



**CANBERRA REGION  
JOINT ORGANISATION**

*Regional leadership connecting our communities*

# **BOARD MEETING**

---

Friday, 1 March 2024  
9am – 1pm  
Eurobodalla Shire Council  
Club Narooma, 88 Princess Highway, Narooma

---

# **AGENDA AND BUSINESS PAPER**



## Table of Contents

1. Opening Meeting .....	5
2. Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country .....	5
3. Apologies.....	5
4. Disclosure of Interest .....	5
8. Chairs Minute.....	5
9. Confirmation of Minutes.....	6
10. Briefings to CRJO Board.....	6
10.1 Associate Members .....	6
10.2 State Government Agencies.....	6
11. Presentations .....	7
11.1 Net Zero Pathway Plan .....	7
12. Reports to Board: For Discussion.....	8
12.1 2024 NSW Minister Meetings.....	8
13. Reports to Board: For Decision .....	9
13.1 Statement of Strategic Priorities .....	9
13.2 Annual Performance Statement.....	10
14. Reports to Board: For Noting .....	11
14.1 CRJO Finance Status Report.....	11
14.2 CRJO Program Status Report.....	15
14.3 CRJO Executive Officer Status Report .....	16
15. Closed Session.....	19
15.1 Code of Conduct Governance Report.....	19
16. Close.....	19



## Meeting Schedule

Time	Item	Presenter	For	Brief
9am	1	Chair, Mayor Russell Fitzpatrick	Introduction	Welcome CRJO Chief Executive, Sharon Houlihan.
9.05am	10.1	Associate Member Briefings		
	10.2	State Government Briefings		
9.35am	11.1	Cecilia Kemp, Net Zero Officer	Presentation	CRJO Net Zero Project update and the Sustainable Councils team to speak to the legislative Net Zero landscape for local councils and the support available from State Government.
10.30am	Break for Morning Tea			
10.45am	12.1	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Discussion	Discuss questions to be raised to NSW Ministers for the CRJO Board Meeting in May 2024.
11am	13.1	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Decision	Seeking endorsement of the CRJO Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028.
11.15am	13.2	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Decision	Seeking endorsement of the CRJO Annual Performance Statement 2022-23.
11.30am	14.2	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Noting	CRJO Financial Report to be received and noted by the CRJO board.
11.40am	14.3	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Noting	CRJO Program Status to be received and noted by the CRJO board.
11.50am	14.4	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer	Noting	CRJO Executive Officer status report to be received and noted by the CRJO board.
12.10pm	15.1	Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer & Mayor, Russell Fitzpatrick	Noting	Closed session report.
12.30pm	Close & Lunch			



ATTENDEES	
Bega Valley Shire Council	Mayor Russell Fitzpatrick (Chair) Mr Anthony McMahon
Eurobodalla Shire Council	Mayor Mathew Hatcher Mr Warwick Winn
Goulburn Mulwaree Council	Mayor Peter Walker Mr Aaron Johansson
Hilltops Council	Mayor Margaret Roles Mr Anthony O'Reilly
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	Mayor Kenrick Winchester (Deputy Chair) Ms Rebecca Ryan
Snowy Monaro Regional Council	Mayor Chris Hanna Mr David Hogan
Snowy Valleys Council	Mayor Ian Chaffey Mr Stephen Pinnuck
Upper Lachlan Shire Council	Mayor Pam Kensit Ms Alex Waldron
Wingecarribee Shire Council	Mr. Viv May (PSM) Ms Lisa Miscamble
Yass Valley Council	Mayor Allan McGrath Mr Chris Berry
Wagga Wagga City Council	Mayor Dallas Tout Mr Peter Thompson
ACT Government	Dr David Clapham
Canberra Airport	Mr Noel McCann
Canberra Region Joint Organisation	Ms Sharon Houlihan Ms Hayley Chapman
GUESTS	
NSW Government	Anthony Body, Regional NSW Kalina Koloff, NSW Office Cross Border Commissioner Heidi Stratford, NSW Reconstruction Authority Louise Taylor, Office of Local Government



## 1. Opening Meeting

The Chairperson, Mayor Russell Fitzpatrick will open the meeting.

## 2. Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

The Chairperson, Mayor Russell Fitzpatrick will welcome members and guests and make an acknowledgment of country.

## 3. Apologies

The Chairperson, Mayor Russell Fitzpatrick will call for any apologies. CRJO will resolve to accept any apology and may grant leave of absence.

The following apologies have been received:

- Ms Heidi Stratford, NSW Reconstruction Authority
- Ms Kalina Koloff, NSW Office Cross-Border Commissioner
- Ms Louise Taylor, NSW Office of Local Government

## 4. Disclosure of Interest

With reference to Chapter 14 Local Government Act 1993, and CRJO's Code of Conduct, Councillors are required to declare any conflicts of interest in the matters under consideration by CRJO at this meeting.

## 5. Notice of Rescission

Pursuant to Clause 372 of the Local Government Act 1993 a voting representative may lodge a notice to rescind a motion for the CRJO's consideration.

## 6. Notice of Motions

Pursuant to Clause 10.2 of the Code of Meeting Practice a voting representative may lodge a notice of motion for the CRJOs consideration.

## 7. Urgent Business

The Chairperson will call for any Additional Business pursuant to Clause 9.3 of the Code of Meeting Practice. Any additional business to be discussed requires a Board resolution or a ruling by the Chairperson that the matter is of great urgency.

The CRJO Board may resolve to accept any late item, information or urgent business to be discussed and/or determined at this meeting.

## 8. Chairs Minute

Pursuant to Clause 9.6 of the Code of Meeting Practice the Chairperson, without notice, may put to the meeting a minute on any matter or topic that is within the jurisdiction of the CRJO.



---

## 9. Confirmation of Minutes

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

**Attachments:** 1. Minutes of CRJO Board Meeting 8 December 2023

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board receives and notes the minutes from the previous Board meeting held 8 December 2023.

## 10. Briefings to CRJO Board

### 10.1 Associate Members

The following Associate Members will provide verbal updates to GMAG:

- Dr David Clapham, Executive Branch Manager, Economic and Regional Policy, ACT Government
- Mr Noel McCann, Director of Planning and Government Relations, Canberra Airport

### 10.2 State Government Agencies

The following NSW State Government Agencies will provide verbal updates to GMAG:

- Mr Anthony Body, Regional Director, Illawarra and South East NSW, Department of Regional NSW

*(Noting apology received from Ms Kalina Koloff, NSW Cross-Border Commissioner, Ms Louise Taylor, Office of Local Government and Ms Heidi Stratford, NSW Reconstruction Authority)*



## 11. Presentations

### 11.1 Net Zero Pathway Plan

**Who:** **Cecilia Kemp**, CRJO Project Officer – Net Zero

**Lisa Miller**, Project Officer Sustainable Councils, Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEEW)

**Dr Simon Wright**, Senior Research Fellow, Energy & Circularity at Charles Sturt University

**Attachments:** Net Zero Pathway Plan Presentation

**Purpose:** The intent of the presentation is to provide an update on the engagement and project implementation done with the Councils since April 2023 and provide an introduction to the **Net Zero Council Pathway Guide**.

Members are asked to review the **Net Zero Council Pathway Guide** ahead of the Local Government Area road trip meetings in March.



## 12. Reports to Board: For Discussion

### 12.1 2024 NSW Minister Meetings

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

**Attachments:** Nil

#### RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The report from the Director Corporate Services on the 2024 NSW Minister Meetings be received.
2. The Board provide feedback to Canberra Region Joint Organisation on the questions to be raised at the 13 May 2024 meeting in NSW Parliament House.

#### REPORT

In preparation for the 13 May 2024 meeting of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board, letters of invitation have been prepared for the following ministers and local members;

- i. The Hon. Chris Minns MP, New South Wales Premier
- ii. The Hon. Daniel Mookey MLC, New South Wales Treasurer
- iii. The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP, Minister for Local Government
- iv. The Hon. Paul Scully MP, Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
- v. The Hon. Rose Jackson MLC, Minister for Housing and Minister for Water
- vi. The Hon. Stephen Kamper MP, Minister for Lands and Property
- vii. The Hon. Jenny Aitchison MP, Minister for Regional Transport and Roads
- viii. The Hon. Tara Moriarty MLC, Minister for Regional New South Wales
- ix. The Hon. Jihad Dib MP, Minister for Emergency Services
- x. The Hon. Ryan Park MP, Minister for Regional Health
- xi. The Hon. Penny Sharpe MLC, Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage
- xii. The Hon. Steve Whan MP, Member for Monaro
- xiii. Dr. Michael Holland, Member for Bega
- xiv. Mrs. Wendy Tuckerman, Member for Goulburn
- xv. Ms. Steph Cooke, Member for Cootamundra

*Additionally, requests for invitations have been prepared for the leader of the Liberal and National parties as well as shadow ministers.*

Canberra Region Joint Organisation have commenced collating questions to send to the ministers, shadow ministers and local members. Feedback is being sought from the Board on additional questions they would like raised at the 13 May 2024 meeting in New South Wales Parliament House.





---

## 13. Reports to Board: For Decision

### 13.1 Statement of Strategic Priorities

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

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

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board endorses the Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028.

#### REPORT

The aim of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028 is to bring together and align priorities of CRJO members and respective communities from across the Canberra region. It assists in defining our roadmap for the future of the CRJO and Canberra region, determining the strategic priorities that will underpin work at the CRJO.

General Manager Advisory Group (GMAG) has undertaken two workshop sessions with Karina Dooley from Projectura to refine and the Statement of Strategic Priorities for 2024-2028. At the most recent GMAG meeting in February, the group endorsed the Statement of Strategic Priorities 2024-2028 to be presented at the 1 March 2024 board meeting.

It is intended the Statement of Strategic priorities will undertake a high-level review early 2025, to align with the 2024 local government elections and legislative requirements.



---

## 13.2 Annual Performance Statement

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

**Attachments:** 1. Annual Performance Statement 2023

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board receive and note the Annual Performance Statement.

### REPORT

Under Section 397J of *the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021*, Canberra Region Joint Organisation is required to prepare an Annual Performance Statement within 5 months from the end of each year, for that year reporting as to its progress in implementing its strategies and plans for delivering its strategic regional priorities.



## 14. Reports to Board: For Noting

### 14.1 CRJO Finance Status Report

**Author:** Jen Lang, Jennifer Lang Australia

**Attachments:** 1. CRJO Financial Statement July 2023 – January 2024

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Board receive the Financial Report and note the financial position of the Organisation at 31 December 2023.

#### REPORT

As at 31 January 2024, the Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) reports a year-to-date operating surplus of **\$1,215k** incorporating a year-to-date operating deficit in CRJO Operations of **\$142k**.

Table 1.1 below provides a breakdown of the operating surplus across each Program.

Program	YTD Operating Result \$000	YTD Budget \$000	YTD Variance to Budget \$000	Full Year Budget \$000	Status
CRJO Operations	(142)	324	(466)	(118)	Ongoing
CRJO Internal Audit	25	(27)	51	3	Ongoing
CRJO Procurement	41	0	41	0	Ongoing
CRJO Training School	1	0	1	0	Ongoing
Trade Pathways Innovation	206	0	206	0	Ongoing
<b>Recovery &amp; Resilience</b>					
Drought Resilience	(5)	0	(5)	0	Ongoing
BCRRF - Vulnerable Contaminated Lands	0	0	0	0	Awaiting Acquittal
BCRRF - Simtable	0	0	0	0	Awaiting Acquittal
BCRRF - Blueprint	0	0	0	0	Awaiting Acquittal
BLERF - Economic Recovery	51	0	51	0	Ongoing
DRRF – Disaster Recovery	44	(153)	197	0	Ongoing
<b>Waste Programs</b>					
Regional Support Fund*	523	163	360	70	Ongoing
Contaminated Lands	133	0	133	0	Awaiting Acquittal
Circular Economy	127	0	127	0	Ongoing
ECC – Net Zero	45	29	16	0	Ongoing
Bin Trim Networks	100	0	100	0	Ongoing
Illegal Dumping Prevention	66	0	66	0	Ongoing
<b>Total Operating Result</b>	<b>1,215</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>(45)</b>	



*Table 1.1*

*\*Includes the following Programs: Regional Waste Education, Household Chemical Clean-Up and CRC Education.*

**The surplus of \$1,215 for the year to date is due to:**

- Grant funding of **\$885k** carried forward from the 2022/23 financial year, this simply represents the timing of expenditure for each Program. Any unspent grant funding at 30 June 2024 will be carried forward into 2025;
- CRJO received further milestone payments totalling **\$473k** for Net Zero, Regional Coordination Support Fund (the first year of a new five-year agreement) and Household Chemical Cleanup Programs. CRJO are forecasting to reimburse Councils for the Household Chemical Cleanup in February/March.
- Offset by a deficit in CRJO Operations of **\$143k** due to loss of Management Fees and higher tenancy costs.

**Notable variances to budget for the year to date:**

Overall, the CRJO is favourable to budget by **\$878k** at 31 January 2024. This is primarily due to:

*Favourable Variances:*

- Due to the delivery timing of our core programs including Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLERF), Circular Economy, Disaster Recovery and Resilience Fund (DRRF) and Contaminated Lands, there is \$503k of surplus compared to budget. The Contaminated Lands Program is currently awaiting acquittal.
- CRJO received several new grants that were not originally included in the budget. Unbudgeted funding totalled \$582k being for the Trade Pathways Innovation, Bin Trim Networks and Illegal Dumping Programs. CRJO also received a further \$150k for the extension of the Household Chemical Cleanup Program for the 2023 calendar year, which is forecasted to be reimbursed to Councils in February/March.

*Unfavourable Variances:*

- CRJO Operations \$373k unfavourable to budget, primarily due to:
  - CRJO budgeted to receive Management Fees of **\$200k** from the Circular Economy Program in August 2023. Given the delivery structure of the Program, CRJO cannot justify receiving the full management fee which was intended to offset the costs of accommodating FTE's working within the Program plus several CRJO direct operational costs. Instead, CRJO are working closely with the funding body to reconfirm funding expenditure and propose an alternate Management Fee to cover fixed costs such as Financials, Audit, IT and CRJO oversight.



- Salary and Wages (including on-costs) exceeded budget by \$43k due to an additional FTE funded by CRJO Operations from October 2023 following the approval of the DRRF Funding Variation. This process confirmed that the Program would not fund the Program Director role.
- CRJO paid Fringe Benefits Tax of \$53k for the private use of Executive vehicles and car parking relating to the 2022 and 2023 FBT years.
- An \$77k unfavourable variance for Rent, IT, Make Good and Amortisation expenses due to the change in office space that was not included in the budget.

### Cash Balances

As at 31 January 2024, CRJO holds a cash balance of **\$939k**. Table 1.2 below provides a summary of the distribution of cash across the core Programs.

Programs	Opening Balance 1 Jul 2023 \$000	Cash Receipts \$000	Cash Outgoings \$000	Closing Balance 31 Jan 2024 \$000	Risk To Cashflow
CRJO Operations	962	714	880	796	High
CRJO Internal Audit	0	114	171	(57)	Low
CRJO Procurement	142	0	101	41	Low
CRJO Training School	0	42	44	(2)	Low
Trade Pathways Innovation	0	250	193	57	Low
<b>Recovery &amp; Resilience</b>					
Drought Resilience	(80)	0	25	(105)	Low
BCRRF - Vulnerable Cont Lands	(39)	0	(1)	(38)	High
BCRRF - Simtable	(28)	0	(6)	(22)	High
BCRRF - Blueprint	(96)	0	(6)	(90)	Low
BLERF - Economic Recovery Fund	(226)	0	463	(689)	High
DRRF – Disaster Recovery	175	82	213	44	Low
<b>Waste Programs</b>					
Regional Support Fund*	196	418	100	514	Low
Contaminated Lands	152	0	10	142	Low
Circular Economy	801	0	666	135	Medium
ECC – Net Zero	56	47	58	45	Low
Bin Trim Networks	0	100	0	100	Low
Illegal Dumping Prevention	0	81	13	68	Low
<b>Total Cash on Hand</b>	<b>2,015</b>	<b>1,848</b>	<b>2,924</b>	<b>939</b>	

Table 1.2

\*Includes the following Programs: Regional Waste Education, Household Chemical Clean-Up, CRC Education and Container Deposit Scheme.



**Risks to cashflow:**

- CRJO are currently working with the funding body to reconfirm the deliverables of the Bushfire Local Economic Recovery, BCRRF Vulnerable Contaminated Lands and BCRRF Simtable. There is currently a high risk that the funding body will not approve several items costed to these Programs, resulting in additional costs carried by CRJO Operations. CRJO are working closely with key stakeholders to quantify these risks and subsequently get variations approved.
- A variation is currently underway to confirm remaining budget allocations for the Circular Economy Program.

**Other notable business as usual upcoming expenditure:**

- Nil

**Status of Audit 2022-23 General Purpose Financial Statements**

CRJO continues to work with Ernst & Young, NSW Audit Office contractors to complete the audit of the 2022-2023 general purpose financial statements. The engagement closing report has been issued and responded to and, the draft report on conduct of audit and management letters have been issued for CRJO management comment. The independent auditor's report and audit opinion are expected to be issued in March.



---

## 14.2 CRJO Program Status Report

**Author:** Kirstie Mayne, Director Regional Programs

**Attachments:** 1. Regional Programs Status Report February 2024

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the CRJO Board receives and notes the Canberra Region Joint Organisation Program Status Report.

### **REPORT**

Please find attached the report on CRJO's Regional Programs for the period November 2023 – February 2024.



### 14.3 CRJO Executive Officer Status Report

**Author:** Sharon Houlihan, Executive Officer

**Attachments:** Nil

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the CRJO Board receive and notes the Executive Officer Status Report.

#### REPORT

I have been given a very warm welcome from members, stakeholders and staff since commencing in the executive officer role on 15 January.

#### Member visits and regional tour

As a priority in my first six weeks, I have visited all local government areas in the region to meet face-to-face with CRJO's members, getting to know your priorities and issues. Joined by CRJO board chair, Mayor Russell Fitzpatrick for many of the visits, I have met with **council members' mayors and councillors/administrator, general managers and executives** as well as **executives from Canberra Airport and the ACT Government**.

Thank you for taking the time to speak to your views of the joint organisation and its strengths and opportunities to build on its value for members. Particular areas of strength of the joint organisation relate to:

- Amplifying members advocacy by speaking with one, collective 'voice' to state and federal government
- Opportunities for councils to come together at mayor and GM level around regional issues and opportunities and via groups which focus on specific areas of council operations such as waste management
- Projects which directly build council capacity in hard-to-fill vacancies areas such as the women in planning project, and
- Projects which help councils meet legislative requirements such as the regional community strategic plan project which develops of councils' community strategic plans
- Projects which deliver hard-to-achieve outcomes such as net zero emissions reductions

#### Ministers and MP introduction meetings

Our federal **Local Government Minister, The Hon Kristy McBain**, took time out of her busy schedule to offer me her views of CRJO and the joint organisation model which has as its greatest strength its ability to advocate for better outcomes for local government and local communities. Minister McBain spoke of opportunities to work together with Regional Development Australia committees, which she has reviewed and restructured.

**NSW Parliamentary Secretary for Recovery, Ms Janelle Saffin MP**, had a positive discussion around regional councils' needs for improvement of recovery funding around betterment, verification of expenditure and timely flow of recovery funding to councils and financial implications.

Further meetings are scheduled with relevant state ministers and our local regional members of parliament in the coming weeks.





#### State government departments introductory and project meetings

I have also had introductory meetings with key contacts from NSW state government departments who work with the joint organisation and members via grant-funded projects and the South East Regional Leadership Executive. Meetings have occurred with the **Office for Local Government, Regional NSW, Reconstruction Authority** and the **Cross Border Commissioner**.

For departments that have provided grant funding to CRJO for projects, I have met with many regarding project progress, deliverables status and, in many cases, variations to funding agreements and I thank these departments for their professionalism in assisting to ensure valuable output from these projects for CRJO members.

In the ACT Government, I have to date met with executives from the **Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate** and **No Waste** regarding the need for a circular economy roadmap and the **International Trade Commissioner** regarding opportunities for export for regional producers via Canberra Airport international flights.

#### Regional Entities introductory meetings

There are many entities which work on various topic areas in the Canberra region and to date I have met with the new combined **South East Regional Development Australia, Destination Southern NSW, Canberra Region Tourism Industry Council** and the **Regional Australia Institute** to better understand how they work in the region.

#### CRJO Compliance

I have spent considerable time working on finalising the **2022-23 audit of general-purpose financial statements** with external auditors Ernst & Young contracted by the **NSW Audit Office** and with **other state compliance agencies** finalising governance matters.

#### Review of CRJO Operations

I have undertaken a review of CRJO's operations starting with the organisation's finances, legislative compliance status and compliance with funding agreements for external grants.

**Financial sustainability** is a key risk for CRJO as it is for most joint organisations and similar entities and compliance requirements are quite heavy for such small organisations. Further information will be provided during specific board meeting agenda items regarding finance and governance.

A **new CRJO website** has been launched and is progressively being populated with content about the organisation, the way we work, our advocacy and projects as well as board meeting papers and minutes and other legislatively required content.

CRJO has a number of funding agreements in place with state government for projects with some **funded project management risks** evident and being worked through in conjunction with state agencies.

The operational review includes an assessment of the **shared audit risk and improvement committee** and **internal audit shared service** involving three and four of our member councils respectively. Development of a shared service agreement between CRJO and the relevant member councils is a priority and discussions have commenced to agree the scope and level of services to be delivered.



Joint Organisation Executive Officers

Lastly, I have met with my fellow **executive officers of joint organisations** around NSW and with almost all of **CRJO's past executive officers** to better understand CRJO and joint organisations generally and how they are of value to their members and regional communities and the future of the NSW joint organisations model.

It has been a whirlwind introduction and wonderful to have been out and about seeing and getting to know this stunning region.



---

## 15. Closed Session

CRJO must resolve to move into Closed Session to deal with any items under s10 Local Government Act 1993.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That CRJO considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 10A(2) of the Local Government Act 1993.

### 15.1 Code of Conduct Governance Report

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2)(i) alleged contraventions of any code of conduct requirements applicable under section 440 of the Local Government Act 1993. All persons who are not members of the Canberra Region Joint Organisation board (or their representative) be asked to leave the meeting.

## 16. Close

The Chairperson, Mayor Russell Fitzpatrick will close the meeting.