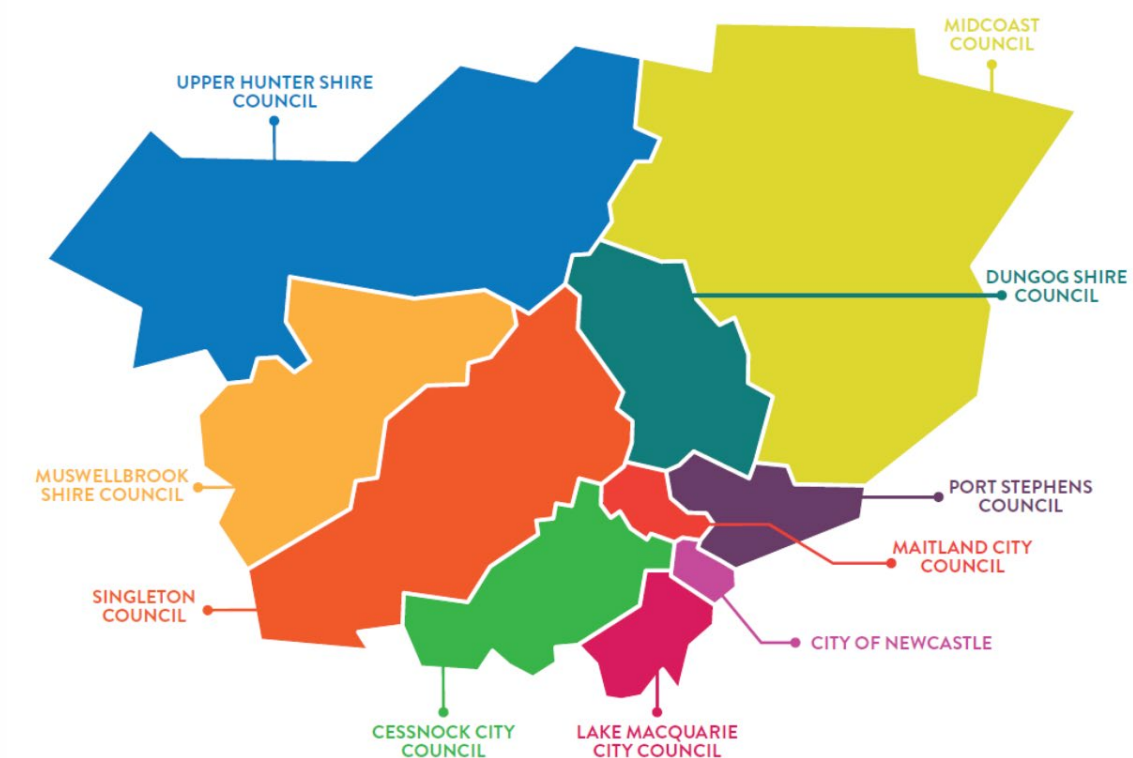


Hunter Joint Organisation Board Meeting Papers

10:30am, Thursday 10 August 2023



Videoconference Details

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

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1. Welcome and Apologies

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

The Hunter Joint Organisation acknowledges the country and history of the traditional custodians of the lands upon which we meet today. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, of our region, and of Australia.

1.2 Conflicts of Interest

The Chair asks for any potential Conflicts of Interest to be declared from members of the Board.

1.3 Closed Session

At the Chair's request, a closed session of the Board will be held at the beginning of the meeting, prior to opening the public Hunter JO Board Meeting.

Items for Decision, 6.1 and 6.2, have been circulated under a confidential board pack for discussion within the closed session.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Minutes of 8 June 2023

Hunter Joint Organisation Board Meeting Minutes

11:00am – 1:00pm, Thursday 8 June 2023

Hunter JO Boardroom, 4 Sandringham Avenue, Thornton

Voting Directors Present

Cr Jay Suvaal - Cessnock City Council

Cr John Connors - Dungog Shire Council

Cr Kay Fraser - Lake Macquarie City Council

Cr Philip Penfold - Maitland City Council

Cr Claire Pontin - MidCoast Council

Cr Nuatali Nelmes - Newcastle City Council

Cr Ryan Palmer - Port Stephens Council

Cr Sue Moore - Singleton Shire Council (Chair)

Cr Maurice Collison - Upper Hunter Shire Council

Non-Voting Members Present

Ken Liddell - General Manager, Cessnock City Council

Adrian Panuccio - General Manager, MidCoast Council

Greg McDonald - General Manager, Upper Hunter Shire Council

Jeremy Bath - CEO, Newcastle City Council

Wayne Wallis - General Manager, Port Stephens Council

Derek Finnegan - General Manager, Muswellbrook Shire Council

Jason Linnane - General Manager, Singleton Council
Morven Cameron - CEO, Lake Macquarie City Council
Gareth Curtis - General Manager, Dungog Shire Council

Apologies

Cr Steve Reynolds - Muswellbrook Shire Council
David Evans - General Manager, Maitland City Council

Staff in attendance

Joe James, CEO - Hunter Joint Organisation
Louisa Bulley - Executive Officer, Hunter JO (Secretariat)
Steve Wilson - Director Regional Policy and Programs, Hunter JO
Tim Askew - Director of Programs, Hunter JO
Kali Somerville - Media and Communications Officer, Hunter JO
Lisa Lord - Manager of Finance and Administration, Arrow & Hunter JO
Bonnie Gradwell - Business Administration Trainee, Hunter JO

Also Present

Scott Goold - Deputy Director Regional Development, Regional NSW

The formal meeting opened at 11.00am.

Item 1 Welcomes and Apologies

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the Board with an Acknowledgement of Country.

Resolved: That the apologies be noted.

Moved: Jay Suvaal, Seconded: Ryan Palmer. Carried.

1.2 Conflicts of Interest

The Chair called for any conflicts of interest to be registered by members of the Board.

1.3 Closed Session

*Board closed session from 10.50am to 10.59pm. At the direction of the Chair, the Board held a closed session for confidential matters. **It was agreed the matters discussed would remain in closed council.***

Item 2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

2.1 Minutes of 13 April 2023

The minutes were taken as read.

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meetings of 16 February 2023 be adopted

Moved: Kay Fraser, Seconded: Claire Pontin, Carried

Item 3 Confirmation of Minutes & Business Arising from Minutes

3.1 Hunter Joint Organisation Board Action Register

The report was taken as read.

3.2 Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Action Register

The report was taken as read.

3.3 Subcommittee for Economic Evolution Action Register

The report was taken as read.

Item 4 Presentations

Presentation: Outcomes from the Accelerating Event Economies (A2E) project and recommended model for ongoing approach to events attraction

Presenter: Kim Carland, Program Lead – Hunter JO

This presentation provided a synopsis of the range of outputs generated through the Accelerating Event Economies (A2E) project, including three high level options for ongoing regional collaboration around events attraction, which are drawn from those identified in the KPMG “Hunter Event Economic Analysis Report”. The recommendation from GMAC (25th May 2023 meeting) is to proceed with the Business as Usual (plus A2E outputs) model, to be monitored and reassessed in 12 months’ time.

Item 5 Correspondence

The report was taken as read and noted.

Resolved: That the update report be received and noted.

Moved: Kay Fraser, Seconded: Claire Pontin, Carried

Item 6 Items for the Hunter JO Board – For Decision

6.1 Hunter JO Draft Budget & Member Contributions 2023-24FY

CEO spoke to this report providing an update to the Board.

Resolved: That the Member Contributions for the Hunter JO and Environment Program for 2023-24FY be endorsed for presentation to the Hunter JO Board at its June Meeting.

That the Hunter JO Draft Budget for the 2023-24 budget be endorsed for presentation to the Hunter JO Board at its June Meeting.

Moved: Maurice Collison, Seconded: Ryan Palmer, Carried

6.2 Grants and Funding Opportunities

Steve Wilson Director Regional Policy and Programs, Hunter JO spoke to this report providing an update and sort endorsement from the Board.

Resolved: That the Board endorse:

- 1. The proposed process for CEO and Board approval of grant funding applications***
- 2. The current grant opportunities being pursued by the Hunter JO.***

Moved: John Connors, Seconded: Jay Suvaal. Carried

6.3 Hunter Global: The Flightpath to Our Future Report

Steve Wilson Director Regional Policy and Programs, Hunter JO spoke to this report providing an update and sort endorsement from the Board.

Resolved: That:

- 1. the Board endorse the “Hunter Global: The Flightpath to our Future” report; and***
- 2. the Hunter JO team continues to collaborate with project partners and key regional stakeholders to facilitate delivery of the opportunities and directions it includes.***

Moved: Kay Fraser, Seconded: Nuatali Nelmes. Carried

6.4 Hunter Venture Fund Project – Outcomes and Next Steps

CEO spoke to this report providing an update to the Board.

Resolved: That the Board:

- 1. Accept the report prepared by CircPartners for the Hunter JO;***
- 2. Endorse a shift in focus for the Hunter JO regarding the Hunter Venture Fund, to one of primarily advocating to other levels of government, the need for establishment and government co-investment in a Hunter Clean Energy and Advanced Manufacture Commercial Pilot Fund, including Agri-Business, and a Hunter Venture Fund and Innovation Entity, as a key policy and delivery mechanism for accelerating and amplifying market driven investment into the region to drive the significant economic evolution that is needed***

Moved: John Connors, Seconded: Jay Suvaal. Carried

6.5 Accelerating Event Economies (A2E) in the Hunter

Kim Carland Project Lead, Hunter JO spoke to this report providing an update and sought endorsement from the Board.

Resolved: That the Board;

Note the key outcomes achieved to date in delivering the A2E project.

Note GMAC's recommendation for option one 'Business as Usual plus A2E outputs' approach to attract and host events in our region, to be monitored and reassessed in 12 months' time.

Endorse that a further report be provided to the Hunter JO Board at a future meeting for consideration, discussing Option 2, providing additional detail in regard to funding and resourcing options.

Moved: Jay Suvaal, Seconded: Claire Pontin. Carried.

6.6 NSW Common Planning Assumptions

Steve Wilson Director Regional Policy and Programs, Hunter JO spoke to this report providing an update and sort endorsement from the Board.

Resolved: That the Board endorse drafting correspondence (using the content provided) from the Hunter JO to the NSW Auditor General expressing concerns about the NSW Common Planning Assumptions.

Moved: Kay Fraser, Seconded: Jay Suvaal. Carried.

Item 7 Items for the Hunter JO Board – For Decision

7.1 CEO Report

The report was taken as read and noted.

Resolved: That the report be received and noted.

Moved: Jay Suvaal, Seconded: Ryan Palmer. Carried.

7.2 Hunter JO Advocacy Update

The report was taken as read and noted.

Resolved: That the Hunter JO Advocacy Report be received and noted.

Moved: Jay Suvaal, Seconded: Ryan Palmer. Carried.

7.3 Hunter JO Financial Reports – April 2023 YTD

The report was taken as read and noted.

Resolved: That the Income Statement for period ending April 2023 be received and noted.

Moved: Jay Suvaal, Seconded: Claire Pontin. Carried.

7.4 Hunter JO Sub-Committees Standing Update

The report was taken as read and noted.

Resolved: That the Board note the updates on the Hunter JO Sub-Committees and the deferment of the 8th June GNMP Subcommittee meeting and Roundtable until 10th August.

Moved: Maurice Collison, Seconded: Claire Pontin. Carried.

7.5 Hunter JO Program Status Report

The report was taken as read and noted.

Resolved: That the report be received and noted.

Moved: John Connors, Seconded: Claire Pontin. Carried.

7.6 Hunter JO Program Delivery Highlights

The report was taken as read and noted.

Resolved: That the report be received and noted.

Moved: John Connors, Seconded: Claire Pontin. Carried.

7.7 Regional NSW Standing Update

The report was taken as read and noted.

Resolved: That the Board note the update on key activities of the Department of Regional NSW relating to funding programs and the Regional Leadership Executive.

Moved: Jay Suvaal, Seconded: Ryan Palmer. Carried.

7.8 Hunter JO - Arrow Staff Survey Results

The report was taken as read and noted.

Resolved: That the Hunter JO Board note the report.

Moved: Kay Fraser, Seconded: Jay Suvaal. Carried.

Item 8 Matters Raised by Members

Nill

Item 9 General Business

Cr Penfold proposed that a letter of thanks be written on behalf of the Board to David Evans, marking retirement and his contribution to the region during his tenure.

Resolved: That the Hunter JO draft correspondence to David Evans acknowledgeing his contribution to the region during his years of service as Chair of General Manager Advisory Committee, and during his time as General Manager of Maitland City Council.

Moved: Philip Penfold, Seconded: Jay Suvaal. Carried.

Meeting closed 12.13pm

3. Confirmation of Minutes & Business Arising from Minutes

Recommendation:

- That the minutes of the previous meetings of 16 February 2023 be adopted
- That the Action Registers be noted, and that items HJO-20-65, HJO-20-71 and HJO-23-007 be removed

3.1 Hunter Joint Organisation Board Action Register

I.D	Action	Mtg Date		Due	Notes
HJO-19-13	That a discussion of Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees be added to the agenda for the HJO for discussion at a later date	29 Aug 2019	In progress	Revised Due date: March 2021 Revised Status: On Hold (no update since March 21)	Aug2023: With the final draft of the guidelines now provided by OLG (while still in draft), GMAC have asked that an update be provided to the Hunter JO Board at its October 2023 Meeting. Mar2021: GMAC have discussed and indicated to put on hold until the framework is finalised and provided from OLG. GMAC 25 March 2021 meeting resolution is as follows: That no further investigation of shared resourcing of ARICs be completed until the OLG Framework has been finalised, and at that point only if member councils' express interest in sharing resources (if this option is allowed within the Framework).
HJO-20-65	<u>World Masters Games</u> Establish a Regional Events Strategy Working Group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review opportunities and costs associated with hosting the World Masters Games. • Scope out the development of a bid for the 2029 World Masters Games on behalf of the Hunter Region. • Review existing strategies and develop a roadmap for the implementation of key actions to attract major events to the region. 	Apr-21	Recommend action be removed from Register	Feb-2022 June-2022 June-2023 August 2023	August 2023 – Major Events Feasibility Study completed. A presentation and report on the study outcomes are being provided to August 2023 Hunter JO Board meeting. Removal of this action is recommended in line with the findings and recommendations of the report (refer Agenda Item 7.5). June 23: JMP Associates have been appointed to deliver the Major Event Feasibility with initial findings underway.

I.D	Action	Mtg Date		Due	Notes
					<p>Final outcomes of the Study will be available in August 2023.</p> <p>Mar 2023: A Request for Quotation process is currently underway for a consultant to complete a major Events Feasibility study. This includes identifying the feasibility of hosting a Commonwealth Games or World Masters event, along with identifying other events the region could attract over the next five years.</p> <p>Feb 2023: In progress (as per previous updates)</p> <p>December 2022 – In progress, as per previous updates</p> <p>September 2022 – As per previous update</p> <p>August 2022 – As per previous update</p> <p>July 2022: As reported to the April 2022 Board meeting, the Major Event Feasibility component of the Accelerating Event Economies project will be assessing the feasibility, technical requirements and gaps in our region for running major sporting event e.g. Commonwealth Games, World Masters etc.</p> <p>April 2022: Refer report included in Agenda Item 7.8 - Accelerating Event Economies (A2E)</p> <p>Nov2021: Hunter JO Board resolved August 2021 to integrate consideration of 2029 World Masters Games bid opportunities and challenges within the scope of the Accelerating Event Economies (A2E) project.</p> <p>Jan2022: Project Officer has been recruited to deliver Accelerating Event Economies (A2E) project, commencing 17 Jan 2022. Stakeholder engagement and development of consultant briefs also commencing regarding undertaking a regional event and asset audit, which will underpin this action.</p>

I.D	Action	Mtg Date		Due	Notes
HJO-20-71	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THAT the Hunter JO draft correspondence to the NSW Government regarding funding and action required on the Hunter Sports Precinct in Broadmeadow • That the drafted correspondence be reviewed out of session by the Board prior to sending. 	10 Jun 21	Recommend action be removed from Register, pending advice from GNMPSC Chair	Sep-22	<p>May 2023: Chair of GNMPSC considering repurposing letter following visit by GCC and subsequent media.</p> <p>February 2023: Draft correspondence has been circulated for feedback on 27 January 2023.</p> <p>December 2022: CEO to provide draft correspondence to GMs/CEOs in advance of Nov GMAC meeting for feedback</p> <p>September 2022: Still awaiting advice from the Hunter JO Board on if this matter should still be pursued.</p> <p>Nov2021: Propose to revisit this matter in 2022 once the GNMPSC has reformed post-local government elections</p> <p>Sep2021: A draft has been completed by the CEO and has been included in Correspondence. The original intent of the correspondence has been overtaken by a government announcement on Hunter Park</p> <p>Mar2022: The CEO has now met with the Venues NSW Project lead, Phil Paris, on two occasions to discuss his process for building a business case for Hunter Park and exploring how the Hunter JO can support the business case and stakeholder engagement.</p>
HJO-23-007	Hunter Offshore Wind Zone: That the Hunter JO Board defer the report and recommendations therein until after the Mayors have each conferred with their individual Councils.	8 June 2023	Recommend action be removed from Register	Not specified	August 2023: Offshore wind zone announced by the Climate Change and Energy Minister Chris Bowen on 13 th July 2023. In light of the announcement, it is recommended to remove this action from the Register.
HJO-23-008	Hunter Venture Fund Project: That the motion change to include the Agribusiness as it currently doesn't have any reference to agriculture	8 June 2023	Complete	June 2023	August 2023: Motion amended and recorded
HJO-23-009	HJO-23-009: Accelerating Event Economies (A2E) in the Hunter: The Hunter JO Board would like this item to be brought back to the next meeting as a detailed report	8 June 2023	In progress	August 2023	<p>August 2023: Item deferred to accommodate following report (and presentation) in August meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunter JO Interim Management Arrangements

I.D	Action	Mtg Date		Due	Notes
	around Option 1 – Business As Usual (BAU) + A2E tools and Option 2 – collaborate				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcomes and recommendations from the Major Events Feasibility Study, which provides important context prior to the Board considering the report on regional event attraction models.
HJO-23-010	NSW Common Planning Assumptions: Send letter to the Auditor General echoing the concerns expressed in the Central NSW JO correspondence.	8 June 2023	Complete	June 2023	Aug 2023: Action completed. Refer correspondence.
HJO-23-011	Hunter JO Advocacy Update: Joe to provide an update to the board regarding engagements and time at ALGA	8 June 2023	Complete	August 2023	Aug 2023: Update provided in Advocacy Report (Refer Agenda Item 8.3).
HJO-23-013	General Business: Letter to be drafted on behalf of the Hunter JO Board acknowledging David Evans commitments to the Hunter JO and time in council.	8 June 2023	In progress	July 2023	Aug2023: Correspondence in draft at time of writing
HJO-23-015	<p>Annual General Meeting: That the legal advice sought be provided to the General Managers.</p> <p>That the paper on the Hunter JO Procurement Issue raised in the 2021-22 audit in June 2022 be brought to the Hunter JO Board Meeting to be reconsidered, with the recommendation amended in line with the outcomes of the legal advice.</p>	29 June 2023 (FY21/22 AGM)	Complete	Aug 2023	Aug 2023: Previous report and updated resolution provided to Board at Item 6.3. Confidential and privileged legal advice previously circulated by Chair to voting board members and subsequently circulated to GM's by Hunter JO management (as per discussion with Chair and Board on 10 August 2023)

3.2 Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Action Register

Date: 13th April 2023

Delivery Status

Complete

In progress

Stalled / Off track

Mtg Date	Responsibility	Action	Status
13 April 2023	Transport for NSW	Contact details to be provided to City of Newcastle for the most appropriate Transport for NSW representative with whom Council can engage in relation to planning work around extension of the light rail network.	Complete. Anna Zycki, Regional Director, North at Transport for NSW confirmed as primary contact.
13 April 2023	Transport for NSW & Hunter JO	Hunter JO and Transport for NSW representatives to work together to look at opportunities for designing a collaborative process through which to align regional priority transport outcomes across councils and key agencies, and bring back to the Subcommittee for consideration.	In progress
16 Feb 2023	Hunter JO	Prepare background papers and invite senior State Agency representatives to provide briefings to the Subcommittee in line with endorsed schedule.	In progress (ongoing activity)

3.3 Subcommittee for Economic Evolution Action Register

Date: 13th April 2023

Delivery Status

Complete

In progress

Stalled / Off track

Mtg Date	Responsibility	Action	Delivery Status
13 April 2023	Hunter JO	Organize a briefing session including RfR Expert Panel and key senior agency representatives to demonstrate the opportunities and benefits that can be realised from changes to the policy and planning pathway to facilitate the adaptation of mining and industrial lands. The session would aim to distil key lessons from companies including Blackrock and AGL.	In progress
13 April 2023	Hunter JO	Acquire and circulate to the Subcommittee the guidelines on post mining approvals recently released by NSW Mining, Exploration and Geosciences (MEG)	Complete
16 Feb 2023	Lithgow City Council	Craig Butler, CEO Lithgow City Council to arrange meeting to explore opportunities for collaborative policy and advocacy across “coal mining and coal generated energy” regions, targeting action from State and Commonwealth Governments to plan and support the economic evolution needed as a matter of urgency in these regions.	Complete.
8 December 2022	Morven Cameron, Jason Linnane, Derek Finnigan	Provide information on each Council’s current approach / policy / processes for facilitating land use change to facilitate reuse of mining and industrial lands	In progress
8 December 2022	Morven Cameron	Invite Blackrock to present to the Subcommittee on the processes they have undertaken, and lessons learned in seeking approvals for their development involving reuse of former mining / industrial land.	Invitation to be extended pending the Blackrock development commencing.

4. Presentations

Nil.

5. Correspondence

Report Author: Louisa Bulley, Executive Officer

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

Executive Summary:

This report provides an update on correspondence sent and received in relation to GMAC and the Hunter Joint Organisation Board.

Correspondence Sent:

- Attachment 1: Correspondence to the Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion, The Hon. Kate Washington re Meeting with Hunter JO Chair, 5 June 2023.
- Attachment 2: Correspondence to the Minister for the Environment and Water, The Hon. Tanya Plibersek re Advancing the Circular Economy, 20 June 2023.
- Attachment 3: Correspondence sent to elected Ministers and local MPs requesting their attendance at Events10 Launch in Hunter Region, 21 June 2023 (as listed below);

State MPs and Ministers

- **Hon John Graham MLC**, Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, Minister for Jobs and Tourism
- **Hon Tim Crakanthorp MP**, Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter, Member for Newcastle
- **Clayton Barr MP**, Member for Cessnock
- **Hon Jodie Harrison MP**, Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, Member for Charlestown
- **Hon Greg Piper MP**, Speaker, Member for Lake Macquarie
- **Hon Jenny Aitchison MP**, Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, Member for Maitland
- **Tanya Thompson MP**, Member for Myall Lakes
- **Leslie Williams MP**, Member for Port Macquarie
- **Hon Kate Washington MP**, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion, Member for Port Stephens
- **Hon Yasmin Catley MP**, Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, Member for Swansea
- **Adam Crouch MP**, Member for Terrigal
- **David Mehan MP**, Member for The Entrance
- **David Layzell MP**, Member for Upper Hunter
- **Sonia Hornery MP**, Member for Wallsend
- **Hon David Harris MP**, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, Minister for the Central Coast, Member for Wyong

Federal MPs and Ministers

- **Hon. Don Farrell**, Deputy Premier, Special Minister of State, Minister for Trade and Tourism
- **Ms Sharon Claydon MP**, Deputy Speaker, Member for Newcastle
- **Hon Dr David Gillespie MP**, Deputy Chair of House Standing Committee on Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water, Member for Lyne
- **Dan Repacholi MP**, Member for Hunter
- **Hon Barnaby Joyce MP**, Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Member for New England

- **Hon Pat Conroy MP**, Minister for Defence Industry, Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Member for Shortland
- **Hon Emma McBride MP**, Assistant Minister for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Assistant Minister for Rural and Regional Health, Member for Dobell
- **Ms Meryl Swanson MP**, Chair of Standing Committee on Agriculture, Member for Paterson

- Attachment 4: Correspondence to NSW Auditor General re NSW Common Planning Assumptions, 26 June 2023.
- Attachment 5: Correspondence re Letter of Support re Newcastle Airport – Aviation Attraction Fund Application, 30 June 2023.
- Attachment 6: Correspondence re Letter of Support for Maitland City Council EOI to host 2026 LGNSW Destination and Visitor Economy Conference, 14 July 2023.
- Attachment 7: Correspondence to Mr Andrew Colvin AO APM re Submission to Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding Review

Correspondence Received:

- Attachment 8: Correspondence from below Member Councils re Letters of Support – Application to ARENA Community Batteries Funding, 28 June 2023;
 - Cessnock City Council
 - Maitland City Council
 - MidCoast Council
 - Singleton Council
- Attachment 9: Correspondence from Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water re Circular Economy Ministerial Advisory Group (response re Minister Plibersek letter), 19 July 2023.

Recommendation: That the update report be received and noted.



4 Sandringham Avenue, PO Box 3137,
Thornton NSW 2323. 02 4978 4040
www.hunterjo.com.au

The Hon. Kate Washington MP
Member for Port Stephens, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion
26 William Street
RAYMOND TERRACE NSW 2324

Date: 5 June 2023

Dear Kate,

Subject: Meeting with Hunter JO

Thank you for meeting with the Hunter JO last month.

It was very useful to hear about your priorities, including those in your portfolio. It sounds like a huge challenge and we are, of course, hugely supportive of anything that supports the wellbeing of our communities.

It was also good to hear about the laser-focus on election commitments, and your priorities around housing (including social housing) and the role of the special activation precinct in Williamstown. All these are of interest at a regional collaboration and local council level. In this regard, it's great that the ongoing collaboration between Hunter MPs has translated into Government.

We appreciate your interest in the emergency services levy and we will send you a consolidated table showing total amount of levies and the impact of the removal of the subsidy.

We heard the clear message around Government's fiscal constraints.

In that context, and while our current areas of advocacy focus are not necessarily within your ministerial portfolio, we would direct your attention to the specific asks (in the table provided and reattached to this email) for the five areas we discussed this morning. These are intended to be smaller, more fiscally-manageable, quick-wins that help collaboratively progress State and Local Governments towards longer term aspirations (as well as inform the pathway towards those longer term aspirations).

We will of course raise all these points with the relevant portfolio ministers but, in your role as a Hunter MP, any support you can offer would be appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

Cr Sue Moore
Chair, Hunter Joint Organisation
Mayor, Singleton Shire Council



4 Sandringham Avenue, PO Box 3137,
Thornton NSW 2323. 02 4978 4040
www.hunterjo.com.au

Hon Tanya Plibersek MP
Member for Sydney, Minister for the Environment and Water
PO Box 6022, House of Representatives
Parliament House, Canberra ACT Australia

Dear Minister Plibersek,

Subject: The Hunter Joint Organisation and Federal Government - Advancing the Circular Economy

I am writing to bring to your attention the great circular economy work being carried out by the Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO) and their Member Councils and establish better connections with Federal Government circular economy initiatives.

Recognising the importance of broad collaboration and knowledge sharing in advancing the circular economy agenda, we are eager to establish formal connections with the Ministerial Advisory Group on the Circular Economy. We believe that our work and networks will provide a useful insight into the practical implementation of the circular economy in regional areas and provide opportunities for your Ministerial Advisory Group on the Circular Economy to connect with our organisations and networks to understand implementing circular outcomes at a local level.

The Hunter JO, through its Member Councils, have made a strong commitment to developing the circular economy in our region. We believe the circular economy will play an important role in our region's economic evolution, as the coal economy becomes more constrained, and offers us an opportunity to improve economic and resource recovery outcomes while reducing carbon emissions.

We have been consistently promoting and implementing circular economy principles through our projects and programs since 2018. Our organisation has established various committees, including the Circular Economy Sub-Committee and the Circular Economy Facilitators Group, which actively engage stakeholders from diverse sectors to collaborate on innovative solutions.

We have recently developed a website, [Hunter Circular](#), which is the main resource for the region outlining our roadmap for success, our work underway and completed, our circular economy ecosystem, our events and a useful resource library.

The Circular Economy Sub-Committee is a sub-committee of the Hunter JO Board and consists of 3 mayoral representatives (signatories to this letter) and a council officer representative from each of our 10 Member Councils. The sub-committee, serves as a platform for knowledge-sharing and the development of strategies aimed at transitioning our region towards a circular economy. Through collaborative efforts, this sub-committee has successfully implemented many projects as outlined on the Hunter Circular website.



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Thornton NSW 2323. 02 4978 4040
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Furthermore, the Circular Economy Facilitators Group, comprising industry experts, academics, government representatives, and community and business associations, serves as a platform for knowledge-sharing and the development of strategies aimed at transitioning our region towards a circular economy model. The committee meets fortnightly and through collaborative efforts, has co-created several events and collaborated on an Australian first; the [Circle City Scan](#) project.

We believe we can bring a unique regional perspective, through the Circular Economy Sub-Committee, that has several years' experience and practical knowledge of the challenges faced when moving our economy toward a circular future. We believe that this partnership will foster greater alignment between our organisation's efforts and the national circular economy strategy, enabling us to benefit from shared insights, best practices, and policy guidance.

Furthermore, we express our keen interest in participating in any other programs or initiatives related to the circular economy that the federal government may undertake. The great circular economy projects we have ongoing and completed to date are reliant on the funding assistance provided by the NSW EPA and are aligned to achieving NSW state government circular economy goals.

We are also keen to leverage funding to achieve federal government circularity goals and outcomes by contributing our expertise, experiences, and local perspectives. Through our involvement in the national agenda, discussions and actions we can collectively drive the transition towards a more sustainable and circular economy.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We greatly appreciate your leadership in championing sustainable practices and driving the circular economy agenda at a national level. We eagerly anticipate the opportunity to collaborate with you and your committee to accelerate the transition to a more sustainable future.

Yours sincerely,

Cr Sue Moore
Mayor of Singleton Council
Chair of Hunter Joint Organisation

Cr Kay Fraser
Mayor of Lake Macquarie City Council
Chair - Hunter JO Circular Economy
Sub-Committee

Cr Claire Pontin
Mayor of MidCoast Council
Committee member - Hunter JO
Circular Economy Sub-Committee

Cr John Connors
Mayor of Dungog Shire Council
Committee member - Hunter JO Circular
Economy Sub-Committee



4 Sandringham Avenue, PO Box 3137,
Thornton NSW 2323. 02 4978 4040
www.hunterjo.com.au

The Hon. John Graham MLC
Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism
52 Martin Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister Graham,

Subject: Invitation to *Events10* Launch

I am writing to invite you to speak at the *Events10* Launch with Council, events and industry representatives from across the Hunter Region, on Wednesday 26 July.

Events10 is an events marketing initiative by the 10 destinations of the Hunter region to position our region as a destination of choice to attract and host world class events that align with our unique offering.

Background

The Hunter Joint Organisation is a collaborative body that brings together the ten councils in the Hunter region to provide a united and local voice for our communities. Tourism and events are a priority identified by the Hunter JO to endure public benefit to the region, accelerating job and income creation, economic resilience and diversification.

The Hunter JO secured grant funding of \$860k through the Australian Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund to deliver a program to build a foundation for event attraction and help foster economic resilience and recovery in the Hunter region – namely the Accelerating Event Economies program.

The launch will directly follow a one-day conference with events and tourism representatives, focused on using the digital products such as a website, resources and tools that have been developed under this initiative, to continue to promote the Hunter region as a leading destination for tourism and events.

As the launch is fast approaching, we thought it best to contact you to explore the option of you speaking on the Government's behalf to demonstrate your support for diversifying our economy as we transition from coal. The allocated time is 4:00pm on Wednesday 26 July 2023. The official launch will be followed by networking, drinks and canapes.

If you or your office have any questions please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours Sincerely,

Cr Sue Moore
Chair, Hunter Joint Organisation
Mayor, Singleton Shire Council



4 Sandringham Avenue, PO Box 3137,
Thornton NSW 2323. 02 4978 4040
www.hunterjo.com.au

Ms Margaret Crawford
NSW Auditor General
Audit Office of NSW
GPO Box 12
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Ms Crawford,

Re: Concerns about anomalies in the NSW Common Planning Assumptions

Joint Organisations are statutory local government entities established by the NSW Government, through the NSW Local Government Act 1993, to support councils work together for better rural and regional outcomes, and to enhance the way local and state governments work together to plan and deliver important regional infrastructure and investment.

The core statutory functions established for Joint Organisations by the NSW Government are:

1. Strategic planning and priority setting – to establish strategic regional priorities for the Joint Organisation area and to establish strategies and plans for delivering those priorities
2. Intergovernmental collaboration - to identify and take up opportunities for inter-governmental cooperation on matters relating to the Joint Organisation area.
3. Shared leadership and advocacy - to provide regional leadership for the Joint Organisation area and to be an advocate for strategic regional priorities.

The ten Member Councils of the Hunter JO (Cessnock, Dungog, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, MidCoast, Muswellbrook, City of Newcastle, Port Stephens, Singleton and Upper Hunter Shire) represent the largest regional economy in Australia and one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in NSW. However, with \$23 billion of the region's economy attributed to coal exports annually, the Hunter is on the precipice of enormous change as it responds to changing global energy demands. To maintain its significant contribution to Australia's state and national economies, the region needs a clear, place-based, integrated whole of government policy and planning approach to drive the Region's economic evolution.

Central to achieving this is the need to more realistically acknowledge and plan for the region's high level of population growth. In contrast to this need however, the NSW Common Planning Assumptions, the agreed information assets that must be utilised by all NSW Government Agencies for planning and infrastructure delivery, are consistently underestimating actual and forecast levels of population growth not only in the Hunter, but more broadly across Regional NSW.

Given the consistent inaccuracy of the forecasts provided by the Common Planning Assumptions, the Hunter JO commissioned its own research to identify projected population figures for the Hunter Region to inform the work of the Hunter JO and Member Councils. This work found that even under upwardly revised projections released by the NSW Government in 2022, the maximum population forecast for 2041 remained at levels comparable to only the lower-level scenarios identified through the Hunter JO commissioned research. Furthermore, there continues to be a significant disconnect between what regional Local Government Areas are experiencing and the projections provided by the Common Planning Assumptions.

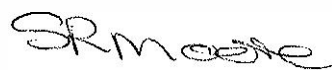
The consistent underestimation of population growth by NSW Government Agencies arising from use of the NSW Common Planning Assumptions has both significant and detrimental impacts for the region's economic growth and liveability, most notably:

- The timing and level of investment in core infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, housing and transport infrastructure is not fit for purpose for the actual population levels that eventuate.
- Inefficient and wasteful expenditure of NSW Government funds that could otherwise be avoided through improved population forecasting and integration with government agency planning processes.
- Significant loss of public confidence and elevated levels of community frustration in the nature and delivery of a range of NSW Government land use planning, infrastructure and other services.

It is for these reasons that we urge the NSW Audit Office to review the integrity, efficacy and value of the NSW Common Planning Assumptions as a tool for informing NSW Government Agency planning processes. At a minimum, we recommend that scenario planning for alternative population numbers should be a mandatory requirement of these processes.

Should you have any further queries or wish to discuss, please don't hesitate to contact Joe James, CEO - Hunter JO at ceo@hunterjo.com.au.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "SR Moore".

Cr Sue Moore
Chair, Hunter Joint Organisation
Mayor, Singleton Council

Dr Peter Cock
Chief Executive Officer
Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd
Private Bag 2001
Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

30 June 2023

Dear Peter,

RE: Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd – Aviation Attraction Fund Application

I write to confirm the substantial and collective support of the Hunter Joint Organisation, for the funding application submitted by Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd to Destination NSW under the Aviation Attraction Fund, and for an extension of the Aviation Attraction Fund, or a comparable program to help attract routes to our region, beyond 30 June 2023.

The Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) is the collaborative body that brings together the region's ten councils to provide a united and local voice for our communities. The JO's statutory role includes identifying key regional strategic priorities and supporting collaborations to deliver these priorities with key partners, including other levels of government, industry and community.

We collectively recognise that Newcastle Airport is one of the Hunter's most significant regional assets. Continued growth in the services provided by the Airport will have profound and positive impacts on business productivity, expansion and diversification, communications, visitor experience and regional identity.

The Aviation Attraction Fund Application submitted by Newcastle Airport directly aligns with the core objectives and policy directions we have identified for the Hunter Region through both our [Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032](#) and [Hunter Global: The Flightpath to our Future](#).

These key regional strategic documents identify that the growth of Newcastle Airport, and of the communities and industries linked to this growth, will be a key future driver of the region's economic evolution beyond coal. This is because a globally connected Hunter, via Newcastle Airport and the Port of Newcastle, will be key to creating an economically prosperous city-region, that can provide our communities with a vibrant and unique lifestyle, linked to growth in products and services, to replace the current economic output of thermal coal. Key objectives and strategic directions identified within these documents include:

Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032

- Through its port and airport, the Hunter is globally connected and economically prosperous city-region, recognised as a key international gateway, providing its communities with a vibrant and unique lifestyle and growth in products and services to replace the economic output of thermal coal
- Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around regional tourism promotion to grow jobs in the region.

- Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around events and tourism.
- Identify opportunities for growth and diversification of the regional events and tourism economy.
- Partner with the airport and port to identify and pursue priority actions to enable access to international markets for the benefit of the region
- Influence government policy to prioritise the importance of access to international markets for the benefit of the region
- Lead collaboration in the region between government, industry and community to ensure the benefits of international markets are region wide
- Support a transport access strategy for regional connectivity to and from the airport.

Hunter Global: The Flightpath to our Future

- Leverage regional support, to attract priority new international flight partners and connecting destinations, including for example whole-of-region representation in trade missions and delegations.
- Collaborate to present a unified position and voice to generate funding and investment to attract international flights that will provide direct connections for businesses.
- Advocate for the renewal of the NSW Government Aviation Attraction Fund beyond 30 June 2023 as an important funding mechanism for leveraging increased domestic and international flights through Newcastle Airport.
- Work actively with Destination NSW and Destination Sydney Surrounds North to collectively promote the Hunter region as-a-whole to international markets.
- Develop and invest in a regional tourism marketing campaign to create a unified and collaborative approach to the promotion of the region as a key international destination.
- Develop a holistic export strategy for the Hunter region, including plans to upgrade freight and supply chain infrastructure.

In line with these strategic priorities, we are fully supportive of the ambition of Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd, as detailed in the Airport 20-year Master Plan, to be the airport the region deserves with an increasing number of direct flights to domestic and international destinations for both people and cargo.

As a group of Councils we strongly believe that the addition of new routes to the offerings at Newcastle Airport, enabled by a grant from the Aviation Attraction Fund will:

- Strongly contribute to the growing the local economy, enhancing local business opportunities, and provide a strong opportunity for growth in the local tourism sector. It will also be a great improvement for the local community, enabling easier and cheaper travel for local people in the Hunter.
- Provide a return to international services and tourism following Covid-19, an important business link for our mining sector in the direct flight to Perth, and an important start for the new terminal currently under construction.
- Directly complement two significant regional projects currently being implemented by the Hunter JO:
 - 1) Hunter Global Tourism project, which is identifying the international tourism opportunities for the Hunter region in preparation of the Newcastle Airport international upgrade.

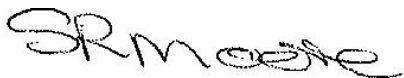
- 2) Airports Strategy (Freight and Logistics) project, which is developing a strategy and business case for airfreight and passenger infrastructure and connectivity logistics for the region.

Given the critical importance and strategic alignment of Newcastle Airport's ongoing growth to the collective vision we have for the region, we strongly:

- Commend the application by Newcastle Airport Pty Ltd to the Aviation Attraction Fund, and sincerely support its approval
- Recommend an extension of the Aviation Attraction Fund, or a comparable program to help attract routes to our region, beyond 30 June 2023.

Should you require any further information please don't hesitate to contact Joe James, CEO Hunter JO on ceo@hunterjo.com.au.

Yours sincerely,



Cr Sue Moore
Chair, Hunter JO
Mayor, Singleton Council



Cr Jay Suvaal
Deputy Chair, Hunter JO
Mayor, Cessnock City Council



Mr Jeff Smith
General Manager
Maitland City Council
PO Box 220
Maitland NSW 2320

Wednesday 12 July, 2023

Re: Letter of Support – Maitland City Council EOI to host the 2026 LGNSW Destination and Visitor Economy Conference

I write to confirm support for Maitland City Council's Expression of Interest to host the LGNSW Destination and Visitor Economy Conference in Maitland in May 2026.

The Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) is a collaborative body that brings together ten regional councils to provide a united and local voice for communities. Our statutory role includes identifying key regional strategic priorities and supporting collaborations to deliver these priorities with key partners, including other levels of government, industry and community.

If successful, the DVE Conference would provide a fantastic opportunity for more than 300 Local Government tourism professionals and Councillors from across New South Wales to learn, network and experience the best visitor experiences that Maitland and the Hunter Region has to offer. Within Maitland, the recently refurbished Maitland Town Hall would be an ideal venue to host this high profile business event, while several unique venues including Maitland Gaol, Walka Water Works and Maitland Regional Art Gallery would be well suited to hosting the social functions.

The project directly aligns with the following objectives and strategic directions from the [Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032](#):

- 4.1.1 Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around events and tourism.
- 4.1.2 Identify opportunities for growth and diversification of the regional events and tourism economy
- 4.5.4 Support enhanced cultural opportunities and protected heritage.
- 3.3.1 Support efforts that position the Hunter globally in its areas of competitive and comparative strength.
- 3.5.2 Identify opportunities for growth and diversification of employment based in the tourism economy



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59 Bonville Avenue | PO Box 3137 | Thornton NSW 2322
P (02) 4978 4040 | F (02) 4966 0588

FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS  

- 3.5.1 Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around regional tourism promotion to grow jobs in the region.

We are committed to supporting Maitland City Council to secure this high profile business event for the region.

Should you have any further queries or require any further information please do not hesitate to contact Kim Carland – Program Lead, Hunter JO at kimc@hunterjo.com.au

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James", written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joe James
CEO

Mr Andrew Colvin AO APM
Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding
National Emergency Management Agency
GPO Box 133
Canberra City ACT 2601

3rd August 2023

Subject: Submission to Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding Review

The Hunter Joint Organisation is a statutory local government entity established by the NSW Government, through the *NSW Local Government Act 1993*, to support councils work together for better rural and regional outcomes, and to enhance the way local and state governments work together to plan and deliver important regional infrastructure and investment.

Member Councils of the Hunter JO include:

- Cessnock City Council
- Dungog Shire Council
- Lake Macquarie City Council
- Maitland City Council
- MidCoast Council
- Muswellbrook Shire Council
- City of Newcastle
- Port Stephens Council
- Singleton Council
- Upper Hunter Shire Council

The Hunter JO also works closely with Central Coast Council on a number of disaster resilience initiatives.

The core statutory functions established for the Hunter JO are:

1. **Strategic planning and priority setting** – to establish strategic regional priorities for the Joint Organisation area and to establish strategies and plans for delivering those priorities
2. **Intergovernmental collaboration** - to identify and take up opportunities for inter-governmental cooperation on matters relating to the Joint Organisation area.
3. **Shared leadership and advocacy** - to provide regional leadership for the Joint Organisation area and to be an advocate for strategic regional priorities.

The information provided in this submission focuses on those regional scale issues, priorities and responses on which Hunter JO Member Councils and Central Coast Council are aligned in response to the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding.

The responses provided in the submission are drawn from the following documents, processes and experiences developed or undertaken in collaboration with Hunter JO Member Councils, Central Coast Council and NSW Government Agencies:

1. [Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032](#)
2. [Hunter JO Advocacy Framework and Priorities.](#)

3. Information provided by Council participants in activities and processes being delivered under various disaster resilience programs being coordinated by the Hunter JO
4. 'Resilience Health Check' consultation sessions completed representatives from all bush fire-declared Hunter JO Member Councils during 2022/23 (Cessnock, Dungog, Lake Macquarie, MidCoast, Muswellbrook, Singleton, Upper Hunter), the focus of which included:
 - What are the biggest resilience challenges being faced by Council?
 - What does Council see as its role in resilience?
 - What makes a resilient Council? And community?
 - Where are the biggest opportunities for regional collaboration on resilience?

Should you have any further queries or to discuss any aspects of our submission, please don't hesitate to contact Anna Flack, Senior Projects Coordinator on 0460 038 199 or at annaf@hunterjo.com.au.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joe James", is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joe James
CEO Hunter Joint Organisation

Regional Submission to the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding

Question 1. What experience have you had with Commonwealth disaster funding support? (Maximum 500 words)

Funding accessed by the Hunter JO

Since 2013 the Hunter JO has accessed grant funding through a number of Commonwealth supported (joint Commonwealth & NSW Government funded) grant programs, to facilitate the design and delivery of regional scale disaster preparedness programs in collaboration with our 10 Hunter JO Member Councils, Central Coast Council, NSW Government Agencies and Community Service Organisations. These programs and their focus have included:

- 2022-24 Disaster Risk Reduction Fund
- 2021-23 Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund
- 2021-23 Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Package
- 2020-21 Regional Disaster Preparedness Program
- 2014-18 Community Resilience Innovation Program
- 2013-14 Auxiliary Disaster Resilience Support Scheme

Further detail on these programs is provided in the Appendix.

Funding programs accessed by Individual Councils

Hunter JO member Councils have also individually been the recipients of various government funded disaster grant programs including:

- Disaster Risk Reduction Fund
- Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund
- Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Package
- NSW EPA Clean-up of Bushfire Generated Green Waste
- Preparing Australian Communities Local Stream (PACLS)
- Essential Public Asset Restoration (EPAR) funding

**2. How could Commonwealth funding support communities to reduce their disaster risk?
(Maximum 500 words)**

The 10 Member Councils of the Hunter JO have identified the following shared strategic objectives and directions for the region to ensure our local communities *“are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks”*:

Strategic Objectives and Directions:

- 2.1 We are recognised as innovative leaders in Council capacity building and policy support for climate change action, resilience and disaster preparedness.
- 2.2 We take leadership and drive regional best practice in climate action
- 2.3 Our region is resilient to environment risks, natural hazards and climate change.
- 4.3 Our natural environments including our bushland, estuaries, waterways and beaches are protected and enhanced.

Advocacy Priorities:

- 2. A resilient region prepared for change
- 6. Improving authority and resourcing for place led decision-making at a local and regional scale

Further detail on the alignment with the Hunter JO Strategic Plan and Hunter JO Advocacy Priorities are included in the Appendix.

Commonwealth funding has the potential to directly support the achievement of these shared strategic objectives and directions of the Hunter JO Member Councils, if it were to:

- Commit to a more sustainable and strategic place-based approach to local and regional recovery and resilience planning, delivered via the collaborative efforts of Local Councils and Joint Organisations. At a minimum, such funding should be provided on a four-year, recurrent funding cycle that aligns to the Integrated Planning and Reporting cycles of Councils and Joint Organisations. NB This would represent a profound and beneficial change that would directly support local government to strategically plan and resource priority disaster preparedness initiatives to improve the resilience of their local communities. This approach would be fundamentally different to that which currently exists, which requires Councils and groups of councils to reactively stitch together a range of disparate short term grant funding opportunities to attempt to deliver longer term, sustained programs to address place based priorities, in line with their statutory planning timeframes (ie 10 year Community Strategic Plans, 4 year delivery programs and annual implementation plans) required by the NSW Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework.

- Investigate opportunities to consolidate different funding sources and programs to streamline and sustain the delivery of disaster focused programs. This would have significant efficiencies for both local government and the funding agencies involved in administering them.
- Provide funding that permits asset renewal and maintenance upgrades that "build back better" to ensure future infrastructure resilience. Instead of restoring damaged assets, upgrades are often necessary to ensure resilience.
- Provide funding and resourcing to drive adaptation planning for communities exposed to a higher risk of disasters due to legacy planning decisions.
- Amend the administrative requirements on councils accessing disaster funding for road repair, by reducing and amending them, to facilitate council prioritisation and allocation of funds consistent with place-based priorities
- Review the evidence requirements for retrospective claims. These need to be minimised and consistent across programs and communicated to Councils prior to any disaster events occurring
- Provide more opportunities for proactive grant funding for resilience and preparedness initiatives rather than predominantly providing reactive funding following disaster events
- Provide resourcing to support an increase in regional place-based delivery to disaster preparedness. Further detail is provided in the Appendix.

3. Please describe your understanding of Commonwealth disaster funding processes. (Maximum 500 words)

- The current system of Commonwealth disaster funding is largely available post disaster and is reactive rather than proactive. The grant process is usually competitive and directly fosters competition between regional stakeholders rather than building the alignment and a collaborative approach that is needed to successfully support communities recover from, and plan resilience to, natural disasters of increasing frequency and intensity.
- In the recent experience of the Hunter JO and Member Councils, that funding is allocated from the Commonwealth to state agencies (NSW Reconstruction Authority) to manage. The level of involvement and oversight of the grant funding varies significantly between grant authorities and even between grants. Some require significant amounts of reporting and financial reports while others require less.
- While the frequency and level of monitoring and reporting can vary significantly across different funding programs, there has been as discernible increase in the requirement for more frequent (in some cases monthly) milestone progress reporting. This is on top of an additional trend toward requiring more frequent (quarterly) milestone and financial reporting. Given the scale and duration of most projects being delivered, 6-monthly financial and implementation reporting at most is considered appropriate. In particular it should be noted that the direct impact of the increasing frequency of grant reporting being required to deliver grant programs focused on disaster resilience, is that significantly more time is being spent on project administration at the expense of actual project delivery.
- There is a noticeable trend occurring across disaster resilience grant programs, that while offering substantive and appropriate levels of funding for projects, the time period allowed for project delivery is unreasonably short (in many cases 12 months or less). This is of particular concern to JO's and other groups of Councils, where delivery of regional scale projects across multiple local council authorities and state and commonwealth government agencies typically involve a level of complexity, collaboration, stakeholder alignment and cross organisational systems development, that require adequate time to deliver. Longer term project time frames are also critical to:
 - Enabling project outputs to be embedded within local government and other project stakeholders, to ensure the sustainability of outcomes.
 - Addressing the challenge of attracting and retaining staff that arises from short term employment contracts linked to short term project delivery timeframes.
 - Ultimately providing Councils' and JOs more time to plan and execute projects to a higher standard.

Case study – Cessnock Pony Club

The excruciatingly tight eligibility criteria of many grants put significant strain on Councils and communities to justify the use of government funds for practical risk reduction and resilience building projects which will benefit the community.

Cessnock Council received funds in the March 2022 Flood Disaster Grant Category D to relocate the flood-damaged local Pony Club clubhouse to higher ground and to undertake flood resilience modifications. Before Council was able to undertake any repairs or relocation activities the July 2022 flood completely destroyed the clubhouse. Council continued with the proposed project of relocating the clubhouse, with the plan to utilise the insurance payout to fund the majority of the rebuild, and the grant portion to fund the additional flood resilience features and other costs associated with the relocation.

Council has recently been advised that the project is no longer eligible to be funded under this grant because it will be deemed as 'building new infrastructure' rather than repairing or enhancing an existing structure, as the Pony Club clubhouse was destroyed and can no longer be 'relocated'. This is a clear example of where eligibility criteria exclude projects that clearly meet a community's need, and where Councils are prevented from using grant funding to value-add to projects to increase resilience.

Source: Cessnock City Council

4. Are the funding roles of the Commonwealth, states and territories, and local government, during disaster events clear? (Maximum 500 words)

Funding roles of the Commonwealth, state and local government are generally unclear, especially to the community, who do not understand the roles and responsibilities of various government authorities and agencies, and typically assumes that the local council does (or should) fulfil most roles.

The community is also generally unaware of the particular grant funding priorities or restrictions that accompany the delivery of disaster related grant funding, including the allocation of funding to specific projects or focus areas that are required by different programs. Where these focus areas are inconsistent with the expectations of the community it can lead to considerable frustration. Where multiple regions are impacted by a disaster event, it can also be more challenging for Councils to access consistent funding and resource support, placing further strain on their recovery efforts and resources.

When short-term resources (including grant-funded recovery roles) are provided to Councils during or immediately after a disaster event, the community sees this as an expansion of Councils' role and expects it to continue even after the extra grant funding supporting the role ends. This creates further challenges for Council's in trying to service the increase in community expectations and needs that have been created, which can typically be required for many years after the grant funded support ends.

5. Is there any further information you would like to provide? (Maximum 500 words)

The current system of reactive, post disaster competitive grant processes to facilitate local and regional recovery and disaster resilience planning does not provide the best value for money. Such an approach:

- Directly fosters competition between regional stakeholders rather than building the alignment and a collaborative approach that is needed to successfully support communities recover from, and plan resilience to, natural disasters of increasing frequency and intensity
- The current system places a significant administrative impost on Councils in the post disaster period, at the very time that maximum resources (human and financial) need to be focused on disaster recovery and resilience efforts
- The current competitive grant-based system places a disproportionately negative impact on the capacity of smaller and less resourced Councils and Joint Organisations to access adequate and sustainable recovery and resilience funding. Less resourced Councils simply do not have the capacity to apply for disaster grant funds that may be available, particularly following a disaster event when limited resources are even further stretched.
- The short-term nature of resilience focused grant programs embeds vulnerability into local systems and processes, in direct contrast to the need to build and sustain core capability and resilience within Local Councils and their communities
- A grant focused approach to building resilience adds significantly to Council workload and creates new obligations that Councils don't have the capacity to take on and sustain. Instead, funding should be directed to supplementing existing work & priorities that reflect the place based needs and priorities of local communities.
- To claim disaster road funding, Councils have to demonstrate prior road condition, for example via photographic inspection programs. Photographic inspection programs may be feasible for larger metropolitan councils, however this is not generally the case for regional councils who typically have less resources and thousands of kilometres of roads.
- Existing disaster recovery funding programs frequently don't recognise the interconnectedness and interdependence within regions and adjoining Councils that can underpin economic and social recovery following these events. For example, many disaster recovery programs will only provide funding to "disaster declared" Local Government Areas, with the requirement that funding be spent only within that Council area. This specifically prevents the significant benefits that can be realised from collaboration between adjoining Councils or via regional groups of councils where only one or two may be declared a disaster area. It is therefore recommended that funding programs recognise and broaden eligibility



4 Sandringham Avenue, PO Box 3137,
Thornton NSW 2323. 02 4978 4040
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requirements to facilitate collaborative opportunities of this nature. Examples of where such programs could have particular advantages include provision of temporary housing across adjoining Council areas, creating employment opportunities and regional promotional / communication campaigns to address community misconceptions post disaster about visiting an area.

Appendix to Hunter JO submission to the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding

Question 1. What experience have you had with Commonwealth disaster funding support? (Maximum 500 words)

Funding Accessed by the Hunter JO

Since 2013 the Hunter JO has accessed grant funding through a number of Commonwealth supported (joint Commonwealth & NSW Government funded) grant programs, to facilitate the design and delivery of regional scale disaster preparedness programs in collaboration with our 10 Hunter JO Member Councils, Central Coast Council, NSW Government Agencies and Community Service Organisations. These programs and their focus have included:

Year	Grant Program	Value	Focus
2022 - 2024	Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF)	\$1,493,856	Reducing Regional Disaster Risk Through Early Action To facilitate place-based regional collaboration across four sub projects to empower Councils and communities in the region to reduce disaster risk through early action. The focus of the sub-projects includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Support and Capacity Building - embedding disaster resilience into Council operations and building capacity to communicate disaster resilience to local communities. • Disaster waste management and resource recovery preparedness - assisting Councils to plan place-based solutions for effective disaster waste management and resource recovery systems • Delivering a regional transport vulnerability and connectivity assessment and mitigation plan • Continued refinement and expansion of the use of Simtables regionally for multi-hazard disaster engagement
2021 - 2023	Bushfire Community Recovery and	\$300,000	Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework To support Member Councils embed resilience principles and projects into their Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R), in order to support their ability to

Year	Grant Program	Value	Focus
	Resilience Fund (BCRRF)		allocate recurrent funds and commit to long term resourcing (financial and staff) for resilience projects.
		\$300,000	Simtables for Community Empowerment Simtables provide a “State of the Art” tool that can be used to engage communities in localised place-based emergency information sessions. This project has purchased two Simtables for the collective use of Member Councils and is providing direct support to Councils in undertaking the extensive community engagement associated with their use.
2021 - 2023	Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Package (BLER)	\$861,476	Accelerating Event Economies To facilitate economic recovery across bushfire affected Council areas by strengthening the region’s collective voice and the capacity of Councils to collaboratively pitch for major events for the region.
2020-21	Regional Disaster Preparedness Program (pilot)	~\$150,000pa	Regional Disaster Preparedness Officer Program Employment of a Regional Disaster Preparedness Officer (employed by Resilience NSW and hosted by Hunter JO) to work with Councils to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase council capability to prepare, respond to and recover from disasters • Improve collaboration between local councils and agencies • Strengthen Council local emergency management plans • Establish local recovery plans • Identify priority systems, strategies and investments (within and across Councils) to mitigate risks • Integrate climate change adaption strategies into emergency management systems • Establish regional networks focused on building Council and community resilience.

Year	Grant Program	Value	Focus
2017-18	Community Resilience Innovation Program	\$162,600	Disaster Communications Project Development of guidance materials and preparedness resources to support Councils with internal and external communication processes before, during and after a disaster event.
2017-18	Community Resilience Innovation Program	\$202,336	Regional Community Disaster Vulnerability Mapping Spatial geodatabase and GIS mapping which integrates and analyses local and regional spatial datasets (representing demographics, infrastructure and natural hazard exposure) to identify relative community vulnerability to a range of natural hazards at a local community (Statistical Area) scale across the 11 Councils areas of the Hunter and Central Coast region.
			Six Steps to Resilience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To facilitate the development of Business Continuity Plans by Community Support Organisations via the ACOSS “6 Steps to Resilience” framework Development of a “Get Ready for Disasters” Resource Kit for the Community Services Sector to directly support Community Organisations to readily access information to support their organisations and clients prepare for natural disasters.
2014-15	Community Resilience Innovation Program	\$133,182	Building Resilience to Heatwaves Research, design and development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suite of “Beat the Heat” community education / engagement resources including posters, information flyers, webpage content, social media content, newsletter articles, scripts for Community Service Announcements, E-mail alerts and text alerts Heatwave planning guide for local government

Year	Grant Program	Value	Focus
2013-14	Auxiliary Disaster Resilience Support Scheme	\$170,834	<p>Identifying risk perceptions, level of preparedness and communication channels for 'at risk' communities in respect to natural disasters.</p> <p>Commissioning of research to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • risk perception regarding natural disasters within 'at risk' communities; • level and nature of preparedness for natural disasters by 'at risk' communities; • capacity of 'at risk' groups to respond and recover from natural disasters; and • the primary means via which 'at risk' groups receive natural disaster warnings and barriers to communication within 'at risk' communities.
			<p>Spatial Analysis and Mapping of Community Vulnerability to Natural Disasters</p> <p>Design and development of a spatial data library for the purpose of identifying natural hazards across the Lake Macquarie, Wyong and Gosford Local Government Areas. The Spatial data library facilitates the integrated collation and analysis of spatial information to explore the extent and nature of exposure of communities to natural disasters.</p>

2. How could Commonwealth funding support communities to reduce their disaster risk?

(Maximum 500 words)

The 10 Member Councils of the Hunter JO have identified the following shared strategic objectives and directions for the region to ensure our local communities “are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks”:

Alignment with HunterJO Strategic Plan 2032	
Strategic Theme(s)	Resilience Liveability
Objective(s)	<p>2.1 We are recognised as innovative leaders in Council capacity building and policy support for climate change action, resilience and disaster preparedness.</p> <p>2.2 We take leadership and drive regional best practice in climate action</p> <p>2.3 Our region is resilient to environment risks, natural hazards and climate change.</p> <p>4.3 Our natural environments including our bushland, estuaries, waterways and beaches are protected and enhanced.</p>
Strategic Direction(s)	<p>2.1.1 We provide guidance and support packages to embed Climate Change action, resilience and disaster preparedness into Councils Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework.</p> <p>2.1.2 We drive council capacity building opportunities supported by an evidence base to improve regional resilience and community awareness.</p> <p>2.1.3 We drive opportunities to collaborate, adopt system thinking and circular economy opportunities to reduce our impact on climate change and increase resilience.</p> <p>4.3.1 Our Councils are well supported in protecting and enhancing the environment through regional programs, data collection, support resources and capacity building.</p> <p>4.3.2 Provide support and identify opportunities to improve and protect the regional Blue Green Grid.</p> <p>4.3.3 We drive council capacity building opportunities to protect the environment and human health from pollution.</p> <p>4.3.4 Provide support for regional conservation planning to protect regional biodiversity.</p> <p>4.3.5 Provide support and identify opportunities to enhance the health of the region’s estuaries and other waterways.</p>

Alignment with Hunter JO Advocacy Priorities	
Advocacy Priority	<p>2. A resilient region prepared for change</p> <p>6. Improving authority and resourcing for place led decision-making at a local and regional scale</p>
Hunter JO Policy	<p><u>A resilient region prepared for change</u></p> <p>The region needs to be prepared for change, and able to withstand and recover from natural and human induced risks (i.e. natural disasters, climate change, economic and social disruption and change).</p> <p>The current system of reactive, post disaster competitive grant processes to facilitate local and regional recovery and resilience planning does not provide the best value for money. Such an approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly fosters competition between regional stakeholders rather than building the alignment and a collaborative approach that is needed to successfully support communities recover from and plan resilience to natural disasters of increasing frequency and intensity • The current system places a significant administrative impost on Councils in the post disaster period, at the very time that maximum resources (human and financial) need to be focused on disaster recovery and resilience efforts. • The current grant-based system places a disproportionate negative impact on the capacity of smaller and less resourced Councils and Joint Organisations to access adequate and sustainable recovery and resilience funding. <p>The cost of implementing Coastal Management Programs being developed by Councils in collaboration with the NSW Government is prohibitive for Councils, meaning that the objectives and intent of the NSW Government's Coastal Management Act will not be achieved under the current system</p> <p><u>Improving authority and resourcing for place led decision-making at a local and regional scale</u></p> <p>Wherever possible and appropriate, delegation of decision-making authority to place-led mechanisms strengthens social fabric and empowers communities. Increasing the authority of local decision-making can, and will, come with increased accountability of decision makers to communities. This can occur through statutory and funding requirements but principally is manifested through the proximity of local elected representatives to community and the democratic process.</p>

	<p>Having genuine local decision-making authority, encourages members of a local community to have an active voice in matters that affect their lives and encourages them to advocate for the voice of others with whom they are connected within their communities. It provides communities with a sense of control of their individual and collective futures and drives improved and more meaningful place-led dialogue.</p> <p>Increasing the authority of local-decision making is only meaningful if supported with appropriate resourcing. This requires both structural change in the resourcing of local government and also more structured and genuine collaboration between all three levels of government to efficiently use scarce resources.</p> <p>The financial sustainability of a stable source of “royalty” revenue is needed to fund local infrastructure in local communities that bear the impacts, or otherwise have restrictions arising from the contribution of that place to broader regional or state benefits.</p>
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Further detail on the benefits of a regional, place-based approach to delivery:

Joint Organisations (JO) of Councils across NSW, both as individual JOs and collaboratively across the JO network, are proving highly effective in supporting NSW Government Agencies deliver its legislative and policy priorities at a regional, place-based scale. Key successes have already, and continue to be delivered in the following areas:

- Economic Development, Planning and Transition
- Destination Attraction
- Net Zero Acceleration
- Disaster Risk Reduction
- Circular Economy
- Contaminated Land Management
- Water Management
- Waste Management

Regional place-based delivery of disaster preparedness programs through groups of Councils (JO’s, Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCS) and other collaborations) presents a significant opportunity for enhancing the efficiency, efficacy of Commonwealth grant funded programs, and the sustainability of outcomes from these programs. Key opportunities include:

- **Increased levels of engagement with Joint Organisations when designing regional funding programs.** Joint Organisations are statutory entities established by the NSW Government to *identify regional priorities and facilitate intergovernmental collaboration to address these.* Both State and Commonwealth Governments working with JOs at the design stage provides a highly efficient and effective means of ensuring program design reflects place-based need and priorities.

- **Multiyear funding linked to shared agency and JO strategic regional priorities.** In line with their statutory role for regional strategic planning and priority setting, Joint Organisations are required to prepare a Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities on a four yearly planning cycle, which aligns with the NSW Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. A significant opportunity for reform exists, whereby government agencies and JOs could collaborate to proactively align strategic priorities and funding resources (currently allocated reactively via grant programs), to provide multi-year funding to JOs to deliver these agreed priorities across a range of government priority areas, including disaster resilience.
- **Targeted investment in regional capacity building roles and consistency in their design across government agencies.** Increasingly over recent years, different NSW Government agencies have been investing in regional positions employed within JOs, to support Councils across NSW develop and build capacity to implement systems and practices to ensure alignment with, and effective place-based implementation of, NSW Government legislation, policies and priorities. The expansion of such roles to focus on disaster resilience is highly recommended. These roles provide an extremely important and cost-effective mechanism through which to actively:
 - Build awareness and capacity of local government staff to meet their responsibilities under Commonwealth and NSW legislation, regulations and policies
 - Support local government to develop and implement consistent and appropriate policies, systems and procedures to align with Commonwealth and State government directives and requirements
 - Provide direct technical support to assist local government staff understand and navigate legislative requirements and policy directions from Commonwealth and State Governments
 - Improve communication between levels of government on key issues and priorities.



29 June 2023

Mrs Julie Briggs
Chief Executive Officer
Riverina Eastern Regional
Organisation of Councils

Contact: Ken Liddell GMU
Our Ref: DOC2022/135355

Via email: jbriggs@reroc.com.au

Dear Ms Briggs

Letter of Support - ARENA Community Batteries Funding Round 1 – Stream B

Cessnock Council confirms its participation in the Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Council's (REROC) application to the Community Batteries Funding Round 1 for provision of batteries for Council Gathering Places.

I declare that I am an authorised representative for Cessnock Council and that Council owns and operates the council infrastructure listed for Council Gathering Places project. This facility consumes more than 100 MW of electricity per year.

If the application is successful, Council consents to the installation of a 74kW battery at Cessnock Council works depot (emergency centre) facility pending detailed design and assessment.

I declare that Council is aware that if successful the funding agreement with ARENA will be signed by REROC on behalf of the participating councils.

I confirm that in-kind support will be provided to the project from council staff for project management of the detailed design and assessment and construction phases of the project. The lead contact person for Cessnock Council is Mark Manning, Senior Environment Planner, who can be contacted on 02 4993 4188 or by email on mark.manning@cessnock.nsw.gov.au

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact my office on 4993 4208 or via email council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Ken Liddell
General Manager

t: 02 4993 4100 f: 02 4993 2500

p: PO Box 152 Cessnock NSW 2325

e: council@cessnock.nsw.gov.au w: www.cessnock.nsw.gov.au

ABN 60 919 148 928

26 June 2023

Mrs Julie Briggs
Chief Executive Officer
Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils
Email: jbriggs@reroc.com.au

Dear Julie

RE: Letter of Support – application to ARENA Community Batteries Funding Round 1 – Stream B

Maitland City Council confirms its participation in the Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Council's (REROC) application to the Community Batteries Funding Round 1 for provision of batteries for Council Gathering Places.

I declare that I am an authorised representative for Maitland City Council and that Council owns and operates the council infrastructure listed for Council Gathering Places project. This facility services thousands of residents and consumes more than 937 MW of electricity per year.

If the application is successful, Council consents to the installation of a 50 kWp battery at Maitland Town Hall and Admin facility pending detailed design and assessment.

I declare that Council is aware that if successful the funding agreement with ARENA will be signed by REROC on behalf of the participating councils.

I confirm that in-kind support will be provided to the project from council staff for project management of the detailed design and assessment and construction phases of the project.

The lead contact person for Maitland City Council is Ben Maddox, Principal Sustainability Officer, who can be contacted on 02 4934 9714 or by email on Ben.Maddox@maitland.nsw.gov.au

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



David Evans PSM
General Manager

26 June 2023

Mr Roger Stephan
Chief Executive Officer
Email: rstephan@isjo.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Stephan

RE: Letter of Support – application to ARENA Community Batteries Funding Round 1 – Stream B

Maitland City Council confirms its participation in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation's application to the Community Batteries Funding Round 1 for provision of batteries to community pool facilities.

I declare that I am an authorised representative for Council and that Maitland City Council owns and operates the Maitland Pool as a service to the Maitland community. This facility provides a range of recreational opportunities for our region and consumes approximately 398 MWh of electricity per year.

If the application is successful, I consent to the installation of 78kWp battery at the Maitland Pool pending detailed design and assessments.

I declare that Maitland City Council is aware that if successful the funding agreement with ARENA will be signed by ISJO on behalf of Council.

I confirm that in-kind support will be provided to the project from council staff for project management of the detailed design and assessment and construction phases of the project.

The lead contact person for Maitland City Council is Ben Maddox, Principal Sustainability Officer, who can be contacted on 02 4934 9714 or by email on Ben.Maddox@maitland.nsw.gov.au

Yours faithfully



David Evans PSM
General Manager

29 June 2023

Mr Roger Stephan
Chief Executive Officer
Email: rstephan@isjo.nsw.gov.au

Dear Roger,

Letter of Support: Application to ARENA Community Batteries Funding Round 1 – Stream B

MidCoast Council confirms its participation in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation's application to the Community Batteries Funding Round 1 for provision of batteries to community pool facilities.

I declare that I am an authorised representative for Council and that MidCoast Council owns and operates the Great Lakes Aquatic Centre as a service to the MidCoast community. This facility provides a range of recreational opportunities for our region and consumes approximately 70 MWh of electricity per year.

If the application is successful, I consent to the installation of 146kWp battery at the Great Lakes Aquatic Centre pending detailed design and assessments.

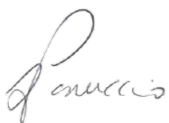
I declare that MidCoast Council is aware that if successful the funding agreement with ARENA will be signed by ISJO on behalf of Council.

I confirm that in-kind support will be provided to the project from Council staff for project management of the detailed design and assessment and construction phases of the project.

The lead contact person for MidCoast Council is Zac Aliberti, Senior Sustainability and Climate Change Officer, who can be contacted on (02) 7955 7383 or by email on Zac.Aliberti@midcoast.nsw.gov.au.

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Your Sincerely



Adrian Panuccio
GENERAL MANAGER

29 June 2023

Mrs Julie Briggs
Chief Executive Officer
Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils
Email: jbriggs@reroc.com.au

Dear Julie,

Letter of Support: Application to ARENA Community Batteries Funding Round 1 – Stream B

MidCoast Council confirms its participation in the Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Council's (REROC) application to the Community Batteries Funding Round 1 for provision of batteries for Council Gathering Places.

I declare that I am an authorised representative for MidCoast Council and that Council owns and operates the council infrastructure listed for Council Gathering Places project. This facility consumes more than 4.9 MW of electricity per year.

If the application is successful, Council consents to the installation of one battery at Taree Works Depot facility pending detailed design and assessment.

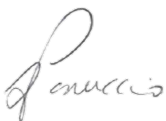
I declare that Council is aware that if successful the funding agreement with ARENA will be signed by REROC on behalf of the participating Councils.

I confirm that in-kind support will be provided to the project from Council staff for project management of the detailed design and assessment and construction phases of the project.

The lead contact person for MidCoast Council is Zac Aliberti, Senior Sustainability and Climate Change Officer, who can be contacted on (02) 7955 7383 or by email on Zac.Aliberti@midcoast.nsw.gov.au

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Your Sincerely



Adrian Panuccio
GENERAL MANAGER

26 June 2023

Mrs Julie Briggs
Chief Executive Officer
Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

jbriggs@reroc.com.au

Dear Julie

**RE: Letter of Support – application to ARENA Community Batteries Funding
Round 1 – Stream B**

Singleton Council confirms its participation in the Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Council's (REROC) application to the Community Batteries Funding Round 1 for provision of batteries for Council Gathering Places.

I declare that I am an authorised representative for Singleton Council and that Council owns and operates the council infrastructure listed for Council Gathering Places project. These facilities service thousands of residents and consume more than 200 MW of electricity per year.

If the application is successful, Council consents to the installation of a 70 kWp battery at Council's Civic Centre pending detailed design and assessment.

I declare that Council is aware that if successful the funding agreement with ARENA will be signed by REROC on behalf of the participating councils.

I confirm that in-kind support will be provided to the project from council staff for project management of the detailed design and assessment and construction phases of the project.

The lead contact person for Singleton Council is Peter Brennan, Coordinator Environmental Services, who can be contacted on 02 6578 7275 or by email on <mailto:pbrennan@singleton.nsw.gov.au>

Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Jason Linnane

General Manager



Australian Government

Department of Climate Change, Energy,
the Environment and Water

MC23-026551

Cr Sue Moore
Mayor Singleton Council
Chair, Hunter Joint Organisation

Cr Kay Fraser
Mayor of Lake Macquarie City Council
Chair – Hunter JO Circular Economy Sub-Committee

Cr John Connors
Mayor of Dungog Shire Council
Committee Member – Hunter JO Circular Economy Sub-Committee

Cr Claire Pontin
Mayor of MidCoast Council
Committee Member – Hunter JO Circular Economy Sub-Committee

By email: louisab@hunterjo.com.au

Dear Councillors Moore, Fraser, Connors and Pontin

Thank you for your letter to the Minister for the Environment and Water, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP. Minister Plibersek has asked me to reply on her behalf and to thank you for your correspondence.

The collaborative work being undertaken as a part of the Hunter Joint Organisation is a great example of the power of regions in driving Australia's transition towards a circular economy. Thank you for drawing this excellent work to our attention.

As you may be aware, the Circular Economy Ministerial Advisory Group that we support is due to consider the role of place-based circular economy in May 2024. We would like to set up a conversation with you ahead of this meeting to hear more about the work you are doing, and consider how best to raise this to the attention of the Advisory Group.

Please feel free to reach out to my team supporting the Advisory Group at: circulareconomy@dcceew.gov.au. They will work with you to set up a meeting.

I look forward to our continued engagement on these important matters.

Yours sincerely

Chloë Bird
Branch head
Supply Chain Initiatives Branch
Circular Economy Division

19 July 2023

DCCEEW.gov.au

John Gorton Building - King Edward Terrace, Parkes ACT 2600 Australia
GPO Box 3090 Canberra ACT 2601 ABN: 63 573 932 849

6. Items for the Hunter JO Board - For Decision

6.1 Hunter JO Interim Leadership Arrangements [Confidential Item]

This item is to be considered in confidential session, the report has been circulated under a separate board pack.

6.2 Royalties for Rejuvenation: Ministerial Appointment [Confidential Item]

This item is to be considered in confidential session, the report has been circulated under a separate board pack.

6.3 Hunter JO Procurement Issue

This report will be provided to the Board as a late item, ahead of the meeting on Thursday 10 August 2023.

6.4 Hunter JO Funding and Grant Opportunities

Status of Board Approved Grant Applications

The following table provides the outcomes of grant applications previously endorsed by the Board that have been determined since the last meeting:

Status	Grant	Amount
Successful	The Hospitality Circularity Network	\$498,971
Successful	Hunter Circular Knowledge Hub	\$293,469
Successful	Landfill Emissions Data Management Program (Landfill Emissions DMP)	\$199,650
Unsuccessful	Shiraz to Shore Feasibility & Preferred Route	\$220,495

New Proposals

One additional funding proposal (at the direct request of the Greater Cities Commission) was submitted in accordance with the process for CEO and Board approval of grant funding applications. With this proposal, the additional step of seeking the approval of GMAC was also undertaken. It is unclear whether this project will still proceed given that the GCC has now been integrated into the Department of Planning and Environment. GCC staff involved in the process have advised that an outcome should be known in August.

Funding proposal	Amount
Resilient Hunter Central Coast Platform To establish a common data platform for the Hunter and Central Coast to provide councils access to consistent, up to date datasets, develop evidence-based policy and collaborate on pathways towards net zero emissions.	\$655,000 (over 2 years)

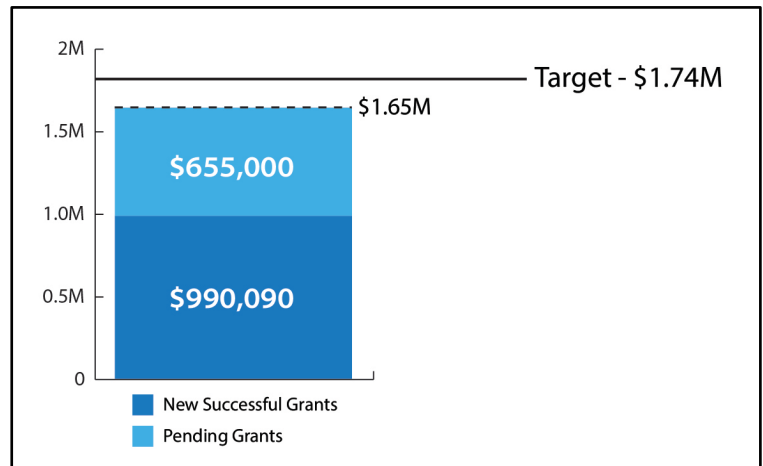
Attachment 10 provides further detail on the focus and status of active funding applications yet to be determined.

Comparison to Forecast Budget

The total grant revenue in the approved FY2023/24 budget is \$6,173,090.

Of that amount, \$1,744,054 was prospective or new grants to be sourced during FY23/24.

The adjacent figure shows the status of progress towards the target of \$1,744,054.



Recommendation: That the Board;

- 1. Note the outcomes of previous grant applications endorsed by the Board**
- 2. Endorse submission of the new “Resilient Hunter Central Coast Platform” funding proposal.**

Hunter JO Funding and Grant Opportunities (10 August 2023)

Funding Program	Grant Focus and Assessment Status	Status	Alignment to Hunter JO Strategic Plan and Advocacy Priorities
Greater Cities Commission	<p>Resilient Hunter Central Coast Platform</p> <p>To establish a common data platform for the Hunter and Central Coast to provide councils access to consistent, up to date datasets, develop evidence-based policy and collaborate on pathways towards net zero emissions.</p> <p>Amount \$655,000 (over 2 years)</p>	Advice Pending	<p>Strategic Plan</p> <p><i>Objectives</i></p> <p>2.1 We are recognised as innovative leaders in Council capacity building and policy support for climate change action, resilience and disaster preparedness</p> <p>2.2. We take leadership and drive regional best practice in climate action</p> <p>2.3 Our region is resilient to environment risks, natural hazards and climate change</p> <p><i>Strategic Directions</i></p> <p>2.3.1 Apply and obtain financial grants for regional programs that support a resilient region</p> <p>2.3.2 Facilitate and manage regional programs that support a resilient region</p> <p>Advocacy Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A resilient region prepared for change
Regional NSW Growing Regional Economy Fund <i>Submitted 23 May 2023</i>	<p>Shiraz to Shore</p> <p>EOI to undertake detailed design and construction for a key section of the Shiraz to Shore route through the Hunter Valley.</p> <p><i>NB While applications generally require a 25% financial contribution to the project, following advice from the funding authority, the Hunter JO has applied for extenuating circumstances to avoid this requirement given the structure and</i></p>	Advice pending	<p>Strategic Plan</p> <p><i>Objectives</i></p> <p>1.1 Within the region there is a robust integrated transport solution that underpins the experience/liveability and productivity of its residents and visitors comparable to its global peers.</p> <p>3.5 We are recognised as a destination of choice for international and domestic visitors.</p> <p><i>Strategic Directions</i></p>

Funding Program	Grant Focus and Assessment Status	Status	Alignment to Hunter JO Strategic Plan and Advocacy Priorities
	<p><i>collaborative nature of our organisation and the regional focus and scope of the project.</i></p> <p>Amount \$10,000,000</p>		<p>1.1.5 Identify and facilitate regional approaches for active transport outcomes that deliver connectivity, health, liveability and economic benefits.</p> <p>3.5.1 Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around regional tourism promotion to grow jobs in the region.</p> <p>4.5 A region with enriched neighbourhoods and places supported by planned infrastructure that promotes community cohesion, active living and pride in culture and heritage.</p> <p>Advocacy Priority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure and transport systems that connect the region • Our unique lifestyle and attractive environment is protected and enhanced <p>Advocacy Policy</p> <p>1 Improving connectivity of the region's cycling experiences and networks, and increasing cycle tourism, provides clear benefits to local communities and economies. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new jobs within the visitor economy • preventive health outcomes • enhanced recreational opportunities and • social connectivity <p>1 environmental benefits such as reducing car use and contributing towards net zero emissions targets.</p> <p>2 Our communities deserve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent facilities and services providing diversity and amenity (eg access to health services, shops, restaurants, events, sporting and cultural facilities etc)

Funding Program	Grant Focus and Assessment Status	Status	Alignment to Hunter JO Strategic Plan and Advocacy Priorities
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unique, diverse and accessible environmental features (waterways, beaches, mountains, bushland and agricultural hinterland).

Report Author: Kim Carland, Program Lead

Responsible Officer: Tim Askew, Director Programs.

Purpose:

To provide an overview of the findings and recommendations arising from the Major Event Feasibility Study for the Hunter region.

Link to Hunter Joint Organisation Strategic Plan 2022-2026

Strategic Theme(s)	1. Connectivity 3. Jobs and a Growing Economy 4. Liveability
Objective(s)	1.2 Through its Port and Airport the Hunter is a globally connected and economically prosperous city-region, recognised as a key international gateway, providing its communities with a vibrant and unique lifestyle and growth in products and services to replace the economic output of thermal coal. 3.1 Coordinated planning and investment by all levels of government that empowers the region and its residents to maintain and grow jobs, economic opportunities and quality of life 3.3 A globally focused region that drives talent attraction and retention 3.5 We are recognised as a destination of choice for international and domestic visitors 4.1 We are recognised as a destination for hosting world class events that align with our unique offering 4.6 A region that is connected, inclusive and fair
Strategic Directions	1.2.1 - Partnering with airport and port to identify and pursue priority actions to enable access to international markets for the benefit of the region. 1.2.3 - Leading collaboration in the region between government, industry and community to ensure the benefits of international markets are region wide. 3.1.1 - Support a clear, place-based, integrated whole-of-government policy and planning approach to drive the region's economic evolution and jobs of the future. 3.3.1 - Support efforts that position the Hunter globally in its areas of competitive and comparative strength. 4.1.1 - Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around events and tourism. 4.1.2 - Identify opportunities for growth and diversification of the regional events and tourism economy. 4.6.2 - Support an increase in the availability of jobs and services closer to people.

Hunter JO Advocacy Priorities	<p><i>Advocacy Priority</i></p> <p>4. A globally focused Hunter connected to international markets</p> <p><i>Advocacy Policy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A globally focused Hunter connected to international markets will underpin the Hunter's successful economic evolution. Efficient and effective access to global markets to attract investment and talent to evolve our economy, and to sell our products and services on the world stage, will be key to this success.
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Background

At its meeting on April 2021 meeting, the Hunter JO Board resolved to:

"Establish a Regional Events Strategy Working Group.

- *Review opportunities and costs associated with hosting the World Masters Games.*
- *Scope out the development of a bid for the 2029 World Masters Games on behalf of the Hunter Region.*
- *Review existing strategies and develop a roadmap for the implementation of key actions to attract major events to the region."*

Later that year the Hunter JO was able to secure \$860K through the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF) to deliver the Accelerating Event Economies (A2E) project. Commencing in January 2022, A2E delivered a suite of initiatives designed to build a foundation for events attraction to the region. The objectives of A2E included:

- Streamline event management and planning in the region across council boundaries to create efficiencies for event managers and planners and attract them to our region, building economic recovery, resilience and diversification in response to the bushfires and other rising uncertainty.
- Encourage investment through identified gaps and opportunities for event assets across the region
- Build on the collective tourism objectives for the region to be recognised as a destination of choice

The resources developed through the A2E project (eg regional facilities audit, KPMG Economic Analysis Report) and direct grant funding have provided the opportunity to explore the options and feasibility for the region to host a major sporting event, such as a World Masters Games or Commonwealth Games. JMP Associates were engaged to undertake this work, the outputs of which (ie Major Events Feasibility Study) are now available and included in Attachment 11.

As well as assessing the feasibility of major events such as World Masters or Commonwealth Games, the report also provides recommendations on alternative events that are available and which would provide more of a balanced economic stimulus for the region compared to putting all effort and investment into one high profile event.

Report Findings

Major Events

Event Type	Findings
Commonwealth Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant investment, circa \$2.6 billion would be required to support the infrastructure development and operations required. • NSW Government refused the recent 2026 opportunity and as such unlikely to support delivery of the Games in the Hunter region.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal Government is currently investing into 2032 Brisbane Olympics and unlikely to invest into the Hunter for a Commonwealth Games.
World Masters Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circa \$50 million investment required, comprising hosting fee (\$15M) and other operational requirements such as event coordination staff and overlay infrastructure (\$35M). The Hunter appears to have majority of required facilities, however smaller capacities. Public transport system would require an uplift to move people around the region.

Alternative events

- Significant opportunities exist to support high-profile international events already secured for Australia (e.g. training camps or smaller team matches):
 - British & Irish Lions Tour 2025 (Rugby)
 - Men's Rugby World Cup 2027
 - Netball World Cup 2029
 - Rugby League World Cup 2029.
- Mass participation, lower profile sporting events cost less and drive more visitation and economic impact than a Commonwealth Games or World Masters Games.
- Business Events provide the highest economic impact of all events and the greatest value. However, the majority of conferences require modern facilities for 300+ pax or larger which the Hunter region doesn't have at a high standard.
- An opportunity exists to secure funding for a larger international convention centre.
- Unique event concepts, such as Marilyn Monroe or Elvis Exhibitions are indoor and ideal for colder months, and can put regions on the map (e.g. Bendigo Art Gallery).

Events available

Significant consultation with Sport Australia, the NSW Office for Sport and Sport NSW and all of Australia's key National and State Sporting Organisations, has identified National, State or championship events available to attract to the Hunter. These events and those LGA's in which suitable facilities exist are mapped in the following table:

LGA	Suitable Events
Cessnock	BMX, road cycling, endurance horse racing, golf, lawn bowls, motor sports
Dungog	road cycling, endurance horse racing, mountain biking
Lake Mac	BMX, croquet, road cycling, disc golf, golf, ice hockey, lawn bowls, motor sports, mountain biking, sailing, surf lifesaving, surfing
Maitland	BMX, croquet, road cycling, golf
MidCoast	BMX, croquet, road cycling, endurance horse racing, golf, hockey, lawn bowls, sailing, surf lifesaving, surfing
Muswellbrook	road cycling, golf
Newcastle	croquet, road cycling, golf, hockey, mountain biking, sailing, softball, surf lifesaving, surfing
Port Stephens	croquet, road cycling, equestrian dressage, golf, lawn bowls, sailing, surf lifesaving, surfing

Singleton	road cycling, golf
Upper Hunter	road cycling, equestrian, golf

Sister event opportunities

Opportunities exist to partner with other similar style international events, to cross promote to similar audiences, share ticketing audience databases, newsletter content and advertising to drive international visitation.

Examples

- Warbirds over Scone (Upper Hunter) – potential sister relationship with Warbirds over Wanaka or Wings over Wairarapa in New Zealand.
- Kurri Kurri Nostalgia Festival (Cessnock) – potential to partner with other rockabilly 50/60s festivals to attract domestic audiences, particularly Queensland (e.g. Greazefest, Beachfest and Cooly Rocks On).

Recommendation:

That:

- 1. The Board receive the Major Events Feasibility Study and note its findings and recommendations.**
- 2. The findings and recommendations of the Study be considered and, where appropriate, integrated into the Accelerating Event Economies Report and Presentation requested on resourcing options (i.e Action Item HJO-23-009).**



Major Event Feasibility Study

PREPARED FOR HUNTER JOINT ORGANISATION // JUNE 2023

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Project Objectives & Deliverables

Project Objectives & Deliverables

The Hunter Joint Organisation (HJO) is a collaborative body that brings together the ten councils of the Hunter region to provide a united and local voice for the region's communities. Identifying key regional strategic priorities and advocating for them is a key part of HJO's role. Tourism has been identified as a priority by HJO to ensure public benefit to the region, accelerating job and income creation and shared assets that power local social and economic resilience and diversification. This Accelerating Event Economies (A2E) project is designed to implement actions that provide a foundation for event attraction to the region. It is designed to result in the attraction of additional events (e.g. significant sporting or other events) which can deliver enduring public benefit to the region, accelerating job and income creation and shared assets that power local social and economic resilience and diversification.

HJO has the following key objectives for this project:

- A. Determine the feasibility of the region to host a major event whereby event participation and visitation is shared across multiple LGA boundaries.
- B. Identify suitable major events available for bidding, or significant events existing in the region which could be grown and expanded.
- C. Provide case studies and data to identify potential event investment options.

HJO has also outlined the six key deliverables it views as being critical to the success of this project:

1. Outline the technical requirements for the region to bid secure and host a Commonwealth Games and/or a World Masters Games.
2. Using existing facility audit data of venues in the region to determine: what venues would meet the criteria; what venues may need rectification and the cost of this; the bidding and hosting costs; the timeline to secure an event and whether it is economically feasible to consider such an event bid.
3. Using the same facility audit data, identify other major events which could potentially be held in the region; utilise multiple venues across the region; drive economic benefit and be available for bidding / hosting in the next 5-10 years.
4. Provide successful case studies from other regions and potential funding models to potentially secure the identified events above in 1. and 3.
5. Identify significant recurring sport business or leisure events held in the region to summarise the current calendar of major events in the region.
6. Identify which of those recurring events can possibly be scaled up to drive increased visitation and economic growth, and how this might occur.



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SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAJOR EVENTS TO BE HOSTED IN THE HUNTER REGION

- The Hunter region is to be congratulated for identifying that hosting major events can act as a major driver for increasing visitor numbers, length of stay and expenditure. Major events can not only drive significant economic outcomes such as these, but they can also deliver far more holistic positive benefits such as: building the brand profile for the Hunter region via media coverage which will assist to drive future visitation; enhance the strategic alignment with the region's key brand attributes; increase community pride and well-being; and ultimately make the Hunter region a better place to live, work, study and play for its residents.
- The HJO and its member Councils also need to be congratulated for the ambition to explore hosting major international events such as the Commonwealth Games and the World Masters Games (WMG). Now, although this Report finds that both of these events are unlikely to be feasibly held in the Hunter region (primarily due to the cost of running and hosting either event, as well as some issues with venue suitability and accommodation) the Hunter region has an enormous opportunity to host a series of other major international event content, which has been already secured to occur in NSW and Australia from 2025-2029.
- The possibility of hosting match and/or training camp content (or in the case of the Women's Rugby World Cup in 2029 – potentially the entire event) from events such as the British & Irish Lions Tour 2025 (Rugby), the Men's Rugby World Cup 2027, the Netball World Cup 2029 (which will be hosted only in NSW) and the Rugby League World Cup 2029, is an opportunity not to be missed by the Hunter region and its Councils.
- In addition to this, there are a multitude of other potential event opportunities for the Hunter region. This ranges from growing and supporting some of its wonderful, home-grown events, to creating or securing a diverse range of other events which can deliver enduring public benefit to the region, accelerate job creation and create shared assets that will power local social and economic resilience and diversification.
- However, the ability to achieve all of this will require heeding the lessons from other destinations and building a very close relationship with the NSW Government, particularly, Destination NSW (DNSW), in order to harness and deliver these opportunities. Of perhaps most critical importance though, will be the ability for the HJO, its Councils and other key event stakeholders (both in the Hunter region and external), to collaborate and work together to ensure that events are a focal point for the region and that events are prioritised by all.



Executive Summary

COMMONWEALTH GAMES

- Very significant levels of investment would be required to host a future Commonwealth Games– significantly more than Gold Coast 2018, and likely more than that currently anticipated for Victoria 2026 – which is currently costing Victoria more than \$2.6 billion. The NSW Government said no to the 2026 event when it became available and are therefore highly unlikely to provide funding for a future Commonwealth Games. As Australia is hosting the Games in 2026, it also unlikely to be back for at least another 2-3 iterations, or at least more than 10 years away.
- Given the Federal Government is also significantly funding the 2032 Brisbane Olympic Games at present, an appeal to them for some of the required funding, is also highly likely to be unsuccessful.
- Aside from the event cost, there are also only limited venues in the Hunter region which are currently suitable, and that actually meet the requirements of the anticipated Commonwealth Games' sports program.
- Critically, there are also no suitable venues for a number of key, high profile and two compulsory Commonwealth Games' sports in swimming and athletics as well as the key sport of track cycling.
- There are also key limitations which relate to the size and standard of existing venues in the Hunter region. Current venues may be 'fit for purpose' for community requirements, but not when introducing international sporting event requirements (i.e. sport technical requirements, spectator seating, broadcast, etc.)
- Significant additional permanent venues would be required to meet anticipated sports program requirements, thus likely adding considerable additional costs which would likely be in excess of \$1 billion.
- Development of an athletes' village solution is also expected to be necessary, given that suitable accommodation alternatives are not readily available, adding even more additional costs to hosting the event.
- Spectator accommodation is also likely to be insufficient, given the type and spread of accommodation throughout the region as well as its proximity to venues and public transport systems.
- The public transport system would also likely require significant uplift (through provision of temporary services) to meet the anticipated Commonwealth Games' requirements.



Hunter Region Venue Assessment – Commonwealth Games

Potential Sport(s)	Hunter Region Venue that meets standard for Commonwealth Games
Archery	●
Athletics	●
Badminton	● ●
Basketball	● ●
Beach Volleyball	●
Boxing	●
Cricket T20	●
Cycling - track	●
Cycling – mtn. bike	●
Cycling - road	●
Cycling BMX	●
Diving	●
Golf	●
Gymnastics	●
Hockey	●
Judo	● ●

Potential Sport(s)	Hunter Region Venue that meets standard for Commonwealth Games
Lawn Bowls	●
Netball	● ●
Rowing	●
Rowing - coastal	●
Rugby Sevens	●
Shooting	● ● ●
Squash	● ●
Swimming	●
Swimming - synchro	●
Table Tennis	● ●
Tennis	● ●
Triathlon	●
Weightlifting	● ●
Wrestling	● ●

The following legend has been used:

- Compliant or likely to be able to meet expected requirements.
- Requirement likely to be able to be addressed through capital or temporary overlay works.
- Not compliant or unlikely to be able to meet expected requirements given venue restrictions (such as space).
- ● May be possible to host but an issue exists where multiple sports require the use of very limited indoor venues.
- ● ● Some genre of shooting venues are compliant. Others likely to need works and some are not compliant.

Executive Summary

WORLD MASTERS GAMES

- Given that Sydney hosted the 2009 World Master Games (WMG) and that this event was funded by both the NSW Government and the Federal Government to the tune of around \$10m each, it is highly unlikely that the current NSW Government and/or Federal Government would be interested in funding another WMG given the €10m hosting fee, the 2032 Olympics and the state of the Federal and NSW budgets.
- However, it does appear that the Hunter region has the majority of venues required to host a WMG sports program – but this would need to be subject to a far more detailed analysis if the decision is made to proceed with a bid.
- There are key potential limitations relating to the size and capacity of some existing venues. Current venues may be ‘fit for purpose’ for community requirements, but they are generally smaller than equivalent style venues which have been used for previous WMGs.
- The size and capacity of venues for certain sports would result in multiple venues being required to support the anticipated levels of participation (when compared to Sydney 2009 and Auckland 2017). Adding more venues then creates operational and sport delivery complexity (and additional costs).
- However, temporary or innovative venues could potentially be created to meet sport requirements.
- Accommodation is also unlikely to be sufficient when considering the total attendee demand and the proximity of that accommodation to both the venues and the public transport system.
- The public transport system would also likely require significant uplift (through the provision of temporary services) to meet the demands of a WMG when considering the participation levels, as well as the venue and accommodation locations.
- No financial estimation has been undertaken, however, based on previous WMG, it is reasonable to expect that the operational costs of delivering such an event would exceed \$50 million, without consideration of any venue upgrade requirements. Therefore, it would appear that there are significantly cheaper event options which in their totality could deliver the same level of economic impact as a WMG.



Hunter Region Venue Assessment – World Masters Games

Potential Sport(s)	Hunter Region Venue that meets standard for WMG
Archery	●
Athletics	●
Badminton	●
Baseball	●
Basketball	●
Canoe / Kayaking	●
Cycling - track	●
Cycling – mtn. bike	●
Cycling - road	●
Cycling - bmx	●
Diving	●
Football	●
Golf	●
Hockey	● (potentially insufficient fields in close proximity)
Judo	●
Karate	●
Lawn Bowls	●

Potential Sport(s)	Hunter Region Venue that meets standard for WMG
Netball	● (potentially insufficient courts in close proximity)
Orienteering	●
Rowing	●
Rugby Union	●
Sailing	●
Shooting	●
Softball	●
Squash	●
Surf lifesaving	●
Swimming	●
Table Tennis	●
Taekwondo	●
Tennis	●
Touch Football	●
Triathlon	●
Volleyball (inc. beach)	● (indoor) ● (beach)
Water Polo	●
Weightlifting	●

Executive Summary

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW ALTERNATIVE EVENTS FOR THE HUNTER REGION

- Australia, and NSW in particular, has done an excellent job of securing a number of **high-profile world cups and other leading international events**. As such, there is an enormous opportunity for the Hunter region to host matches and/or training camps for a number of these upcoming events. This will require the HJO and its member Councils to lobby DNSW and the various event organisers to ensure that this occurs. Please see the next page for a potential HJO Committee Structure, which may potentially facilitate this focus on securing these major events and reaping the benefits of hosting them.
- The following international major events have already been secured, but now the Hunter region needs to actively lobby to host as much training and match content as possible. Indeed, the Hunter region should put itself forward once again to host entire 2029 Women's Rugby World Cup, as per the original 2021 bid.
 - British & Irish Lions Tour 2025 (Rugby), Men's Rugby World Cup 2027, Netball World Cup 2029 (which will be hosted entirely in NSW) and the Rugby League World Cup 2029.
- Arguably, if the Hunter region can secure some of the above international event content, it will **cost far less** and may **drive far more** visitation and economic impact than a Commonwealth Games or WMG.
- In terms of **business events**, there are over 100+ national and NSW focused associations that hold annual conferences. However, the vast majority of these conferences are for 300+ pax or even larger. Until the Hunter region secures funding to build a far larger international convention centre, it will need to continue to work closely with DNSW's Regional Conferencing Unit to secure increased numbers of smaller conferences and meetings, particularly ones that involve the NSW Government.
- A number of other **potential event concepts** have been outlined in this Report which could potentially drive significant visitor economy outcomes and increase visitor numbers, stay and spend in the Hunter region. These event concepts include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - **Major pop-art or gallery exhibitions** much like Bendigo in Victoria has undertaken with enormous success with its hosting of the Grace Kelly, Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Exhibitions. These are indoor events, so they are ideal for the colder months when there is less occupancy and there are multiple hosting options across the region. They also tend to be held for an extended period which minimises accommodation capacity constraints as well as being likely to address any shortfall of mid-week visitors.



Executive Summary

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW ALTERNATIVE EVENTS FOR THE HUNTER REGION (continued)

- **Food and wine as well as concerts** in wineries has provided the Hunter region with an ability to develop a unique selling point (USP) which has proved highly successful in bringing large numbers of predominately Sydneysiders, to spend their weekends and money in the region. New concert and food and wine concepts across other nearby LGAs could be developed to ensure that this success continues to be a future major driver of visitation to the Hunter region.
- **Mass participation sporting events** such as bringing the proven event model of a potential Cycle Classic could be brought to the Hunter Valley, which would result in 3,000+ mostly high net worth cyclists from Sydney converging on the Hunter region. Events like these generate a high ROI while showcasing the Hunter region's natural beauty, iconic towns and beautiful landscapes. There is also the additional possibility of creating entirely new mass participation event content such as the Kanga Cup in Canberra (see the Case Study later) where hundreds of primary football teams and their families converge on Canberra during its low season of the winter school holidays.
- Further to this concept, no regional destination has yet been able to establish itself as an absolute leader in attracting mass participation sporting events. While these sporting events are mostly not high-profile, a large number of them do drive significant out of region visitation, and they can also be targeted by focusing on low or shoulder seasons. This Report outlines a large number of potential national and state sporting events; from BMX, mountain biking and road cycling through to croquet, disc golf and ice hockey – all of which could be strategically secured for all 10 Councils at a relatively low cost, venue hire waivers and/or by cost-effective infrastructure improvements. They present a massive opportunity for the Hunter region that is largely untapped, although some Councils have identified their clear benefits.

POTENTIAL NEW GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE FOR HUNTER REGION EVENTS

- There is currently no agreement within the HJO Board on how best to approach supporting and securing events for the Hunter region, and as such it may be difficult to ensure that there is a unified and collaborative approach to targeting some of the events highlighted in this Report. Of particular importance will be to ensure that there is adequate governance, funding, administration support, collaboration (i.e. member Councils not bidding against each other) and political will. A potential solution might be to establish an HJO Events Committee which would identify targeted events and develop a strategic approach on how to attract events to the region. This Committee could be made up of 2-3 Council Mayors and/or CEOs, the GM of Destination Sydney Surrounds North and HJO administrative support to facilitate its needs. It would require an agreed clear and transparent charter as well as the identification of clear priorities to report back on progress. It would not prevent individual Councils targeting events but it would likely mean far more event success across all of the HJO member Councils.



Executive Summary

EXISTING RECURRING HUNTER REGION EVENTS & THEIR ABILITY TO UPSCALE

- The Hunter region has a broad variety of event genres spread across the year, and part of the Brief for this Project was to compile a list of recurring events across the broader Hunter region and this has been provided as a spreadsheet which can be easily added to and amended to reflect any future changes. These events can be broadly summarised into the following categories:
 - Food and Drink, Sporting, Equine, Shows, Agricultural / Garden, Unique & Special Events, Music, Mass participation sporting events, Arts & Culture and Ceremonial
- A number of the Hunter region's recurring events are long-standing and have their roots in the local community and are embraced by their residents. The fact that a large number of these events are community / volunteer run means that this ethos is critical to their on-going development and success. The not-for-profit / community basis to these events are often what binds them together, but it can also sometimes stifle event development and new ideas. As such, there is an opportunity to potentially facilitate major event professionals to mentor and guide some of these not-for-profit / community events and assist them to adapt and grow by adopting some of the best-practice governance, risk and documentation practices used by professional event organisers. If done and managed effectively this could be one of the most valuable initiatives to assist the Hunter region's wonderfully diverse range of recurring events to prosper for many years to come.
- Some of these recurring Hunter region events also have similar counterparts across Australia and sometimes New Zealand. As such, they could possibly scale up and attract more out of region and even international visitors by forming key sister type relationships with these other events for mutual benefit.
- Events such as *Warbirds over Scone* and the **Kurri Kurri Nostalgia Festival** are ideally placed to explore such mutually beneficial relationships, not only for the purposes of encouraging like-minded event attendees to come to the Hunter region via mutual database access, eDMs and advertising, but also by building relationships with other event organisers from the same genre and sharing new ideas and also how to deal with key issues they may be facing.



Executive Summary

CASE STUDIES OF OTHER REGIONAL DESTINATIONS EXCELLING IN EVENTS

Two key regional locations were chosen for their excellence in events. The Mudgee region was chosen as it is also located in NSW, has a food and wine focus and is a relatively small LGA which “punches well above its weight”. The Sunshine Coast was chosen for its ambition to be recognised as the premier regional events destination in Australia, and it is hard to argue that they have not already achieved this status.

The Mudgee Region

Despite its relatively small population size, Mudgee has been recognized as Australia’s top tourist town the last two years. This has not happened by accident, but by careful and strategic planning and key stakeholder engagement. Events are a key pillar of how the Mudgee region has been so successful. Mid-Western Council has taken a very deliberate strategy of recognising its portfolio of existing events, nurturing them and assisting them to grow and become far larger and ultimately more sustainable. It has also been **highly strategic in applying for grant funding** to help pay for some of their secured events. The region also has a highly curated master event calendar where at least one or two major events occur almost every month of the year, thus filling occupancy gaps and low and shoulder seasons, and ensuring new types of visitors are continuously coming to see all that the Mudgee region has to offer.

The Sunshine Coast

The Sunshine Coast is one of Australia’s most popular tourism destinations and its economy depends largely on tourism. The region hosts a variety of major events each year, which reinforces its reputation as a leading tourism and events destination. Sunshine Coast Council have recognised how valuable events are to the local visitor economy, by creating a 10-year events strategy, which provides a clear framework for supporting existing events as well as acquiring new events. Council established a largely independent Events Board, a tourism ratepayer levy to fund its events, a major events unit to ensure bringing events to the region is as simple as possible, and they are now reaping the benefits of a highly targeted approach. In 2021/22 the region held 88 events driving \$69.3m in direct economic benefit, and in doing so generated a **\$30 return for every \$1 invested** across their event portfolio. For them events are an investment not a cost.





Commonwealth Games



Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Sports Program

At the heart of the Commonwealth Games is the Sports Program. The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) provides a range of guidance on the formation of the Sports Program for each edition of the Games, which would be developed through a candidature phase.

Currently, the Commonwealth Games Sports Program is formed with the following guidance:

- Required to include two (2) compulsory sports:
 - Athletics (track & field)
 - Swimming
- Other sports are selected from a list of core sports, with a Host able to propose two (2) additional sports, which may include other CGF recognised sports and/or sports of local interest.
- Need to contain approximately 15 sports with an absolute minimum of 10 sports including the two (2) compulsory sports. There is no stipulated limit on the number of sports that can be included.
- An integrated para sport program is required to remain as a key, focal part of the Commonwealth Games.



Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Compulsory Sports

- Aquatics (Swimming, including Para)
- Athletics (including Para)

Expected Core Sports

- Aquatics (Diving)
- Archery (Recurve)
- Badminton
- Basketball 3x3 (Men and Women)
- Boxing
- Cricket (Men and Women)
- Cycling (Mountain Bike, Road, Track, Track Para)
- Gymnastics (Artistic and Rhythmic)
- Hockey (Men and Women)
- Judo
- Lawn Bowls (including Para)
- Netball (Women)
- Powerlifting (Para)
- Rugby Sevens (Men and Women)
- Shooting (Clay Target, Small Bore, Full Bore, Pistol)
- Squash
- Table Tennis (including Para)
- Triathlon (including Para)
- Volleyball (Beach)
- Weightlifting
- Wheelchair Basketball 3x3 (Para)
- Wrestling (Freestyle)

Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Venues

A wide range of venues are required to successfully host a Commonwealth Games, with over 100 venues necessary when accounting for all of the competition venues, training venues as well as the non-competition venues and support facilities.

Competition venues and training venues are required to comply with CGF technical requirements which are aligned to international sporting federation requirements (which often are more stringent than national standards).

Based on a likely Sports Program, the following tables set out the high-level requirements of the competition venues (from a sport/field of play perspective). Events that are conducted outside of traditional venues (i.e. marathon, road cycling events etc.) are not included.

The venue for the opening and closing ceremony is also not included, noting that the indicative venue capacity would be at least 20,000 - 40,000 to align with the athletics venue (although it is not compulsory that the same venue is used).



Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Sport	Requirements	Indicative Capacity
Athletics – Track and Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified synthetic athletics track - Class 1 certification of the track is mandatory. • 400m warm-up athletics track – minimum 6 lanes, with an identical track surface to the competition track. • Separate long throws warm-up area • Final athlete warm-up area adjacent to final-call in the stadium. 	20,000 - 40,000
Aquatics – Swimming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two 50m pools required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Preferably 10 lanes for competition ◦ Minimum 6 lane warm-up pool • Controlled water temperature • Indoor venue typically preferred, but can be outdoor venue 	4,000
Aquatics - Diving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diving platforms in accordance with FINA requirements. • Indoor venue typically preferred, but can be outdoor venue. • Controlled water temperature • Dry training area 	1,000
Badminton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 courts (including 'show-court', plus warm-up courts). • Preferred minimum clear ceiling height of 12m. • Minimum of two (2) full size courts in close proximity to field of play. 	2,500



Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Sport	Requirements	Indicative Capacity
Basketball (3x3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two training courts required in addition to main field of play court. 	2,500
Boxing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 450m2 for Boxing layout. Four (4) separate warm-up areas in close proximity to field of play. 	2,500
Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities compliant to ICC requirements. Sufficient practice nets, with same type of surface as the competition venue. Appropriately sized grass outfield for fielding training. 	10,000 – 20,000
Cycling - Track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor timber track velodrome built to UCI regulations and specifications. Athlete warm-up area located within the infield area of the competition track. 	2,500
Gymnastics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 2,700m2 for Artistic layout (excluding seating, judging areas etc.) Approximately 1,800m2 for Artistic warm-up areas in close proximity to field of play. Smaller areas required for Rhythmic, but preference to locate in same venue. Minimum ceiling height. 	6,000 / 3,000
Hockey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two (2) full size pitches required Specific orientation requirements 	4,000



Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Sport	Requirements	Indicative Capacity
Judo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 1,200m2 for Judo layout. Approximately 400m2 for warm-up facilities. 	2,000
Lawn Bowls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four (4) greens typically required 	2,000
Netball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor competition. One (1) competition court. Two (2) full size warm-up courts. 	2,500 – 8,000 (finals)
Rugby Sevens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Athlete warm-up in close proximity to field of play. 	10,000 – 30,000
Shooting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to individual discipline requirements. 	500 (combined across ranges)
Squash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show court capable of singles and doubles configuration. Additional match courts - 4 doubles courts and 6 singles courts as guidance. 	2,000
Table Tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Space for two (2) show courts. Space to eight (8) match courts. Space for ten (10) warm-up courts. Appropriate environmental conditions. 	2,000



Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Sport	Requirements	Indicative Capacity
Triathlon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Field of play configuration (swim, cycle and run) to meet competition requirements, including areas for start platform, transition zone and finish zone. 	2,000 (at finish line)
Beach Volleyball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) competition court. Two (2) full size warm-up courts. 	3,000
Weightlifting / Powerlifting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 300m2 for weightlifting layout. Approximately 400-500m2 for warm-up facilities, including platforms. 	2,000
Wrestling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 1,300m2 for Judo layout. Approximately 600m2 for warm-up facilities. 	2,000



Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Venues - Overlay

It is not unusual for a significant level of 'overlay' to be required to ensure the sport, technical and operational requirements of the Games can be met – even for venues designed for international level competition. The nature of the existing venue will ultimately determine the extent of overlay requirement.

Overlay is typically required to accommodate the following requirements:

- Temporary seating
- Broadcast lighting
- Broadcast compounds
- Media tribunes within the seating bowl
- Sponsor activation and/or spectator engagement
- Dedicated athletes' and technical officials' lounges
- Hospitality facilities
- Entrance and ticketing facilities
- Temporary fencing
- Security infrastructure
- Logistics, catering and waste compounds
- Transport facilities

In addition, there is a significant dependency on services such as electrical and telecommunications to meet the requirements of the Games.

Wayfinding signage and branding is also required to varying levels throughout all Games venues.

Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Venues – Training Venues

Training forms a key component of the athlete preparation for elite-level competition.

Depending on the sport, the training venue requirements will be determined by a range of factors, including competition format, athlete numbers (or number of teams) and any proposed venue sharing arrangements.

Stand-alone training venues (i.e. venues required in addition to the use of competition venues as training venues) should be located in close proximity to either the competition venue or the athletes' village facility.

The following tables provide guidance on the stand-alone training venues that are typically required to host a Commonwealth Games.



Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Sport	
Aquatics	Separate training facility with 50m pool.
Athletics	Additional 8-lane 400m track (including two horizontal jump pits) and separate throws field.
Badminton	Depending on size of competition venue, additional 4 x training courts required (but preferably can be at venue).
Basketball	Depending on size of competition venue, additional training courts (but preferably can be at venue).
Boxing	Training venue with 4 x boxing rings and other specific training requirements.
Cricket	Two separate training facilities subject to number of teams, including practice wickets. Indoor training facility required in case of adverse weather.
Gymnastics - Artistic	Separate training venue typically required.
Gymnastics - Rhythmic	Separate training venue, accommodating 2 floors.
Hockey	Full-size training pitch is required with appropriate FIH certification.
Judo	Training venue required.
Lawn Bowls	Training conducted at competition venue. However, additional venue would provide greater flexibility.



Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Sport	
Netball	Two courts (preferably co-located) for training.
Rugby Sevens	Multiple training pitches required, depending on number of teams competing. Access to a high-performance gym, preferably co-located with a training venue. Access to a swimming pool (1-2 lanes), in close proximity to the training venues. Technical Officials require use of training pitch or warm-up pitch for training.
Squash	Training typically contained within competition venue. Other courts may be utilised if available.
Table Tennis	Typically contained within competition venue, but depending on size of venue, an additional venue may be required.
Triathlon	Access to 25m swimming pool and running track.
Weightlifting / Para Powerlifting	Depending on the size of competition venue, a separate training venue may be required, for 30 platforms for Weightlifting / 12 benches for Para Powerlifting.
Wrestling	Depending on size of competition venue, a separate training venue may be required for at least 6 mats.



Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Venues - Non-Competition Venues

To support the operational delivery of the Commonwealth Games, several non-competition venues and support facilities are also required for varying lengths of time. These venues may include, but are not necessarily limited, to the following:

- International Broadcast Centre (IBC)
- Games Media Hub/Centre
- Games Family Hotel
- Accreditation and Uniform Distribution Centre(s)
- Volunteer Recruitment Centre(s)
- Organising Committee office accommodation, including supporting range of Games-time operational functions
- Welcome centres
- Transport depots
- Logistics warehouse(s)

Considerable overlay may therefore be required to support the venue function and operations.

In the case of the IBC, provision also needs to be made for unobstructed indoor space of approximately 5,000m², with additional space for an adjacent satellite facility, car parking and storage compounds.

Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Venues – Athletes' Village

A key feature of the Commonwealth Games is the delivery of an Athletes' Village where athletes and team officials are accommodated.

Commonwealth Games hosts from Melbourne 2006 through to Gold Coast 2018, provided athlete and team official accommodation in a single village site, using a new housing development.

Birmingham 2022 had originally planned to follow the same model, but construction challenges amplified by COVID-19 required alternative solutions to be adopted (using a combination of university accommodation and hotels).

Victoria 2026 is planning for new housing developments in each of the four (4) major regional hub locations across Victoria.

For future Commonwealth Games, the above model remains an option where there are legacy benefits for the scale of new housing required, however, the CGF has indicated that where there is no such legacy requirement, athletes and team officials could be accommodated at more than one site using a combination of solutions such as new build housing, hotels and university accommodation provided that the quality of experience and service levels are maintained (commensurate with the types of service ordinarily provided at a single site Commonwealth Games Village).

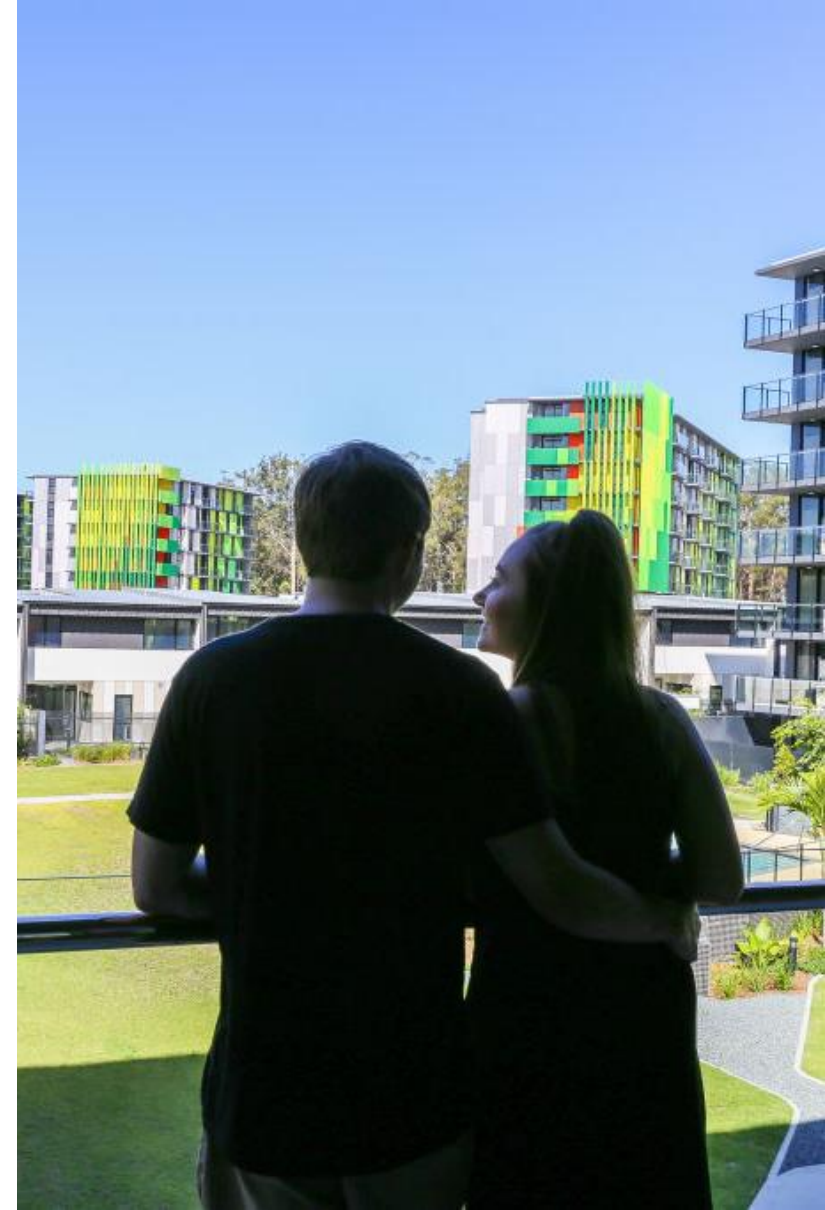


Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Venues – Athletes' Village (cont.)

The athlete's village accommodation must be located in close proximity to the competition venues. Where a sport is taking place at a location that is an extended distance from the village (i.e. over an hour's drive), a satellite village may be required to accommodate the athletes and team officials for that sport – with the conditions and services of the satellite village being similar to that of the main village.

In addition to the accommodation, a wide range of services are to be provided as part of the village set-up, including large-scale dining facilities, transport connectivity, gyms and training facilities, recreational facilities, and medical facilities. Administrative facilities and support to the CGAs participating in the Games, also need to be provided.



Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Accommodation

For planning purposes, approximately **4,000 - 5,000** rooms (with the majority of properties required to be 3 - 4 star standard) are estimated to be required to meet the needs of the various constituent groups for the Commonwealth Games. This excludes accommodation for athletes and team officials.

This also excludes consideration for spectator accommodation as well as workforce (organising committee staff and contractor/supplier staff).

Depending on local circumstances, it might also be necessary to source short-term accommodation options for the workforce to meet operational requirements. This is likely to include solutions to support high levels of paid staff at Games time, as well as contractor accommodation solutions.

Accommodation properties that provide large room inventory are typically preferred, as opposed to standalone accommodation solutions, given the broader logistical requirements (i.e. transport connectivity or arrangements).

For comparison purposes, including workforce requirements:

- Birmingham 2022 - managed over 8,400 rooms
- Gold Coast 2018 - managed over 7,000 rooms on the Gold Coast (excluding sports held in Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville)
- Glasgow 2014 - managed over 8,600 rooms



Commonwealth Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Transport

The delivery of integrated transport solutions is a critical component of a Commonwealth Games, which includes a high dependency on existing public transport capacity to serve the city and connect Games venues. High profile failures in transport services have been seen in previous multi or single sport events, typically the result of insufficient or untested infrastructure and/or planning.

The scope of transport required for a Games is very broad and an organising committee would typically work with local transport authorities in the planning and delivery of integrated transport solutions, covering elements such as:

- Buses – supporting a range of purposes, including athlete and team official transport
- Spectator and workforce transport, including enhanced public transport and supplementary services (such as park and ride locations and shuttle services)
- Games route network definition
- Fleet transport services
- Venue transport
- Local area traffic and parking management



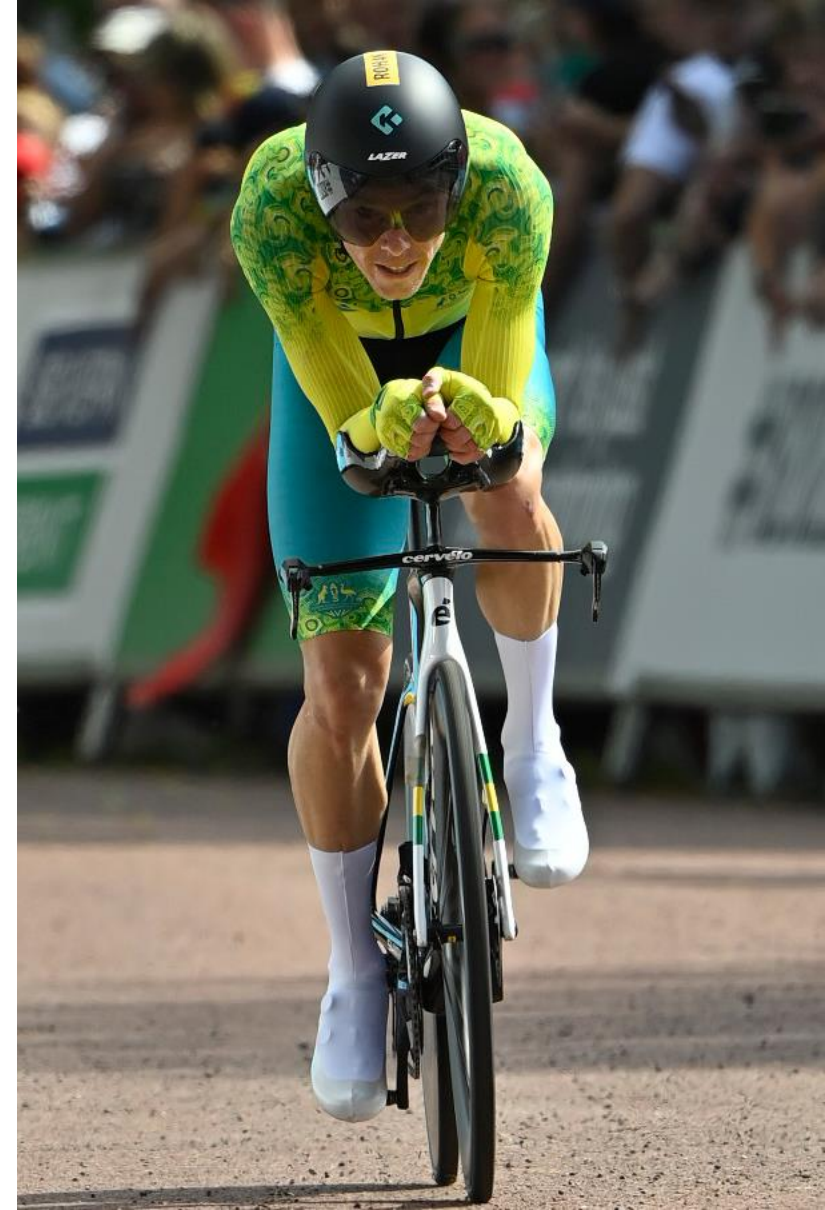


Hunter Region Venue Assessment

Commonwealth Games // Hunter Region Venue Assessment

SUMMARY

- There are a small number of venues assessed as being currently suitable to host sports expected to be on a Sports Program.
- There are currently no existing venues to support the following key/high profile sports:
 - No current venue suitable for athletics, including venues which could be adapted on a temporary space (due to space or other restrictions).
 - No current venue suitable for aquatics (swimming).
 - No current venue suitable for track cycling.
- Venues which are potentially suitable would require varying levels of capital and/or temporary overlay expenditure to meet required standards.
- The majority of suitable or potentially suitable venues are located in Newcastle. There are limited venues in other areas of Hunter region, with some exceptions – particularly sports which do not rely on existing venues or temporary venues are common (i.e. non-track cycling events and beach volleyball).
- Although not assessed in detail, venues not suitable for competition could potentially meet training requirements – but not in all cases.
- The location and potential suitability of venues would create a challenge in terms of travel times and village provision, necessitating satellite villages with hotel style accommodation.



Commonwealth Games // Hunter Region Venue Assessment

DESKTOP SUMMARY

- With consideration to the high-level competition venue requirements identified, a desktop review has been conducted of the venues in the Hunter region to assess which venues could host, or could potentially host, sports at a future Commonwealth Games.
- Only venues potentially suitable for competition purposes have been assessed.
- The assessment focused on sports that typically would be included in a Commonwealth Games Sports Program (i.e. the sports that have most commonly occurred at previous Games).
- Sports that are not conducted at a fixed venue (such as cycling road events, marathon, triathlon) have not been assessed.
- Likewise, sports that are traditionally conducted at temporary venues (such as beach volleyball) have also not been assessed, recognising the higher level of flexibility that is afforded to such sports.
- The assessment has not included any proposed new venues or venues subject to proposed refurbishment.



Commonwealth Games // Hunter Region Venue Assessment

ASSESSMENT ELEMENTS

The following key elements have been considered in the assessment:

- **International Federation Standard:** Whether the venue is likely to comply with the relevant international federation standards for a Commonwealth Games-level event. This is largely focused on the field of play requirements
- **Warm-up and Training Facilities:** Whether the venue can support (either already existing or can be setup) required warm-up and/or training facilities, where required in addition to the field of play. For example, swimming requires two (2) 50m pools, athletics requires a full 400m warm-up track plus and additional throws area.
- **Seating Capacity:** Whether the existing seating capacity can meet the indicative Games capacity expectations.
- **Space for Games Overlay:** Whether the venue has enough space within the venue boundary or general proximity of the venue to support overlay installations (given the extent of overlay required for a Games, including additional temporary seating where it might be required).

This includes consideration to elements that would be required for a Commonwealth Games, such as sports presentation requirements (i.e. scoreboards and large video screens).



Commonwealth Games // Hunter Region Venue Assessment

ASSESSMENT EXCLUSIONS

The following are some examples of Games requirements that have not been assessed:

- Proximity to public transport solutions.
- Lighting requirements to meet sport and broadcast standards.
- Electrical capacity to meet the additional power demands of a Games.
- Telecommunications connectivity and capacity to support broadcast and Games technology requirements.
- Training venues.

The following legend has been used:

- Compliant or likely to be able to meet expected requirements.
- Requirement likely to be able to be addressed through capital or temporary overlay works.
- Not compliant or unlikely to be able meet expected requirements given venue restrictions (such as space).



Commonwealth Games // Hunter Region Venue Assessment

AQUATIC SPORTS

Discipline	Venue	Location	IF Standard	Warm-up Facilities	Seating Capacity	Space for Games Overlay
Swimming	Lambton Pool	Newcastle	●	●	●	●
Swimming	The Forum Aquatic Centre	Callaghan	●	●	●	●
Swimming	Great Lakes Aquatic & Leisure Centre	Forster	●	●	●	●
Swimming	Singleton Gym & Swim	Singleton	●	●	●	●
Diving	Lambton Pool	Newcastle	●	●	●	●

CYCLING - TRACK

Discipline	Venue	Location	IF Standard	Warm-up Facilities	Seating Capacity	Space for Games Overlay
Cycling - Track	Newcastle Velodrome	Newcastle	●	●	●	●
Cycling - Track	Ron King Velodrome	Muswellbrook	●	●	●	●

Commonwealth Games // Hunter Region Venue Assessment

FIELD SPORTS

Potential Sport(s)	Venue	Location	IF Standard	Warm-up Facilities	Seating Capacity	Space for Games Overlay
Athletics	Hunter Sports Stadium	Newcastle/Glendale	●	●	●	●
Athletics	Maitland Regional Athletics Centre	Maitland	●	●	●	●
Athletics	Fearnley Dawes Athletics Centre	Newcastle West	●	●	●	●
Rugby Sevens	McDonald Jones Stadium	Newcastle/Broadmeadow	●	●	●	●
Rugby Sevens	Maitland No.1 Sports Ground	Maitland	●	●	●	●
Rugby Sevens	Cessnock Sports Ground - Baddeley Park	Cessnock	●	●	●	●
Rugby Sevens	Olympic Park, Muswellbrook	Muswellbrook	●	●	●	●
Rugby Sevens	Tomaree Sports Complex	Nelson Bay	●	●	●	●
Hockey	Newcastle International Hockey Centre	Newcastle/Broadmeadow	●	●	●	●
Hockey	Manning Valley Hockey Complex	Taree	●	●	●	●
Hockey	Maitland Hockey Field	Maitland	●	●	●	●
Hockey	Cessnock	Cessnock	●	●	●	●
Cricket	National Park / Newcastle No.1 Oval	Newcastle West	●	●	●	●

Commonwealth Games // Hunter Region Venue Assessment

INDOOR SPORTS

Potential Sport(s)	Venue	Location	IF Standard	Warm-up Facilities	Seating Capacity	Space for Games Overlay
Gymnastics	Hunter Sports Centre	Glendale	●	●	●	●
Gymnastics	Maitland PCYC	Maitland	●	●	●	●
Gymnastics	Cessnock PCYC	Cessnock	●	●	●	●
Gymnastics	Taree PCYC	Taree	●	●	●	●
Court/Arena Sports*	Newcastle Entertainment Centre	Newcastle	●	●	●	●
Court/Arena Sports	Newcastle Basketball Stadium	Newcastle/Broadmeadow	●	●	●	●
Court/Arena Sports	Maitland Federation Centre	Maitland	●	●	●	●
Court/Arena Sports	Cessnock Civic Indoor Sports Centre	Cessnock	●	●	●	●
Court/Arena Sports	Scone Basketball Stadium	Scone	●	●	●	●
Court/Arena Sports	Saxby Stadium	Taree	●	●	●	●
Squash	Cardiff Squash Courts	Newcastle/Cardiff	●	●	●	●
Badminton	Hunter Badminton Centre	Newcastle/Wickham	●	●	●	●

* Depending on venue, could include Basketball (3x3), Netball, Boxing.

Commonwealth Games // Hunter Region Venue Assessment

SHOOTING

Discipline	Venue	Location	IF Standard	Warm-up Facilities	Seating Capacity	Space for Games Overlay
Clay Target	Newcastle & Lake Macquarie Clay Target Club	Newcastle	●	●	●	●
Clay Target	Singleton Clay Target Club	Singleton	●	●	●	●
Clay Target	Wingham Clay Target Club	Wingham	●	●	●	●
Pistol	Newcastle Pistol Club	Newcastle	●	●	●	●
Pistol	Cessnock Pistol Club	Cessnock	●	●	●	●
Pistol	City of Maitland Pistol Club	Maitland	●	●	●	●

LAWN BOWLS

Sport	Venue	Location	IF Standard	Warm-up Facilities	Seating Capacity	Space for Games Overlay
Lawn Bowls	Nelson Bay Bowling and Recreation Club	Nelson Bay	●	●	●	●
Lawn Bowls	Forster Bowling Club	Forster	●	●	●	●

Commonwealth Games // Hunter Region Venue Assessment

OBSERVATIONS

Multi-Purpose Indoor Sport Venues

- Given the flexibility and availability of open floor space, multi-purpose sports venues can often be used to support different sports, including sport transitions (during an event).
- There are no identifiable venues (particularly in terms of overall size and capacity to accommodate overlay requirements) currently in the Hunter region – when compared to equivalent venues used for previous Commonwealth Games – that could be used to host multiple sports.
- The proposed new 10 court stadium at Glendale in Lake Macquarie LGA could potentially be appropriate, but it would be subject to the final overall design and venue configuration.

Indoor Function Centres

- Given the flexibility and availability of open floor space, indoor function centre venues are often used for multi-sport games – notwithstanding a large amount of temporary overlay usually required to deliver the sport and venue requirements.
- Of the indoor function centres in the Hunter region, the largest is the Newcastle Convention and Exhibition Centre. However, the venue is assessed to be too small to accommodate any Commonwealth Games sports (except potential training requirements), when full venue requirements are considered.



Commonwealth Games // Hunter Region Venue Assessment

Accommodation

A high-level assessment of the accommodation audit information shared, identifies about 12,000 rooms or units (which excludes certain self-contained properties, i.e. Airbnb).

- Almost half of the properties are self contained properties, which represent less than 10% of the total rooms.
- The highest percentage of rooms (about 30%) are provided through motel style properties.
- Corporate, boutique or resort style properties – most suitable to Games constitute groups – are a small portion of the properties, but they do make up about 25% of the total rooms available.
- The balance of rooms are made up of apartments, B&Bs/guest houses, caravan parks, pubs, hotels, etc.

While there are a wide range of property types providing a large level of accommodation across the Hunter region, it is assessed that the overall accommodation property types and room numbers is unlikely to be appropriate to meet the requirements of a Commonwealth Games, when considering the following:

- Location of accommodation relative to venues – the location of suitable properties is distributed across a wide part of the Hunter region, and not necessarily in locations in close proximity to venues.
- Anticipated public transport links to key accommodation types – transport to and from a large portion of the venues will rely on private transport arrangements.
- Types and styles of accommodation - self contained properties are typically not suited to constitute groups to support operational and logistics arrangements.

While there is a large level of accommodation that might suit the requirements of spectators, and workforce groups, integration with public transport arrangements could be problematic, with a high dependency on car travel and creating bespoke transport solutions (i.e. an increased number of 'park and ride' sites).





Bid Process

Commonwealth Games // Bid Process

Bid Process

Any interest in hosting the Commonwealth Games needs to be in full consultation and ultimately supported by the Commonwealth Games Association (CGA) in the country, which in the case of Australia, is Commonwealth Games Australia (CGAus).

Against a backdrop of changes in audience consumption innovations and competition in the wider multi-sports events landscape, the CGF recognises that the Commonwealth Games needs to adapt and evolve to ensure it continues to maintain its relevance and prestige across the Commonwealth. This includes giving consideration to alternative delivery models for the Games, such as what has transpired for the 2026 edition in Victoria.

As a result, the process for bidding to host a Commonwealth Games has changed to provide for a far more consultative process.

A key objective of the process is to provide stronger support to countries and cities interested in hosting future Commonwealth Games, and enhance the overall value of the event, including helping cities appraise the potential value from hosting the Commonwealth Games through to supporting the identification and implementation of benefit strategies.



Commonwealth Games // Bid Process

Bid Process Timing

The consultative bidding process is expected to adopt a structured process commencing ideally about 7-8 years prior to the relevant edition of the Games and run over at least an 18-month-long period, commencing with the CGF actively seeking expressions of interest from prospective countries and cities (which in reality is an ongoing process in conjunction with CGAs). The anticipated stages that could be anticipated are set out below:

Expressions of Interest		Commitment to Bid		Evaluation and Award
Dialogue phase	Feasibility phase	Candidature phase		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frame opportunity• Understand impact• Stakeholder initial engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop Games concept• Test feasibility• Align stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalise Games concept plan• Secure guarantees and funding• Develop Bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final evaluation of Bids• Awarding	



Commonwealth Games // Bid Process

Bid Process

While the awarding of a Games edition has traditionally occurred approximately 6-7 years prior to the event, in recent years, due to a range of circumstances this has occurred closer to the Games (i.e. about 4 years in the case of Victoria 2026).

The 2026 edition of the Commonwealth Games in Victoria represents a significantly different delivery model compared to previous editions. While previous Commonwealth Games have had regional components, such as basketball for Melbourne 2006 and Gold Coast 2018, Victoria 2026 will effectively operate 4 separate Hubs (each containing a separate village). It is expected that Melbourne will provide a key role in supporting the Games, such as for a range of supporting services, such as accommodation (in addition to hosting the Opening Ceremony).

Typically, in the case of Australia, the State Government has led the bid process and has subsequent oversight of planning and delivery. Councils have, to varying degrees, supported the bid process – more so in the case of Gold Coast 2018.

Financial support from the Australian Government and host council has typically been secured following the award of the Games.





Cost of Previous and Future Games

Commonwealth Games // Cost of Previous and Future Games

The following table provides a high-level summary of reported Games-related operating expenses and capital expenditure associated with the Commonwealth Games since Manchester 2002 (excluding Delhi 2010).

Sport	Manchester 2002 ¹ (\$M)	Melbourne 2006 ¹ (\$M)	Glasgow 2014 ¹ (\$M)	Gold Coast 2018 ¹ (\$M)	Birmingham 2022 ² (\$M)	Victoria 2026 ³ (\$M)
Games-related operating expenses ⁴	398	1,039	896	1,348		
Games-related capital expenditure ⁵	421	189	135	526	1,292	2,600
Discretionary operating expenditure ⁶	54	52	50	81	-	-

¹ Data sourced from Commonwealth Games Value Framework published December 2019. Figures converted to AUD from GBP (exchange rate of 1.8) at 2018 prices (PPP exchange rates from OECD, UK GDP Deflator from Office for National Statistics).

² Data estimate sourced from government published reports. Split between operating expenses and capital expenditure not currently available. Figure converted to AUD from GBP (exchange rate of 1.8).

³ Data sourced from government releases. Split between operating expenses and capital expenditure not currently available.

⁴ Organising committee staff, venue management sport, technology, marketing, security, logistics, broadcast etc.

⁵ Athletes' village and venues.

⁶ Discretionary operating expenditure to achieve host cities' wider objectives where the effect of hosting the Games is to accelerate or enhance the scale of expenditure, typically to meet legacy objectives.



Commonwealth Games // Background on Bid Process and Timings

The following should be noted with respect to the figures presented in the previous table:

- The scale of Games related capital expenditure varies significantly depending on the extent and quality of host cities' existing infrastructure (including venues, road and public transport infrastructure, etc.) along with their objectives and appetite to invest.
- The levels of capital expenditure has ranged significantly between editions of the Games. The differences typically reflect the extent and quality of existing event infrastructure, each city's objectives and their appetite to invest. For example:
 - Glasgow decided to invest in several new venues before it was awarded the right to host the Games (such costs were therefore not classified as Games related), but it did undertake minor redevelopment works at a small number of venues.
 - Gold Coast's higher capital costs reflect the investment in the athletes' village and improvements to, and construction of, several venues.
- Capital expenditure does not include accelerated or enhanced capital investment in infrastructure related projects to achieve wider objectives that can be driven by, and support, the hosting of the Games.
- Between 2002 and 2018, commercial revenues have funded 17% (Gold Coast 2018) to 46% (Manchester 2002) of Games related operating expenditure. The balance of funding required usually is provided through national, state/devolved or local governments.





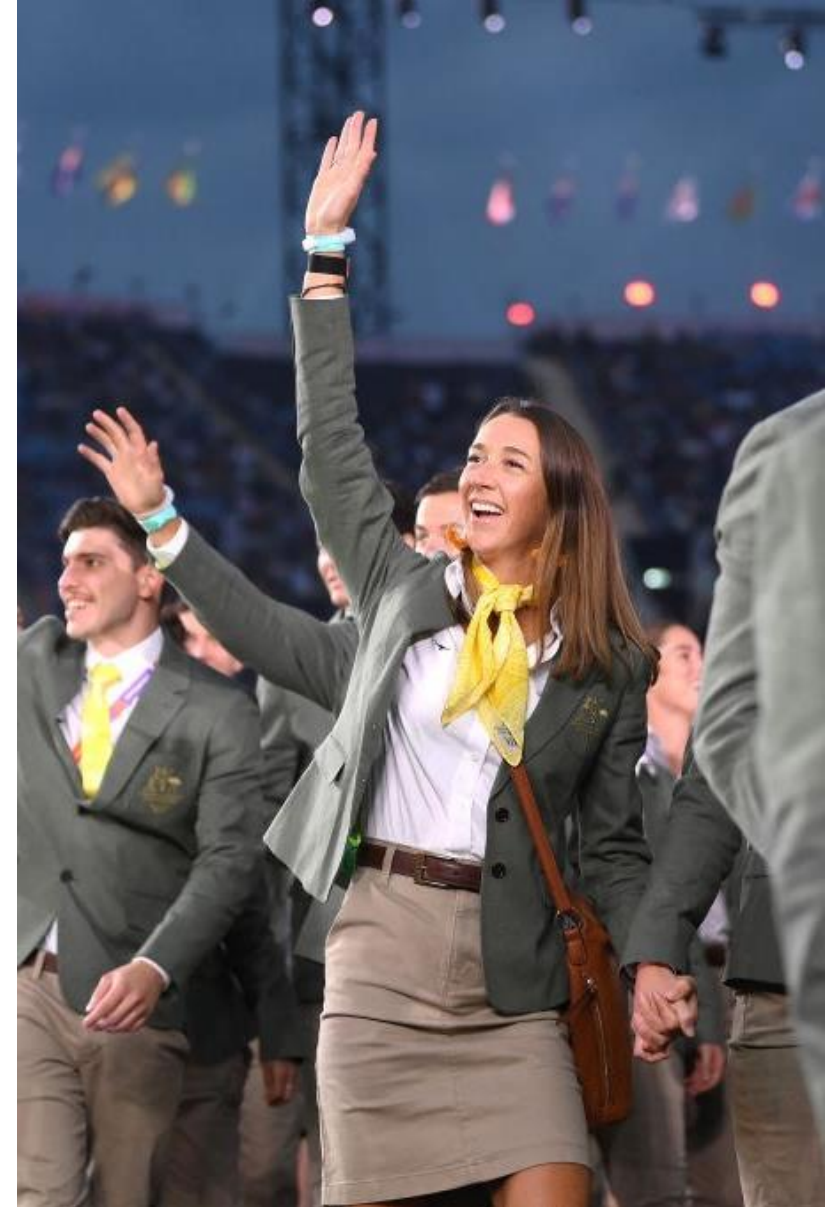
Scope and Delivery Structure

Commonwealth Games // Scope and Delivery Structure

Constitute Groups

In terms of scale of a Commonwealth Games, the following table summarises the Constitute Groups that can be expected:

Group	Size	Comments
Athletes and Team Officials	6,500 to 6,700	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On average, the past 3 editions of the Commonwealth Games have had around 4,500 athletes participate.
Technical Officials	1,200	
Games Family	500 to 1,000	
Workforce	25,000 to 35,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes broad range of contracted workforce, such as security, cleaning staff, catering staff, bus drivers; as well as police and other security resources. Workforce requirements are influenced by venue capacities, security requirements etc. The organising committee responsible for the Games would have a workforce of approximately 2,000 staff, plus other delivery partners and agencies.
Media – Broadcast	2,000 to 2,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host broadcast production, rights holding broadcasters, written and photographic press
Volunteers	12,000 to 15,000	
Ceremonies production and performers	Up to 5,000	



Commonwealth Games // Background on Bid Process and Timings

Costs of Delivery Games

The increase in operating expenditure for hosting the Commonwealth Games since Manchester 2002 is driven by an increase in operating costs across a number of elements, including but not limited to the following:

- Increased number of athletes and team officials participating, impacting the size of the village and various operating costs.
- Increased security requirements, creating a direct impact on policing and security personnel and infrastructure, as well as impacting other operational areas such as overlay, transport and logistics.
- Increases in overall presentational standards of the Games, such as ceremonies, sports presentation, look and branding.
- Increases in service levels provided to constitute groups (athletes, Games Family, media etc.) and associated impacts on operating costs.
- General escalation and costs associated with enhanced risk mitigation measures.



Commonwealth Games // Background on Bid Process and Timings

Organising Committee

The scale, complexity and fixed deadlines associated with delivering a Commonwealth Games means that no single organisation can deliver the Games on its own.

While an organising committee is established to manage the operational delivery of the Games, the State Government through various departments will retain interest and control of elements such as budget, policing and coordination with other security agencies, sporting and urban infrastructure, transport and achieving ongoing benefits and legacy opportunities; working in partnership with the organising committee.

Appropriate governance frameworks involving the various stakeholders supporting the delivery the Games are therefore established.



Commonwealth Games // Background on Bid Process and Timings

CGF Partnerships

In addition to evolving the process for bidding for a Games, the CGF has recognised the need to provide greater support to host cities and optimise the benefits of the Games, including ways to reduce costs and avoid 'reinventing the wheel' each time.

In about 2018, the CGF entered in a partnership with (then) Lagardère Sports (now SportFIVE), which created CGF Partnerships (CGFP). The objective of CGFP is a delivery model that develops new long-term commercial strategies, along with reducing cost and maximising the value of the Games for hosts.

This includes providing dedicated CGFP delivery teams fully integrated with organising committee teams, providing enhanced support, knowledge and expertise on the delivery of the Games.





World Master Games



Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

World Master Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Overview

- The World Masters Games (WMG) is positioned as a participatory event with a blend of elite competition and amateur participation. Participants represent themselves, rather than their countries/nations.
- The number of sports, venues and participation levels in a WMG is high.

WMG Edition	Sydney 2009	Torino 2013	Auckland 2017	Kansai 2021*
Participants	28,000+	20,550+	28,500+	N/A
Sports	28	28	28	35
Competition Venues	80+	65	48	80+

- There is generally no qualification criteria other than age - the minimum age can be as low as 25 in some sports and up to 35 in other sports. There is no upper age limit.
- Participants are responsible for their own accommodation and transport, both to the host destination and at the Games.
- The WMG is not a spectator-oriented event, it is a mass-participation event.
- The WMG is also generally not considered a media orientated event and does not have traditional levels of broadcast coverage.

* Postponed.



World Master Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Overview (cont.)

- A broad range of accommodation properties, in relative proximity to competition venues is required – and all types of accommodation are typically used by participants.
- Approximately 3,000 - 5,000 volunteers are also required to assist in running a WMG.
- The WMG is considered a major tourism event opportunity, driven largely by the number of participants, often with family and friends joining participants – thus increasing the total number of visitors and the broader economic benefits.



World Master Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Sports Program

- The WMG controlling body, IMGA, are in the process of re-evaluating the overall concept of the WMG. This includes the composition of the Sports Program and also additional opportunities to include more local sports activation projects.
- The Sports Program for the past 3 WMG has had 28 sports, including integrated para sports. The postponed Kansai 2021 WMG had 35 sports planned.
- The Sports Program is conducted with the authority and support of the relevant International Federations and delivered to an appropriate international standard.
- There is traditionally a high dependency on the national sport to support the planning and management of that sport's competition.
- Some sports (Orienteering and Weightlifting) hold their International World Masters Championships in conjunction with the WMG, which introduces further rules and regulations to comply with World Championship requirements, including anthems and flags.



World Master Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Sport	Sydney 2009		Torino 2013		New Zealand 2017	
	Core/Optional	Venues	Core/Optional	Venues	Core/Optional	Venues
Archery	C	5	C	1	C	2
Athletics	C	3	C	2	C	3
Badminton	C	1	C	1	C	2
Baseball	O	3	O	2	O	1
Basketball	C	4	C	7	C	3
Canoe/Kayak	C	2	C	4	C	4
Cycling	C	5	C	3	C	5
Diving	O	2				
Duathlon			O	1		
Football	C	3	C	6	C	3
Golf	C	13	O	2	C	4
Hockey (Field)	C	3	C	2	C	2
Lawn Bowls/Bowls	O	1	O	2	O	3
Judo			O	1		
Karate			O	1		
Netball	O	2			O	1
Orienteering	C	4	C	5	C	4
Rowing	C	1	C	1	C	1
Rugby Union	O	1	O	1	O	1
Sailing	O	2	O	2	O	1
Shooting	C	2	C	2	C	1
Softball	C	4	C	4	C	2
Squash	C	1	C	1	C	1
Surf Lifesaving	O	1			O	1
Swimming	C	2	O	1	C	2
Table Tennis	C	1	C	1	C	1
Taekwondo			O	1		
Tennis	C	2	O	1	C	1
Touch Football	O	2			O	1
Triathlon			O	2	O	1
Volleyball (including Beach)	O	2	O	9	O	2
Water Polo	O	2			O	1
Weightlifting	C	1	C	1	C	1

Sports Program

- This table outlines both the core and optional sports at the past three WMGs.
- The optional sports tend to reflect that strength or popularity of certain sports in the host destination (i.e. Lawn Bowls, Rugby Union, Surf Lifesaving, Touch Football etc. held in both Australia and New Zealand while Duathlon, Karate and Judo were held at the Torino WMG).

World Master Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Venues

- The objective of the WMG is to utilise existing sporting and event venues and not require any new venue construction.
- The WMG are designed to be participatory rather than spectator oriented, which allows a host city to use smaller venues – such as community and sporting club venues, as well as venues located in schools and universities, in addition to the more traditional large event venues.
- While delivered to international standards, the sport (including field of play) and venue requirements are not at the same level as elite world championship events or events such as the Commonwealth Games. Some sports still expect certain minimum standards.
- The number of events in the Sports Program, along with the large number of participants, generates a requirement for a large number of competition venues to be utilised.
- Venues need to be selected on the basis of their suitability for the number of participants, their existing facilities and integration into the overall WMG operation. Venues should ideally be 'clustered' around transport and accommodation hubs.
- Separate training venues are typically not required, with training being held at competition venues.
- Low cost/temporary venues can be appropriate to address the requirements of many sports.



World Master Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Venues - Overlay

- Compared to a Commonwealth Games, the level of temporary overlay and facilities that may be required to support a WMG is significantly less.
- Overlay may be required to support a range of sport and operational requirements, which will be informed by the sport technical requirements and the venues being used.
- Wayfinding signage and branding will be required to varying levels throughout all venues.

Venues - Non-Competition Venues

To support the operational delivery of the WMG, a number of non-competition venues and support facilities are required. These venues may include, but are not necessarily limited, to:

- Opening and Closing Ceremonies
- Accreditation and Uniform Distribution Centre
- Volunteer Recruitment Centre
- Games Media Hub/Centre
- Organising Committee office accommodation, including supporting range of Games-time operational functions
- Logistics warehouse

Venues – Athletes' Village

The provision of “village” accommodation is not required for a WMG.

World Master Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Accommodation

- Participants are responsible for organising and paying for their own accommodation.
- A full range of accommodation property types (and price points) are historically used by participants, including staying with family and friends.
- Organising committees typically support participants in sourcing accommodation, such as through the appointment of an official accommodation booking provider/service. However, participants are not obligated to use such services.
- Although proximity to venues is not as critical for a WMG – when compared to a Commonwealth Games – travel times between accommodation and venues should remain manageable.
- Accommodation options also need to be close to public transport solutions, given the dependency on public transport as the primary means of participants getting between accommodation and venues.
- Accommodation levels are not available from previous WMG. However, the majority of participants at previous events have stayed in paid accommodation, which represents a high level of accommodation being required to meet the requirements of a WMG.



World Master Games // Outline of Key Hosting Considerations

Transport

- While participants are responsible for managing their transport requirements, the delivery of an integrated public transport solution - connecting Games venues with accommodation options - is a critical component of delivering a WMG.
- Supplementary bus shuttle services may be required to increase frequency (and capacity) of transport services, or connect venues that are not served by public transport services.
- Free access to public transport and supplementary shuttle services for participants (including officials and workforce) is usually offered.
- Private vehicles may be used by some participants during their stay at a World Games, but parking at venues is typically not available or offered (but can depend on the venue).





Hunter Region Venue Assessment

World Master Games // Hunter Region Venue Assessment

SUMMARY

- A full scope of venues required for a WMG, based on an anticipated Sports Program (aligned to Auckland 2017 and Sydney 2009), may be available in Hunter region – but would need to be subject to a more detailed analysis.
- A number of sports would require an increase in venues (when compared to Auckland 2017) based on their size and capacity, which would add operational and sport delivery complexity (and therefore cost).
- Temporary or innovative venues could be created to meet sport requirements.
- Location and potential suitability of some venues would need to be considered in terms of transport solutions and accommodation proximity. This is potentially exacerbated where multiple venues are required for a sport.
- Majority of suitable or potentially suitable venues are located in the Newcastle area, which would increase the pressure on accommodation availability and public transport capacity.
- Key infrastructure projects that provide long-term community benefit will augment venue options for certain sports (i.e. aquatics, indoor multi-purpose venues).



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DESKTOP SUMMARY

- Based on the Sports Program for the Auckland 2017 WMG, a desktop assessment of venues in the Hunter region was undertaken to determine their potential suitability to meet the anticipated requirements of each Sport.
- Given the Auckland 2017 WMG provides the most appropriate benchmark relative to the Hunter region (compared to Sydney or Torino), reference to the venues used for Auckland 2017 was made – particularly in terms of capacity and standards.
- Consideration to public transport and accommodation proximity was not considered.
- Training requirements was not assessed.
- The Sport assessment in the following tables is categorised as follows:
 - Suitable venue(s) available or expected to be available – including through provision of temporary overlay works.
 - Suitable venue(s) may be available, but would require 1) multiple venues and/or 2) subject to a more detailed assessment to take into considered holistic venue requirements for a World Masters.
 - Suitable venue(s) not available, particularly due to insufficient capacity or alignment with sport technical requirements.



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Sport	Assessment	Comments
Archery	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to Archery specific venues (Westlakes Archery Club), other suitable venues would be suitable to host Archery, such as showgrounds (i.e. Maitland Showground). Good public transport links.
Athletics	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For track and field events, Auckland 2017 used 3 athletics facilities/venues - which were all generally of a higher standard and capacity than the 3 main venues in the Hunter region. Would need to be subject to a more detailed assessment but anticipate that Newcastle venues (in total) might not meet the required standards and capacities. Cross Country and Road athletics events could be held at a number of suitable locations given the nature of the sport requirements.
Badminton	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auckland 2017 used 2 badminton specific venues, which had a high number of courts available. Hunter region has limited badminton specific venues and while other indoor venues can be suitable, they do require additional fit out works to meet the required standards. This is further impacted by the total number of available indoor sport venues, of an appropriate size, available to meet the total requirements of a WMG.
Baseball	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of venues available and in total likely to be sufficient. Implementation of the Belmont Sports Complex Masterplan provided 4 baseball diamonds would provide further capacity.



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Sport	Assessment	Comments
Basketball	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auckland 2017 used 3 venues, with a large number of courts available. Hunter JO Region venues are smaller and might not meet the total capacity requirements. Subject to further detailed assessment, total requirements could be met through an increased level of venues, but would add complexity to sport delivery and scheduling, as well as transport and accommodation integration.
Canoe	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available venues will be suitable, but not all disciplines will be able to be supported (i.e. slalom). Reduction in number of disciplines would address venue limitations.
Cycling - Track	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No suitable venue(s) available on expectation that indoor/international level facility would be required.
Cycling – Non-track	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable locations for road cycling events and mountain bike would be able to be identified.
Football	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable venues expected to be able to be identified for Football. Consideration will need to be given to transport and accommodation requirements given large number of Participants.
Golf	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable venues expected to be able to be identified for Golf. Consideration will need to be given to transport and accommodation requirements given large number of Participants.
Hockey	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auckland 2017 used 2 venues which provided access to 8 pitches. Existing venues in Hunter region, that are likely to be of the appropriate standard, may not provide enough capacity to meet total sport requirements. This also takes into consideration the relative location of each venue.



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Sport	Assessment	Comments
Lawn Bowls	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable venues expected to be able to be identified for Lawn Bowls. Consideration will need to be given to transport and accommodation requirements given large number of Participants.
Netball	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auckland 2017 used 1 venue that provided access to 30 (outdoor) courts, which was a national level venue. Expect that suitable venues are available in the Hunter region, including facilities with large numbers of courts. However, more a detailed assessment would be required to ensure that the standard of the venues, in particular playing surfaces, is to the appropriate level.
Orienteering	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature of Orienteering will allow appropriate venues to be identified.
Rowing	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable existing venues/locations available and used for rowing competitions, such as Lake Macquarie, Hunter River and Manning River.
Rugby	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable venues, with a high number of playing fields, expected to be able to be identified for Rugby.
Sailing	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature of Sailing will allow appropriate venues to be identified.
Shooting	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clay target discipline venue required. Newcastle Lake Macquarie Clay Target Club would to be suitable. Transport solution would be required.
Softball	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity of existing venues in Hunter region likely to present some challenges given total number of teams/competitors. Would need to be subject to a more detailed assessment of sport requirements.



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Sport	Assessment	Comments
Squash	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cardiff Squash Centre likely to be suitable. Similar style of venue to the venue used for Auckland 2017.
Surf Life Saving	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature of Surf Life Saving will allow appropriate venues to be identified.
Swimming	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auckland 2017 used national aquatic facility, which met FINA standards. Pools in Hunter region may not meet expected FINA requirements – in particular, requirement for 2 pools (1 for warm-up) with both heated/temperature controlled. More detailed assessment required. Open water swimming event could be held at a number of suitable locations given the nature of the sport requirements.
Table Tennis	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auckland 2017 used a single venue that was able to accommodate a large number of courts to support the number of competitors. Equivalent type/size of venue not available in Hunter region, particularly when taking potential other World Masters requirements into consideration. Therefore, more than 1 venue would be required, potentially 3-4. Further assessment would be required to determine suitable venues given total WMG requirements.
Tennis	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auckland 2017 used 1 venue that 6 indoor courts and 15 outdoor courts, all to a high standard. Expect that suitable venues are available in the Hunter region, including facilities with large numbers of courts. However, more a detailed assessment would be required to ensure that the standard of the venues, in particular playing surfaces, is to the appropriate level.



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Sport	Assessment	Comments
Touch	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable venues expected to be able to be identified for Touch. Consideration will need to be given to transport and accommodation requirements given large number of Participants.
Triathlon	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable location for Triathlon would be able to be identified.
Volleyball – Beach	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable location for Beach Volleyball would be able to be identified.
Volleyball – Indoor	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect that suitable venues are available in the Hunter region. More than 1 venue expected to be required, potentially 2-3. Further assessment would be required to determine suitable venues given total World Masters requirements.
Water Polo	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessed that suitable venues would be available, on assumption swimming can't be held at same locations. More than 1 venue would be required.
Weightlifting	●	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable venue/auditorium for Weightlifting would be able to be identified.



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Accommodation

- A high-level assessment of the Hunter region accommodation audit identifies about 12,000 rooms or units (which excludes certain self-contained properties, i.e. Airbnb).
- The total number of beds, which would be in excess of this, is not readily available.
- While across the Hunter region there is a wide range of property types providing a large level of accommodation, there is a high chance that the total accommodation availability is not sufficient to meet the total anticipated levels required. This takes into consideration:
 - The majority of the estimated 30,000 participants (excluding travelling family and friends) require some form of accommodation.
 - Accommodation is distributed across certain areas of the Hunter region and not necessarily in locations that are in relatively close proximity to venues or transport.
 - Unique requirements of the different participant groups, particularly those competing in team sports.
- No assessment has been made of caravan and holiday parks, school boarding facilities (or similar) which could be contracted to offer accommodation solutions; a solution adopted for Auckland 2017 when there were indications athletes were withdrawing due to inability to find hotels and apartments at reasonable prices.



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Transport

- Given the high dependency on public transport, the existing system will not be at a level required to support the delivery of a WMG.
- This considers the location of accommodation, venues and other services WMG participants would have, needing to be 'integrated' as much as possible.
- To address this, a significant level of event specific transport services (buses) would be required to provide connectivity between accommodation solutions, venues as well as other recreational and dining locations. This would be a costly and complex endeavor.





Cost of Previous and Future World Masters Games

World Master Games // Cost of Previous and Future Games

The following table provides a high-level summary of reported WMG-related operating expenses and revenue since Sydney 2009.

Sport	Sydney 2009 ¹ \$M	Torino 2013 ² \$M	Auckland 2017 ³ \$M	Taipei City 2025 ⁴ \$M
Income	27.0	10.3	33.9	67.4⁵
Local Authority/Government Funding	17.7	5.1	21.2	
Registration Fees	6.7	3.6	7.7	
Commercial Review	1.1	1.4	3.4	
Other Income	1.5	0.2	1.6	
Expenses	27.0	10.3	33.1	67.4
Venue Refurbishment/Operations	-	-	-	29.7

¹ Data sourced Post Games Report. Figures presented at 2009 prices.

² Data sourced Post Games Report. Figures presented at 2013 prices, converted to AUD from EUR (exchange rate of 1.54).

³ Data sourced Post Games Report. Figures presented at 2017 prices, converted to AUD from NZD (exchange rate of 0.93).

⁴ Data sourced WMG 2025 Application File. Figures converted to AUD from EUR (exchange rate of 1.54).

⁵ Detail/split of income source not provided. Application File states that funding is shared by the central government (40%) and the host city (60%)





Potential New Major Event Opportunities & Successful Major Event Case Studies

Potential New Event Opportunities

SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR MAJOR EVENTS TO BE HOSTED IN THE HUNTER REGION

- Australia, and NSW in particular, has done an excellent job of securing a number of high-profile world cups and other leading international events. As such, there is a massive opportunity for HJO and its member Councils to be lobbying Destination NSW and the event organisers to host matches and/or training camps for a number of these upcoming events.
- Indeed, the Hunter region would again be the ideal sole host for the entire 2029 Women's Rugby World Cup, as was proposed during Australia's 2021 bid, which was ultimately won by New Zealand. Australia has secured the rights to host the event and the Hunter region should be rightly saying that it is the ideal host for the entire event which would see the Final played at McDonald Jones Stadium, but pool matches and training camps could be held all over the Hunter region.
- There are also other significant major event opportunities to push to host matches and/or training camps for these other global major events which will be held in Australia and in NSW:
 - British & Irish Lions Tour 2025 (Rugby)
 - Men's Rugby World Cup 2027
 - Netball World Cup 2029 (which will be hosted entirely in NSW)
 - Rugby League World Cup 2029
- A number of other potential event concepts have been outlined in the following pages, as well as case studies of where other smaller metropolitan or regional destinations who have been able to strategically use events to drive significant visitor economy outcomes and increase visitor numbers, stay and spend.
- Before this, however, part of the Project Brief was to also consider non-public events such as business events, conferences and conventions and what the opportunities there are for the Hunter region in this space.



Potential New Event Opportunities

Business Events

- There are over 100+ national and NSW focused associations that hold annual conferences and seek new event destinations. In general, these conferences are generally 300+ pax or even larger, with a national membership database, so this tends to limit the number of suitable host destinations.
- While some smaller destinations have this venue capacity, the challenge then becomes supporting accommodation room capacity and travel distance. Associations will typically seek an easily accessible destination with direct flights from multiple capital cities given their geographically diverse membership base.
- Typically this has limited the potential conference destinations in the Hunter region to either Newcastle or the Hunter Valley and where either meets the client brief (i.e. seeking a regional location with venue capacity of 300+ with 250-300 accommodation rooms required per night).
- DNSW has a dedicated Regional Conferencing unit and building a closer relationship with key members of this team, will be essential to driving more business events to the Hunter region, as they are dealing with associations, incentive groups and professional conference organisers (PCOs) on a daily basis, and this can ensure that if a regional location is what the client wants, then the Hunter can be put forward as a potential hosting option. It is simply too difficult an area to have all the necessary relationships without this existing network, and hence why working closely with DNSW is critical from a success standpoint. The success of this method was recently highlighted by the City of Newcastle working with DNSW to secure the hosting rights to the 250 delegate Australian Regional Tourism Convention (ARTC), which will be held In Newcastle from 10-12 October, 2023
- There are also hundreds of corporate and government organisations open to holding their events in regional NSW, and these are typically smaller in nature (50-200pax). Given the close proximity to Sydney, there are also definitely opportunities for the Hunter region in this space, and if Newcastle is successful in its long-standing efforts to have a far larger convention centre built in its CBD, then this would also open up opportunities to host far larger conferences, including international ones.



Blockbuster Pop-Art Exhibition Opportunity

Potential Anchor Event	Will it drive Economic& Visitation benefits	Will it drive Media& Profile benefits	Will it drive Community benefits	Can it be held during event calendar gaps	Is it utilising the USPs & Event Infrastructure
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ Multiple art gallery options across the Hunter region

- Could provide regular content for one of the many art galleries across the Hunter region, using the same proven regional event model that Bendigo has successfully undertaken with Visit Victoria for the Grace Kelly, Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Exhibitions.
- These three events had attendances from 143,000 (Grace Kelly, 2012), 153,000 (Marilyn Monroe, 2016) through to 219,000 for Elvis (2022). Most attendees were overnight visitors from outside the region, particularly from Melbourne and even interstate.
- It is an indoor event, so it is ideal for the colder months when there are lower occupancy levels and it also fills a key calendar gap.
- Extended duration minimising capacity constraints on available accommodation.
- Likely to address shortfall of mid-week visitors and alleviate any weekend visitation pressures.
- Ideally to occur every year – Same time. Same place. Most likely need to partner with Destination NSW to reduce costs.



Case Study - Marilyn Monroe Exhibition

- **Location:** Bendigo, Victoria, Australia
- **Genre:** Pop-Art Exhibition
- **Duration:** 4 months
- **Attendance:** 143,500
- **Economic Impact to Bendigo region:** \$13.2 million
- **Comments:** It far exceeded the \$11.2 million benefit forecast before the show opened.
- **Hosting fee:** Not publicised but likely to be A\$500k - \$1m.



New Events	Preferred Event Genre - Residents	Conducive Event Environment	Sensitive to Tourism Concerns	Aligns to HJO and member councils	Available Local Event Infrastructure	Brand Positioning
Indoor Visual Exhibition	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Mass Participation Event Opportunities

Potential Anchor Event	Will it drive Economic Benefits	Will it drive Media Benefits	Will it drive community benefits	Can it be held during event calendar gaps	Is it utilising the Hunter region's USPs & existing event infrastructure
✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓ Natural Landscape, sporting fields, open space

- Will generate high ROI while showcasing the Hunter region's natural beauty, iconic towns and beautiful landscapes.
- Cost-effective and highly visible in smaller regional locations like most of the smaller LGAs across the Hunter region.
- Possibility to create entirely new event content (e.g. Kanga Cup in Canberra – see Case Study) where hundreds of primary football teams converge on the Australian capital during Canberra's low season of the winter school holidays.
- Potentially focus on events with the highest yield (i.e. team events, school and/or masters events).
- Which events will depend largely upon the minimum venue requirements of each sport.
- Can also align with the Hunter region's key brand attributes and most Hunter region LGAs can host a wide range of sports.



A Case Study - The Cycling Classics

- The Classics, created in 2016 by Yaffa Media and Bicycling Australia, are a collection of Gran Fondo cycling events across Australia.
- Set in stunning tourist destinations, within two hours' drive of major metropolitan cities, **The Classics** are the ultimate Gran Fondo experience. Unlike other cycling events which can be limited by their focus on elite riders, a singular charity or a family day out, they have adopted an all-inclusive platform which maximises the numbers of participants, which only benefits the host region.
- They cater for riders of all levels, all charitable causes and openly encourage community and corporate involvement.
- The NSW events appear to be at least part-funded by Destination NSW or other NSW Govt. funds.
- Can be plugged into a gap in the lower occupancy months. Could also possibly be a “plug and play” or collaborate to share databases and promotions. The Hunter Valley would be ideal destination that would appeal to generally higher net-worth cyclists from Sydney.
- **Location:** Could be hosted in most Hunter LGAs but likely to be most successful in the Hunter Valley.
- **Genre:** Cycling mass participation events
- **Duration:** 2-3 days
- **Attendance:** 1,500-3,000 cyclists plus accompanying people
- **Projected Economic Impact:** \$3-5m
- **Cost:** Around A\$150,000 - \$200,000 p.a.



A Case Study – Kanga Cup

- **Location:** Canberra, Australian Capital Territory
- **Genre:** Primary-school Football tournament
- **Duration:** 1 week
- **Attendance:** 336 teams, 8,500 attendees and 43,000 visitor nights
- **Economic Impact to Canberra:** \$5.2 million
- **Comments:** The event deliberately occurs during the Canberra winter when occupancy is at its lowest for tourists, and it goes for an entire week over the July school holidays.
- **Cost estimate:** \$100,000 from Destination Canberra



New Events	Preferred Event Genre - Residents	Conducive Event Environment	Sensitive to Tourism Concerns	Aligns to HJO and member councils	Available Local Event Infrastructure	Hunter region's Brand Positioning
Mass Participation Events (Team based)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗

Other Event Opportunities: By Event Genre

Music Concerts:

- Can be held in a range of indoor and outdoor venues across multiple Hunter region LGAs.
- Ideally exclusive music performers who are not performing in other parts of NSW, critically including Sydney.
- Proven history of successful events such as ***A Day on the Green*** in the Hunter Valley which is a unique event experience not available in many locations due to its unique vineyard location.
- A multitude of sites across the Hunter region could potentially be used for a multitude of outdoor and indoor concerts of many music genres.
- Likely to achieve visitor economy key objectives by driving significant visitation.



Food and Wine Events:

- Can be held across multiple indoor and outdoor event venues event across restaurants, cafes, wineries, breweries and distilleries throughout Cessnock and the Hunter Valley. Could possibly be embraced right across the Hunter region as a celebration of the entire region's unique and diverse range of food and beverage experiences.
- Speaks to, and aligns perfectly with, one of the key brand attributes of the Hunter.
- Points of difference - Meet the winemaker/chef/brewer nights. Special offerings. Private tastings. Wine matching dinners. Wine/spirit/beer making masterclasses.
- Seemingly the current event offerings of this genre are not seen as “must attend” events and are losing visitation to other similar locations, such as Mudgee.



Other Event Opportunities: By Event Genre

Mass Participation Events (Individual sports e.g. mountain biking, cycling etc.):

- Outdoor events which can be held at multiple venues across almost every Hunter region LGA.
- A perfect fit for the Hunter region's unique natural landscape and terrain, and therefore aligns perfectly with the region's key brand attributes.
- Participatory in nature, unlikely to gather spectators besides family and friends.
- School aged events means that whole families come, increasing visitor spend.
- Provides a sampling opportunity, so visitors see all that the Hunter has to offer.
- Very likely to achieve visitation objectives at a very low cost and high ROI.
- Please see next section for some potential event opportunities in this space.



National / School Level Competitions (Team sports e.g. cricket, rugby etc.):

- These events can be held at venues across the entire Hunter region and all of its LGAs.
- Participatory in nature, unlikely to gather large numbers of spectators, however, will drive significant visitation through family and/or friends that come to watch.
- Team sports involve more participants and therefore drive higher visitation & spend.
- School aged events means that whole families come, increasing visitor spend.
- Very likely to achieve visitation objectives at a very low cost and high ROI.
- Please see next section for some potential event opportunities in this space.





Other Potential Alternative Events for the Hunter Region

Potential Alternative Event Opportunities

Mass Participation Sporting Events

- No regional destination has yet been able to establish itself as an absolute leader in attracting mass participation sporting events – although a number are certainly moving in this direction.
- While these sporting events are mostly not high-profile, a large number of them do drive significant out of region visitation, and they can also be targeted by focusing on low or shoulder seasons for visitation and occupancy in any given destination.
- Given the large variety of diverse locations across the Hunter region, they represent a largely untapped market which can help drive significant additional visitor numbers, length of stay and spend.
- As such, through significant consultation with Sport Australia, the NSW Office for Sport and Sport NSW, all of Australia's National Sporting Organisations along with all NSW State Sporting Organisations were made aware that an East-coast located regional destination with significant sporting and event infrastructure, was potentially looking for event content to host during 2024-2029.
- The response from these organisations was significant and on the whole, very positive. They were asked to outline the following in as much detail as possible:
 - Calendar gaps / opportunities for unallocated events over the next 5 years (i.e. 2024-2029)
 - What events they were organising on across all genres / age groups etc.?
 - How long each event goes for?
 - Numbers of participants /officials and then separately the number of accompanying people
 - Any post-event evaluation reports they may have on their events – particularly economic impact or visitation?
 - Expression of interest process if there is one, and timing of how long before this needs to be submitted?
 - How far out time-wise is the decision making for hosting undertaken for each of the events?
 - Any special venue requirements?
 - Cost or rights fee for each event?
- As can be seen from the following pages, a significant amount of market intelligence on the availability, impact and cost of a number of potential mass participation events was gathered.



BMX

Potential event hosting opportunities exist for the Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Mid Coast and Maitland LGAs.

Brief overview

BMX National Championships in Racing and Freestyle, and Racing State Championships are the main BMX sporting events run annually.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Australian Cycling	BMX Racing National Championships	Not supplied	Not supplied	4000	\$500,000.00	October	2025 -
Australian Cycling	BMX Freestyle National Championships	Not supplied	Not supplied	Unknown		Varies	2024 -
Australian Cycling	BMX National Series	Not supplied	Not supplied	1500	\$40,000.00	April-July	2024 -
Australian Cycling	BMX Racing State Championships	Not supplied	Not supplied	Unknown	\$20,000.00	TBC	2024

Potential event hosting opportunities exist for the Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Mid Coast, Newcastle and Port Stephens LGAs.

Brief overview

Croquet Australia's event calendar has host destination availabilities across 2025 and 2026, for Singles and Doubles championships.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Croquet Australia	GC Under 21 Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	January	2025 -
Croquet Australia	President's GC Eights	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	February	2024 -
Croquet Australia	AC Gold+Silver Medals; AC Men's & Women's Singles; AC Eire Cup	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	March	2025 -
Croquet Australia	GC Open Doubles Championship & Singles Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	May	2025 -
Croquet Australia	GC Gold+Silver Medals; GC Men's & Women's Singles; GC Interstate Shield	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	August/September	2025 -
Croquet Australia	President's AC Eights	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	October	2025 -
Croquet Australia	GC Handicap Doubles Championship; GC Handicap Singles Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	September/October	2025 -
Croquet Australia	WCF GC World Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	October	2024 -
Croquet Australia	AC Open Doubles Championship; AC Open Singles Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	November	2025 -
Croquet Australia	GC Under 21 Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	January	2025 -
Croquet Australia	WCF GC World Team Championship – Tier 1	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	February	2025 -

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Croquet Australia	President's GC Eights	Not supplied	Not supplied	4000	Not supplied	February	2025 -
Croquet Australia	WCF U21 World GC Champs	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	February/March	2024 -
Croquet Australia	AC Gold+Silver Medals; AC Men's & Women's Singles; AC Eire Cup	Not supplied	Not supplied	1500	Not supplied	March	2024 -
Croquet Australia	GC Open Doubles Championship & Singles Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	May	2024
Croquet Australia	GC Gold+Silver Medals; GC Men's & Women's Singles; GC Interstate Shield	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	September	Not supplied
Croquet Australia	President's AC Eights	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	October	Not supplied
Croquet Australia	GC Handicap Doubles Championship & Singles Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	September/October	Not supplied
Croquet Australia	WCF AC World Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	October	Not supplied
Croquet Australia	AC Open Doubles Championship & Singles Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	November	Not supplied
Croquet Australia	Australian Gateball Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	TBC	Not supplied
Croquet Australia	WCF Women's AC World Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	TBC	Not supplied

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Croquet Australia	Commonwealth Croquet Champs	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	March	2026
Croquet Australia	13th World Gateball Championship (postponed)	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	TBC	2026
Croquet Australia	WCF MacRobertson Shield (AC Team Tier 1)	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	July-August	2026
Croquet Australia	WCF GC World Championship	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Late 2026	2026

Cycling - Road

Potential event hosting opportunities exist across all 10 Hunter region LGAs.

Brief overview

Australian Cycling in Road National and State Championships are run annually, the largest being the Road National Championships available from 2027. Other major road cycling events are available to host as early as 2024.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Australian Cycling	Road National Championships	Not supplied	25000	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2027 -
Australian Cycling	Masters and Junior Road National Championships	Not supplied	1200	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Australian Cycling	Road National Series	Not supplied	500	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2024 -
Australian Cycling	Road State Championships	Not supplied	TBC	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	TBC

Disc Golf

Potential event hosting opportunities exist for the Lake Macquarie LGA.

Brief overview

Disc Golf events occur across Local, State and National levels. There is an opportunity for Lake Macquarie Council to pay for the cost to upgrade the current Lake Macquarie course to an 18-hole course capable of hosting all of these events listed below. The cost to undertake these works is estimated at around \$15k. Hosting these events over a number of years could be potentially be made a condition of any Council course upgrade.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Australia Disc Golf	National Championships Div. 1	3 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$18k	Not supplied	2024 -
Australia Disc Golf	National Championships Div. 2	3 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2024 -
Australia Disc Golf	State Championships Div. 1	3 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2024 -
Australia Disc Golf	State Championships Div. 2	3 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2024 -
Australia Disc Golf	Local Tournament	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2024 -
Australia Disc Golf	Masters - Over 40s	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2024 -

Equestrian

Potential event hosting opportunities exist, particularly for the Upper Hunter Council at White Park and surrounds. Also a Dressage event opportunity exists for Port Stephens and Endurance Riding opportunities exist for the Dungog, Cessnock and Mid Coast LGAs.

Brief overview

Equestrian NSW events across all categories are available from 2025, including Eventing, Jumping, Dressage and Vaulting.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Equestrian NSW	The National Show Horse Championships	Not supplied	400	Not supplied	Not supplied	December	2026 -
Equestrian NSW	The Australian Jumping Championships	Not supplied	400	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	The Australian Amateur Owner Rider Dressage Championships	Not supplied		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	The National Interschool Championships	Not supplied	400	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	Australian Vaulting Championships	Not supplied	400	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	NSW State Championship - Dressage - CNC/CDI	Not supplied		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	NSW State Championship - Dressage - Sydney CDI	Not supplied	400	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	NSW State Championship - Jumping - Summer Classic	Not supplied	400	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	Tamworth World Cup - Jumping	Not supplied		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	Waratah Show jumping	Not supplied	400	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	NSW State Championship - Eventing Tamworth	Not supplied		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -

Equestrian

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Equestrian NSW	NSW State Championship - Eventing Wallaby Hill		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	NSW State Championship - Eventing Quirindi		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	NSW State Championship - Eventing Equestriad Camden	TBC	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	NSW State Championship - Eventing Willinga Park	TBC	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	NSW State Championship - Eventing Albury	TBC	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -
Equestrian NSW	NSW State Championship - Eventing NSW International	400	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025 -

Potential event hosting opportunities exists across almost all Hunter region LGAs, except Dungog.

Brief overview

Suitable golf tournaments across multiple Junior, Amateur, Senior and Open categories are available from 2024 with the Jack Newton Junior Golf events, as well as a number of Golf Australia and Golf NSW events.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Harvey Norman A.C.T Week of Golf	4 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	January	2024 -
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Harvey Norman Sydney Week of Golf	5 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	January	2023
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Wagga Wagga JM	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	February	2024 -
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Peter O'Malley JM	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	March	2024 -
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Illawarra JM	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	April	2024 -
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Murray River JM	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	April	2024 -
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Regional Academy Games	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	April	2024 -
Jack Newton Junior Golf	North Coast JM	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	May	2024 -
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Regional Academy North vs South Cup	3 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	May	2024 -
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Macarthur JM	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	June	2024 -
Jack Newton Junior Golf	NSW Junior Championships	4 days	250	500	Min \$10-15k	July	2024 -
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Ballina Junior Masters	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	July	2024 -
Jack Newton Junior Golf	JNKG 12 Years & Under State Age	4 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	July	2023 -

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Jack Newton Junior Golf	South Coast JM	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	August	Not supplied
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Jack Newton International Junior Classic	4 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	September	Not supplied
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Jack Newton International Sub-Junior Classic	4 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	September	Not supplied
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Jack Newton International 9 Hole Junior Classic	4 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	September	Not supplied
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Fayde Junior Matchplay	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	October	Not supplied
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Sydney Metro Encourage Shield & Junior Pennant	2 months	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Oct - Nov	Not supplied
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Brett Ogle JM	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	November	Not supplied
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Bonville Champions Trophy	4 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	December	Not supplied
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Blue Mountains JM	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	December	Not supplied
Jack Newton Junior Golf	NSW Junior Championships	4 days	250	500	Not supplied	July	Not supplied
Jack Newton Junior Golf	NSW Junior Championships	4 days	250	500	Not supplied	July	Not supplied
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Greg Chalmers JM	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	July	2024 -
Jack Newton Junior Golf	Sydney Metro Eric Apperly Shield	2 months	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10-15k	July-August	2024 -

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Golf Australia	Australian Mid - Amateur	4 days	220	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2024
Golf Australia	Australian Senior Amateur	5 days	156	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2025
Golf Australia	Australian Junior Amateur	2 days	156	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2027
Golf Australia	Australian Junior Interstate Teams	2 days	70	Not supplied	Not supplied	July	2027
Golf NSW	Men's NSW Open	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10k	January	2025-
Golf NSW	Women's NSW Open	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10k	January	2025-
Golf NSW	Australian Women's Classic	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10k	January	2025-
Golf NSW	NSW Men's Senior Open	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10k	January	2025-
Golf NSW	NSW Mid-Amateur Championship	3 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Min \$10k	January	2025-

Potential event hosting opportunities exist for the Mid Coast and Newcastle LGAs.

Brief overview

Major annual hockey events are held across U13, U15, U18, U21 and Open categories. Hockey Australia also runs a number of other outdoor and indoor events which are available from 2025.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Hockey NSW	Basil Sellers Regional Challenge	Not supplied	1320	3960	Not supplied	March	2024
Hockey NSW	Under 18 Girls State Championship	Not supplied	480	1440	Not supplied	May	2024
Hockey NSW	Under 18 Boys State Championship	Not supplied	480	1440	Not supplied	May	2024
Hockey NSW	Under 15 Girls State Championship	Not supplied	560	1680	Not supplied	May/June	2024
Hockey NSW	Open Men's State Championship	Not supplied	448	1120	Not supplied	June	2024
Hockey NSW	Open Women's State Championship	Not supplied	448	1120	Not supplied	June	2024
Hockey NSW	Under 15 Boys State Championship	Not supplied	560	1680	Not supplied	May/June	2024
Hockey NSW	Under 13 Girls State Championship	Not supplied	608	1824	Not supplied	July	2024
Hockey NSW	Under 13 Boys State Championship	Not supplied	608	1824	Not supplied	July	2024
Hockey NSW	Women's Masters Half State North	Not supplied	960	1680	Not supplied	July	2024
Hockey NSW	Women's Masters Half State South	Not supplied	960	1680	Not supplied	July	2024
Hockey NSW	Under 15 Boys and Girls	Not supplied	840	2520	Not supplied	Nov	2024
Hockey NSW	Under 21 / Open Men	Not supplied	336	840	Not supplied	Oct/Nov	2024

Hockey

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Hockey NSW	Under 21 / Open Women		336	840	Not supplied	Oct/Nov	
Hockey NSW	Under 13 Boys and Girls		840	2520	Not supplied	Nov	
Hockey NSW	Under 18 Girls		350	875	Not supplied	Nov	
Hockey NSW	Under 18 Boys		350	875	Not supplied	Nov	
Hockey NSW	Masters Mens		224	448	Not supplied	Feb	
Hockey NSW	Masters Women's		560	1120	Not supplied	Feb	
Hockey Australia	National Championships U13 Outdoor	7 days	408	1331	\$80k-\$150k	Not supplied	2025 & 2026
Hockey Australia	National Championships U15 Outdoor	9 days	432	1164	\$80k-\$150k	Not supplied	2024, 2027
Hockey Australia	National Championships U18 Outdoor	9 days	288	946	\$80k-\$150k	Not supplied	2027
Hockey Australia	National Championships U21 Outdoor	8 days	238	772	\$80k-\$150k	Not supplied	2025
Hockey Australia	National Championships Country	10 days	595	1908	\$80k-\$150k	Not supplied	2026 & 2027
Hockey Australia	National Championships Women's Masters	10 days	1394	4381	\$80k-\$150k	Not supplied	2026
Hockey Australia	National Championships Men's Masters	5 days	888	3286	\$80k-\$150k	Not supplied	2026 & 2027
Hockey Australia	National Championships Indoor	7 days	408	1336	\$80k-\$150k	Not supplied	2025 - 2027

Ice Hockey

Potential event hosting opportunities exist for the Lake Macquarie LGA.

Brief overview

Junior Ice Hockey events are run during winter school holidays, and are available to host from 2025. National Championships run in U13, U15 and U18 age categories, and there is also an U11 Jamboree.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Ice Hockey Australia	13/15/18U National Championships		180	400	Not supplied	School Holidays	2025 -
Ice Hockey Australia	U11 Jamboree		100	250	Not supplied	School Holidays	2025 -

Lawn Bowls

Potential event hosting opportunities exist for the Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Mid Coast and Port Stephens LGAs.

Brief overview

Bowls Australia’s National championships is available to host from 2024, with the following options:

- 2 years major partner recognition 2024 & 2025 @ \$450K per annum = \$900K total
- 5 years major partner recognition 2024 to 2028 @ \$350K per annum - \$1.75M total

Organisation	Event	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Bowls Australia	The Nationals	836	1450		October	2024, 2025, 2027 -
Bowls Australia		2 years major partner recognition 2024 & 2025 @ \$450K per annum = \$900K total;				
Bowls Australia		5 years major partner recognition 2024 to 2028 @ \$350K per annum - \$1.75M total				

Motorsports

Potential event hosting opportunities exist across almost all Hunter region LGAs except Newcastle (which however currently has the Supercars event), and in particular Lake Macquarie with its Lakes MX Track which is a national level track. Cessnock also has the Loxford Park Speedway and Lake Macquarie has the major new Black Rock Motor Sports complex in development for future events.

Brief overview

Motorcycling Australia and MOTO facilitate various events that occur across the year at various venues nationally. A number of these are available to host from 2024 onwards. Similarly, Motorsports Australia also hosts events across the year at a range of venues, leaving many possibilities for hosting from 2025 onwards.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Superbike Championship (ASBK) Rd 3	3 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	April	2024 -
Motorcycling Australia	ProMX - Round 5	1 day	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	May	2024 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Superbike Championship (ASBK) Rd 4	3 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	June	2024 -
Motorcycling Australia	ProMX - Round 6	1 day	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	June	2024 -
Motorcycling Australia	Aussie Flat Track Nationals Round 1&2	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	July	2024 -
Motorcycling Australia	2023 Australian Junior Motocross Championship	6 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	July	2024 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Superbike Championship (ASBK) Rd 5	3 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	July	2024 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Junior Track Championships	2 days	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	July	2024 -

Motorsports

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Motorsports Australia	Motorkhana	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied
Motorsports Australia	Khanacross	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2026
Motorsports Australia	Hillclimb	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	2028
Motorsports Australia	Rally / Rally sprint	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied
Motorsports Australia	Off Road (recurring annually)	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied
Motorsports Australia	Rally (recurring annually, multi round)	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Speedway Snr Solo Championship - Round 1	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	January	Not supplied
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Speedway Snr Solo Championship - Round 2	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	January	Not supplied
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Speedway Snr Solo Championship - Round 3	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	January	Not supplied
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Speedway Snr Solo Championship - Round 4	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	January	Not supplied
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Speedway Snr Solo Championship - Round 5	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	January	Not supplied
Motorcycling Australia	Official ASBK / OJC Test	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	February	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Superbike Championship (ASBK)	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	February	2025 -

Motorsports

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Motorcycling Australia	Oceania Junior Cup (OJC)		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	March	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Snr and Jnr Sidecar Championships		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	April	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Junior Dirt Track		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	April	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Four Day Enduro (A4DE)		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	May	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Finke Desert Race		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	June	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	St George Endurance Series - Rd 1		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	July	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Aussie Flat Track Nationals Rd 1 & 2		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	July	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	WJMX		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	July	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Junior Motocross Championship		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	July	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Junior Track Championships		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	July	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Arenacross Series Round 1		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	September	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	TdN		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	September	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Speedway World Cup		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	September	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Trial Championship		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	September	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	2023 Senior Dirt Track Championships		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	October	2025 -

Motorsports

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Arenacross Series Round 3		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	October	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian MotoGP		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	October	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Senior Track Championships		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	October	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	ISDE		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	November	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Historic Road Race Championships		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	November	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Speedway 125cc Solo Championship		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	November	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Speedway 125cc Teams Championships		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	November	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Speedway U21 & U16 250cc Championships		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	November	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	FIM World Supercross Championship		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	November	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	FIM Oceania Speedway Championship		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	December	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	F1 and F2 Sidecar Championship (multi)		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	TBC	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Rules and Technical Commission Meeting		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	TBC	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	Australian Three Day Vintage Enduro (A3VE)		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	TBC	2025 -
Motorcycling Australia	MA Commission Meeting		Not supplied	Not supplied	Not supplied	TBC	2025 -

Mountain Biking

Potential event hosting opportunities exist across for the Cessnock, Dungog, Lake Macquarie and Newcastle LGAs.

Brief overview

Mountain biking State and National Championships are facilitated by the national organisation Australian Cycling across Enduro, Marathon, XC and DH events.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Australian Cycling	Mountain Bike National Championships		Not supplied	2600	\$500,000.00	March	Not supplied
Australian Cycling	Mountain Bike National Championships – Enduro		Not supplied	3000	\$100,000.00	October	Not supplied
Australian Cycling	Mountain Bike National Championships - Marathon		Not supplied	500	\$20,000.00	May	Not supplied
Australian Cycling	Mountain Bike National Series		Not supplied	300	\$20,000.00	December – March	Not supplied
Australian Cycling	Mountain Bike State Championships- XC		Not supplied	Not supplied	\$5,000.00	TBC	Not supplied
Australian Cycling	Mountain Bike State Championships – Enduro		Not supplied	Not supplied	\$10,000.00	TBC	Not supplied
Australian Cycling	Mountain Bike State Championships – DH		Not supplied	Not supplied	\$10,000.00	TBC	Not supplied

Pony Club

Potential event hosting opportunities exist across all 10 Hunter region LGAs.

Brief overview

Pony Club’s National and State Championships are large 1-5 day events, available for hosting from 2025 and 2024 respectively.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Pony Club Australia	PCA Nationals	1-5 days	300	Not supplied	Not supplied	TBC	2025 -
Pony Club Australia	PCA State Championships	1-5 days	200	Not supplied	Not supplied	TBC	2024 -

Sailing

Potential event hosting opportunities exist across the Lake Macquarie, Mid Coast, Newcastle and Port Stephens LGAs.

Brief overview

The NSW Youth Championship regatta is available for hosting from 2024, with the 3-day Coaching Clinic preceding it. These events are locked in to occur over the October long-weekend.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Sailing NSW	Sailing - Coaching Clinic		170	Not supplied	Not supplied	October	2024 -
Sailing NSW	NSW Youth Championship Regatta		250	850	\$20,000	October	2024 -

Softball

Potential event hosting opportunities exist for the Newcastle LGA.

Brief overview

Softball Australia events calendar has major events available from 2025 and future years.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Softball Australia	National Championships		1000	Not supplied	No charge at present	Not supplied	2025 -
Softball Australia	U14, 16, 18, 23 Age championships		200 each	Not supplied	No charge at present	Not supplied	2025 -
Softball Australia	Masters Championship			Not supplied	No charge at present	Not supplied	2025 -

Surf Lifesaving

Potential event hosting opportunities exist across the Lake Macquarie, Mid Coast, Newcastle and Port Stephens LGAs.

Brief overview

Surf Lifesaving Australia run various sporting events annually across Swimming, IRB, Iron Man, Surf Boat Series and of course their major event, the National Surf Lifesaving Championships – known as ‘The Aussies’.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Surf Life Saving Australia	The Kellogg's Nutri Grain Iron Series	2 days	40	500	\$10-20k	Not supplied	Unknown
Surf Life Saving Australia	The Super Surf Teams League	2 days	80	500	\$10-20k	Not supplied	Unknown
Surf Life Saving Australia	The Interstate Championships	2 days	216	500	\$10-20k	Not supplied	Unknown
Surf Life Saving Australia	The Aussies – National Pool Rescue Championships	9 days	700	5500-7000	\$10-20k	August	Unknown
Surf Life Saving Australia	The Aussies – National IRB Championships	9 days	800	5500-7000	\$10-20k	July	Unknown
Surf Life Saving Australia	Ocean Thunder Surf Boat Series	2 days	225	500	\$10-20k	Not supplied	Unknown
Surf Life Saving Australia	Coolangatta Gold	2 days	900	2000	\$10-20k	October	N/A
Surf Life Saving Australia	Aussies Ocean Swim	2 days	1000		\$10-20k	Not supplied	Unknown
Surf Life Saving Australia	Australian Championships (The Aussies)	2 days	3400		Est. \$2.7-3m	April	Unknown
Surf Life Saving Australia	Ocean Thunder Surf Boat Series	2 days	225	500	\$10-20k	Not supplied	

Surfing

Potential event hosting opportunities exist across the Lake Macquarie, Mid Coast, Newcastle and Port Stephens LGAs.

Brief overview

Major Surfing events facilitated by Surfing Australia are available for hosting from 2024 including National and World Surfing Games.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Surfing Australia	Australian Interschool Surfing Championships	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	2024 -
Surfing Australia	Australian SUP Championships	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	2024 -
Surfing Australia	World Surfing Games & Championships	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	2024 -
Surfing Australia	Domestic Cup	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	2024 -

Touch Football

Potential event hosting opportunities exist across almost all Hunter region LGAs except Dungog.

Brief overview

Annual touch football events as well as recurring tournaments facilitated by both National and State Touch Football organisations are available for hosting from 2024. The National Touch League Championship is currently being hosted in Coffs Harbour and is next available for host bidding from 2027.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
Touch Football Australia	National Touch League	3 days	Not supplied	6000	\$210,000.00	March	2027 -
Touch Football Australia	National Youth Championship	5 days	1926	6000	\$210,000.00	Not supplied	2024 -
NSW Touch	Vawdon Cup	Not supplied	90-120 teams	Not supplied	Not supplied	Aug-Oct	2024 -
NSW Touch	Vawdon Cup- Double Header	Not supplied	90-120 teams	Not supplied	Not supplied	Aug-Oct	2024 -
NSW Touch	Country Championships	Not supplied	70-100 teams	Not supplied	Not supplied	October	2023 -
NSW Touch	State Cup	Not supplied	200+ teams	Not supplied	Not supplied	December	2026 -
NSW Touch	JSC North and South	2 weekends	180-200 teams	Not supplied	Not supplied	February	2024 -
NSW Touch	Junior Regionals		60 teams	Not supplied	Not supplied	April/May	2024 -

Potential event hosting opportunities exist across almost all Hunter region LGAs except Dungog, with a potential Unisport Nationals likely to be held mainly in Newcastle and its surrounding LGAs.

Brief overview

UniSport run various individual and multi-sport events each year, and event calendars from 2024 being currently finalised. The 5-day Indigenous Multi-sport competition is available from 2024. The only event that the Hunter region could not potentially host is their Snow Sports event, for obvious reasons.

Organisation	Event	Duration	Estimated # Participants	Total Attendance	Hosting Fee	Month Held	Available
UniSport	Athletics	3 days	350	Not supplied	Not supplied	April	2026-
UniSport	Triathlon	1 day	125	Not supplied	Not supplied	March	2025 -
UniSport	3x3	3 days	168	Not supplied	Not supplied	April	2024 -
UniSport	Swimming	3 days	350	Not supplied	Not supplied	May	2024 -
UniSport	Multi-sport - Indigenous	5 days	385	Not supplied	Not supplied	June	2024 -
UniSport	Distance Running	2 days	300	Not supplied	Not supplied	July	2024 -
UniSport	LOL - eSports	TBC	180	Not supplied	Not supplied	TBC	2023 -
UniSport	Futsal	3 days	300	Not supplied	Not supplied	July	2024 -
UniSport	Nationals – Multisport	7 days	6800	Not supplied	Est. \$500k-\$1m	September	2027 -
Unisport	T20 Cricket	5 days	200	Not supplied	Not supplied	November	2024 -



Recurring Events in the Hunter Region with Potential for Growth

The Hunter Region's Recurring Events

The Hunter region has a broad variety of event genres spread across the year, some of which are quite unique and others which are also replicated in other regional destinations.

- Part of the Brief for this Project was to compile a list of recurring events across the broader Hunter region, and this has been compiled in a searchable spreadsheet to enable it to be easily updated and be used as a resource for HJO and its 10 member Councils.
- The diversity of events across the Hunter region can be summarised best under various over-arching genres such as, but not limited to (the list below is not designed to be definitive but to showcase examples of these event genres across the region):
 - **Food and Drink** – Maitland Taste Festival, Maitland Aroma Coffee & Chocolate Festival, Lovedale Long Lunch, Hunter Valley Beer & Wine Festival, Hunter Valley Cheese and Chocolate Festival.
 - **Sporting** – Supercars, Surfest, Lake Macquarie Surfing Festival, Fast and Loud Festival.
 - **Equine** - Scone Horse Festival, King of the Ranges Stockman's Challenge & Bush Festival.
 - **Shows** – Almost every major town across the Hunter hosts an annual Show.
 - **Agricultural / Garden** – Merriwa Festival of the Fleeces, Mega Creatures, Tocal Field Days.
 - **Unique & Special Events** – Kurri Kurri Nostalgia Festival, Warbirds over Scone, Aberdeen Highland Games, Old Bar Beach Festival, Rattletrap Historic Bikes & Vintage Casts, Living Smart Festival, Maitland Multicultural Festival.
 - **Music** – The Gum Ball, Dashville Skyline, Groovin the Moo, Days on the Green, Lake Macquarie Country Music Festival.
 - **Mass participation sporting events** – Tri Port Stephens, Sail Port Stephens, Peter Wilson Cup, Le Tour de Merriwa, Singleton Auscycling events, Viking challenge – senior and junior, Rugby 7s – open and youth, Winery Running Festival.
 - **Arts & Culture** – Scone Literary Festival, Float your Boat.
 - **Ceremonial** – Multiple Christmas, NYE, Australia Day events.



The Hunter Region's Recurring Events

- A number of the recurring events listed on the previous page have been around for quite some time, have their roots in the local community and are embraced and loved by their residents. The fact that a large number of these events are community / volunteer run means that this ethos is critical to their on-going development and success.
- The not-for-profit basis to these events are often what binds them together, but it can also sometimes stifle event development and new ideas, and even lead to fatigue and burnout amongst key volunteers which can mean the “end is nigh”, even for some very longstanding events.
- Almost any event could be improved by some expert guidance from professional event organisers who have many years of experience on delivering large scale events that people enjoy and attend. Most of these event professionals are very commercially focused, because if their events fail to deliver, they lose their own (or other investor's) money.
- This is a very major distinction between community / not-for-profit events and commercial / for-profit events. Both types of events can be very professionally run and organised, but the latter tend to be done far more so.
- The 10 Hunter region Councils need to be very aware of this distinction when looking to support and nurture some of their longstanding events. Potentially HJO could assist to facilitate event professionals to mentor and guide some of these community / not-for-profit events and assist them to adapt and grow by adopting some of the governance, risk and documentation practices used by professional event organisers.
- If this guidance process is done and managed effectively by event professionals who understand regional events, then this could be one of the most valuable initiatives to assist the Hunter region's wonderfully diverse range of recurring events to prosper for many years to come.



The Hunter Region's Recurring Events

Some examples of how some of the recurring events could possibly scale up and attract more out of region (and even international visitors in some cases):

- **Opportunity for the Upper Hunter Shire Council - Warbirds over Scone** – There are a number of other similar types of events, including a couple of prominent events in New Zealand, one is ***Wings over the Wairarapa***, which is held in November in Masterton which is located around one hour from the capital, Wellington. The other is ***Warbirds over Wanaka***, which is held over Easter each year in Wanaka, which is around one hour's drive from Queenstown. Given that these events do not directly compete with the Scone event, setting up some sort of sister relationship may mean that Scone could potentially promote the other two events and vice versa via ticketing databases, eDMs and advertising, which could potentially assist in driving international visitation to the Hunter region.
- **Opportunity for the Cessnock Shire Council - Kurri Kurri Nostalgia Festival** – Just like above, there are also a number of other similar types of Rockabilly / 50s / 60s events held around Australia, particularly in Queensland (e.g. Greazefest, Beachfest and Cooly Rocks On) over winter. Again, given that these events do not directly compete with the Kurri Kurri event, and that attendees at these events might like to travel to other similar events of the same genre, setting up some sort of sister relationship with a number of these events makes strategic sense. Kurri Kurri could potentially promote the other events and vice versa via ticketing databases, eDMs and advertising, which can assist in driving increased visitation, revenues and long-term sustainability.





Regional Event Case Studies & Sources of Event Funding

Mudgee – Australia's Top Tourism Town

A master events calendar with a broad variety of event genres spread across the year is one of the key pillars that made Mudgee Australia's top tourism town two years in a row.

- Mudgee is a relatively small town of just over 10,000 people and it is the largest town in a relatively small LGA.
- In 2014, the Mudgee region had over 35 cellar doors and a viticultural history dating back to 1858, but struggled with limited recognition beyond regional NSW residents, competing with the likes of the far more well-known Hunter Valley wine region.
- Many potential visitors believed Mudgee region to be further away than its 3.5-hour drive from Sydney, with misconceptions about the region's offerings and climate. Mudgee Region Tourism aimed to position the Mudgee region as a leading Australian food and wine destination, showcasing its contemporary experiences within vibrant and sophisticated country towns and surrounds. The goal was to increase awareness, conversion and encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more.
- Mudgee focused on its key brand attributes – fine food, wine, spirits and craft beer and then emphasised its natural beauty, open spaces, markets, proximity to national parks, and then created bespoke visitation opportunities through its curation of a diverse range of home grown and acquired events.
- This deliberate approach led to increased awareness and visitor conversion for the Mudgee region. By 2019, and prior to COVID-19, which only increased the amount of visitors, the region had experienced annual visitor growth of 32%. Growing overnight visitors by 34%, length of stay by 25% and spend by 43%.



Mudgee – Australia's Top Tourism Town

A TYPICAL YEARLY EVENT CALENDAR FOR MUDGEE

January

- Gulgong Folk Festival – Music
- A Day on the Green Concert - Music

February

- NRL Charity Shield (St.George v. Rabbitohs) - Sport
- New Haven Park Country Championships – Horse Racing
- Rylestone – Kandos Show – Show

March

- Mudgee Craft Beer & Cider Festival – Food & Beverage
- Mudgee Show – Show
- Carp Muster – Community
- Can Cruise Car Rally – Mass Participation

April

- NRL Premiership match – Manly Sea Eagles – Sport
- Mudgee Cycling Classic – Mass Participation
- Mudgee Wings, Wheels and Wine – Mass Participation / Exhibition
- Bull-a-Rama – Rodeo

May

- Mudgee Running Festival – Mass Participation

June

- MudgeeQue BBQ Festival

July

- Mudgee Small Farm Field Days – Agricultural / Garden

September

- Mudgee Food and Wine Month – Food & Beverage
- Mudgee Reader's Festival – Arts & Cultural

October

- Mudgee Golf Open - Sport
- Sculptures in the Garden – Arts & Cultural
- Mudgee Region Open Gardens – Agricultural / Garden

November & December

- Mudgee Arts & Crafts Christmas Markets – Arts & Cultural



Mudgee – Australia's Top Tourism Town

A unique mix of home-grown events and popular acquired events has seen Mudgee become a beacon for events in regional NSW.

- Mudgee has now built a highly curated master event calendar where at least one or two major events occur almost every month of the year, thus filling occupancy gaps during low and shoulder seasons, and ensuring new types of visitors are continuously coming to see all that the Mudgee region has to offer.
- Mid-Western Council has taken a very deliberate strategy of recognising its portfolio of existing events, nurturing them and assisting them to grow and become far larger and ultimately more sustainable. For example, the original Food and Wine Weekend became a week, and it now takes pride of place as a full month of activations that is embraced by all key stakeholders across the region.
- Mid-Western Council has also taken a very proactive stance in encouraging high profile events such as professional team sports like the NRL, A-League and Super Rugby and large-scale mass participation sports, such as the Mudgee Cycle Classic and brought them to the region. Unique and high-profile events like these are bringing in visitors who may not have otherwise thought to travel to Mudgee – and once they visit – their overall experience means not only will they come back again, but they become positive advocates for the Mudgee region to all of their friends and family.
- Some of these acquired events such as the Annual NRL Charity Shield pre-season match between St George Illawarra v. South Sydney and Manly's annual NRL premiership matches, also showcase the Mudgee region to many more hundreds of thousands of broadcast viewers from across Australia and internationally.



Mudgee – Australia's Top Tourism Town

Measuring event impacts and unearthing Strategic Funding Sources for events is also a feature of Mudgee's overall event strategy

- It is often difficult to secure public support for Council investments in most things. However, when the impacts of events are measured and local businesses and residents can clearly see the positive benefits of events - through increased vibrancy, visitation and expenditure - it makes future event investment far easier to undertake. Mid-Western Council has found that being able to widely publicise the event impacts has certainly assisted in increasing local resident and business support for hosting events in the Mudgee region.
- Mid-Western Council has also sought out other means of financial support in order to acquire a number of events, including numerous NSW Government funds such as **Reconnecting Regional NSW - Community Events Program** and the **Regional Event Acceleration Fund (REAF)**.
- Examples of recent events held in Mudgee are detailed below:
 - Manly v. Newcastle NRL match - 9024 people headed to Glen Willow Park to see Manly draw 32-all against Newcastle in late March, 2023. Ticketing data showed that half the crowd were visitors to the region, which returned an estimated \$1.75 million into the local Mudgee economy. This match was delivered through \$150k funding support from the REAF. Manly are already locked in to return on 1 April, 2024. \$130k was also received from REAF to host a recent Mariners A-League match.
 - NRL Charity Shield - In February, 2023, 8,317 people made their way to Glen Willow to see the South Sydney Rabbitohs claim back the Charity Shield defeating the St George Illawarra Dragons 42 – 24. Council estimates from ticketing and economic data that around \$1.6 million was spent in the region over the weekend, at restaurants and cafes, retailers and accommodation providers.
 - In 2022, more than \$3.6 million was injected into the Mudgee economy as a direct result of three major events at Glen Willow Oval. A combined 18,228 people made it through the gates to see the NRL Charity Shield: South Sydney v. St George Illawarra (26 February), Round 4: Manly v. Canberra Raiders (2 April), and A-League Round 19: Central Coast Mariners v Macarthur FC (26 March). Ticketing and economic data shows 67 per cent of Manly v. Canberra event attendees were visitors to the region, while 54 per cent of A-League attendees and 66 per cent of Charity Shield attendees were all visitors to the region.





A selection of some of the Mudgee region's diversity of event genres.

Queensland's Sunshine Coast

A strategic focus on growing existing events and acquiring new events each year sees the Sunshine Coast hosting around 50 key events which drive over \$50m in direct economic impact each year. This has not happened by accident but as a very deliberate event strategy.

- The Sunshine Coast is one of Australia's most popular tourism destinations and its economy depends strongly on the tourism industry. The region hosts a variety of major events each year, which reinforces its reputation as a leading tourism destination. These events support local businesses and contribute to a range of community development goals.
- Sunshine Coast Council are completely sold on the value of investing in events and in doing so, it committed to a 10-year event strategy, via its very own **Major Events Strategy 2018-2027**. In the strategy Council sought to ensure the region realises its full potential, ensuring that major events contribute fully to the vision for the Sunshine Coast region to be **Australia's most sustainable region – healthy, smart and creative**.
- Council's ambitious vision for its strategy is for the region to be recognised as the “**premier regional events destination in Australia – and where major events deliver maximum results.**”
- The strategy provides a 10-year framework which seeks to maximise the value of major events to the Sunshine Coast economy and to the wider region. The strategy was developed by Council in close consultation with the Sunshine Coast Events Board and informed through valuable consultation from the tourism and event industry and key regional partners.
- The events strategy outlines the region's approach to the acquisition, support and assessment of the annual calendar of Sunshine Coast major events which drive visitation and economic benefit
- It is also deliberately designed to align with key State and local Government policy priorities, and in particular, contribute to the desired outcomes of the **Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy 2013-2033**, and to assist Council in achieving the broader regional and community objectives envisioned in the **Sunshine Coast Council Corporate Plan 2018-2022**.



Queensland's Sunshine Coast

There are many reasons as to why the Sunshine Coast is viewed as one of Australia's leading regional event destinations, and it has come about through strategic planning, financial commitment and focus:

- Council implemented its own **Major Events Sponsorship (funding) Program** and acknowledges its vital role in the overall tourism strategy for the region. Events are viewed as key drivers of visitation, promoters of the destination and long-term brand developers for the Sunshine Coast. This funding program is financed through Council's **Tourism and Major Events Levy** where around 10% of rate payers who are tourism related (i.e. accommodation providers, hospitality venues etc.) raise around \$6m p.a. The event sponsorship program is primarily designed to support events that attract tourists during the low season and/or generates significant media and destination exposure for the whole region.
- Council endorsed the creation of a **Sunshine Coast Events Board** which comprises of independent regional leaders who represent a wide range of experience in various professions such as the events industry, sporting, artistic and cultural industries. The Board also includes two councillors. The role of the Board is to oversee implementation of the Events Strategy; support the region's investment in existing major events; identify other possible sources of sponsorship funding; and secure new events.
- A **Major Events Team** was established to deliver the day-to-day management necessary, with experienced partnership officers guiding event organisers through the funding application process, support them through the permit process, and connecting them with local event industry suppliers. There is also a dedicated website featuring all Sunshine Coast events by category, showcasing the broad diversity of event genres and a true mix of one-off events v. recurring and annual events.
- This model for funding, supporting and acquiring major events has been highly successful. In 2021/22:
 - 53 major event sponsorship applications were considered with 51 supported, resulting in 88 individual events.
 - Support to the local events industry with the Major Events portfolio consisting of 62 events.
 - These 62 events generated over \$69.3 million in new economic activity and a return on investment of 30:1.
 - 21 events were supported for the very first time including The Old Women Ocean Paddle 2021, Aquathlon, State Championships and All Schools Aquathlon, and Sunshine Coast Comedy Festival.
 - An events industry taskforce was formed to build greater connectivity across the entire events industry.



Queensland's Sunshine Coast

In recent years the region has played host to several major events and competitions:

- Australian Surf Life Saving Championships ('The Aussies') 2016, 2021
- Buskers by the Lake 2021
- Ironman 70.3 Sunshine Coast (annual event)
- Mooloolaba Triathlon (annual event)
- NRL matches (annual event)
- Queensland Garden Expo (annual event)
- NRL Women's State of Origin 2020, 2021

The Sunshine Coast region has established a reputation as a destination of choice as they make it as easy as possible for event organisers to bring their events to the region, with reduced red tape and a “can do” attitude to make events happen.

In addition, the region has a multitude of natural and man-made assets for event organisers to select from. There are venues and facilities suitable from grass roots to international competition across over 60 different sports. All types of major events are well accommodated for, either along beaches, roads, stadiums, public venues or parklands.

The Sunshine Coast is easily accessible with its own international airport linking to 55 Australian cities as well as New Zealand. More than four million people reside within a 2-hour drive to the Sunshine Coast. It is also only a one-hour drive from Brisbane, plus it has train and bus options.

The region is a desirable visitor destination which also assists in driving attendance for major events. Participants choosing event options from a crowded national calendar are drawn to the region's attractions and climate. Not just for their chosen event activity, but also for the vacation and relaxation options available during their stay.





A selection of some of the Sunshine Coast region's diversity of event genres.



Potential Governance Structure to focus on Hunter region events

Potential Event Governance Structure

- Given that there is currently no universal agreement on how best to approach supporting and securing events into the future across the Hunter region, then it may be difficult to ensure that there is a unified and collaborative approach to targeting some of the events or pursuing some of the event concepts identified in this Report.
- Of particular importance will be to ensure that there is adequate governance, funding, administration support, collaboration (i.e. member Councils not bidding against each other) and the political will to bring future event success to the Hunter region.
- A potential solution might be to establish an HJO Events Committee which would be tasked with identifying targeted events (using this Report as a key starting point) and developing a strategic approach on how to attract those events to the Hunter region.
- This HJO Events Committee could be made up of 2-3 Council Mayors and/or CEOs, the GM of Destination Sydney Surrounds North and HJO administrative support to facilitate its needs.
- Having a potential combination of Mayors and CEOs and regular reporting to the HJO Board would ensure that event attraction is seen as an on-going priority for HJO, and individual Councils whose LGA may be involved in hosting specific targeted events could bring in their tourism or economic development staff to assist with any potential event proposals, bids or funding applications.
- Potential priorities for the Events Committee could potentially consist of:
 - Ensure evidence-based and robust reporting on activities to the HJO Board
 - Deliver media opportunities for member Councils supporting events
 - Provide additional value through creating effective partnership and relationships with DNSW and event owners
 - Develop a long-term vision and strategy for events across the Hunter region



Potential Event Governance Structure

- A potential Charter for the Events Committee could possibly consist of the following:
 - **Accountable** by reporting to the HJO Board with a set Agenda item each HJO Board meeting
 - **Value focused** by developing an event ROI model which would be agreed upon by the HJO Board
 - **Evidence-based** by developing clear criteria as to how potential new events would be assessed and ranked (i.e. what are the most important benefits from events? Economic via increased visitor numbers, stay and spend; brand and raising the profile of the Hunter region via media and other coverage to drive future visitation; strategic such as aligns with brand attributes or areas that the Hunter region wants to become known for; community pride and well-being; making the Hunter region a better place to live, work, study and play; etc.) and which criteria has the highest weighting in any decision-making matrix?
 - **Collaboration** by agreeing on the events to be targeted and knowing that some of these events may be hosted outside the LGAs of the members of the Events Committee.
 - **Sourcing alternative funding** by identifying potential funds and building key relationships within the NSW Government for events (e.g. DNSW, Dept. of Regional etc.)
 - **Infrastructure requirements** by identifying priority event facility upgrades or developments with the potential to attracts more events.
 - **Responsibility** for delivering high quality and compelling event bids and submissions.
 - **Review** and assess the event targeting and criteria on a regular and on-going basis.
 - **Evaluate** the success or otherwise of events which were targeted and secured and measure their holistic benefits to ensure that these benefits can be conveyed and reported to all key stakeholders including the residents of the Hunter region.
 - **Co-ordinate** the development of external event organisations where required, such as was done for the 8th Australian Masters Games in 2001.





www.jmpconsultants.com.au

Managing Director - James Paterson

Phone: + 61 408 686 119

james@jmpconsultants.com.au

7. Items for the Hunter JO Board – For Noting

7.1 CEO Report

Report Author: Joe James, CEO

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of key collaboration and advocacy engagement since the last meeting of the Hunter JO. This includes key networks, meetings, workshops and forums in which the CEO and staff have recently participated in to facilitate and support intergovernmental collaboration.

The report provides an update for the last period on:

- Political Engagements
- Media Coverage
- Regional Submissions
- Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement including:
 - Hunter JO convened workshops, forums and events
 - Existing Standing Engagements (convened by Hunter JO and local government)
 - Existing Standing Engagements (convened by others)
 - Proposed New Standing Engagements
 - Additional Strategic Engagements (if any)

Political Engagements

Political Representative	Purpose / Outcomes (where relevant)
Upcoming Engagements	
The Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, Federal Minister for the Environment and Water	<p>In response to our correspondence, at the request of the Minister, the Circular Economy Division of the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment & Water, has written to the Hunter JO identifying that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Circular Economy work being undertaken as a part of the Hunter Joint Organisation is a great example of the power of regions in driving Australia's transition towards a circular economy.• Requesting that a conversation be set up to hear more about the work the Hunter JO is doing, prior to the Circular Economy Ministerial Advisory Group's consideration of the role of a place-based circular economy that will occur in May 2024. <p>Refer Correspondence for further detail.</p>
The Hon. Penny Sharpe, MLC, Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage	<p>A meeting had been confirmed with the Minister for 2nd June in Cessnock, however had to be postponed by the Minister. The focus of the meeting was to include the five advocacy priorities of the Board, with a particular emphasis (given the Ministers portfolio responsibilities) on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NSW Waste Levy

Political Representative	Purpose / Outcomes (where relevant)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need for a clear, place-based, integrated whole of government policy and planning approach to drive the Region's economic evolution. <p>We are awaiting advice from the Ministers office on potential alternative dates.</p>
Completed Engagements	
The Hon. Tim Crakanthorp, Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter, and Member for Newcastle	The Minister attended the Hunter JO Board meeting on 8 th June, at which he provided an overview of the NSW Government priorities for the Parliamentary term and engaged in discussion on a number of priorities raised by Board Members.
The Hon. Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government <i>16th June 2023</i>	<p>During the ALGA conference, The CEO engaged with the Minister via the drop-in session organised on the final day of the conference.</p> <p>Refer Agenda item "Hunter JO Advocacy Update" for information on meeting focus and outcomes.</p>
Meeting with GM/CEO's from Royalties for Rejuvenation Councils	<p>Following a briefing from Craig Butler (GM of Lithgow Council) provided to GMAC and the SEE Committee, this meeting engaged General Managers of 'affected coal mining' councils recognised under the Royalties for Rejuvenation (R4R) Fund. The meeting was to explore the appetite, across R4R councils, to collaborate on joint advocacy about the intergovernmental policy co-ordination and funding required to genuinely address the challenges facing our LGAs and communities.</p> <p>Attendees from Member Councils were the GMs/CEOs of Lake Macquarie, Singleton, Upper Hunter and Singleton, as well as the Hunter JO CEO.</p>
Senator Jenny McCallister, Assistant Minister for Climate Change and Energy @ Parliament House	<p>During the ALGA conference, Mayors Fraser, Pontin & Reynolds met with the Member for Paterson. The meeting focused on the Hunter JO's core advocacy priorities.</p> <p>Refer Agenda item "Hunter JO Advocacy Update" for information on meeting outcomes.</p>
Meryl Swanson MP, Member for Paterson <i>14th June 2023</i>	<p>During the ALGA conference, Mayors Fraser, Pontin & Reynolds met with the Member for Paterson. The meeting focused on the Hunter JO's core advocacy priorities.</p> <p>Refer Agenda item "Hunter JO Advocacy Update" for information on meeting outcomes.</p>
The Hon Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy <i>12th July 2023</i>	The Chair Cr Sue Moore accepted an invitation for the Hunter JO to attend the declaration of the Hunter Offshore Offshore Wind Zone by the Minister for Climate Change and Energy. The launch was also attended by Cr Kay Fraser – Mayor of Lake Macquarie and Cr Declan Clausen - Deputy Lord Mayor, City of Newcastle.

Political Representative	Purpose / Outcomes (where relevant)
James Chisholm, Deputy Secretary: Net Zero Economy Taskforce, Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet <i>14th June 2023</i>	During the ALGA Conference a meeting was held with members of the Net Zero Economy Taskforce, Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet. The meeting focused on the establishment of the Commonwealth Net Zero Transition Authority. Refer Agenda item "Hunter JO Advocacy Update" for information on meeting outcomes.

Media Coverage

Media Outlet(s)	Focus	Summary of coverage
Newcastle ABC Radio <i>2NUR FM</i> <i>14th July 2023</i>	Partnership Agreement - Cities Power Partnership	Cities Power Partnership Agreement Cr Sue Moore, Hunter JO Chair provided interviews to the Newcastle ABC Radio Drive program and 2NUR FM following the launch of the Cities Power Partnership regional agreement.
Great Lakes Advocate Manning River Times <i>19th July 2023</i>	Partnership Agreement - Cities Power Partnership	MidCoast Council one of the nine Hunter councils joining partnership with national climate network. MidCoast Council has joined fellow Hunter-based councils entering into a regional partnership with Australia's largest local government climate network, the Cities Power Partnerships (CPP) Links to coverage: https://www.greatlakesadvocate.com.au/story/8272260/hunter-councils-partner-with-national-climate-network/ https://www.manningrivertimes.com.au/story/8274343/hunter-councils-partner-with-national-climate-network/
Government News News for Business Australian Associated Press Mirage News News of Australia News Centre - ConnectWeb - PR Newswire News.com.au The National Tribune What's On Australia	Partnership Agreement - Cities Power Partnership	Council Climate Network signs first regional partnership. The Hunter Joint Organisation, representing ten regional NSW councils, has become the first JO to enter into a regional partnership with the Cities Power Partnership climate network. Links to Coverage: Government News - https://www.governmentnews.com.au/council-climate-network-signs-first-regional-partnership/ News for Business - https://www.newsforbusiness.com.au/releases.html?rkey=20230713medianet_pr_989884&filter=17169 Australian Associated Press - https://photos.aap.com.au/releases?rkey=20230713

Media Outlet(s)	Focus	Summary of coverage
News Today Newswire NZ The Point		medianet_pr_989884&filter=16881 Mirage News - https://www.miragenews.com/hunter-councils-partner-with-national-climate-1046702/ News of Australia - http://www.newsofaustralia.com.au/releases.html?rkey=20230713medianet_pr_989884&filter=16639 News Centre - https://www.newscentre.com.au/releases.html?rkey=20230713medianet_pr_989884&filter=16817 ConnectWeb - PR Newswire - https://connectweb.com.au/pages/newscontent.aspx?rkey=20230713medianet_pr_989884&filter=8360 News.com.au - https://medianet.news.com.au/release/989884?cspt=1689311807 5130e79dcb439e10dc9ed3dde3abb635 The National Tribune - https://www.nationaltribune.com.au/hunter-councils-partner-with-national-climate-network/ What's On Australia - https://www.whatsonoz.com.au/news-releases.html?rkey=20230713medianet_pr_989884&filter=17281 News Today - https://www.oznewstoday.com.au/news-releases.html?rkey=20230713medianet_pr_989884&filter=17337 Newswire NZ - https://www.newswirenz.co.nz/media-releases.html?rkey=20230713medianet_pr_989884 The Point - https://thepoint.net.au/hunter-councils-partner-with-national-climate-network/

Awards and Recognition

The team are currently considering preparing submissions to the NSW Local Government Government Excellence in the Environment Awards for the following project initiatives:

1. Hunter Circular
2. Contaminated Land Resource Toolkit for Councils
3. Simtables for Community Resilience

Regional Submissions

A submission has been endorsed by GMAC and provided to the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding commissioned by the Minister for Emergency Management, Senator the Hon. Murray Watt. This submission is in addition to a specific consultation session held by Deloitte (who were engaged to conduct the review) with Hunter JO and LGNSW staff representatives. Information underpinning the submission was drawn from:

1. [Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032](#)
2. [Hunter JO Advocacy Framework and Priorities.](#)
3. Information provided by Council participants in activities and processes being delivered under various disaster resilience programs being coordinated by the Hunter JO
4. 'Resilience Health Check' consultation sessions completed by the Hunter JO with staff representatives from all bush fire-declared Member Councils during 2022/
5. Responses provided by key resilience contacts in Hunter JO Member Councils and Central Coast Council who were invited to review and provide input to the draft regional submission. Responses were received from Central Coast Council, Cessnock City Council and Lake Macquarie City Council.

A copy of the submission is included in Correspondence.

Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement

Hunter JO Workshops, Forums and Events	
Textiles Circularity Think Tank <i>20th June 2023</i>	This event brought together stakeholders across the textile value chain to explore gaps and opportunities for greater circularisation of textiles in the Hunter region. Thirty-five stakeholders from across local councils, industries and the Hunter JO participated.
Events 10 Conference <i>26th July 2023</i>	The focus of this event was to create connections, build networks and receive an overview and summary of all the tools, resources and information that is now available to the events industry in the Hunter, through the work completed under the Accelerating Events Economies Program. The event also included the formal launch of the Events10 website.
Australian Bioeconomy Conference 2023 <i>19 & 20 September 2023</i>	The Australian Industrial Ecology Network (AIEN) is hosting the Australian Bioeconomy Conference 2023 in Newcastle for the first time and the Hunter JO is an organising partner. The two-day event is themed Managing Carbon and Biomass in a Carbon Constrained World and will explore potential opportunities for industry in Australia and what it might look like in the future. Cr Sue Moore, as Chair of the Hunter JO will open the conference, and an overview of the Hunter JO Circular Precincts and Futures Hub project will be featured in the program. More information on the conference is available at https://bioeconomy.com.au/
Hunter Biodiversity Conservation and Planning Forum <i>7th September 2027</i>	This forum is being organised in response to interest from member councils to identify and collaborate around opportunities for improving biodiversity and conservation outcomes. The Forum will feature presentations from key state government teams, local council case studies, Q&A Panel session, and a roundtable workshop session to identify collaborative opportunities and priorities.

Existing Standing Engagements - Convened by Hunter JO & Local Government	
<p>Disaster Waste Management & Resource Recovery Preparedness Working Group</p> <p>29th May 2023</p> <p><i>Convened by: Hunter Joint Organisation</i></p>	<p>This inaugural meeting of the group focused on the scope and boundaries of the new Disaster Waste Management & Resource Recovery component of the Disaster Risk Reduction project. This work will focus on the opportunities to collaborate in preparing and responding to the waste generated by natural disasters.</p>
<p>Regional Resilience Program Advisory Committee (RRPAC)</p> <p>Monthly</p> <p><i>Convened by: Canberra Region Joint Organisation</i></p>	<p>Monthly RRPAC meetings of this group facilitate regular updates between the NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA) and Joint Organisations on how JOs are tracking with project delivery and reporting, and to provide progress updates from the various cross JO working groups. Discussions at the most recent meeting included potential project delays and the need to complete project variations (not relevant for Hunter JO). Emerging issues included transport vulnerability work already being undertaken by Transport for NSW and likely overlaps with similar works proposed by JOs across the State under the current funding program.</p>
<p>Circular Economy Facilitators Group</p> <p>30th June 2023</p> <p><i>Convened by: Hunter Joint Organisation</i></p>	<p>The focus of this meeting was the quarterly Circular Economy Roadmap session. Project identification and alignment workshopping was undertaken to inform an update of the Roadmap via the Hunter Circular website (digital hub).</p>
<p>Contaminated Land Working Group</p> <p>31st May 2023</p> <p><i>Convened by: Hunter Joint Organisation</i></p>	<p>The focus of this meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regular recurring agenda items (EPA funding, recent asset managers training, Council visits, Service Desk update). • update on the LGNSW Asbestos Network (provided by Mal Hunter, Dungog Shire Council) • an overview of some of Maitland's contaminated land portfolio and its unique challenges, including the Anambah Landfill, Webland St, Gasworks, Maitland Gaol and Walka Waterworks (provided by Mal Adrienm, Maitland City Council) • An update from City of Newcastle on improvements to their contaminated land information system. • Council roundtable, with a focus on PFAS and legacy landfills, which will be the topic for the next working group meeting.
<p>Regional Waste Managers Network (Regional Waste Strategy Group)</p> <p>6th July 2023</p> <p><i>Convened by: Hunter Joint Organisation</i></p>	<p>The focus of this quarterly meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • action planning for this year's implementation of the Regional Circular Materials Strategy. • an overview of the Illawarra Shoalhaven JO Regional Illegal Dumping Program, provided by James Vincent - Regional Illegal Dumping Prevention Coordinator with ISJO.

<p>Sustainability Educators Group</p> <p>10th July 2023</p> <p>Convened by: Hunter Joint Organisation</p>	<p>Key focus areas for the meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good for the Hood program • B-cycle training that will be implemented in a number of our councils. • CRC education and communication plan evaluation survey • Discussion of the purpose and goals of the Sustainability Educators Group.
<p>Hunter Net Zero Network</p> <p>Convened by: Hunter Joint Organisation</p> <p>28th June 2023</p>	<p>This second meeting of the Network was attended by 17 representatives from across 10 councils. Its focus included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing an overview of the purpose of the Network. • Presenting the draft Project Management Plan for consultation, feedback and advice. • Providing an overview of the Landfill Emissions Project, and an update on the EV chargers feasibility study. • Discussion on the ARENA Community Batteries EOI with officers from the four participating councils (Maitland, Cessnock, MidCoast and Singleton).
<p>Simtables JO Group</p> <p>Convened by: Hunter Joint Organisation</p> <p>Monthly</p>	<p>Regular meetings of this group provides the opportunity to share learnings from individual Simtable focused projects being delivered by the Hunter JO, Noosa Council, Ku-ring-gai Council, Mid North Coast JO, and Canberra Region JO. Meetings will continue for the next 12 months, as we continue to extend application and use of the Simtables through the Disaster Risk Reduction project.</p>
<p>Regional SDGs Dashboard Project</p> <p>Convened by: Sustainability Advantage / University of Newcastle</p>	<p>While no meeting of the project group occurred during the reporting period, an email update has been provided following queries from Member Councils. This has confirmed that the Sustainability Advantage / UON team have quality checked the data and are currently developing a dashboard and uploading the data. They have indicated more information will be available in July/August.</p>
<p>Hunter Resilience Network</p> <p>18th May 2023</p> <p>20th July 2023</p> <p>Convened by: Hunter Joint Organisation</p>	<p>All 11 Councils (Hunter JO Member Councils and Central Coast Council) participated and engaged heavily in the inaugural meeting of the Hunter Resilience Network in May. Participants represented a range of Council functions including business continuity, LEMO's, strategic planning and community engagement. The focus of the first meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the purpose of the Network • an overview of current regional resilience projects being led by the Hunter JO. • An extensive Council Roundtable session identifying what each Council is currently working on in the resilience space and where they see the biggest opportunities for building regional resilience. A follow up survey has also been disseminated to confirm priorities and directions for moving forward. <p>The second meeting of the network occurred on 20 July. Attended again by all Hunter JO Member Councils and Central Coast Council, this meeting included briefings from Andrew Codrington (REMO) and the NSW Reconstruction Authority.</p>

<p>IP&R Network</p> <p><i>31st May 2023</i></p> <p><i>Convened by: Lake Macquarie City Council</i></p>	<p>Lake Macquarie Council provided an update on the LG Professionals Integrated Planners Network, including service review training sessions. Enquiries are being made to canvas the potential for a training session to be delivered in Newcastle. Council roundtable session discussed service review reporting, annual reports, strategies and plans registers, progress on Delivery Programs and Operational Plans, and staff changes.</p>
<p>NSW JO Chairs Network</p> <p><i>29th June 2023</i></p> <p><i>Convened by: Canberra Region Joint Organisation</i></p>	<p>The Chair, CEO and Director Hunter JO participated in this meeting, which included briefings from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hon Ron Hoenig, Minister for Local Government • LGNSW (Red Fleet, Emergency Services Levy, IPART Review) • ALGA (\$100M Climate Fund, Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding Arrangements, Federal Assistance Grants, Commonwealth review of Regional Development Authorities) <p>Other agenda items included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates on cross Joint Organisation delivery of projects (Net Zero Acceleration, Disaster Resilience and Contaminated Lands) • Grant funding - shared challenges and opportunities across the NSW Joint Organisation Network (prepared by the Hunter JO) • Progress on the OLG Joint Organisation Review - outcomes and recommendations from the joint "Financial sustainability and boundaries" working group
<p>Existing Standing Engagements - Convened by Others</p>	
<p>Contaminated Land CRCB Officers Group</p> <p><i>Monthly</i></p> <p><i>Convened by: NSW Environment Protection Authority</i></p>	<p>Recent discussions have focused on wrapping up the contaminated land program (funding will end in December) and establishing a LGNSW Contaminated Land webpage and online network to be managed by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (to be confirmed). Development of a Contaminated Land podcast series continues, with the first interviews with Anna Lundmark (StellaNord Consulting) and Peter Brennan (Singleton Council) now live.</p>
<p>Hunter Central Coast CMP Practitioners Roundtable</p> <p><i>25-May-23</i></p> <p><i>Convened by: Department of Planning and Environment NSW</i></p>	<p>The Hunter JO continues to participate in the Roundtable. The focus of the most recent meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunter JO provided an update on the Coastal and Estuary Support package • Foreshore and waterway development (provided by Lake Macquarie Council) • The impacts of the recent East Coast Low (provided by Department of Planning and Environment) • Flood debris clean up (provided by NSW Environment Protection Authority)
<p>State and Regional Waste Managers Network</p> <p><i>26th June 2023</i></p>	<p>Metro and RENEW Regional Waste Coordination networks met with the NSW EPA Partnerships Team. Key discussions involved the results of the LGNSW waste survey, as well as a workshop on the regional coordination program.</p>

Convened by: NSW Environment Protection Authority	
Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration Weekly Convened by: Office of Energy and Climate Change	Weekly meetings with the JONZA Managers and OECC Sustainable Councils team continue. Recent discussion has focused predominantly around the ARENA Community Battery EOI bids. The Network is very collaborative. A knowledge sharing session on tariff reviews for councils has been organised for July.
Hunter Planning Alliance Convened by: UDIA	<p>A briefing was provided by Transport for NSW representatives to the Hunter Planning Alliance. The briefing provided an overview of the key shifts in the approach of the new NSW Government to the Transport portfolio including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A move away from centralised mega projects and an increased focus on more widely spread smaller projects that increase access and equity to transport options for communities across NSW – this includes a greater emphasis on public transport • A clear direction for a more integrated approach to transport planning for the region • A 90-day review of current priority transport projects is currently underway to determine which will continue to proceed and which won't.
Additional Strategic Engagements - Convened by Others	
Commonwealth Disaster Funding Review - consultation session 5 th July Convened by: Deloitte	<p>The Hunter JO were invited to participate, along with Central West JO and LGNSW, in this targeted consultation session delivered by Deloitte's as part of the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding. The session focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of local government in disaster • Understanding the usefulness and accessibility of supports • Data needs <p>The session provided the opportunity to communicate the key issues and priorities identified by Member Councils through recent "Resilience Health Checks" facilitated by the Hunter JO, and those priorities articulated in the Hunter JO Strategic Plan and Advocacy Priorities.</p>

Recommendation: That the report be received and noted.

Report Author: Lisa Lord, Head of Finance

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

INCOME STATEMENT – June 2023

INCOME STATEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

	Month		YTD			Annual Budget	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Var	Approved	Revised
Revenue	74,492	95,485	5,089,607	1,863,215	2	1,863,215	4,440,164
Labour	-	-	-	-		-	-
Subcontractors	-	-	-	-		-	-
Materials / Other	-	-	-	-		-	-
Gross Profit	74,492	95,485	5,089,607	1,863,215	173%	1,863,215	4,440,164
Overheads	82,317	66,133	4,733,083	1,346,022	252%	1,346,022	4,053,970
Operating Profit	(7,825)	29,352	356,523	517,194	(31%)	517,194	386,194
Other Income / Expenses	-	-	(111)	-		-	-
Net Profit	(7,825)	29,352	356,412	517,194	(31%)	517,194	386,194
	-	-	-	-		-	-
Policy & Programs Subsidy	(3,081)	(29,281)	(370,366)	(501,366)	(26%)	(501,366)	(370,367)
Total NPBT	(10,906)	71	(13,954)	15,828	(188%)	15,828	15,827

YTD revenue (excluding grant funds) on target with revised budget estimates, with Net profit 8% behind revised budget.

This has resulted in a Net Result (after contribution to the Hunter JO Policy and Programs team) of (\$13,954).

Key contributors to this loss include unbudgeted costs associated with CEO performance review and budget overruns associated with accommodation/meals and fares/parking and IT.

Although 2022/23 has resulted in a loss of \$14k, this is significantly improved in comparison to prior years where the losses have exceeded \$150k.

Detailed Income Statement following this report.

BALANCE SHEET – June 2023

HIGHLIGHTS	YTD
BALANCE SHEET	Actual
Assets	
Cash	17,666
Trade Debtors	-
Other	50,062
Liabilities	
Trade Creditors	65,546
Employee Leave Entitlements	106,636
Unspent Grant Funding	
Other	37,420
Total Group Net Assets	(141,874)

Detailed balance sheet following this report.

CASHFLOWS – June 2023

GROUP HIGHLIGHTS	YTD
CASH ON HAND	Actual
Opening Balance - Cash on Hand	165,473
Arrow Net Increase / (Decrease)	(147,810)
Closing Balance - Cash on Hand	17,663
Plus Trade Debtors / Creditors	(65,546)
Available Working Capital (Cash)	(47,883)
Less restricted funds	
Employee Leave Entitlements	106,636
Unpsent grant funds received	-
Unrestricted funds	(154,519)

Cashflows have been under pressure, with a total YTD Net decrease in cash of \$148k. This Qtr. has continued to see a continued slow down in cash net movement from previous quarters. Detailed consolidated cashflow report following this report.

Further Updates

- Financials for 2021/22 have now been finalised and lodged with OLG.
- Audit for 2022/23 has commenced, with final audit field work to commence from 21 August.

Recommendation:

- **That the Income Statement for period ending June 2023 be received and noted.**

Report Author: Louisa Bulley, Executive Officer & Steve Wilson, Director Hunter JO,

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

This report provides an update on the current advocacy priorities, activities and systems development being undertaken by the Hunter JO.

1. NSW Parliamentary Engagement

In response to correspondence forwarded to newly appointed Government Ministers and all Hunter-based MPs elected to the new Parliament soon after the NSW Election, the following meetings / commitments have occurred over recent months:

- The Hon. Tim Crakanthorp, Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter, and Member for Newcastle (8th June 2023 – Hunter JO Board meeting)
- The Hon. Kate Washington, Minister for Families and Communities, and Disability Inclusion, and Member for Port Stephens (18th May 2023)
- The Hon. Penny Sharpe, MLC, Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage (NB meeting scheduled for 2nd June at Cessnock but had to be postponed by the Minister. Currently awaiting advice regarding an alternative date).

In follow up to the initial round of correspondence, additional contact has been initiated with Ministerial staff with a view to potentially securing meetings between remaining Ministers and the Hunter JO Chair, Deputy Chair and CEO during the parliamentary sitting week of 21 – 25 August 2023. In light of the resourcing impacts that will occur in the Hunter JO over the coming months however, it has been determined, in consultation with the Chair, to temporarily defer further efforts to secure meetings with Ministers during this period.

2. ALGA Conference

The Hunter JO CEO and Board representatives attended the ALGA conference during June. During conference meetings were held with the following Commonwealth Government representatives:

- Hon. Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government
- Meryl Swanson MP, Member for Paterson
- Senator Jenny McCallister, Assistant Minister for Climate Change and Energy
- Net Zero Economy Taskforce representatives, Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet
- Meeting with GM/CEO's from Royalties for Rejuvenation Councils

Key insights and outcomes from these meetings included:

- The tailored advocacy priorities, provided to each of the Federal Ministers and members, as well as senior Taskforce bureaucrats, were well received.
- The importance of local government collaboration in addressing priorities, particularly as it relates to economic evolution of the region, was acknowledged.
- The National Net Zero Authority was proffered as at least part of the solution to a number of our priorities by the Federal Ministers and senior Taskforce bureaucrats
- It is less clear, at least to the CEO's reckoning, as to how the Federal Government will achieve genuine place-based approaches that are both adaptable and resilient through time and which maintain some level of ongoing and informed regional input and accountability. This was acknowledged as a genuine challenge in the meetings with Minister King and the Taskforce.
- Influencing the direction and engagement with the national net Zero Authority would appear to be an important advocacy opportunity for the Hunter JO.

3. Review of Advocacy Framework and Priorities

A comprehensive review of the Hunter JO Advocacy Framework and Priorities has recently been undertaken, given that in August 2023 it will have been 12 months since the document was endorsed by the Board. Since that time it has provided a strong foundation for a wide range of advocacy and accompanying activities undertaken by the Hunter JO. These include meetings with Government Ministers and officials, supporting the development of aligned positions with other regional stakeholder organisations, and the development of regional submissions articulating the aligned position of the region's Mayors in the context of a wide range of State and Commonwealth Government directions and initiatives.

Changes to the document that will be recommended to the Board will:

- Reflect significant progress in prioritising and refining the advocacy, advocacy asks and advocacy processes of the Hunter JO since the document was originally endorsed.
- Aim to incorporate a number of new evidence-based advocacy positions drawn from the significant network collaboration and capacity building program work being undertaken to deliver Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032.

At a broad level, recommended additions or amendments to the document arising from the recent review process will relate to the following areas:

- Housing availability and affordability
- Strategic regional biodiversity and natural resource planning
- Sustainable place-based resilience planning and resourcing
- Emergency Services Levy and Red Fleet Assets
- Greater specificity around road funding reform (to reflect the Board's refinement during the year)
- Shaping the focus and nature of State and Commonwealth Net Zero Transition Authorities
- Greater specificity around policy and planning pathways for the reuse of mining and industrial lands
- Supporting action on a range of priorities identified in the Hunter Global: The Pathway to our Future report.
- The return of NSW waste levy funds to resource local and regional Circular Economy and waste management initiatives.
- Greater specificity around the need for integrated transport planning (to reflect the Board's refinement during the year)

It is proposed that a full suite of recommended updates to the Advocacy Framework and Priorities document be provided to the Board for consideration following the broader review of the Hunter JO's advocacy objectives and approach that will be delivered over the coming months. This will facilitate any key changes identified during that process to be incorporated into the document before being considered by the Board.

Recommendation: That the Hunter JO Advocacy Report be received and noted.

Report Author: Steve Wilson, Director Hunter JO

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Steering Committee

There was no meeting of the Subcommittee during June. This was to facilitate attendance at the Hunter JO Board meeting by the Hon. Tim Crakanthorp, Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter, and Member for Newcastle.

In line with the action arising from the previous (April 2023) Subcommittee meeting, liaison is underway with Transport for NSW representatives regarding delivery of a collaborative workshop with Mayors, through which to align regional priority transport outcomes across councils and key agencies.

Circular Economy Sub Committee

As reported at the previous Board meeting, the Subcommittee last met on 30th May 2023. A key action from that meeting was to write to the Federal Minister for the Environment, Tanya Plibersek, to:

- Communicate the region's successes to date in the Circular Economy
- Outline the existing networks that are already established in the region
- Request participation by the Hunter in the Ministerial Advisory Group.

In response to that letter, at the request of the Minister, the Circular Economy Division of the Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment & Water, has written to the Hunter JO (refer Correspondence) identifying that:

- The Circular Economy work being undertaken as a part of the Hunter Joint Organisation is a great example of the power of regions in driving Australia's transition towards a circular economy.
- Requesting that a conversation be set up to hear more about the work the Hunter JO is doing, prior to the Circular Economy Ministerial Advisory Group's consideration of the role of a place-based circular economy that will occur in May 2024.

Subcommittee for Economic Evolution

The Subcommittee last met on 8th June 2023. Key focus areas included:

- A presentation by Trent Bagnall on the Hunter Venture Fund established by Melt Ventures. A significant focus of the fund will be investing into Hunter based startups where a significant skills base for these companies already exists, and in attracting new businesses to the Hunter.
- An update on the progress of facilitating / supporting the establishment of a Coal Affected Region's Alliance, ahead of a meeting of interested Councils scheduled during the ALGA conference.
- Standing update from the CEO, Hunter JO on the progress of the Royalties for Rejuvenation Expert Panel, which has recently included a strong focus on the re-use of mining lands.

Recommendation:

That the Board receive and note the updates on the Hunter JO Sub-Committees.

Report Authors: Steve Wilson, Director Hunter JO and Kali Somerville, Media & Communications Officer

Responsible Officer: Steve Wilson, Director Hunter JO

Purpose:

To provide a six-month progress report on delivery of:

- Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032
- Hunter JO Communications and Engagement Strategy

Background.

Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032

The Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032 was adopted by the Hunter JO Board in December 2022. The Plan is the Hunter JO's Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities and is an aspirational 10-year plan that will be reviewed on the election cycle timeframe consistent with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. The Plan brings together and aligns the priorities of the ten Hunter JO Member Councils and their respective communities from across the region. The Plan defines a vision and roadmap for the future of the Hunter region, determining the strategic priorities that underpin the work of the Hunter JO.

The Strategic Plan is developed around four strategic themes:

1. **Connectivity** - A globally connected region whose residents enjoy transport and digital infrastructure and systems that enhance their economic and lifestyle opportunities.
2. **Resilience** - We are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks.
3. **Jobs and a Growing Economy** - The Hunter economy continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs.
4. **Liveability** - Protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments that we enjoy in our region.

Hunter JO Communications and Engagement Strategy

The purpose of this Communications and Engagement Strategy is to enable clear communication about the Hunter JO's advocacy and programs and provide consistent messaging aligned to the Hunter JO strategic priorities, statutory functions, and communications objectives. The communications and engagement strategy aims to deliver on its communication objectives and communications outcomes (refer Attachment 12) to support in the delivery of our four strategic themes identified in the Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032.

Progress reporting

The Hunter JO Strategic Plan identifies that six monthly progress reports will be completed and reported to the Board for both the Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032 and Communications and Engagement Strategy.

Report

The six-monthly progress reports for the Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032 and Communications and Engagement Strategy are both provided in Attachment 13. The information provided in the progress reports:

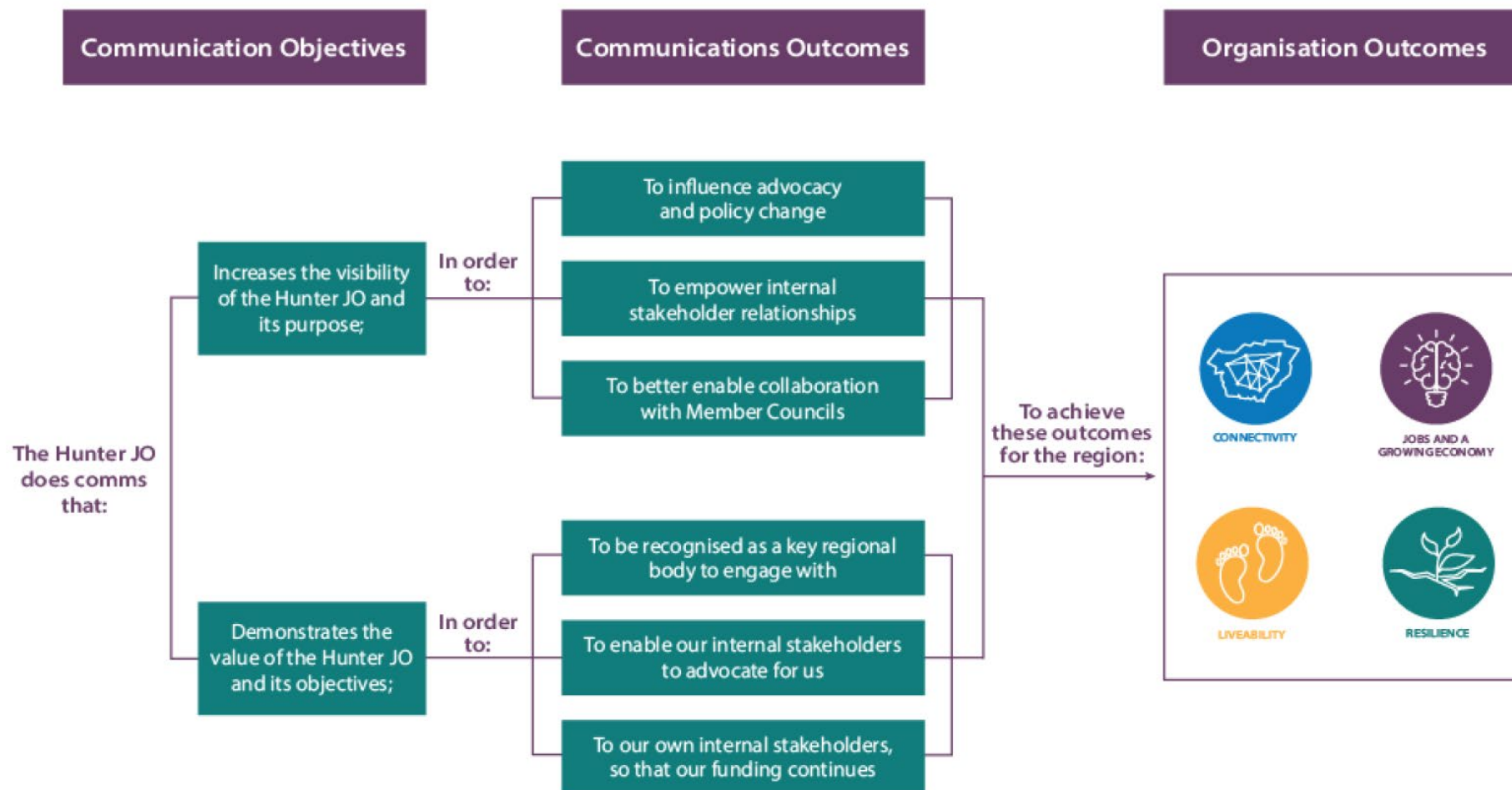
- For the Hunter JO Strategic Plan, is mapped against the four strategic priorities (ie Connectivity, Resilience, Jobs & A Growing Economy, and Liveability)
- For the communications strategy, is mapped against "Methods for Communicating"

- Is provided at a high level (eg project / program name). More specific information and detail about the programs and activities identified can be accessed via a range of information sources, including bimonthly program reports, newsletters and the Hunter JO website.
- Is replicated in a number of cases across numerous strategic priorities and directions. This is a direct reflection that many of the projects and initiatives being implemented by the Hunter JO address multiple priorities identified within the Strategic Plan.

Recommendation:

That the Board receive and note the six-monthly progress reports for the Hunter JO Strategic Plan and Communications and Engagement Strategy.

Attachment. Hunter JO Communication Plan Objectives and Outcomes





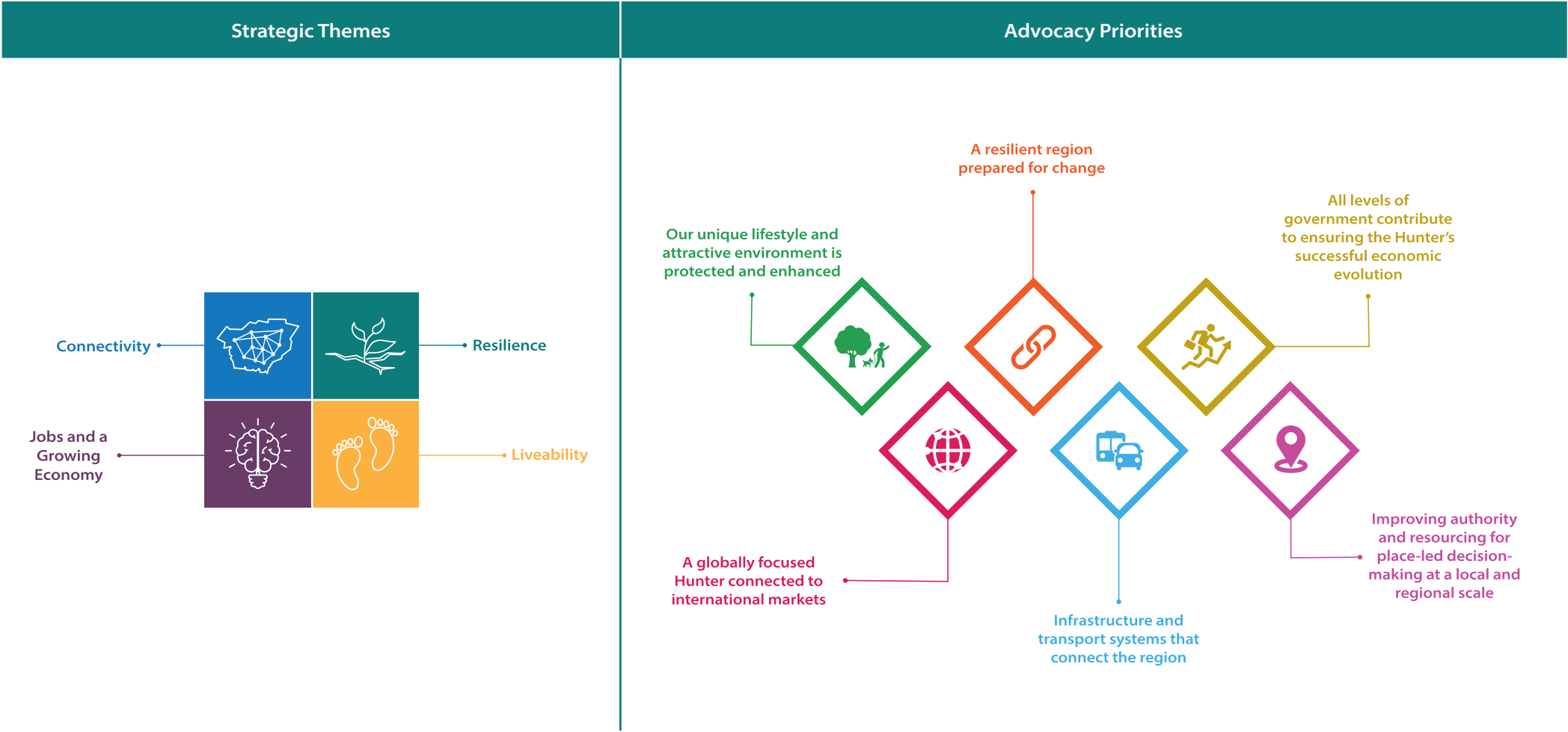
Hunter JO Strategic Plan Implementation Report - June 2023



Hunter JO Strategic Plan Implementation Report - June 2023

<u>Strategic Themes and Advocacy Priorities</u>	1
<u>Connectivity</u>	2
<u>Resilience</u>	4
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<u>Liveability</u>	8
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Strategic Themes and Advocacy Priorities








Connectivity

A globally connected region whose residents enjoy transport and digital infrastructure and systems that enhance their economic and lifestyle opportunities.



Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
1.1 Within the region there is a robust integrated transport solution that underpins the experience/liveability and productivity of its residents and visitors comparable to its global peers.	1.1.1 Support local government having a collective voice in the planning and delivery of major transport infrastructure and systems.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated Regional Transport Strategy included in top five priorities underpinning Hunter JO NSW Election Campaign Advocacy. Integrated Regional Transport Strategy continues to be included in top five advocacy priorities. Included as a priority in engagement with senior Transport for NSW representatives undertaken through GNMP Subcommittee "Roundtable with the Mayors" session delivered April 2023. Arising from this session, collaborative workshop between Mayors, General Managers and Transport for NSW officials currently being planned to identify shared transport outcomes and priorities for the region. Participating in ongoing partnership with regional stakeholders (Business Hunter, Committee for the Hunter, UDIA, Property Council and Dantia), through the Hunter Planning Alliance, to advocate for \$500M Enabling Infrastructure Fund.
	1.1.2 Proactively facilitate collaboration with key state agencies to support delivery of connectivity solutions that suit the regions current and future needs.		
	1.1.4 Support a Regional Integrated Transport Plan linking key services and centres.		
	1.1.3 Support Member Councils to influence other levels of government on a sustainable model for delivery and maintenance of road infrastructure.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road funding reform included in top five priorities underpinning Hunter JO NSW Election Campaign Advocacy. Road funding reform continues to be included in top five advocacy priorities of the Board.
	1.1.5 Identify and facilitate regional approaches for active transport outcomes that deliver connectivity, health, liveability and economic benefits.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Cycling Tourism Strategy (Shiraz to Shore) concept development and Business Case project commenced.
	1.1.6 Private and public transport solutions operate on a net zero basis.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EV Feasibility studies underway with all Member Councils (except Lake Macquarie and Muswellbrook, who have received Destination Charging grants). Councils who are further down the EV path are being assisted with promoting EV chargers to businesses.

Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
1.2 Through its port and airport the Hunter is a globally connected and economically prosperous city-region, recognised as a key international gateway, providing its communities with a vibrant and unique lifestyle and growth in products and services to replace the economic output of thermal coal.	1.2.1 Partnering with airport and port to identify and pursue priority actions to enable access to international markets for the benefit of the region.		Hunter Global Initiative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flightpath to our Future Report (endorsed by Board June 2023) Airports Strategy Business Case (Freight and Logistics) and Strategy project commenced Hunter Global Tourism Project commenced Hunter Global Partners Group (convened by Hunter JO) to facilitate ongoing regional collaboration around the opportunities posed by an international airport in the region.
	1.2.2 Influence government policy to prioritise the importance of access to international markets for the benefit of the region.		
	1.2.3 Leading collaboration in the region between government, industry and community to ensure the benefits of international markets are region wide.		
	1.2.4 Support a transport access strategy for regional connectivity to and from the airport.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated Regional Transport Strategy included in top five priorities underpinning Hunter JO NSW Election Campaign Advocacy. Integrated Regional Transport Strategy continues to be included in top five advocacy priorities of the Board. Included as a priority in engagement with senior Transport for NSW representatives undertaken through GNMP Subcommittee "Roundtable with the Mayors" Session delivered April 2023. Arising from this session, collaborative workshop between Mayors, General Managers and Transport for NSW officials currently being planned to identify shared transport outcomes and priorities for the region.
1.3 Digital connectivity that ensures community access to core services on commuter routes across the region and between Sydney and Newcastle and to enable business development, growth and innovation	1.3.1 Support and encourage investment in equitable and competitive digital connectivity and the elimination of mobile black spots across the region to ensure community access to commuter routes, core health and education opportunities, and to enable business development, growth and innovation.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No advocacy or capacity building programs underway (not resourced).
1.4 A region that is built around sustainable transport options	1.4.1 Embed the direction of net-zero in all our connectivity strategies to provide a pathway and level of confidence to investors and community to support the transition to more sustainable transport outcomes.		Net Zero Acceleration Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EV Feasibility studies currently being coordinated for Hunter JO Member Councils Scoping opportunities underway to progress funding and delivery of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional EV Strategy Assist councils with preparing EV fleet transition plans and implementing EV chargers.





Resilience

We are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks.



Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
2.1 We are recognised as innovative leaders in Council capacity building and policy support for climate change action, resilience and disaster preparedness	2.1.1 We provide guidance and support packages to embed Climate Change action, resilience and disaster preparedness into Councils Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act Now on Coastal Adaptation project • Climate Change IP&R Package • Disaster Risk Reduction project • Simtables for Community Empowerment project • Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resilience IP&R Package - Transport Vulnerability Analysis - Disaster Waste - Disaster Communications - Simtables for community engagement Stage 2.
	2.1.2 We drive council capacity building opportunities supported by an evidence base to improve regional resilience and community awareness.		
	2.1.3 We drive opportunities to collaborate, adopt system thinking and circular economy opportunities to reduce our impact on climate change and increase resilience.	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular Economy Subcommittee • Circular Economy Facilitators Network • Regional Circular Materials Strategy • Hunter & Central Coast Circular Economy Roadmap • Circular Economy Ecosystem project • Hunter Circular website (www.huntercircular.com.au) • Circular Economy Procurement Project • Circular Economy Precincts and Futures Hub Concept Plans and Business Case.

Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
2.2 We take leadership and drive regional best practice in climate action	2.2.1 We lead the way in regional best practice and work with all levels of government to drive policy and strategy on climate change. 2.2.2 Engage and provide thought leadership in local, national and global climate change and resilience networks.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act Now on Coastal Adaptation project • Climate Change IP&R Package • Net Zero Acceleration Program • Hunter Net Zero Network (convened by Hunter JO) • Participation in Hunter Central Coast Coastal Practitioners Network (convened by DPE).
2.3 Our region is resilient to environment risks, natural hazards and climate change	2.3.1 Apply and obtain financial grants for regional programs that support a resilient region. 2.3.2 Facilitate and manage regional programs that support a resilient region.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement (consultation workshop) and submission to the Commonwealth Independent Review into Disaster Funding Arrangements • Act Now on Coastal Adaptation project • Climate Change IP&R Package • Disaster Risk Reduction project • Simtables for Community Empowerment project • Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resilience IP&R Package - Transport Vulnerability Analysis - Disaster Waste - Disaster Communications - Simtables for community engagement Stage 2.



Jobs and a Growing Economy

The Hunter economy continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs.



Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
3.1 Coordinated planning and investment by all levels of government that empowers the region and its residents to maintain and grow jobs, economic opportunities and quality of life	3.1.1 Support a clear, place-based, integrated whole-of-government policy and planning approach to drive the region's economic evolution and jobs of the future.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need for a clear, place-based, integrated whole of government policy and planning approach to drive the region's economic evolution included in top five priorities underpinning Hunter JO NSW Election Campaign Advocacy. This advocacy focus continues to be included in top five advocacy priorities of the Board.
	3.1.2 Support the establishment of an entity that has the authority and resources from the Commonwealth and NSW Government necessary to provide the institutional capacity and expert and empowered, place-based planning and decision-making capability.		
	3.1.3 Support regional institutional capacity to assist businesses and workers impacted by changes in the economy.		
	3.1.4 Drive collaboration to provide clarity, certainty and fairness in land-use policy and regulation as it relates to the use of former industrial and mining land and assets, or where local communities bear the impacts or have restrictions arising from the contribution of that place to broader regional or state benefits.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The urgent need for legislation and policy change to provide clarity, certainty and a clear pathway to enable adaptation and reuse of mining and industrial lands included in top five priorities underpinning Hunter JO NSW Election Campaign Advocacy. This advocacy focus continues to be included in top five advocacy priorities of the Board.
	3.1.5 Support government policy and planning that prioritise the investment into key regional catalyst areas.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Subcommittee, including "Roundtable with the Mayors" designed to facilitate collaborative dialogue with State Agencies to progress action on GNMP priorities, including catalyst areas.
	3.1.6 Support the place-based delivery of Aboriginal partnerships and employment programs in the Hunter.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No advocacy or capacity building programs underway (not currently resourced).

Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
3.2 Accelerated and amplified market driven investment in innovation that capitalises on the region's existing natural strengths and attributes which create jobs in future industries	3.2.1 Support and mature the innovation ecosystem in order to drive commercialisation of ventures and start-ups in the region which will provide growth in future jobs.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunter Venture Fund project and Final Report (endorsed by Hunter JO Board June 2023)
3.3 A globally focused region that drives talent attraction and retention	3.3.1 Support efforts that position the Hunter globally in its areas of competitive and comparative strength.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunter JO staff representation on Hunter Identity & Positioning Strategy Project Working Group and Local Government Reference Groups (convened by Regional NSW & HCCDC).
3.4 A region that is built around Circular Economy principles as a driver of future jobs	3.4.1 Support knowledge sharing and embed Circular Economy principles in our strategies and plans to provide a pathway to future jobs creation in our local supply chains and services. 3.4.2 Support implementation of the Hunter Central Coast Circular Economy Roadmap.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circular Economy Subcommittee Circular Economy Facilitators Network Regional Circular Materials Strategy Hunter & Central Coast Circular Economy Roadmap Circular Economy Ecosystem project Hunter Circular website (www.huntercircular.com.au) Circular Economy Procurement Project Circular Economy Precincts and Futures Hub Concept Plans and Business Case.
3.5 We are recognised as a destination of choice for international and domestic visitors	3.5.1 Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around regional tourism promotion to grow jobs in the region. 3.5.2 Identify opportunities for growth and diversification of employment based in the tourism economy.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunter Global: The Flightpath to our Future Report (endorsed by Board June 2023) Hunter Global Tourism Project Accelerating Event Economies Project.







Liveability

Protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments that we enjoy in our region.



Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
4.1 We are recognised as a destination for hosting world class events that align with our unique offering.	4.1.1 Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around events and tourism. 4.1.2 Identify opportunities for growth and diversification of the regional events and tourism economy.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerating Event Economies Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KPMG Hunter Event Economic Analysis Report - KPMG Event Economic Modelling Tool - KPMG Event Prioritisation and Assessment Framework - Facilities Audit - Event Planning Guide - Event Licencing Recommendations - Consistent Templates for Event Management - Website to promote the region (Events10) - Hunter Event Prospectus - Cross Regional Itineraries - Major Event Feasibility Study • Hunter Global Tourism Project • Hunter Global: The Flightpath to our Future Report (endorsed by Board June 2023).
4.2 Making use of our opportunity to drive circular evolution of our region's economy.	4.2.1 Support meeting our future regional infrastructure and operations for circular outcomes. 4.2.2 Reduce carbon emissions through better waste and materials management.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular Economy Subcommittee • Circular Economy Facilitators Network • Regional Circular Materials Strategy • Hunter & Central Coast Circular Economy Roadmap • Circular Economy Ecosystem project • Hunter Circular website (www.huntercircular.com.au) • Circular Economy Procurement Project • Circular Economy Precincts and Futures Hub Concept Plans and Business Case • Small Acts Big Change Regional Awareness Campaign • Regional Awareness Campaign - Community Recycling Centres.

Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
4.3 Our natural environments including our bushland, estuaries, waterways and beaches are protected and enhanced.	4.3.1 Our Councils are well supported in protecting and enhancing the environment through regional programs, data collection, support resources and capacity building.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act Now on Coastal Adaptation project • Participation in Hunter Central Coast Coastal Practitioners Network (convened by DPE) • Regional Contaminated Land Program • Regional Illegal Dumping Program.
	4.3.2 Provide support and identify opportunities to improve and protect the regional Blue Green Grid.		
	4.3.3 We drive council capacity building opportunities to protect the environment and human health from pollution.		
	4.3.4 Provide support for regional conservation planning to protect regional biodiversity.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning commenced to deliver regional workshop with Member Councils and agencies in September 2023. The forum will explore regional opportunities for collaboration to facilitate a more strategic and coordinated approach toward biodiversity planning, offsets and habitat conservation.
	4.3.5 Provide support and identify opportunities to enhance the health of the region's estuaries and other waterways.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No advocacy or capacity building programs underway (not currently resourced).
4.4 Supporting our region to be on the path to net zero emissions and paving the way with smart innovative solutions that increase liveability.	4.4.1 Provide support and identify opportunities on regional collaboration around Electric Vehicles.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JONZA Net Zero Acceleration Program (Regional Electric Vehicle Strategy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigating funding opportunities - Project scoping - Working towards opportunities to progress development of a Regional EV Strategy - Assisting councils with preparing for EV fleet transition plans and implementing EV chargers.
	4.4.2 Support regional collaboration around clean energy and future energy initiatives and industries.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial engagement completed with Commonwealth Net Zero Economy Taskforce. • JONZA Net Zero Acceleration Program.

Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
4.5 A region with enriched neighbourhoods and places supported by planned infrastructure that promotes community cohesion, active living and pride in culture and heritage.	4.5.1 Support Improved planning outcomes to enhance liveability and lifestyle.		• No advocacy or capacity building programs underway (not currently resourced).
	4.5.2 Support a healthy and active community.		
	4.5.3 Support a safe and accessible society across the region.	Nil	
	4.5.4 Support enhanced cultural opportunities and protected heritage.		
4.6 A region that is connected, inclusive and fair.	4.6.1 Support affordability and increased access to housing.		• No advocacy or capacity building programs underway (not currently resourced).
	4.6.2 Support an increase in the availability of jobs and services closer to people.		

Communications and Engagement Strategy

Methods for Communicating	Activity within reporting period
Websites Providing updates on our website including project updates and latest news.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent updating of website in line with newsletters and other updates (e.g., new projects/grants) • Updated design of Hunter JO website complete including addition of resources page, advocacy page and priorities page. Improved customer journey and usability • Over 20,000 website views.
Newsletters Publishing a corporate newsletter to share updates on our key projects and priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six newsletters distributed with an average open rate of 43%. This is 22% higher than the international average open rate for email marketing • Changed newsletter delivery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisation update newsletters to be delivered every two months (rather than monthly) - Alternating months we deliver a 'thought-leadership' newsletter focusing on different topics with the aim of being seen as leaders and an authoritative source among our target audience on topics key to the function of the Hunter JO. To add value and generate further opportunities to demonstrate the significance of the Hunter JO in the region - Inclusion of a Board Member Spotlight in which we feature a different Mayor to raise their profile and highlight the collaboration of the organisation.
Social Media Posting social media updates that link to our programs as well as the website and newsletters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 114% increase on social media followers from beginning of the reporting period • 28,141 impressions (post views) on LinkedIn • Development of an updated social media strategy underway.
Traditional Media Communicating with traditional media outlets about key milestones and successes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nine stories covered across 17 publications within the reporting period • Development of a media and profiling framework and updated media list underway • Internal capacity building around building media relations undertaken.
Meetings and Events Hosting or attending meetings and events that are relevant to our strategic priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted eight regional events • Twelve parliamentary/government meetings/engagements • Fifteen additional strategic engagements • Either host or participate in almost 50 networks and committees.
Presentations and Publications Providing updates in the form of presentations and publications on the progress of our strategic priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bimonthly program status report • Four additional publications/reports published online.
Direct Distributions Sending direct distributions on the progress of our strategic priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three Email Direct Marketing (EDMs) distributions sent to 1720 recipients.



4 Sandringham Ave, Thornton, NSW, 2322
02 4978 4020 • admin@hunterjo.com.au
www.hunterjo.com.au

Report Authors: Steve Wilson, Director Hunter JO

Responsible Officer: Steve Wilson, Director Hunter JO

Background

For over two decades the Councils of the Hunter & Central Coast area have been collaborating to deliver improved environmental outcomes for our region. Having achieved significant results, the Environment Program continues to represent a primary component of the body of work being delivered by the Hunter JO. The projects that fall under the Environment Program contribute directly to the delivery of a number of the regional strategic priorities identified in the Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032.

Key focus areas for the Environment Program currently include:

- Climate Adaptation
- Disaster Resilience
- Net Zero Acceleration
- Circular Economy
- Regional Waste Management
- Regional Illegal Dumping
- Contaminated Land

The funds that are invested by Councils into the Environment Program directly support and contribute to the core operating costs of the Hunter JO, underpinning the attraction and management of a wide range of environmentally focused grant projects. The benefits these projects provide to Member Councils and their communities is significant, as is the return on each Council's annual investment in the program (which collectively contributes around \$300k per annum).

Attachment 14 includes the annual information report that will be circulated to staff across Hunter JO Member Councils and Central Coast Council to detail the progress and outcomes generated from the Environment Program during the 2022/23 financial year.

Recommendation:

That the Board receive and note the annual Environment Program report.



Hunter and Central Coast Environment Program

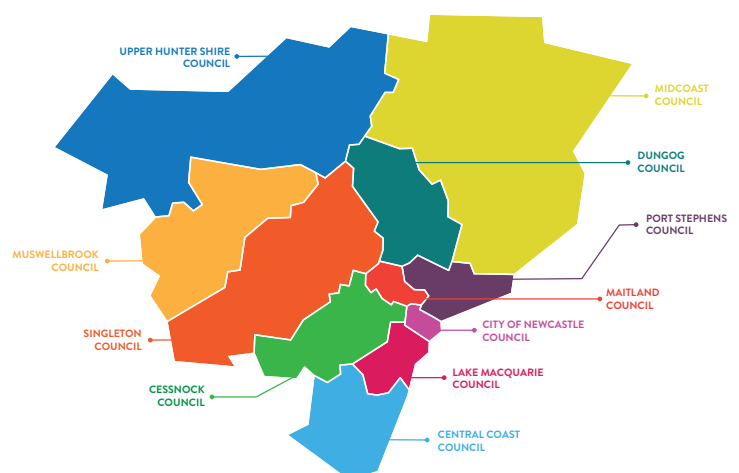
For over two decades the Councils of the Hunter & Central Coast area have been collaborating to deliver improved environmental outcomes for our region. Having achieved significant results, the Environment Program continues to represent a primary component of the body of work being delivered by the Hunter JO.

The projects that fall under the Environment Program contribute directly to the delivery of a number of the regional strategic priorities identified in the [Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032](#), implementation of which is overseen by the Hunter JO Board, comprising the ten Mayors of the Hunter region.

Key focus areas for the Environment Program currently include:

- Climate Adaptation
- Disaster Resilience
- Net Zero Acceleration
- Circular Economy
- Regional Waste Management
- Regional Illegal Dumping
- Contaminated Land

The funds that are invested by Councils into the Environment Program directly support and contribute to the core operating costs of the Hunter JO, underpinning the attraction and management of a wide range of environmentally focused grant projects.



The benefits these projects provide to Member Councils and their communities is significant, as is the return on each Council's annual investment in the program (which collectively contributes around \$300k per annum). The nature and value of projects currently being delivered can be seen in the following table.

Program Delivery

Projects being delivered with the support of the Environment Program include:

Strategic Themes*	Project	Total Grant Value	Purpose
● ●	Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework	\$300,000	To support Member Councils embed resilience principles and projects into their Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R), in order to support their ability to allocate recurrent funds and commit to long term resourcing (financial and staff) for resilience projects.
● ●	Act Now on Coastal Adaptation	\$120,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Package which embeds resilience to Climate Change into Councils operations through incorporation into the overarching IP&R documents. • Provide a coastal adaptation communication framework, media templates and suite of practical resources to directly build the capacity of the coastal councils of the Hunter and Central Coast. • Build capacity within Councils to reduce risks, increase resilience and reduce climate vulnerability by collaboratively building community understanding and literacy around coastal management and adaptation issues and bridging the gap between the IP&R framework and prioritisation of Climate Change resilience.
● ● ●	Disaster Risk Reduction	\$1,493,856	<p>To facilitate place-based regional collaboration across four sub projects to empower Councils and communities in the regional to reduce disaster risk through early action. The focus of the sub-projects includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Support and Capacity Building - embedding disaster resilience into Council operations and building capacity to communicate disaster resilience to local communities. • Disaster waste management and resource recovery preparedness - assisting Councils to plan place-based solutions for effective disaster waste management and resource recovery systems • Delivering a regional transport vulnerability and connectivity assessment and mitigation plan • Continued refinement and expansion of the use of Simtables regionally for multi-hazard disaster engagement
● ●	Simtables for Community Empowerment	\$300,000	Simtables provide a “State of the Art” tool that can be used to engage communities in localised place-based emergency information sessions. This project has purchased two Simtables for the collective use of Member Councils and is providing direct support to Councils in undertaking the extensive community engagement associated with their use.
● ●	Circular Economy Procurement	\$30,000	To support Councils to prioritise recycled materials and circular economy services in their procurement systems and processes, and to collaborate with the Hunter JO and other participating councils to develop a common framework for a joint regional procurement of recycled materials.

*Strategic Themes from the Hunter JO Strategic Plan



CONNECTIVITY



RESILIENCE



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GROWING ECONOMY



LIVEABILITY

Program Delivery

Projects being delivered with the support of the Environment Program include:

Strategic Themes*	Project	Total Grant Value	Purpose
● ●	Circular Economy Eco-System	\$92,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide and improve circular economy communication for all circular economy eco-system participants in the Hunter and Central Coast • Build circular economy knowledge through education and capacity building opportunities for Hunter JO member councils and Central Coast Council • Develop and improve circular economy data and analytics systems for use by all circular economy eco-system participants in the Hunter and Central Coast.
● ●	Circular Economy Precincts and Futures Hub	\$878,600	<p>To deliver concept plans and business cases for four multi-element circular economy precincts, that would each represent a key part of the Hunter. Project outputs will outline the potential for circular processing, renewable energy production and value-added businesses, delivering diversified employment opportunities and new industries to the region. Key project deliverables will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A concept plan and strategy for Circular Economy Precincts, including an Anaerobic Digestion component for the circular processing of organics and biogas or energy production for the precinct. • A concept plan and strategy for establishing a Circular Economy Futures Hub.
●	Regional Illegal Dumping Program	\$2,668,341	<p>To support Member Councils manage illegal dumping by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering a regional approach to target illegal dumping • Employing skilled officers to undertake compliance action against illegal dumpers • Undertaking proactive measures to prevent illegal dumping • Targeting problematic and complex illegal dumping incidents. • Increasing capacity to target problematic and complex illegal dumping incidents.
●	Small Acts Big Change	\$180,000	To deliver a regional communication campaign to improve community waste avoidance behaviours at the top end of the waste management hierarchy, along with reuse and recycling habits.
●	Community Recycling Centres	\$98,095	To deliver a regionally coordinated approach to promoting community awareness of Community Recycling Centres (CRC's).

*Strategic Themes from the Hunter JO Strategic Plan



CONNECTIVITY



RESILIENCE

















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GROWING ECONOMY



LIVEABILITY

Program Delivery

Projects being delivered with the support of the Environment Program include:

Strategic Themes*	Project	Total Grant Value	Purpose
   	Net Zero Acceleration	\$155,000	To support Member Councils reduce their carbon emissions to achieve their part in the State's Net Zero target of 50 per cent reduction by 2030 and Net Zero by 2050. This includes employing a staff member dedicated to progressing the JO and its member councils toward net zero emissions, and to provide a link to other NSW government support mechanisms.
 	Landfill Emissions Data Management Program	\$199,650	To establish a landfill emission data management program for councils to assist in understanding their baseline landfill emissions, and building a model data management framework and tools to support the collation and interpretation of landfill emission data.
 	Hunter Circular Knowledge Hub	\$293,469	To create and pilot a digital circular knowledge hub for two distinct user groups – for council staff, and for the community at large. The aim is to address the information accessibility and knowledge barriers that prevail and frustrate uptake of circular services and recovery pathways in the region. By creating tools to broaden participation, these solutions will be supported to scale and increase their impact. The project will gather information on services and solutions available in the region, then deploy tools that will present that information in a user-friendly format designed specifically for that group's needs.
 	Hospitality Circularity Network	\$500,000	The project seeks to engage hospitality SMEs across the region, to build their capacity to evaluate and adopt circular solutions for their business operations and supply chains, focusing on organics and single use items. The project will also seek to create or strengthen existing business networks and assist them to collaborate and co design practical solutions that benefit from network efficiency and scale.
 	Regional Waste Coordination	\$220,822	To facilitate collaborative implementation of the Hunter and Central Coast Regional Circular Materials Strategy (2022-2027) and Annual Action Plan.
 	Contaminated Land Program	\$736,000	To build capacity and capability within Member Councils to manage contaminated sites on private and council managed land, and to support Councils transition to their new role as regulator of the Underground Petroleum Storage System (UPSS) Regulation.
TOTAL:		\$8,265,833	

*Strategic Themes from the Hunter JO Strategic Plan



CONNECTIVITY



RESILIENCE



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GROWING ECONOMY



LIVEABILITY

Report Author: Steve Wilson, Director Hunter JO

Responsible Officer: Joe James, CEO

The Program Status Report included in Attachment 15 provides the Board with an “at-a-glance” overview of the range of operational projects currently being delivered by the Hunter JO. Key information provided by the report includes:

1. Alignment of each project to the strategic themes included in the Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032
2. Project name
3. Source of project funding
4. Status of project delivery in relation to project schedule, resourcing and scope
5. Scheduled delivery date.
6. A brief update where any impacts on project schedule, resourcing and scope are being experienced.

Further detail on each of the projects being delivered is included in the August 2023 Program Report provided in Attachment 16.

Recommendation: That the report be received and noted.

7.8 Regional NSW Standing Update

No update to be provided to the August 2023 Hunter JO Board Meeting, due to staffing change within Regional NSW.

Regional Programs and Capacity Building

Program Status Report - August 2023										
Strategic Themes			Project	Funding	Schedule	Resourcing	Scope	Delivery Date	Updates by Exception	
CONNECTIVITY										
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Cycle Tourism Strategy (Shiraz to Shore)	Grant				31-03-2024		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Airports Strategy (Freight and Logistics)	Grant				31-03-2024		
RESILIENCE										
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework	Grant				15-12-2023		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Act Now on Coastal Adaptation	Grant				30-09-2023		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Disaster Risk Reduction	Grant				30-06-2024		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Simtables for Community Empowerment	Grant				1-06-2023		
JOBS AND A GROWING ECONOMY										
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Circular Economy Eco-System	Grant				30-06-2024		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Circular Precincts and Futures Hub	Grant				31-03-2024		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Hunter Circular Knowledge Hub	Grant				31-12-2024		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Hospitality Circularity Project	Grant				31-03-2026		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Hunter Global Tourism	Grant				31-03-2024		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Priority Infrastructure List	Hunter JO				30-06-2024		
LIVEABILITY										
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Accelerating Event Economies	Grant				31-12-2023		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Illegal Dumping Program	Grant				31-03-2027		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Small Acts Big Change	Grant				30-06-2023		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Community Recycling Centres	Grant				30-06-2024		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Net Zero Acceleration	Grant				30-06-2024		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Landfill Emissions Data Project	Grant				30-06-2024		
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>			Contaminated Land Program	Grant				15-12-2023		

ON TRACK

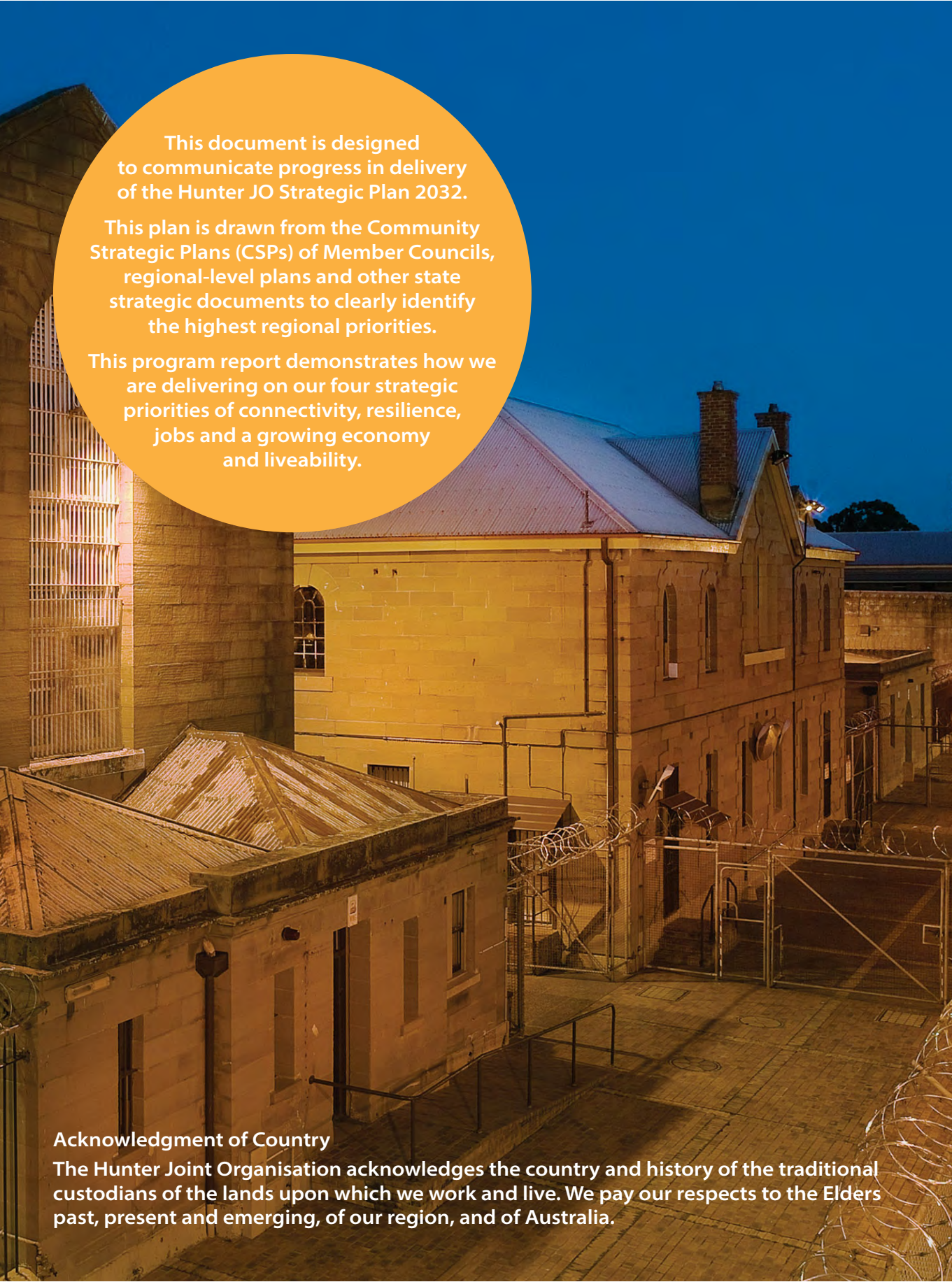
MODERATE IMPACT

CRITICAL IMPACT

COMPLETED



Hunter JO Program Report August 2023



This document is designed to communicate progress in delivery of the Hunter JO Strategic Plan 2032.

This plan is drawn from the Community Strategic Plans (CSPs) of Member Councils, regional-level plans and other state strategic documents to clearly identify the highest regional priorities.

This program report demonstrates how we are delivering on our four strategic priorities of connectivity, resilience, jobs and a growing economy and liveability.

Acknowledgment of Country
The Hunter Joint Organisation acknowledges the country and history of the traditional custodians of the lands upon which we work and live. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, of our region, and of Australia.

For all enquiries please contact Hunter Joint Organisation on 02 4978 4020 or email rppd@hunterjo.com.au.
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Who we are

The Hunter Joint Organisation (Hunter JO) is a collaborative body that brings together the ten councils in the region to provide a united and local voice for our communities. As the hub for local intergovernmental collaboration, our statutory mandate includes identifying key regional strategic priorities, advocating for these priorities, and building collaborations around these priorities with other levels of government, industry and community.

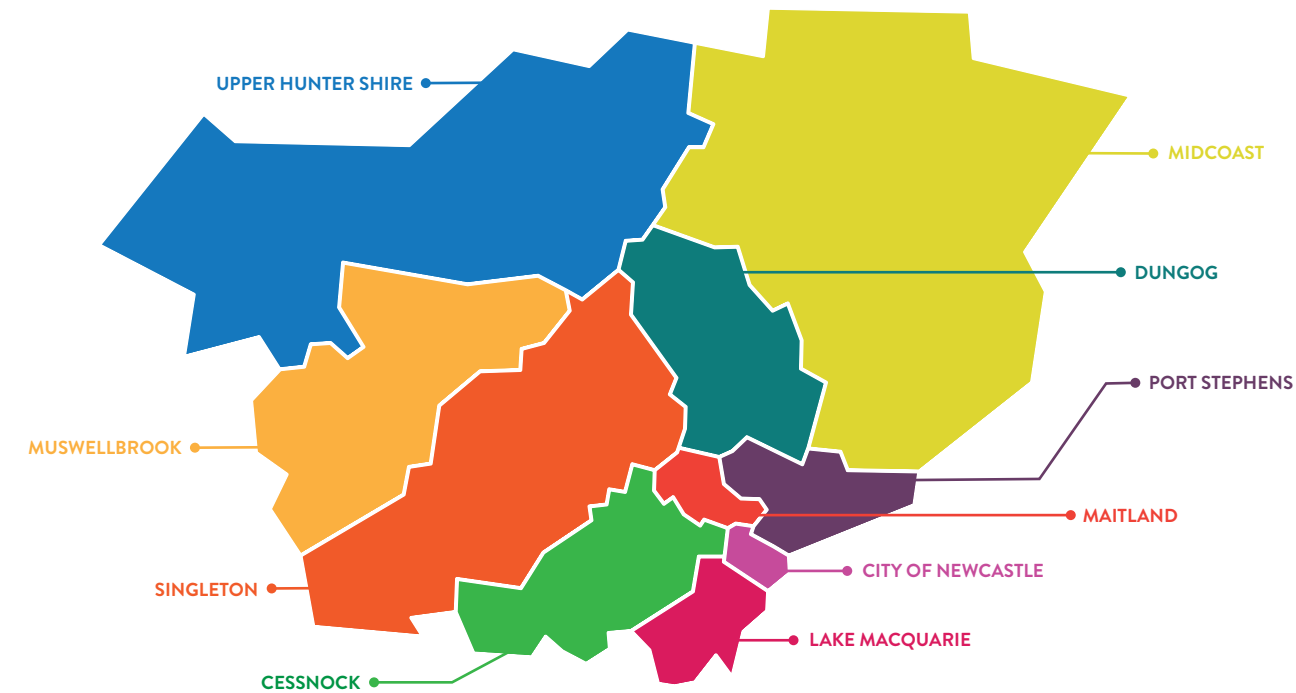
Our statutory functions defined by the NSW Local Government Amendment (Regional Joint Organisations) Act 2017 comprise:

Strategic Planning and Priority Setting
 To establish strategic regional priorities for the Joint Organisation area and to establish strategies and plans for delivering those strategic regional priorities.

Regional Leadership and Advocacy
 To provide regional leadership for the joint organisation area and to be an advocate for strategic regional priorities.

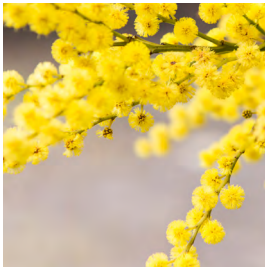
Intergovernmental Collaboration
 To identify and take up opportunities for intergovernmental co-operation on matters relating to the Joint Organisation area.

The Hunter Joint Organisation (JO) is a collaborative body that brings together the ten Councils in the region to provide a united and local voice for our communities.



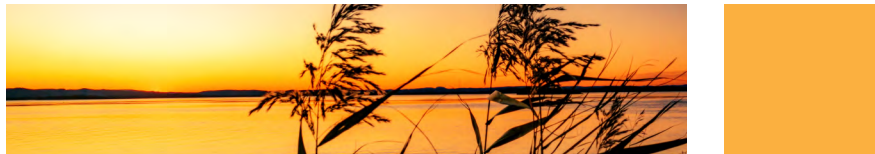
Our Vision

- We are a Region that:
- Is globally connected and whose residents enjoy transport and digital infrastructure and systems that enhance their economic and lifestyle opportunities;
 - Is prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks;
 - Has an economy that continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs; and
 - Will protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments.



Our Mission

As the hub for local intergovernmental collaboration, we strengthen our communities by being the local voice on strategic issues in the Hunter Region.



Our Board

The Hunter JO Board is made up of members from each of our member councils, with each Mayor as a voting representative, and the General Managers of each of the councils in a non-voting capacity.

Our Board also includes a representative from NSW Government.



Cr Jay Suvaal
Mayor Cessnock City Council



Cr John Connors
Mayor Dungog Shire Council



Cr Kay Fraser
Mayor Lake Macquarie City Council



Cr Philip Penfold
Mayor Maitland City Council



Cr Claire Pontin
Mayor MidCoast Council



Cr Steven Reynolds
Mayor Muswellbrook Shire Council



Cr Nuatali Nelmes
Lord Mayor City of Newcastle



Cr Ryan Palmer
Mayor Port Stephens Council



Cr Maurice Collison
Mayor Upper Hunter Shire Council



Cr Sue Moore
Mayor Singleton Council

Our Team

Joe James	CEO, Hunter Joint Organisation	0405 217 249 ceo@hunterjo.com.au
Louisa Bulley	Executive Officer	0413 891 320 louisab@hunterjo.com.au
Steve Wilson	Director Hunter Joint Organisation	0448 401 436 steve@hunterjo.com.au
Tim Askew	Director of Programs	0436 420 623 tima@hunterjo.com.au
Eloise Lobsey	Program Lead - Circular Economy	0448 160 800 eloisel@hunterjo.com.au
Kim Carland	Program Lead	0408 051 705 kimc@hunterjo.com.au
Anna Flack	Senior Projects Coordinator	0460 038 199 annaf@hunterjo.com.au
Chris Dart	Senior Projects Coordinator	0460 038 197 chrisd@hunterjo.com.au
Susan Conway MacDonald	Senior Project Officer	(02) 4978 4028 susanm@hunterjo.com.au
Stephanie Reilly	Project Officer - Circular Economy	0428 981 012 stephanier@hunterjo.com.au
Janine Chandler	Regional Project Officer	0477 398 250 janinec@hunterjo.com.au
Kerri Watson	Project Coordinator - Problem Waste	0475 824 662 kerriw@hunterjo.com.au
Lexi Crouch	Project Coordinator - Net Zero	0483 393 584 lexic@hunterjo.com.au
Barbora Michalidesova	Finance and Systems Coordinator	0400 087 133 barboram@hunterjo.com.au
Kali Somerville	Media and Communications Officer	0429 564 111 kalis@hunterjo.com.au
Carissa Norton	Graphic Designer	0457 049 878 carissan@hunterjo.com.au
Bonnie Gradwell	Administration and Events Officer	0400 063 502 bonnieg@hunterjo.com.au



Our priorities represent the **aligned regional interests of the region's ten councils** and the directions of the region's ten democratically elected Mayors.



Our Priorities

Our Strategic Themes	
	Connectivity - A globally connected region whose residents enjoy transport and digital infrastructure and systems that enhance their economic and lifestyle opportunities.
	Resilience - We are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks.
	Jobs and a Growing Economy - The Hunter economy continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs.
	Liveability - Protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments that we enjoy in our Region.

*Refer to [Appendix](#) for our full list of Strategic Directions and Objectives.

Our Advocacy Priorities	
	Our unique lifestyle and attractive environment is protected and enhanced.
	A resilient region prepared for change.
	All levels of government contribute to ensuring the Hunter's successful economic evolution.
	A globally focused Hunter connected to international markets.
	Infrastructure and transport systems that connect the region.
	Improving authority and resourcing for place-led decision-making at a local and regional scale.



Intergovernmental Collaboration

Hunter JO Workshops, Forums and Events

Textiles Circularity Think Tank	<p>This event brought together stakeholders across the textile value chain to explore gaps and opportunities for greater circularisation of textiles in the Hunter region. Thirty-five stakeholders from across local councils, industries and the Hunter JO participated.</p> <p>20 June 2023</p>
Events10 Conference	<p>The focus of this event was to create connections, build networks and receive an overview and summary of all the tools, resources and information that is now available to the events industry in the Hunter through the work completed under the Accelerating Events Economies Program. The event also included the formal launch of the Events10 website.</p> <p>26 July 2023</p>

Existing Standing Engagements - Convened by Hunter JO and Local Government

Disaster Waste Management & Resource Recovery Preparedness Working Group	<p>This inaugural meeting of the group focused on the scope and boundaries of the new Disaster Waste Management & Resource Recovery component of the Disaster Risk Reduction project. This work will focus on the opportunities to collaborate in preparing and responding to the waste generated by natural disasters.</p> <p>Convened by: Hunter JO 29 May 2023</p>
Regional Resilience Program Advisory Committee (RRPAC)	<p>Monthly RRPAC meetings of this group facilitate regular updates between the NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA) and Joint Organisations on how JOs are tracking with project delivery and reporting, and to provide progress updates from the various cross JO working groups. Discussions at the most recent meeting included potential project delays and the need to complete project variations (not relevant for Hunter JO). Emerging issues included transport vulnerability work already being undertaken by Transport for NSW and likely overlaps with similar works proposed by JOs across the State under the current funding program.</p> <p>Convened by: Canberra Region Joint Organisation Monthly</p>

Existing Standing Engagements - Convened by Hunter JO and Local Government	
Circular Economy Facilitators Group	<p>The focus of this meeting was the quarterly Circular Economy Roadmap session. Project identification and alignment workshopping was undertaken to inform and update of the Roadmap via the Hunter Circular website (digital hub).</p> <p>Convened by: Hunter JO 30 June 2023</p>
Contaminated Land Working Group	<p>The focus of this meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular recurring agenda items (EPA funding, recent asset managers training, Council visits, Service Desk update). Update on the LGNSW Asbestos Network (provided by Mal Hunter, Dungog Shire Council) An overview of some of Maitland's contaminated land portfolio and its unique challenges, including the Anambah Landfill, Webland St, Gasworks, Maitland Gaol and Walka Waterworks (provided by Mal Adrienm, Maitland City Council) An update from City of Newcastle on improvements to their contaminated land information system. Council roundtable, with a focus on PFAS and legacy landfills, which will be the topic for the next working group meeting. <p>Convened by: Hunter JO 31 May 2023</p>
Regional Waste Managers Network (Regional Waste Strategy Group)	<p>The focus of this quarterly meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action planning for this year's implementation of the Regional Circular Materials Strategy. An overview of the Illawarra Shoalhaven JO Regional Illegal Dumping Program, provided by James Vincent - Regional Illegal Dumping Prevention Coordinator with ISJO. <p>Convened by: Hunter JO 6 July 2023</p>
Sustainability Educators Group	<p>Key focus areas for the meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good for the Hood program B-cycle training that will be implemented in a number of our councils. CRC education and communication plan evaluation survey Discussion of the purpose and goals of the Sustainability Educators Group. <p>Convened by: Hunter JO 10 July 2023</p>

Existing Standing Engagements - Convened by Hunter JO and Local Government	
Hunter Net Zero Network	<p>This second meeting of the Network was attended by 17 representatives from across 10 councils. Its focus included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing an overview of the purpose of the Network. Presenting the draft Project Management Plan for consultation, feedback and advice. Providing an overview of the Landfill Emissions Project, and an update on the EV chargers feasibility study. Discussion on the ARENA Community Batteries EOI with officers from the four participating councils (Maitland, Cessnock, MidCoast and Singleton). <p>Convened by: Hunter JO 28 June 2023</p>
Simtables JO Group	<p>Regular meetings of this group provides the opportunity to share learnings from individual Simtable focused projects being delivered by the Hunter JO, Noosa Council, Ku-ring-gai Council, Mid North Coast JO, and Canberra Region JO. Meetings will continue for the next 12 months, as we continue to extend application and use of the Simtables through the Disaster Risk Reduction project.</p> <p>Convened by: Hunter JO Monthly</p>
Regional SDGs Dashboard Project	<p>While no meeting of the project group occurred during the reporting period, an email update has been provided following queries from Member Councils. This has confirmed that the Sustainability Advantage / UON team have quality checked the data and are currently developing a dashboard and uploading the data. They have indicated more information will be available in July/August.</p> <p>Convened by: Sustainability Advantage / University of Newcastle</p>
Hunter Resilience Network	<p>All 11 Councils (Hunter JO Member Councils and Central Coast Council) participated and engaged heavily in this inaugural meeting of the Hunter Resilience Network. Participants represented a range of Council functions including business continuity, LEMO's, strategic planning and community engagement. The focus of the meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of the Network An overview of current regional resilience projects being led by the Hunter JO. An extensive Council Roundtable session identifying what each Council is currently working on in the resilience space and where they see the biggest opportunities for building regional resilience. A follow up survey has also been disseminated to confirm priorities and directions for moving forward. The next scheduled meeting of the network is 20 July, at which briefings from Andrew Codrington (REMO) and the NSW Reconstruction Authority will be provided. <p>Convened by: Hunter JO 18 May 2023</p>

Existing Standing Engagements - Convened by Hunter JO and Local Government	
IP&R Network	<p>Lake Macquarie Council provided an update on the LG Professionals Integrated Planners Network, including service review training sessions. Enquiries are being made to canvass the potential for a training session to be delivered in Newcastle. Council roundtable session discussed service review reporting, annual reports, strategies and plans registers, progress on Delivery Programs and Operational Plans, and staff changes.</p> <p>Convened by: Lake Macquarie City Council 31 May 2023</p>
NSW JO Chairs Network	<p>The Chair, CEO and Director Hunter JO participated in this meeting, which included briefings from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hon Ron Hoenig, Minister for Local Government • LGNSW (Red Fleet, Emergency Services Levy, IPART Review) • ALGA (\$100M Climate Fund, Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding Arrangements, Federal Assistance Grants, Commonwealth review of Regional Development Authorities) <p>Other agenda items included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates on cross Joint Organisation delivery of projects (Net Zero Acceleration, Disaster Resilience and Contaminated Lands) • Grant funding - shared challenges and opportunities across the NSW Joint Organisation Network (prepared by the Hunter JO) • Progress on the OLG Joint Organisation Review - outcomes and recommendations from the joint “Financial sustainability and boundaries” working group <p>Convened by: Canberra Region Joint Organisation 29 June 2023</p>

Existing Standing Engagements - Convened by Others	
Contaminated Land CRCB Officers Group	<p>Recent discussions have focused on wrapping up the contaminated land program and establishing a LGNSW Contaminated Land webpage and online network to be managed by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (to be confirmed). Development of a Contaminated Land podcast series continues, with the first interviews with Anna Lundmark (StellaNord Consulting) and Peter Brennan (Singleton Council) now live.</p> <p>Convened by: NSW Environment Protection Authority Monthly</p>
Hunter Central Coast CMP Practitioners Roundtable	<p>The Hunter JO continues to participate in the Roundtable. The focus of the most recent meeting included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunter JO provided an update on the Coastal and Estuary Support package • Foreshore and waterway development (provided by Lake Macquarie Council) • The impacts of the recent East Coast Low (provided by Department of Planning and Environment) • Flood debris clean up (provided by NSW Environment Protection Authority) <p>Convened by: Department of Planning and Environment NSW 25 May 2023</p>
State and Regional Waste Managers Network	<p>Metro and RENEW Regional Waste Coordination networks met with the NSW EPA Partnerships Team. Key discussions involved the results of the LGNSW waste survey, as well as a workshop on the regional coordination program.</p> <p>Convened by: NSW Environment Protection Authority 26 June 2023</p>
Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration	<p>Weekly meetings with the JONZA Managers and OECC Sustainable Councils team continue. Recent discussion has focused predominantly around the ARENA Community Battery EOI bids. The Network is very collaborative. A knowledge sharing session on tariff reviews for councils has been organised for July.</p> <p>Convened by: Office of Energy and Climate Change Weekly</p>

Additional Strategic Engagements - Convened by Others	
Hunter Planning Alliance	<p>A briefing was provided by Transport for NSW representatives to the Hunter Planning Alliance. The briefing provided an overview of the key shifts in the approach of the new NSW Government to the Transport portfolio including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A move away from centralised mega projects and an increased focus on more widely spread smaller projects that increase access and equity to transport options for communities across NSW – this includes a greater emphasis on public transport • A clear direction for a more integrated approach to transport planning for the region • A 90-day review of current priority transport projects is currently underway to determine which will continue to proceed and which won't. <p>Convened by: Urban Development Institute of Australia NSW 31 May 2023</p>
Commonwealth Disaster Funding Review - consultation session	<p>The Hunter JO were invited to participate, along with Central West JO and LGNSW, in this targeted consultation session delivered by Deloitte's as part of the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding. The session focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of local government in disaster • Understanding the usefulness and accessibility of supports • Data needs <p>The session provided the opportunity to communicate the key issues and priorities identified by Member Councils through recent "Resilience Health Checks" facilitated by the Hunter JO, and those priorities articulated in the Hunter JO Strategic Plan and Advocacy Priorities.</p> <p>Convened by: Deloitte 5 July 2023</p>

Regional Programs and Capacity Building

Program Status Report				
Strategic Themes		Project	Funding	Delivery Date
CONNECTIVITY				
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Cycle Tourism Strategy (Shiraz to Shore)	Grant	31-03-2024
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Airports Strategy (Freight and Logistics)	Grant	31-03-2024
RESILIENCE				
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework	Grant	15-12-2023
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Act Now on Coastal Adaptation	Grant	30-09-2023
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Disaster Risk Reduction	Grant	30-06-2024
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Simtables for Community Empowerment	Grant	01-06-2023
JOBS AND A GROWING ECONOMY				
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Circular Economy Eco-System	Grant	30-06-2024
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Circular Precincts and Futures Hub	Grant	31-03-2024
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Hunter Circular Knowledge Hub	Grant	30-06-2023
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Hospitality Circularity Project	Grant	31-03-2026
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Hunter Global Tourism	Grant	31-03-2024
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Priority Infrastructure List	Hunter JO	30-06-2024
LIVEABILITY				
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Accelerating Event Economies	Grant	31-12-2023
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Illegal Dumping Program	Grant	31-03-2027
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Small Acts Big Change	Grant	30-06-2023
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Community Recycling Centres	Grant	30-06-2024
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Net Zero Acceleration	Grant	30-06-2024
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Landfill Emissions Data Project	Grant	30-06-2024
<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		Contaminated Land Program	Grant	15-12-2023



Connectivity

A globally connected region whose residents enjoy transport and digital infrastructure and systems that enhance their economic and lifestyle opportunities.

Objectives - Where do we want to be?

- 1.1** Within the region there is a robust integrated transport solution that underpins the experience/liveability and productivity of its residents and visitors comparable to its global peers.
- 1.2** Through its port and airport the Hunter is a globally connected and economically prosperous city-region, recognised as a key international gateway, providing its communities with a vibrant and unique lifestyle and growth in products and services to replace the economic output of thermal coal.
- 1.3** Digital connectivity that ensures community access to core services on commuter routes across the region and between Sydney and Newcastle and to enable business development, growth and innovation.
- 1.4** A region that is built around sustainable transport outcomes.

Cycle Tourism Strategy (Shiraz to Shore)

Purpose	Status Update
Significant opportunity exists to link existing and planned cycleway infrastructure across Hunter JO member Councils; to create an integrated region wide network. This would provide both a valuable region wide recreational resource for residents, and the foundation upon which to generate economic and business development by holistically promoting the region as a key cycling destination. The purpose of this project is to prepare and implement a cycle tourism masterplan / Destination Management Plan for the region.	The consultancies Destination Marketing Store and TRC Consulting have been formally engaged to deliver this Business Case project. To date stakeholder engagement and planning meetings have been held with Cessnock, Newcastle and Lake Macquarie City Councils, and with Parks NSW, Dept of Regional NSW and Crown Lands NSW.
Strategic Directions	1.1.2, 1.1.5, 1.4.1, 4.1.2

Airports Strategy (Freight and Logistics)

Purpose	Status Update
To develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none">A strategy and business case for airfreight and passenger infrastructure and connectivity logistics for the region.An integrated airports strategy for the region including assessments of passenger, airfreight and transport links across the region.	The preferred consultant PricewaterhouseCoopers has been engaged to deliver the project, with the project inception meeting held Friday 7 July 2023. An initial stakeholder list has been identified and representatives contacted from all Member Councils, each of the five regional airports, business associations and relevant government agencies.
Strategic Directions	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3





Resilience

We are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks.

Objectives - Where do we want to be?

2.1 We are recognised as innovative leaders in Council capacity building and policy support for climate change action, resilience and disaster preparedness.	2.2 We take leadership and drive regional best practice in climate action.	2.3 Our region is resilient to environment risks, natural hazards and climate change.
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Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework

Purpose	Status Update
To support Member Councils embed resilience principles and projects into their Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IP&R), in order to support their ability to allocate recurrent funds and commit to long term resourcing (financial and staff) for resilience projects.	A request to vary the completion date for this project by 6 months until 15 December 2023 has been approved by the funding authority. A draft resilience IP&R Package summary document has been completed and a consultant engaged to refine and complete the package during August/September 2023. An Expression of Interest is currently in preparation to identify a consultant to support and facilitate the delivery of the Resilience Games with Member Councils.
Strategic Directions	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2

Act Now on Coastal Adaptation

Purpose	Status Update
The objectives of this project are to: 1. Develop an Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Package which embeds resilience to Climate Change into Councils operations through incorporation into the overarching IP&R documents. 2. Provide a coastal adaptation communication framework, media templates and suite of practical resources to directly build the capacity of the coastal councils of the Hunter and Central Coast. 3. Build capacity within Councils to reduce risks, increase resilience and reduce climate vulnerability by collaboratively building community understanding and literacy around coastal management and adaptation issues and bridging the gap between the IP&R framework and prioritisation of Climate Change resilience.	All deliverables have now been provided by the consultant and positive engagement on these completed via an update to the Hunter Central Coast Coastal Practitioners Network. Hunter JO are in the process of compiling all components for graphic design which is scheduled to be complete in August.
Strategic Directions	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.2.1, 4.3.1

Disaster Risk Reduction

Purpose	Status Update
To facilitate place-based regional collaboration across four sub projects to empower Councils and communities in the region to reduce disaster risk through early action. The focus of the sub-projects includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Regional Support and Capacity Building - embedding disaster resilience into Council operations and building capacity to communicate disaster resilience to local communities.Disaster waste management and resource recovery preparedness - assisting Councils to plan place-based solutions for effective disaster waste management and resource recovery systemsDelivering a regional transport vulnerability and connectivity assessment and mitigation planContinued refinement and expansion of the use of Simtables regionally for multi-hazard disaster engagement	Extensive ongoing collaboration is occurring with the NSW JO network and NSW Reconstruction Authority (RA) through the establishment stage, with regular topic specific meetings each month. The Hunter JO team required to deliver the project is now fully onboard and all 4 sub-projects have commenced. Key activities to date include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Hunter Resilience Network established involving all Hunter JO Member Councils and Central Coast Council which first met on 18 May. Extensive discussion will be followed up by a feedback survey to inform future work and priorities. The next meeting is scheduled for 20 July at which REMO Andrew Codrington and Hunter Central Coast NSW RA representatives will provide an overview of the emergency management framework and the role of the RA.Ongoing engagement with Councils and other stakeholders, including a whole team IP&R workshop and Statewide Mutual Flood Road Management workshop in July.Commencement of the next stage of community engagement using Simtables, which will expand the focus of community engagement from bushfires (under the previous project concluded 1 June 2023) to a broader all hazards approach. Key deliverables as at 10 July 2023 include:<ul style="list-style-type: none">4 Simtable workshops5 Simtable training sessions or demonstrations2 Simtable loansSimtable working group established (Council staff)Flood mapping purchased for use in Simtable workshops.Data acquired for each LGA through the Emergency Services Spatial Information Library (ESSIL).Joint Organisation DRRF Technology Working Group established and meeting monthly (Hunter JO is chair).
Strategic Directions	2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2

Simtables for Community Empowerment

Purpose	Status Update
Simtables provide a "State of the Art" tool that can be used to engage communities in localised place-based emergency information sessions. This project has purchased two Simtables for the collective use of Member Councils and is providing direct support to Councils in undertaking the extensive community engagement associated with their use.	This project was formally completed on 1 June 2023. Final outputs of the project included: <ul style="list-style-type: none">47 Simtable community workshops/ events - 1061 attendees total.23 Simtable demonstrations or training sessions.5 Simtable loans.Community support resources procured:<ul style="list-style-type: none">500x Emergency kit fridge magnets500x Get Ready logo Jute BagsProduction of Community Case Study video, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Core video, demonstrating the use and purpose of the SimtableBurrell Creek (MidCoast LGA) community case study30 and 15 second cut-downs.Completion of a Simtable user guide and workshop outline.Purchase of regional flood mapping to integrate into future Simtable community engagements.
Strategic Directions	2.1.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2



Jobs and a Growing Economy

The Hunter economy continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs.

Objectives - Where do we want to be?

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|--|--|---|
| 3.1 Coordinated planning and investment by all levels of government that empowers the region and its residents to maintain and grow jobs, economic opportunities and quality of life. | 3.2 Accelerated and amplified market-driven investment in innovation that capitalises on the region's existing natural strengths and attributes which create jobs in future industries. | 3.3 A globally focused region that drives talent attraction and retention. |
| 3.4 A region that is built around Circular Economy principles as a driver of future jobs. | 3.5 We are recognised as a destination of choice for international and domestic visitors. | |

Circular Economy Ecosystem

Purpose	Status Update
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Provide and improve circular economy communication for all circular economy eco-system participants in the Hunter and Central CoastBuild circular economy knowledge through education and capacity building opportunities for Hunter JO member councils and Central Coast CouncilDevelop and improve circular economy data and analytics systems for use by all circular economy eco-system participants in the Hunter and Central Coast.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Hunter Central Coast Facilitators Group met on the 30 June 2023 for its Quarterly CE Roadmap session. Project identification and alignment workshoping was undertaken with the group and will inform an update of the Roadmap via our Hunter Circular website (digital hub).Completion of the rebuild of the Hunter Circular Hub (website) is now complete and soft launched. Work is underway to organise an official launch of the digital hub in the coming months.Work is underway to progress a circular economy event series in the region, with the aim to have a Hunter Circular showcase event in November 2023, if funding can be secured.The Textiles Circularity Think Tank was held on the 20th June 2023 at Fort Scratchley Function Centre. Thirty-five stakeholders from local councils, HJO, and industries across the textile value chain attended the event.
Strategic Directions	3.4.1, 4.2.2, 4.4.2

Circular Precincts and Futures Hub

Purpose	Status Update
<p>To deliver concept plans and business cases for four multi-element circular economy precincts, that would each represent a key part of the Hunter. Project outputs will outline the potential for circular processing, renewable energy production and value-added businesses, delivering diversified employment opportunities and new industries to the region. Key project deliverables will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A concept plan and strategy for Circular Economy Precincts, including an Anaerobic Digestion component for the circular processing of organics and biogas or energy production for the precinct.A concept plan and strategy for establishing a Circular Economy Futures Hub.	<p>The tender process for this project has now been completed, with the preferred consultant now in the process of being formally engaged. Invitations have also been extended to those who will be represented on the Expert Working Group that will provide advice and assistance on project delivery to the Hunter JO and project consultant.</p>
Strategic Directions	3.4.1, 4.2.2, 4.4.2

Hunter Circular Knowledge Hub

Purpose	Status Update
<p>To create and pilot a digital circular knowledge hub for two distinct user groups – for council staff, and for the community at large. The aim is to address the information accessibility and knowledge barriers that prevail and frustrate uptake of circular services and recovery pathways in the region. By creating tools to broaden participation, these solutions will be supported to scale and increase their impact. The project will gather information on services and solutions available in the region, then deploy tools that will present that information in a user-friendly format designed specifically for that group's needs.</p>	<p>Key data sets have been gathered across all Councils. The project consultant has built a test platform and dashboards. The next stage of delivery will include developing use cases and a methodology for analysing the data sets and to finalise dashboard requirements.</p>
Strategic Directions	3.4.1, 3.4.2, 4.2.2, 4.4.2

Hospitality Circularity Project

Purpose	Status Update
<p>The project seeks to engage hospitality SMEs across the region, to build their capacity to evaluate and adopt circular solutions for their business operations and supply chains, focusing on organics and single use items. The project will also seek to create or strengthen existing business networks and assist them to collaborate and co design practical solutions that benefit from network efficiency and scale.</p>	<p>\$498,971 in grant funding has been received from the NSW Environment Protection Authority's Bin Trim Program to deliver this new project. Project planning is now underway and administrative systems being established to support project delivery.</p>
Strategic Directions	3.4.2, 4.2.2

Hunter Global Tourism

Purpose	Status Update
<p>To identify the international tourism opportunities of the Hunter region in preparation of the Newcastle Airport international upgrade. Key elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Stakeholder engagement to bring all tourism, marketing and economic development organisations across the region together to identify how we want to position, brand and market the region as one to potential visitors.Undertaking a review of the region to identify priority tourism infrastructure needed to attract international visitors.	<p>Destination Marketing Store and Pier2Pier Consulting have now been engaged as the consultants to deliver this Business Case project. An Investment Logic Mapping workshop has been held with the Project Steering Committee, and initial stakeholder engagement meetings held with Parks NSW and Dept of Regional NSW.</p>
Strategic Directions	1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 3.5.1, 3.5.2, 4.1.1

Priority Infrastructure List

Purpose	Status Update
<p>To develop a methodology and process for determining regional infrastructure priorities to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Building and advocating a stronger case for investment in infrastructure priorities across the regionIdentifying the potential for shared interests and collaboration between Councils and other stakeholders in delivering local and regional scale infrastructure initiatives.	<p>The collation of infrastructure data through the initial phase of this project identified missing projects and data gaps that now need to be rectified. Engagement with Councils has commenced to develop a refined and efficient process for collecting the missing infrastructure projects and data.</p>
Strategic Directions	3.1.1, 3.1.5, 4.5.1



Liveability

Protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments that we enjoy in our region.

Objectives - Where do we want to be?

4.1 We are recognised as a destination for hosting world class events that align with our unique offering.	4.2 Making use of our opportunity to drive circular evolution of our region's economy.	4.3 Our natural environments including our bushland, estuaries, waterways and beaches are protected and enhanced.
4.4 Supporting our region to be on the path to net zero emissions and paving the way with smart innovative solutions that increase liveability.	4.5 A region with enriched neighborhoods and places supported by planned infrastructure that promotes community cohesion, active living and pride in culture and heritage.	4.6 A region that is connected, inclusive and a fair.

Accelerating Event Economies

Purpose	Status Update
To strengthen the region's collective voice and the capacity of Councils to collaboratively pitch for major events for the region. It includes undertaking an events and opportunity audit, and identifying, preparing and implementing shared destination and even management resources including an event managers toolkit, prospectus, website and integrated council shared services, approvals and event data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The outcomes of the Major Event Feasibility Study have now been completed, with outputs to be presented to the Hunter JO Board's August meeting.The Events10 website (www.events10.com.au) has been launched along with paid marketing campaign, and will be officially launched at the Accelerating Event Economies Conference on 26th July.The Hunter JO Board has requested a briefing to provide further detail on the three potential options identified for continuing a regional coordinated approach to event attraction.
Strategic Directions	1.2.1, 1.2.3, 4.1.1, 4.1.2

Illegal Dumping Program

Purpose	Status Update
To support Member Councils manage illegal dumping by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivering a regional approach to target illegal dumpingEmploying skilled officers to undertake compliance action against illegal dumpersUndertaking proactive measures to prevent illegal dumpingTargeting problematic and complex illegal dumping incidents.Increasing capacity to target problematic and complex illegal dumping incidents.	The Illegal Dumping Program Coordinator (Kerri Watson) has now commenced with the Hunter JO and is in the process of establishing working group/network and program codesign with participating councils. Illawarra Shoalhaven JO presented an overview of their regional program to the first network meeting held on 7 July 2023. Eight of the eleven councils eligible to join the Hunter RID Program have now signed the MOU governing participation.
Strategic Directions	4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3



Small Acts Big Change

Purpose	Status Update
To deliver a regional communication campaign to improve community waste avoidance behaviours at the top end of the waste management hierarchy, along with reuse and recycling habits.	This community waste avoidance education/behaviour change program has officially come to the end of its funding under the NSW Better Waste and Recycling Fund. Unfortunately no alternative funding opportunities have been identified that would support the continuation of this wide reaching community focused program. Content of the Small Acts Big Change channels (Facebook, Instagram and Youtube) will now be reduced as a result, however will be kept live in the short to medium term to allow other programs to promote through them, such as the Community Recycling Centres Education Program. The Small Acts Big Change website will now be archived.
Strategic Directions	4.2.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3

Community Recycling Centres

Purpose	Status Update
To deliver a regionally coordinated approach to promoting community awareness of Community Recycling Centres (CRC's).	Continuing promotion of CRC videos has resulted in them being viewed by over 800,000 people in May and June with people playing the video on 1.5 million occasions. The Creative Collective were engaged to run an online promotion via Facebook and Instagram to engage Hunter residents to complete a survey evaluating our 2022-23 CRC Education and Communications plan. The promotion ran between 26th June and 20th July 2023.
Strategic Directions	4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.3.1, 4.3.3

Net Zero Acceleration

Purpose	Status Update
To support Member Councils reduce their carbon emissions to achieve their part in the State's Net Zero target of 50 per cent reduction by 2030 and Net Zero by 2050. This includes employing a staff member dedicated to progressing the JO and its member councils toward net zero emissions, and to provide a link to other NSW government support mechanisms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lexi Crouch has recently commenced in the role of Net Zero Coordinator with the Hunter JO.The second meeting of the Hunter Net Zero Network was held 28 June 2023 with strong engagement from councils. The Network provided input and feedback on the Draft Project Plan for the Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration (JONZA) program.EV feasibility study reports have been finalised and will be provided to councils pending announcement of the NSW Government Destination Charging grant funding, so that the information can be used to support the preparation of Council funding applications.Councils have been invited to nominate potential sites for batteries, for which the NSW Government would also fully fund feasibility studies. Based on the responses, four Hunter councils were invited to participate in the ARENA Community Batteries EOI. Three EOIs were submitted on 30 June 2023 by three lead JOs (Central NSW, ISJO and REROC) on behalf of participating councils.
Strategic Directions	2.2.1, 2.2.2, 4.4.1, 4.4.2



Liveability

Protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments that we enjoy in our region.

Landfill Emissions Data Project

Purpose	Status Update
To establish a landfill emission data management program for councils to assist in understanding their baseline landfill emissions, and building a model data management framework and tools to support the collation and interpretation of landfill emission data.	\$199,650 in grant funding has been received from the NSW Environment Protection Authority's Sustainability Partnerships Program to deliver this new project. Project planning is now underway and administrative systems being established to support project delivery.
Strategic Directions	4.2.2, 4.4.2

Contaminated Land Program

Purpose	Status Update
To build capacity and capability within Member Councils to manage contaminated sites on private and council managed land, and to support Councils transition to their new role as regulator of the Underground Petroleum Storage System (UPSS) Regulation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A substantial update to the Register of Contaminated Land Consent Conditions document has now been completed and published on the Hunter JO website, with initial feedback from other JOs and Councils very positive - https://www.hunterjo.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Register-of-Contaminated-Land-Consent-Conditions.pdfFace-to-face visits have recently been completed with MidCoast, Dungog and Cessnock Councils. These provided an overview of contaminated land management for staff, as well as focusing on particular areas Councils had identified as needing further support. These meetings were well attended by Council staff, including MidCoast (approx 20 people) and Cessnock (approx 12 people).Two new podcast interviews have gone live, which feature interviews with Anna Lundmark (Director & Principal Consultant at StellaNord Consulting), focusing on change management and the Hunter JO contaminated land resource library, and Peter Brennan (Singleton Council) focusing on building capacity for better management of contaminated land.A meeting of the Regional Contaminated Land Working Group was held on 31 May, which included a presentation from Mal Adrien from Maitland City Council on their contaminated land portfolio.
Strategic Directions	4.3.1, 4.3.3



Grants and Funding Proposals

Funding Source	Amount	Description
Greater Cities Commission	\$655,000	Resilient Hunter Central Coast Platform Focus: To establish a common data platform for the Hunter and Central Coast to provide councils access to consistent, up to date datasets, develop evidence-based policy and collaborate on pathways towards net zero emissions. Status update: Advice Pending
Regional NSW Growing Regional Economy Fund	\$10,000,000	Shiraz to Shore Focus: EOI to undertake detailed design and construction for a key section of the Shiraz to Shore route through the Hunter Valley. While applications generally require a 25% financial contribution to the project, following advice from the funding authority, the Hunter JO will applying for extenuating circumstances to avoid this requirement given the nature of the organisation and the regional collaborative focus and scope of the project. Status update: Advice Pending
NSW EPA Bin Trim Program	\$498,971	The Hospitality Circularity Network Focus: The project seeks to engage hospitality SMEs across the region, to build their capacity to evaluate and adopt circular solutions for their business operations and supply chains, focussing on organics and single use items. The project will also seek to create or strengthen existing business networks and assist them to collaborate and co design practical solutions that benefit from network efficiency and scale. Status update: Successful
Local Government Waste Solutions Fund Round 1	\$293,469	Hunter Circular Knowledge Hub Focus: To create and pilot a digital circular knowledge hub for two distinct user groups – for council staff, and for the community at large. The aim is to address the information accessibility and knowledge barriers that prevail and frustrate uptake of circular services and recovery pathways in the region. By creating tools to broaden participation, these solutions will be supported to scale and increase their impact. The project will gather information on services and solutions available in the region, then deploy tools that will present that information in a user-friendly format designed specifically for that group's needs. Status update: Successful

Funding Source	Amount	Description
EPA Sustainability Partnerships Program	\$199,650	Landfill Emissions Data Management Program (Landfill Emissions DMP) Focus: To establish a landfill emission data management program for councils to assist in understanding their baseline landfill emissions, and building a model data management framework and tools to support the collation and interpretation of landfill emission data. Status update: Successful
NSW EPA Regional Illegal Dumping Program	\$2,668,341 over 5 years	Regional Illegal Dumping Program Focus: To support Member Councils manage illegal dumping by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering a regional approach to target illegal dumping • Supoporting employment of skilled officers to undertake compliance action against illegal dumpers • Undertaking proactive measures to prevent illegal dumping • Increasing capacity to target problematic and complex illegal dumping incidents. Status update: Successful
Get NSW Active Program	\$220,495	Shiraz to Shore Feasibility & Preferred Route Focus: To undertake a strategic assessment to determine the feasibility and preferred route of the Hunter vineyards section of the widely supported Shiraz to Shore 100km cycle trail, connecting communities, tourists and local businesses. The project will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • balance safety, amenity, feasibility and local landholder and stakeholder inputs for the route following an extensive local stakeholder engagement program. • produce the indicative costs and key elements to enable the project to move through to the next stage. Status update: Unsuccessful

Appendix - Strategic Objectives and Directions

Connectivity

A globally connected region whose residents enjoy transport and digital infrastructure and systems that enhance their economic and lifestyle opportunities.



Objectives - Where do we want to be?	Strategic Directions - How will we get there?
<p>1.1 Within the region there is a robust integrated transport solution that underpins the experience/ liveability and productivity of its residents and visitors comparable to its global peers.</p>	<p>1.1.1 Support local government having a collective voice in the planning and delivery of major transport infrastructure and systems.</p> <p>1.1.2 Proactively facilitate collaboration with key state agencies to support delivery of connectivity solutions that suit the regions current and future needs.</p> <p>1.1.3 Support Member Councils to influence other levels of government on a sustainable model for delivery and maintenance of road infrastructure.</p> <p>1.1.4 Support a Regional Integrated Transport Plan linking key services and centres.</p> <p>1.1.5 Identify and facilitate regional approaches for active transport outcomes that deliver connectivity, health, liveability and economic benefits.</p> <p>1.1.6 Private and public transport solutions operate on a net zero basis.</p>
<p>1.2 Through its port and airport the Hunter is a globally connected and economically prosperous city-region, recognised as a key international gateway, providing its communities with a vibrant and unique lifestyle and growth in products and services to replace the economic output of thermal coal.</p>	<p>1.2.1 Partnering with airport and port to identify and pursue priority actions to enable access to international markets for the benefit of the region.</p> <p>1.2.2 Influence government policy to prioritise the importance of access to international markets for the benefit of the region.</p> <p>1.2.3 Leading collaboration in the region between government, industry and community to ensure the benefits of international markets are region wide.</p> <p>1.2.4 Support a transport access strategy for regional connectivity to and from the airport.</p>
<p>1.3 Digital connectivity that ensures community access to core services on commuter routes across the region and between Sydney and Newcastle and to enable business development, growth and innovation.</p>	<p>1.3.1 Support and encourage investment in equitable and competitive digital connectivity and the elimination of mobile black spots across the region to ensure community access to commuter routes, core health and education opportunities, and to enable business development, growth and innovation.</p>
<p>1.4 A region that is built around sustainable transport outcomes.</p>	<p>1.4.1 Embed the direction of net-zero in all our connectivity strategies to provide a pathway and level of confidence to investors and community to support the transition to more sustainable transport outcomes.</p>

Resilience

We are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks.



Objectives - Where do we want to be?	Strategic Directions - How will we get there?
<p>2.1 We are recognised as innovative leaders in Council capacity building and policy support for climate change action, resilience and disaster preparedness.</p>	<p>2.1.1 We provide guidance and support packages to embed Climate Change action, resilience and disaster preparedness into Councils Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework.</p> <p>2.1.2 We drive council capacity building opportunities supported by an evidence base to improve regional resilience and community awareness.</p> <p>2.1.3 We drive opportunities to collaborate, adopt system thinking and circular economy opportunities to reduce our impact on climate change and increase resilience.</p>
<p>2.2 We take leadership and drive regional best practice in climate action.</p>	<p>2.2.1 We lead the way in regional best practice and work with all levels of government to drive policy and strategy on climate change.</p> <p>2.2.2 Engage and provide thought leadership in local, national and global climate change and resilience networks.</p>
<p>2.3 Our region is resilient to environment risks, natural hazards and climate change.</p>	<p>2.3.1 Apply and obtain financial grants for regional programs that support a resilient region.</p> <p>2.3.2 Facilitate and manage regional programs that support a resilient region.</p>

Jobs and a Growing Economy

The Hunter economy continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs.



Objectives - Where do we want to be?	Strategic Directions - How will we get there?
3.1 Coordinated planning and investment by all levels of government that empowers the region and its residents to maintain and grow jobs, economic opportunities and quality of life.	3.1.1 Support a clear, place-based, integrated whole-of-government policy and planning approach to drive the region's economic evolution and jobs of the future. 3.1.2 Support the establishment of an entity that has the authority and resources from the Commonwealth and NSW Government necessary to provide the institutional capacity and expert and empowered, place-based planning and decision-making capability. 3.1.3 Support regional institutional capacity to assist businesses and workers impacted by changes in the economy. 3.1.4 Drive collaboration to provide clarity, certainty and fairness in land-use policy and regulation as it relates to the use of former industrial and mining land and assets, or where local communities bear the impacts or have restrictions arising from the contribution of that place to broader regional or state benefits. 3.1.5 Support government policy and planning that prioritise the investment into key regional catalyst areas. 3.1.6 Support the place-based delivery of Aboriginal partnerships and employment programs in the Hunter.
3.2 Accelerated and amplified market-driven investment in innovation that capitalises on the region's existing natural strengths and attributes which create jobs in future industries.	3.2.1 Support and mature the innovation ecosystem in order to drive commercialisation of ventures and start-ups in the region which will provide growth in future jobs. 3.2.2 Improve and accelerate the regions access to investment and capital markets to underpin the innovation ecosystem and the redevelopment of industrial and mining assets.
3.3 A globally focused region that drives talent attraction and retention.	3.3.1 Support efforts that position the Hunter globally in its areas of competitive and comparative strength.
3.4 A region that is built around Circular Economy principles as a driver of future jobs.	3.4.1 Support knowledge sharing and embed Circular Economy principles in our strategies and plans to provide a pathway to future jobs creation in our local supply chains and services. 3.4.2 Support implementation of the Hunter Central Coast Circular Economy Roadmap.
3.5 We are recognised as a destination of choice for international and domestic visitors.	3.5.1 Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around regional tourism promotion to grow jobs in the region. 3.5.2 Identify opportunities for growth and diversification of employment based in the tourism economy.

Liveability

Protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments that we enjoy in our region.



Objectives - Where do we want to be?	Strategic Directions - How will we get there?
4.1 We are recognised as a destination for hosting world class events that align with our unique offering.	4.1.1 Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around events and tourism. 4.1.2 Identify opportunities for growth and diversification of the regional events and tourism economy.
4.2 Making use of our opportunity to drive circular evolution of our region's economy.	4.2.1 Support meeting our future regional infrastructure and operations for circular outcomes. 4.2.2 Reduce carbon emissions through better waste and materials management.
4.3 Our natural environments including our bushland, estuaries, waterways and beaches are protected and enhanced.	4.3.1 Our Councils are well supported in protecting and enhancing the environment through regional programs, data collection, support resources and capacity building. 4.3.2 Provide support and identify opportunities to improve and protect the regional Blue Green Grid. 4.3.3 We drive council capacity building opportunities to protect the environment and human health from pollution. 4.3.4 Provide support for regional conservation planning to protect regional biodiversity. 4.3.5 Provide support and identify opportunities to enhance the health of the region's estuaries and other waterways.
4.4 Supporting our region to be on the path to net zero emissions and paving the way with smart innovative solutions that increase liveability.	4.4.1 Provide support and identify opportunities on regional collaboration around Electric Vehicles. 4.4.2 Support regional collaboration around clean energy and future energy initiatives and industries.
4.5 A region with enriched neighborhoods and places supported by planned infrastructure that promotes community cohesion, active living and pride in culture and heritage.	4.5.1 Support Improved planning outcomes to enhance liveability and lifestyle. 4.5.2 Support a healthy and active community. 4.5.3 Support a safe and accessible society across the region. 4.5.4 Support enhanced cultural opportunities and protected heritage.
4.6 A region that is connected, inclusive and a fair.	4.6.1 Support affordability and increased access to housing. 4.6.2 Support an increase in the availability of jobs and services closer to people. 4.6.3 Support equitable access to education and health services and facilities.



8. Matters Raised by Members

9. General Business

9.1 Compliance & Governance Calendars

Note. The Hunter JO Board Forward Planner and Governance Calendar 2023-24 is currently in draft and will be provided to the October 2023 Hunter JO Board Meeting.

- Attachment 17 - JO-Calendar-of-Compliance-and-Reporting-Requirements-2022-23

JO Calendar of Compliance & Reporting Requirements 2023-2024

July 2023

Aug 2023

Sept 2023

Oct 2023

Nov 2023

Dec 2023

Jan 2024

Feb 2024 – May 2024

June 2024

Finance

Financial statements to be audited within 4 months [LGA s416(1)]

7 Proposed borrowing return to be submitted to TCorp

17 Request for extension to lodge financial statements due in writing to OLG [LGA s416(2), Code]

31 Financial Statements to be audited [LGAs416(1), Code] and lodged to OLG [LGA s417(5)] with Financial Data Return

5 Last day for financial statements to be presented to the public [LGA 418(2)]

Governance

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

EO to table returns at next JO Board meeting [MCC cl 4.25]

30 Annual Report of obligations under GIPA due to the Minister and the Information Commissioner [GIPA s125]

30 Annual Report of obligations under PIDA due to the Minister and Ombudsman [PIDA s31]

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 Annual Performance Statement is to be placed on the JO website

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 397I]

JO Calendar of Compliance & Reporting Requirements 2023-24

General

JO should notify OLG (olg@olg.nsw.gov.au) of any senior staff or address changes via email to enable updating of the directory

JO must review its publication guide in relation to the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 and adopt a new publication guide at intervals of not more than 12 months. An agency may update and amend its publication guide at any time

Circulars are emailed to council. Please advise OLG (olg@olg.nsw.gov.au) of any change of council email address. Council Circulars can be downloaded from OLG website at www.olg.nsw.gov.au

OLG = Office of Local Government

LGA = Local Government Act 1993.

LG Reg = Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

Code = Local Government Code of Accounting Practice and Financial Reporting

PIDA = Public Interests Disclosures Act 1994

MCC = Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW, 2018

MCCP = Procedures for the Administration of The Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW, 2018

GIPA = Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009

IP&R G/L = Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines Sept 2021