applicable. Refer clause 5.7.2 in policy.
Board Member sitting fees. ¹	Total: \$18,485
Board meeting expenses. ²	Total: \$4,190 (Ex GST)

¹ CRJO Board sitting fees were accrued at 30 June 2024 to reflect the obligation to pay sitting fees to 9x Mayors and the Chair for the 2023/24 financial year. As due process is followed, payments to the Mayors will be made during the 2024/25 financial year.

² An amount of \$3,108 was omitted from the total Board Meeting Expenses relating to the 2022/23 financial year as the expense for the June 2023 meeting had not yet been invoiced at the time of finalising the accounts. The total of \$4,190 disclosed above is *only* in relation to the expenses incurred for Board Meetings held during the 2023/24 financial year.

Details of each Contract Awarded

The CRJO awarded the following contracts above \$150,000 (Ex GST) during the 2023/2024 financial year:

- MRA Consulting Group Pty Ltd, \$199,895 [Engagement commencement June 2024 - EPA - Bin Trim Networks]
- MRA Consulting Group Pty Ltd, \$198,000 [Engagement commencement October 2023 - DRNSW - Circular Economy]

Summary of amounts incurred in relation to legal proceedings

Nil

Financial Assistance of others

Nil

Statement of all external bodies exercising function of JO

The CRJO has not delegated any of its functions.

Statement of bodies in which JO held a controlling interest

Nil

Statement of bodies in which JO participated

Nil

Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan

Our Equal Employment Opportunity Policy is currently under review and will be presented to the Chief Executive Officer for approval. Staff and manager training will be conducted once approved.

Associated policies and processes have been reviewed including Code of Conduct, Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment, Performance Management process, Grievance and Complaint procedures and the Recruitment process.

Additional measures to capture or prevent any equal employment opportunity contraventions include:

- Systematic review of employment practices to ensure flexibility in accommodating the changing needs of employees
- Annual review schedule of human resources policies and procedures to ensure they are non-discriminatory and supportive to all employment groups equally
- Employee Assistance Program provider reports de-identified information on any contraventions
- Confidential reporting for staff and managers

Remuneration Executive Officer

Chief Executive Officer 1 July 2023 – 11 January 2024	\$237,420 (full year package)
Chief Executive Officer 15 January 2024 – 30 June 2024	\$287,924 (full year package)

The above remuneration packages include salary, superannuation and the full use of an organisation owned vehicle.

Remuneration of Senior Staff Members

Nil applicable

Statement of total numbers of persons completing paid work on 14 February 2024

The total number of persons employed by the joint organisation on a permanent full-time basis was 6.

The total number of persons employed by the joint organisation on a permanent part-time basis was 1.

The total number of persons employed by the joint organisation on a casual basis was 0.

The total number of persons employed by the joint organisation under a fixed-term contract was 4.

Of these, the number of persons employed by the Joint Organisation who are "Senior Staff" for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1993 was 1.

The number of persons engaged by the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, that is wholly or principally for the labour of the person the number of persons supplied to the council, under a contract or other arrangement with the person's employer, as an apprentice or trainee was 0.

Capital works projects

Nil

Government Information Public Access (GIPA)

CRJO received one formal access and zero informal applications for the reporting year under Government Information (Public Access) Act, 2009 (GIPA).

Public Interest Disclosure Activity

CRJO received zero public interest disclosures for the reporting year under Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994.

Audited Financial Statements 2023-2024

Canberra Region Joint Organisation

GENERAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For the year ended 30 June 2024



Canberra Region Joint Organisation

General purpose financial statements

for the year ended 30 June 2024

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Canberra Region Joint Organisation is constituted under the *Local Government Act 1993* (NSW) and has its principal place of business at:

Canberra Region Joint Organisation
Suite 4, Level 4 Plaza Offices East,
Terminal Avenue
Canberra Airport ACT 2609

Through the use of the internet, we have ensured that our reporting is timely, complete and available at minimum cost. All press releases, financial statements and other information are publicly available on our website: www.crjo@nsw.gov.au.

CANBERRA REGION JOINT ORGANISATION

Statement by Members of the Board and Management

made pursuant to Section 413 (2c) of the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)*

The attached general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with:

- the *Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)* and the regulations made thereunder
- the Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and other pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board
- the Joint Organisations Supplement to the Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting.

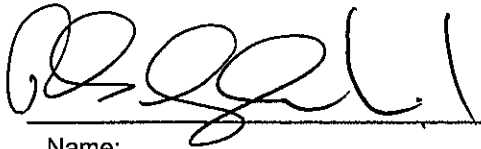
To the best of our knowledge and belief, these statements:

- present fairly Canberra Region Joint Organisation's operating result and financial position for the period
- accord with Canberra Region Joint Organisation's accounting and other records.

We are not aware of any matter that would render this report false or misleading in any way.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation made on

.....



Name:

Chairperson *CR RUSSELL
25/10/24 FITZPATRICK*



Name: *CR JULIA HAM*

Voting Representative Board Member & DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON
25/10/24



Sharon Houlihan

Executive Officer

25/10/24

CANBERRA REGION JOINT ORGANISATION

Statement of Income and Accumulated Surplus for the year ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Income			
Member council contributions	B1-1	464	435
User charges and fees	B1-2	564	376
Grants provided for operating purposes	B1-3	2,921	2,663
Interest and investment income	B1-4	4	6
Other income	B1-5	533	315
Total income		4,486	3,795
Expenses			
Employee benefits and on-costs		1,955	1,686
Administrative expenses	B2-1	2,724	1,809
Borrowing costs	B2-2	6	1
Depreciation	C1-5 / C2-1	147	100
Total expenses		4,832	3,596
Net result for the year		(346)	199
Accumulated surplus at 1 July		979	780
Accumulated surplus as at 30 June		633	979

The above Statement of Income and Accumulated Surplus should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes

CANBERRA REGION JOINT ORGANISATION

Statement of Financial Position

as at 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	C1-1	516	1,502
Investments	C1-2	27	513
Receivables	C1-3	2,411	695
Contract assets and contract cost assets	C1-4	13	391
Other		71	102
Total current assets		3,038	3,203
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	C1-5	19	85
Right of use assets	C2-1	77	10
Total non-current assets		96	95
Total assets		3,134	3,298
LIABILITIES			
Current liabilities			
Payables	C3-1	471	257
Contract liabilities	C3-2	1,815	1,937
Lease liabilities	C2-1	80	11
Employee benefit provisions	C3-4	106	114
Total current liabilities		2,472	2,319
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	C3-5	29	-
Total non-current liabilities		29	-
Total liabilities		2,501	2,319
Net assets		633	979
EQUITY			
Accumulated surplus		633	979
Total equity		633	979

The above Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes

CANBERRA REGION JOINT ORGANISATION

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 30 June 2024

	Notes	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts:			
Contributions from member councils		464	480
User charges and fees		937	395
Grants		1,469	3,197
Interest received		4	6
Procurement rebate		108	-
GST		60	-
Other income		48	205
Payments:			
Employees and suppliers		(4,427)	(3,855)
Other		(60)	-
Net cash flows from operating activities		(1,397)	428
Cash flows from investing activities			
Receipts:			
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		35	-
Redemption of term deposits		513	-
Payments:			
Payments for property, plant and equipment		(23)	(129)
Payments for reinvestment		(27)	(6)
Net cash flows from investing activities		498	(135)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Payments:			
Repayment of lease liabilities (principal)		(87)	(40)
Other		-	26
Net cash flows from financing activities		(87)	(14)
Net change in cash and cash equivalents		(986)	279
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		1,502	1,223
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	C1-1	516	1,502

The above Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

CANBERRA REGION JOINT ORGANISATION

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A. About the Joint Organisation and these financial statements

A1. Basis of preparation

These financial statements were authorised for issue by the Board of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (Joint Organisation) on 25/10/2024. The Board has the power to amend and reissue these financial statements.

The material accounting policy information related to the preparation of these financial statements are set out below.

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures, the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) and Regulations, and the Joint Organisation Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting. The Joint Organisation is a not-for-profit entity. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars.

a. New and amended standards adopted by JO

The Joint Organisation adopted AASB 2021-2 during the 2024 financial year. In accordance with this amendment, the Joint Organisation has disclosed only material accounting policy information.

b. Historical cost convention

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

c. Significant accounting estimates and judgements Guidance note 16 - 18

The preparation of financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the JO's accounting policies. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that may have a financial impact on the JO and that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Accounting estimates and assumptions

The Joint Organisation makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year include:

- employee benefit provisions – refer Note C3-4
- contract assets and liabilities – refer Notes C1-4 and C3-2.

B. Financial performance

B1. Sources of income

B1-1 Member Council contributions

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Bega Valley Shire Council	40	38
Eurobodalla Shire Council	44	41
Goulburn Mulwaree Council	37	35
Hilltops Council	26	26
Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council	64	59
Snowy Monaro Regional Council	28	27
Snowy Valley Council	22	22
Upper Lachlan Shire Council	17	17
Wagga Wagga City Council	53	47
Wingecarribee Shire Council	55	51
Yass Valley Shire Council	25	24
ACT Government	53	48
Total member council contributions	464	435

Material accounting policy information

Contributions by member councils are recognised as revenue at the point in time when the amount to be paid for the period has been determined and communicated to councils. The contribution may be in the form of a cash payment or non-monetary contribution (which is recorded at its fair value).

The methodology for determining the contribution is:

- equal contributions by all member councils in order to perform the principal functions of delivering on strategic regional priorities, regional leadership and intergovernmental cooperation.
- contributions by participating member councils for other functions of enhancing strategic capacity and direct service delivery.

B1-2 User charges and fees

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
CRJO - Operations	127	259
CRJO – Internal Audit	391	-
DRRF – Disaster Risk Reduction Fund	24	-
EPA Contaminated Land (Western Cluster)	-	34
EPA Contaminated Land (Eastern Cluster)	-	23
EPA Regional Co-Ordination Support	8	1
EPA – Household Chemical Cleanup 2023	13	22
EPA – Container Deposit Scheme	-	11
EPA – Waste Education Program	-	12
Private Vehicle User Fees	1	14
Total member council contributions	564	376
Timing of revenue recognition for user charges and fees		
User charges and fees recognised over time	563	362
User charges and fees recognised at a point time	1	14
Total user charges and fees	564	376

Material accounting policy information

Revenue arising from user charges and fees is recognised when or as the performance obligation of providing the related service is completed and the customer receives the benefit of the goods / services being provided.

B1-3 Grants

	Operating	
	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
CRJO - Operations	-	35
BCRRF – Blueprint	(11)	-
BCRRF – Simtable	(7)	75
BCRRF – Vulnerable Contaminated Lands	-	67
BLERF – Bushfire Local Economic Fund	587	1,047
DRNSW – Circular Economy	958	201
DRNSW – Regional Drought Resilience Plan	-	384
DRRF - Disaster Risk Reduction Fund	444	116
ECC - Net Zero Acceleration	115	36
ECC – Net Zero Acceleration Round 2	1	-
EPA – Bin Trim	50	-
EPA – Contaminated Land Eastern Cluster	-	204
EPA – Contaminated Land Western Cluster	11	130
EPA – CRC Education	42	13
EPA – Household Chemical Cleanout 2023	106	33
EPA – Illegal Dumping	34	-
EPA – Regional Coordination Support Fund	160	281
EPA – Regional Waste Education Support	9	-
EPA - Scrap Together	-	33
OLG - Procurement	101	8
TSNSW – Trade Pathways Innovation	321	-
Total grants	2,921	2,663
Comprising:		
– State funding	2,921	2,663
	2,921	2,663
Timing of revenue recognition		
Grants recognised over time	2,921	2,663
Total grants	2,921	2,663

Grants - enforceable agreement with sufficiently specific performance obligations

Grant revenue arising from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised as or when control of each performance obligations is transferred.

The performance obligations vary in accordance with each individual agreement.

Performance obligations may be satisfied either at a point in time or over time and this is reflected in the revenue recognition pattern. Point in time recognition occurs when the beneficiary obtains control of the goods / services at a single time (e.g. completion of the project when a report / outcome is provided), whereas over time recognition is where the control of the services is ongoing throughout the project (e.g. provision of community health services through the year).

Where control is transferred over time, generally the input methods of costs or time incurred are deemed to be the most appropriate methods to reflect the transfer of benefit.

Other grants

Assets (e.g. cash) received from other grants are recognised at fair value when the asset is received. The JO considers whether there are any related liability or equity items associated with the asset which are recognised in accordance with the relevant accounting standard.

Once the assets and liabilities have been recognised then income is recognised for any remaining asset value at the time that the asset is received.

B1-4 Interest and investment income

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Interest on financial assets measured at amortised cost	4	6
Total interest and investment income	4	6

B1-5 Other income

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Procurement rebates	108	123
Management fee	367	192
Gain on disposal of property, plant and equipment	11	-
Other (training fees)	47	-
Total other income	533	315

B2. Costs of providing services**B2-1 Administrative expenses**

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Accommodation	-	45
Accounting & Bookkeeping	58	52
Advertising	63	50
Audit Fees	40	34
Bank Fees	2	1
Catering & Venue Hire	30	-
Cleaning	10	5
Consulting	1,550	1,101
General Expenses	127	71
Insurance	9	1
IT Expenses	49	-
Legal Expenses	2	-
Light, Power, Heating	4	-
Make Good Expenses	10	-
Meeting Expenses	47	62
Motor Vehicle Allowances	-	6
Motor Vehicle Expenses	43	49
Office Expenses	23	66
Printing & Stationary	6	12
Project Management	382	195
Rent	42	3
Repairs & Maintenance	1	1
Sitting Fees	67	25
Subscriptions	117	13
Telephone & Internet	21	17
Website & Social Media	21	-
Total administrative expenses	2,724	1,809

B2-2 Borrowing costs

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Borrowing costs	6	1
Total borrowing costs	6	1

C. Financial position

C1. Assets we manage

C1-1 Cash and cash equivalents

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Cash at bank and on hand	520	1,505
Credit Facility	(4)	(3)
Total cash and cash equivalents	516	1,502
Restricted cash and cash equivalents		
External restrictions	-	590
	-	590
Reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents		
Total cash and cash equivalents per Statement of Financial Position	516	1,502
Balances as per Statement of Cash Flows	516	1,502

C1-2 Investments

	2024 Current \$'000	Non- current \$'000	2023 Current \$'000	Non-current \$'000
Debt securities at amortised cost				
Term deposits	27	-	513	-

C1-3 Receivables

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Receivables from member councils	113	120
Grant receivables	2,263	575
Other	35	-
Total	2,411	695
Less: provision for impairment:	-	-
Net receivables	2,411	695

Receivables are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. Receivables are generally due for settlement within 30 days.

Impairment of receivables is assessed using the simplified expected credit loss model where lifetime credit losses are recorded on initial recognition. To measure the expected credit losses, debtors have been grouped based on shared credit risk characteristics and the days past due.

C1-4 Contract assets and Contract cost assets

		2024	2023
		\$'000	\$'000
Contract assets	a	13	391
		13	391
a. Contract assets			
BCRRF – Blueprint		-	96
BCRRF - Simtable		-	29
BCRRF – Vulnerable Contaminated Lands		-	38
BLERF – Bushfire Local Economic Fund		-	228
DRRF – Disaster Risk Reduction Fund		13	-
		13	391

C1-5 Property, plant and equipment

	At 1 July 2023			Movements during the period		At 30 June 2024				
	Gross carrying amount \$'000	Accum depn and impairment \$'000	Net carrying amount \$'000	Additions \$'000	Disposals \$'000	Depn and impairment \$'000	Depn write-back after disposal	Gross carrying amount \$'000	Accum depn and impairment \$'000	Net carrying amount \$'000
Furniture and fittings	66	(66)	-	18	-	(18)	-	84	(84)	-
Vehicles	203	(118)	85	-	(139)	(27)	83	64	(62)	2
Program Assets	40	(40)	-	-	-	-	-	40	(40)	-
Leasehold Improvements	-	-	-	33	-	(16)	-	33	(16)	17
Totals	309	(224)	85	51	(139)	(61)	83	221	(202)	19

Accounting policy

Plant and equipment are measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses.

Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the JO and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. All other repairs and maintenance are expensed during the year in which they are incurred. When property, plant and equipment are acquired by the JO for significantly less than fair value, the assets are initially recognised at their fair value at acquisition date.

Depreciation is calculated using the straight-line method to allocate their cost, net of their residual values, over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Furniture and Fittings: 1-3 Years

Vehicles: 5 Years

Program Assets: 1-3 Years

Leasehold Improvements: 2 Years (in line with lease term)

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each reporting date.

C2. Leasing activities

C2-1 Joint Organisation as a lessee

The Joint Organisation has leases over a range of assets including land and buildings and IT equipment.

Terms and conditions of leases

The Joint Organisation has a lease over assets such as buildings. Information relating to the leases in place and associated balances and transactions is provided below.

Buildings

The CRJO executed a property lease over an office facility at Suite 4, Level 4 Plaza Offices East, Terminal Avenue Canberra Airport ACT 2609. This lease was entered into on 05/07/2023 and expires on 05/07/2025.

The building lease contains a fixed 4% increase at each anniversary of the lease inception.

This lease was subsequently terminated as of 27 August 2024, with a new lease commencing with Queanbeyan-Palarang Regional Council.

Office and IT equipment

Leases for office and IT equipment are generally for low value assets, except for significant items such as photocopiers.

Right-of-use assets

	Buildings \$'000	Total \$'000
Opening balance at 1 July 2023	10	10
Additions to right-of-use assets	151	151
Depreciation charge	(84)	(84)
Balance at 30 June 2024	77	77

Lease liabilities

The maturity analysis of lease liabilities based on contractual undiscounted cash flows is shown in the table below

	< 1 year \$'000	1–5 years \$'000	> 5 years \$'000	Total \$'000	Total per statement of financial position \$'000
2024	87	-	-	87	87
2023	11	-	-	11	11

Statement of Income and Accumulated Surplus

The amounts recognised as expenses relating to leases where the Joint Organisation is a lessee are shown below.

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Interest on lease liabilities	6	10
Depreciation of right of use assets	84	40
Expenses relating to leases of low-value assets	2	1
Make good expense	10	-

Accounting policy

At inception of a contract, the Joint Organisation assesses whether a lease exists – i.e. does the contract convey the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration.

The Joint Organisation has elected not to separate non-lease components from lease components for any class of asset and has accounted for payments as a single component.

At the lease commencement, the Joint Organisation recognises a right-of-use asset and associated lease liability for the lease term. The lease term includes extension periods where the Joint Organisation believes it is reasonably certain that the option will be exercised.

The right-of-use asset is measured using the cost model where cost on initial recognition comprises: the lease liability, initial direct costs, prepaid lease payments, estimated cost of removal and restoration, less any lease incentives. The right-of-use asset is depreciated over the lease term on a straight-line basis and assessed for impairment in accordance with the impairment of asset accounting policy.

The lease liability is initially recognised at the present value of the remaining lease payments at the commencement of the lease. The discount rate is the rate implicit in the lease, however where this cannot be readily determined then the Joint Organisation's incremental borrowing rate for a similar term with similar security is used.

Subsequent to initial recognition, the lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. The lease liability is re-measured when there is a lease modification or change in estimate of the lease term or index upon which the lease payments are based (e.g. CPI).

Where the lease liability is re-measured, the right-of-use asset is adjusted to reflect the re-measurement.

Exceptions to lease accounting

The Joint Organisation has applied the exceptions to lease accounting for both short-term leases (i.e. leases with a term of less than or equal to 12 months) and leases of low-value assets. The Joint Organisation recognises the payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

C3. Liabilities of the joint organisation**C3-1 Payables**

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Trade payables	384	182
Superannuation Payable	11	-
Workers Compensation Payable	(5)	7
PAYG Tax Payable	28	64
FBT Payable	15	-
GST	38	4
Total payables	471	257

C3-2 Contract liabilities

	2024	2023
	\$'000	\$'000
Funds received prior to performance obligation being satisfied (upfront payments) – AASB 15 (ii)	1,815	1,937
Total contract liabilities	1,815	1,937

(i) The contract liability relates to grants received prior to the revenue recognition criteria in AASB 15 being satisfied since the performance obligations are ongoing.

C3-3 Borrowings**Financing arrangements**

	2024	2023
Total facilities		
Total financing facilities available to the JO at the reporting date are:		
- Bank overdraft facility	-	-
- Corporate credit cards	20	20
	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>
Drawn facilities		
Financing facilities drawn down at the reporting date are:		
- Bank overdraft facility	-	-
- Corporate credit cards	(4)	(3)
	<u>(4)</u>	<u>(3)</u>
Undrawn facilities		
Undrawn financing facilities available to the JO at the reporting date are:		
- Bank overdraft facility	-	-
- Corporate credit cards	16	17
	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>

C3-4 Employee benefits

	2024		2023	
	Current	Non-current	Current	Non-current
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Annual leave	42	-	50	-
Long-service leave	64	-	64	-
Total employee benefit provisions	<u>106</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>-</u>
Current employee benefit provisions not expected to be settled within the next 12 months	<u>64</u>	<u>n/a</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>n/a</u>

Short-term obligations

Liabilities for wages and salaries (including non-monetary benefits and annual leave expected to be wholly settled within 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service) are recognised in respect of employees' services up to the end of the reporting period and are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled. The liability for annual leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. All other short-term employee benefit obligations are presented as payables.

Other long-term employee benefit obligations

The liability for long-service leave and annual leave that is not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service is recognised in the provision for employee benefits, and measured as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the end of the reporting period using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures, and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the end of the reporting period on national government bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

On-costs

The employee benefit provisions include the aggregate on-cost liabilities that will arise when payment of current employee benefits is made in future periods.

These amounts include superannuation, payroll tax and workers compensation expenses that will be payable upon the future payment of certain leave liabilities which employees are entitled to at the reporting period.

The obligations are presented as current liabilities in the Statement of Financial Position if the Joint Organisation does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the reporting date, regardless of when the actual settlement is expected to occur.

C3-5 Provisions

	2024		2023	
	Current \$'000	Non-current \$'000	Current \$'000	Non-current \$'000
Provision for Make Good	-	29	-	-
Total provisions	-	29	-	-

(a) Movements in provisions

	Provision for Make Good \$'000	Total \$'000
At 1 July 2023	-	-
Amounts used	-	-
Unwinding of discount	-	-
Unused amounts reversed	-	-
New provisions	29	29
At 30 June 2024	29	29

Nature and purpose of provisions

The make good provision recognises CRJO's obligation to return the leased premises located at Suite 4, Level 4 Plaza Offices East, Terminal Avenue Canberra Airport, to a similar condition it was in upon commencement of the lease.

D. Risks and accounting uncertainties

D1. Financial risk management

Risk management

The Joint Organisation's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks, including credit risk, liquidity risk, and interest rate risk. Financial risk management is carried out by the finance team under policies approved by the Joint Organisation Board. The fair value of receivables and financial liabilities approximates the carrying amount.

D2. Contingencies

The Joint Organisation has nil contingent assets or liabilities.

E. People and relationships

E1. Related party disclosures

E1-1 Key management personnel

Key management personnel (KMP) of the Joint Organisation are those persons having the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the Joint Organisation's, directly or indirectly.

The aggregate amount of KMP compensation included in employee expenses are:

	2024 \$000	2023 \$000
Salaries and Wages	574	417
Compulsory Employer Super (11%)	57	44
Reportable Fringe Benefits	17	33
Total fees paid to key management personnel	648	494

E2. Other relationships

E2-1 Audit fees

	2024 \$'000	2023 \$'000
Auditors of the JO – NSW Auditor-General:		
Audit of financial statements	32	23
Total fees paid or payable to the Auditor-General	32	23

F. Other matters

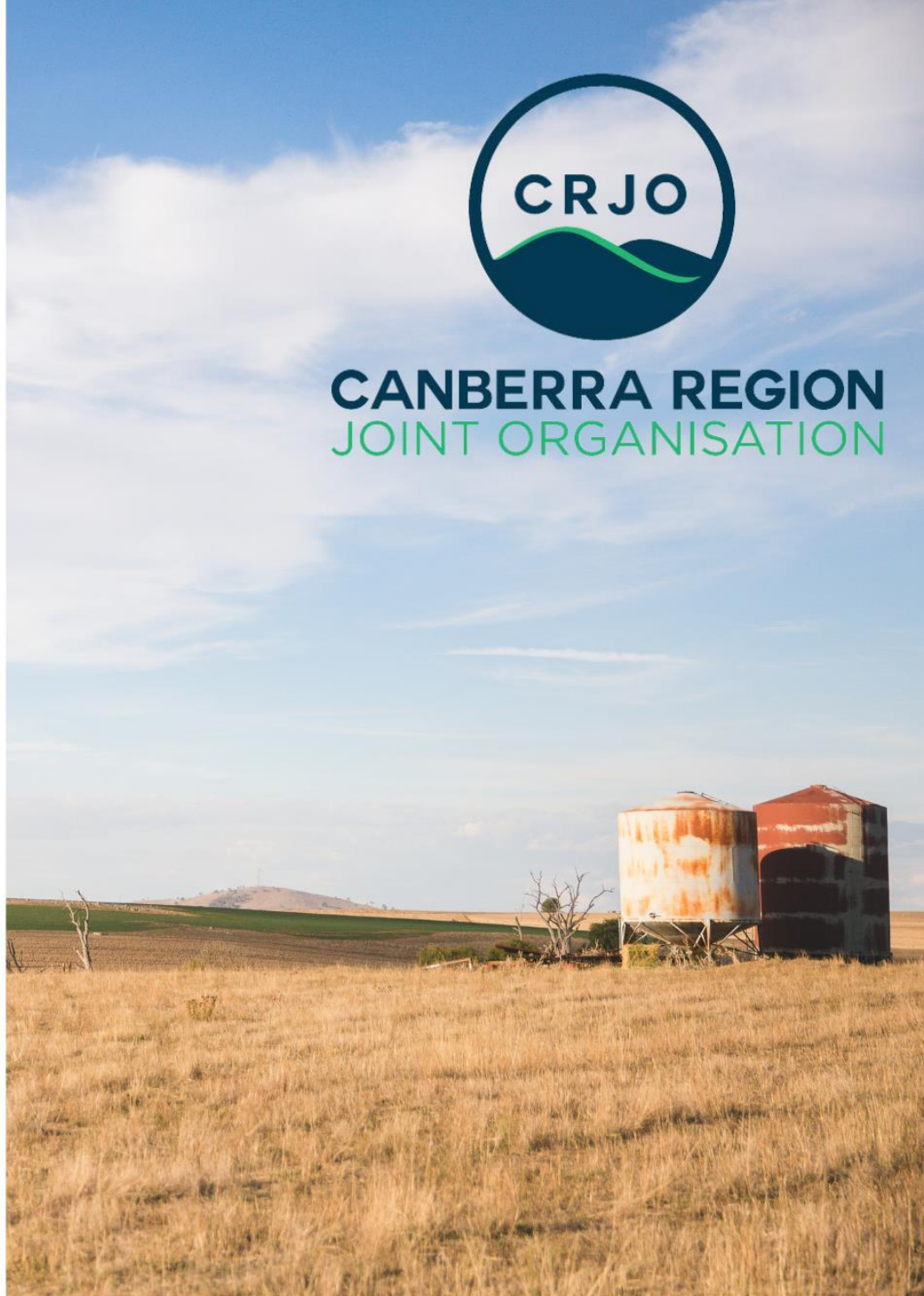
F1. Commitments

The Joint Organisation has Nil Commitments

F2. Events occurring after reporting date

Nil

End of the audited financial statements



CANBERRA REGION
JOINT ORGANISATION

