

## Agenda to the Board Meeting Thursday 23 November 2023

### Voting Delegates

<b>Cr J Jennings</b>	Bathurst Regional Council	<b>Cr M Statham</b>	Lithgow City Council
<b>Cr S Ferguson</b>	Blayney Shire Council	<b>Cr M Kellam</b>	Oberon Council
<b>Cr K Beatty</b>	Cabonne Council	<b>Cr J Hamling</b>	Orange City Council
<b>Cr R Fagan</b>	Cowra Shire Council	<b>Cr N Westcott</b>	Parkes Shire Council
<b>Cr P Miller, OAM</b>	Forbes Shire Council	<b>Cr C Bembrick</b>	Weddin Shire Council
<b>Cr P Phillips</b>	Lachlan Shire Council		

### Associate member delegates and others attending

<b>Mr D Sherley</b>	Bathurst Regional Council	<b>Cr A McKibbin</b>	UMCC
<b>Mr M Dicker</b>	Blayney Shire Council	<b>Mr T Johnston</b>	UMCC
<b>Mr B Byrnes</b>	Cabonne Council	<b>Ms R Fagan</b>	RDACW
<b>Mr P Devery</b>	Cowra Shire Council	<b>Ms K Annis-Brown</b>	OLG
<b>Mr S Loane, OAM</b>	Forbes Shire Council	<b>Ms O West</b>	Regional NSW
<b>Mr G Tory</b>	Lachlan Shire Council		
<b>Mr C Butler</b>	Lithgow City Council	<b>Ms J Bennett</b>	CNSWJO
<b>Mr G Wallace</b>	Oberon Council	<b>Ms M Macpherson</b>	CNSWJO
<b>Mr D Waddell</b>	Orange City Council	<b>Ms K Barker</b>	CNSWJO
<b>Mr K Boyd, PSM</b>	Parkes Shire Council	<b>Ms C Griffin</b>	CNSWJO
<b>Ms N Vu</b>	Weddin Shire Council		
<b>Cr D Somervaille</b>	CTW		
<b>Mr G Rhodes</b>	CTW		

It is advised that the next meeting of the Central NSW Joint Organisation Board will be held Thursday 23 November 2023 beginning at 9.00am in Parliament House, 6 Macquarie Street, Sydney.

Dinner Wednesday 22 November 6.00pm – 9.00pm Jubilee Room Parliament House  
'Cocktail reception'. Dress code is casual Business wear. Drinks and Canapes will be served.

The Board meeting will be held in the Preston Stanley room at Parliament House, hosted by Mr Philip Donato, Member for Orange, supported by Mr Roy Butler, Member for Barwon who will address the Board at 9.00am. Please see the separate schedule.

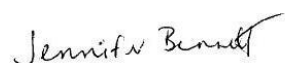
Please contact Jenny Bennett on 0428 690 935 with any queries.

## Agenda

# Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Acknowledgment to Country:
 

*I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today. I would also like to pay my respects to Elders past and present.*
3. Apologies applications for a leave of absence by voting members
4. Conflicts of Interest
5. Speakers
  - a. Ernst & Young – Presentation on the Business Case for the *Priority Investments in the Nexus Between Emissions Reduction and Energy Security in Central NSW*:
    - Celine Luke, Partner, Energy Transition Policy and Regulation
    - Tamara Monty, Associate Director, Sustainability Economics
    - Ben Hughes, Associate Director, Infrastructure Advisory
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9. Quarterly Review of the Central NSW JO Strategic Plan and Statement of Regional Strategic Priority 2022-2025 .....133
10. Late Reports
11. Matters raised by Members.
12. Speakers to the next meeting
13. Next Meetings:



Jenny Bennett  
Executive Officer  
Central NSW Joint Organisation

# Reports

# CNSWJO Meeting Schedule

Preston Stanley Room – NSW Parliament House Macquarie Street Sydney

Hosted by Member for Orange Mr Philip Donato, supported by Member for Barwon Mr Roy Butler.

Thursday 23 November 2023		
Time allocation		Session
8.30am – 8.55am	25 min	Morning Tea & Coffee on arrival
8.55am - 9.00am	5 min	Welcome and Introduction: Cr Kevin Beatty, Chair of Central NSW Joint Organisation
9.00am – 9.30am	30 min	Official Welcome and Introduction Mr Philip Donato, Member for Orange and Mr Roy Butler, Member for Barwon
9.30am-10.00am	30 min	CNSWJO Normal Business
10.00am-11.00am	60 min	Ernst & Young Presentation on the Business Case for the Priority Investments in the Nexus Between Emissions Reduction and Energy Security in Central NSW
11.00am-12.00pm	60 min	Question Time
12.00pm- 12.15pm	15min	Lunch
12.15pm-12.30pm	15 min	The Hon. Penny Sharpe, MLC Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
12.30pm – 12.45pm	15 min	The Hon. Chris Minns, MP Premier Member of the Legislative Assembly Member for Kogarah
12.45pm-1.00pm	15 min	The Hon. Daniel Mookhey, MLC Treasurer
1.00pm - 1.30pm	30 min	The Hon. Stephen Kamper Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport Member for Rockdale
1.30pm -3.00pm	90 min	CNSWJO Normal Business
3.00pm-3.30pm	30 min	The Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC Minister for Water, Minister for Housing, Minister for Homelessness, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Youth, and Minister for the North Coast
3.30pm-4.00pm	30 min	Afternoon tea
4.00pm-4.30pm	30min	The Hon. Jenny Aitchison Member for Maitland Minister for Regional Transport and Roads
4.30pm-4.45pm	15 min	Wrap up and close

## Reports

**6. Minutes****a. Noting of the Minutes of the CNSWJO GMAC Meeting 26 October held in Forbes****Minutes of the GMAC meeting 26 October 2023 held in Forbes****Delegates in Bold**

<b>Mr D Sherley</b>	Bathurst Regional Council	Mr G Rhodes	CTW
<b>Mr B Byrnes</b>	Cabonne Council	Ms O West	Regional NSW
<b>Mr P Devery</b>	Cowra Council	Ms K Annis-Brown	OLG
<b>Mr S Loane</b>	Forbes Shire Council	Ms J Bennett	Central NSW JO
<b>Mr C Butler</b>	Lithgow City Council	Ms M Macpherson	Central NSW JO
<b>Mr G Wallace</b>	Oberon Council	Ms K Barker	Central NSW JO
<b>Mr D Waddell</b>	Orange City Council	Ms A Thomas	Central NSW JO
<b>Mr K Boyd</b>	Parkes Shire Council	Ms V Page	Central NSW JO
<b>Ms N Vu</b>	Weddin Shire Council		

Meeting opened at 10.0am, Chaired by Mr D Sherley

**1. Apologies** –Mr Greg Tory, Mr M Dicker, Mr S Bowman, Mr T Johnson

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Mr C Butler/Mr D Waddell</b>
That the apologies for the GMAC meeting 26 October 2023 held in Forbes be accepted	

**2. Speakers**

- a. Damien Pfeiffer, Director Development Services, Community and Place, Regional and Outer Metropolitan, TfNSW - future priorities and corridor work TfNSW are undertaking in region and the renewable energy freight task.
- b. Laureta Wallace RAI Director of External Affairs and Cassie Gates, Membership Manager Regional Australia Institute (RAI), on Opportunities with RAI

**3. Minutes****a. Confirmation of the Minutes of the GMAC Meeting 27 July 2023 held in Orange**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Mr D Waddell/Ms N Vu</b>
That the Minutes of the CNSWJO GMAC Meeting 27 July 2023 held in Orange be confirmed.	

**b. Minutes of the Board Meeting 23 August 2023 held in Sydney provided for information.**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Mr D Waddell/Mr G Rhodes</b>
That the Minutes of the CNSWJO Board Meeting 23 August 2023 held in Sydney be noted.	

**4. Business Arising from the Minutes – Matters in Progress**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Mr D Waddell/Mr G Wallace</b>
That the Matters in Progress be noted, and deletions as suggested be made.	

**5. Reports to Statement of Regional Strategic Priority****Priority One: Leveraging our successful collaboration****a. Financial Report**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Mr B Byrnes/Ms N Vu</b>
That GMAC note the Financial report.	

# Minutes



**b. Procurement and Contract Report**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Mr D Waddell/Ms N Vu</b>
That GMAC notes the report on Procurement and Contract Management and commend to the Board that it:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. approve a 12-month extension of the Supply of Linemarking Services Contract;</li> <li>2. approve a Bitumen Emulsion RFT process inclusive of up to 4% contract management fee;</li> <li>3. approve an RFQ process for Solar Asset Maintenance inclusive of a 5% contract management fee; and</li> <li>4. approve an RFQ process for Energy Savings Certificates inclusive of a 5% (or equivalent) contract management fee.</li> </ol>	

**c. Cyber Security Shared Services Report**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Mr S Loane/Mr B Byrnes</b>
That GMAC notes the report on the Cyber Security Shared Service.	

**d. Disaster Risk Reduction Program Report**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Mr C Butler/Mr D Waddell</b>
That GMAC note the Disaster Risk Reduction Fund Program report and note;	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the progress on the needs analysis currently underway;</li> <li>2. top-down support is needed in Councils for the population of the Gap Analysis Framework as provided in this report;</li> <li>3. the progress on the Regional Resilience Program working groups;</li> <li>3a. including the commencement of a collaborative procurement for the technology deliverable;</li> <li>4. the update and upcoming commencement of the Transport for NSW Customer Resilience Journey Plans project; and</li> <li>5. the progress of the 'Fix Me' project.</li> </ol>	

**Priority Five: Regional Transport Planning and Infrastructure****e. Transport Report**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Mr G Wallace/Mr P Devery</b>
That GMAC note the Transport report and:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. commend to the Board to endorse the 'plan on a page' for the recently adopted CNSWJO Regional Transport Technical Committee Strategy 2023-2028;</li> <li>2. note progress of the 'Fix Me' project;</li> <li>3. note that negotiations are continuing with UGL Regional Linx regarding the Master Access Deed; and</li> <li>4. note progress on the Grattan Institute project</li> </ol>	

**Priority Six: Regional Water Security and Productive Water****f. Regional Water Report**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Mr R Rhodes/Mr K Boyd</b>
That GMAC note the Regional Water Report and;	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. commends the Priority Water Infrastructure brochure to the Board for endorsement.</li> </ol>	

**Priority Seven: Transition to a sustainable, secure and affordable energy future****g. Energy Report**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Mr D Waddell/Mr B Byrnes</b>
<p>That GMAC note the Energy Program Report and;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. commend to the Board that it approve a regional application by CNSWJO for interested member councils for the Community Energy Upgrades Fund;</li> <li>2. once the guidelines for the Community Energy Upgrades Fund are announced, members to advise the support they need in the preparation of grant applications and their inclusion in a regional application;</li> <li>3. note the estimated cost savings of \$2.37m for members between January to June 2023 under the large sites and streetlighting electricity contract;</li> <li>4. endorse the inclusions within Options 1, 2 and 3 of the business case on the Nexus Between Energy Security and Emissions Reduction;</li> <li>5. note the AER's draft determination in relation to Essential Energy's pricing proposal for public lighting was not approved, and note the importance of the ongoing work that the Southern Lights Group continues to conduct on behalf of members, where it was the only submission received in relation to public lighting; and</li> <li>6. regarding the impractical short timeframe for negotiations progress negotiations to the AER with a broad policy position that any price increases align with IPART and Ausgrid as key considerations.</li> </ol>	

**h. Just Transition to a Renewable Energy Future Report**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Mr G Wallace/Mr D Waddell</b>
<p>That GMAC note the Just Transition to a Renewable Energy Future Report and commend to the Board it;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. call on the NSW Government to, as a matter of urgency; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. provide a whole of government approach to the logistics of the infrastructure effort to rewire regional NSW;</li> <li>b. review the State Significant Development Process particularly with regard to <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. cumulative impacts;</li> <li>ii. its applicability to the large-scale infrastructure effort in rewiring NSW;</li> <li>iii. timeframes for the post consultation period;</li> <li>iv. additional compulsory pre consultation requirements</li> <li>v. a fit for purpose mandated planning agreement policy and process; and</li> </ol> </li> <li>c. identify all cumulative impacts of rewiring of regional NSW including transport and housing;</li> <li>d. note development outside the Renewable Energy Zone and Energy Co remit is also substantial;</li> <li>e. provide just compensation to communities for these impacts where this compensation includes consideration of the ongoing, cumulative impacts of poor processes to date;</li> <li>f. direct NSW Government agencies and State-Owned Corporations to develop and implement policy that better engage and inform community on State Significant Development;</li> <li>g. provide assurance for energy security for the communities of Central NSW through the next decade of transition and beyond;</li> <li>h. ensure that there is sufficient water for urban communities leading into the next drought and that they have priority over the energy transition effort; and</li> <li>i. develop and implement policy that allows for optimal outcomes for agriculture co-located with large scale renewable energy generation;</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

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- j. royalties on power generation from renewable energy productions go to all affected communities including those responsible for and impacted by the transport task;
- k. freight impacts for the Central NSW region be urgently assessed;
2. advocate for more funding for distributed energy generation, including seeking support for roll-out in the Central NSW region from Essential Energy, Endeavour Energy and Iberdrola;
3. advocate for incentivising domestic battery uptake in region, to help both support the energy transition and energy security;
4. note in particular the advice regarding windfarm projects in Forestry Corporation softwood forests in Bathurst, Lithgow, Oberon and Orange;
5. update the advocacy policy and the CNSWJO Risk Management Plan in line with the resolve above; and
6. ask the Advocacy Subcommittee of Mayors to monitor the situation closely and act in the interest of the region between Board meetings with an ongoing focus on supporting communities through this difficult period including seeking recompense and energy security

## 7. Quarterly review of the Central NSW JO Strategic Plan and Statement of Regional Strategic Priority 2022-2025

Resolved	Mr D Waddell/Mr C Butler
That GMAC note the Quarterly Review of the Central NSW JO Strategic Plan and Statement of Regional Strategic Priority 2022-2025 and;	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. commend to the Board it endorse the following submissions that have been lodged:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Submission to AEMC on Enhancing Community Engagement in Transmission Building;</li> <li>b. Inquiry into the implementation of recommendations relating to workforce issues, workplace culture and funding considerations for remote, rural and regional health; and</li> <li>c. IPART Water NSW Operating Licence Review.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. note the following submissions will be progressed between GMAC and the next Board meeting;               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. an Inquiry into Protecting Local Water Utilities from privatisation;</li> <li>b. Submission inquiry into the performance of the Regional Investment Activation Fund and the Regional Job Creation Fund;</li> <li>c. Water Infrastructure NSW 91 proposed new indicators for LWUs in a streamlined process; and</li> <li>d. Planning system and the impacts of climate change on the environment and communities; and</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. encourage attendance at the Rural Doctor's Network Workshop 31 October in Forbes.</li> </ol>	

## 8. Regional NSW – update

### Actions

- Will share the presentation that went to the CSP workshop
- Will send the RNSW team plan
- Youth and community summit coming up
- Program for Executive female staff invitations going directly to Council staff

## 9. OLG – update

- A letter requested supporting the relationship management positions; under the auspices of the Chair
- Members to follow up on Veterans' Employment Program

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**10. Late reports – Nil****11. Matters raised by Members**

- Lithgow: Responsibilities for fire protection and response – to be raised with LGNSW and to seek legal advice with other JOs
- Lachlan: Seeking advice from GMs if they have been asked by the Audit Office to reduce the amount they reported, as their own expenditure, on their R2R report. This relates to their reference amount under the R2R agreement. Request to be circulated to members for response.

**12. Speakers to the next meeting**

- LGNSW update – David Reynolds, Chief Executive
- Brad Cam on energy transition
- OLG on Veterans' Employment

**13. Next meetings:****Board**

- 22 November – Dinner at Parliament House
- 23 November Board Meeting and Round Table with Various Ministers

**GMAC suggested dates for 2024**

1 February, 2 May, 25 July, 24 October

**Meeting closed 1:15**

**Page 5 is the last page of Minutes of the CNSWJO GMAC meeting 26 October 2023**

**b. Confirmation of the Minutes of the CNSWJO Board Meeting 23 August held in Sydney****Minutes of the CNSWJO Board Meeting 23 August 2023 held in Sydney****In Attendance\***

<b>Cr R Taylor</b>	Bathurst Regional Council	<b>Cr M Statham</b>	Lithgow City Council
<b>Cr S Ferguson</b>	Blayney Shire Council	<b>Cr M Kellam</b>	Oberon Council
<b>Cr K Beatty</b>	Cabonne Council	<b>Cr K Keith OAM</b>	Parkes Shire Council
<b>Cr B West</b>	Cowra Shire Council	<b>Cr P Best</b>	Weddin Shire Council
<b>Cr P Miller OAM</b>	Forbes Shire Council		

Mr D Sherley	Bathurst Regional Council	Mr G Rhodes	CTW
Mr M Dicker	Blayney Shire Council	Cr A McGibbon	UMCC
Mr B Byrnes	Cabonne Council	Mr S Bowman	RDACW
Mr P Devery	Cowra Shire Council	Ms O West	Regional NSW
Mr S Loane OAM	Forbes Shire Council	Ms J Bennett	CNSWJO
Mr C Butler	Lithgow City Council	Ms M Macpherson	CNSWJO
Mr D Waddell	Orange City Council	Ms C Griffin	CNSWJO
Mr K Boyd PSM	Parkes Shire Council	Ms V Page	CNSWJO
Ms N Vu	Weddin Shire Council		

\*Voting members in bold

Meeting opened at 12.39 pm by Chair Cr Kevin Beatty

**1. Acknowledgement of Country**

Acknowledgment to Country: Gadigal (Sydney)

**2. Welcome from the Chair Cr Kevin Beatty**

Acknowledged our two Board members who are not standing for Mayor in September Cr Ken Keith and Cr Bill West both for their communities and as regional advocates.

**3. Apologies applications for a leave of absence by Joint Voting representatives**

Cr J Medcalf, Cr C Bembrick, Cr J Hamling, Mr B Byrnes, Mr G Tory, Mr G Wallace, Cr D Somervaille, Cr R Fagan and Mr T Johnson.

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr M Kellam/Cr R Taylor</b>
That the apologies for the Central NSW Joint Organisation Board meeting 23 August 2023 listed above be accepted.	

**4. Conflicts of Interest**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr R Taylor/Cr M Kellam</b>
Nil declared	

**5. Speakers**

- a. **Mr Brett Whitworth Deputy Secretary, Local Government, Department of Planning and Environment**

Ms O West arrived at 12.44pm

Cr P Miller left the meeting at 1.00pm

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- b. Cr Darriea Turley AM, President of Local Government NSW gave an update in attendance and was Acting Chief Officer Damien Thomas.

Cr B West, Cr S Ferguson, Mr P Devery and Mr M Dicker arrived at 1.18pm

## 6. Minutes

### Confirmation of the Minutes of the CNSWJO Board Meeting 24 May 2023 held in Canberra

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr K Keith/Cr B West</b>
That the Central NSW Joint Organisation Board confirm the Minutes of the CNSWJO Board Meeting 24 May 2023 held in Canberra	

## 7. Business Arising from the Minutes – Matters in Progress

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr P Best/Cr R Taylor</b>
That the Central NSW Joint Organisation Board note the Matters in Progress, making deletions as suggested.	

## 8. Reports on Statement of Regional Strategic Priority

### Priority One: Inter-Council Co-operation

#### 1. Financial Report

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr M Kellam/ Cr S Ferguson</b>
That the Board note the Financial Report.	

#### 2. Compliance Report

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr S Ferguson/Cr R Taylor</b>
That the Board note the Compliance Report	

Mr Whitworth, Cr M Statham and Mr C Butler left at 1.30pm

### c. The CNSWJO Governance and Advocacy Report

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr P Best/Cr M Kellam</b>
That the Board note the CNSWJO Governance Advocacy Report and	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. note the Advocacy Subcommittee update;</li> <li>2. note the advice from the Health and Aging Portfolio Mayors' Subcommittee;</li> <li>3. adopt the MoU the Rural Doctor's Network;</li> <li>4. adopt the Plan on a Page for the Planners' Group;</li> <li>5. adopt the Terms of Reference for the Spare Capacity in Housing Project;</li> <li>6. circulate the Plan on a Page for the Spare Capacity in Housing Project for adoption through the Chair;</li> <li>7. endorse the submission to IPART on the council rating methodology;</li> <li>8. endorse the submission on the monitoring the NSW Biodiversity Credits Markets – IPART;</li> <li>9. endorse the Response on the Biodiversity Assessment Method review, Department of Planning and Environment;</li> <li>10. adopt the Current and Historic Population Projections for Local Government Areas in the Central NSW Joint Organisation;</li> <li>11. lodge a submission to the Inquiry into the Implementation of Recommendations Relating to Workforce Issues, Workplace Culture and Funding Considerations for Remote, Rural and Regional Health within existing policy;</li> <li>12. lodge a submission to the Draft Community Engagement Rules for Major Transmission Projects within existing policy;</li> </ol>	

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13. note that a date is being sought for a meeting in Hawkesbury to progress a policy position on a safe, swift and secure link between Central NSW and Sydney;
14. update the Transport Advocacy Plan to support;
  - a. the Bathurst Bullet being extended to Orange, including Opal Card ticketing;
  - b. a morning day-return service from Dubbo to Sydney via Orange using Bullet 2 pathway and timetable;
  - c. Staged Faster Rail track upgrades to reduce travel time from Orange and Dubbo; and
  - d. Split the faster passenger rail at Orange to go to Parkes and Dubbo; and
15. for the two days of meetings that are concurrent with parliamentary visits, the Board meeting be held on the Friday;
16. invite interested Mayors to the next Advocacy Mayor's Subcommittee meeting to progress priority on the Safe Swift and Secure Link between Sydney and Central NSW where this is to include discussion on a freight study and rail as a potential priority.

#### **d. Regional Procurement and Contracts**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr M Kellam/Cr R Taylor</b>
That the Board notes the report on the Regional Procurement and Contract Management Report and that it:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. note the procurement activities that have occurred between Board meetings; and</li> <li>2. approve the additional procurement processes added to the CNSWJO regional procurement plan for 2023/2024.</li> </ol>	

#### **e. Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF) Program report**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr B West/Cr R Taylor</b>
That the Board note the Disaster Risk Reduction Program report and:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. note the approval by NSW Reconstruction Authority of the extension of Milestone 2 from 30 September to 11 November 2023, with the ultimate project deadline of 30 June 2024 remaining the same;</li> <li>2. note the approval by NSW Reconstruction Authority of the collaborative variation under the Regional Resilience Program to allocate an additional spend of \$4,000 from Central NSW Joint Organisation for the Regional Resilience Program Monitoring and Evaluation plan, led by Canberra Region Joint Organisation;</li> <li>3. recommend to councils they consider entering into new data sharing agreements with Spatial Services; and</li> <li>4. endorse the submission for the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding reviewed by the Central NSW Joint Organisation Transport Technical Committee.</li> </ol>	

### **Priority Two: Regional Prosperity through better Infrastructure and Services**

#### **f. "Come Out, We're Open" – Post Campaign Report**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr B West/ Cr P Best</b>
That the Board note the "Come Out, We're Open" – Post Campaign Report.	

### **Priority Five: Transport and Infrastructure**

#### **g. Transport Advocacy**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr K Keith/Cr M Kellam</b>
That the Board note the Transport report and note:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the alignment of work with the CNSWJO Disaster Risk Reduction Fund's transport vulnerability assessment;</li> </ol>	

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2. progress for the “Fix Me” project; and
3. the legal advice received from Marsdens Law Group regarding the Master Access Deeds and Road Rail Interface Agreement.

**Priority Six: Regional Water Security and Productive Water****h. Regional Water Report**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr P Best/Cr R Taylor</b>
That the Board note the Regional Water Security and Productive Water report and: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. endorse the submission made under the hand of the executive to the Productivity Commission’s Murray Darling Basin Plan Independent Review; and</li> <li>2. advocate now that the Regional Water Strategies are near release for the Wyangala Business case and assessment to be released; and</li> <li>3. support the pamphlet developed for the Minister of Water in principle with changes to be made based on feedback from members.</li> </ol>	

**Cr P Miller returned at 3.04pm**

**Priority Seven: Transition to a sustainable, secure and affordable energy future****i. Energy Report**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr M Kellam/Cr S Ferguson</b>
That the Board note the Energy Report and; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. note the progress of the Business Case on the Nexus Between Energy Security and Emissions Reduction;</li> <li>2. endorse the Project Plan for the Business Case on the Nexus Between Energy Security and Emissions Reduction; and</li> <li>3. endorse the application to ARENA for the Community Battery Program.</li> </ol>	

**2. Quarterly review of the Central NSW JO Strategic Plan and Statement of Regional Strategic Priority 2022 -2025**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr P Miller/Cr R Taylor</b>
That the Board note the Quarterly review of the Central NSW JO Strategic Plan and Statement of Regional Strategic Priority 2022 –2025.	

**10. Late reports – Nil****11. Matters raised by Members**

UMCC – Concerns there may be funding cuts to DPI and the effects on weeds management.

**12. Passing of Former Deputy Mayor of Cabonne, Kevin Walker**

<b>Resolved</b>	<b>Cr P Miller/Cr P Best</b>
That the Board send a letter of condolences to the Walker family.	

**13. Speakers to the next meeting.**

The Premier and the Minister for Water were requested as part of the parliamentary visit.

**14. Next meetings:**

**GMAC: 26 October – Forbes**

# Minutes



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Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

**Board: 23 November – With support from the Member for Orange, Mr Phil Donato MP and Member for Barwon, Mr Roy Butler MP the meeting be held in Sydney including a dinner at Parliament House. Details to be circulated as soon as possible.**

**Meeting closed 3.25pm**

**Page 5 is the last page of the Central NSW Joint Organisation meeting 23 August 2023 at Sydney**

**Minutes**

## 7. Matters in Progress

Action	By	Update
<b>290519-8b-Drought Sub-committee - Progressing the recommendations of the Drought Issues Paper</b> Work with requisite State agencies and other peak regional bodies regarding drought preparedness with a report to be provided to the Board on options for resourcing better drought support and coordination at the local and regional level.	JB/MM	<p><b>290519-8b-- Progressing the recommendations of the Drought Issues Paper</b></p> <p>Advice on 21 March 2020 from Ken Harrison, Director, Central West Orana and Far West, Resilience NSW is that the Office of Drought Preparedness is still a function in the department of Regional NSW. The State Government's Future Ready Regions Strategy has been developed to guide drought management while its inter-agency coordination for drought has been discontinued. <a href="https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-nsw/future-ready-regions">https://www.nsw.gov.au/regional-nsw/future-ready-regions</a></p> <p>There has been a 2023 update on progress <a href="#">Future Ready Regions 2023 Update (nsw.gov.au)</a></p> <p>Further, the funding programs for drought have been evaluated with the findings being positive. <a href="#">Drought Measures – Strategic Evaluation (nsw.gov.au)</a></p> <p>While it is pleasing that the work this region has been undertaking is recognised by the NSW Government in its 2023 update on drought preparedness, the activities being progressed fall well short of this region's policy particularly for urban communities. It is clear from the commentary in the 2023 update. It is noteworthy that the Centroc Water Security Study undertaken in 2009 found that any amount of demand management and leakage reduction will not deliver water security for this region without further investment on a multi-source approach in infrastructure investment. This finding has been reinforced in the draft Regional Water Strategies for the Macquarie and the Lachlan.</p> <p>Further, feedback from across the region is that Local Water Utilities trying to progress infrastructure solutions are meeting the sorts of challenges described in the Auditor General's Report and are not progressing fast enough to prepare for likely imminent next drought.</p> <p>Advocacy continues for inter-agency coordination of water security planning and management with Local Government with a seat at the table. Happily, the Draft Implementation Plan for the Macquarie and Lachlan Regional Water Strategies contemplates this structural arrangement. However, following a briefing by DPE Water on the draft Lachlan Strategy on 19 September it is clear that more advocacy is needed to ensure governance around this coordination.</p>

## Matters in Progress

Action	By	Update
		<p>Regional NSW provided a funding opportunity for two groupings of councils in the CNSW footprint that did not apply in the first round. The Drought Issues Paper was provided as useful background information to the grant.</p> <p>At a presentation by DPE Water on Lessons Learned from the 2017-2020 drought on 15 September it was advised that a review of the NSW Government drought response was undertaken in 2021 with various Fact Sheets available on the DPE website. This includes Valley Snapshots and advice about the effectiveness of the Critical Water Advisory Panel. For detail:</p> <p><a href="https://water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/allocations-availability/drought-and-floods/drought-recovery">https://water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/allocations-availability/drought-and-floods/drought-recovery</a></p> <p><a href="https://water.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/469255/Lachlan-Valley-snapshot-drought-2017-20-20210914.pdf">https://water.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/469255/Lachlan-Valley-snapshot-drought-2017-20-20210914.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="https://water.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/469253/macquarie-valley-snapshot-drought-2017-20-20210914.pdf">https://water.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/469253/macquarie-valley-snapshot-drought-2017-20-20210914.pdf</a></p>
<p><b>271119-P4-b-Regional Water Report.</b></p> <p>1. Agree arrangements be developed with the strategic subcommittee and in consultation with member Councils for emergency water management between towns across the region that (based on previous Board policy) address the following heads of consideration:</p> <p>a. Arrangements for the sharing of water for emergency water needs between towns across the region so that the burden of providing infrastructure for critical urban water transfers is borne equitably by the region (for example through the development of instruments and agreements not structures);</p> <p>b. Ownership and management by LG of any such</p>	MM	<p>While a Regional Water Committee of member councils met in April 2020, strategic work on a.to d. has been driven by the NSW Government through the development of the State and Regional Water Strategies (RWSs), the Town Water Risk Reduction Program, review of the Water Sharing Plans and associated work. Sub-regional work by Cabonne, CTW and Orange has also sought to address some of these.</p> <p>Where the JO and councils have been actively pursuing water security solutions and enabling policy and structures through these programs, the RWSs have been subject to long delays. While the Macquarie-Castlereagh Strategy has just been released, the Lachlan Strategy is yet to be finalised. Both offer high-level long-term solutions. Further, feedback from councils is that in trying to progress infrastructure solutions they are meeting the sorts of challenges described in the Auditor General's report and are not progressing fast enough to prepare for the next drought.</p> <p>Advice that the Wyangala Dam Wall raising project will not proceed and the reliance of the State Government on the RWSs to address the region's water security challenges heading into the next drought are extremely worrying, particularly given the immaturity of options proposed and the lack of state infrastructure dollars.</p> <p>These challenges have been raised with the Water Portfolio Mayors who are now meeting on a six-weekly basis. Collateral</p>

## Matters in Progress

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

Action	By	Update
<p>infrastructure built to transfer emergency water between towns across the region for critical human needs;</p> <p>c. On-going operational costs for emergency water infrastructure;</p> <p>d. A multi-source approach to the supply of emergency water that enables options to be switched on or off as needed with these to be linked to State and local based triggers</p>		<p>developed by this group was provided to the Board in August and is also provided to this meeting.</p> <p>See the Regional Water Report for details of recent advocacy.</p> <p>Given the activity of the Portfolio Mayors it is suggested that they have carriage of this resolve.</p> <p><b>Suggest deletion</b></p>
<p><b>41220-9m-Western Link</b> Work with TfNSW on aligned messages on road safety.</p>	JB	Correspondence has been sent and follow-up through the Central NSW Regional Integrated Transport Group is anticipated once the Central West and Orana Regional Transport Plan, currently nearly five years in the making, has now been shelved and a new approach is underway.
<p><b>030621- Progressing a Western Link Event</b> Meet with Blue Mountains City Council, Penrith City Council and other Western Sydney Councils individually on potential opportunities.</p>	JB	<p>Meeting regularly with Penrith City Council.</p> <p>A meeting is being coordinated with Hawkesbury Council for early in the new year.</p>
<p><b>121022 -7g-Report from Regional Australia Institute event Regions Rising Canberra</b></p> <p>1. co-hosting events and familiarisations in region for Federal representatives and bureaucrats;</p> <p>2. engaging with the Regional Australia Institute in progressing these ambitions;</p> <p>3. receive a report on opportunities afforded to the region from the Rebalance the Nation Framework; and</p>	JB, MM	<p>1 and 2- Currently in the plan for the State and Federal Government:</p> <p>a. correspondence has been sent and various presentations have been made; and</p> <p>b. Mr Stephen Lawrence attended the Policy Labs event.</p> <p>c. various meetings re water – please see water report;</p> <p>At the time of writing RAI has organised an event in Orange 16 November. They were not interested in co-hosting. The RAI presented to GMAC in October. <b>Suggest deletion.</b></p> <p>3. Underway</p> <p>4. This has proved difficult to get into diaries – the intention is to progress after the Policy Labs on Productive Water comes together.</p>

## Matters in Progress

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

Action	By	Update
4. seek a time to meet with Minister King's Office and provide advice on the Dutch Model.		
<p><b>241122-7-Matters raised by Members. Lachlan has raised the need for advocacy regarding this flooding event</b></p> <p>That the Central NSW Joint Organisation endorse the following key messages in the briefing note on the recent flooding event and seek feedback from members on specific advocacy they are seeking support for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There should be automatic, well-known processes switched on when natural disaster declarations are made. These should include; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>one source of truth;</li> <li>effective and known communication pathways, governance arrangements and messaging;</li> <li>a known support package including rates relief and business support tailored to the impacted engine industries of the community; and</li> <li>recognition that some natural disasters are much bigger than the local response through Council and the SES and there ought to be pre-planned responses to rapidly escalate.</li> </ol> </li> <li>There ought to be known escalation points to support the local effort including use of the military.</li> <li>CNSWJO, through its Disaster Risk Reduction Program, prepare a tool that systematises mutual</li> </ol>	JB/JW	<p>1-4 Correspondence was sent to Ken Harrison regarding the Systematic Tool development and the lessons learned session. A meeting was held with Ken Harrison 30 January and he has agreed to progress a lessons learned workshop. Ken Harrison has provided the following advice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>NSW Reconstruction Authority, under the provisions of its Act, is the primary recovery agency, but is not a response agency, such as RFS and SES.</i></li> <li><i>Combat agencies are responsible for After Action Reviews, after each event. (focusing on the response phase)</i></li> <li><i>SES for the Lachlan River based LGAs are in SES Southern Zone, run from Wagga Wagga. Ben Pickup is the SES zone commander and may be able to supply the outcomes of any AARs they undertook. I'd have anticipated that LEMC reps may have been involved in this process.</i></li> <li><i>If the JO wants to undertake a broader review encompassing relief and recovery processes, I would be happy to support and be involved. It would be informative to have a clear idea of who was to be involved and what the objective is.</i></li> <li><i>NSW RA is undertaking a full review of the NSW Recovery Plan this year. This is quite extensive and will include learnings from recent events. I will liaise with the review team to determine opportunities for consultation with the JO.</i></li> </ul> <p>Collaboration with NSW RA continues through the Disaster Risk Reduction Program.</p> <p>Advocacy policy is being amended to include the above.</p> <p>5. Significant activity has been undertaken this year regarding road damage. Please see reports on the Grattan Institute and Fix Me Projects. <b>Suggest deletion of 5</b></p>

## Matters in Progress

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

Action	By	Update
<p>support between Councils for natural disasters.</p> <p>4. CNSWJO ensure coordination of a debrief with affected Councils and key agency representatives to inform the above tool where this includes elected representatives.</p> <p>5. There should be policy and financial recognition of the ongoing and unprecedented road impacts on the safety and economy of this region as a result of the continued La Nina event. This recognition should include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Supporting Country Mayors and LGNSW in their advocacy on their State-wide Roads Emergency declaration</li> <li>b. Extension of funding deadlines allowing Councils reprioritisation of resource from other infrastructure funding programs to the roads' effort; and</li> <li>c. An ongoing plan for roads recovery that recognises that this effort will take years.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>230223- h - Health Advocacy</b></p> <p>1. Note the balance of the advocacy advice will be provided to the next Board meeting;</p> <p>2. Seek to have the Health and Social Profiles developed by the Western Area Local Health District's Health Intelligence Unit updated</p>	JB	<p>This is being progressed through the Portfolio Mayors for Health. Please see advice provided in a separate report on advocacy to this meeting.</p>
<p><b>230223-I-Regional Water Security and Productive Water</b></p> <p>1. A bid be put up to the newly formed Charles Sturt University Policy Lab to bring together CNSWJO member Council representatives, academics,</p>	MM	<p>1. The Policy Lab working group have advised that this will be the second Policy Lab early next year.</p> <p>CNSWJO nominees for this are:</p>

## Matters in Progress

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

Action	By	Update
<p>subject matter specialists and key regional stakeholders to participate in a forum to co-design a Roadmap for the region to progress work on Productive Water; and</p> <p>2. In the interim, the Board continue advocacy in line with the updated Advocacy Plan for Regional Water on:</p> <p>a. the finalisation of the Regional Water Strategies and the co-design of the Governance and Implementation Plans for these.</p> <p>b. Wyangala Dam wall raising and Belubula Water Security Project inclusive of the recognition of the value of urban water and the opportunities to manage water differently (the 'Dutch Model').</p>		<p>Cr Bill West, Cr David Somerville, Mr Kent Boyd, Mr Darren Sturgiss (Bathurst) and Mr Garry Styles. A meeting of this group is currently being coordinated.</p> <p>2. The Water Portfolio Mayors - Cr David Somerville, Cr Jason Hamling and their representatives met are meeting six-weekly. Advocacy collateral has been developed and with drought conditions intensifying a campaign in support of town water has been suggested.</p> <p>See the Regional Water Report for detail of recent advocacy.</p> <p><b>Suggest deletion of 2</b></p>
<p><b>230223- 9.Quarterly review of the Central NSW JO Strategic Plan and Statement of Regional Strategic Priority 2022 -2025</b></p> <p>Note that CNSWJO is seeking to have an event sponsored by the Regional Australia Institute to build better alignment with the Regionalisation Ambition 2032- Rebalance the Nation.</p>	JB	<p>Negotiations continue where at the time of writing discussions are in play with the new Director of RDACW in taking the lead here as RDA has just become a member.</p> <p>At the time of writing an event is being held in Orange 16 November with Minister Moriarty in attendance.</p> <p><b>Suggest deletion</b></p>
<p><b>240523- 7c- Budget considerations 2023/2024 and revision of the CNSWJO Charter</b></p> <p>1. adopt the Statement of Revenue Policy and Budget;</p> <p>2. adopt the revised CNSWJO Charter with the amendment that the increase to the payment of the Chair be the same as the percentage increase set by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal.</p>	JB	<p>The policy and procedure manual has been updated and provided to this meeting.</p> <p><b>Suggest deletion</b></p>
<p><b>240523-7e -Regional Procurement and Contracts</b></p> <p>1. approve the CNSWJO regional procurement plan for 2023/2024,</p>	KB/ GQ	<p>1. See report to this meeting where procurement processes are outlined as per the regional procurement plan for</p>

## Matters in Progress

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

Action	By	Update
including new procurement activities and their related management fees, noting that approval to conduct any emerging activities will be as per the Procurement Policy; and 2. report all use of the delegations above to the next Board meeting.		2023/2024. Please see advice for additional procurement processes to be added to the 2023/2024 procurement plan. 2. See report to this meeting where all use of the delegations between meetings are reported. The table summarising the use of delegations under the procurement policy will be a standing item to each Board meeting.  <b>Suggest deletion</b>
<b>240523-f -Opportunities for Screen in Central NSW Report</b> 1. formally request a photoshoot in region by Screen NSW; and 2. approach RDACW to progress a briefing of members on the opportunities of screen for Economic Development Officers in the region	CG/ JB	1. Underway 2. Underway
<b>240523-7i -Transport Advocacy</b> invite Mr Damian Pfeiffer to the next meeting to discuss the future priorities and corridor work TfNSW are undertaking in region.	JB/ JW	Presented to GMAC in October  <b>Suggest deletion</b>
<b>240523-7k -Energy Report</b> 1. A report be provided on the issues with State Significant Development approvals including but not limited to a. concerns regarding poor engagement with community and its impacts; b. funding for Councils to manage the costs of community response including legal and other expert advice; c. minimising sterilisation of agricultural land including allowing grazing below panels.	KB/JB	See report to this meeting.  <b>Suggest deletion</b>
<b>240523-9 -Quarterly review of the Central NSW JO Strategic Plan and Statement of Regional Strategic Priority 2022 -2025</b> 1. advocate to the relevant Ministers on issues regarding the	JB	1. Correspondence and media have been sent. Advocacy to State round tables has been effected. 2. NSW Govt. has announced the vouchers will reduced to \$50 and continue to 1 Feb 2024 with a new Voucher scheme that will be means tested to begin then.

## Matters in Progress



## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

Action	By	Update
ESL Levy, red fleet and seeking the extension of the Active Kids Vouchers.		<b>Suggest deletion</b>
<b>240523-10b -Executive Officer Transition Report</b> receive a report on implementing one salary system and restructuring options for the transition period including a 2IC model where the EO takes on a reduced role.	JB	Underway – please see advice on progress in the quarterly review report and a briefing at the request of the Chair is being progressed.
<b>240523 - 12-Matters raised by Members regarding Flood recovery</b> 1. the CNSWJO supports Cabonne Council in regard to Cabonne communities' flood recovery efforts in particular the village of Eugowra; the CNSWJO expresses concerns raised by member Councils regarding the support from Federal and State governments with flood recovery from the 2022 flooding events and write to the Premier, Prime Minister and relevant Ministers and invite them to visit the affected regions; 2. advise LGNSW of the concerns seeking support, 3. seek support from Country Mayors; and 4. issue media.	JB	1. Correspondence has been sent. There have been various Ministers who have visited the region. 2. Copies sent to LGNSW <b>suggest deletion of 2.</b> 3. Underway 4. Media drafted however the timing was not good.
<b>240523-APH- Roundtable Discussions with Ministers</b> Follow-up actions from the round table are: 1. A briefing on the Dutch Model be coordinated through The Hon Kristy McBain's Office; 2. Receive a report on Murray Darling Basin Plan #2; 3. Seek further advice on suicide prevention; and 4. Seek further advice on the aging copper network and its impacts.	JB	1. Letter sent, follow-up underway 2. Underway 3. Correspondence has been sent and advice has been provided This advice has been provided to the Portfolio Mayors for Health and Ageing. 4. This was being undertaken through RDACW however Mr Steve Bowman has recently resigned.

## Matters in Progress

Action	By	Update
<b>230823-8c- The CNSWJO Governance and Advocacy Report</b> 1. circulate the Plan on a Page for the Spare Capacity in Housing Project for adoption through the Chair; 2. lodge a submission to the Inquiry into the Implementation of Recommendations Relating to Workforce Issues, Workplace Culture and Funding Considerations for Remote, Rural and Regional Health within existing policy; 3. lodge a submission to the Draft Community Engagement Rules for Major Transmission Projects within existing policy; 4. update the Transport Advocacy Plan to support; a. the Bathurst Bullet being extended to Orange, including Opal Card ticketing; b. a morning day-return service from Dubbo to Sydney via Orange using Bullet 2 pathway and timetable; c. Staged Faster Rail track upgrades to reduce travel time from Orange and Dubbo; and d. Split the faster passenger rail at Orange to go to Parkes and Dubbo; and 5. for the two days of meetings that are concurrent with parliamentary visits, the Board meeting be held on the Friday; 6. invite interested Mayors to the next Advocacy Mayor's Subcommittee meeting to progress priority on the Safe Swift and Secure Link between Sydney and Central NSW where this is to include discussion on a	JB	1, 2 and 3 Complete <b>suggestion deletion</b> 4. The revised plan comes to the Board in February 5. Noted change has been made to fit with CMA in Sydney for the November Board meeting. <b>Suggest deletion</b> 6. Complete <b>Suggest deletion</b>

## Matters in Progress

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

Action	By	Update
freight study and rail as a potential priority.		
<b>230823-8e –Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF) Program report</b> recommend to councils they consider entering into new data sharing agreements with Spatial Services	JW	Reports provided to Councils <b>suggest deletion</b>
<b>230823-8g- Transport Advocacy</b> progress for the “Fix Me” project	JW	Some Councils are being followed up for more information. The reports is well underway and anticipated for the next Board meeting.
<b>230823-8h-Regional Water Report</b> 1. advocate now that the Regional Water Strategies are near release for the Wyangala Business case and assessment to be released; and 2. support the pamphlet developed for the Minister of Water in principle with changes to be made based on feedback from members.	MM	The Business Case has been released. The pamphlet has been updated. For more detail, please see the Water Report.  <b>Suggest deletion.</b>
<b>230823-12-Passing of Former Deputy Mayor of Cabonne, Kevin Walker</b> That the Board send a letter of condolence.	JB	Correspondence sent  <b>Suggest deletion</b>
<b>230823 -13 -Speakers to the next meeting.</b> The Premier and the Minister for Water were requested as part of the parliamentary visit.	JB	At the time of writing the Premier and Minister Jackson’s Office have advised they can attend.  <b>Suggest deletion</b>
<b>230823 -14 -Next meetings</b> Board 23 November, with support from the Member for Orange, Mr Phil Donato MP and Member for Barwon, Mr Roy Butler MP the meeting be held in Sydney including a dinner at Parliament House. Details to be circulated as soon as possible.	JB	We thank the coordination of the Member for Orange Phil Donato with support from Member for Barwon Roy Butler for the confirmed Ministers as per the schedule.  Dinner is at Parliament House Wednesday night.  <b>Suggest deletion</b>
<b>240823- Round table with Ministers NSW Parliament House</b> 1. Continuing to work with both sides of government regarding; a. the raising of the wall at Wyangala Dam including seeking to see the business case; b. reinstating the Blayney-Demondrille Line;	JB	1. a. ongoing, see Water Report for an update; b. ongoing; c. ongoing; d. verbal advice from Mr Stephen Lawrence, MLC is that meetings in region will be in the north and south of the state; e. ongoing; f. ongoing where a report is being drafted for the Board for February 2024.

## Matters in Progress

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

Action	By	Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. progressing a safe swift and secure transport link between Central NSW and Sydney;</li> <li>d. seeking to have a meeting in region regarding the Joint Parliamentary Inquiry into Constitutional Arrangement for Local Water Utilities;</li> <li>e. betterment in natural disaster funding including for current rounds;</li> <li>f. council financial sustainability, Emergency Levy Funding, red fleet and Audit Risk;</li> <li>g. community impacts of the rewiring of the region to meet net zero carbon emissions targets;</li> <li>h. Treasury Common Planning Assumptions;</li> <li>i. the cost of biodiversity offsets; and</li> <li>j. being alive to the Murray Darling Basin Plan review.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>g. see report to this meeting;</li> <li>h. ongoing;</li> <li>i. ongoing;</li> <li>j. ongoing;</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Providing Ministerial advice requests on               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Audit Risk and Improvement Committees;</li> <li>b. incentivising medical visits into aged care facilities;</li> <li>c. member Council input to guidance on renewable energy development; and</li> <li>d. natural disaster funding timing and the inclusion of betterment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. a. Advice provided</li> <li>b. Will be progressed with Rural Doctors Network</li> <li>c. see report to this meeting</li> <li>d. advocacy ongoing</li> </ul> <p><b>Suggest deletion with the exception of item 2b</b></p>

## Matters in Progress

## 8. Reports on Statement of Regional Strategic Priority 2022-2025

### Priority One: Leveraging our successful collaboration

#### a. Financial Report

<b>Regional Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>Leveraging our successful collaboration</b> <b>1.1 Driving efficiencies and effectiveness saving Councils money</b> <b>1.2 Building capacity across our Councils</b> <b>1.3 Working well with other peak organisations</b>
<b>Portfolio Mayor</b>	<b>Cr Kevin Beatty</b>
<b>Sponsoring General Manager/s</b>	<b>Mr B Byrnes, Mr G Tory, Ms N Vu, and Mr C Butler</b>

**Report by Ann Thomas and Jenny Bennett dated 13 November 2023**

<b>Recommendation</b>
<b>That the Board notes the Financial Report</b>

This report presents the financial accounts at 13 November 2023. This report anticipates a full year profit of \$23,710 at 30 June 2024 against a budgeted profit of \$2,072. Taking into account prior year surpluses carried over it is anticipated that the surplus at 30 June 2024 will be \$337,372.

The JO has received the annual rebate from Local Government Procurement (LGP) under the MOU arrangement. The rebate for the 2023 year was \$60,938 against a budgeted figure of \$42,500. The spend under LGP contracts by member councils increased by 25% between 2022 and 2023, from \$16.8 million to \$20.9 million resulting in the increased rebate amount.

Management fees from other JO contracts have been collated for the September 2023 quarter and this has resulted in income of \$57,004 being invoiced for the quarter.

Anticipated interest income has been increased by \$10,000 above the budgeted figure due to the rise in interest rates since the budget was prepared. This increase in income will offset the higher advocacy costs and any other small cost variations the JO may experience in 2023/2024.

This report includes the wages and oncosts for the September quarter for all JO staff. A portion of staff costs are allocated to the various JO projects including Jonza, Business Case, Tourism, Disaster Risk Reduction and the Water Utilities Alliance.

Applications have now been approved by Westpac for the slight increases in the limits of the corporate credit cards currently held by three JO staff members and for an additional card for Carolyn Griffin. The total credit card facility limit is now \$20,000 up from \$9,000. The increase in the limits and the additional card were necessary to facilitate the costs associated with the higher volume of meeting preparation and hosting required of the JO.

The annual audit of the 2022/2023 financial accounts has been completed and the final accounts have been received from the Audit Office. The accounts were submitted to the OLG along with the Financial Data Return on 30 October. These accounts have been placed on the JO website for public notice with no comments being received to date. The audited accounts are included in this Board report for adoption.

**Attachment/s:** Nil

## Reports

## Central NSW Joint Organisation

### Financial Position at 13 November 2023

	Budget 2023/2024	Actual 13/11/2023	Anticipated 30/06/2024
<b>Income</b>			
CNSWJO Membership Fees	359,208	359,208	359,208
CWUA Best Practice Program	324,649	324,649	324,649
CNSWJO Regional Tourism Group	119,020	109,623	119,020
CNSWJO Operational Membership	122,364	122,364	122,364
WRAS	11,341	10,001	10,001
	<b>\$936,582</b>	<b>\$925,845</b>	<b>\$935,242</b>
Grant - JONZA	62,000	46,500	62,000
Grant - Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF)	323,995		323,995
Grant - RNSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	208,665		208,665
Grant - LGP Procurement Capability		7,150	7,150
	<b>\$594,660</b>	<b>\$53,650</b>	<b>\$601,810</b>
CWUA -Smart Approved Watermark	19,767		19,767
CWUA - NAMAF 2023		63,554	95,343
	<b>\$19,767</b>	<b>\$63,554</b>	<b>\$115,110</b>
HR - Regional Training Service	200,000	64,805	200,000
HR - Online Training & Other HR Modules	100,000		100,000
	<b>\$300,000</b>	<b>\$64,805</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>
Management Fees - Contracts	130,000	57,004	130,000
Management Fee - LGP	42,500	60,938	60,938
	<b>\$172,500</b>	<b>\$117,942</b>	<b>\$190,938</b>
Copyright Licence	20,000		20,000
Vehicle Lease Back - Net Zero and Operational Programs Mgr	5,000	1129.09	5,000
Interest	15,000	16,959	25,000
Member Council Expenses Reimbursed		7,894	7,894
	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$25,982</b>	<b>\$57,894</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$2,063,509</b>	<b>\$1,251,778</b>	<b>\$2,200,994</b>

## Reports

**Expenditure**

Executive Officer Costs	190,000	50,506	190,000
Executive Officer Vehicle Costs & Depn	10,000	531	10,000
Net Zero and Operational Programs Manager (incl vehicle)	72,000	8,980	72,000
Finance Manager	77,500	23,295	77,500
Project Officer - Procurement	97,000	31,767	97,000
Project Officer - Operations	65,000	19,644	65,000
Executive Support Officer	73,000	25,362	73,000
CWUA Program Manager & Program costs	186,927		186,927
CWUA Assoc. Memberships & Benchmarking Program	137,722	30,900	137,722
CWUA - Smart Approved Watermark	19,767		19,767
CWUA - NAMAF 2023			95,343
Grant - JONZA	62,000		62,000
Grant - Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF)	323,995		323,995
Grant - RNSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	208,665		208,665
Grant - LGP Procurement Capability		7,150	7,150
CNSWJO Regional Tourism Group	119,020	23,998	119,020
Remuneration of the Chair	10,000		10,000
WRAS	11,341	10,001	10,001
HR - Training Service Costs	195,000	59,674	195,000
HR - Online Training & Other HR Modules	100,000		100,000
Regional Medical Student Scholarship	15,000		15,000
Advocacy	15,000	15,361	20,000
Accounting/Audit/Financial Services Support	28,000	7,100	28,000
Bank Fees and Sundry costs	2,500	570	2,500
Computer Software/Licences	2,000	120	2,000
Copyright Licence	20,000		20,000
Depreciation (excl vehicles)	3,000		3,000
Internet Cloud	10,000	3,416	10,000
Legal	3,000	4,992	5,000
Member Council Expenses Reimbursed		7,894	7,894
Printing/Stationery/Postage	1,000	63	1,000
Zoom Conferences	1,500	1,050	1,500
Website Hosting and costs	1,500	73	1,300
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$2,061,437</b>	<b>\$332,445</b>	<b>\$2,177,284</b>
<b>Net Profit/Loss</b>	<b>\$2,072</b>	<b>\$919,334</b>	<b>\$23,710</b>

**Reports**

**Non-Budgeted Expenditure****CNSWJO Reserves from 2022/2023 and previous years**

Asset Revaluations for Buildings and Operational Land	64,000	64,000	64,000
BPAP - Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement	150,000		150,000
Community Engagement Surveys	73,300	62,700	73,300
CWUA Best Practice Program	238,721	42,265	238,721
CNSWJO Regional Tourism Group	2,238	2,238	2,238
Energy Project	32,145		32,145
Energy - Regional Energy Program - Council Contributions	22,615		22,615
Energy - Smart Sensors Trial BRC	1,887		1,887
Grant - RNSW Business Case and Strategy Development Fund	794,069	322,749	794,069
Grant - OLG Capacity Building Fund Stage 2	27,145	9,144	27,145
Grant - CNSWJO Water Loss Management Program	810,000		810,000
Grant - Destination Central West NSW	30,000	3,900	30,000
Grant - Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF)	271,875	32,014	271,875
Grant - JONZA	33,901	32,932	33,901
Grant - Spare Capacity in Housing Project (V2)	45,000		45,000
Inter-Council Cooperation Reserve - Procurement	15,617	8,625	15,617
	<b>\$2,612,513</b>	<b>\$580,568</b>	<b>\$2,612,513</b>

<b>Net Profit/Loss after Non-Budgeted Expenditure</b>	<b>\$338,766</b>	<b>-\$2,588,803</b>
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<b>CNSWJO Accumulated Surplus at 30 June 2023</b>	<b>\$2,926,175</b>
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<b>Anticipated Surplus at 30 June 2024</b>	<b>\$337,372</b>
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## Reports



**b. Adoption of the Audited Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2023**

<b>Regional Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>1.1 Governance arrangements enable inter-council co-operation.</b>
<b>Portfolio Mayor</b>	<b>Cr Kevin Beatty</b>
<b>Sponsoring General Manager/s</b>	<b>Mr B Byrnes, Mr G Tory, Ms N Vu, and Mr C Butler</b>

**Report by Ann Thomas and Jenny Bennett dated 14 November 2023**

<b>Recommendation/s</b>
<b>That the Board adopt the CNSWJO Joint Organisation General Purpose Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2023</b>

**Precis**

This report seeks adoption of the CNSWJO Joint Organisation General Purpose Financial Statements for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023. This is a requirement to comply with the Local Government Act.

The accounts were audited by the Auditor-General and an Independent Auditor's Report and Report on the Conduct of the Audit for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 were received 26 October 2023. The Statements were then placed on exhibition on the CNSWJO website.

At the time of writing no feedback has been received. Should any be received, a late report will be provided to the Board.

At 30 June 2023, the Joint Organisation had total assets of \$3,380,000 and total liabilities of \$1,709,000. The Joint Organisation's main assets consisted of cash and cash equivalents of \$3,203,000 and receivables of \$129,000. The main liabilities were payables of \$529,000 and contract liabilities of \$1,093,000.

The audit procedures did not identify any instances of non-compliance with legislative requirements or a material deficiency in the Joint Organisation's accounting records or financial statements. The Joint Organisation's:

- accounting records were maintained in a manner and form to allow the GPFS to be prepared and effectively audited
- staff provided all accounting records and information relevant to the audit.

**Reason for the report**

This report seeks adoption of the CNSWJO Joint Organisation General Purpose Financial Statements for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023. This is a requirement to comply with the Local Government Act.

## Reports

## Legislative Policy and Risk Consideration

Under the Local Government Act the JO Board must adopt its Audited Financial Statements (the Statements) having placed them on exhibition for public feedback.

No feedback has been received and the Statements follow this report. Once adopted they will be included in the Annual Statement, sent to all Councillors in the region and placed on the website.

The accounts were audited by the Auditor-General and an Independent Auditor's Report and Report on the Conduct of the Audit for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 were received 26 October 2023. The Statements were then placed on exhibition on the CNSWJO website.

At the time of writing no feedback has been received. Should any be received, a late report will be provided to the Board.

Please see the Opinion from the Independent Auditor's Report below:

*I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Central NSW Joint Organisation (the Joint Organisation), which comprise the Statement by Members of the Board and Management, the Statement of Income and Accumulated Surplus for the year ended 30 June 2023, the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2023, and Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 30 June 2023 and notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information. The financial statements include the consolidated financial statements of the Joint Organisation and the entities it controlled at the period's end or from time to time during the period.*

*In my opinion:*

- *the Joint Organisation's accounting records have been kept in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993, Chapter 13, Part 3, Division 2 (the Division)*
- *the financial statements:*
  - *have been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the requirements of this Division*
  - *are consistent with the Joint Organisation's accounting records*
  - *present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Joint Organisation as at 30 June 2023, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures*
- *all information relevant to the conduct of the audit has been obtained*
- *no material deficiencies in the accounting records or financial statements have come to light during the audit*

*My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.*

Please see an excerpt from the Report on the Conduct of the Audit below:

### Net Operating Result

*The Joint Organisation's net operating result for the year ended 30 June 2023 was \$182,000 (2022: \$640,000).*

*The Joint Organisation's income for the year ended 30 June 2023 of \$1,766,000 consisted mainly of income from member council contributions of \$827,000 and operating and capital grants of*

## Reports

*\$576,000. The main sources of grant income were a receipt of \$135,000 for the delivery of the Water Loss Management Project and \$125,000 for the Destination NSW – ‘Come Out, We’re Open’ campaign.*

*The Joint Organisation’s total expenses for the year ended 30 June 2023 of \$1,584,000 consisted mainly of employee benefits and on-costs of \$807,000 and administration expenses of \$706,000.*

**Financial position**

*At 30 June 2023, the Joint Organisation’s:*

- total assets of \$3,380,000 consisted mainly of cash and cash equivalents of \$3,203,000 and receivables of \$129,000.*
- total liabilities of \$1,709,000 consisted mainly of payables of \$529,000 and contract liabilities of \$1,093,000.*

**Legislative Compliance**

*My audit procedures did not identify any instances of non-compliance with legislative requirements or a material deficiency in the Joint Organisation’s accounting records or financial statements. The Joint Organisation’s:*

- accounting records were maintained in a manner and form to allow the GPFS to be prepared and effectively audited*
- staff provided all accounting records and information relevant to the audit*

# **Central NSW Joint Organisation**

## **Financial Statements**

**For the Year Ended 30 June 2023**

## **Reports**

**Central NSW Joint Organisation****Contents****General purpose financial statements  
for the year ended 30 June 2023**

	Page
Statement by Members of the Board and Management	1
Statement of Income and Accumulated Surplus	2
Statement of Financial Position	3
Statement of Cash Flows	4
Notes to the Financial Statements	5
Auditor's Report	18

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

Central NSW Joint Organisation  
2 Court Street  
FORBES, NSW 2871

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.centraljo.nsw.gov.au](http://www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au).

## Reports

## Central NSW 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) (as amended) 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 Central NSW Joint Organisation's operating result and financial position for the period
- the accord with Central NSW 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 by the delegates of the Board of Central NSW Joint Organisation.

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Councillor Kevin Beatty  
 Chairperson

Dated: 26 October 2023

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Councillor Phyllis Miller  
 Voting Representative Board Member

Dated: 26 October 2023

  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ms Jennifer Bennett  
 Executive Officer

Dated: 26 October 2023

## Central NSW Joint Organisation

**Statement of Income and Accumulated Surplus**  
 for the year ended 30 June 2023

		2023 000's \$	2022 000's \$
	Notes		
<b>Income</b>			
Member council contributions	B.1.1	827	788
Grants provided for operating purposes	B.1.2	576	873
Interest and investment revenue	B.1.3	23	-
Other income	B.1.4	340	270
<b>Total income</b>		<b>1,766</b>	<b>1,931</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Employee benefits and on costs		807	649
Administrative expenses	B.2.1	706	621
Depreciation		21	21
Other expenses		50	-
<b>Total expenses</b>		<b>1,584</b>	<b>1,291</b>
<b>Net operating result for the year</b>		<b>182</b>	<b>640</b>
Gain on transfer of assets from former entity (Centroc)		-	-
Gain/(loss) on revaluation of property, plant and equipment		-	-
<b>Net result for the year</b>		<b>182</b>	<b>640</b>
<b>Accumulated surplus at 1 July</b>		<b>1,489</b>	<b>849</b>
<b>Accumulated Surplus as at 30 June</b>		<b>1,671</b>	<b>1,489</b>

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

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## Central NSW Joint Organisation

**Statement of Financial Position**  
 as at 30 June 2023

		2023 000's \$	2022 000's \$
	Note		
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	C.1.1	3,203	1,145
Receivables	C.1.2	129	823
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>3,332</b>	<b>1,968</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	C.1.3	48	54
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>48</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>3,380</b>	<b>2,022</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Payables	C.2.1	529	357
Contract liabilities	C.2.2	1,093	82
Employee benefit provisions	C.2.3	87	94
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>1,709</b>	<b>533</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>1,709</b>	<b>533</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>1,671</b>	<b>1,489</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Accumulated surplus		1,671	1,489
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>1,671</b>	<b>1,489</b>

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

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## Central NSW Joint Organisation

**Statement of Cash Flows**  
 for the year ended 30 June 2023

	2023 000's \$	2022 000's \$
<b>Notes</b>		
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
<b>Receipts:</b>		
Contributions from member councils	920	877
Investment revenue and interest	23	-
Grants	1,648	11
Other	1,185	518
<b>Payments:</b>		
Employees	(770)	(654)
Non-employee cash flows	(931)	(738)
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>2,075</u>	<u>14</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
<b>Receipts:</b>		
Sale of property, plant and equipment	-	25
Payment for property, plant & equipment	(17)	(44)
<b>Payments:</b>		
Net cash (used in) investing activities	<u>(17)</u>	<u>(19)</u>
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	2,058	(5)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	1,145	1,150
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	C.1.1 <u>3,203</u>	<u>1,145</u>

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

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## Central NSW Joint Organisation

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2023

#### A. About the Joint Organisation and these financial statements

##### A1 Basis of Preparation

These financial statements were authorised for issue by delegates of the Board of the Central NSW Joint Organisation as the board had delegated the authority to authorise to these individuals on the 26/10/2023. The Board has the power to amend and reissue these financial statements.

The principal accounting policies adopted in 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. JO NSW 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

During the year, the JO adopted all standards which were mandatorily effective for the first time at 30 June 2023. The following new standards are effective for the first time at 30 June 2023.

- AASB 2022-3 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Illustrative Examples for Not-for-Profit Entities*
- AASB 2020-3 *Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Annual Improvements 2018 – 2020 and Other Amendments*

These standards are unlikely to have a significant impact on JO.

##### (b) Historical cost convention

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

##### (c) Significant accounting estimates and judgements

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

Central NSW 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:

- (i) employee benefit provisions – refer Note C2.3.

Significant judgements in applying the JO accounting policies

- (i) there are no significant judgements made by the JO.

##### Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of associated GST, unless the GST incurred is not recoverable from the taxation authority. In this case it is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense.

**Central NSW Joint Organisation****Notes to the Financial Statements  
for the year ended 30 June 2023****Goods and services tax (GST)**

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included with other receivables or payables in the Statement of Financial Position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities that are recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority are presented as operating cash flows.

## Central NSW Joint Organisation

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2023

### B. Financial Performance

#### B1 Sources of income

##### B.1.1 Member Council contributions

	2023	2022
	000's	000's
	\$	\$
- Orange City Council	143	141
- Bathurst Regional Council	138	136
- Parkes Shire Council	81	79
- Cowra Shire Council	64	63
- Cowra Tourism Corp	12	12
- Cabonne Council	73	72
- Forbes Shire Council	63	62
- Lachlan Shire Council	58	57
- Blayney Shire Council	44	43
- Oberon Council	54	53
- Weddin Shire Council	35	34
- Central Tablelands Water	36	36
- UMCC - Association membership	2	-
- Lithgow City Council	24	-
	<b>827</b>	<b>788</b>

#### Accounting policy

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:

- contributions by all member councils is prorated based on population in their respective Local Government Areas (LGA's) in order to perform the principal functions of delivering on strategic regional priorities, regional leadership and intergovernmental cooperation.

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

## Central NSW Joint Organisation

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2023

## B1 Sources of income

## B.1.2 Grants

	Operating		Capital	
	2023	2022	2023	2022
	000's	000's	000's	000's
	\$	\$	\$	\$
OLG capacity building funding	55	138	-	-
Dept of Regional NSW	86	50	-	-
Water Loss Management Program	135	675	-	-
DPIE Sustainable Councils & Communities	-	10	-	-
Dept of Communities and Justice (DRRF)	52	-	-	-
The Office of Energy and Climate Change (JONZA)	93	-	-	-
Destination NSW	125	-	-	-
Destination Central West NSW	30	-	-	-
<b>Total grants</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Comprising:</b>				
- Commonwealth funding	-	-	-	-
- State funding	328	873	-	-
- Other funding	248	-	-	-
	<b>576</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Timing of revenue recognition</b>				
Grants recognised over time	107	138	-	-
Grants recognised at a point in time	469	735	-	-
<b>Total grants</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>873</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

## Accounting policy

## 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 according to the agreement but include the terms of the grant, cash is received upfront for some grants and on the achievement of certain payment milestones for others.

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.

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

## Other grants

Assets (eg. 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

## Central NSW Joint Organisation

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2023

**B1 Sources of income****B.1.2 Grants**

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.

**B.1.3 Interest and investment income**

	2023	2022
	000's	000's
	\$	\$
Interest revenue from:		
- interest on financial assets measured at amortised cost	23	-
<b>Total interest and investment revenue</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>-</b>

**Accounting policy**

Interest and investment income is recognised using the effective interest rate at the date that interest is earned.

## Central NSW Joint Organisation

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2023

### B1 Sources of income

#### B.1.4 Other income

	2023	2022
	000's	000's
	\$	\$
Procurement Management fees	235	172
Vehicle leaseback	5	10
Training fees	93	65
Gain on disposal of asset	-	23
Performance monitoring	7	-
<b>Total other revenue</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>270</b>

#### Accounting policy

Other income is recorded when the payment is due, the value of the payment is notified, or the payment is received, whichever occurs first.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with carrying amount. The gain or loss on sale of an asset is determined when control of the asset has irrevocably passed to the buyer and the asset is de-recognised.

Gain on transfer of assets relates to the value of net assets received free of charge from Centroc on establishment of the JO.

## Central NSW Joint Organisation

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2023

## B.2 Costs of providing services

## B.2.1 Administrative expenses

	2023	2022
	000's	000's
	\$	\$
CWUA Group expenses	137	62
Audit of financial statements	13	13
Regional training program	83	53
Legal expenses	13	3
Phone expenses	3	2
Meeting expenses	7	10
IT expenses	18	21
Travel expenses	16	4
Joint organisation projects	211	314
Staff training/conferences	8	5
Printing/Stationery/Postage	5	1
Bank fees	-	1
Hosting fees	25	22
Regional tourism group expenses	126	78
Motor vehicle expenses	12	14
Other expenses	29	18
	<b>706</b>	<b>621</b>

## Accounting policy

## Employee benefit expenses

Employee benefit expenses are recorded when the service has been provided by the employee.

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense as they become payable. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that a cash refund or a reduction in the future payments is available.

## Administrative expenses

Administrative expenses are recorded on an accruals basis as the JO receives the goods or services.



## Central NSW Joint Organisation

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2023

### C. Financial position

#### C.1 Assets we manage

##### C.1.1 Cash and cash equivalents

	2023	2022
	000's	000's
	\$	\$
Cash at bank and in hand	135	35
Deposits at call	3,068	1,110
	<b>3,203</b>	<b>1,145</b>
<b>Restricted cash and cash equivalents</b>		
External restrictions	1,882	808
Unrestricted	1,321	337
	<b>3,203</b>	<b>1,145</b>

##### Accounting policy

For Statement of Cash Flow presentation purposes, cash and cash equivalents include: cash on hand; deposits held at call with financial institutions; other short-term, highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value; and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the Statement of Financial Position, however are included as cash and cash equivalents in the Statement of Cash flows.

##### C.1.2 Receivables

	2023	2022
	000's	000's
	\$	\$
Trade receivables	38	731
GST receivable	48	43
Accrued revenues	43	49
<b>Net receivables</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>823</b>

##### Accounting policy

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.

## Central NSW Joint Organisation

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2023

## C.1.3 Property, plant and equipment

	Movements during the period						At 30 June 2023
	Gross carrying amount	At July 2022 Accum Depn and impairment	Net carrying amount	Additions	Disposals	Depn and Impairment	Net carrying amount
	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's	000's
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Office equipment	9	(7)	2	16	-	(4)	14
Vehicles	75	(23)	52	-	-	(17)	34
<b>Totals</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>(30)</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(21)</b>	<b>48</b>

**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 charged to the Income Statement and Other Comprehensive Income during the financial period 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:

- (i) Office equipment 2-5 years
- (ii) Motor vehicle 5-6 years

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

## Central NSW Joint Organisation

## Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2023

## C.2 Liabilities of the joint organisation

## C.2.1 Payables

	2023	2022
	000's	000's
	\$	\$
Trade payables	367	255
Accrued expense	162	102
	<b>529</b>	<b>357</b>

## Accounting policy

The JO measures all financial liabilities initially at fair value less transaction costs; subsequently financial liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

Trade payables represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the JO prior to the end of financial period that are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

## C.2.2 Contract liabilities

	2023	2022
	000's	000's
	\$	\$
Funds received prior to performance obligation being satisfied	1,093	82
<b>Total payables</b>	<b>1,093</b>	<b>82</b>

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

## Accounting policy

When an amount of consideration is received from a fund provider prior to Central NSW Joint Organisation transferring a good or service to the customer, Central NSW Joint Organisation presents the funds which exceed revenue recognised as a contract liability.

## C.2.3 Employee benefits

	2023		2022	
	Current	Non-current	Current	Non-current
	000's	000's	000's	000's
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Annual leave	13	-	18	-
Long service leave	74	-	76	-
<b>Total employee benefit provisions</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Current employee benefits provisions not expected to be settled within the next 12 months</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>-</b>

## Central NSW Joint Organisation

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2023

#### C.2.3 Employee benefits

##### Accounting policy

###### *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 benefits 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 JO 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.

#### C.3 Reserves

##### Asset revaluation reserve

The asset revaluation reserve records fair value movements on property, plant and equipment held under the revaluation model.

## D. Risks and accounting uncertainties

### D1 Financial Risk Management

#### Risk Management

The JO'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 JO Board.

The fair value of receivables approximates the carrying amount.

## Central NSW Joint Organisation

## Notes to the Financial Statements

### for the year ended 30 June 2023

## D.2 Contingencies

There were no contingent assets or liabilities which the JO is party to at 30 June 2023 (30 June 2022:None).

## E. People and relationships

## E1 Related party disclosures

## E.1.1 Key management personnel

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

The aggregate amount of KMP compensation included in the employee expenses is: \$207,256.

## E.1.2 Other related parties

	Amount of the transactions during the period 000's \$	Outstanding balances, including commitments at period end 000's \$	Terms and condition s	Impairment provision on outstanding balances 000's \$	Impairment expense 000's \$
<b>2023</b>					
Administration services	26	9	30 Days	-	-
Rental of office space and utilities	25	15	30 Days	-	-
Provision of Motor Vehicles	12	3	30 Days	-	-
<b>2022</b>					
Administration services	22	12	30 Days	-	-
Rental of office space and utilities	24	12	30 Days	-	-
Provision of Motor Vehicles	15	3	30 Days	-	-

## Administration Services:

The JO has entered into an arrangement with Bathurst Regional Council, Orange City Council and Forbes Shire Council where 3% of payroll is paid for the provision of payroll to staff they host. Amounts are payable on a continuing quarterly basis for staff hosted by these councils. Forbes Shire Council also receives \$3,000 pa for financial support services and \$2,000 pa for managing staff mobile telephones in its role as Treasury Council.

## Central NSW Joint Organisation

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2023

#### E1 Related party disclosures

##### Rental of office space and utilities:

The JO has entered into an arrangement with Orange City Council, Bathurst Regional Council and Forbes Shire Council to provide office space and utilities to staff hosted in these locations to perform their required roles. There is an agreed annual amount paid depending on the number of staff members in each location.

##### Provisions of motor vehicles:

The JO has entered into an arrangement with Orange City Council to provide motor vehicles. Orange City Council will acquire motor vehicles and manage them as part of their fleet. The Council invoice for the costs incurred in acquiring the motor vehicles at the time of purchase. The leaseback fee charged to the staff members for the use of the vehicles are retained by Orange City Council to cover all running costs of the vehicles incurred by the Council.

The JO has entered into an arrangement with Bathurst Regional Council to provide use of a motor vehicle for an annual charge of \$7,800 for the use of the motor vehicle and a set rate of \$2,800 per annum to cover operating expenses. These charges are billed on a quarterly basis over the year.

#### E.2 Other relationships

##### E.2.1 Audit fees

	2023	2022
	000's	000's
	\$	\$
Auditors of the JO - NSW Auditor-General		
Audit of financial statements	13	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>

#### F. Other matters

##### F.1 Events occurring after reporting date

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the JO, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the JO in future financial years.

Central NSW Joint Organisation

**Auditor's Report to the members of Central NSW Joint Organisation**

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report





## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

### Report on the general purpose financial statements

#### Central NSW Joint Organisation

To the Board of Central NSW Joint Organisation

### Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Central NSW Joint Organisation (the Joint Organisation), which comprise the Statement by Members of the Board and Management, the Statement of Income and Accumulated Surplus for the year ended 30 June 2023, the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2023 and Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 30 June 2023 and notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information. The financial statements include the consolidated financial statements of the Joint Organisation and the entities it controlled at the period's end or from time to time during the period.

In my opinion:

- the Joint Organisation's accounting records have been kept in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Chapter 13, Part 3, Division 2 (the Division)
- the financial statements:
  - have been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the requirements of this Division
  - are consistent with the Joint Organisation's accounting records
  - present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Joint Organisation as at 30 June 2023, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures
- all information relevant to the conduct of the audit has been obtained
- no material deficiencies in the accounting records or financial statements have come to light during the audit.

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

### Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under the standards are described in the 'Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements' section of my report.

I am independent of the Joint Organisation in accordance with the requirements of the:

- Australian Auditing Standards
- Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 'Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)' (APES 110).



Parliament promotes independence by ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their roles by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of joint organisations
- precluding the Auditor-General from providing non-audit services.

I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with APES 110.

I believe the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

### **The Board's Responsibilities for the Financial Statements**

The Board is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Local Government Act 1993*, and for such internal control as the Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Board is responsible for assessing the Joint Organisation's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting.

### **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements**

My objectives are to:

- obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error
- issue an Independent Auditor's Report including my opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but does not guarantee an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect material misstatements. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions users take based on the financial statements.

A description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: [www.auasb.gov.au/auditors\\_responsibilities/ar4.pdf](http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf). The description forms part of my auditor's report.

The scope of my audit does not include, nor provide assurance:

- that the Joint Organisation carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited financial statements on any website where they may be presented
- about any other information which may have been hyperlinked to/from the financial statements.



Farisha Ali  
Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

26 October 2023  
SYDNEY



Cr Kevin Beatty  
Chairperson  
Central NSW Joint Organisation  
PO Box 333  
FORBES NSW 2871

Contact: Farisha Ali  
Phone no: 02 9275 7373  
Our ref: R008-16585809-46852

26 October 2023

Dear Chairperson

### **Report on the Conduct of the Audit for the year ended 30 June 2023 Central NSW Joint Organisation**

I have audited the general purpose financial statements (GPFS) of the Central NSW Joint Organisation (the Joint Organisation) for the year ended 30 June 2023 as required by section 415 of the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act).

I expressed an unmodified opinion on the Joint Organisation's GPFS.

This Report on the Conduct of the Audit (the Report) for the Joint Organisation for the year ended 30 June 2023 is issued in accordance with section 417 of the Act. This Report should be read in conjunction with my audit opinion on the GPFS issued under section 417(2) of the Act.

## **PERFORMANCE**

### **Net result**

The Joint Organisation's net result for the year ended 30 June 2023 was \$182,000 (2022: \$640,000).

The Joint Organisation's income for the year ended 30 June 2023 of \$1,766,000 consisted mainly of income from member council contributions of \$827,000 and operating and capital grants of \$576,000. The main sources of grant income were a receipt of \$135,000 for the delivery of the Water Loss Management Project and \$125,000 for the Destination NSW - 'Come Out, We're Open' campaign.

The Joint Organisation's total expenses for the year ended 30 June 2023 of \$1,584,000 consisted mainly of employee benefits and on-costs of \$807,000 and administration expenses of \$706,000.

### **Financial position**

At 30 June 2023, the Joint Organisation's:

- total assets of \$3,380,000 consisted mainly of cash and cash equivalents of \$3,203,000 and receivables of \$129,000.
- total liabilities of \$1,709,000 consisted mainly of payables of \$529,000 and contract liabilities of \$1,093,000.

Level 19, Darling Park Tower 2, 201 Sussex Street, Sydney NSW 2000  
GPO Box 12, Sydney NSW 2001 | t 02 9275 7101 | mail@audit.nsw.gov.au | audit.nsw.gov.au

## OTHER MATTERS

### Legislative compliance

My audit procedures did not identify any instances of non-compliance with legislative requirements or a material deficiency in the Joint Organisation's accounting records or financial statements. The Joint Organisation's:

- accounting records were maintained in a manner and form to allow the GPFS to be prepared and effectively audited
- staff provided all accounting records and information relevant to the audit.



Farisha Ali

Delegate of the Auditor-General for New South Wales

## c. Annual Compliance and CNSWJO Meeting dates for 2024

Regional Strategic Priorities	1.1 Governance arrangements enable inter-council co-operation
Portfolio Mayor	Cr Kevin Beatty
Sponsoring General Manager/s	Mr B Byrnes, Mr G Tory, Ms N Vu, and Mr C Butler

## Report by Jennifer Bennett dated 6 November 2023

Recommendation/s				
<p>That the Board note the Compliance report and;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>note the Calendar of Compliance and Reporting-Requirements update;</li> <li>endorse the 2023 Annual Performance Statement and place it on the website;</li> <li>note the advice from the Chair and Executive Officer that this is summarised in the Annual Performance Statement;</li> <li>note the report to on code of conduct complaint statistics;</li> <li>note the Pecuniary Interest Returns under s450a of the Local Government Act 1993;</li> <li>determine the dates for GMAC and Board meetings for 2024 be:</li> </ol>				
Board	23 February	25 May	24 August	24 November
Location	Lachlan	State Parliament	Federal Parliament	Lithgow
GMAC	1 February	2 May	25 July	24 October
Location	Orange	Oberon	Parkes	Orange

**Precis**

This report includes:

- an update on the Annual Compliance Calendar;
- the 2023 Annual Performance Statement and advice from the Chair and Executive Officer
- 2024 meeting dates;
- the Pecuniary Interest Returns under s450a of the Local Government Act 1993; and

CNSWJO is compliant with the annual calendar as provided by the Office of Local Government.

As part of its compliance, the JO must approve an Annual Performance Statement.

Dates for next year also seek adoption.

**Reason for report**

This report is procedural.

## Reports

## Legislative Risk and Policy considerations

The OLG Council 2023/2024 Joint Organisations Calendar of Compliance and Reporting Requirements refers to key deadlines and statutory reporting. The region is tracking well.

### An update on the Annual Compliance Calendar

Please find at the end of the report the Annual Compliance Calendar for the JO. Regarding the next reporting deadline in December on complaints; at the time of writing no complaints have been received.

### 2023 Annual Performance Statement

The CNSWJO is required to submit an Annual Performance Statement (the Statement) by 30 November 2023. The Statement should report progress in implementing the Strategies Plans for delivering Strategic Regional Priorities.

The information required under the Local Government Act 1993 (the Act), the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 and other relevant legislation and guidance has been included in the Statement. Please find attached.

A copy of the Statement will be published on the website, and a copy will be provided to the Minister for Local Government. Please find the following excerpts, a Forward from the Chair and report from the Executive Officer.

#### ***Forward from the Chair***

*This year has demonstrated to me the extraordinary value of being a member of the Central NSW Joint Organisation CNSWJO Board.*

*In the first instance I would like to thank my fellow Mayors for their generosity and kindness towards me, my Council and the Cabonne community during the flooding disasters in late 2022.*

*Only other Mayors can truly understand the challenges I faced during these natural disasters. I knew I had rock-solid support and could ask anything of my fellow Mayors through these terrible times. I cannot tell you how much this meant to me.*

*The change of government has brought its challenges through this period, especially with funding. All Councils affected by these disasters have had similar issues and having each other's backs through advocacy in this regard has been helpful. This region continues to work cooperatively with a proud history of successful collaboration.*

*CNSWJO was the first to be constituted in the State in May 2018 and this is its fifth Annual Statement. Under the NSW Local Government Act CNSWJO has three primary functions, which are to:*

- establish strategic regional priorities and develop strategies and plans for delivering these priorities;*
- provide regional leadership and be an advocate for strategic regional priorities; and*
- identify and take up opportunities for intergovernmental cooperation on matters that relate to our Region.*

## Reports

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

*The Local Government Act also allows for other activity and in the case of this region, supporting the financial sustainability of Councils through delivering cost savings and other efficiencies is a significant priority.*

*In November the region adopted its new Statement of Strategic Regional Priority. With oversight of a subcommittee of Mayors and feedback from members including an event 25 August 2022, the region now progresses seven priorities. These are:*

- Leveraging our successful collaboration;*
- Regional prosperity through better infrastructure and services;*
- Advocate for better infrastructure and services in health and ageing*
- Telecommunications;*
- Regional Transport Planning and Infrastructure Prioritisation;*
- Regional Water Security and Productive Water; and*
- Transition to a sustainable, secure, and affordable energy future.*

*I am pleased to report that the value of the Joint Organisation to its members has gone from strength to strength. Return on investment for member fees for the year was 9.4:1.*

*With the change in government at both the state and federal levels we have seen cooling of support for major infrastructure projects for the region including Inland Rail, the Great Western Highway tunnel and Wyangala Dam. The incoming NSW Government has brought with it a pause on many activities in this region including transport planning. The Board's response has been to step up advocacy and I thank the mayors who meet with me monthly to progress this good work.*

*I would also like to comment on the collaboration and communication between the Joint Organisations. CNSWJO coordinates the Joint Organisation Officers' network and as a result of the work being done in Net Zero and Disaster Risk Reduction the cross-JO collaboration is also strengthening. While it is disappointing the Office of Local Government has not progressed implementing the recommendations of the Joint Organisation Review it commissioned, the JOs themselves are building the sustainable networks for their ongoing program delivery.*

*Highlights for me this year was the development of the Policy Labs Initiative with Charles Sturt University and working on the MoU with the Rural Doctors' Network.*

*Finally, thanks to the CNSWJO team for all their efforts for the year. For such a small team you deliver fantastic results.*

### **Executive Officer's report**

*Value to our members is at the heart of the program delivered by the Central NSW JO team.*

*We have delivered over to \$4.2m in net cost savings across 18 regional contracts from a spend of \$25.3m.*

*New contracts for the year included: Asset Management Maturity Audits, Strategic planning for Water, Disaster Risk Reduction Consulting services, Community Engagement Surveying, Electricity, Energy Business Case Consulting services, Road Signs, Employee Assistance Program, Learning Management System, Restocking of First Aid Kits, Asset Revaluations and Water and Sewer Consulting Services.*

## Reports

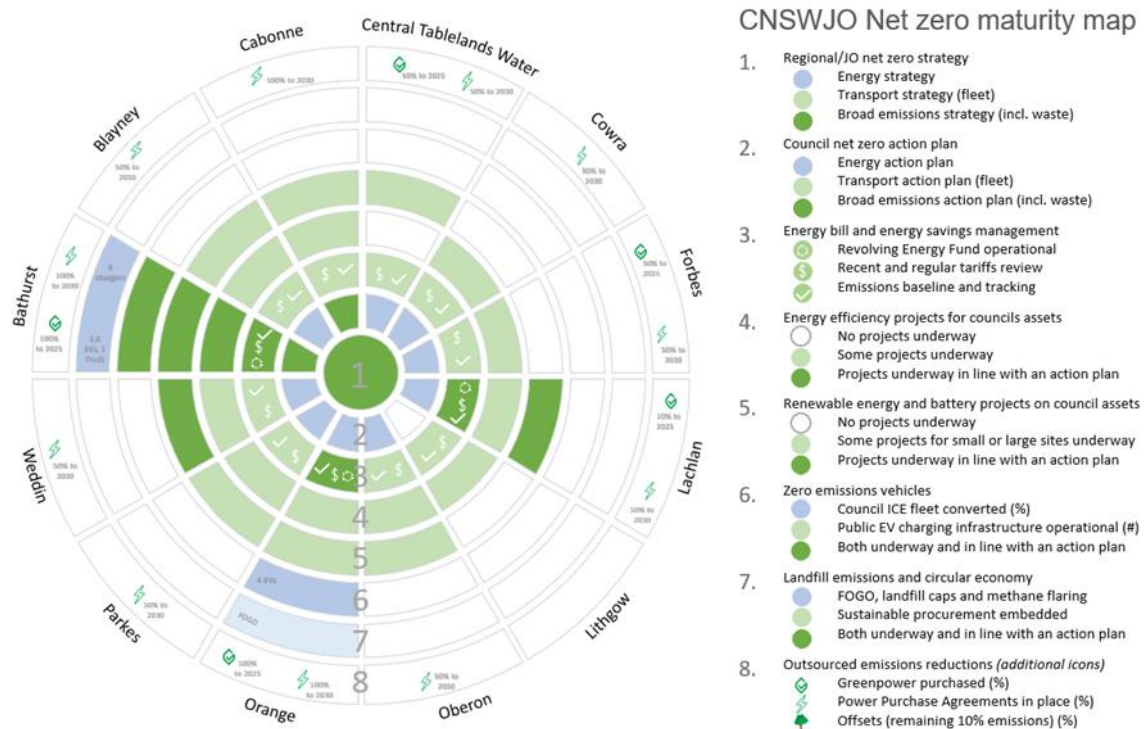
Grant funded projects have been awarded and continued this year. These include:

- The Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration Program;
- Natural Disaster Risk Reduction;
- Bridge Assessments;
- Come Out We're Open flood recovery program
- A Business Case for Priority Investment in the Nexus between Net Zero and Energy Security;
- A Regional Centre of Excellence in Water Loss Management;
- Transitioning Integrated Water Cycle Management Plans to Integrated Planning and Reporting; and
- A Spare Capacity in Housing Project.

I would like to call out two of these projects as being stand out collaborations with NSW Government and examples of the value this model offers to both councils and the state.

Firstly, the Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration Program. Piloted in Central NSW this program is now rolled out across nine joint organisations. Information is shared across the network and has resulted in cross JO/NSW Government collaborations on federal funding applications.

Using a maturity model reporting approach adapted from Central NSW State reporting now looks like this:



Secondly, a truly codesigned approach with the Department of Planning and Environment is implementation of a Regional Centre of Excellence in Water Loss Management, again using a maturity model. This project is bringing together a regional accountability framework to building capacity in water loss management and ultimately being able to accurately report on water saved.

This is so very important as member demonstrate their commitment to saving water during drought.

## Reports

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Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

*I would like to thank all the peak agency staff this region has worked with over the year. Welcoming a new Destination Network was a highlight as well as the various projects being progressed through our own Regional NSW boundary. After decades of advocacy to protect this region from being “swept into the rest of the west,” this recognition has been very welcomed and enables work like the collaboration on Community Strategic Planning to progress.*

*The MoU with RDA continues to deliver. Their support of the economic development managers of the region, including with data and grant support, is an ongoing boon.*

*I would like to call out the collaboration between Business NSW, Orange 360 and the JO on the “Come Out We’re Open” campaign in response to the floods. A fast moving project fully funded by the NSW Government, this project was funded, in market and acquitted within 6 months.*

*The ongoing collaboration with Charles Sturt University has seen Councillors from across the region coming together to plan and prioritise for the region. The workshop in region 25 August generously hosted at Charles Sturt University’s Bloomfield campus has led to the Policy Labs initiative which will see ongoing events in region developing and implementing policy about the issues and opportunities that matter to our member councils and their communities.*

**Tabling of Pecuniary Interest Returns (s450a Local Government Act 1993)**

The Joint Organisation is required to lodge completed pecuniary interest returns for voting representatives and designated persons under section 449 of the Local Government Act 1993 and Regulation. The JO is not required to send the returns to the OLG, but they do need to be kept on file. The Executive Officer is required to table all returns at a Board meeting according to Part 4 of the Code. No forms are placed on the JO website.

These form an attachment to this report.

**Attachment/s:**

1. 2023 Annual Performance Statement
2. CNSWJO Pecuniary Interest Returns who held office at June 2023



## JO Calendar of Compliance & Reporting Requirements 2023-204

	July 2023	Aug 2023	Sept 2023	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024 – May 2024	June 2024
<b>Finance</b>	Financial statements to be audited within 4 months [LGA s416(1)]			17 Request for extension to lodge financial statements due in writing to OLG [LGA s416(2), Code]		5 Last day for financial statements to be presented to the public [LGA 418(2)]			
	7 Proposed borrowing return to be submitted to TCorp			31 Financial Statements to be audited [LGAs416(1), Code] and lodged to OLG [LGA s417(5)] with Financial Data Return					
<b>Governance</b>	30 Public Interest Disclosures Report due to NSW Ombudsman (PIDA s6CA)		30 Written returns of interest due for voting representatives and designated persons who held office at 30 June [MCC cl4.21(b)] to be lodged	30 Annual Report of obligations under GIPA due to the Minister and the Information Commissioner [GIPA s125]	30 Annual Performance Statement is to be prepared [Checklist is available on the OLG website]	30 Model Code of Conduct Complaints Statistics to be reported to Board [MCC 11.1]. Collection form due to OLG [MCC 11.2]	30 Public Interest Disclosure Report due to the NSW Ombudsman [PIDA s6CA]		30 Last day to adopt Statement of Revenue Policy and Budget 2023-24 [LG Reg cl 397]
		EO to table returns at next JO Board meeting [MCC cl 4.25]		30 Annual Report of obligations under PIDA due to the Minister and Ombudsman [PIDA s31]		30 Annual Performance Statement is to be placed on the JO website			

## Reports

**d. Policy and Procedure Annual Review**

<b>Regional Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>1.1 Governance arrangements enable inter-council co-operation</b>
<b>Portfolio Mayor</b>	<b>Cr Kevin Beatty</b>
<b>Sponsoring General Manager/s</b>	<b>Mr B Byrnes, Mr G Tory, Ms N Vu, and Mr C Butler</b>

**Report by Jennifer Bennett, 13 November 2023**

<b>Recommendation/s</b>
<p><b>That the Board note the CNSWJO Policy Procedure Annual Review report and adopt the updated Policy and Procedure Manual noting it includes;</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. a new policy on the JO making applications through competitive grants processes;</b></li> <li><b>2. policy aligning with Modern Slavery Legislation;</b></li> <li><b>3. inclusion in the Charter an annual fee for the Chair of \$10K;</b></li> <li><b>4. changes to the credit card use to allow for increased programming; and</b></li> <li><b>5. updates associated with policy in procurement adopted in May of this year.</b></li> </ol>

**Precis**

Each year CNSWJO reviews its Policy Manual (the Manual).

Where the majority of changes to the Manual have been reported over the year the substantial change for this report is the introduction of a Competitive Funding Policy. This policy directs that the JO does not apply for grants that Councils can access except under specific circumstances. Over time it is anticipated that JOs will be better recognised in the funding framework, however in the meantime it is important that JOs do not compete with members.

**Reason for the Report**

This report seeks resolve to support the JOs compliance and administrative roles. Each year the complete suite of CNSWJO policies is put to the Board for review.

The CNSWJO Policy and Procedure Manual has had minimal changes this year. This being:

1. a new policy on the JO making applications through competitive grants processes;
2. policy aligning with Modern Slavery Legislation;
3. inclusion of an annual fee for the Chair of \$10K;
4. changes to the credit card use to allow for increased programming; and
5. updates associated with policy in procurement adopted in May of this year.

**Legislative, Policy and Risk Considerations**

In May 2018 a suite of previous Centroc policies and new Local Government Act compliance policies were adopted by the CNSWJO. An annual policy review of the full suite has subsequently been undertaken.

# Reports

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

The policies included have either already been approved by members or are modelled on members' existing policies and have been deemed necessary in the transition to the JO.

Updates to existing policies for this year are:

1. a new policy on the JO making applications through competitive grants processes;
2. policy aligning with Modern Slavery Legislation;
3. inclusion of an annual fee for the Chair of \$10K;
4. changes to the credit card use to allow for increased programming; and
5. updates associated with policy in procurement adopted in May of this year.

Where the majority of the above has either been adopted previously by the Board this year or in the case of Modern Slavery, seeks to align with legislation, the new policy for this year relates to the competitive funding framework. Please see the Finance Report for an update on credit card limits.

### **Competitive funding framework policy**

The Board resolved to develop policy that allows for the JO to apply for competitive funding where there is an established regional priority, this to be in the context of the objectives of the JO.

Central NSW JO is a regularised local government entity under the NSW Local Government Act 1993. It has eleven member Councils and two associate member County Councils.

It is noteworthy that every region and JO is navigating the opportunities afforded in the funding framework in different ways based on their capacity and priority.

For the opportunities afforded by the JO serious change needs to happen regarding funding that realises the nexus between the value to the State. The State's response to date has been to include JOs as eligible for competitive funding. Criteria are often a poor fit with the value that the JO can provide to both the State and to member Councils.

However, there is some change emerging, for example the Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration Fund.

There are many roles that JOs can fulfil in support of the State's objectives including in the funding framework where prioritisation is a mandated function of these entities. Where practitioners in region have lots of ideas, a fit for purpose process codesigned by the State and JO representatives will ensure the best possible shared value proposition. In the meantime, policy is required for CNSWJO to navigate the competitive framework.

CNSWJO will continue to advocate for a codesigned purpose-built funding framework that recognises the value to the State of the JO while delivering value to member Councils and through them to the communities of Central NSW.

In the meantime CNSWJO will seek not to compete directly with members except in specific circumstances outlined in the procedure.

### **Procedure**

Generally, CNSWJO will not compete for funding with members. Exception to this approach is where:

1. a project has pre-approval from the Board for competitive funding;

## **Reports**

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Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

2. members request a grant application be made by the JO as a more efficient use of resource, for example the bridge assessment program;
3. the process enables the sustainability of the broader JO network and support of a more systemic approach to service delivery in regional NSW through cross JO collaboration; and
4. an opportunity arises that has a clear fit with existing priority and the Chair approves the approach between meetings if time frames do not allow for Board approval and consideration of the extent to which members are applying is given.

Where an application is made between Board meetings it must be approved by the Chair and then put to the Board for endorsement.

**Attachment/s:**

3. CNSWJO Policy and Procedure Manual 2023

**e. Governance and Advocacy Report**

<b>Regional Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>1.Leveraging the region's successful collaboration</b> <b>1.1 Driving efficiencies and effectiveness saving Councils money Activity</b> <b>1.2 Building capacity across our Councils</b> <b>1.3 Working well with other peak organisations</b>
<b>Portfolio Mayor</b>	<b>Cr Kevin Beatty</b>
<b>Sponsoring General Manager/s</b>	<b>Mr B Byrnes, Mr G Tory, Ms N Vu, and Mr C Butler</b>

Report by Jenny Bennett dated 10 November 2023

<b>Recommendation/s</b>
<p>That the Board note the Governance and Advocacy Report and;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. nominate Portfolio Mayors to the various portfolios of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leveraging our successful collaboration</li> <li>• Regional Prosperity through better infrastructure and services</li> <li>• Advocate for better infrastructure and services in health and ageing</li> <li>• Telecommunications</li> <li>• Regional Transport Planning and Infrastructure Prioritisation</li> <li>• Regional Water Security and Productive Water</li> <li>• Transition to a sustainable, secure and affordable energy future; and</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. note that a report will be received from the Rural Doctors' Network workshop in Forbes 31 October and encourage members to take up the "State of Play" opportunity in the interim;</li> <li>3. endorse the activities of the Opt in Advocacy Subcommittee of Mayors, that being; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. developing a media campaign on Council sustainability;</li> <li>b. progressing advocacy for a Safe Swift and Secure Link between Sydney and Central NSW; and</li> <li>c. providing oversight of advocacy for on the renewable energy transition and council financial sustainability;</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. provide a letter of support for Cr J Jennings for his fact finding visit to the United States;</li> <li>5. develop policy on the need for national strategy for the Safe Swift and Secure Link between Sydney and Central NSW;</li> <li>6. adopt the response to the Inquiry into the performance of the Regional Investment Activation Fund and the Regional Job Creation Fund; and</li> <li>7. endorse the following submissions that have been lodged to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. AEMC on Enhancing Community Engagement in Transmission Building;</li> <li>b. the Inquiry into the implementation of recommendations relating to workforce issues, workplace culture and funding considerations for remote, rural and regional health; and</li> <li>c. IPART Water NSW Operating Licence Review;</li> <li>d. Water Infrastructure NSW 91 Proposed New Indicators for LWUs; and</li> <li>e. The Planning system and the Impacts of Climate Change on the Environment and Communities.</li> <li>f. the Inquiry into Protecting Local Water Utilities from privatisation;</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

## Reports

**Precis**

With four newly elected Mayors coming onto the CNSWJO Board advice is provided on the role of Portfolio Mayors and other advocacy opportunities should they wish to avail themselves of this work.

The balance of the Board may wish to review their roles.

The Statement of Strategic Regional Priority (SSRP), Portfolio Mayors lead the following priorities:

- Leveraging our successful collaboration;
- Regional Prosperity through better infrastructure and services;
- Advocate for better infrastructure and services in health and ageing;
- Telecommunications;
- Regional Transport Planning and Infrastructure Prioritisation;
- Regional Water Security and Productive Water; and
- Transition to a sustainable, secure and affordable energy future.

Progress on advocacy is also provided where it is noted that significant effort is being undertaken on building and supporting the collaborative fabric of this region. Submissions are provided for adoption.

**Reason for this report**

In the first instance his report asks for Mayors to determine Portfolio Mayors. Endorsement of various submissions is sought.

**Legislative, Policy and Risk Considerations**

CNSWJO legislative role includes both prioritisation and advocacy. According to its Charter, the CNSWJO Board may set up Subcommittees and other governance arrangements at its discretion. These are reviewed subsequent to the adoption of the Statement of Strategic Regional Priority to ensure that priorities are being adequately resourced – structure follows strategy.

Effective governance and communication are identified as strategies to manage a variety of risks identified in the CNSWJO Risk Management Plan adopted by the Board.

**Portfolio Mayors**

In its Advocacy Policy the following advice is provided on Portfolio Mayors.

*Mayors who are elected to represent portfolios will:*

- *Make themselves aware of the Advocacy Plan for their portfolio and provide feedback;*
- *Be invited to relevant meetings and be supported with briefing advice to these meetings;*
- *Be expected to represent the organisation from time to time at the request of the Chair; and*
- *Use opportunities in other forums to proffer the advocacy agenda under their portfolio.*

**Reports**

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

The Statement of Strategic Regional Priority adopted in November 2022 identified 7 priorities of which three are new. Advocacy plans for each of these are either well underway or were adopted at the February Board meeting. Portfolio Mayors will be asked to review these before the February 2024 meeting. These plans pull together the key messages for advocacy for the region in the following areas:

- Leveraging the region's successful collaboration
  - Portfolio Mayor - Cr Kevin Beatty
  - Sponsoring General Managers- Greg Tory, Noreen Vu, Brad Byrnes, Craig Butler
- Regional prosperity through better infrastructure and services
  - Portfolio Mayor- Currently vacant, was Cr B West of Cowra
  - Sponsoring General Managers- Noreen Vu, Steve Loane, Paul Devery, Craig Butler, Mark Dicker
- Advocate for better infrastructure and services in health and ageing
  - Portfolio Mayors- Cr Phyllis Miller as Chair and Cr Maree Statham
  - Sponsoring General Managers:- Gary Wallace, Brad Byrnes and Craig Butler
- Telecommunications
  - Portfolio Mayor- Cr Phyllis Miller
  - Sponsoring General Managers- Gary Wallace, Brad Byrnes and Craig Butler
- Regional transport and infrastructure planning and prioritisation
  - Portfolio Mayor- Currently vacant, was Cr K Keith of Parkes
  - Sponsoring General Managers- Kent Boyd, Steve Loane, Gary Wallace and Paul Devery.
- Water Security and Productive Water
  - Portfolio Mayors- Cr David Somerville and Cr Jason Hamling
  - Sponsoring General Managers- Gavin Rhodes, Kent Boyd and Dave Waddell
- Transition to a sustainable, secure and affordable energy future
  - Portfolio Mayor- Cr Mark Kellam
  - Sponsoring General Managers- Dave Waddell, Brad Byrnes, Greg Tory and Paul Devery

Please find following advice on the activities anticipated for the term of the SSRP.

Priority One: Leveraging our successful collaboration	
1.1 Driving efficiencies and effectiveness saving Councils money	
#	Activity
a)	Determine the regional procurement activities of the JO
b)	Implement the outcomes from the Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement Program
1.2 Building capacity across our Councils	
a)	<p>The region supports the operational teams and short-term projects by collaborations of Council staff that provide an opportunity for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information sharing</li> <li>• networking</li> <li>• capacity building</li> <li>• procurement</li> <li>• formal and informal training</li> <li>• good governance</li> <li>• cost savings and other value to Councils</li> </ul> <p>All teams and projects work to Terms of Reference adopted by the Board.</p>

## Reports

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

	There are typically 10-15 collaborations of member Councils supported by CNSWJO resource.
1.3	Working well with other peak organisations
a)	Engage with LGNSW Country Mayors and ALGA on priorities for local government
b)	Progress actions in the MoU with RDA;
c)	Foster collaboration with a focus on the region's opportunities and endowments between CSU, Arts Out West, RDA Central West, Essential Energy, Business NSW and the RLE
<b>Priority Two: Regional Prosperity through better infrastructure and services</b>	
2.1	Initiatives to grow the visitor economy in the context of locational preference factors
a)	Review CNSW Tourism service provided by JO with consideration of future services in light of the offerings from Destination Network Central West while continuing with destination marketing.
a)	Review and progress the implementation of the Central West and Orana Regional Plan
b)	Continue advocacy regarding Treasury Common Planning Assumptions including the population projections for this region.
c)	Identification and reporting on regional planning matters.
d)	Community Strategic Planning Project with the Regional Leadership Executive and advocacy for better engagement between Councils and State agencies on CSP.
2.3	Advocacy and initiatives on skills and housing shortages
a)	Develop and implement advocacy plan in support of skills shortages
b)	Supporting Councils with skills shortages with a focus on the Health and Building staff
c)	Provides regional representation to the Local Jobs Taskforce and the Parkes Special Activation Precinct Skills Subcommittee of the Regional Leadership Executive.
d)	Undertake through funding from NSW Housing Taskforce a spare capacity in housing project in the region.
2.4	Leveraging the region's endowments and opportunities
a)	<b>Critical minerals and mining</b> This priority will be negotiated with the Department of Regional NSW and the Regional Leadership Executive in the context of the Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS) to seek cross agency support for programming in region. Policy will be developed and reviewed to inform advocacy plans.
b)	<b>Circular economy and net zero.</b> Resource collaboration with peak agencies in this regard in line with Board direction from the CNSWJO Emissions Reduction Plan. Leverage the Parkes SAP and potential other projects in region. Support collaborations with DPE on Net Zero.
c)	Support the development of existing and potential activation precincts including Parkes SAP
d)	<b>Inland Rail.</b> Progress advice from Inland Rail Productivity enhance Program with a view to entering the next Gateway
e)	<b>Pattern of settlement; liveability, proximity to capital cities and ports</b> Seek to work through the RLE where childcare has been identified as of particular concern
f)	<b>Agriculture</b> Produce a productive water strategy for Board consideration including considering the "Dutch Model"
<b>Priority Three: Advocate for better infrastructure and services in health and ageing</b>	
#	Activity
a)	Provide advocacy support and programming at the direction of the Board where advocacy for better infrastructure and services in health and ageing will be reworked to align with the 44 recommendations as listed in the Health Outcomes and Access to Services report.
b)	Seek to work with Charles Sturt University on a policy paper on enabling growing our own health workforce
c)	As part of its commitment to growing our own health workforce, CNSWJO provides \$15Kpa for three medical students a year.
<b>Priority Four: Telecommunications</b>	
a)	Advocacy and opportunities For improved outcomes for Telecommunications: delivered in collaboration with RDACW
<b>Priority Five: Regional Transport Planning and Infrastructure Prioritisation</b>	
5.1	Transport connectivity planning
a)	Review and implement transport advocacy plan
b)	Monitor and actively engage in the TfNSW Central West and Orana Regional Transport Plan and other strategic opportunities
c)	Provide regional transport planning analysis with a focus on freight
d)	Identify opportunities for regional program funding and report on emergent transport issues
e)	Implement the Reviewed Roads and Transport Technical Committee Plan

## Reports



## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

5.2 Infrastructure prioritisation including using the CNSWJO Matrix on including using the CNSWJO Matrix	
a )	Using a multi criteria analysis prioritisation matrix Informed by the State and Federal funding framework. Outputs from the Matrix are used to support member grant applications. Members keep the inputs current typically through workshops of the transport and water teams. CNSWJO staff develop outputs and letters of support on an as needs basis.
5.3 Natural disaster road funding	
a )	A report will be provided to the February 2023 Board meeting outlining the program.
Priority Six: Regional Water Security and Productive Water	
6.1 Regional Water network planning and best practice skills development	
a )	Advocacy plan
b )	Regional Water Strategies in the Lachlan and Macquarie -implementation
c )	Resource the Regional Water Loss Management Centre of Excellence for Central NSW codesigned with the NSW Government
d )	Resource Stage 2 implementation of the new Regulatory and Assurance Framework for LWUs including a potential pilot of regional work on the integration of strategic water planning with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. This to align with the Regional Asset Management Working Party is also being resourced to support members in the management of assets.
e )	Balance of program identified in the CWUA Strategy supporting leading practice, measured and benchmarked in the delivery of quality secure water and sewer services
6.2 Productive Water	
a )	Advocacy plan to support the value of town water and alternative approaches to water use, for example the Dutch Model
b )	Resource the development of a productive water strategy leveraging the huge amount of strategic reform underway in water management at both the State and Federal level.
Priority Seven: Transition to a sustainable, secure and affordable energy future	
7.1 Energy Efficiency and Emissions Reduction	
#	Activity
a )	Review advocacy plan for an orderly transition to a secure renewable energy future with an emphasis on Social License issues
b )	Collaborate with State agencies in delivering programming in reducing member Council emissions. Resource collaboration with peak agencies in this regard in line with Board direction from the CNSWJO Emissions Reduction Plan.
c )	Support Council collaboration under the 5 pillars of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streetlighting</li> <li>• Electric Vehicles</li> <li>• Renewable energy production and storage, including Distributed Energy Resources (DER)</li> <li>• Energy efficiency and demand management</li> <li>• The nexus between water and energy</li> </ul>
d )	Leverage the contractual relationship with electricity retailers to enable emissions reduction
7.2 Circular Economy	
#	Activity
a )	Support regional collaboration on circular economy as directed by the Board from the CNSWJO Emissions Reduction Plan
7.3 Environment	
#	Activity
a )	Review policy approach to the anticipated rapid transition to a renewable energy future on the Social Licensing issues and raise awareness for renewable energy infrastructure
b )	Develop policy with regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity</li> <li>• Urban environments during climate change including tree canopy</li> <li>• Waste and landfill emissions.</li> </ul>
c )	Provide advocacy support to members in regard to weed management issues
7.4 Understanding our energy (fuel and electricity) security, capacity and scalability	
#	Activity
a )	Undertake strategy and scoping for Board review

## Reports

### **Advocacy Update**

The Opt in Advocacy Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) meets monthly and notes from the meetings are attached.

A summary of these meetings including actions they are progressing follows where endorsement of this work is sought.

Please find briefing notes to the Premier and other State Representatives attending the meeting with the attachments to this agenda.

### **Safe Swift and Secure Link**

A presentation on Fast Rail from TfNSW was received to the October meeting of the Subcommittee. It was clear from the presentation that the NSW Government will be seeking to align its work with the federal effort. They advised that they will wait for work to progress at the federal level to inform activity by TfNSW.

More advice on tunnels has been requested and this is being progressed. Cr Jess Jennings has advised he is visiting the USA in January with a view to under and experiencing tunnelling, self driving public transport and other innovations.

An online meeting was held with Susan Templeman Member for Macquarie 27 October and her Senior Advisor Mark Andrews. Ms Templeman is keen to see progress and suggests a key message should be “doing nothing is not an option.” She supports tunnelling and has suggested further meetings with various federal representatives which will be progressed. She was instrumental in the \$100m federal funding towards upgrades to the Bells Line.

Mark Andrews pointed out last time there was a successfully delivered funding for a substantial part of the road was the Bob Debus work done after a roads of national significance strategy. There has not been any serious strategic work undertaken since. The Board is asked to consider policy in this regard where there is a significant risk in asking for more strategies. However, if it is the only way forward it may have to be considered.

A meeting with Hawkesbury Council is being pursued – it has proved difficult to find a time suitable to both the Chair and the Mayor of Hawkesbury.

### **A Just Transition to a renewable energy future**

The Subcommittee has been progressing action 7.3a in the CNSWJO Statement of Strategic Region Priority, that being *Review policy approach to the anticipated rapid transition to a renewable energy future on the Social Licensing issues and raise awareness for renewable energy infrastructure*. The Subcommittee has developed up the thinking in the report to this meeting which has also been reviewed by GMAC.

### **Council financial sustainability**

The Subcommittee has reviewed a draft of a report on council financial sustainability in Central NSW. They have requested further work be undertaken and a review by GMAC. It will be presented to the Board in February.

### **Health and Aging**

The focus of the work by the Portfolio Mayors in Health and Aging has been to progress the MoU with the Rural Doctors Network and optimise health data on an LGA by LGA basis.

## **Reports**

A workshop was held 31 October in Forbes progressing lga specific data sets on the “State of Play” for health services. Attendance from across the region was strong and advice was provided on shaping the “States of Play” per LGA where the barriers, demography and opportunities for each LGA are quite different.

Please find attached a mural summary of the advice from the workshop where there was unanimous support for individual Councils to take up the opportunity of the State of Play per LGA.

Follow-up has been undertaken with General Managers and Council State of Play work should begin shortly.

The next meeting of the Portfolio Mayors is being scheduled and anticipates a presentation from Western Area Health District on data as well as monitoring the MoU with RDN and project progress.

### **Productive Water**

The Productive Water Portfolio Mayors meet on a 6 weekly basis. At their recent meeting they resolved to ramp up a campaign for better water security in the context of the upcoming drought, see the water report elsewhere in this agenda. The notes are attached.

### **The Integrated Transport Group**

Mayors are welcome to attend the Integrated Transport Group Meetings. This strategic group meets bi-monthly and is chaired by a Transport Portfolio Mayor. Administered by TfNSW it provides a window into state and federal programming and policy as well as a feedback mechanism from this region. **Can Mayors please advise if they interested in being added to the attendance list of these meetings.** Terms of Reference can be requested.

### **Submissions**

The following submissions have been lodged since the last Board meeting. All have been at the request of members and/or as part of supporting the advocacy policy of the Board. All Submissions can be viewed on the website [Submissions - Central Joint Organisation \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/submissions)

Submissions are as follows:

- [Submission to AEMC on Enhancing Community Engagement in Transmission Building](#)
- [Inquiry into the implementation of recommendations relating to workforce issues, workplace culture and funding considerations for remote, rural and regional health](#)
- [IPART Water NSW Operating Licence Review](#)
- [Submission inquiry into the performance of the Regional Investment Activation Fund and the Regional Job Creation Fund; and](#)
- [Planning system and the impacts of climate change on the environment and communities.](#)
- An inquiry into protecting local water utilities from privatization (provided as a confidential attachment at the direction of the Committee); and
- [Water Infrastructure NSW 91 proposed new indicators for LWUs in a streamlined process;](#)

Where possible these submissions reflect the broader challenges of the region, for example council financial sustainability and the regulatory framework. The disappointment of the region with the decisions on Wyangala has also featured in feedback. CNSWJO always offers to be part of the solution and submissions try to be positive where possible, however as the region moves towards drought there are mounting concerns that the “system” is failing our communities. Councils across the region and indeed further afield have spent the interim since the last drought trying to navigate urban water security through torturous regulatory processes – with little or no success.

## **Reports**

**Financial Implications**

Nil at this time.

**Attachment/s:**

4. 27 October 2023 Notes from Opt in Advocacy Subcommittee meeting
5. November 2023 Notes from the meeting of Productive Water Mayors
6. 31 October 2023 mural summary from RDN workshop in Forbes
7. An inquiry into protecting local water utilities from privatization (provided as a confidential attachment at the direction of the Committee)

**Reports**

## f. Report from Policy Labs for dissemination to attendees

Regional Strategic Priorities	<b>1.Leveraging the region's successful collaboration</b> <b>1.1 Driving efficiencies and effectiveness saving Councils money</b> <b>Activity</b> <b>1.2 Building capacity across our Councils</b> <b>1.3 Working well with other peak organisations</b>
Portfolio Mayor	Cr Kevin Beatty
Sponsoring General Manager/s	Mr B Byrnes, Mr G Tory, Ms N Vu, and Mr C Butler

## Report from Policy Lab#1 with Charles Sturt University by Jenny Bennett dated 15 November

Recommendation/s
<p>That the Board note the Report from Policy Lab#1 with Charles Sturt University adopt policy, update advocacy plans and receive advice on programming for;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reframing the rhetoric – speak about local government in terms of capability, opportunity etc;</li> <li>encouraging a 'big conversation' about expanding regional collaboration – consider a more authoritative regional board (representing member councils) that's better placed to advise/negotiate with state and federal agencies;</li> <li>using a regional strategy to build trust in/respect for local government and improve its status in the overall system of government while not glossing over the difficult issues for example financial sustainability;</li> <li>removing red tape barriers to more regional action while avoiding raising amalgamations;</li> <li>leveraging available resources and talent more effectively;</li> <li>reviewing financial sustainability, addressing 'spatial fiscal imbalance' particularly between Western Sydney and Central NSW where this is to include a review Federal Assistance Grants system and distribution of other grants to improve equity; avoid competitive grants;</li> <li>expanding self-regulation (eg in planning, environment, water) – Audit Risk and Improvement Committees could be useful but must have effective local representation;</li> <li>supporting the primary democratic role of councillors;</li> <li>providing more background information on election candidates;</li> <li>exploring opportunities for improving candidacy;</li> <li>optimising the Integrated Planning &amp; Reporting framework including as a basis for enhanced community engagement and making the cycle a better fit for newly elected councils;</li> <li>rejecting <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mandatory popular election of mayors or wards;</li> <li>amalgamations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>changes that might increase oversight and</li> <li>changing the councillor-executive relationship at least in the short term pending needed changes; and regarding social media;</li> </ol> </li> </ol> </li> <li>the Board provide the advice on social media to Council as a proforma report; and</li> <li>that this advice include; <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>canvassing the idea of a shared resource in social media support; and</li> <li>consideration of Councils' other regulatory obligations relevant to social media under the Local Government Act, Work Health and Safety Act and other material legislation and</li> </ol> </li> <li>the Mayoral Board report to Councils include advice from this report.</li> </ol>

## Reports

**Precis**

At the request of Councillors of the region, more opportunities are being created for collaborative work on policy to inform advocacy and programming at the regional level.

Policy Labs has been developed in collaboration with Charles Stuart University to explore the issues important to our communities with a view to action this region can work on to shift the dial.

The first Policy Lab for Central NSW Councils was held September 28 2023 at the CSU Campus in Orange. Please request previous reports.

Policy being explored was Australian Local Democracy and Social Media. Please find slide decks and reports attached.

Attendees defined problems and worked on solutions in both areas. Recommendations for changes to JO Policy were developed from the workshops in both the areas of local democracy and social media. These have been circulated to attendees for feedback. At the time of writing no material feedback has been received.

This report summarises the event and provides direction for the CNSWJO Board to consider.

Once the Board has considered the advice in this report a report will be provided back to member Councils as part of the Mayoral Report from the Board meeting.

**Reason for this report**

This report seeks resolve to update advocacy policy and consider potential further activity to progress the thinking of Councillors from the region at the first Policy Labs.

**Legislative, Policy and Risk Considerations****Risks**

The CNSWJO Risk Management Plan 2022 identifies the following risks that are material to this report:

- 19** - Long term viability and financial sustainability;
- 14** – Miss opportunity to see how collaborations could work effectively
- 22**- Members do not see the value of the JO

**Australian Local Democracy with Professors Mark Evans, Graham Sansom and Gerry Stoker**

From a presentation by Professor Sansom some of the findings about the status of our local democracy added up to NSW being the least locally democratic State in the nation, for example:

- The NSW Constitution does not guarantee *democratic* local government;
- There is unconstrained state oversight/intervention – rate pegging, planning etc; and
- There is no statutory, place-based, democratic mechanisms below whole of LGA.

**Reports**

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

Professor Gerry Stokes provided advice on how localism is tracking in the United Kingdom. Based on concepts like the principle of subsidiarity, control has been devolving top down in the UK however funding has not – leading to significant financial challenges for NSW Council equivalent in the UK.

[Councils in England in crisis as Birmingham ‘declares itself bankrupt’ | Local government | The Guardian](#)

Some ideas for change were canvassed by Professor Graham Sansom including;

- A *national* conversation about *state* constitutions: adopt the best
- Transform OLG into a multi-purpose, independent Local Government Commission: largely advisory but limit Minister’s power to override advice
- Expand ‘self-regulation’ using Local Government NSW plus Audit Risk and Improvement Committees
- Candidates to declare their backgrounds, interests, and policy positions
- Regular independent ‘representation reviews’ covering all aspects of electoral system, whether councils adequately reflect their communities, possible changes required
- Re-establish the primary *democratic* role of councillors: ‘community connectors, brokers and leaders’ (engagement becomes councillor-led)
- Remove the cap on numbers of councillors: (Electoral) Commission to determine required number based on adequate and diverse representation

A panel session was held where each panelists was asked what their one idea was to grow local democracy in NSW.

The Panel session was followed by a workshop which pulled together the following advice. Firstly, attendees were keen to reinforce that any shift in policy needs to consider the extreme financial constraints Councils are finding themselves in this region – through no fault of their own. Then the workshop fielded the following ideas:

- Reframe the rhetoric – speak about local government in terms of capability, opportunity etc;
- Encourage a ‘big conversation’ about expanding regional collaboration – consider a more authoritative regional board (representing member councils) that’s better placed to advise/negotiate with state and federal agencies;
- Use a regional strategy to build trust in/respect for local government and improve its status in the overall system of government – don’t gloss over difficult issues eg integrity; JOs as ‘think-tanks’?

**Subsidiarity** is a principle of social organisation that originated in the Roman Catholic church, and was developed following the [First Vatican Council](#). *In its most basic formulation, it holds that social problems should be dealt with at the most immediate (or local) level consistent with their solution.* The [Oxford English Dictionary](#) defines subsidiarity as the idea that a central authority should have a subsidiary (that is, a supporting, rather than a subordinate) function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level.... It has been associated by some with the idea of [decentralisation](#).

## Reports



Policy Lab Panel Members L-R Cr Kevin Beatty Chair of CNSWJO Mayor of Cabonne Council, The Hon Stephen Lawrence, MLC and previous Mayor of Dubbo City Council, Ms Noreen Vu, General Manager of Weddin Shire Council, Cr Gerald Power, Deputy Mayor Orange City Council, Cr Bill West, long serving Councillor and previous Mayor of Cowra Council.  
Image from Brenton Cox Photography

- Remove red tape barriers to more regional ACTION; tap available resources/talent more effectively; but avoid raising the ghost of mergers in the process;
- Review financial sustainability – address ‘spatial fiscal imbalance’; review Federal Assistance Grants system and distribution of other grants to improve equity; avoid competitive grants;
- Expand self-regulation (eg in planning, environment, water) – Audit Risk and Improvement Committees could be useful but must have effective local representation;
- Re-establish the primary democratic role of councillors – remove cap on numbers, increase fees;
- More background information (including party?) on election candidates – aim for better quality;
- Rejig IP&R framework – (a) as a basis for enhanced community engagement; (b) to make the cycle a better fit for newly elected councils;

The workshop was also keen to rule out the following as “no go” areas:

- Mandatory popular election of mayors; wards;
- Amalgamations;
- Changes that might increase oversight and regulation (eg revamping the Office of Local Government); and
- Changing the councillor-executive relationship – at least in the short term pending needed changes to councillor numbers, roles, payment etc plus supportive changes at the regional level.

While comparing to the rest of Australia and then the UK – did we go far enough in exploring local democracy? Take for example the Swiss.

## Reports



There are 26 Cantons in Switzerland, the equivalent of states in Australia, all of which have many municipalities. For example, the Canton of Zurich with a population of over 1.5m has 169 municipalities – where municipalities are equivalent of local councils in NSW. These municipalities have more responsibility than NSW Councils including for local roads, pools, libraries, riverine health, forests, schools, quality secure water and cemeteries.

Given the culture of direct democracy in Switzerland forced amalgamations are unheard of though neighbouring LGAs have been known to amalgamate where the *people* vote for it. Further, the concept of a “donut Council” which is loudly decried in NSW, is seen as totally logical in the Canton of Zurich. The Swiss cannot believe that forced amalgamations of rural Councils with their regional centres occurs in Australia as in rural Zurich the view is that the needs of urban versus rural are very different.

### Social Media with Les White and Rob Herrick

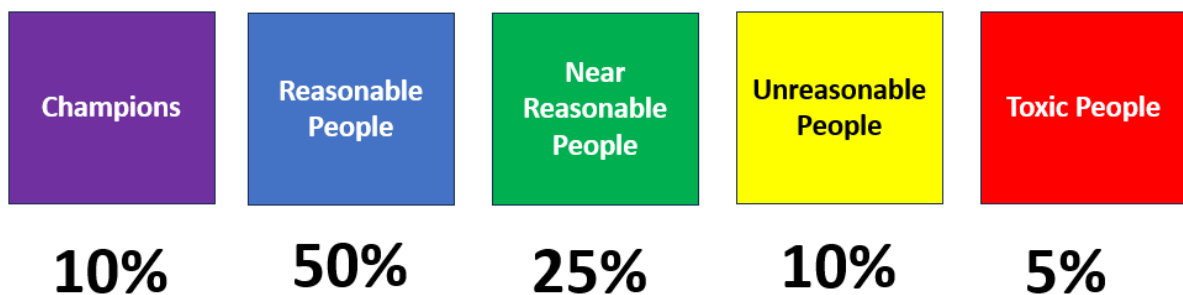
Councils operate within a community with its various social media sites.

The issue is not just Council owned sites but for other sites over which Council has not control for example “Have a Whinge about Council” or even sites specifically set up to tackle one issue such as a Special Rate Variation.

This session focussed on managing a toxic social media environment. The advice below is drawn from the workshop session and an attached report.

### Understanding the social media environment

It’s important to recognise the general social media landscape. There are several different key groups online, and they interact with one another in ways that can be both advantageous and disadvantageous.



- Champions - they love you and your work
- Reasonable people - they can see what you’re doing and why and accept it is necessary.
- Near-reasonable people - they are generally like 'reasonable people' but can have irrational triggers, often over a pet issue, and sometimes never forget it. When people in this group are agitated, it empowers unreasonable and toxic people.
- Unreasonable people - They've just decided they don't like you and it will be hard to win them over. In a political sense, these are the ones who will always vote against you, irrespective of what you've done or promised, however they have positive intent. They will try to win over other people online through selective reasoning. They feed off the discontent of others.

## Reports

- **Toxic people** – This group is simply looking to inflict as much damage as possible and cannot be won over and often find validation in the discontent of others.

### **Managing a toxic social media environment**

There are two key steps that need to be undertaken to return to a moderate social media environment *over which you have direct control*:

#### **Cut the toxic out of the conversation all together.**

This can seriously rebalance the landscape and change the tone of the public conversation.

The best method of doing this is by establishing a terms of use, it must be something almost everyone would accept is reasonable. It should include a preface setting the tone for constructive debate before listing specific things that will not be tolerated and then conclude with consequences. Announce it and implement it but apply a grace period before users are blocked or banned.

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#### *Terms of use example:*

*The City of Orange appreciated feedback from citizens and ratepayers and wishes to support constructive online discussions about the issues facing our community.*

*This page is moderated and abusive behaviour will not be tolerated. This includes:*

- 1. Threats of violence*
- 2. Personal attacks*
- 3. Swearing*
- 4. Spreading of misinformation, including links*
- 5. Sharing explicit imagery, including links*
- 6. Repeatedly making the same comment*
- 7. Irrelevant contributions*
- 8. Impersonation of others, or use of pseudonyms*
- 9. Spam, scams or marketing*

*All serious threats will be reported to police, Comments that violate these terms will be removed. Repeated violations of these terms may result in a user being banned or suspended from this page.*

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Then;

- Delete and hide comments that violate your terms immediately. Take screenshots of repeat offenders before banning or suspending them and keep it on file.
- You can also set up an auto-hide feature for any comments that use certain terms.
- After the grace period, implement these terms stringently and start banning the worst offenders. Spend a period of time focusing on this. Within one to two weeks, a considerable drop in the most vile interactions should occur.

#### **Win over near-reasonable people by demonstrating fairness, accountability and transparency.**

By targeting the near-reasonable group it will

- a. Automatically win support from champions and reasonable people
- b. Quell the unreasonable, because they won't gain validation from the toxic, who removed; or from the discontent of others.

#### **Respond to comments and don't dismiss positive intent**

The vast majority of people who interact with social media accounts will have a positive intention behind doing so, and recognising this it will help facilitate a positive interaction.

If people feel attacked or dismissed they will not be open to different ideas or points of view. You need to show them you are listening to their core concerns. Be aware that while they may have positive intent, it may still come across in a confrontational way, but if it is not abusive, and you respond well, you will not only start winning that person over, but *others* who are following the conversation *which is key*.

## **Reports**



This does something else that is critical: Demonstrating respect and decency, especially in the face of those who are short and confrontational will help to charm those who are 'near reasonable'.

This can only be done if you are in the right frame of mind. If you act unreasonably at any time, this will shake this group of people, and you risk being labelled unfair or liars.

What you're trying to do is create a domino effect. Once the toxic fall, it's easier to charm the near-reasonable. Once the near reasonable are making the right noises then the unreasonable have nothing to feed off. Combined this can take a lot of heat out of an online conversation.

It is important to note, you can't expect to eliminate abuse and unreasonableness, but you can manage it and reduce it. These people always will be, and always have been present in the community - social media just elevates their voices.

Importantly, not all sites are owned and operated by Council. There are a few tactics that can be helpful in managing toxicity on other sites:

#### Get out in front and be strategic

- Build trust with the community through other mechanisms eg CSP consultation, surveys, events, subcommittees of Councils, other communications such as newsletters. Build a database of community members and communicate with them regularly.

## Reports

- If you know there is a significant likelihood of toxicity about a matter before Council – develop a plan to manage this and be resource ready to implement it. This includes a “page of facts” that can be dropped into toxic conversations.

#### Do not hide – engage on other sites

- Do not engage on sites other than your own – just drop in “the facts.”
- Redirect those looking for factual information on the issue to a site you control.

#### Be ready willing and able to go the legal route

Sending a \$500 legal letter can quickly shut down defamatory or threatening toxicity.

#### **Mental health of Council staff/Councillors constantly exposed to social media is important**

Avoid interacting with online users in a defensive or combative way, as opponents can capture this and turn this against you. To win over those who are somewhat reasonable you need to seem reasonable - emotions must be left at the door, as they will cloud your judgement. Strategies to achieve this:

- a. Avoid people in public view, such as the Mayor or CEO managing their own account. Anyone who feels personally connected to the issue should leave it to others. In cases of individual councillors, they should turn off comments or suspend accounts. Let staff manage and respond where possible.
- b. Avoid overexposure of any individual to the toxic online environment: even if the abuse isn't specifically targeted at a staff member, looking at it on an ongoing basis can be demoralising and lead to a clouded judgement.
- c. Make sure everyone who manages social accounts acts consistently and have a set of rules that are clearly and publicly defined.
- d. Give consideration to a shared resource at the regional level to call in help when more is needed.

#### **Note on social media timings**

When an issue is starting to gain momentum, or is bound to gain momentum, then it is best for an organisation to publicly address it at an early opportunity.

Take the time to get your messaging right, but you do not want to let your opponents set the stage on any issue. Allowing this to happen can create unvalidated public concerns that will not go away. It can be frustrating and time-consuming responding to such baseless concerns.

When determining to what extent you respond to online commentary, you will want to consider the expectations of your audience. Generally, there is a large and growing section of the community that will want to interact with you through social media and will want you to respond.

As a rule of thumb, it is recommended responding within one business day. Generally, the public understands large organisations, or people in high office have a large volume of communications. Also, very few private individuals respond to their friends or family in real-time on social media.

Also, you do not need to respond to every comment individually, rather try responding to each concern, as you will find the same concern is raised multiple times. You may choose to respond to the most prominent comment on the matter, or by publishing an individual post on concerns that are attracting significant attention.

## Reports

**Seeking help**

Any case of direct and severe threat should be reported to police. If you would report a threat in a phone call to police, then if the comment is made on social media you should also report it to police. This includes:

- threats of violence towards anyone;
- threats of property damage;
- threats of terrorism; and
- threats of self-harm.

Establish a culture of support within your organisation. Having a broad institutional understanding of the impact a toxic online environment can have will encourage support among colleagues.

Organisational leaders can encourage this behaviour by checking in on their staff. The simple act of making others aware you understand the situation they are facing and are prepared to help can help build significant resilience within your team.

The Australian eSafety Commissioner also has resources for managing online abuse. You can file a report of Adult Cyber Abuse to eSafety Commissioner after exhausting the options available through the platform in question. The eSafety Commissioner has the power to order content be taken off line and can issue fines to companies of individuals who do not comply. Find out more at:

[www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au)

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/report/what-you-can-report-to-esafety#adult-cyber-abuse>

**Social Media in a day-to-day setting**

Using this strategy day-to-day will assist you in keeping control of the issues before they arise. An open and respectful forum will always facilitate the exchange of good ideas and public understanding of the decisions your organisation makes.

**BE PROACTIVE:** Get in front of issues – don't let unreasonable and toxic people write history

- **HOUSE RULES:** Maintain house rules and moderation, this will keep the temperature down at all times and give you a head start when issues escalate.
- **BE POSITIVE:** Remember always be reasonable
- **CULTURE OF SUPPORT:** Check in with staff and members using social media and reinforce reality

**Value for members**

This event came at no cost to members. Any proforma policy advice on social media will be at no cost to members.

**Financial Implications**

Advice on any financial implications, of for example a collaborative approach to social media support, will be provided in due course for Board consideration should it resolve to proceed this way.<space>

**Attachment/s:**

8. Report to the Policy Lab workshop from Mr Les White
9. Presentation by Professor Graham Sansom to the Policy Lab

# Reports

**g. Regional Procurement and Contracts**

<b>Regional Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>1: Leveraging our successful collaboration</b> <b>1.1 Driving efficiencies and effectiveness saving Councils money</b>
<b>Portfolio Mayor</b>	<b>Cr Kevin Beatty and TBC</b>
<b>Sponsoring General Manager/s</b>	<b>Mr Brad Byrnes, Mr Greg Tory, Mr Craig Butler, Ms Noreen Vu</b>

**Report by Kate Barker and Grace Quinton 14 November 2023**

<b>Recommendation/s</b>
<p><b>That the Board note the report on Procurement and Contract Management and that it;</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. note the use of delegations under the procurement policy between Board meetings;</b></li> <li><b>2. note the procurement activity report since the last meeting;</b></li> <li><b>3. approve a 12-month extension of the Supply of Linemarking Services Contract;</b></li> <li><b>4. approve to seek a variation to the current TLD1_2021 Safety Compliance Training Contract for Admire Workplace Safety, enabling the delivery of Traffic Control Training Services under the TLD1_2021 Contract; and</b></li> <li><b>5. approve the additional procurement processes added to the CNSWJO regional procurement plan for 2023/2024.</b></li> </ol>

**Precis**

This report provides advice on:

- the procurement activities that have occurred between Board meetings;
- the procurement processes added to the procurement plan for 2023/2024; and
- other procurement activities.

**Reason for this report**

This report seeks to provide an update on the procurement activities that have occurred between board meetings. The report seeks Board approval for one contract extension and three additional procurement processes added to the procurement plan for 2023/2024 as requested. The report also provides an update on the Modern Slavery Risk Assessment Project and the Local Government Procurement (LGP) Sustainable Procurement Training that two CNSWJO staff participated in.

**Legislative, Policy and Risk Considerations**

Given procurement is an operational support program designed to bring cost savings and other benefits from aggregation, prior to commencing a procurement process a report is considered by GMAC where they are notified of the background and asked to approve the process. All procurement processes are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act and the CNSWJO procurement policy.

The region is continuing to engage with the Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement (BPAP) program which was a collaborative effort with neighbouring JOs that assists in informing optimal

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processes that can be leveraged by the changes in legislation enabling the work and actions of the JO.

The CNSWJO Risk Management Plan 2022 identifies the following risks that are material to this report:

**7** – Despite the efforts by the OLG subsequent to the JO Review, all Councils in the JO footprint do not engage.

**12** – Confused messaging on what the JO does.

**19** – Long term viability and financial sustainability.

### Procurement Activity Report

At the Board meeting of May 2023 new procurement approval processes were adopted including calling for the need for all decisions undertaken by delegation to be reported to the next Board meeting. The following table provides a summary of the use of delegations under the procurement policy between Board meetings:

Description of the project and decision required	Why delegation was required	Who approved the requested process
The Community Engagement Survey project required an extension of contract with Woolcott Research and Engagement. The contract expiry date was 31 October 2023, offering an optional 3-month extension.	The Regional Findings Report for this project is nearing completion, and a presentation of this report will be provided to the General Managers Advisory Committee (GMAC) at its February 2024 meeting. The contract has therefore been extended for a period of four months. The new completion date for this contract is 29 February 2024.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>David Sherley as the Chair of GMAC;</li> <li>Kevin Beatty as the Chair of Central NSW Joint Organisation; and</li> <li>Jenny Bennett as the Executive Officer of the Central NSW Joint Organisation.</li> </ul>

### Community Engagement Survey - Extension

The Community Engagement Survey Project, contract held between CNSWJO and Woolcott Research and Engagement has been extended for a period of four months. The new completion date for this project is 29 February 2024. This project was extended to enable to completion of the Regional Findings Report and to allow a presentation by Woolcott Research to the GMAC at its next meeting.

### Roads Linemarking Services Regional Contract – Extension

GMAC received a report at their October meeting and subsequently resolved to commend to the Board that it extend the regional contract for the Roads Linemarking Services – with Avante Linemarking, Central West Linemarking, Complete Linemarking and Oz Linemarking which is to expire 29 February 2024.

It is recommended to the Board that it approves this 12-month extension.

### Admire Workplace Safety variation to Safety Compliance Training Contract

The contract HR1\_2019 Traffic Control Training is complete as of 31 March 2024. At its February 2023 meeting, GMAC advised there are councils who are still utilising the services of supplier Admire Workplace Safety under this contract. Therefore, the 12-month contract extension was put in place.

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As the contract extension nears completion, it has been recommended that a contract variation to the current TLD1\_2021 Safety Compliance Training Contract, of which Admire Workplace Safety also holds a contract, be implemented for councils to continue utilising their Traffic Control Training Services.

Interest is being sought from member councils in this variation. At the time of writing this report, not all responses have been provided from councils. However, this report seeks in-principle support from the Board to approve the CNSWJO to seek a contract variation to the TLD1\_2021 Safety Compliance Training Contract with Admire Workplace Safety to enable the continued delivery of its Traffic Control Training Services until the completion of the TLD1\_2021 contract.

### Procurement Processes Underway

The following table details the procurement processes that are currently underway:

Contract	Contract Holder	Model	Estimated Value	Management Fee	Timeframe	Status
Supply and Delivery of Road Signs	Participating Councils	RFX	\$400-\$500K per year	5%	Contract to Commence 1 January 2024	Confidential Memo and Proforma Report issued to Councils. Contracts are being prepared.
CCTV, Smoke Testing and Pipe Relining of Sewer Lines – annual rolling procurement process for package of work in the next financial year	Participating Councils	RFX	Dependent on uptake by members. Spend is not yet known.	5%	Contract to Commence approx. January 2024	RFX responses in the evaluation stage.
Supply, Delivery and Installation of Guardrail and Wire Rope Safety Barrier	Participating Councils	RFX	New regional process, spend is not yet known.	2.5%	Contract to Commence approx. March 2024	Evaluation panel in the process of finalising specification.

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### Approvals for Procurement Plan for 2023/2024

The following table details the procurement processes that are seeking approval to be added to the procurement plan for 2023/2024:

Contract	Contract Holder	Model	Estimated Value	Management Fee	Status
Supply of Bitumen Emulsion	Participating Councils	RFT	>1.5M annual	Up to 4%	Council participation being established, and evaluation panel being formed.
Solar Asset Maintenance	TBC	RFQ	TBC	5%	Scoping underway.
Energy Savings Certificates	TBC – Participating Councils	RFQ	<100K	5%	Scoping underway. Possible interest from other Joint Organisations, in a collaborative procurement.
Condition assessment of Transport Assets	CNSWJO	RFQ	TBC	5%	Currently seeking interest from Member Councils in a regional approach. If enough interest is received the procurement will progress.
Asset Revaluation of Roads, Bridges and Footpaths	CNSWJO	RFQ	TBC	5%	Currently seeking interest from Member Councils in a regional approach. If enough interest is received the procurement will progress.

### Other Procurement Activities

#### Sustainable Procurement Training

On Friday, 8 September 2023, Ms Kate Barker and Ms Grace Quinton alongside 13 representatives from Joint Organisations throughout NSW attended ISO 20400 Sustainable Procurement Training hosted by Local Government Procurement (LGP). The one-day event offered learning and development in the area of Sustainable Procurement. Topics Covered throughout the day included, net zero targets, reducing environmental impacts, gaining social value, increasing local spend and employment, increasing supplier diversity, and modern slavery prevention. The training was well received, and left attendees well placed to work towards and develop Sustainable procurement policies and best practice within their organisations.

This training was grant-funded, with a total of \$7,150 awarded through LGP. In addition to the two CNSWJO staff members, there were nine attendees from other Joint organisations covered by this funding. CNSWJO coordinated the funding and the training day.

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**Modern Slavery Risk Assessment Project**

CNSWJO are working to support members with their Modern Slavery obligations, the project is underway, and information is being collected from participating councils outlining the lists of suppliers each council have actively engaged over the 22/23 financial year. CNSWJO are liaising with Local Government Procurement (LGP) through this process and may look to engage their services once an initial audit of supplier lists has been completed.

**Modern Slavery Changes Procurement Policy**

The NSW Modern Slavery Amendment Act, 2021 requires all Local Government Sites to take reasonable steps to ensure that goods and services procured by and for Council are not the product of modern slavery.

As a result, CNSWJO has made additions to the procurement policy to reflect the Modern Slavery regulations. Please see the attached CNSWJO Policy and Procedure document that reflects the additions.

**Value for members**

Value for members in relation to regional procurement and contract management can be found in the cost savings table elsewhere in this business paper.

**Financial Implications**

Some contracts administered by CNSWJO contain a management fee which is a percentage of total spend by members under the contract. The management fee is incorporated into the cost to councils for the goods or services and is paid to CNSWJO directly by the provider. The JO is continuing to do research to identify the value stack from the provider's perspective, where to date the majority are advising the management fee is either fully absorbed or partly absorbed (50/50) by the provider.

**Attachment/s:** Nil

**h. Disaster Risk Reduction Fund Program Report**

<b>Regional Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>1.2 Building capacity across our Councils</b> <b>5.3 Natural disaster road funding</b>
<b>Portfolio Mayor</b>	<b>1. Leveraging our successful collaboration:</b> <b>Cr Kevin Beatty as Chair and TBA</b> <b>5. Regional Transport Planning and Infrastructure Prioritisation:</b> <b>TBA</b>
<b>Sponsoring General Manager/s</b>	<b>1. Leveraging our successful collaboration:</b> <b>Greg Tory, Noreen Vu, Brad Byrnes and Craig Butler</b> <b>5. Regional Transport Planning and Infrastructure Prioritisation:</b> <b>Kent Boyd, Steve Loane, Gary Wallace and Paul Devery</b>

Report by Jenny Webber dated 30 October 2023

<b>Recommendation/s</b>
<p><b>That the Board note the Disaster Risk Reduction Fund Program report and note;</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. the progress on the needs analysis currently underway;</b></li> <li><b>2. the progress on the Regional Resilience Program working groups;</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. including the commencement of a collaborative procurement for the technology deliverable;</b></li> </ol> </li> <li><b>3. the update and upcoming commencement of the Transport for NSW Customer Resilience Journey Plans project; and</b></li> <li><b>4. the progress of the 'Fix Me' project.</b></li> </ol>

**Precis**

This report to the Board contains a project update regarding the following:

- Regional Resilience Program;
- Transport for NSW Customer Resilience Journey Plan;
- CNSWJO Technical Transport Committee 'Fix Me' Project; and
- Needs Analysis

GHD commenced the needs analysis by distributing a survey through CNSWJO to collect data, and all member Councils have provided their responses. Currently, the data is undergoing evaluation, and individual Council meetings are being held to ensure clarity and to gather any missing details. Following these meetings, the first deliverable for Milestone 1, a data report, will be published. In addition, the second Milestone 1 deliverable, which is a literature review encompassing the Blueprint by Canberra Region Joint Organisation, the work of other Joint Organisations, and publicly available research, has been issued and is presently undergoing review by the JO network participating in this program.

**Reason for this report**

Please see advice in the body of the report on progress and governance. This report will be provided as a deliverable to the funding entity.

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## Legislative, Policy and Risk Considerations

### Risks

The risks identified in the CNSWJO Risk Management Strategy relevant to this priority are:

- 2 - Changing State and Federal government.
- 3 - Skills shortages reduce capacity of the region.
- 10 - Well intentioned State agencies design processes that waste JO and Councils' time.
- 16 – Duplication of other services.
- 20 – Turnover of staff in councils who are working on JO projects; loss of corporate knowledge.
- 23 – Management of members contribution – ensuring those who don't commit/deliver don't compromise the project.
- 25 - Increasing costs to Councils of storms etc. more extreme events Councils will find themselves unable to plan and just be reactive to Climate Change. More storms and more drought; their impacts.
- 36 – Being present in online meetings – everyone is there but no one is paying attention – enable “tick box” but ultimately wastes time.
- 42 - Costs of building materials or no supply at all.

This project has its own risk register which may be provided on request where risks are reviewed at every committee steering meeting.

### Project Update

#### Needs Analysis

Please find below a summary of the needs analysis project delivery where highlights in yellow identify CNSWJO specific actions.

PROJECT MILESTONE	JOINT ORGANISATIONS	OBJECTIVE	OUTPUTS
<b>MILESTONE 1.</b> Data Collection for Needs Analyses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central NSW Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Northern Rivers Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Riverina &amp; Murray Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Mid North Coast Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils</li> </ul>	<p>1.1 In alignment with the project objectives, obtain information from each LGA Council and for each of the Participating JOs to identify the gaps and needs in region with the intention of the relevant immediate, intermediate and end of program DRRF program outcomes:</p> <p><i>Immediate Outcomes</i>            In the context of disaster risk reduction vulnerability assessments, with groups and communities with specific needs represented;            Strategic planning related to natural hazard risk reduction at a local and regional levels; and</p> <p><i>Intermediate outcomes</i>            Place-based community risks and needs are identified and prioritized, including for vulnerable groups and communities and those with specific needs;            Councils and community groups factor disaster risk information into planning, investment and decisions; and</p> <p><i>End of program outcome</i>            NSW communities implement place-based, pragmatic solutions to reduce local and regional risks and improve their disaster resilience.</p>	<p>1.1 Data reports per LGA and one per Joint Organisation for:</p> <p>1.1.1 Central NSW Joint Organisation.</p> <p>1.1.2 Northern Rivers Joint Organisation.</p> <p>1.1.3 Riverina &amp; Murray Joint Organisation.</p> <p>1.1.4 Mid North Coast Joint Organisation.</p> <p>1.1.5 Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils</p> <p>1.2 Literature review report including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a review of the Blueprint by Canberra Region Joint Organisation and the work of other Joint Organisations</li> <li>publicly available research</li> </ul> <p>Note: Hunter JO &amp; CRJO are not to be included in the outputs of this milestone.</p>

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PROJECT MILESTONE	JOINT ORGANISATIONS	OBJECTIVE	OUTPUTS
		<i>Further information can be found at attachment DRRF Attachment A_Program Logic</i>	
<b>MILESTONE 2.</b> Analysis of Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central NSW Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Northern Rivers Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Riverina &amp; Murray Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Mid North Coast Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils</li> <li>Hunter Joint Organisation</li> <li>Canberra Region Joint Organisation</li> </ul>	<p>Synthesize the data collected at Milestone 1.</p> <p><i>Note: As described in the 'background' the Hunter JO has already completed a separate needs analysis, and their involvement in this milestone requires a synthesis of the data already collected and to be provided by Hunter JO to the successful tenderer upon execution of a contract.</i></p>	<p>Data collection analysis report per Joint Organisation including metrics on a council-by-council basis.</p> <p><i>Note: Hunter JO &amp; CRJO are only to be included in the outputs of this milestone based on separate pieces of work to be provided by Hunter JO &amp; CRJO.</i></p>
<b>MILESTONE 3.</b> Final Product Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Central NSW Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Northern Rivers Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Riverina &amp; Murray Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Mid North Coast Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils</li> <li>Hunter Joint Organisation.</li> <li>Canberra Region Joint Organisation.</li> </ul>	<p>3.1 For each of the Participating JOs listed in #1 outputs, deliver a summary of findings as a needs analysis for each LGA Council, understanding the disaster gaps and needs in region, including brief advice on findings that are out of scope or unexpected.</p> <p>3.2 For each of the Participating JOs, deliver a regional opportunities report, including brief advice on findings that are out of scope or unexpected.</p> <p>3.3 For each of the Participating JOs, deliver an opportunities reports that links each Joint Organisations findings for a systemic approach to disaster risk reduction across these regions, including brief advice on findings that are out of scope or unexpected.</p>	<p>3.1 A needs analysis for each LGA of the four Joint Organisations (31 reports).</p> <p>3.1.1 Central NSW Joint Organisation.</p> <p>3.1.2 Northern Rivers Joint Organisation.</p> <p>3.1.3 Riverina &amp; Murray Joint Organisation.</p> <p>3.1.4 Mid North Coast Joint Organisation</p> <p>3.1.5 Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils</p> <p>3.2 A Regional Opportunities report per Joint Organisation based on the findings from the previous output (6 reports).</p> <p>3.2.1 Central NSW Joint Organisation.</p> <p>3.2.2 Northern Rivers Joint Organisation.</p> <p>3.2.3 Riverina &amp; Murray Joint Organisation.</p> <p>3.2.4 Mid North Coast Joint Organisation.</p> <p>3.2.5 Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils</p> <p>3.2.6 Hunter Joint Organisation</p> <p>3.2.7 Canberra Region Joint Organisation</p> <p>3.3 An Opportunities Report that summarises the findings for a systemic approach to disaster risk reduction across the participating Joint Organisations (1 report).</p> <p><i>Note: Hunter JO &amp; CRJO are not to be included in output 3.1 of this milestone, however outputs 3.2 and 3.3 are required.</i></p>
<b>MILESTONE 4.</b> (Optional) Climate Risk Assessment Report (Mid North Coast JO only)	Mid North Coast Joint Organisation.	Identify and assess the risks that climate change poses to local government operations (including staff, assets and services).	A climate change risk assessment report for Mid North Coast Joint Organisation only (1 report).

**Milestone 1 – data collection for the needs analysis**

GHD commenced the needs analysis by distributing a survey through CNSWJO to collect data, and all member Councils have provided their responses. Currently, the data is undergoing evaluation, and individual Council meetings are being held to ensure clarity and to gather any missing details. Following these meetings, the first deliverable for Milestone 1, a data report, will be published. In addition, the second Milestone 1 deliverable, which is a literature review encompassing the Blueprint by Canberra Region Joint Organisation, the work of other Joint Organisations, and publicly available research, has been issued and is presently undergoing review by the JO network participating in this program.

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**Milestone 2 – analysis of data**

The Gap Analysis Framework for Milestone 2, which is included with this report, has undergone several rounds of review and is now in its final stages. The most recent input has been received from the Senior Strategy Officer with the Disaster Risk Assessment team at the NSW Reconstruction Authority. Currently, GHD is in the process of reviewing this feedback and is working on producing the final version of the Gap Analysis framework which will inform the balance of this milestone.

**Milestone 3 – final product delivery**

This Milestone is dependent on the preceding milestones.

**Regional Resilience Program – Working Groups****Transport working group**

The transport working group has been actively engaged in collaborative efforts to define a scope of work in areas of mutual interest. Through this collaborative work, three primary aspects have been pinpointed:

1. **Access and Alternatives for Isolated Communities:** Focusing on areas with only one access route.
  2. **Access and Alternatives for Freight:** Ensuring the flow of supplies in and out of regions.
  3. **Diversion Routes from State to Local/Regional Roads:** Examining the impact on local communities and infrastructure.
- Stage 1:
    - **Identification of Vulnerable Networks and Routes:** This encompasses existing networks and routes, including those related to freight, isolated communities, evacuation facilities, crucial resilience routes, and potential alternate routes. It also looks at critical at-risk infrastructure and diversion points from state to local/regional routes.
    - **Identification of Risk Mitigation Initiatives:** This involves the identification of risk mitigation programs and activities, including asset management plans, capital projects, maintenance programs, and monitoring efforts.

The ongoing projects by Transport for NSW (TfNSW), the needs analysis, and the CNSWJO Technical Transport Committee's 'Fix Me' project will contribute significantly to these objectives:

- TfNSW is actively working on delivering Customer Journey Resilience Plans to all Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the region, with a focus on fire and flood risks to isolated settlements, to be finalised by June 2024.
- GHD is conducting a needs analysis, which includes an examination of infrastructure, including roads and will be available in the coming month.
- The CNSWJO Technical Transport Committee is collaborating with a consultant to assess the road network's vulnerability and will be available in the coming months ('Fix Me' project).
- Stage 2:
 

The next step involves the development of a visual tool incorporating the previously identified layers, overlaid with natural hazard mapping. This tool will serve as a valuable resource for activities such as strategic planning, scenario analysis, effective communication, business case development, and advocacy efforts. There is a concerted plan to collaborate with TfNSW's ongoing initiatives, with a particular emphasis on incorporating additional

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functionalities into this spatial tool.

Furthermore, this tool is envisioned to incorporate a background feature that highlights prioritised locations, including the top 20 projects in dire need of funding, accompanied by their respective justifications. To ensure a consistent and seamless user experience across the 65 participating Councils, the oversight and management of this tool may be entrusted to Spatial NSW.

- **Stage 3:**  
The final stage involves socialising and advocating the findings and tools developed in collaboration with state partners. By leveraging the datasets and agreements at the local government elected level, these tools can become valuable assets in supporting state agency partners and local communities in developing business cases for funding within the context of policy frameworks.

It is important to note that the DRRF project steering committee may be called upon to make contributions to this work at any given moment.

### **Regional Resilience, IP&R, and Waste working group**

The Hunter Joint Organisation has recently released a Resilience IP&R Support Package designed to assist Councils and their communities in their resilience efforts. This package provides user-friendly and practical tools and templates to incorporate resilience into the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) process, ensuring that resilience becomes an integral part of standard business practices, with dedicated resources allocated for its continued consideration.

As part of the ongoing needs analysis process, GHD is conducting a review of this IP&R support package in conjunction with other publicly available research. The outcome of this review will significantly influence the direction of the project deliverable, which is the integration of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) into Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R).

*A consultant will be engaged to embed the key DRR learnings from the needs analyses and workshops/trainings into IP&R for member Councils. A Regional Framework will be developed to guide how member councils can integrate and consider DRR and climate related risks and opportunities in IP&R, identifying specific strategies, plans and processes that are most relevant to each member Council (such as the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and operational Plan, Local Environment Plan, Local Strategic Planning Statement, Resourcing and Asset Management strategies, etc.) Programming will be embedded into Council IP&R structures with suitable inputs from the Regional Framework and supporting tools developed through workshops with Council staff, with training provided for implementation.*

Upon the availability of the review, the Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be invited to participate in advancing this particular deliverable.

The Hunter JO Resilience IP&R Support Package can be viewed by following this link:  
<https://www.hunterjo.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Resilience-IPR-Support-Package-DRAFT-September-2023.pdf>

### **Technology working group – Cross JO EOI scope**

At the Joint Organisation level, the technology working group has been actively involved in discussions concerning collaborative technology opportunities. These discussions have yielded various technology possibilities, including simtables, extended reality, data experiences for

## **Reports**

scenario/simulation, drone technology, among others.

In preparation for the needs analysis draft gap analysis reports from GHD, expected late October to mid November, and with the objective of fostering seamless collaboration between the participating Joint Organisations and the project steering committee, it is an opportune time for the DRRF project steering committee to partner with the Joint Organisations of this project to define the scope for a potential Expression of Interest (EOI). However, the group may elect to bypass this step and engage the market directly if Councils have a clear understanding of their requirements and a well-defined scope of work is established. This collaborative effort aims to enhance the comprehension of various disaster risk reduction technology options available in the market. This knowledge will significantly influence the technology outcome of the project, which is as follows:

*“Based on the findings from the needs analyses, the project will develop and deliver 11 community workshops/trainings (one per LGA) using Simtables and/or other technologies to pilot new risk reduction investments, tools, technologies, innovations, platforms and systems. Target audiences are key local community agencies from a resilience perspective, including Council and SES, and attendance is anticipated to be approximately 30 per face-to-face workshop, depending on the community.”*

The collaborating JOs consisting of Canberra Region, Illawarra Shoalhaven, Mid North Coast and Centra NSW Joint Organisation have met twice to discuss ideas and capture any initial thoughts. JOs have now called for requests and nominations from their project steering committees and other specialist representatives to be involved in the cross-Joint Organisation working group. At the time of writing this report, the JOs have established a preliminary project scope which will initiate collaboration between the JOs, cross JO project steering committee members, and other specialist representatives. A *confidential* detailed outline of this scope can be found attached to this report. Additionally, the JOs are in the process of conducting audits within their respective Councils to gain insights into the current tools, systems, and programs employed for disaster simulation, planning, and preparedness. These audits will help in identifying existing challenges and possible solutions or wish list items for improvement.

#### **Commencement of the Transport for NSW Customer Resilience Journey Plan**

CNSWJO have received guidance from TfNSW regarding the commencement of the Customer Resilience Journey Plans project in this region. This project is primarily focused on addressing fire and flood risks in isolated settlements and is working towards completion by June 2024.

In line with promoting effective collaboration, CNSWJO is actively engaged in ongoing communication with TfNSW to share relevant information proactively, aimed at reducing the workload for local councils during any upcoming consultation.

TfNSW will present this project to the PSC at the next meeting, scheduled for 8 November 2023. The PSC will then have the opportunity to seek clarifications, ask questions, and have input into what should be in the plan.

This collaborative effort is expected to make a generous contribution to the Transport Vulnerability Assessment, which is an integral component of this overarching project.

#### **CNSWJO Technical Transport Committee ‘Fix Me’ project update**

The 'Fix Me' project, conducted in partnership with Warren Sharpe Strategic Services and Parkes Shire Council, has achieved notable progress. Councils have actively engaged in data collection workbooks throughout August and September, gathering information related to road network

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management, sealed and unsealed roads, bridges, structures, and disaster impacts. A template of this workbook is an attachment for the Transport report in this agenda.

The recent CNSWJO Technical Transport Committee meeting, held on September 27, 2023, addressed several important topics. These included Warren Sharpe's prior experience with the Canberra Region Joint Organisation, the project's objective to capture the region's road network characteristics and enhance funding opportunities, and the request for Councils to review and refine financial details related to disaster damage. The meeting highlighted the importance of comprehensive data sets, documenting pre-disaster inspections, and predicting increased disaster damage in the coming years. Councils were encouraged to provide detailed financial breakdowns and data sets, a crucial step in improving network management and securing funding opportunities for the region.

Please refer to the Transport report in this agenda for more information.

### Key Reporting Areas (KRAs)

Please find following a table updating on each KRA. All outputs, for example meeting agendas and minutes, presentations and reports, are available on request.

Key Reporting Area	Update
1. The needs analysis/capability and capacity assessment both at the local and regional levels.	<p>The KPIs achieved for this quarter are:</p> <p>Procurement – needs analysis update The procurement process for the needs analysis is now complete and the contract with GHD for the local and regional needs analysis is underway.</p> <p>Needs analysis Please refer to the body of the report for specific progress on the needs analysis that is working towards this KPI.</p> <p>Regional Resilience, IP&amp;R, Waste working group The Regional Resilience, IP&amp;R, Waste working group are assisting in managing the contract with GHD, including risk and quality of the needs analysis project.</p> <p>From this work the outputs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract underway with GHD for the needs analysis project</li> <li>Regional Resilience, IP&amp;R, Waste working group meeting agenda and minutes.</li> </ul> <p>Please request agendas, minutes and procurement outputs.</p>
2. Working with member Councils to adapt and embed policy, systems and practices that are drawn from the outputs of the Canberra and Hunter JO's	<p>Regional Resilience, IP&amp;R, Waste working group The Regional Resilience, IP&amp;R, Waste working group (previously referred to as the 'Regional Resilience Working Group') meet monthly and aim to foster collaboration among NSW Joint Organisations (JOs) to integrate resilience into the IP&amp;R Framework for member Councils. The group recognises the diverse progress levels among JOs and Councils and aims to:</p>

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Share and integrate existing IP&amp;R resilience work across JO network Councils.</li> <li>2. Embed lessons learned from needs analysis, regional opportunities report, and workshops into member Councils' IP&amp;R.</li> <li>3. Develop training and support resources for resilience integration.</li> <li>4. Educate state government stakeholders on the importance of IP&amp;R for Councils and their engagement challenges.</li> </ol> <p>Please refer to the body of this report for details on the Hunter Joint Organisation IP&amp;R support package.</p> <p>Literature review</p> <p>The literature review encompassing the Blueprint by Canberra Region Joint Organisation, the work of other Joint Organisations, and publicly available research. This was issued by GHD to CNSWJO 24 October 2023 and is presently undergoing review by the JO network participating in this program.</p> <p>From this work, the outputs produced are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Resilience, IP&amp;R, Waste working group outputs</li> <li>• Draft Literature review</li> </ul> <p>Please request agendas, minutes and other outputs from this KPI.</p>
3. Design and delivery of community workshops	<p>Technology working group</p> <p>Please refer to the body of this report for an update on this working group.</p> <p>Needs analysis</p> <p>The work undertaken by GHD will play a significant role in shaping the design and delivery of the workshops. Additionally, the insights obtained will inform the scope for the Expression of Interest (EOI) mentioned earlier.</p> <p>From this work, the outputs produced are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commencement of a scoping document for an EOI regarding technology for the design of the workshops</li> <li>• Needs analysis outputs are on track to contribute to this KPI</li> </ul> <p>Please request agendas, minutes and other outputs from this KPI.</p>
4. Design and embedment of the IP&R program	<p>Regional Resilience, IP&amp;R, Waste working group</p> <p>Please refer to KPI #2 'Regional Resilience, IP&amp;R, Waste working group'.</p>
5. Greater consistency and collaboration across Council Boundaries	<p>Regional Resilience Program</p> <p>The Regional Resilience Program Advisory Committee (RRPAC), consisting of the 8 jointly funded JOs and NSW Reconstruction Authority, continues to meet monthly as an opportunity to share project information between each JO and the funding body.</p>

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	<p>Regional Resilience Program Working Groups</p> <p>Please refer to the body of this report for an update on each of the working groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Resilience, IP&amp;R, Waste</li> <li>• Technology</li> <li>• Transport</li> </ul> <p>CNSWJO DRRF Project Steering Committee</p> <p>The CNSWJO DRRF Project Steering Committee (PSC) continue to meet monthly online, with GHD providing project updates within this forum since the contract commenced.</p> <p>At each meeting the PSC cover content related to the project;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communication;</li> <li>• quality;</li> <li>• risk management;</li> <li>• procurement;</li> <li>• reporting;</li> <li>• shared learning and emerging opportunities;</li> <li>• budgeting; evaluation; and</li> <li>• reporting to GMAC and the JO Board.</li> </ul> <p>Please request agendas, minutes and other outputs from this KPI.</p>
6. Developing and embedding a state- wide approach to improving practice in disaster risk reduction	<p>The activities described throughout this report highlight the extensive work being carried out by CNSWJO member Councils, the eight JO regions encompassing 63 LGAs, and relevant state government stakeholders. This collaborative approach and the sharing of information are vital in the development of the necessary structures and systems throughout the state to be able to design and embed a statewide approach to improving practice in disaster risk reduction.</p>
7. Codesigned project with Transport for NSW (TfNSW)	<p>Transport for NSW Customer Resilience Journey Plans</p> <p>Please refer to the body of this report for an update on the Transport for NSW Customer Resilience Journey Plans.</p> <p>Transport Working Group</p> <p>Please refer to the body of this report for an update on the Transport Working Group.</p> <p>Please request any agendas, minutes and other outputs from this KPI.</p>
8. Milestone reporting	<p>The KPIs and outputs achieved for this quarter are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monthly progress reports for July to September.</li> <li>2. Quarterly financial report for 2022-23 Q4</li> </ol> <p>Please request monthly progress reports and Q4 financial report.</p>

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**Value for members**

This project supports all member Councils with the aim to reduce existing disaster risk, minimise the creation of future risk and equip decision-makers with the capabilities and information needed to reduce disaster risk and manage residual risk. The position of the Regional Resilience Program further supports this through collaboration for the purpose of a larger reach to share and align benefits of strategic, targeted, place-based risk reduction projects, for sustainable and longer-term outcomes to be built upon in the future.

**Financial Implications**

The funding covers all aspects of the DRRF project and has no implications for the JO or member Councils.

**Attachment/s:**

10. GHD Gap Analysis Framework

11. Confidential Preliminary technology scope of works

**Priority Five: Regional Transport and Infrastructure and Planning and Prioritisation****i. Transport Report**

<b>Regional Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>Regional Transport Planning and Infrastructure Prioritisation</b>
<b>Portfolio Mayor</b>	TBA
<b>Sponsoring General Manager/s</b>	Mr K Boyd, Mr S Loane, Mr G Wallace and Mr P Devery

**Report by Jenny Webber dated 30 October 2023**

<b>Recommendation/s</b>
<b>That the Board note the Transport report and adopt the 'plan on a page' for the recently adopted CNSWJO Regional Transport Technical Committee Strategy 2023-2028.</b>

**Precis**

This report provided to the Board provides an update on the Transport work and provides advice on;

- Progress of the 'Fix Me' project;
- Update on negotiations with UGL Regional Linx regarding the Master Access Deed; and
- Progress on the Grattan Institute project.

The Grattan Institute recently presented the initial research findings about local road maintenance. A comprehensive research report with recommendations on how maintenance should be funded and administered is slated for publication in 2023. The Institute plans to disseminate these findings to governments, the media, and decision-makers through various channels, including publicizing the results and delivering speeches.

A copy of the presentation is attached to this report.

**Reason for this report**

This report provides an update on the transport priorities and seeks approval for the 'plan on a page' for the recently adopted CNSWJO Regional Transport Technical Committee Strategy 2023-2028.

**Legislative, Policy and Risk Considerations**

The CNSWJO transport priorities are:

Priority One: Leveraging our successful collaboration

- 1.1 Driving efficiencies and effectiveness saving Councils money
- 1.2 Building capacity across our Councils

Priority Two: Regional prosperity through better infrastructure and services

Priority Five: Regional Transport Planning and Infrastructure Prioritisation

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## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

- 5.1 Transport connectivity planning
- 5.2 Infrastructure prioritisation including the Central NSW Joint Organisation Matrix
- 5.3 Natural disaster road funding

The risks identified in the CNSWJO Risk Management Strategy relevant to this priority are.

- 2** - Changing State and Federal government.
- 3** - Skills shortages reduce capacity of the region.
- 10** - Well intentioned State agencies design processes that waste JO and Councils' time.
- 20** - Turnover of staff in councils who are working on JO projects; loss of corporate knowledge.
- 25** - Increasing costs to Councils of storms etc. more extreme events Councils will find themselves unable to plan and just be reactive to Climate Change. More storms and more drought; their impacts.
- 42** - Costs of building materials or no supply at all.

Also, initiatives delivering cost savings assist with Council financial sustainability.

### Update on transport priorities

#### **CNSWJO Regional Transport Technical Committee Strategy 2023-2028**

Please refer to the attached document 'Regional TTC Strategy 2023-2028 update as of 20 Sept 23' for the latest update on the recently adopted CNSWJO Regional Transport Technical Committee Strategy 2023-2028, as of 20 September 2023. Additionally, attached is a 'plan on a page' derived from this Strategy.

#### **Progress of the 'Fix Me' project**

The 'Fix Me' project, which is being carried out in collaboration with Warren Sharpe Strategic Services through Parkes Shire Council, is making significant progress. In August and September, most Councils completed data collection workbooks to gather information related to network management, sealed roads, unsealed roads, bridges and structures, and disaster impacts. You can find more detailed information in the attached 'Fix Me' data collection workbook.

Warren Sharpe participated in a recent CNSWJO Technical Transport Committee meeting held in Orange on 27 September 2023. The meeting covered various topics, including:

- Warren's prior experience working with the Canberra Region Joint Organisation.
- How this project aims to capture the unique characteristics of the road network in our region and enhance future funding opportunities.
- The request for Councils to review and refine the financial details concerning disaster damage that were previously provided to Warren. This includes breaking down the data or offering estimated breakdowns for different aspects, such as roads, bridges, and waste.
- The importance of comprehensive data sets (workbooks) that include information on issues within Local Government Areas (LGAs), including identifying the primary causes and proposed solutions. This should also cover aspects like resource allocation and any positive developments that have occurred, are currently underway, or are planned.
- The need for better documentation of pre-disaster inspection work to facilitate grant fund recovery.
- The prediction that the amount of disaster damage will likely double in the next four years.

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- The importance of each Council incorporating their disaster-related experiences into a resilience plan.

As of the time of writing this report, Councils have been asked to revisit the financial details of disaster damage provided to Warren. They are encouraged to provide breakdowns, if possible, and to provide complete data sets that encompass information on LGA issues, fatigue levels in terms of resources, and any positive developments occurring or anticipated.

This collaborative effort is a critical step in the 'Fix Me' project, aiming to enhance network management and secure funding opportunities for the region.

#### **Update on negotiations with UGL Regional Linx regarding the Master Access Deed**

The CNSWJO Technical Transport Committee (TTC) and CNSWJO are actively engaged in sincere negotiations with UGL Regional Linx. Here are the key developments:

1. **Legal Counsel Involvement:** Legal guidance was sought and presented at the August meeting, where it was shared with the Board. Subsequently, the TTC conducted an extensive review of this legal advice and collectively established a position and feedback regarding the Master Access Deed. This feedback was conveyed to UGLRL in August. The latest information from UGLRL indicates that they are currently reviewing this feedback in consultation with TfNSW. They intend to provide a response to the TTC once this review is complete.
2. **Insurance Insight:** Additional guidance was sought from an insurance perspective and was subsequently considered and agreed upon by the TTC. This advice was then furnished to UGLRL.
3. **ONRSR Inquiries:** The ALGA reached out to ONRSR, and ONRSR advised that the responsibility for executing the Master Access Deed (MAD) agreement lies with UGL. This development appears to favor the Councils as it underscores the importance of the Councils approaching the agreement in good faith.

#### **Grattan Institute**

The Grattan Institute recently presented the initial research findings about local road maintenance. A comprehensive research report with recommendations on how maintenance should be funded and administered is slated for publication in 2023. The Institute plans to disseminate these findings to governments, the media, and decision-makers through various channels, including publicizing the results and delivering speeches.

A copy of the presentation is attached to this report.

#### **Financial Implications**

The total budget for the 'Fix Me' project is \$34,500. This is co-funded by each member Council contributing \$2,00 each and the JO contributing \$12,000.

#### **Attachment/s:**

12. CNSWJO Regional Transport Technical Committee Strategy 2023-2028
13. Transport Technical Committee Plan on a page
14. Grattan Institute presentation

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**Priority Six: Regional Water Security and Productive Water****j. Regional Water Report**

<b>Regional Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>6 : Regional water security planning and productive water</b> <b>6.1 Regional water network planning and best practice skills development</b> <b>6.2 Productive water</b>
<b>Portfolio Mayor</b>	<b>Cr David Somervaille, Cr Jason Hamling</b>
<b>Sponsoring General Manager/s</b>	<b>Mr K Boyd, Mr G Rhodes and Mr D Waddell</b>

**Report by Meredith Macpherson dated 13 November 2023**

<b>Recommendation/s</b>
<b>That the Board note the Regional Water Report and</b> <b>1. endorses the Priority Water Infrastructure brochure; and</b> <b>2. notes the renegotiation of the agreement with Smart Water for the provision water efficiency collateral for member councils.</b>

**Precis**

This report provides advice on the progress of the following projects in the water portfolio:

- Project to transition local water utility strategic planning into the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework;
- Regional Water Loss Management project;
- Renegotiation of the agreement with Smart Water for water efficiency collateral;
- Regional asset management assessments using the National Asset Management Assessment Framework (NAMAF).

It also provides advice on finalised, current and upcoming consultative processes including;

- Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal WaterNSW Operating Licence Review;
- Joint Select Committee on Protecting Local Water Utilities from Privatisation;
- DPE Water Review of Performance Monitoring Indicators for Local Water Utilities;
- DPE Water third consultation on the draft Lachlan Regional Water Strategy; and
- DPE Water consultation on Harmonisation of Water Restrictions.

Following a presentation by Water Infrastructure NSW on the Wyangala Dam wall raising project Final Business Case, advice is provided on discussion within region on the next steps for advocacy to Government including endorsement by the Board of advocacy collateral on the region's Priority Water Infrastructure Projects.

**Reason for this report**

This report is procedural. Please see advice in the body of the report on progress and governance. It requests that the Board endorse the Priority Water Infrastructure brochure.

## Reports



## Legislative, Policy and Risk Considerations

### Risks

The CNSWJO Risk Management Plan 2022 identifies the following risks that are material to this report:

- 2** - Changing state and federal government – support for JO priorities not continuing e.g. decision not to raise the Wyangala Dam wall.
- 10** - well intentioned state agencies design processes that waste JO and councils' time.
- 14** - miss opportunity to see how collaborations could work effectively.
- 20** - turnover of staff in councils who are working on JO projects – loss of corporate knowledge.
- 26** - increasing costs to community of storms and drought and their impacts.
- 27** - risks associated with poor data e.g. Treasury Common Planning Assumptions.
- 28** - the great resignation – more workforce shortages, different priorities for job development.
- 39** - smart controls and smart towns e.g. Poor coordination of smart water metering.
- 40** - shortages of technology and expertise in region.
- 43** - extreme weather events impact agriculture.

Also, initiatives delivering cost savings and efficiencies assist with council financial sustainability.

### Projects

#### Transitioning local water utility strategic planning into the Integrated Planning and Reporting

Work is progressing on the project to transition what was Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) planning for Local Water Utilities (LWUs) into the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework under the guidance of IP&R specialist, consultant Karen Legge.

The first of three workshops with staff from opt in councils, Bathurst, Orange, Parkes and Forbes and representatives from state agencies including DPE Water, the Department of Regional NSW and the Office of Local Government was held in Orange on 30 August. Representatives from Goulburn Mulwaree also attended to inform a similar project in the Canberra JO region.

Participants discussed how best to utilise the IP&R framework to achieve the outcomes and expectations of DPE's Regulatory and Assurance Framework (RAF). This included mapping each of the 106 expectations from the RAF for LWU strategic planning to the IP&R framework elements.

One-to-one conversations with opt-in councils have since been held and have included discussion of challenges and resources that would be helpful for a Toolkit (one of the deliverables for this project).

A draft spreadsheet capturing the workshop outcomes and Toolkit ideas has been circulated to project participants for consideration. This spreadsheet demonstrates how meeting the RAF expectations is essentially just implementing good IP&R practice.

The next meeting of the project steering committee will be held in early December.

The key takeaway from this project is the importance of enabling strategic planning for LWUs to be undertaken through the existing IP&R framework of the NSW Local Government Act and not through some other duplicative framework or process developed by DPE Water without any legislative mandate.

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Executive Officer, Jenny Bennett participated in a panel discussion on the use of IP&R for LWU strategic planning at the annual NSW Water Directorate Forum in Sydney on 15 September. Also on the panel was Sascha Moege, Manager Water Utility Policy and Pricing, DPE Water. This session attracted a great deal of interest and support from other councils seeking to do similar work. A follow-up meeting was held on 16 October with Shoalhaven Water who are taking a similar approach and are interested in contributing to this project.

### **Regional Water Loss Management Project**

With drought conditions intensifying work on the CNSWJO Water Loss Management Project is just one component of the multi-source approach to water security. It aims to ensure that water distribution systems are operating optimally with water losses identified and repairs made. Water efficiency is a priority for the state government and the region continues to demonstrate through its leading work in this area that it is doing the heavy lifting to save water.

This project is, however, proving to be complex and time-consuming due largely to resourcing issues including high levels of staff turnover within councils LWUs and the many competing priorities.

What has become evident is that project consultants are needed on the ground to work with operational staff to assess what is needed to get systems operating to their optimum from a water loss management perspective. While progress is slow, this is all positive as it is achieving what was intended from the outset which is to improve maturity and embed in-house capability. DPE Water are using lessons learned to inform the design of better fit-for-purpose programming for further rollout across the state. This is also positive and aligned with JO advocacy.

Another positive is that this project is enabling a strong collaborative partnership with DPE Water's Manager of Water Efficiency Programs, Jethro Laidlaw. Through this we have been able to leverage other work being rolled out across the state funded by DPE Water including access to the Sydney Water leak detection dogs for detection work in Parkes and Orange and a data management pilot with Orange, Parkes, Forbes, Lachlan and Central Tablelands Water.

Aside from the procurement and installation of a range of water loss management equipment across councils currently underway, an on-line knowledge hub is also in development. Further advice regarding the knowledge hub tool will be provided in a future report.

### **Sydney Water leak Detection Dog Visit**

Sydney Canine Environmental Network Team (SCENT) were engaged to part of the DPE Water leak reduction program to help local regional communities reduce water losses and boost drought resilience. Sydney Water's team of two water leak detection dogs covered 37.45km of water main throughout Parkes Shire Council and Orange City Council, locating a total of 14 confirmed potable water leaks and 1 possible pollution event.

While Minister Jackson did not attend, she pre-recorded an interview and issued a media release which resulted in good media coverage across radio on ABC Central West and also on Prime TV. DPE Water also promoted the event via their monthly newsletter.

<https://watergroup.dpie.nsw.gov.au/link/id/zzzz654a89659e938700Pzzzz64f6cdfebdd96126/page.html>

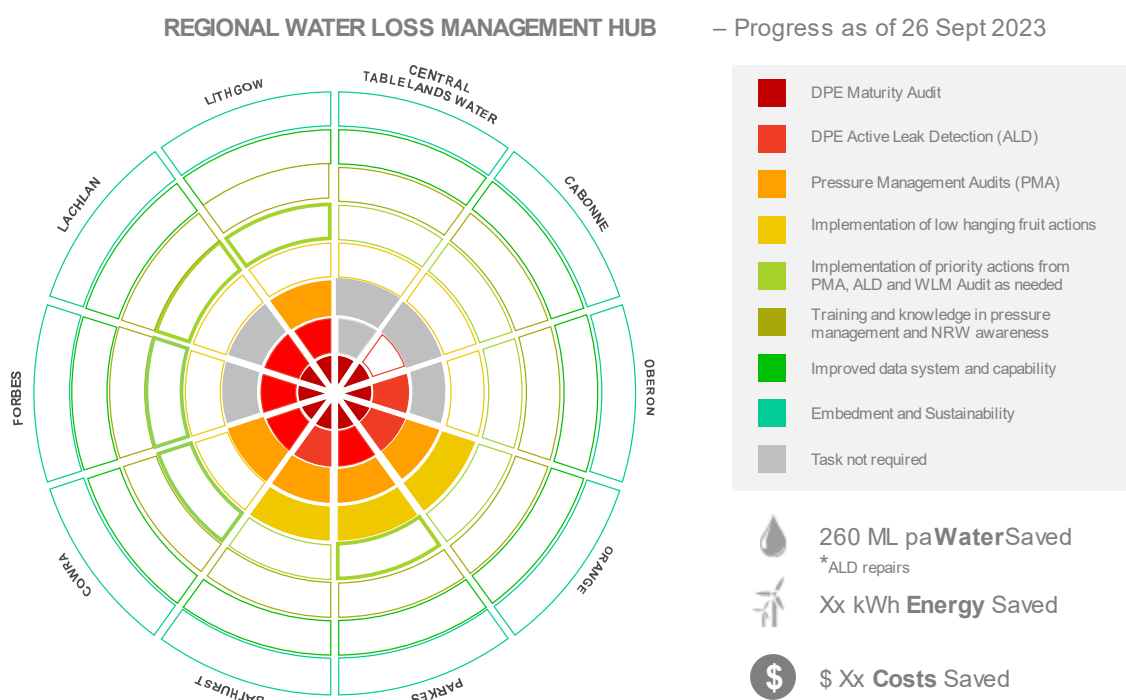
<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-10-18/sydney-water-dogs-detect-pipe-leaks-regional-nsw/102942106>

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Sydney Water Leak Detection Dogs visit to Parkes and Orange – October 23

The following infographic has been developed in partnership with DPE Water to track progress on the Water Loss Management project.



### Smart Water Regional Membership

Through the Water Utilities Alliance, members have enjoyed reduced membership rates through a regional membership of the Water Services Association of Australia auspiced Smart Water program for many years now.

The subscription provides participating councils with online water efficiency collateral for communication with their communities including:

- a Central NSW Councils landing page – with all participating councils logos included;
- access to on-line resources including saving water in the home, garden and in business;

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- access to the on-line plant finder – specific to the region;
- links to water efficiency videos and you tube clips;
- facts sheets, posters and postcards with Council logos included for download;
- the Blue House – interactive video of water wise living in the home;
- interactive water calculator; and
- white goods selector.

Where the DPE Water Efficiency Program funded one year's subscription for our members, the original three-year agreement is now up for renewal. This program is an important tool in the water efficiency kit for councils.

The CNSWJO is currently seeking interest from members to renegotiate this agreement and will seek to execute the contract with Smart water mark pending interest as per the delegation in the procurement policy.

### **Regional asset management assessments**

The University of Newcastle Institute for Regional Futures has just completed regional asset management assessments for Blayney, Lachlan, Oberon, Weddin, Parkes and Lithgow using the National Asset Management Assessment Framework (NAMAF).

NAMAF assesses a council's asset and financial management maturity, capacity and capability. It is a national framework based on *leading* practice, which is relevant and applicable to the IP&R requirements and guidelines of all Australian Local Government jurisdictions.

Each council will be provided with an individual report including recommendations for improvements in asset management. These assessments will be consolidated into a regional report highlighting opportunities for future regional programming. The opportunity exists for individual council reports to inform Asset Management Improvement Plans for reporting to ARICs.

Preliminary findings from assessments highlight alignment of asset management practices with the work underway to transition LWU strategic planning into the IP&R framework. A detailed report will be provided to the February Board meeting.

### **Advocacy**

The regional water portfolio Mayors and sponsoring GMs continue to meet 6 weekly and have oversight of the development of strategy and advocacy collateral in the water space. This includes consideration of a potential campaign in support of town water security as drought conditions intensify.

### **Consultative processes**

There are numerous state government consultations recently finalised, underway or pending. Refer to the Governance and Advocacy report that seeks endorsement for recent submissions.

### **Wyangala Dam wall raising Final Business Case – what now?**

A briefing was provided to members by Water Infrastructure NSW on 10 October on the Wyangala Final Business Case. A copy is available here (and yes it *really* is titled Wyangala *Damn* wall raising). [https://water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/578481/wyangala-damn-wall-raising-final-business-case.pdf](https://water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/578481/wyangala-damn-wall-raising-final-business-case.pdf) The PowerPoint presentation from this meeting has been circulated to meeting attendees and is available on request.

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Those who attended the meeting can talk to the frustration of a business case developed with little to no social considerations, a lack of clarity around the biodiversity offsets costs and no understanding of the full extent of options needed to provide water security for food and people (and flood mitigation) over a 50-year planning horizon. Especially based on population projections by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

What is clear is that the NSW Government is looking to the options in the Lachlan Regional Water Strategy to resolve town water security and flooding risks. As succinctly put by sponsoring GM, Kent Boyd, to ensure water security, for food and people (and flood mitigation) the region will need to look to all options over a 50-year planning horizon starting now -this includes the pipe grid, Wyangala Upgrade, Lake Rowlands augmentation, groundwater etc.

The water portfolio Mayors and sponsoring GMs are considering next steps which includes:

- Seeking greater transparency of the economic modelling and other key documents that inform the *assumptions* made in the business case;
- Increased advocacy focussing on the legislative and other frameworks not recognising the primacy of human consumption/social impacts of water/flood; and
- a meeting with Lachlan Valley Water to talk about next steps.

#### **Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy**

After four years of consultation by DPE Water with the CNSWJO and its members that included the retrofitting of the town water challenges for towns in the unregulated Macquarie River system, the final Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy was released on 31 October and is available here:

<https://water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/plans-and-programs/regional-water-strategies/final/macquarie-castlereagh-regional-water-strategy>

Of particular interest is the Implementation Plan:

[https://water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/586819/macquarie-castlereagh-rws-implementation-plan-final.pdf](https://water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/586819/macquarie-castlereagh-rws-implementation-plan-final.pdf)

The CNSWJO fought hard for this and while not exactly what we were looking for it represents a major step forward. Advocacy has focused on the need for a Governance and Implementation Plan to ensure these strategies deliver the outcomes so desperately needed. The challenge will now be seeing this plan enacted.

#### **Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal WaterNSW Operating Licence Review**

A submission was lodged on 13 October. This has implications for Lithgow and Oberon (Fish River Water Supply Scheme) relating to pricing, water quality, access to data including secure yield and collaboration with customers. Consultation also sought feedback on licence extension to non-declared catchments for catchment, water quality and flood management and on whether WNSW should be required to manage its relationship with LWUs through an MoU, protocol or policy.

<https://www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/content/uploads/231013-WaterNSW-operating-licence-review-2022-2024-Final-Submission.pdf>

#### **Joint Select Committee on Protecting Local Water Utilities from Privatisation**

A submission was lodged on 29 October. The Committee is inquiring into and reporting on how the Government can prevent and stop privatisation of local water utilities.

## Reports



This inquiry stemmed from legislation passed by the newly elected Minns Government to protect Sydney and Hunter Water from privatisation. At the time, the opposition lead by the Hon. Steph Cooke, Shadow Minister for Water advocated for Local Government owned and operated local water utilities to be included under this legislation. The Minister for Water, the Hon Rose Jackson announced that the inquiry would be held to ensure that there were no inadvertent adverse impacts from the inclusion of regional water utilities. The Committee is chaired by the Hon. Stephen Lawrence MLC and the Shadow Minister for Water, Steph Cooke is a member.

Advice from DPE Water is that their long-awaited review of alternate funding models for local water utilities will be held over until the findings of this inquiry are known. This was a commitment from the Town Water Risk Reduction Program phase one.

Refer to the Governance and Advocacy Report for a confidential attachment being the CNSWJO submission to this inquiry.

#### **DPE Water Review of Performance Monitoring Indicators for Local Water Utilities**

A submission was lodged on 31 October. This consultation sought feedback on additional NSW data sets for LWUs. Currently there are 166 indicators mandated for LWUs with over 10,000 connections under the BOMs National Performance Report. Total new "requirement" could be ~ 210 and not all are easy to find data sets or useful to LWUs. The key message has been that 'this data is for regulators' not to assist LWUs to manage their businesses. Our submission has requested that while recognising the importance of good data for evidence-based decision making, data sets need to be reduced and be useful to a LWU in managing their business.

[https://www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/content/uploads/231031\\_Submission-on-DPE-Review-of-Performance-Monitoring-Indicators\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/content/uploads/231031_Submission-on-DPE-Review-of-Performance-Monitoring-Indicators_FINAL.pdf)

#### **DPE Water Draft Lachlan Regional Water Strategy Proposed Options**

A submission was lodged on 10 November following a series of public and targeted consultation sessions run by DPE Water in Lachlan valley communities and online. Following the decision on Wyangala dam the Minister has pointed to the options in this strategy in addressing long-term water security and flood issues. The region has expressed its disappointment and concern regarding what are high-level long-term options that will not deliver the water security needed in preparation for the impending drought or the flood mitigation it had hoped for after four years of working with DPE on this strategy.

CNSWJO has long advocated for the 'missing piece' being better intergovernmental collaboration within region with local government with a seat at the decision-making table. It is hoped that Action1.1 in this draft strategy will enable this. This action is summarised as:

*Establish an enduring coordination approach in partnership with local councils and local water utilities in the Lachlan region to support the implementation of town water-related actions under Priority 1, and improve coordinated, timely decision-making regarding extreme events (including drought and flood).*

This action is also included in the Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy. See above.

[https://www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/content/uploads/231108\\_submission- Lachlan-Regional-Water-Strategy\\_FINAL-.pdf](https://www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/content/uploads/231108_submission- Lachlan-Regional-Water-Strategy_FINAL-.pdf)

**Fish River Wywandy Subregional Water Strategy**

CNSWJO staff and representatives from Bathurst, Orange, Lithgow and Oberon Councils attended a consultation with DPE Water in Bathurst on 2 November on the Fish River- Wywandy Subregional Water Strategy.

Where Lithgow has been overlooked in the development of the Regional Water Strategies, this new strategy will cover the Lithgow, Upper Blue Mountains and Upper Macquarie areas. It will be critically important because of the energy diversification issues being considered by other agencies and the water security issues faced by towns in the surrounding area. It will be developed under the same policy framework and objectives of the regional water strategies program.

The strategy will support the economic transition of the broader Lithgow area. It will also address water security issues for the key regional centres of Lithgow, Bathurst and the Upper Blue Mountains. The key water resource issues for this subregion identified to date are:

- there are water security risks for towns and communities in and around the strategy area
- the Fish River Water Supply Scheme will require significant investment in coming years
- the region's economy is undergoing significant transition
- there is policy uncertainty about managing the large volumes of entitlement licensed for the specific purpose of coal-fired power generation.

The CNSWJO and members advocated strongly at this meeting for representation on the Steering Committee for this project. Work on this front continues.

**DPE Water consultation on Harmonisation of Water Restrictions**

Consultation was anticipated in September-October but has now been put back to early 2024. This consultation is to identify and develop options to improve existing guidance on strategic planning outcomes that cover water restrictions. It will seek to encourage and enable a more consistent and harmonised approach to applying water restrictions in water utilities based on common principles. DPE Water plan the rollout of an extensive stakeholder consultative process across regional NSW.

**Advocacy Collateral****Priority Water Infrastructure Brochure**

Following presentation to the Board at its August meeting, further consultation has been undertaken with members on the Priority Water Infrastructure brochure. A copy is provided as an attachment. It is suggested that the Board endorse the Priority Water Infrastructure brochure for use for advocacy purposes.

See the briefing notes for Minister Jackson where her support is being sought to work with the CNSWJO region to:

- represent the water grid projects to the National Water Grid;
- provide an update on the progress of the Belubula Water Security Project Final Business Case;
- help speed up the timeframes of DPE Water in enabling water security projects to progress notably stormwater harvesting for Bathurst and Orange.

Following a meeting with Minister Plibersek's Water Advisor, Michael Wrathall and a representative from the National Water Grid, Mark Darrough on 26 July efforts to line up a follow up meeting are proving challenging.

## Reports

Where the National Water Grid is currently calling for expressions of interest for its latest round of funding for state-led urban water security projects, the Minister's support is needed to progress key infrastructure projects notably those that enable the long sought regional water grid which is also referenced in the draft Lachlan Regional Water Strategy for further investigation (Action 1.7). For more detail reference the submission on the proposed options.

**Productive Water**

The Policy Lab working group have advised that the focus for the second CSU Policy Lab to be held in early 2024 will be productive water. CNSWJO nominees for this are:

Cr Bill West, Cr David Somerville, Mr Kent Boyd, Mr Darren Sturgiss (Bathurst) and Mr Garry Styles. Preliminary discussions have commenced and a meeting of this group is currently being coordinated.

**Value for Members**

Work by the CNSWJO in the regional water portfolio supports member councils in the planning and management of quality, secure water and sewer services for central NSW communities. The work of the collaborative Water Utilities Alliance supports the Board's key advocacy priority for Local Government ownership and management of Local Water utilities in regional NSW.

**Financial Implications****WLM Project**

The WLM Project Control Group (Technical Committee) will prioritise expenditure both from the existing project funding and for any future work outside the scope of this initial program. This prioritisation will be based on the following heads of consideration:

- Impact on non-revenue water
- Capacity of Council to pay.

Any additional funding requirements will be discussed with individual councils based on costings for Pilot Projects.

**IP&R Project Budget**

The budget for this project is \$49,320 (ex GST). This excludes the optional desktop published Toolkit.

The OLG has granted approval for a variation of \$25,000 previously earmarked for a Workforce Development Plan for Water and Wastewater to support this initiative. The balance will be funded by the CNSWJO through the Water Utilities Alliance budget.

**Attachment/s:**

15. Priority Water Infrastructure Brochure

## Reports



**Priority Seven: Transition to a sustainable, secure and affordable energy future****k. Energy Program Report**

<b>Regional Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>7: Transition to a sustainable, secure and affordable energy future</b> 7.1 Energy Efficiency and Emissions Reduction 7.2 Circular Economy 7.3 Environment 7.4 Understanding our energy (fuel and electricity) security, capacity and scalability
<b>Portfolio Mayor</b>	Cr Mark Kellam
<b>Sponsoring General Manager/s</b>	Mr B Byrnes, Mr P Devery, Mr G Tory and Mr D Waddell

Report by Kate Barker dated 14 November 2023

<b>Recommendation/s</b>
<p><b>That the Board note the Energy Program Report and;</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>note the progress of the business case on the nexus between energy security and emissions reduction and</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>note the draft business case document and the appendices;</b></li> <li><b>endorse option 3 of the business case as the recommended option;</b></li> <li><b>endorse the business case 'placemat';</b></li> </ol> </li> <li><b>advocate to the NSW OECC to extend the JONZA program to ensure embedment and efficient implementation of activities that support the region's net zero aspirations into the future;</b></li> <li><b>advocate to the EPA and the OECC for support and funding to progress activities that will assist councils in reducing emissions from landfill;</b></li> <li><b>approve a regional application by CNSWJO for interested member councils for the Community Energy Upgrades Fund;</b></li> <li><b>note the estimated cost savings of \$2.37m for members between January to June 2023 under the large sites and streetlighting electricity contract; and</b></li> <li><b>note the AER's draft determination in relation to Essential Energy's pricing proposal for public lighting was not approved and note the importance of the ongoing work that the Southern Lights Group continues to conduct on behalf of members, where it was the only submission received in relation to public lighting.</b></li> </ol>

**Precis**

This report provides an update on the varying activities under the energy priority, including:

- business case on the Nexus Between Energy Security and Emissions Reduction; and
- JONZA program;
- electricity savings;
- AER determination for public lighting;
- submissions.

The Business Case on the Nexus Between Energy Security and Emissions Reduction is nearing completion, with the Cost Benefit Analysis being conducted on 3 options:

1. Address immediate energy reliability and security issues
2. Address future energy reliability and security issues (inclusive of option 1)
3. Target high emissions areas (inclusive of options 1 and 2)

# Reports

The business case, funded by Regional NSW, will be presented to the Board the 23 November meeting in Sydney.

This report also highlights the \$2.3m cost savings achieved for members under the new electricity contract for large sites and streetlighting between 1 January and 30 June 2023.

Further, this report recommends advocacy in 2 areas:

1. To the OECC in relation to the JONZA program being extended
2. To the EPA and OECC in relation to funding and support for councils to reduce landfill emissions

## Reason for this report

This report provides an updated on the varying projects currently underway through the energy priority. It also seeks endorsement of the Business Case on the Priority Investments for the Nexus Between Energy Security and Emissions Reduction, as well as the approval for the CNSWJO to facilitate a regional application for interested member councils for the \$100m Community Energy Upgrades Fund.

There are 2 key areas of advocacy, both in relation to funding – firstly to extend the JONZA program, and secondly to seek funding and support from the EPA and the OECC to assist councils in reducing landfill emissions.

## Legislative, Policy and Risk Considerations

### Risks

The CNSWJO Risk Management Plan 2022 identifies the following risks that are material to this report:

- 1 – Failure of the JO network;
- 7 – Despite the efforts by the OLG and subsequent to the JO Review, all councils in the JO footprint do not engage;
- 14 – Review recommendations to “bring the State to the table” do not deliver network sustainability;
- 19 – Long term viability and financial sustainability; and
- 20 – Turnover of staff in councils who are working on JO projects – loss of corporate knowledge

### Business Case

A significant amount of work on the business case has been undertaken since the last report to the Board in August. The Project Control Group has been meeting fortnightly, and the Steering Committee has been meeting monthly to progress this project. Importantly, the Steering Committee consisted of many key stakeholders, including Essential Energy.

The business case explored 4 key issues:

- electricity supply does not consistently meet demand in many areas of Central NSW;
- decentralised renewable generation is growing, but the current grid cannot handle it;
- community resistance is creating barriers to large-scale renewable energy projects; and
- current high energy prices are adding to cost-of-living pressures for consumers.

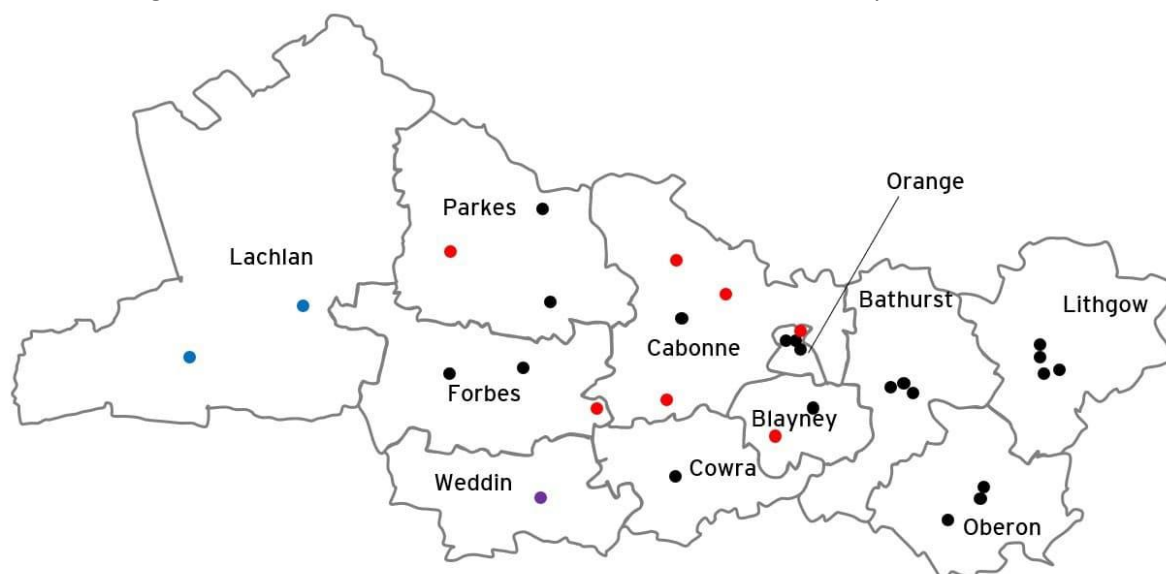
# Reports

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

In regard to issue #1, of the region's 30 zone substations, one-third and their surrounding areas are currently experiencing:

- network constraints – where electricity demand exceeds the rated infrastructure capacity, and/or
- reliability issues – where supply interruptions in minutes are highest in the region.

The following shows the substations with network constraints or reliability issues – or both:






## Energy Infrastructure

- Zone Substations
- Zone Substations with network constraints
- Zone Substations with reliability issues
- Zone Substations with network constraints and reliability issues

Source: EY analysis of DNSP data

During consultation with key stakeholders, the following 3 options were considered in a building block approach:

Option 1. Address immediate energy reliability and security issues	
 Address the areas currently experiencing the worst reliability and energy security issues through examining current limitations of Central NSW's substations.	
Locations	Technology solution identified
Areas with reliability issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lake Cargelligo, Lachlan</li> <li>▪ Condoblin, Lachlan</li> <li>▪ Grenfell, Weddin</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appropriately sized battery storage solution located at the zone substation with a co-located small-scale (&lt;5MW) solar farm.</li> </ul>
Areas with energy security issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mandurama, Blayney</li> <li>▪ Canowindra, Cabonne</li> <li>▪ Cumnock, Cabonne</li> <li>▪ Molong, Cabonne</li> <li>▪ Paytens Bridge, Forbes</li> <li>▪ Orange Industrial, Orange</li> <li>▪ Trundle, Parkes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increased uptake of behind-the-meter DER generation (rooftop solar PV) and storage (batteries) solutions.</li> </ul>

Option 2. Address future energy reliability and security issues (inclusive of option 1)	
 <p>In addition to addressing current security and reliability issues, address reliability and energy security issues where demand growth is expected in the medium term, to future-proof the region and support regional population and industry growth.</p>	
Locations	Technology solution identified
Bathurst – Laffing Waters residential precinct*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microgrid with onsite small-scale solar farm and an appropriately sized battery located within the residential precinct embedded network.</li> <li>A VPP to enable effective utilisation of behind-the-meter DER assets within the precinct.</li> <li>Increased uptake of rooftop solar PV, home batteries and EVs.</li> </ul>
Orange Airport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microgrid.</li> <li>Onsite DER generation and storage solutions (small-scale solar farm, rooftop solar PV and battery solutions).</li> </ul>
Option 1 Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option 1 technology solutions with a VPP across those locations to reduce the risk of future energy security issues in those areas and ensure continued reliability / security of option 1 infrastructure for the long term.</li> </ul>
Option 3. Target high emissions areas (inclusive of options 1 and 2).	
 <p>In addition to addressing energy security and reliability issues, identify technology solutions or enabling mechanisms to support emission reduction in Central NSW through a focus on high emission areas / sectors and identifying solutions to enable and support private investment that contributes towards the region transitioning from natural gas.</p>	
Locations	Technology Solution Identified
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cowra - EV transport hub</li> <li>Lithgow – EV transport hub</li> <li>Parkes – EV transport hub</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ultra-fast EV charger.</li> <li>Co-located small-scale solar farm and battery solution to supplement grid-power to the EV charger.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oberon – enabling environment for gas-to-renewables transition**</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocacy and stakeholder engagement by CNSWJO to create a supportive and enabling environment for local commercial and industrial businesses to transition from gas-to-renewables, such as by deploying and installing waste-to-energy technologies in the region (e.g. Borg in Oberon).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option 1 Locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option 1 technology solutions with a VPP across those locations to reduce the risk of future energy security issues in those areas and ensure continued reliability / security of option 1 infrastructure for the long term.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option 2 Locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option 2 technology solutions.</li> </ul>

While feedback on the contents of the report was provided by some councils, no councils raised concern with any of the proposed options.

The Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) conducted as part of the project assessed all 3 options, with Option 3 being identified as the preferred option with a positive Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR). In addition to the monetised benefits, Option 3 provides the highest level of qualitative benefit, supporting its preference compared to the alternative options considered. These benefits include:

- supporting broader resiliency savings (broader benefits to government and the DNSPs given Distributed Energy Resources (DER) can support and complement network energy in the face of natural disasters and other events when the network suffers from outages);
- rapid deployment of electricity infrastructure (the construction and commissioning of DER technology is generally significantly quicker to deploy, ensuring immediate electricity needs can be addressed); and
- less disturbances to the community during construction (DER technology can often be constructed with significantly less interruptions to local communities and businesses).

Critically however, compared to Options 1 and 2, Option 3 (the preferred option) offers additional tourism support and benefits related to supporting the energy transition in the region which would otherwise not occur under the other options.

## Reports

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

A roadmap for the JO and its member councils, along with an implementation plan will be provided prior to the meeting. Ernst & Young representatives will be in attendance at the meeting on 23 November and welcome the opportunity to present the findings of the work to the Board.

Noting there is a vast amount of information contained within the business case and the accompanying appendices which are attached, this report seeks the Board's endorsement of option 3 as the preferred option. The Board will receive a further report at the February 2024 meeting, which will seek endorsement of the business case in its entirety.

Further, a 'placemat' will be provided to members prior to the Board meeting, and this report seeks endorsement of such to be used as an advocacy document, particularly during the briefing with the Minister.

### Update on JONZA Program

While the JONZA program had a staggered start, the CNSWJO commenced the 12-month program on 1 February 2023 whereas many others commenced in the months following. Advice has been received from the NSW OECC's Sustainable Councils program, that the JONZA program will be extended to 30 June 2024 for all JOs to bring all JOs in line.

Further work is being undertaken to advocate for a longer term of the project noting the success it is having across the JO footprint. It is recommended that the Board advocate to the OECC to extend the JONZA program to support embedment and efficient implementation of projects.

The mid-term report is due to the OECC towards the end of November.

The main projects underway with members under this program are:

- Emissions Reduction Plans;
- Fleet Transition Plans (including Fleet Transition Day in Parkes on 1 November); and
- preparing for the upcoming \$100m Community Energy Upgrades Fund from the Australian Government.

The following table provides an update on the progress of 17 key activities being progressed through the JONZA program.

	Complete
	Underway
	Not yet started

Action	Update	Status
1. Net Zero Action Plan (NZAP) for the renamed CNSWJO Regional Net Zero Group (NZG) shows progress on a least one item for every Council	<p>Energy Group has been renamed to Net Zero Group. Progress for each council will continue to be tracked through the tracking spreadsheet.</p> <p>Meetings are being organised with individual councils to support the updating of the spreadsheet and to collect further information to feed into the maturity tracker (found below this table)</p>	

## Reports

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

Action	Update	Status
2. Terms of Reference for the CNSWJO Energy Group is reviewed to align with this project and this group becomes the CNSWJO Regional Net Zero Group	Terms of Reference were reviewed and amended at the May 2023 meeting of the Group.	Complete
3. Update procurement Policy to incorporate Social and Sustainability Procurement elements.	<p>Two CNSWJO staff members attended sustainable procurement training in early September. Funding was received on behalf of 5 JOs through LGP's Capability Fund to attend the training in Sydney.</p> <p>Work will now commence on the development of a draft sustainable procurement policy for use by JOs and member councils should they choose. It is anticipated that the Board will receive a report at its February meeting.</p>	
4. Emissions Reduction Plans (ERP) for each Council for scopes 1 and 2	<p>Underway. Where Bathurst and Cabonne have previously completed this work in 2022, the remaining councils are in the process of developing these plans through consultants 100% Renewables. This project is fully funded by the OECC's Sustainable Councils program to the value of \$188k.</p> <p>Bathurst and Cabonne are working with the consultant on conducting a baseline analysis of their scope 3 emissions.</p> <p>The consultant has been meeting with councils in October/November to walk through the findings of the reports.</p>	
5. Tool for Councils to track emissions	<p>The carbon inventory tool has been developed and sent to all member councils, pre-populated with their scopes 1 and 2 data. The tool enables the councils to track their emissions for fuel, gas, electricity, wastewater and landfill year on year.</p> <p>The tool was developed through funding received from the OECC.</p> <p>CNSWJO staff are available to support councils to use the tool.</p>	Complete
6. Identify training opportunities and	Training in the use of the tool has been	Complete

## Reports

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

Action	Update	Status
provide training in use of the tool, and develop an accountability framework to enable embedment within the JO including NZOPM support if required.	undertaken through a series of webinars.  The emissions factors will need to be updated annually, where CNSWJO can collect the relevant information and send to councils. Councils can reach out to CNSWJO staff for support in using the tool.  Training in the use of the tool was funded by the OECC.	
7. Develop an implementation plan for the CNSWJO Emissions Reduction Plan: Regional Opportunities	Underway. The regional ERP will be updated with any relevant findings not already captured during the development of the plan using Bathurst and Cabonne information. An implementation plan will be developed after the update has been conducted.	
8. Develop a business case for the change of ownership of streetlights	Yet to commence. Awaiting the outcome of the current AER Determination where this will affect the business case.	
9. Develop a business case for renewable street lighting/other external community lighting	Scoping to commence shortly.	
10. A fleet transition plan for each Council	Underway. Members have received funding of \$94,500 to develop a fleet transition plan for every council, and update the existing plan for Bathurst. Included in this work is the development of a template which will support other JOs and their members to develop plans. See details below on the Fleet Transition Day in Parkes on 1 November which aimed to complement the development of the plans.	
11. Annual network tariff review for each council	A tool has been developed by Chargeworks through the Sustainable Councils program to enable the JONZA resources to conduct tariff reviews on behalf of member councils. Once the tool is received, a tariff review will be conducted by CNSWJO for member councils where it is expected this would be an annual exercise.	
12. Deliver emissions reduction through the water loss management program.	Please see an update on the program elsewhere in this business paper.	

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## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

Action	Update	Status
13. Develop business case for regional revolving energy fund	Underway. There is potential that a regional revolving energy fund could support JOs in financial sustainability for a dedicated energy resource, where the annual tariff reviews conducted through the JO for member councils in 2021 saw savings of \$300k.	
14. Direct Metering Agreement in place for councils small sites	This is mostly complete. A final review and tidy-up of any missed sites is yet to be completed, however most councils signed a DMA through the NSW Govt contract for both small and large sites with intervals, commencing around January 2021.	
15. Regional opportunities report for Virtual Power Plants for member councils	This is being explored through the Business Case.	
16. Review policy for transition to renewable energy future regarding the social licensing issues, then develop advocacy plan	Underway. Some update to the Energy Advocacy Plan has been done, however there are other community aspects that need to be explored further and included, where the Business Case is also considering how the community is affected and can potentially benefit from renewable energy projects.	
17. Develop policy and advocacy plan with regard to biodiversity, urban environments during climate change including tree canopy, and waste and landfill emissions.	Work has commenced on this item in an ad hoc manner, however it is yet to be pulled together into a formal plan. Work will continue in the coming months.	

CNSWJO staff are working with council staff to update the project tracking spreadsheet and the broader checklist to capture the status of councils in relation to targets, emissions, plans etc. This information then feeds into the maturity map which each JO under the JONZA program are using to track progress towards emissions reduction. The map is updated periodically, as more information is collected from councils.

## Reports



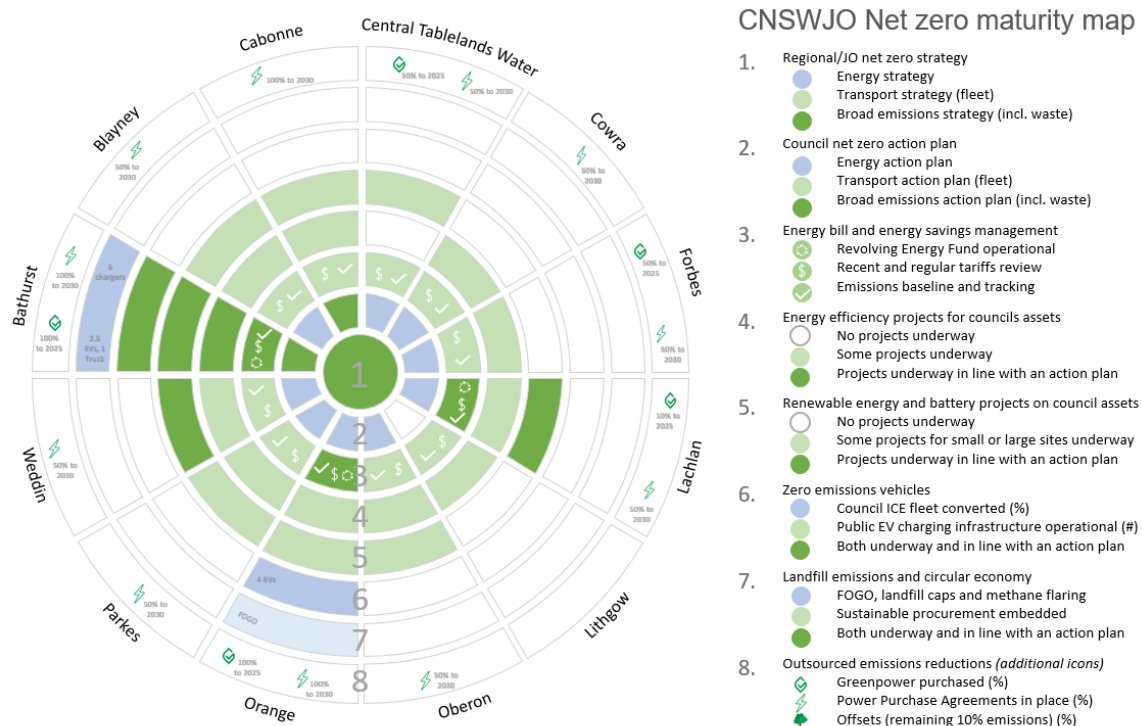


Image: CNSWJO Maturity Map – updated August 2023

### Emissions Reduction Plans

The development of the emissions reduction plans (ERPs) is underway through 100% Renewables who has been engaged through the NSW OECC's Sustainable Councils program. This work is fully funded through the program.

A strong theme that has been identified through this work is that landfill emissions account for 60-75% of councils' emissions. The remaining emissions are made up of gas, fuel/diesel, electricity and wastewater. While councils have begun to abate some of these emissions through the renewable energy contract, as well as exploring gas and EV transition activities, work is needed to identify ways to support member councils to reduce their landfill emissions.

Members have provided feedback throughout the process that advocacy to agencies such as the EPA is needed to seek support to help councils with funding to implement initiatives to reduce landfill emissions.

Once the ERPs have been finalised, the regional ERP (adopted was in November 2021) will be updated to reflect any changes or new insights that have been found through the development of the balance of the plans, where the original regional ERP based was on the findings from the work undertaken for Bathurst and Cabonne.

The following graphs are indicative of a council's emissions profile and possible pathway to net zero:

## Reports

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

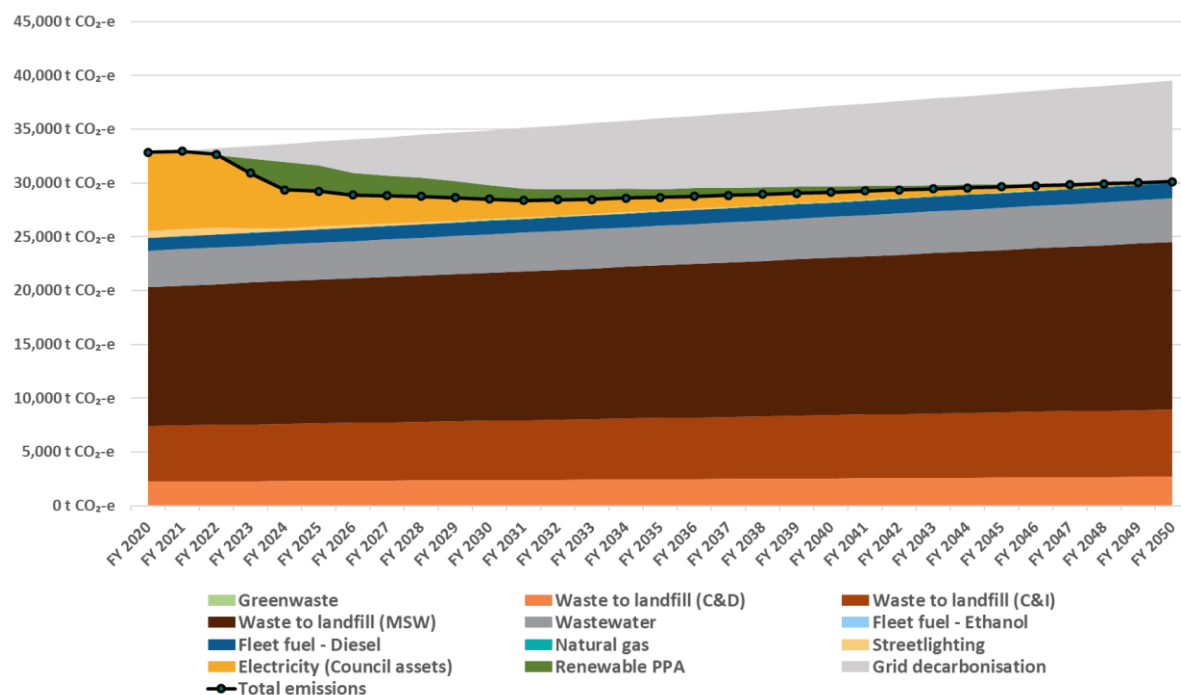


Image: example of forecast business-as-usual emissions to 2050

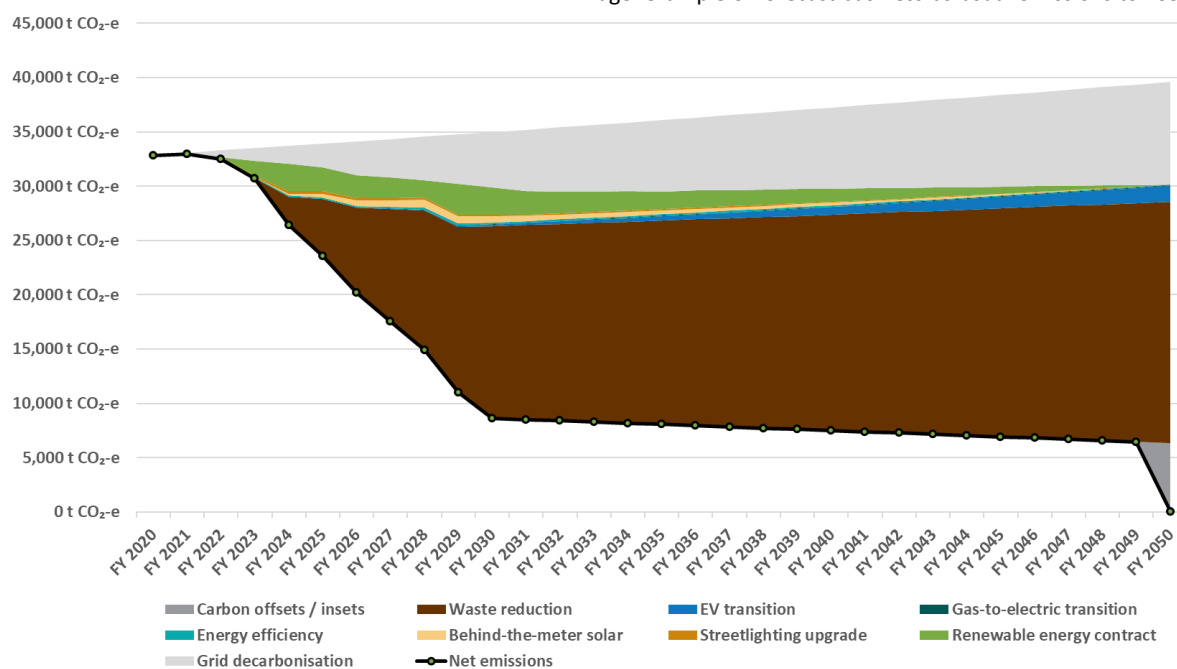


Image: example of emissions reduction pathway

On this basis, it is recommended that the JO Board seek to advocate to the EPA and the OECC, potentially in collaboration with Netwaste, to seek funding and other support for councils in reducing landfill emissions.

### Fleet Transition Day

On 1 November, CNSWJO hosted a Fleet Transition Day for member councils. Approximately 60 attendees participated in the day and heard presentations regarding the development of their fleet transition plans, charging infrastructure, EV availability and options, hydrogen, EVs on the electricity network and procurement options.

## Reports

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

The JO has received lots of positive feedback from the day and plans to host another EV event in 2024 to continue supporting councils with their fleet transition journey.



Image: Attendees at Fleet Transition Day.



Image: Vehicles on show at Fleet Transition Day

Attendees provided advice that the main barriers they see in the transition include:

- upfront cost
- attitude/behaviour
- charging infrastructure, range and managing remote areas
- vehicle availability and supply
- misinformation
- heavy vehicles

A full report on the outcomes and next steps will be provided in due course.

### Community Energy Upgrades Fund

The \$100m Community Energy Upgrades Fund from the Australian Government is expected in the coming months. At its October meeting, GMAC received a report on a suggested pathway to support members in a regional application. The report detailed two targeted applications – one for water and sewer assets, and the other for aquatic centres.

Potential activities a water and sewer applications could be:

- Variable Speed Drives;
- Power Factor Correction devices;

## Reports

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

- Solar and batteries; and
- LED lights.

For aquatic centres (where pools are consistently mentioned in the [media release](#), particularly ‘energy-intensive heating in council pools with heat pumps and energy efficient lighting’), potential activities could be:

- Gas boilers to heat pumps;
- Electrifying the gas hot water units used for showers;
- Variable Speed Drives;
- Power Factor Correction devices;
- Solar and batteries; and
- LED lights.

The JO could support such applications in either a preparation approach whereby data collection and analysis could be coordinated regionally and councils submit individual applications, or a regional application submitted by the JO on behalf of interested members, including the data and analysis work. Alternatively, members may wish to progress an application independently.

The guidelines are expected to be released in December, with applications opening in January, closing in April 2024. It is expected that there may be some level of co-contribution required. Should councils be interested, such co-contribution may be sourced collectively through the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, or other source.

The OECC’s Sustainable Councils program is supporting councils with gas boilers for pool water heating by providing funding for a consultant to develop a business case for a program which would include the activities listed above. Bathurst, Forbes, Lithgow, Orange and Parkes councils have gas boilers and have taken up the opportunity for the business case. It is anticipated that this work will make them grant-ready in anticipation of the grant.

It is recommended that the Board approve the CNSWJO to submit an application/s on behalf of participating councils, noting that some councils may wish to apply individually.

### Electricity savings

The electricity contract for large sites and streetlighting commenced on 1 January 2023, and with consumption data for January to June now available, the estimated cost savings have been calculated for member councils.

The following table identifies the estimated cost savings achieved by councils, comparing the current contract with an alternate contract that commenced at the same time. The calculations and figures used to determine the cost savings are available as commercial-in-confidence, on request.

SAVINGS	January to June 2023
Bathurst	\$731,368
Blayney	\$49,768
Cabonne	\$42,250
Central Tablelands Water	\$46,540
Cowra	\$153,507
Forbes	\$138,693
Lachlan	\$77,969
Lithgow*	\$0

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Oberon	\$26,974
Orange	\$768,255
Parkes	\$314,160
Weddin	\$23,142
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,372,625</b>

Further information is available to members on request.

These savings will be calculated on a quarterly basis and will be included in the cost savings table found toward the end of the business paper. The savings in the table above have been included in the final 2022-2023 FY savings.

### AER Determination for Public Lighting

In late September, the AER released its draft determination in response to Essential Energy's proposal submitted in January 2023. The current determination period is for 2024-2029, where the new pricing would commence in July 2024. While the determination considers revenue proposal across the various parts of Essential Energy, the focus for the JO and the other Southern Lights members focuses on public lighting only.

The AER has rejected much of Essential Energy's submission in relation to public lighting. It is important to note that the Southern Lights submission was the only one received in relation to Minor Capital Works and Public Lighting Services.

Southern Lights continues to push Essential Energy to recognise the value in smart controls, and it is encouraging to see the comments made by the AER in the draft determination in relation to the significant efficiencies to public lighting that smart controls have the potential to bring.

Essential Energy has until 30 November 2023 to submit their revised proposal. Southern Lights will have until the end of January 2024 to provide a submission to the AER in response to the revised proposal.

The above demonstrates the value of the Southern Lights group, and other JOs and councils in the EE footprint are being continually encouraged to participate in the group, where the state-wide benefit to such collaboration is proving to be significant.

### Submissions

Since the last meeting of the Board, there have been two relevant submissions lodged in the energy space:

1. **Submission to the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) on enhancing community engagement in transmission building** – the response argued that the absence of consistent policy at the federal level for the past decades has led to a narrowing window to meet emissions reduction targets, and this has led to poor outcomes for the communities in the current NSW scramble to rewire the state.

The submission advocated for a different approach to the coordination and focus from a logistics perspective, also noting that there needs to be more consideration for distributed energy systems which would likely be more logistically possible than the current effort.

2. **Submission to Portfolio Committee no. 7 – Planning and Environment on the inquiry into the planning system and the impacts of climate change on the environment and**

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**communities** - the submission highlighted the deficiencies in the current planning system in relation to meaningful consultation and accountability frameworks.

All submissions can be found on the CNSWJO website - [www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/submissions](http://www.centraljo.nsw.gov.au/submissions)

### **Value for members**

All programs and resources under this program are currently grant funded, and at no cost to councils, including the consulting work which is being funded by the NSW OECC. Details of the total grant funding received by members for this program can be found in the Quarterly Review report.

### **Financial implications**

As the funding for the JONZA program nears completion in early 2024, where other JOs complete their JONZA program in mid-2024, it is anticipated that additional funding will be provided to CNSWJO. It is not known at the time of writing this report what the value of the extension of the funding will be.

#### **Attachment/s:**

16. Business Case Opportunities Context Report
17. Business Case Demand Report
18. Business Case Capacity Report
19. Business Case Gas Transition Report
20. Business Case - draft
21. Business Case Roadmap - draft



**I. Just Transition to a Renewable Energy Future Report**

<b>Regional Strategic Priorities</b>	<b>7. Transition to a sustainable, secure and affordable energy future</b>
<b>Portfolio Mayor</b>	<b>Cr Mark Kellam</b>
<b>Sponsoring General Manager/s</b>	<b>Mr D Waddell, Mr B Byrnes, Mr G Tory and Mr P Devery</b>

**Report by Jenny Bennett dated 6 November 2023**

<b>Recommendation/s</b>
<p><b>That the Board note the Just Transition to a Renewable Energy Future Report and;</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. call on the NSW Government to, as a matter of urgency;</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a. provide a whole of government approach to the logistics of the infrastructure effort to rewire regional NSW;</b></li> <li><b>b. review the State Significant Development Process particularly with regard to</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i. cumulative impacts;</b></li> <li><b>ii. its applicability to the large-scale infrastructure effort in rewiring NSW;</b></li> <li><b>iii. timeframes for the post consultation period;</b></li> <li><b>iv. additional compulsory pre consultation requirements</b></li> <li><b>v. a fit for purpose mandated planning agreement policy and process; and</b></li> </ol> </li> <li><b>c. identify all cumulative impacts of rewiring of regional NSW including transport and housing;</b></li> <li><b>d. note development outside the Renewable Energy Zone and Energy Co remit is also substantial;</b></li> <li><b>e. provide just compensation to communities for these impacts where this compensation includes consideration of the ongoing, cumulative impacts of poor processes to date;</b></li> <li><b>f. direct NSW Government agencies and State-Owned Corporations to develop and implement policy that better engage and inform community on State Significant Development;</b></li> <li><b>g. provide assurance for energy security for the communities of Central NSW through the next decade of transition and beyond;</b></li> <li><b>h. ensure that there is sufficient water for urban communities leading into the next drought and that they have priority over the energy transition effort; and</b></li> <li><b>i. develop and implement policy that allows for optimal outcomes for agriculture co-located with large scale renewable energy generation;</b></li> <li><b>j. royalties on power generation from renewable energy productions go to all affected communities including those responsible for and impacted by the transport task;</b></li> <li><b>k. freight impacts for the Central NSW region be urgently assessed;</b></li> </ol> </li> <li><b>2. advocate for more funding for distributed energy generation, including seeking support for roll-out in the Central NSW region from Essential Energy, Endeavour Energy and Iberdrola;</b></li> <li><b>3. advocate for incentivising domestic battery uptake in region, to help both support the energy transition and energy security;</b></li> <li><b>4. note in particular the advice regarding windfarm projects in Forestry Corporation softwood forests in Bathurst, Lithgow, Oberon and Orange;</b></li> <li><b>5. update the advocacy policy and the CNSWJO Risk Management Plan in line with the resolve above; and</b></li> <li><b>6. ask the Advocacy Subcommittee of Mayors to monitor the situation closely and act in the interest of the region between Board meetings with an ongoing focus on supporting communities through this difficult period including seeking recompense and energy security.</b></li> </ol>

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**Precis**

An absence of consistent policy at the federal level in Australia for the past decades has led to a narrowing of the window to meet the nation's international obligations on greenhouse gas emissions' reduction and closure timeframes of coal-fired power generation.

This has led to some extremely poor outcomes for communities in the current NSW scramble to rewire the state. These poor outcomes are likely to continue for at least the next decade. Ironically, the poor execution of the rewiring of NSW is likely to lead to the process stumbling with ongoing challenges for community. The goal posts continue to change, for example recent advice on doubling the generation capacity at the neighbouring Central West and Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ).

Arguably, NSW needs to be on a war footing to achieve its aspirations for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Production needs to be scaled up supported by leadership to effect the change required. Further, a completely different approach to coordination and focus from a logistics perspective needs to be enabled. Instead, business as usual processes such as State Significant Development pathways with their corollary weaknesses and community impacts are in play.

It is imperative that as a region local leaders familiarise themselves with the likely implications of this ongoing very poorly executed transition and provide support to those communities who continue to experience the greatest impacts.

In this region the communities most likely to be impacted at this time are those to the east of the region where wind and hydrogeneration have the greatest potential.

Concurrently there are risks to the whole region that energy security may get lost as the priority for existing infrastructure is to support the neighbouring REZ and other large-scale generation.

What is particularly galling is that for all the pain regional communities will endure, it is likely that timeframes as outlined by the Australian Energy Market Commission for greenhouse gas reductions will not be achieved.

There needs to be a significant rethink about what is achievable where distributed energy systems and incentivising batteries in the domestic setting, including electric vehicles, would be much more logistically possible than the current effort.

**Reason for this report**

At the May 2023 Board meeting it was resolved that a report be provided on the issues with State Significant Development (SSD) approvals including but not limited to:

1. concerns regarding poor engagement with community and its impacts;
2. funding for Councils to manage the costs of community response including legal and other expert advice; and
3. minimising sterilisation of agricultural land including allowing grazing below panels.

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Subsequently a similar report to this has been provided to the Advocacy Subcommittee 29 September 2023 and GMAC October 2023 for further input.

This report responds to Board resolve and makes recommendations seeking adoption as listed above.

## Legislative, Policy and Risk Considerations

### Policy

After a decade of policy at the Federal level that did not enable Australia's comparatively lower-level international commitments to reducing carbon emissions, the State and local government in NSW have had to take the lead.

CNSWJO members are well into this work with its renewable energy power purchase agreement, renewable energy targets, plans for their implementation and continuing roll out of renewables in region. This region knows there is lost ground to be made up for example in waste emissions and the electrification of fleet, however the enablement of these is beyond local control.



It has been CNSWJO and Centroc before it to have policy seeking an orderly transition to a renewable energy future. The current CNSWJO Strategy adopted in November 2022 calls for an action to *Review policy approach to the anticipated rapid transition to a renewable energy future on the Social Licensing issues and raise awareness for renewable energy infrastructure.*

To date this involved a review of advocacy where this report provides more detail framed by the Board resolve of May.

The Board's advocacy position is as follows:

*Building on the work and reputation of Centroc, the CNSWJO will work collaboratively with relevant State, Federal and other government agencies to accelerate the transition towards net zero carbon for our Councils and communities. This work will occur where value to the communities of Central NSW is greatest and align with the NSW Government's stated goal of a 70% reduction in emissions by 2035 (based on a 2005 baseline).*

*An orderly transition to a renewable energy future is a priority of the CNSWJO Board. This includes consideration of energy security during the transition period.*

*It is noteworthy that regional Australia will bear the brunt of the impacts of rewiring the nation and policy at both the State and Federal levels needs to be developed that accounts for this, including better communications and consideration of compensation.*

*Based on the principles of subsidiarisation, decentralization and place-based planning, this advocacy will consider the electoral cycle, the likelihood of change, the need for urgency and*

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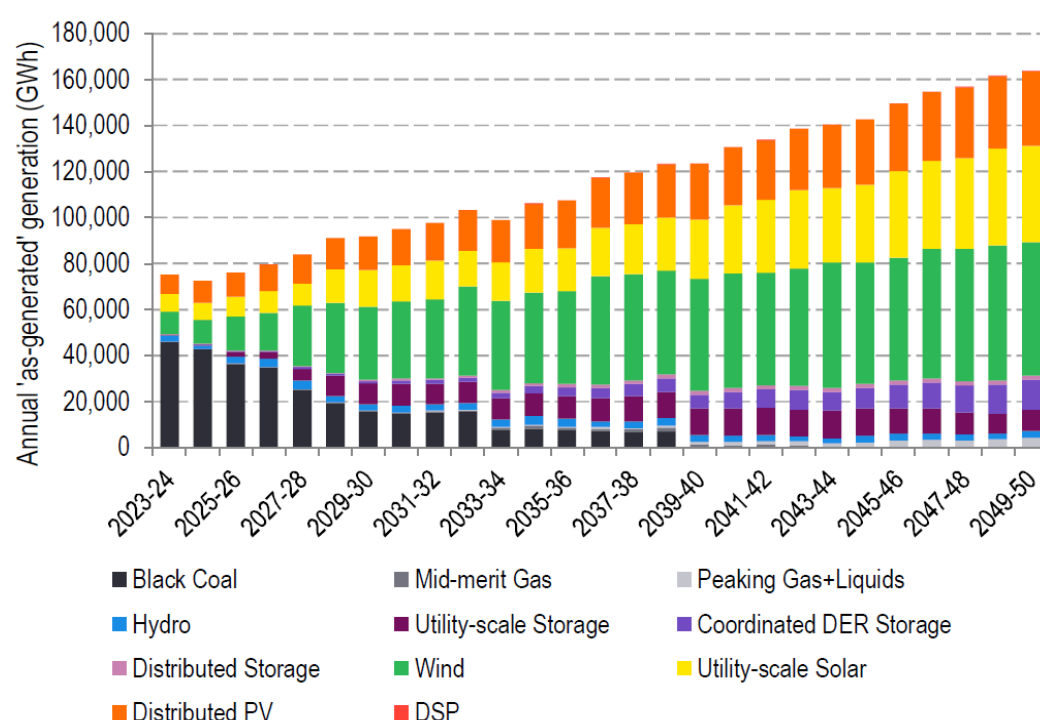
*demonstrated leadership in region.*

## Legislation

At the State level the previous government invested significantly in transitioning the State's energy production to renewables including setting up Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) and other legislation. For example, in October 2021, both houses of the Parliament of NSW passed the [Energy Legislation Amendment Bill 2021](#), which amended the Forestry Act 2012 to allow renewable energy projects to be considered within softwood plantations.

## Discussion

The Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) has identified a pathway for the nation to move to renewables. This clearly shows the rapid introduction of wind and utility scale solar with its corollary impacts on transmission lines and regional communities.



1

## Concerns regarding poor engagement with community and its impacts

Arguably, NSW Government legislation enabling the transition to a renewable energy future has been rushed, will continue to be rushed and its socialisation has been extremely poor. For example, the cumulative impacts on accommodation of the anticipated REZ construction are not considered, councils have not been engaged and assumptions have been made about their capacity and role in managing various issues, for example temporary worker housing. Other agencies, such as TfNSW, are raising concerns about the transport task where, as Australian Government policy is so far behind in embracing renewables with its corollary lacklustre manufacturing, a significant amount of the infrastructure needed must be imported by sea then transported into region.

<sup>1</sup> EY CNSWJO Capacity Assessment Report (Draft) p27 – please note DSP is demand side participation



Wind turbines imported at Port Kembla. Image: [Giant wind farm components imported at Port Kembla \(with video\) - Daily Cargo News \(thedcn.com.au\)](#)

The logistics of the build are not being coordinated. Communities have lost confidence are asking questions like:

- Where will the water for all this construction come from?
- Who pays for the water and sewer needed to house workers for the larger construction efforts?
- How will our quality-of-life change?
- Will this affect energy security for our community?
- How long will this go on for?
- Why is no one talking to us about this?

Please find attached recent correspondence from the Oberon Against Wind Turbines community group sent to all Board members and a media release provided by way of response.

## Reports



Anecdotal advice is there are only two cranes in Australia that have the height to construct the taller wind turbines and there is a three year wait to manufacture any more in Germany. Further, ten oversize overmass vehicles requiring escort will be needed, every 'out of school holidays and weekends' night for the next decade, to transport imported equipment for the build. Meanwhile the goal posts change, for example Energy Co are seeking to double the generation of the improperly named Central West and Orana REZ.



One wind turbine blade road transport breakdown on Cowra bridge – image credit: Over and Above Photography

Outside the REZs, renewable energy production will occur in locations that are suitable for a variety of factors including;

- proximity to port to import materials not manufactured in Australia;
- renewable generation potential, eg wind; and
- proximity to transmission infrastructure.

The east of the Central NSW Joint Organisation region aligns with the above factors where it is likely, given the poor coordination, that impacts will occur more broadly across the region as goal posts change.

Based on commentary from the Premier [NSW renewable energy delivered through overhead cables: Chris Minns \(smh.com.au\)](https://www.smh.com.au/nsw-renewable-energy-delivered-through-overhead-cables-2023-11-23) it is unlikely that the NSW Government will turn around its current approach with respect to overhead transmission and proceeding with the REZs.

#### **Development in State Forests**

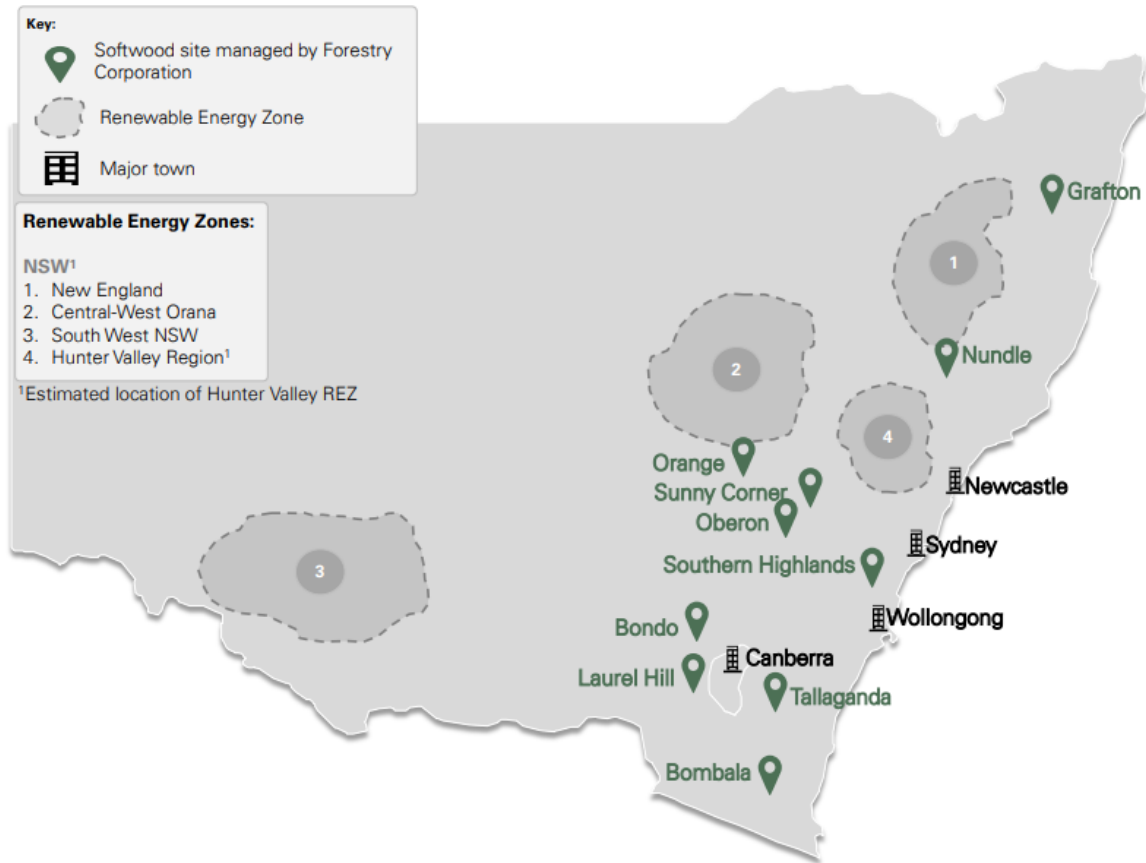
As advised above, Legislation has been effected to enable renewable energy projects to replace coal and ultimately most greenhouse gas emissions.

## **Reports**

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The [Forestry Corporation](#) provides the following advice:

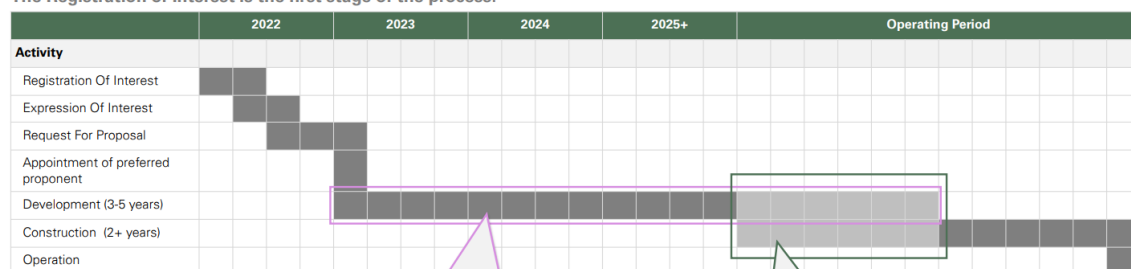
A total of 47 renewable energy providers registered their interest in establishing renewable energy projects in NSW State forest pine plantations. Respondents overwhelmingly identified wind power as the most feasible technology, with pumped hydro systems and battery storage opportunities also identified. The pine plantations near Oberon, Sunny Corner, Bondo, Orange and Laurel Hill were identified as the most feasible locations for initial investigations.



If any suitable proposals are identified, they would also have to undergo the normal planning application and approval process, which includes detailed requirements for community consultation and environmental assessments.

Different projects will have slightly different timelines. Below is an indication of a potential timeline through to operation

The Registration of Interest is the first stage of the process.



Activities undertaken in the Development Period include:

- Collection of Wind Data
- Negotiation of grid connection
- Environmental studies
- Design
- Planning Approvals

The duration of the planning phase is expected to range between 4 – 6 years

Commencement of the construction phase is contingent upon the developer successfully gaining all necessary development approvals as required by legislation. The duration of the development phase generally ranges between 3 – 5 years.

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These projects will fall into a SSD pathway with its requisite consultation framework.

Given the feedback from communities across the State, this process is not delivering good outcomes for communities.

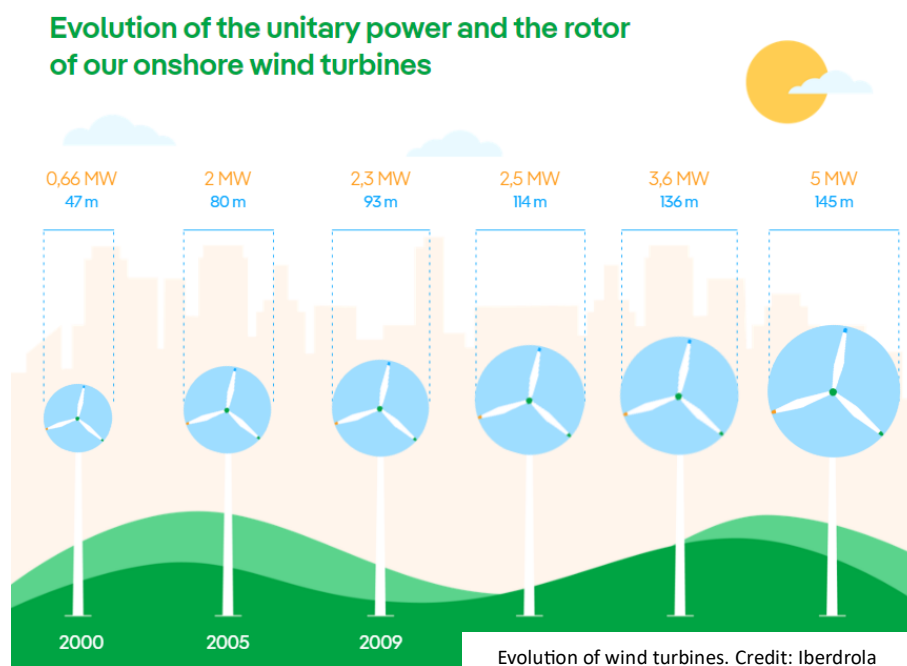
### Legacy

Communities that host renewable energy developments have an interest in seeing the development benefit their local community and economy. This is especially the case as turbines are increasing in size.

In part, this is seen as a fair response to the changes incurred as a result of hosting the development. It is also seen as allocating a fair share of the increased productivity (from the use of local land and resources) to local benefit. Renewable energy developments are located within active landscapes in which local communities live and work. As such, benefit sharing offers the opportunity to integrate the development into people's lives in a positive way. For local communities, effective benefit sharing strategies contribute to:

- a feeling that the project is “giving back” and contributing fairly to the local area;
- opportunities to see important benefits flowing from local developments;
- developing positive and direct relationships with the project and project staff;
- the ability to have renewable energy contribute to achieving local plans and goals;
- developing positive and tangible associations with the project; and
- increasing people's active support for the project.

How benefits (financial and otherwise) are received and taken up by a local community relates directly to how the idea is developed and introduced. It is imperative that benefit sharing occurs in a context of good community engagement so that people see both the processes and outcomes of benefit sharing as being fair and equitable. If benefit sharing is financially generous and proposes to deliver excellent local outcomes but is not matched with good community engagement, it may be seen as a dishonest effort to buy community support. A fair process will increase people's acceptance of the outcomes, even if the outcomes are not strictly what they would have preferred. Conversely, and particularly for benefit sharing, if the outcomes are at odds with people's expectations and experience of the process, it can reduce acceptance. Deploying innovative benefit sharing models takes consistent engagement to both design and implement with a community. Ambitious benefit sharing programs generally need on the ground local resourcing to design and implement them well.



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Arguably, the SSD process for renewables in this region is irretrievably poor and not fit for purpose for the scale of cumulative development required. The engagement has been terrible. Incorrect assumptions are being made about what affected councils can deliver rather than how affected councils and communities can be supported through the process.

### **Funding for Councils to manage the costs of community response including legal and other expert advice**

Where this report suggests the SSD is not fit for purpose for the scale development required for rewiring eastern Australia, at this time it is councils who are bearing the brunt of resourcing the concerns of community.

Where the resourcing by councils and community goes well beyond the development application process, at the very least councils should be resourced to represent their communities in these unprecedented times. As advised above, it is the assumptions being made by developers, particularly for housing, transport and water as well as their lack of consideration for cumulative impacts that expose community to extreme significant impacts and risk. A significant risk is to be managed is the need for water and its scarcity with the likelihood of drought and bushfire during the construction effort. Anecdotal advice is that these developments are being approved without identifying water sources and assumptions are being made that councils will provide access to urban supply systems.

Councils across Central NSW are reporting shortages of planning staff and so their capacity to internally resource a community response to SSD. Communities must be able to challenge these assumptions and it is outrageous that councils, whose financial sustainability is constrained by the NSW Government rate cap, are being asked to step up time and again to call for recognition of cumulative and other community impacts.

### **Minimising sterilisation of agricultural land including allowing grazing below panels.**

Co-location of sheep grazing and solar panels has been trialled in region in Parkes. The ABC reported that early results are good.<sup>2</sup>

Where this region may have dreams of well thought-out renewable energy generation development co-located with agriculture - the reality is that, given the goal post changing and paucity of thought on the logistics and impacts of the massive development effort, there will need to be on ongoing focus on supporting communities through this harrowing period, recompense and energy security. Advocacy regarding the energy transition construction needs to include these more optimal approaches and it is recommended that the state develop policy in this regard.



Sheep trial in Parkes collocating sheep grazing and solar generation. Image Credit: ABC News

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2020-08-25/parkes-solar-panel-sheep-trial-early-positive-results/12581756>



**An alternative approach**

It is unsurprising that the historically metro focussed, centralised and “deeply frustrated by the lack of action in climate change” bureaucracy in NSW has come up with a “lines on maps” approach to the construction effort required to transition energy generation in NSW. Upon finding a NSW Cabinet willing to contemplate emissions reduction and implement action to meet net zero targets, legislation has been swift and the scramble is on. The naming of the ‘Central West REZ’ without a single Central West LGA in it, announced without any discussion with any community affected, has typified the paucity of knowledge about affected communities.

Looking at the reality of the logistical effort required to make these ‘lines on maps’ real, it is clear that this approach will fail. While bureaucrats may be anchored in REZs, and they will without doubt be part of the solution, an alternative approach is required.

There is some discussion about offshore windfarms<sup>3</sup>. When considering reducing bushfire risk to transmission, the logistics challenge of the inland build and concerns from communities across regional NSW, consideration of offshore wind farms of significance has merit.

Essential Energy is of a view that they are ready willing and able to support distributed generation.<sup>4</sup> This is supported by the work being undertaken by Ernst & Young in region building a business case for investment in infrastructure that meets the nexus between Net Zero and energy security in Central NSW.

At the very least there should be an incentivised battery and electric vehicle scheme implemented immediately to support domestic and fleet transition.

**Value for members**

Research undertaken can be used by members for their advocacy purposes.

**Financial Implications**

Nil at this time

**Attachment/s:**

22. Correspondence 4 October from the Oberon Against Wind Turbines community group sent to all Board members
23. Media release 10 October Mayors of the Central NSW region are raising concerns about the current direction of the NSW and Australian Government’s efforts to get to net zero greenhouse gas emissions

<sup>3</sup> <https://illawarraoffshorewind.com.au/>

<sup>4</sup> ["Cheaper and quicker:" Distributed networks put case to host wind and solar | RenewEconomy](#)



**9. Quarterly Review of the Central NSW JO Strategic Plan and Statement of Regional Strategic Priority 2022-2025**

<b>Regional Strategic Priorities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Leveraging our successful collaboration</li> <li>2. Regional Prosperity through better infrastructure and services</li> <li>3. Advocate for better infrastructure and services in health and ageing</li> <li>4. Telecommunications</li> <li>5. Regional Transport Planning and Infrastructure Prioritisation</li> <li>6. Regional Water Security and Productive Water</li> <li>7. Transition to a sustainable, secure and affordable energy future</li> </ol>
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**Report by Jenny Bennett dated 14 November 2023**

<b>Recommendation/s</b>
<p>That the Board note the Quarterly Review of the Central NSW JO Strategic Plan and Statement of Regional Strategic Priority 2022-2025; and</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. note that Councils have been sent their PlaceMats for the pre-Community Strategic Plan consultation period;</li> <li>2. receive a report from State agency consultations to inform Community Strategic Plans and in the interim circulate this to members for feedback;</li> <li>3. note costs saving of \$4.2m and ROI of 94:1 for members in the 2022/2023 financial year;</li> <li>4. progress an application to the Round Two EOI for the Disaster Risk Reduction Fund to be developed by the sponsoring General Managers under the hand of the Chair;</li> <li>5. employ a new staff member under the auspices of the Chair to             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. provide continuity of service during a maternity leave period and</li> <li>b. provide a greater level of operational support to the water priority;</li> </ol> </li> <li>6. note that a briefing is being sought for members regarding budgetary implications of 4 and 5 above and work arrangements of the Executive Officer give her family commitments where the Chair will make his final decisions based on member feedback; and</li> <li>7. a full report on the Executive Officer transition will be provided to the Board in February in the context if the overall budget going forward.</li> </ol>

**Precis**

This report provides a quarterly review against the Statement of Strategic Regional Priority with more detailed advice on:

- risks to the JO and their management;
- progress of the OLG review of JOs;
- OLG funded projects;
- working with the Regional Leadership Executive;
- the Community Strategic Plan and Our PlaceMats Project;
- status of funding applications including a potential application through the second round EOI for the Disaster Risk Reduction Fund;
- progress on the report on the Executive Officer Transition Report including advice on a position to support procurement and water in the interim; and
- value of the JO to members.

## Reports

## Reason for this report

The Central NSW JO approved its Strategic Plan (the Plan) 24 November 2022. Seven priorities were identified for action. This report provides advice on progress on the Plan. Reports requiring more detailed advice to inform decision making are provided separately. These reports would include those reporting on challenges and opportunities identified as the Plan is delivered. Advice on progress of past resolve can be found in Matters in Progress. A table providing advice on progress of every action identified in the Strategic Plan is provided as an attachment.

This report seeks resolve from the Board to both progress an application under the Disaster Risk Reduction Fund Round 2 and engage a new resource given their time sensitivity. Given the small amount of time afforded at this meeting for such important decisions, in discussion with the Chair, a briefing is being arranged about the financial implications of these initiatives in the context of the Executive Officer work arrangements.

## Legislative, Policy and Risk Considerations

### Risks

Regarding risk, risks are reviewed each quarter, please request the Risk Register. There are six Very High Risks identified for the Joint Organisation of 39 risks overall.

#	Category	Risk	Consequence	Risk treatment	Rating
1	Political	Failure of the JO Network	State will not engage leading to failure of the broader aspiration of JOs.	CNSWJO leads collaboration of JOEO network with focus on JO sustainability. Chairs Forum focus on sustainability	Very High
9	Political	Review recommendations to "bring the State" to the table" do not deliver network sustainability	Potential funding implications and relationship damage. Possible advocacy failure.	Communications Plan in place. Board monitoring relationship strengths on quarterly basis – however this is not within the ambit of the Board's control so the risk remains high.	Very High
10	Political	Well intentioned State agencies design processes that waste JO and Councils' time.	JO and member Council resources are taken away from delivering member value in efforts to work with State agencies that "just don't get it"	Communications Plan in place. Reporting to other tiers of government systematic. Measurement of impact of programs defined and tested for robustness. Formal agreements with major stakeholders that clearly defines roles and responsibilities and enables two way communication.	High

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## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

12	Political	Confused messaging on what JO does.	Board approved Communication Plan that clearly defines who is delegated to speak on behalf of the JO	Communications Plan in place. Strategic Plan in place and reviewed annually. Council roadshows. Stakeholder engagement directly with key government agencies. Work with Councils to get messaging to communities out.	High
14	Political	Miss opportunity to see how collaborations could work effectively.	Opportunity to engage differently with the NSW and Federal Government on how they want to engage may compromise the effectiveness of the JO. Use the process as a means to refresh engagement and understand stakeholder business better.	Communications Plan in place. Specific program to determine how stakeholder WANT to be engaged and to learn about their strategies in order to see how they align with the JO's objectives.	Very High
19	Economic	Long term viability and financial sustainability.	JO can't get sufficient funding to be able to meet liabilities.	Work with other JOs and relevant State agencies on a sustainable funding framework for the JO network and advocate as necessary.	Very High

**Risks to the JO and their management**

The existential risk to the JO from network sustainability as outlined in the above Risks is now happening and will have greater impact despite the mitigations in place. There is not much more this JO can do to mitigate the risk and it is noteworthy that the Chairs of JOs Forum is tackling the issue. The Advocacy Mayors have asked for a report to be written about Council and JO financial sustainability. This is well underway and a current draft can be requested. A copy is anticipated to the next Advocacy Mayors Subcommittee meeting.

Please request all associated minutes and agendas from the NSW JO Chairs Forum meetings.

The growing regulatory burden, patchiness of JO capacity and lack of State funding for core business is likely to significantly impact the sustainability of the broader network. Central NSW continues to put up business cases for funding, provide advice on the value proposition of JOs to State entities and work with other JOs to provide support for their sustainability. This work is very slow though showing some positive responses. Please see advice further into this report on two successful funding programs across the regional NSW network.

Current status of JOs is as follows:

Joint Organisation	Staff support and status
Canberra	EO FT plus support staff
CNSWJO	EO FT plus support staff

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Hunter	EO FT plus support staff
Illawarra	EO FT plus support staff
Far North West	EO PT
Far South West	In hiatus
Namoi	EO resigned, currently dormant
New England	In hiatus
Northern Rivers	EO PT
Mid North Coast	EO FT recruitment plus project support staff
Orana	In hiatus
RAMJO	EO PT plus support staff
Riverina JO	In hiatus as of 1 July 2023 as they have an incorporated entity in REROC that more efficiently does business.

**Progress on the OLG Joint Organisation Review (the Review)**

CNSWJO welcomed the opportunity to be engaged in the Review recommendations which were to be implemented within twelve months where this region suggested that a codesigned approach will lead to better outcomes. Since the review was published in late 2021 a State agency group excluding JOs was progressed through the OLG.

At a meeting 5 September 2022 with Executive Officers of JOs and State Agencies, the first Agency/JO Implementation Plan, three key pieces of work were identified for development by cross agency/JO subcommittees. These were based on the four themes of the Implementation Plan circulated 27 July 2022 for “codesign” where themes three and four became one for this next stage of work. The three themes were as follows:

- a. Theme - Governance, promotion and communication
- b. Theme - Accountability and performance
- c. Theme - Financial sustainability and boundaries

CNSWJO took the lead for Theme 3 in November 2022. A final report was adopted for Theme 3 was adopted in May 2023 by CNSWJO Board. In summary the report finds time has moved on since the inception of the Joint Organisation Review and enthusiasm for the process has waned. Over this period two significant things have happened:

1. A small but growing number of JOs are either seeking to disband or go into hiatus; and
2. A growing number of State agencies and programs are recognising the value of JOs, for example the Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration Program (JONZA - 9 JOs working collaboratively with the State) and the Disaster Risk Reduction Program (8 JOs working collaboratively with the state.) JOs are leading this coordinated approach and are consistently giving consideration to further opportunities as part of the fortnightly collaboration of the JOEOs.

The following recommendations are made in the report:

*Form an ongoing interagency/JO Working Party including State Government membership at senior level to progress the balance of the recommendations in this report with its Terms of Reference codesigned with JOs;*

*Review the Local Government Act to both remove red tape and better enable JO's to represent member Councils effectively from a regional perspective;*

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*Create or identify a Partnerships Director in the appropriate State Government Department whose role includes supporting NSW Government agencies and Councils to showcase JOs as a strong and respected partner for the NSW Government;*

*Create governance and other support arrangements around the Partnerships Director to further refine and promote the value stack identified by the Subcommittee;*

*Reinvigorate the Department of Premier and Cabinet policy for state agency alignment within planning boundaries in NSW;*

*The Department of Premier and Cabinet give consideration to:*

*a. Direct funding of Joint Organisations of \$250Kpa reflecting the value of their role in reducing costs and driving other efficiencies for the NSW Government in their partnership arrangements with local government and;*

*b. A root and branch review of the competitive funding framework for Local Government to recognise and realise the value of Joint Organisations in the context of enabling better overall outcomes.*

A copy of the report was sent to the Minister for Local Government the Hon Ron Hoenig MP and the Deputy Secretary of OLG and formed background to the NSW JO Chairs Forum meeting held 29 June 2023. The Local Government Minister addressed the NSW JO Chairs Forum, his commentary was that he supported collaboration between councils in any form. The Chairs' Forum adopted the above recommendation.

At the time of writing no further action is taking place by the OLG.

### **OLG Stage funding project update**

There are two projects remaining from round two of the OLG Capacity Building fund. Please request previous reports for advice on completed programs. These two projects are:

- Supporting Councils in the transition to net zero.
- Transitioning what was IWCM into the IP&R framework.

Please see the Energy Report for progress on the broader DPIE collaborative project. Funds are used to match DPIE funding or fill gaps as the project continues. At the time of writing \$67,854 of the \$70,000 has been expended.

Regarding Transitioning what was IWCM into the IP&R framework a consultant has been engaged and two workshops have been held. At the time of writing a total of \$9,144 of the \$25,000 has been expended where at the project's completion there will be a toolkit to support Councils in this transition. For more advice on this project please go to the Water Report.

### **Working with the Regional Leadership Executive and Regional NSW**

The Regional Leadership Executive (RLE) continues to meet quarterly. Please request agendas and minutes.

Concurrently Regional NSW is working with the JO on the following projects:

- Spare Capacity in Housing

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- Community Strategic Plan Project

At the Board meeting Canberra in May, Ms Olivia West provided advice on an opportunity for the region to leverage a MoU with Canberra. Further advice will be provided as it comes to hand.

CNSWJO meets with RNSW on a monthly basis to progress projects and have a standing offer for reports to come into this business paper or meeting.

### **Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and Our PlaceMats Project**

As advised above, the CSP project is being progressed in collaboration with Regional NSW. From previous reports, members will be aware that the consultation sessions with State agencies was held in the second half of this calendar year. This is in line with feedback from members in the last round of this project that the timing of the last round was too late. However, the timing may need to be finessed again and feedback from members is welcomed.

With both workshops completed a report will be provided to members and evaluation of the process undertaken.

Concurrently with the CSP State agency engagement, Our Placemats are being updated with support from RDA Central West. All Councils have been provided with their updated PlaceMats.

### **Status of funding applications**

Members will be aware that there are a significant number of opportunities for Local Government, including JOs to participate in competitive grant rounds. Many members are seeking support letters from the JO, and these are provided upon request.

Advice has been received that the funding deed for the Fixing Country Bridges project has been executed. Work has commenced on this project. Please request a verbal update.

Advice on current funded programs can be found elsewhere in this agenda.

Funding is being sought from the OECC on a case-by-case basis for members and for regional programming and is reported elsewhere in this agenda.

CNSWJO is pursuing funding for Cyber Security, the extension of the JONZA program and ongoing funding for collaborative work in Disaster Risk Reduction where advice is provided below on a potential funding application.

### **Disaster Risk Reduction Fund EOI Round 2**

The second round of EOIs for the Disaster Risk Reduction fund opened 6 November and closes 8 December 2023. CNSWJO led a successful cross eight JOs collaboration for the Round One EOI. Please find a full report on this project elsewhere in this agenda where it is noteworthy the JOs are pursuing a more sustainable funding model than the competitive funding framework given the role of local government in disaster risk reduction.

Importantly, the legislation enabling Reconstruction NSW mandates the development of Disaster Adaptation Plans (DAPs). Councils will be required to develop these plans where guidance is being developed by Reconstruction NSW. At the time of writing this guidance is anticipated in April of 2024. At

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various consultations members have been keen to point out the need to work within the IP&R framework rather than creating a whole new set of plans that risk becoming shelfware.

Key activities in the project currently being rolled out are a Needs Analysis per council and the region as well as an IP&R embedment framework. Given Round One finishes 30 June 2024 embedment of DAPs into IP&R will be difficult to support from a regional perspective without added resource. Implementation of recommended regional actions from the Needs Analysis will also be resource dependent.

At this stage support is sought only for the extension of the capacity building support provided at this time by Ms J Webber.

The Round 2 EOI funds 50% of total project funding. This includes in kind where typically JO projects can offer significant in-kind contributions where there are capped at 25% for the funding round. Interrogation of the forward budget finds this affordable but the Board may like to cap the contribution at \$90K.

In principle support is sought for an application to be made. If the Board resolved this way, the application under the hand of the Chair with support of those being Ms N Vu, Mr G Tory Mr B Byrnes and Mr C Butler. Given this is such an important decision, the Chair has asked for a briefing session to be arranged for members from which he will make his final decision.

Please note that this project is acutely aware of Council resourcing and role in disaster risk reduction. Members have consistently raised the concern of being given unfunded role through this process and it is very important that a regional approach applies which manages this risk.

### **Progress on the Executive Officer Transition Report including advice on a position to support procurement and water in the interim**

Members will recall resolve from the May Board meeting from a report on the Executive Officer transitioning to retirement. This resolve called for advice to come to the Board on implementing one salary system and restructuring options for the transition period including a 2IC model where the EO takes on a reduced role. These recommendations were from a consultancy through LGNSW, please request all previous reports.

Subsequently;

- the EO took six weeks leave and Ms Kate Barkers was acting Executive Officer;
- to inform work levels and understand where existing resource is being deployed, all NSWJO have spent one quarter measuring their daily activity in 15 minute lots;
- forward budget projections have been undertaken giving consideration to ongoing likely grant funding and incomes from the Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement Program; and
- Ms Grace Quinton has advised she will be seeking maternity leave from April 2024 for 12 months.

From this the following advice is provided;

- all CNSWJO staff are either working at capacity or beyond;
- commitments to the JONZA Program means that separate resourcing has been appointed for the growing procurement function. \$150K has been reserved for resourcing however has not been required to date as income from Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement Program is more than covering costs;

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- procurement activities for 2024 have been scrutinized with a view to keeping them to a minimum where this year has seen a significant amount of activity including in support of procurement across the JO network for the Disaster Risk Reduction Program;
- Ms Kate Barker was well received by the Board and GMAC during her 6 weeks as Acting Executive Officer enabling a 2IC model during transition;
- with the impending drought and the ongoing regulatory and funding challenges for Councils there is likely to be increased workload in the water priority where there is significant resourcing the operational support program including the Centre of Excellence Regional Water Loss Management Program, NAMAf and the Transition from IWCM to IP&R;
- give the skills shortage, a permanent position offered at either full or part time with flexibility is more likely to be filled;
- potential costs for this role are between \$60K and \$80K depending on the hours and skills; and
- the forward budget is showing strong growth of non-Council fee income streams in grants and from the Best Practice in Procurement Program.

It is therefore recommended that a new position be included in the CNSWJO structure to support the operational program for the water priority and procurement with a full report on transition resourcing to come to the next Board meeting.

Given this is such an important decision, the Chair has asked for a briefing session to be arranged for members from which he will make his final decision.

## Financial Implications

The total costs for progressing a Second Round EOI for the Disaster Risk Reduction Fund and back fill support for the maternity leave position are between \$110K and \$170K. the forward budget is showing strong growth of non-Council fee income streams in grants and from the Best Practice in Procurement Program and no fee increases are anticipated.

Given this is such an important decision, the Chair has asked for a briefing session to be arranged for members from which he will make his final decision.

## Spend and Cost Savings

The table below reflects the **spend** by members for the **22/23 financial year**:

SPEND	Water Utilities Alliance Contracts	HR Contracts	WHS contracts	IT contracts	Supply contracts	Roads/ Transport contracts	Energy contracts	RDOCS contracts	Other contracts	Training	Total
Bathurst	\$18,900	\$69,842	\$13,043	\$0	\$1,725,583	\$0	\$3,331,941	\$56,480	\$0	\$370	\$5,216,158
Blayney	\$6,700	\$17,705	\$0	\$0	\$674,947	\$0	\$316,289	\$6,227	\$0	\$0	\$1,021,868
Cabonne	\$21,430	\$33,583	\$280	\$0	\$2,016,501	\$0	\$478,581	\$2,863	\$0	\$1,650	\$2,554,889
Central Tablelands Water	\$14,023	\$604	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$321,534	\$5,395	\$0	\$0	\$341,555
Cowra	\$14,323	\$44,090	\$13,905	\$0	\$826,701	\$0	\$952,990	\$3,000	\$0	\$8,470	\$1,861,480
Forbes	\$7,000	\$33,768	\$0	\$0	\$1,516,762	\$0	\$918,623	\$32,423	\$0	\$6,010	\$2,514,786
Lachlan	\$7,000	\$28,538	\$0	\$0	\$1,148,259	\$0	\$410,575	\$2,343	\$0	\$12,480	\$1,609,195
Lithgow	\$7,000	\$9,802	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$36,802
Oberon	\$7,000	\$14,527	\$0	\$0	\$881,172	\$0	\$280,250	\$19,142	\$0	\$3,585	\$1,205,676
Orange	\$55,068	\$98,525	\$14,148	\$0	\$979,441	\$0	\$3,687,729	\$34,228	\$0	\$26,445	\$4,895,583
Parkes	\$21,430	\$37,658	\$0	\$0	\$1,499,540	\$0	\$1,629,480	\$40,174	\$0	\$14,615	\$3,242,897
Upper Macquarie County Council	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Weddin	\$17,416	\$2,014	\$0	\$0	\$592,025	\$0	\$197,294	\$3,460	\$0	\$370	\$812,580
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$197,291</b>	<b>\$390,657</b>	<b>\$41,376</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$11,860,931</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$12,525,487</b>	<b>\$225,733</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$71,995</b>	<b>\$25,313,470</b>

The table following reflects the **savings** by members for the **22/23 financial year**. It is noteworthy the savings achieved through the electricity contract have been calculated and included, where the previous report did not include these. As such, there is an additional \$2.3m in savings shown for the last financial year. Further details can be found in the Energy Report.

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SAVINGS	Water Utilities Alliance Contracts	HR Contracts	WHS contracts	IT contracts	Supply contracts	Roads/ Transport contracts	Energy contracts	RDOCS contracts	Other contracts	Training	Legal advice re Procurement	Participation in regional procurement	Total
Bathurst	\$1,500	\$48,996	\$2,302	\$0	\$21,026	\$0	\$987,394	\$15,647	\$0	\$100	\$5,546	\$25,000	\$1,107,510
Blayney	\$1,500	\$12,661	\$0	\$0	\$11,481	\$0	\$84,946	\$1,099	\$0	\$0	\$5,546	\$27,000	\$144,232
Cabonne	\$1,500	\$13,372	\$49	\$0	\$41,138	\$0	\$86,983	\$1,388	\$0	\$5,786	\$5,546	\$26,000	\$181,762
Central Tablelands Water	\$1,500	\$107	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$46,540	\$2,191	\$0	\$0	\$4,937	\$30,000	\$85,275
Cowra	\$1,500	\$25,660	\$2,454	\$0	\$51,380	\$0	\$224,910	\$1,455	\$0	\$3,625	\$5,546	\$45,000	\$361,530
Forbes	\$1,500	\$13,509	\$0	\$0	\$59,982	\$0	\$196,440	\$8,584	\$0	\$10,215	\$5,546	\$23,000	\$318,775
Lachlan	\$1,500	\$21,716	\$0	\$0	\$32,483	\$0	\$134,552	\$1,136	\$0	\$10,356	\$5,546	\$39,000	\$246,288
Lithgow	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,000	\$0	\$0	\$5,546	\$23,000	\$36,046
Oberon	\$1,500	\$19,774	\$0	\$0	\$29,569	\$0	\$51,680	\$4,019	\$0	\$0	\$5,546	\$38,000	\$150,088
Orange	\$1,500	\$72,097	\$2,497	\$0	\$30,640	\$0	\$1,052,070	\$9,425	\$0	\$5,818	\$5,546	\$22,000	\$1,201,592
Parkes	\$1,500	\$6,130	\$0	\$0	\$51,529	\$0	\$395,878	\$8,428	\$0	\$7,574	\$5,546	\$28,000	\$504,585
Upper Macquarie County Council	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,937	\$8,000	\$12,937
Weddin	\$1,500	\$355	\$0	\$0	\$10,539	\$0	\$53,624	\$611	\$0	\$5,582	\$5,546	\$42,000	\$119,756
Sub Total	\$18,000	\$234,377	\$7,302	\$0	\$339,767	\$0	\$3,315,016	\$59,982	\$0	\$49,055	\$70,875	\$376,000	\$4,470,373
												Cost to members	\$257,800
												Total	\$4,212,573

The table below reflects the **spend** by members for the **23/24 financial year** as of 15 November 2023:

SPEND	Water Utilities Alliance Contracts	HR Contracts	WHS contracts	IT contracts	Supply contracts	Roads/ Transport contracts	Energy contracts	RDOCS contracts	Other contracts	Training	Total
Bathurst	\$0	\$14,814	\$0	\$0	\$384,391	\$0	\$0	\$9,891	\$0	\$4,310	\$413,407
Blayney	\$0	\$865	\$0	\$0	\$175,576	\$0	\$0	\$3,477	\$0	\$4,310	\$184,227
Cabonne	\$0	\$4,683	\$0	\$0	\$477,045	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$11,910	\$493,638
Central Tablelands Water	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cowra	\$0	\$4,397	\$8,174	\$0	\$279,849	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$615	\$293,035
Forbes	\$0	\$3,613	\$0	\$0	\$608,921	\$0	\$0	\$3,021	\$0	\$15,295	\$630,850
Lachlan	\$0	\$2,963	\$0	\$0	\$525,272	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,280	\$536,515
Lithgow	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$958	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,540	\$6,498
Oberon	\$0	\$2,248	\$502	\$0	\$225,887	\$0	\$0	\$2,197	\$0	\$7,970	\$238,604
Orange	\$0	\$21,109	\$13,675	\$0	\$285,594	\$0	\$0	\$11,308	\$0	\$24,320	\$356,006
Parkes	\$0	\$6,630	\$0	\$0	\$509,506	\$0	\$0	\$7,776	\$0	\$5,540	\$529,452
Upper Macquarie County Council	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Weddin	\$0	\$726	\$0	\$0	\$93,974	\$0	\$0	\$1,318	\$0	\$5,230	\$101,248
Total	\$0	\$62,049	\$22,351	\$0	\$3,566,775	\$0	\$0	\$38,988	\$0	\$93,320	\$3,783,482

The table below reflects the **savings** by members for the **23/24 financial year** as of 15 November 2023:

SAVINGS	Water Utilities Alliance Contracts	HR Contracts	WHS contracts	IT contracts	Supply contracts	Roads/ Transport contracts	Energy contracts	RDOCS contracts	Other contracts	Training	Legal advice re Procurement	Participation in regional procurement	Total	Cost to members	Net savings
Bathurst	\$0	\$1,660	\$0	\$0	\$136,785	\$0	\$0	\$1,746	\$0	\$1,617	\$0	\$9,000	\$150,807	\$0	\$150,807
Blayney	\$0	\$48	\$0	\$0	\$140,037	\$0	\$0	\$614	\$0	\$1,681	\$0	\$6,000	\$148,380	\$0	\$148,380
Cabonne	\$0	\$785	\$0	\$0	\$128,559	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,990	\$0	\$6,000	\$138,335	\$0	\$138,335
Central Tablelands Water	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$0	\$8,000
Cowra	\$0	\$423	\$3,503	\$0	\$186,663	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$100	\$0	\$10,000	\$200,689	\$0	\$200,689
Forbes	\$0	\$461	\$0	\$0	\$239,346	\$0	\$0	\$533	\$0	\$4,399	\$0	\$2,000	\$246,740	\$0	\$246,740
Lachlan	\$0	\$430	\$0	\$0	\$248,655	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,182	\$0	\$4,000	\$256,267	\$0	\$256,267
Lithgow	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,626	\$0	\$5,000	\$6,626	\$0	\$6,626
Oberon	\$0	\$291	\$215	\$0	\$10,749	\$0	\$0	\$388	\$0	\$2,211	\$0	\$6,000	\$19,854	\$0	\$19,854
Orange	\$0	\$2,332	\$5,861	\$0	\$159,743	\$0	\$0	\$1,995	\$0	\$4,707	\$0	\$6,000	\$180,638	\$0	\$180,638
Parkes	\$0	\$1,079	\$0	\$0	\$15,021	\$0	\$0	\$1,372	\$0	\$1,986	\$0	\$6,000	\$25,459	\$0	\$25,459
Upper Macquarie County Council	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$0	\$8,000
Weddin	\$0	\$34	\$0	\$0	\$109,948	\$0	\$0	\$233	\$0	\$1,493	\$0	\$6,000	\$117,707	\$0	\$117,707
Sub Total	\$0	\$7,544	\$9,579	\$0	\$1,375,506	\$0	\$0	\$6,880	\$0	\$25,992	\$0	\$82,000	\$1,507,502	\$0	\$1,507,502
												Cost to members	\$0		
												Total	\$1,507,502		

## Grant Funding

The following table shows the final grant funding value in **22/23**:

GRANT FUNDING - 22/23 FY	Water	Training/HR/ WHS	IT	Supply	Roads/ Transport	Energy	RDOCS	Tourism	Disaster Resilience	Other	Total
Bathurst	\$18,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$99,347	\$0	\$13,864	\$29,090	\$4,091	\$165,142
Blayney	\$18,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$107,347	\$0	\$13,864	\$29,090	\$4,091	\$173,142
Cabonne	\$18,750	\$4,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$98,347	\$0	\$13,864	\$29,090	\$4,091	\$168,142
Central Tablelands Water	\$18,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$107,347	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$126,097
Cowra	\$18,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$93,347	\$0	\$13,864	\$29,090	\$4,091	\$159,142
Forbes	\$18,750	\$4,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$108,347	\$0	\$13,864	\$29,090	\$4,091	\$178,142
Lachlan	\$18,750	\$2,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$109,347	\$0	\$13,864	\$29,090	\$4,091	\$177,142
Lithgow	\$18,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$137,464	\$0	\$13,864	\$29,090	\$4,091	\$203,259
Oberon	\$18,750	\$4,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$106,347	\$0	\$13,864	\$29,090	\$4,091	\$176,142
Orange	\$18,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$115,347	\$0	\$13,864	\$29,090	\$4,091	\$181,142
Parkes	\$18,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$109,347	\$0	\$13,864	\$29,090	\$4,091	\$175,142
UMCC	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Weddin	\$18,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$106,347	\$0	\$13,864	\$29,090	\$4,091	\$172,142
Total	\$225,000	\$14,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$1,298,279	\$0	\$152,500	\$319,995	\$45,000	\$2,054,774

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The following table shows the grant funding for the **23/24 financial year** as of 15 November 2023:

GRANT FUNDING - 23/24 FY	Water	Training/HR/ WHS	IT	Supply	Roads/ Transport	Energy	RDOCS	Tourism	Disaster Resilience	Other	Total
Bathurst	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Blayney	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cabonne	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Central Tablelands Water	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cowra	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,221	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,221
Forbes	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$121,300	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$121,300
Lachlan	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Lithgow	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$72,886	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$72,886
Oberon	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$91,107	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$91,107
Orange	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Parkes	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
UMCC	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Weddin	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$256,544	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$256,544
CNSWJO	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,150	\$7,150
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$560,059</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$567,209</b>

### Value for members

Where a majority of the staffing resource of the JO goes to providing support for the operations of Councils and supporting Councils with the sustainability challenge, it is notable that the CNSWJO program for 2022/2023 had a return of investment for every dollar members spend on fees of 9.46:1.

Please see below the value to members for this financial year to date and a summary of the previous years.

VALUE FOR MEMBERS	FY 2019/2020	FY 2020/2021	FY 2021/2022	FY 2022/2023	FYTD 2023/2024	ACTIVITY THIS QUARTER 17/8/2023 - 16/11/2023
SUBMISSIONS	20	23	16	13	12	220923 - Inquiry into the implementation of recommendations relating to workforce issues, workplace culture and funding considerations for remote, rural and regional health 270923 - Submission to AEMC on Enhancing Community Engagement in Transmission Building 131023- IPART Water NSW Operating Licence Review; 271023-Inquiry into the performance of the Regional Investment Activation Fund and the Regional Job Creation Fund 271023- Inquiry into Protecting Local Water Utilities from privatisation; 031123-The Planning system and the Impacts of Climate Change on the Environment and Communities. 311023 -Water Infrastructure NSW 91 Proposed New Indicators for LWUs
PLANS, STRATEGIES AND COLLATERAL	26	12	3	9	26	12x fleet transition plans underway 10x emissions reduction plans underway 2x Scope 3 baseline analyses underway 1x Business Case on the Nexus Between Energy Security and Emissions Reduction.
GRANTS SEEKING	3	3	1	9	1	

## Reports

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

GRANT FUNDING AWARDED	\$215k	\$736k	\$738k	\$2.05m	\$567k	Official confirmation of the Fixing Country Roads - Bridges grant of \$560k through Forbes Shire Council has been recieved.
COMPLIANCE	13	9	11	16		As at 6 November 2023, 3909 contractors from across the region hold a current WHS induction
DATA	6	3	1	14	12	Review and update of Regional and members Placemats undertaken by RDA Central West with the inclusion of Lithgow.
COST SAVINGS	\$1.87m	\$2.2m	\$2.1m	\$4.2m	\$1.5m	Note the 22/23 FY figure has been updated to include the cost savings identified through the electricity contract. Please see Energy Report for more details.
REPRESENTATION AND OPPORTUNITIES COUNCILS HAVE BEEN AFFORDED	147	159	210	143	77	<p>210823-Disaster Risk Reduction Fund Project Steering Committee meeting</p> <p>250823- CNSWJO Regional Water Loss Management Project Control Group</p> <p>280823- CNSWJO Energy Business Case - Steering Committee monthly meetings</p> <p>280823- Community Engagement Project - fortnightly project update</p> <p>290823- CNSWJO Regional Water Loss Management PSC</p> <p>290823- Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration - Tuesday Tune-in</p> <p>300923 - IP&amp;R LWU Strategic Planning Workshop No. 1</p> <p>010923- Regional Asset Management Audits Project Inception Meeting</p> <p>050923-CNSWJO Regional Water Loss Management PSC</p> <p>080923- CNSWJO Regional Water Loss Management Project Control Group</p> <p>110923- CNSWJO Energy Business Case - council briefing on the options</p> <p>110923-EO meeting monthly of JO/ROCS/Other</p> <p>120923-CNSWJO Regional Water Loss Management PSC</p> <p>120923- Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration - Tuesday Tune-in</p> <p>140923 -Water Directorate Executive Committee Meeting 148</p> <p>200923- Skills and Training Focus Group Meeting #2</p> <p>200923-Disaster Risk Reduction Fund PSC meeting</p> <p>210923 – Building Surveyor Networking Group</p> <p>230923- Central West Orana and Far West Regional Recovery Committee</p> <p>260923- CNSWJO Regional Water Loss Management PSC</p>

## Reports

## Central NSW JO Board Meeting 23 November 2023

						260923- Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration - Tuesday Tune-in 270923- Workshop One with State Agencies on State info/data for CSPs 270923- CNSWJO Energy Business Case - Steering Committee monthly meetings 270923 - CNSWJO Transport Technical Committee Meeting 290923- Policy Lab Workshop with CSU 101023- Wyangala Wall Raise Project - Information session on the Final Business Case 111023-Disaster Risk Reduction Fund PSC meeting 121023- Presentation on SunSPOT tools available to councils 121023 -CNSWJO Water Utilities Alliance Meeting 171023- CNSWJO Regional Water Loss Management PSC 181023- Draft Lachlan Regional Water Strategy consultation paper - CNSWJO Council workshop 181023 – Training, Learning & Development Group Meeting 191023 - Central West Orana and Far West Regional Recovery Committee 191023 - Building Surveyor Working Group Meeting 19/20 October - Joint Alliances Meeting 241023- GMAC 311023 – Rural Drs Network Workshop 011123- EV Fleet Day 011123- Planners Group Meeting 141123 – HR Managers Group Meeting 161123 – NSW JO Chairs Forum (online) 211123 – WHS/Risk Management Group meeting 211123- NSW Health DWMS Audit Training- 231122- CNSWJO Board meeting
MEDIA INCLUDING SOCIAL MEDIA	13	18	25	32	10	Social Media followers at 6 November 2023: Facebook – 643 Twitter – 913 Instagram (CNSWT) – 6,355 CNSWT Facebook – 15k  210823 -Central NSW Joint Organisation signs Memorandum of Understanding with Rural Doctors Network 280823-Central NSW Councils tackle better readiness for Natural Disaster 280823 – Pedal Power – Take a Cycling Holiday in Central NSW (written and released by Gabrielle Brewer)

## Reports

						<p>300823 – Cowra’s Canola Fields of Gold, Four Ways (written and released by Gabrielle Brewer)</p> <p>130923- Widespread disappointment with the Wyangala Dam decision</p> <p>250923- We need to be better at social media say Mayors across Central NSW</p> <p>101023- Mayors of the Central NSW region are raising concerns about the current direction of the NSW and Australian Government’s efforts to get to net zero greenhouse gas emissions</p> <p>171023 – Oberon a Cool New Summer Escape (written &amp; released by Gabrielle Brewer)</p> <p>071123-Sustainability in focus for regional contracts</p> <p>161123 - Council budgets and the environment reap the benefits of buying renewable energy</p>
PR VALUE OF TOURISM	\$1.5m	\$2.4m	\$1.9m	\$1.4m		These figures are provided annually.
MEDIA PR VALUE	35	102	101	51	13	<p>The following are the PR results for Central NSW Joint Organisation as advised by Gabrielle Brewer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Sydney Morning Herald, Traveller</b> – ‘<i>Six of the Best - Orange NSW drinking holes</i>’ a one-page feature appeared in print on Saturday with images and information on Hey Rosey, Martini Bar at The Oriana, Birdie Noshery, Badlands Brewery, Charred but not Charred and Ferment the Orange Wine Centre. The writer Natasha Mirosch was a guest of our media visits program</li> <li>• <b>Country Style Magazine</b> – <i>Grazing down the Lachlan</i> event featured in a month in the country</li> <li>• <b>Australian Country</b> – a few Central NSW events are featured including Grazing Down the Lachlan, Trundle’s ABBA Festival and Mayfield Garden Spring Festival.</li> <li>• <b>Australian Country</b> – ‘<i>A breath of fresh air</i>’ an 11-page feature on Wilga Station and The new Wool Store in Bathurst – ‘After five years living in New York Hamish and Mez have retuned to Australia determined to give Bathurst its rightful place on the NSW tourist map’. Editor Kirsty and Ken have been a guest of our media visits program</li> <li>• <b>Qantas Travel Insider</b> – Regional towns feature includes Carcoar -</li> </ul>

## Reports

					<p><a href="https://www.qantas.com/travelinsider/en/explore/australia/regional-australian-towns-community-led-tourism.html">https://www.qantas.com/travelinsider/en/explore/australia/regional-australian-towns-community-led-tourism.html</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Where Wild Things Roam</b> – ‘Cycling through Central NSW’ a feature on cycling in Central NSW - <a href="https://www.wherewildthingsroam.com/cycling-through-central-nsw/">https://www.wherewildthingsroam.com/cycling-through-central-nsw/</a></li> <li>• <b>Escape, Sunday Telegraph</b> and across interstate/key metro papers– ‘Spring has Sprung’ a news piece on the Fields of Gold Canola Tours from Cowra. This was published across the Escape travel section in Gold Coast Bulletin, Townsville Bulletin, Courier Mail Qld, Herald Sun Vic and Adelaide Advertiser, Cairns Post, Geelong Advertiser etc <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edwina Bartholomew planning to open a hotel in Carcoar... <a href="https://7news.com.au/entertainment/celebrity/detail-in-edwina-bartholomew-post-day-after-exciting-announcement-intrigues-fans-c-11830182">https://7news.com.au/entertainment/celebrity/detail-in-edwina-bartholomew-post-day-after-exciting-announcement-intrigues-fans-c-11830182</a></li> <li>• Off the back of hosting Selector Magazine’s editor Brendan McCallum, a ‘Taste, Play, Stay’ feature has been published online which supports some key Orange Region wine and food experiences, with special ‘buy in’ offers to partners. <b>Wine Selectors</b> - ‘Taste, Play, Stay’ in the Orange Region - <a href="https://www.wineselectors.com.au/selector-magazine/life/taste-play-stay-orange">https://www.wineselectors.com.au/selector-magazine/life/taste-play-stay-orange</a></li> <li>• <b>Selector Magazine, Sept/Oct</b> - ‘Gold Rush, Seeking the ideal food and wine getaway? Orange offers treasures beyond measure’ – a 6-page food, wine and destination feature on the Orange Region also includes Bathurst as its neighbouring up and coming F&amp;W region.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>A media release ‘Cowra’s ‘Fields of Gold’ Canola Tours’ was issued to promote the Cowra region’s scenic canola tours by bus, flights and hot air balloons. Results follow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Canowindra Phoenix</b> – ‘Fields of Gold Canola Tours’ -</li> </ul>
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## Reports

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## Reports

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### Reporting to the Strategic Business Plan

Please refer to the attachments for the full quarterly update on progress on the Strategic Business Plan adopted 24 November 2022.

### Attachment/s:

24. Update on Strategic Business Plan 2022-2025

## Reports