Mid North Coast Joint Organisation

Board Meeting

Business Paper

Date: 17 August 2018

Location: Port Macquarie-Hastings Council

Time: 10.30am

Contents

Item: **1**
Subject: **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

I would like to acknowledge the Birpai people who are the Traditional Custodians of this Land. I would also like to pay respect to the elders both past and present and extend that respect to any Aboriginal People present.

Item: **2**
Subject: **APOLOGIES**

NIL

Item: **3**
Subject: **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the MNCJO Board Meeting held on 13 June 2018 be confirmed.

ATTACHMENT: A – MNCJO Board Minutes 13 June 2018

Item: **4**
Subject: **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Item: **5**
Subject: **SPEAKERS**

The Board will be joined:

12.00pm Chris Presland, Director Reform Implementation, Office of Local Government

12.30pm Bob Higgins, General Manager Pacific Highway Roads and Maritime Services

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

Name of meeting _____

Meeting date _____

Item / Report Number _____

I _____ declare the following interest:

(name)

Pecuniary – must leave meeting, take no part in discussion and voting.

Non Pecuniary – Significant Conflict – Recommended that Board Member leaves chamber, takes no part in discussion or voting.

Non-Pecuniary – Less Significant Conflict – Board Member may choose to remain in Chamber and participate in discussion and voting.

*(Definitions are provided on the next page).

For the reason that -

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Signed   Date

DEFINITIONS

(Local Government Act and Code of Conduct)

Pecuniary – An interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person or another person with whom the person is associated.
(Local Government Act, 1993 section 442 and 443)

A Councillor or other member of a Council Committee who is present at a meeting and has a pecuniary interest in any matter which is being considered must disclose the nature of that interest to the meeting as soon as practicable.

The Council or other member must not take part in the consideration or discussion on the matter and must not vote on any question relating to that matter. *(Section 451).*

Non-pecuniary – A private or personal interest the council official has that does not amount to a pecuniary interest as defined in the Act (for example; a friendship, membership of an association, society or trade union or involvement or interest in an activity and may include an interest of a financial nature).

If you have declared a non-pecuniary conflict of interest, you have a broad range of options for managing the conflict. The option you choose will depend on an assessment of the circumstances of the matter, the nature of your interest and the significance of the issue being dealt with. You must deal with a non-pecuniary conflict of interest in at least one of these ways.

- It may be appropriate that no action is taken where the potential for conflict is minimal. However, council officials should consider providing an explanation of why they consider a conflict does not exist.
- Limit involvement if practical (for example, participate in discussion but not in decision making or vice-versa). Care needs to be taken when exercising this option.
- Remove the source of the conflict (for example, relinquishing or divesting the personal interest that creates the conflict or reallocating the conflicting duties to another officer).
- Have no involvement by absenting yourself from and not taking part in any debate or voting on the issue if the provision in section 451(2) of the Act apply (particularly if you have a significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest).

Item: 6
Subject: ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Item: 6.1.
Subject: ADOPTION OF MNCJO GOVERNANCE DOCUMENTS
File/Index:
Presented by: Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board adopt the following documents:

1. MNCJO Charter
2. MNCJO Code of Meeting Practice
3. MNCJO Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities Policy
4. MNCJO Public Interest Disclosure Policy

REPORT

At the Inaugural meeting of the MNCJO the Board adopted in principle the above documents for further consultation with member councils.

Feedback has been provided by member Councils and the following material amendments have been made to the documents.

MNCJO Charter

Clauses

1.3   Definitions

Associate Members
Remove reference to clause 3.2.
Add that Associate members are non-voting members.

2.3   Supplementary functions

Add   (a) Member Council or Councils 'Resolve' to be part of the supplementary functions.

6.   Dispute Resolution

Changes in italics.

(b)   on receipt of notice Member Councils must endeavor in good faith to resolve the dispute promptly using informal resolution techniques such as *independent* mediation, *independent* expert evaluation or determination or similar techniques as agreed to by those members.

(c)   Members that are parties to the dispute will *share the mediator's costs equally.*

MNCJO Code of Meeting Practice

Clauses

7. Lodgement of Notices of Motion Form of giving Notice of Motion

Remove the following paragraph.

The Chairperson may call over the Notices of Motion on the business paper in the order in which they appear thereon; and if objection not be taken to a Motion being taken as a formal Motion, it may, without discussion, be put to the vote.

8.   Questions Without Notice

Insert.

Questions may be put to the Board and Executive Officer

(1)   A Board Member:

   (a)   may, through the chairperson, put a question to another Board member or Executive Officer, and

   (b)   may, through the General Manager, put a question to a council employee.

(2)   However, a Board Member, Executive Officer or council employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to documents.

(3)   The Board Member must put every such question directly, succinctly and without argument.

(4)   The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply or refusal to reply to a question put to a Board Member, Executive Officer or council employee under this clause

12.   News Media and public attendance at JO Board and Committee Meetings

Changes in italics.

The news media and members of the public are invited to attend all JO Board and Committee meetings. *The media and the public will be only excluded from attendance when the Board or Committee is considering matters in Confidential pursuant to Section 10A of the Local Government Act (1993),*

14.   Participation by members of the public

Include

There will be a maximum of *three (3)* public speakers permitted to address the Board. If there are more than three (3) speakers wishing to speak, *then the first three (3) requests received will have precedence.*

22. Reports by Voting Representatives of Member Councils to Meetings

Removed.

Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities Policy

Clauses

1. Expenses

(a) Conferences, Seminars and Inspections – Reimbursement of Costs

Remove

(i) Delegates accompanied by spouse / partner

Include

The Chairperson needs the concurrence of the other voting Board members if insufficient time is available for the request to be approved in a formal Board meeting

(b) Travel Expenses

Include the italics

(i) Members cover their own costs for accommodation and travel to and from meetings of the Board and its Committees, *but may claim these expenses from their own Council as these expenses are incurred in the course of undertaking Council business.*

Public Interest Disclosures Policy

No changes.

ATTACHMENT: B   Revised MNCJO Governance Documents.

Item: 6.2
Subject: **MNCJO DRAFT REVENUE POLICY**
File/Index:
Presented by: General Managers

RECOMMENDATION

That the preparation of a Draft Revenue Policy be deferred pending the development of the MNCJO Statement of Regional Strategic Priorities.

REPORT

The MNCJO will be conducting a workshop on 14 September 2018 with the University Technology Sydney Centre of Local Government (UTS:CLG) to determine the MNCJO Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities (SSRP). It is intended that once these priorities are determined a Draft Revenue Policy can be developed and reviewed by member Councils, with the policy taking into account future projects and initiatives as included in the finalised SSRP.

Item: 6.3
Subject: **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS**
File/Index:
Presented by: General Managers

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board request the Executive Officer write to all relevant State and Federal Ministers and their Opposition counterparts, as well as copying to all local State & Federal members of JO member Councils, requesting a review of the Financial Assistance Grants (FAG) to Local Government, with a view to including consideration of horizontal fiscal equalisation in the calculation of FAG funding as per the details proposed by the Productivity Commission in their 15 May 2018 report titled 'Horizontal Fiscal Equalisation' (HFE)

SUMMARY

Councils on the Mid North Coast have previously raised the issue of Horizontal Fiscal Equalisation with respect to the way the Financial Assistance Grants are allocated to local government areas. The FAGs apportioned to Councils should be based on need, capacity to generate own source revenue and income. This would lead to a redistribution of FAG funding on a more equitable basis.

For further context, the Australian governments system of horizontal fiscal equalisation (HFE) transfers GST between the States and Territories with the aim of equalising States' fiscal capacities to deliver public services. (Productivity Commission Report 15 May 2018)

The above provides evidence that in relation to GST, the application of HFE is applicable, therefore it is reasonable to ask the government to adopt this principle for FAGs.

Item: 6.4.

Subject: PACIFIC HIGHWAY HANDOVER

File/Index:

Presented by: General Managers

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board:

1. Make representations to the NSW Government in relation to the handover of State assets (such as the old Pacific Highway) and in particular request a review of the maintenance handover process to include oversight and determination by the Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

2. Request that a new policy position be determined by the NSW Government in relation to the handover of State assets, so that ownership of former State assets does not impact on the ongoing financial sustainability of Local Government.

Item: 6.5

Subject: MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION MEMBERSHIP

File/Index:

Presented by: General Managers

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board invite Coffs Harbour City Council and Nambucca Shire Council to join the Mid North Coast Regional Organisation of Councils.

REPORT

The Mid North Coast Regional Organisation of Councils (MIDROC) included MNCJO Council members, as well as Coffs Harbour City Council and Nambucca Shire Council. Collectively as a region we collaborated, sought and secured funding for projects and were advocates for the region for over 15 years.

Together we represented over 200,000 residents in one of the highest growth areas of the State. It is important that the Mid North Coast Region is represented with strong advocacy and cohesion as we work for the best possible outcomes for our communities.

MNCJO would warmly welcome Coffs Harbour City Council and Nambucca Shire Council as representatives on the MNCJO either as full members or associate members. With all regional councils represented on the JO, the entity would be stronger and better positioned to attract resources to the Mid North Coast Region.

Item: 6.6
Subject: **JOINT ORGANISATION BRIDGES (JOB) PROJECT**
File/Index:
Presented by: General Managers

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board delegate to the General Managers any actions required to pursue any applicable funding opportunities for the MNCJO Bridges Project.

REPORT

In 2014 the Mid North Coast Regional Organisation of Councils (MIDROC) supported an asset project aimed at creating asset standards across the Mid North Coast Region.

This project evolved into the Bridges Without Boards Project which reviewed and classified timber bridges across the region based on condition and risk. This project included the MNCJO member Council areas.

MIDROC intended to seek funding for the priority timber bridges identified in this project and may well continue to do so.

With the establishment of the MNCJO it is intended for the JO to pursue funding for priority timber bridges in member Council areas.

Item: 6.7

Subject: IPART FINAL REPORT LOCAL GOVERNMENT RATING REVIEW

File/Index:

Presented by: General Managers

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board request the Executive Officer write to the Minister for Local Government, The Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP, requesting that the IPART Review of the Local Government Rating System Report that was presented to the Minister in December 2016, be immediately released to all Councils for review and comment.

REPORT

Efforts have previously been made by the Mid North Coast Regional Organisation of Councils (MIDROC), of which all MNCJO member Councils have been or still are members of, to secure a copy of the IPART Review of the Local Government Rating System December 2018, through Government Information (Public) Access (GIPA). Applications to both the Office of Local Government (OLG) and IPART have been denied. Further application has been made by MIDROC to the Information and Privacy Commission (IPC) requesting an External Review on the OLG determination. To date a response on this request has not been received by MIDROC.

Recommendations contained in the IPART Draft Review of the Local Government Rating System released August 2016 have significant implications for Councils and the final report should be released for review and comment.

Item: 6.8

Subject: JOINT ORGANISATION FUNDING

File/Index:

Presented by: General Managers

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board write to the Deputy Premier The Hon. John Barilaro MP and the Minister for Local Government The Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP advocating for ongoing operational funding to be provided to Joint Organisations, to ensure their ongoing success.

REPORT

The NSW Government has allocated funding of $300,000 to establish each Joint Organisation across the state. This funding is required to be expended by June 2020. For Joint Organisations to be successful and financially sustainable, the State Government needs to commit additional financial resources to Joint Organisations to support the primary functions of the organisations in delivering on the objectives of the State Government in establishing such entities. Ongoing operational costs should not be borne by member Councils and their communities alone.

Item: 6.9

Subject: A 20-YEAR ECONOMIC VISION FOR REGIONAL NSW

File/Index:

Presented by: General Managers

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board:

1. Note the document titled 'A 20-year Economic Vision for Regional NSW' that was launched by the NSW government on Monday 30 July 2018.

2. Ensure that the MNCJO Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities (that is to be developed by the end of December 2018), references this regional economic vision document.

REPORT

In July 2018 the NSW Government released A 20-year Economic Vision for Regional NSW

Extract:

Our vision charts economic growth in key sectors, increased regional populations, and supporting infrastructure and services.

This 20-year plan focuses on economic growth that promotes wellbeing in regional communities. It maximises economies of scale in infrastructure and services, while minimising 'big city' characteristics of traffic congestion, pollution and affordability issues.17 Many regional centres have room to grow to a size that can bring benefits including greater cultural and leisure activities, knowledge economies, and more specialist goods and services, without compromising a sense of community and connectedness.

We envisage more employment opportunities in regional NSW, which in turn retains and attracts younger generations and creates sustainable, thriving regional cities and towns. We see our regions retaining their local identity, rather than becoming more like Sydney. Regional areas will offer valued alternatives to city living and connect via the hub-and-spoke model described in the Future Transport Strategy 2056.

Sustainable jobs growth will be supported by regions' endowments, created or natural. Innovation in regional NSW will develop high-value service and commodity sectors to leverage cutting-edge technology. For example, NSW already has nascent industries working on generating and storing energy to meet our future needs. We also see opportunities for innovation on issues such as retaining experienced employees in the workforce for longer, and better connecting young regional people to the training, job exposure and mentorship that those experienced workers can provide.

Attachment: C A 20-year Economic Vision for Regional NSW

Item: 6.10
Subject: TROPICAL SODA APPLE
File/Index:
Presented by: General Managers

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board:

1. Liaises with neighbouring JOs i.e. the New England JO, the Northern Rivers JO and the Namoi JO that are impacted by the infestation of TSA, to develop a united approach to garner support to address this issue.

2. Seeks representation with relevant State and Federal Agricultural Minsters, the Deputy Premier and the Federal National Party Leader to advocate for funding to address the TSA issues being faced by the JO Councils.

REPORT

Tropical Soda Apple (TSA), first identified in Australia on the Upper Macleay in August 2010, has been an introduced disaster in a number of areas of Northern NSW for many lands owners and managers.

The Biosecurity breach of allowing TSA to be present in Australia, particularly the targeted area of the North Coast, requires additional and significant funding to decrease its numbers with the aim of eradication, it cannot be left to local communities, farmers, landowners and land managers to protect the rest of New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and the rest of Australia.

TSA invades properties quicker than most other weeds, northern NSW has proven to be well liked by this highly invasive plant. The plants quickly grow, flower and fruit in a matter of months. The fruit creates seeds as soon as they begin to form, they have 200 to 400 seeds per fruit and it is said 45,000 seeds can be produced per plant. It can potentially generate a monopoly on pastures resulting in zero carrying capacity.

TSA is a native of north eastern Argentina, south eastern Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. It was first recorded in Florida in 1987 and was known to infest 10,000 hectares by 1990 and half a million hectares by 1995.

In 2011, it was identified in areas on the North Coast of NSW with infestations of TSA such as Upper Macleay (Armidale Shire and Kempsey Shire), Coffs Harbour, Clarence, Rous County Council area in the Far North Coast, cattle tracked through the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) from those areas potentially went to 7500 properties in NSW, QLD and VIC.

The funding to date has had a significant impact in reducing TSA from riparian areas, however, the nature of this plant is unpredictable and relentless. It has now been proven that the seed of this plant survives for up to or more than five (5) years, information from USA studies indicated approximately 26 months, however in Australia with studies carried out by DPI, it could be estimated to be up to 10 years.

Additional and ongoing funding is urgently required from all levels of government to assist in the eradication of TSA, to enable a sustainable on-ground programs ideally over five (5) years and to support the ongoing viability of agricultural land.

This commitment will have positive follow on effects such as:
- Reduced fruiting plants
- Less plants producing fruit
- Reduced number of plants and fruit will lessen the number of animals feeding on fruit becoming carriers
- Governments will be assisting and supporting the Biosecurity (Tropical Soda Apple) Control Order 2017
- Maintain the carrying capacity of valuable grazing lands on the North Coast
- Prevent this highly invasive weed being introduced to other areas.

The experience in Macleay River system is that flooding or river rise events have proven to be a significant vehicle to spread the TSA down-stream to properties along the riparian zone and into some areas of the floodplain. This has also been the case in other areas of Northern NSW.

Weather events and the palatable nature of TSA for animals and birds exacerbate the proliferation of this invasive species. It is a direct threat to the agricultural industry and requires a whole of government response. The eradication of this pest cannot be borne by the local farming communities and Councils alone.

Item: 6.11

Subject: JOINT ORGANISATION GENERAL MANAGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

File/Index:

Presented by: General Managers

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board in accordance with Clause 4.9 of the MNCJO Charter formally establish the MNC Joint Organisation General Managers Advisory Committee (GMAC).

Item: **6.12**
Subject: **EXECUTIVE OFFICER INVOICES**
File/Index:
Presented by: General Managers

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board authorises the General Manager of Port Macquarie-Hastings Council (or their delegate) to approve payment of the Executive Officer invoices, noting that Port Macquarie-Hastings Council manage the MNCJO finances on behalf of the MNCJO.

Item: 6.13
Subject: **EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT**
File/Index:
Presented by: Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board note the Executive Officer's Report.

REPORT

The following activities for the establishment of the MNCJO have been undertaken or are pending.

Action	Status	Timeframe
MNCJO Charter	Adopted in principle 13/6/18 Comments received	For adoption 17 August
Code of Meeting Practice	Adopted in principle 13/6/18 Comments Received	For adoption 17 August
Payment of expenses and provision of facilities	Adopted in principle 13/6/18 Comments received	For adoption 17 August
Public Interest Disclosures Policy	For review	For Adoption 17 August
Draft Revenue Policy	For review	Recommend defer
Model Code of Conduct	Adopted 13/6/18	
Code of Conduct Reviewers	Adopted 13/6/18	
Bank account opened	Completed	
OLG JO Funding Agreement	Completed	22 June 2018
Vendor details and bank account details to OLG	Completed	
ABN and TFN	Completed	
Register for GST	Completed	
Reserving a domain name	Completed	
Phone number and email address	Completed	
Adopt a logo	Completed	
Separate Office software licence (MNCJO)	Completed	
Quote for letter head	Completed	August 2018
Inaugural JO network meeting, Chairs & EOs		15 &16 August 2018
Payment of fees to Board members	Permissible, needs to be determined.	
Arrangements for workshop - UTS	Scheduled , determine strategic priorities	14 September 2018
Submit plan to OLG for expenditure of Establishment Fund	Funding Deed signed and submitted – Funds need to be expended by June 2020	28 September 2018
Statement of Regional Priorities		30 December 2018

Item: 7
Subject: CONFIDENTIAL

Item: 7.1
Subject: EXECUTIVE OFFICER ARRANGEMENTS
File/Index:
Presented by: General Managers

MEETING CLOSE:

PRESENT

Voting Members:

Mayor Dominic King, Bellingen Shire Council
Mayor Liz Campbell, Kempsey Shire Council
Mayor Peta Pinson, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council

Non-Voting Members:

Matt Fanning A/ General Manager, Bellingen Shire Council
Craig Milburn, General Manager, Kempsey Shire Council
Craig Swift-McNair General Manager, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council
Tanya Latanville A/ Director North Coast, Department Premier and Cabinet

Other Attendees:

Melissa Gibbs Director Policy and Sector Development, Office of Local Government
Anita Gambhir, Principal Project Officer, Office of Local Government

The meeting opened 9.35 am

1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Returning Officer Craig Swift-McNair opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed members and guests to the Inaugural meeting of the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation (MNCJO).

2. APOLOGIES

RESOLVED: King/ Pinson

That the Board accept the apology of Liz Jeremy, General Manager Bellingen Shire Council

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: Dominic King, Peta Pinson, Liz Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

3. ELECTION OF A CHAIRPERSON AND DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON FOR THE MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION

3.1 ELECTION OF A CHAIRPERSON AND DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON FOR THE MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION.

1. The Returning Officer asked for nominations for the position of Chair and receiving only one, Mayor Liz Campbell, Kempsey Shire Council was declared the Chairperson of the MNCJO.
2. The Returning Officer asked for nominations for the position of Deputy Chair and receiving only one, Mayor Dominic King, Bellingen Shire Council was declared Deputy Chairperson of the MNCJO.

9.38am: The Chair of the MNCJO, Mayor Liz Campbell presided.

3.2 PROCLAMATION AND REGULATION EFFECTING THE MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION

RESOLVED: Pinson/ King

That the Board note the Proclamation and Regulation effecting the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

3.3 OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT - IMPLEMENTATION OF JOINT ORGANISATIONS

RESOLVED: Pinson/ King

That the Board note the Office of Local Government, Joint Organisation Implementation Guidance materials.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4. ITEMS OF BUSINESS

4.1   MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION - DRAFT CHARTER

RESOLVED: Pinson/ King

That the Board:

1. Adopt in principle the Draft Charter for the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation and refer the Draft Charter to member Councils for comment by 31 July 2018.
2. Consider comments provided from member Councils on the Draft MNCJO Charter at the August 2018 Board meeting for adoption of the Charter or as amended if required.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4.2   MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION LOGO AND VISUAL IDENTITY

RESOLVED: King/ Pinson

That the Board adopt the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation logo suite and visual identity.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4.3   APPOINTMENT OF THE INTERIM EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RESOLVED: Pinson/ King

That the Board:

1. Appoint Kathy Oliver to the position of interim Executive Officer of the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation (MNCJO) for a period of three months.
2. Approve of the Interim Executive Officer Arrangements.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4.4   DELEGATIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RESOLVED: Pinson/ King

That the Board adopt the delegations to the role of Executive Officer as outlined in the body of this report.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4.5   ADOPTION OF A CODE OF CONDUCT AND PROCEDURES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

RESOLVED: King/ Pinson

That the Board:

1. Adopt the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW (the Model Code).
2. Adopt the Procedures for the Administration for the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4.6   CODE OF CONDUCT REVIEWERS FOR UTILISATION BY THE MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION

RESOLVED: Pinson/ King

That the Board:

1. For the purposes of Code of Conduct Reviews, use the investigation service suppliers as approved by the Office of Local Government under the Performance and Management Services, Prequalification Scheme administered by NSW Procurement.
2. Review the Draft Public Interest Disclosures Policy for consideration of at the August 2018 Board meeting.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4.7   ADOPTION OF A CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

RESOLVED: King/ Pinson

That the Board:

1. Adopt in principle the draft Code of Meeting Practice and refer the draft to member Councils for their comment by 31 July 2018.
2. Consider comments from member Councils on the draft Code of Meeting Practice at the August 2018 Board meeting for adoption or as amended if required.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4.8   MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION - DRAFT PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND FACILITIES POLICY

RESOLVED: King/ Pinson

That the Board:

1. Adopt in principle the draft policy Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities and refer the draft policy to member Councils for their comment by 31 July 2018.
2. Consider the comments provided from member Councils on the draft Policy Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities at the August 2018 Board meeting for adoption of the Policy or as amended if required.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4.9   DISCLOSURE OF DELEGATES – DESIGNATED PERSONS (S449 LG. Act).

RESOLVED: Pinson/ King

That the Board:

1. Note that all Board members and the Executive Officer are automatically Designated Persons for the purposes of S449 of the Local Government Act.
2. Note that Deputy Mayors of member Councils as alternatives to the Mayors on the Joint Organisation Board should be treated as Designated Persons.
3. Complete and return the Designated Person, Disclosure of Interest forms to the Executive Officer by 30 June 2018.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4.10   JOINT ORGANISATION ESTABLISHMENT TIMELINE

RESOLVED: Pinson/ King

That the Board:

1. Note the timeline for the implementation of the Joint Organisation.
2. Taking into consideration the report at Item 4.4 of this agenda, delegate to the interim Executive Officer to make arrangements for:
    a. Opening a bank account
    b. Obtaining an ABN and TFN
    c. Nominating signatories
    d. Reserving a domain name
    e. Establishing a phone number and email address.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4.11   MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION MEETINGS 2018 -2019

RESOLVED: Pinson/ King

That the Board adopt the Joint Organisation meeting schedule as provided in this report, with a change from 10 August 2018 to 17 August 2018 for the Ordinary Board Meeting.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4.12   CORRESPONDENCE TO JOINT ORGANISATION NON-MEMBER COUNCILS

RESOLVED: Pinson/ King

That the Board note that Clarence Valley Council, Coffs Harbour City Council and Nambucca Shire Council have received correspondence from the Deputy Premier, The Hon. John Barilaro MP and the Minister for Local Government, The Hon. Gabrielle Upton MP advising the respective Councils that the NSW Government will not be proclaiming any additional Joint Organisations in NSW.

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

4.13   MID NORTH COAST JOINT ORGANISATION
**   STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC REGIONAL PRIORITIES**

RESOLVED: Pinson/ King

That the Board supports the engagement of the University of Technology Sydney: Centre for Local Government (UTS:CLG) to assist in the development of the Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities based on work previously undertaken by the UTS:CLG for the Mid North Coast Regional Organisation of Councils (MIDROC).

CARRIED: 3/0
FOR: King, Pinson, Campbell
AGAINST: Nil

MEETING CLOSE: 9.53am

…………………………………...

Mayor Liz Campbell

Chair

CHARTER

Adopted on   **2018**

Contact details

Mid North Coast Joint Organisation
17 Burrawan Street
Port Macquarie

Postal Address:
PO Box 84
PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444

Telephone: Executive Officer   0407 069 592
Email: executive.officer@mncjo.nsw.gov.au

Amendments to the MNCJO Charter

Number	Amendment	Date
1.	First Draft of MNCJO Charter	4 June 2018
2.	Amended following Member Council consultations	6 August 2018

Table of Contents

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Name and legal status

(a)   The name of the Organisation is Mid North Coast Joint Organisation.

(b)   The Organisation is a body corporate established on 9 May 2018 by proclamation under Part 7 Chapter 12 of the Local Government Act 1993.

1.2   Interpretation

This Charter is to be interpreted in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 and the Interpretation Act 1987.

1.3   Definitions

The following definitions apply in this Charter:

Act means the Local Government Act 1993.

Associate Member means those councils and other organisation's that are members of the Organisation. Associate members are non-voting members.

Board means the Board of the Organisation consisting of the Voting Representatives and Non-Voting Representatives set out in clause 4.1 of this Charter, acting collectively.

Charter means this document, as amended from time to time.

Chairperson means the person elected to the office of chairperson by the Voting Representatives under clause 4.7 of this Charter.

Councillor means a person elected or appointed to civic office and includes a Mayor.

Executive Officer means the person employed by the Organisation under clause 4.8 of this Charter.

General Manager means the person employed by a council as its general manager.

Member Councils means the councils proclaimed under the Act to be the members of the Organisation.

Mayor means the mayor of a Member Council.

Non-Voting Representative means the Board representatives appointed pursuant to clause 4.2 of this Charter. Organisation means Mid North Coast Joint Organisation.

Principal Functions means the functions set out in clause 2.2 of this Charter or as otherwise prescribed by the Act or Regulations.

Regulations means the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005.

Supplementary Functions means the functions approved by the Board under clause 2.3 of this Charter.

Voting Representative means a representative of a Member Council on the Board.

1.4 Adopting the Charter

(a) This charter, in the form originally adopted by the Board, was approved in consultation with member councils.

(b) This Charter was adopted by the Board on [date]

1.4 Amending the Charter

This Charter may be amended from time to time by Resolution.

2. ESTABLISHMENT

2.1 Vision and principles

(a) The vision of the Organisation is set from time to time by the Board to reflect the collective regional priorities and aspirations of its Member Councils

(b) At the date of adoption of this Charter the vision of the Organisation, as the successor to the regional organisation of councils known as Mid North Coast Regional Organisation of Councils (or MIDROC) is for the Mid North Coast Joint Organisation to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of communities in the Mid North Coast region.

2.2 Principal functions

In accordance with the Act, the principal functions of the Organisation are:

(a) to establish strategic regional priorities for the Joint Organisation area and to establish strategies and plans for delivering those priorities;

(b) to provide regional leadership for the Joint Organisation area and to be an advocate for strategic regional priorities;

(c) to identify and take up opportunities for inter-governmental cooperation on matters relating to the Joint Organisation area; and additionally

(d) deliver cost savings to member councils.

2.3 Supplementary functions

The Organisation may perform functions, supplementary or ancillary to its Primary Functions, if:

(a) A Member Council or Councils Resolve to be part of the supplementary functions and,

(b) the objective of undertaking those functions is to provide support for the operations of its Member Councils aimed at strengthening local government in its joint organisation area; and

(c) the scope, operational principles and business plan for those Supplementary Functions is approved by a Resolution of the Board

3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1 Member Councils

The following are the Member Councils of the Organisation as at the date of its establishment:

(a) Bellingen Shire Council;

(b) Kempsey Shire Council;

(c) Port Macquarie-Hastings Council;

3.2 Changes in membership

(a) An additional council may become a Member Council if:

   (i) it applies in writing the Organisation to become a Member Council pursuant to a resolution to that effect by its governing body;

   (ii) it is approved as a Member Council by the Board;

   (iii) it applies in writing to the NSW State Government to become a Member Council pursuant to a resolution to that effect by its governing body; and

   (iv) the proclamation establishing the Organisation is amended to include the additional Member Council and the area of the Organisation is extended to include the local government area of that council.

(b) A Member Council may withdraw as a Member Council of the Organisation if:

   (i) it has given 12 months' notice in writing to the Organisation to withdraw as a Member Council pursuant to a resolution to that effect by its governing body;

   (ii) it applies in writing to NSW State Government to withdraw as a Member Council pursuant to a resolution to that effect by its governing body; and

   (iii) the proclamation establishing the Organisation is amended to remove the Member Council and the area of the Organisation is amended to excise the local government area of that council.

(c) An Associate Member:

   (i) may withdraw as an Associate Member on giving [6 months] notice in writing to the Organisation; and

   (ii) may be removed as an Associate Member by Resolution.

3.4   Financial Contributions

The financial contributions are to be set in consultation with Member Councils and should consider;

(a)   an annual base fee of the same amount for each Member Council; and

(b)   fees reviewed in consideration of the program of works and activities

(c)   the annual financial contribution required to be made by each Associate Member is to be based on a methodology adopted by the Board.

4.   THE BOARD AND MANAGEMENT

4.1   Membership of the Board

The Board consists of:

(a)   the Mayors of each Member Council, who are the Voting Representatives or a replacement Councillor of a Member Council, (if the Mayor is removed from office as a Voting Representative by the Minister under the Act);

(b)   the alternate for a Voting Representative appointed by the Member Council under the Regulations, while acting in the place of the Voting Representative; and

(c)   the Non-Voting Representatives appointed under clause 4.2.

4.2   Non-Voting Representatives

(a)   The following persons are Non-Voting Representatives on the Board:

(i)   an employee of the public service nominated by the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet;

(ii)   the General Managers of Member Councils

(iii)   any other person or a member of a class of persons prescribed by the Regulations.

(b)   Non-Voting Representatives may attend and speak at meetings of the Board but may not move, second, amend or vote on motions.

(c)   The following persons may attend meetings of the Board in an advisory capacity and may be members of committees established under clause 4.9:

(i)   the Executive Officer

4.3 Powers of the Board

Except as otherwise required by the Act, any other applicable law or this Charter, the Board:

(a) has power to direct and control the affairs of the Organisation in carrying out its functions, in consultation with the Executive Officer; and

(b) may exercise every right, power or capacity of the Organisation.

4.4 Exercise of powers

A power of the Board can be exercised only:

(a) by resolution passed at a meeting of the Board; or

(b) in accordance with a delegation of the power under clause 4.5

4.5 Power to delegate

(a) The Board may delegate any of its powers.

(b) The Board may revoke a delegation previously made whether or not the delegation is expressed to be for a specified period.

(c) A delegation of powers may be made:

(i) to the Executive Officer, to a committee established under clause 4.9, to a Member Council or to any other person or body;

(ii) for a specified period or without specifying a period; and

(iii) on the terms (including power to further delegate) and subject to any restrictions the Board decides.

(d) A document of delegation may contain the provisions for the protection and convenience of those who deal with the delegate that the Board thinks appropriate.

4.6 Acceptance of delegations

The Organisation may not accept the delegation to it by a Member Council of a function of that Member Council.

4.7 Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson

(a) The Chairperson is to be elected from amongst the Voting Representatives who are mayors and will hold office in accordance with the Act and Regulations.

(b) The Chairperson while acting as such:

(i) has a deliberative vote; and

(ii) does not have a casting vote

(c)   The Board may elect a Deputy Chairperson from amongst the Voting Representatives who are Mayors following the election of the Chairperson, to hold office for the term of the Chairperson.

(d)   In the absence of the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson (or in their absence), a person elected by the Voting Representatives at the meeting is to preside at a meeting of the Board and does not have a casting vote.

4.8   Executive Officer

The Board must appoint an Executive Officer in accordance with the Act and Regulations.

4.9   Committees

For the purpose of carrying out its functions, the Organisation may by resolution of the Board establish:

(a)   standing committees or divisions within the Organisation;

(b)   ad hoc advisory committees; and

(c)   working groups,

and determine their membership and terms of reference.

4.10   Common seal

(a)   The Board may decide whether or not the Organisation has a common seal.

(b)   The common seal may only be used with the authority of the Board.

(c)   The fixing of the common seal to a document must be witnessed:

(i)   by two Voting Representatives; or

(ii)   by one Voting Representative and the Executive Officer.

5.   MEETINGS

5.1   Meeting frequency

The Board will meet:

(a)   at least once in each quarter on such date and at such place and time as the Board decides; and

(b)   at such other times as the Chairman may decide.

5.2   Use of technology

A Board meeting may be held using any means of audio or audio visual communication by which each Board member participating can hear and be heard by each other Board member participating. A Board meeting held solely or partly by technology is treated as held at the place at which the greatest number of the Board members is present or, if an equal number of Board members is located in each of two or more places, at the place where the chairman of the meeting is located.

5.3 Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of the board is a majority of voting representatives entitled to vote under the JO charter

No business may be transacted at a meeting of the Board without a quorum being present at the time the business is transacted.

5.4 Voting

(a) Each Voting Representative has one vote at a meeting of the Board.

(b) A resolution of the Board is passed:

  (i) In the case of an Ordinary Resolution, by consensus by Representatives entitled to vote on the resolution; and

  (ii) in the event that a consensus cannot be reached, Dispute Resolution procedures may be implemented.

(c) All decisions of the Board are to be made by Ordinary Resolution.

6 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

In the event of a dispute between Board Members that arises from or relates to the Organisation the following steps will be taken to resolve the dispute;

(a) relevant Members will give notice to the Board Members specifying the nature of the dispute;

(b) on receipt of notice Member councils must endeavor in good faith to resolve the dispute promptly using informal resolution techniques such as independent mediation, independent expert evaluation or determination or similar techniques as agreed to by those Members; and

(c) Members that are parties to the dispute will share the mediator's costs equally.

(d) Relevant Members will advise the Organisation prior to taking legal action.

7. CONSULTATION and PUBLICATION

(a) The Organisation will consult with all Members in preparing and reporting on the following documents required under the Act and will publish the adopted versions on the Joint Organisation website;

  (i) Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities
  (ii) Annual revenue Statement
  (iii) Audited annual reports

(b)   In addition to the requirements under the Act, the MNCJO will;

(i)   consult with Member Councils in regards to financial contributions.
(ii)   provide all meeting agendas, reports prior to the meeting and the subsequent minutes of these meetings to the Board and all member Councils.

8.   INDEMNITY AND INSURANCE

8.1   Indemnity

(a)   Subject to and so far as permitted by the Act and any other applicable law the Organisation must indemnify every member of the Board and the staff of the Organisation against any Liability incurred as such, unless the Liability arises out of conduct involving a lack of good faith.

(b)   This indemnity is a continuing indemnity. It applies in respect of all acts done by a person while a member of the Board or the staff of the Organisation even though the person is not member of the Board or the staff of the Organisation at the time the claim is made.

(c)   In this clause, Liability means a liability of any kind (whether actual or contingent and whether fixed or unascertained) and includes costs, damages and expenses, including costs and expenses incurred in connection with any investigation or inquiry by a government agency or a liquidator.

8.2   Insurance

Subject to the Act and any other applicable law, the Organisation may enter into, and pay premiums on, a contract of insurance in respect of any person.

8.3   Liability on winding up

The liability of a Member Council or an Associate Member to contribute towards the payment of the debts and liabilities of the Organisation or the costs, charges and expenses of the winding up of the Organisation is limited to the amount, if any, unpaid by the Member Council or Associate Member in respect of the financial contributions required by clause 3.4.

CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

Date adopted:

Revision No:

Date last revised:

Code of Meeting Practice

Introduction

This Code of Meeting Practice has been established by the Joint Organisation (JO) pursuant to Section 360(2) of the Local Government Act 1993 (The Act). The Code is supplementary to the Act and Regulations, which cover most aspects of meeting procedure.

1.   Board Meetings

Ordinary meetings of the JO will commence at 9.30am. At least four meetings per annum will be held, refer to Section 396 of the Local Government Act.

The JO may change the time or date of any particular meetings, by resolution at a preceding meeting, without prior notice being given.

The meeting schedule shall be as follows:

Month	Meeting	Location
17 August 2018	Ordinary Board Meeting	Bellingen Shire Council
5 October 2018	Ordinary Board Meeting	Port Macquarie Hastings Council
1 December 2018	Ordinary Board Meeting	Kempsey Shire Council
1 February 2019	Ordinary Board Meeting	Bellingen Shire Council
5 April 2019	Ordinary Board Meeting	Port Macquarie Hastings Council
7 June 2019	Annual General Meeting	Kempsey Shire Council

The Board of a Joint Organisation may transact any of its business at a meeting at which representatives (or some representatives) participate by telephone or other electronic means, but only if the representative who is speaking can be heard by all other representatives.

2.   Notice of Meeting

(a)   An agenda for meetings of the Board will be provided to members five (5) working days before the meeting.

(b)   Subsequent to circulation to members the Agenda will be placed on the JO website.

3.   Extraordinary Meetings

(a)   Call by Board Members for Extraordinary meetings will be guided by Section 366 of the Local Government Act

(b)   The Chairperson may, if he/she is of the opinion that a situation exists which warrants the holding of an extraordinary meeting, at short notice, call such a meeting.

The period of notice for such a meeting shall be at the Chairperson's discretion [Local Government Act S:367(2)].

4.   Quorum

(a)   JO Board meetings – The quorum for a meeting of the board is a majority of voting representatives entitled to vote under the JO Charter.

(b)   Non-voting Representatives in attendance – The following are non-voting representatives of the Joint Organisation:

   (i)   The NSW Government, as represented by a nominee of the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

   (ii)   General Managers of member Councils

   (iii)   Any other non-voting representative as approved by the Board

(c)   A meeting of a JO must be adjourned if a quorum is not present:

   (i)   within half an hour after the time designated for the holding of the meeting;

   (ii)   at any time during the meeting.

In either case, the meeting must be adjourned to a time, date (including later that day) and place fixed:

   (i)   by the Chairperson; or,

   (ii)   in his or her absence – by the majority of the Members present; or

   (iii)   failing that, by the Executive Officer.

The Executive Officer must record in the JO's Minutes the circumstances relating to the absence of a quorum (including the reasons for the absence of a quorum) at or arising during a meeting of the JO, together with the names of the members present (Local Government (General) Regulation Clause 233).

5.   Voting Entitlements

(a)   JO meetings – There is one voting representative for each Member Council.

(b)   A motion at a meeting of the Board of a JO is taken to be defeated in the event that no consensus on the item in question can be reached.

(In effect, this means that, unlike Councils, the Chairperson of the Joint Organisation Board does not have a casting vote.)

(c)   Non-voting representatives are entitled to participate in debate and speak on (but not move, second, amend or vote on) motions.

6.   Rescinding or Altering Resolutions

(a)   See Section (372) Local Government Act.

(b)   Effect will not be given to any resolution of the JO until 12 noon on the first working day after the date of the Ordinary or Extraordinary meeting, at which the resolution was passed.

(c)   The JO will not accept a Rescission Motion after noon on the first working day following the Ordinary meeting or Extraordinary meeting of the JO.

7.   Lodgement of Notices of Motion

Form of giving Notice of Motion

Every Notice of Motion relating to any new subject or matter not already before the JO distinctly stating the precise object proposed, shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Officer duly signed by the voting representative of the Member Council giving Notice of at least ten (10) days before the meeting at which the matter is to be taken into consideration (Local Government (General) Clause 241).

Order of Notices of Motion

All Notices of Motion shall be dated and numbered as received and shall be entered by the Executive Officer, subject to Local Government (General) Regulation Clause 240, upon the agenda paper in the order in which they are received and except by the permission of the JO, all such Notices of Motion shall be taken and considered in the order in which they appear on the agenda paper.

Limitation of Notices

A member shall not have more than three Notices of Motion on the Agenda Paper at the same time.

8.   Questions Without Notice

In alignment with the Local Government (General) Regulation, Clause 249.

Questions may be put to the Board and Executive Officer
(1)   A Board Member:

(a)   may, through the chairperson, put a question to another Board member or Executive Officer, and

(b)   may, through the General Manager, put a question to a council employee.

(2)   However, a Board Member, Executive Officer or council employee to whom a question is put is entitled to be given reasonable notice of the question and, in particular, sufficient notice to enable reference to be made to other persons or to documents.

(3)   The Board Member must put every such question directly, succinctly and without argument.

(4)   The chairperson must not permit discussion on any reply or refusal to reply to a question put to a Board Member, Executive Officer or council employee under this clause.

9. Standing Orders

The general order of business at every Ordinary meeting of the JO shall be:

1. Meeting commences at 9.30 am

2. Acknowledgement of Country

3. Apologies

4. Confirmation of Minutes

5. Declaration of Pecuniary and Non Pecuniary Interest

6. Speakers (invitation to be approved by Chairperson or Executive Officer)

7. Reports

8. Late Reports

9. Correspondence

10. Matters raised by Voting and Non-Voting Representatives

11. Resolve into Confidential Committee of the Whole to deal with Confidential Reports

12. Resolve into Open meeting

13. Adopt report of Confidential Committee

14. Close

Provided that the JO may, after the confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting, make a variation of the order of the business to accord precedence to any matter set down on the business paper for consideration.

10. Method of Adoption of Reports

Voting and Non-Voting representatives always speak to a Motion. No debate is allowed on any item without a motion having first been moved and seconded.

11. Motions of Dissent

See Local Government (General) Regulation, Clause 248.

12. News Media and public attendance at JO Board and Committee Meetings

The news media and members of the public are invited to attend all JO Board and Committee meetings. The media and the public will be only excluded from attendance when the Board or Committee is considering matters in Confidential pursuant to Section 10A of the Local Government Act (1993),

Prior to distributing the business paper for any JO Board or Committee meetings, the Executive Officer will determine, in accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulation, Clause 240 if any items in the business paper come within the provisions of this Section and will mark any such items "CONFIDENTIAL".

Business papers for all JO and Committee meetings will only be made available on the web for public perusal (following distribution to the Board members). Business papers made

available to the public will exclude those reports marked "Confidential" in the terms of the above.

13.   Electronic recording of JO or Committee meeting

The Executive Officer may use an electronic recorder, or any other electronic recording device, to record the proceedings of a meeting of the JO or a committee for the purpose of ensuring that the minutes accurately record the proceedings.

The Executive Officer will, if the Executive Officer proposes to use an electronic recording device, inform the person presiding at the meeting who will, immediately after the opening of the meeting, tell the meeting that the proceedings are to be recorded.

Any electronic recording made by the Executive Officer of the proceedings of a meeting of the Council or a Committee, and any copy of such a recording, will be deleted by the Executive Officer as soon as possible after the minutes of the meeting are confirmed.

With the exception of the Executive Officer, no person may use any electronic recording device, to record the proceedings of a meeting of the JO or a committee unless the JO has so resolved, and the use is in accordance with the conditions of use specified in the resolution. In any resolution allowing the use of any electronic recording device the JO shall specify the meeting, or meetings, to which the resolution is to relate and the conditions, if any, subject to which the use is permitted.

14.   Participation by members of the public

Official visitors are persons that the JO has invited to attend a meeting.

The Chairperson, Executive Officer or the person presiding at a meeting will determine the time to be allocated for an official visitor to address a meeting of the JO, including the time to be allocated for questions by representatives to the official visitor.

Members of the public wishing to address a meeting of the JO will give their names and details of the item of business on which they wish to address the meeting to the Executive Officer, prior to the commencement of the meeting.

There will be a maximum of three (3) public speakers permitted to address the Board. If there are more than three (3) speakers wishing to speak, then the first three (3) requests received will have precedence.

The Chairperson or the person presiding at a meeting will determine by reference to the list prepared by the Executive officer prior to the commencement of the meeting, what members of the public will be permitted to address a meeting of the JO.

The Chairperson or the person presiding at a meeting will announce the name of any person who is to be permitted to address the meeting at the start of the meeting.

A person permitted to address the meeting will be allowed three (3) minutes, without interruption by representatives, to do so. At the end of the three (3) minutes, if the person indicates that they wish to continue, the Chairperson or the person presiding at the meeting may allow an additional 2 minutes. No further additional time will be allowed unless the JO so resolves.

15. Election of Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Members of Committees

Election of the JO Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson (if required) by the voting representatives of the member Councils – See Local Government (General) Regulation, Part II – Elections: Division 12 and Schedule 8.

The election of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson will be considered as an item in the Executive Officer's Report to the JO meeting.

(a)   at the first meeting of the JO after an ordinary election of members of the JO, and

(b)   at the first meeting of the JO after each two-year anniversary of that ordinary election until the next ordinary election of members of the JO is held.

16. Pecuniary Interest – Representatives and Staff

Voting and Non-Voting representatives or staff, in matters before the JO or Committee meetings, who have a pecuniary interest must disclose the interest and the nature of the interest to the meeting when the declarations of interest are requested.

Voting and Non-Voting representatives or staff must, when the matter is being considered, re-declare their interest and the nature of the interest and leave the room while the matter is being determined.

Voting and Non-Voting representatives and staff should refer to the JO's Code of Conduct for more detailed information.

17. Committees

17.1 Appointment and Purpose (Charter)

A JO Board may appoint or elect such Committees as it considers necessary (Section 355(b) and (c), (1993) Local Government Act and Local Government (General) 2005 Regulation, Clause 260). The JO Board will specify the charter of each of its Committees when the committee is appointed or elected, but may from time to time amend those charters, by a resolution of the Board.

Note: Committees are an extension of the JO into a specialised area. They derive any powers they may have from the JO and can exercise these powers through the JO by making recommendations which the JO can adopt, or by acting in accordance with a specific delegation of powers. The JO's Committee structure can vary from time to time in accordance with a specific JO resolution. A list of the JO's Committees is available from the Executive Officer's office.

Each Committee shall regulate its own procedures, subject to compliance with the Local Government Act 1993, Local Government (General) Regulation and the Code of meeting Practice (Clause 265 – local Government (General) Regulation).

17.2 Responsibilities

(i)   to consider agenda items, and make recommendations to the JO Board (or decisions, if holding delegated authority from the JO);

(ii)   to observe requirements of The Local Government Act (1993), Local Government (General) Regulation (2005) and this Code of Meeting Practice;

(iii)   to observe requirements of the Charter given by the JO Board;

(iv)   to represent the views of the organisations you represent (if any) on the JO's Committee.

Note: Should a Committee wish to recommend to the JO Board on a matter outside its charter, it should do so by acknowledging this, then recommend the JO refer such matter to the appropriate Committee, for consideration and recommendation.

17.3   Procedural Matters

(i)   Agendas for Committee meetings will be circulated to members and all voting and non-voting representatives at least five (5) days before the meeting. (Local Government (General) Regulation 262).

(ii)   The Agenda will include advice as to whether such previous report was adopted by the JO Board, amended and adopted, or rejected.

(iii)   Advice – an appropriate employee will attend Committee meetings to advise on agenda matters, if required.

18.   Absence from Committee meetings

See Clause 268 of the Local Government (General) Regulation.

19.   Election of Chairs of Committees

(a)   See Clause 267 of the Local Government (General) Regulation.

(b)   The Chair's responsibility is to ensure that the Committee's charter is implemented and to chair meetings in accordance with the Act, Regulations and Code. The Chair is accountable to the JO Board through the JO Chairperson.

20.   Record of Meetings

The Executive Officer or his/her representative will attend all meetings and will keep an accurate record of proceedings in accordance with section 375(1) of the Local Government Act and the Local Government (General) Regulation, Clause 254 for:

(i)   JO Board meetings;

(ii)   JO Committees (Local Government (General) Regulation, Clause 266). Minutes are to be kept and presented to the JO Board for all meetings of Committees, for noting and / or action as appropriate.

21.   Closed meetings – Public Submissions

The JO Board or a Committee of the JO of which all the members are Voting Representatives, may close to the public parts of the meeting of the JOs or committees in accordance with Sections 10A, 10B, 10C and 10D of the Local Government Act.

Members of the public must be given the opportunity immediately after a resolution to refer the matter into Confidential Committee has been moved or seconded, to make representations on whether a matter should be dealt with in Confidential Committee or not. The time permitted for each speaker will be one minute and an overall maximum of five minutes (five speakers). (See Clause 252, Local Government (General) Regulation).

POLICY: **PAYMENT OF EXPENSES AND PROVISION OF FACILITIES TO MEMBERS OF THE BOARD**

Date Policy Adopted:

Date Due for Revision:

Preamble

The Joint Organisation (JO) Expenses and Provision of Facilities Policy is designed to cover any needs associated with the exercise by Board Members and the Chairperson of their JO functions that are not otherwise covered under member Council's Expenses and Facilities policies.

Board Members and the Chairperson are not entitled to make a claim under a JO Expenses and Provision of Facilities Policy where a claim has been covered under a member Council's policy and vice versa.

1. EXPENSES

(a) Travel Expenses

Members cover their own costs for accommodation and travel to and from meetings of the Board and its Committees, but may claim these expenses from their own Council as these expenses are incurred in the course of undertaking Council business.

Expenses for use of a private motor vehicle will be based on the relevant kilometre rate in the Local Government Award or relevant member Council policy.

(b) Conferences, Seminars and Inspections – Reimbursement of Costs

Subject to JO approval or approval by the Chairperson if insufficient time for JO approval.

    (i)   Registration: including official luncheons, dinners and tours relevant to the conference.

    (ii)   Accommodation:

Meal allowances (dinner and lunch) -	$ 100 (per day)
Accommodation (capital city) -	$ 400 (per day)
Accommodation (country areas) -	$ 200 (per day)
and reasonable telephone costs.	

    (iii)   Accommodation for the night before or after the conference where necessary.

Expenses for representing the region will be considered by the Board if sufficient time allows or by the Chair where the request is made before the expense is incurred.

Expenses for use of a private motor vehicle will be based on the relevant kilometre rate in the Local Government Award or relevant member Council policy.

Travel by air (when required) to be by economy class.

The Chairperson needs the concurrence of the other voting Board members if insufficient time is available for the request to be approved in a formal Board meeting

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2. FACILITIES

(a) Members

The Members are to receive the benefit of the following JO facilities:

(i)   Meeting Meals and Refreshments – provision of meals and refreshments associated with JO, Committee and Working Parties/Special Committee meetings.

(ii) Meeting Rooms – Provision of meeting facilities for the purpose of JO, Committee and Working Parties/Special Committee meetings (and for meeting with constituents), where available.

(iii) Photocopiers – provision of photocopying facilities at the JO's Office for official purposes.

(b) Chairperson

In addition to those facilities provided to the Members, the Chairperson is to receive the benefit of:

(i)   Secretarial Services – word processing and administrative support provided by the Executive Officer;

(ii) Administrative Support – assistance with functions, organisation, meetings and the like for official purposes.

(c) Deputy Chairperson (if appointed)

In addition to those facilities provided to the Members, the Deputy Chairperson is to receive the benefits of the Chairperson when acting in the office of JO Chairperson.

(d) Arbitration of Claims

The Chairperson, (the Deputy Chairperson when the claim is made by the Chairperson) and the Executive Officer will be responsible for determining whether all claims are reasonable and within the guidelines as set by the policy adopted by the Organisation. Any member dissatisfied with the determination can request the matter be submitted to Council for consideration

POLICY: **PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES (PROTECTED DISCLOSURES)**

Date Policy Adopted:

Date Due for Revision:

OBJECTIVE: The aim of this policy is to establish guidelines to facilitate the introduction of an effective internal reporting system, which enables the Joint Organisation (JO) to acknowledge and act upon reports of *corruption, maladministration* and *serious and substantial waste*. These guidelines are to serve as Council's internal system for the purpose of the Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994. The Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 aims to encourage and facilitate disclosures – in the public interest – by:

- enhancing and augmenting established procedures for making disclosures,
- protecting persons from reprisals that might otherwise be inflicted on them because of these disclosures, and
- providing for those disclosures to be properly investigated and dealt with.

1. PURPOSE AND CONTEXT OF THE POLICY

The aim of this policy is to establish guidelines to facilitate the introduction of an effective internal reporting system, which enables the JO to acknowledge and act upon reports of *corruption, maladministration, serious and substantial waste, government information contravention and/or local government pecuniary interest contravention*. These guidelines are to serve as the JO's internal system for the purpose of the Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 (PID Act). The Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 aims to encourage and facilitate disclosures – in the public interest – by:

- enhancing and augmenting established procedures for making disclosures,
- protecting persons from reprisals that might otherwise be inflicted on them because of these disclosures, and
- providing for those disclosures to be properly investigated and dealt with.

The JO is committed to providing an appropriate avenue for staff and other parties to make Public Interest Disclosures and to provide a safe working environment for any person who makes a Public Interest Disclosure.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

This policy will apply to:

- both JO staff and representatives
- all permanent employees, whether full-time or part-time
- temporary or casual employees
- consultants
- individual contractors working for the JO.

The policy may also apply to other people who perform public official functions and their conduct and activities could be investigated by an investigating authority. This can include volunteers and those contracted to work for the JO.

3. WHAT SHOULD BE REPORTED?

You should report any wrongdoing you see relating to the work of the JO. Reports about the four categories of serious wrongdoing – corrupt conduct, maladministration, serious and substantial waste of public money, government information contravention, and also local government pecuniary interest contravention – will be dealt with under the PID Act as public interest disclosures and according to this policy.

(a)   Corrupt conduct

Corrupt conduct is the dishonest or partial exercise of official functions by a public official.

For example, this could include:

- the improper use of knowledge, power or position for personal gain or the advantage of others
- acting dishonestly or unfairly, or breaching public trust
- a member of the public influencing a public official to use their position in a way that is dishonest, biased or breaches public trust.

For more information about corrupt conduct, see the NSW Ombudsman's guidelines on what can be reported.

(b)   Maladministration

Maladministration is conduct that involves action or inaction of a serious nature that is contrary to law, unreasonable, unjust, oppressive or improperly discriminatory or based wholly or partly on improper motives.

For example, this could include:

- making a decision and/or taking action that is unlawful
- refusing to grant someone a licence for reasons that are not related to the merits of their application.

For more information about maladministration, see the NSW Ombudsman's guidelines on what can be reported.

(a)   Serious and substantial waste in local government

Serious and substantial waste is the uneconomical, inefficient or ineffective use of resources that could result in the loss or wastage of local government money. This includes all revenue, loans and other money collected, received or held by, for or on account of the JO.

For example, this could include:

- poor project management practices leading to projects running over time
- having poor or no processes in place for a system involving large amounts of public funds.

For more information about serious and substantial waste, see the NSW Ombudsman's guidelines on what can be reported.

(d)   Government information contravention

A government information contravention is a failure to properly fulfil functions under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act).

For example, this could include:

- destroying, concealing or altering records to prevent them from being released
- knowingly making decisions that are contrary to the legislation
- directing another person to make a decision that is contrary to the legislation. For more information about government information contravention, see the NSW Ombudsman's guidelines on what can be reported.

(e)   Local Government pecuniary interest contravention

A local government pecuniary interest contravention is a failure to fulfil certain functions under the *Local Government Act 1993* relating to the management of pecuniary interests. These include obligations to lodge disclosure of interests returns, lodge written declarations and disclose pecuniary interests at council and council committee meetings. A pecuniary interest is an interest that a person has in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to the person.

For example, this could include:

- a senior JO staff member recommending a family member for a JO contract and not declaring the relationship
- a general manager holding an undisclosed shareholding in a company competing for a council contract

For more information about local government pecuniary interest contravention, see the NSW Ombudsman's guidelines on what can be reported.

(f) Other wrongdoing

Although reports about the previous five categories of conduct can attract the specific protections of the PID Act, you should report all activities or incidents that you believe are wrong.

For example, these could include:

- harassment or unlawful discrimination
- reprisal action against a person who has reported wrongdoing
- practices that endanger the health or safety of staff or the public.

These types of issues should be reported to a supervisor, in line with the JO's policies. Copies of the policies are available from the Executive Officer of the JO

Even if these reports are not dealt with as public interest disclosures, the JO will investigate and consider each matter and make every attempt to protect the staff member making the report from any form of reprisal.

4. WHEN WILL A REPORT BE PROTECTED?

The JO will support any staff who report wrongdoing. For a report to be considered a public interest disclosure, it has to meet all of the requirements under the PID Act. These requirements are:

- The person making the disclosure must honestly believe on reasonable grounds that the information shows or tends to show wrongdoing.
- The report has to be made to one or more of the following:
  - a position nominated in this policy – see section 8 below
  - the general manager
  - one of the investigating authorities nominated in the PID Act – see section 9 below

Reports by staff and councillors will not be considered to be public interest disclosures if they:

- mostly question the merits of government policy, including the policy of the governing body of the council.
- are made with the sole or substantial motive of avoiding dismissal or other disciplinary action.

5. HOW TO MAKE A REPORT

You can report wrongdoing in writing or verbally. You are encouraged to make a report in writing as this can help to avoid any confusion or misinterpretation.

If a report is made verbally, the person receiving the report must make a comprehensive record of the disclosure and ask the person making the disclosure to sign this record. The staff member should keep a copy of this record.

If you are concerned about being seen making a report, ask to meet in a discreet location away from the workplace.

6. CAN A REPORT BE ANONYMOUS?

There will be some situations where you may not want to identify yourself when you make a report. Although these reports will still be dealt with by the JO, it is best if you identify yourself. This allows us to provide you with any necessary protection and support, as well as feedback about the outcome of any investigation into the allegations.

It is important to realise that an anonymous disclosure may not prevent you from being identified. If we do not know who made the report, it is very difficult for us to prevent any reprisal action.

7. MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY

The JO realises many staff will want their report to remain confidential. This can help to prevent any action being taken against you for reporting wrongdoing.

We are committed to keeping your identity, and the fact you have reported wrongdoing, confidential. **However, there may be situations where this may not be possible or appropriate**. We will discuss with you whether it is possible to keep your report confidential.

If confidentiality cannot be maintained, we will develop a plan to support and protect you from risks of reprisal. You will be involved in developing this plan. You will also be told if your report will be dealt with under the council's code of conduct, as this may mean certain information will have to be tabled at a council meeting.

If you report wrongdoing, you should only discuss your report with those dealing with it. This will include the disclosures coordinator and the general manager. If you discuss your report more broadly, you may affect the outcome of any investigation.

8. WHO CAN RECEIVE A REPORT WITHIN THE MID NORTH COAST JO?

You are encouraged to report general wrongdoing to your supervisor. However, the PID Act requires that – for a report to be a public interest disclosure – it must be made to a public official in accordance with the council's disclosure procedures. For the JO, this means this policy and any supporting procedures.

Any supervisor who receives a report that they believe may be a public interest disclosure must refer the staff member making the report to one of the positions listed below. The broader responsibilities of these positions are outlined below.

If you are council staff and your report involves a councillor, you should make it to the general manager or the Mayor. If you are a councillor and your report is about another councillor, you should make it to the general manager or the Mayor.

The following table provides

(a)   for internal disclosures: - a list of JO representatives to whom a Public Interest Disclosure can be made and;

(b)   for External disclosures: - a list of bodies to whom a Public Interest Disclosure can be made.

The following positions are the only staff within the JO who can receive a public interest disclosure.

(a)   Executive Officer

You can report wrongdoing directly to the Executive Officer. The Executive Officer is responsible for:

- deciding if a report is a public interest disclosure
- determining what needs to be done next, including referring it to other authorities
- deciding what needs to be done to correct the problem that has been identified. The Executive Officer must make sure there are systems in place in the JO to support and protect staff who report wrongdoing.

The Executive Officer also responsible for referring actual or suspected corrupt conduct to the Independent Commission Against Corruption. The Executive Officer can be contacted via the Executive Officer's office.

(b)   Chair

If you are making a report about the Executive Officer, you should make your report to the Chair. They are responsible for:

- deciding if a report is a public interest disclosure
- determining what needs to be done next, including referring it to other authorities
- deciding what needs to be done to correct the problem that has been identified.

The Chair must make sure there are systems in place in the JO to support and protect staff who report wrongdoing

If the report is about the Executive Officer, the Chair is also responsible for referring actual or suspected corrupt conduct to the Independent Commission Against Corruption. The Chair may be contacted via the Chair's office.

(c)   Disclosures Co-ordinator

The Disclosures Co-ordinator for the JO is appointed by the Executive Officer

9. WHO CAN RECEIVE A REPORT OUTSIDE OF THE JO?

Staff are encouraged to report wrongdoing within the JO, but internal reporting is not the only option. If you follow the guidance below, your report can still be a public interest disclosure.

You can choose to make your report to an investigating authority. You can do this first, or at any stage after your initial report to the JO. If your report is about the Executive Officer or the Chair, you should consider making it to an investigating authority.
You can also choose to make a report to a Member of Parliament or a journalist, but only in limited circumstances.

(a)   Investigating authorities

The PID Act lists a number of investigating authorities in NSW that staff can report wrongdoing to and the categories of wrongdoing each authority can deal with.

In relation to council, these authorities are:

- the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) — for corrupt conduct
- the Ombudsman — for maladministration
- the Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet — for disclosures about local government agencies
- the Information Commissioner — for disclosures about a government information contravention.

You should contact the relevant authority for advice about how to make a disclosure to them. Contact details for each investigating authority are provided at the end of this policy.

You should be aware that it is very likely the investigating authority will discuss the case with the JO. We will make every effort to assist and cooperate with the investigating authority to ensure the matter is dealt with appropriately and there is a satisfactory outcome. We will also provide appropriate support and assistance to staff who report wrongdoing to an investigating authority.

(b)   Members of Parliament or journalists

To have the protections of the PID Act, staff reporting wrongdoing to a Member of Parliament
(MP) or a journalist must have already made substantially the same report to one of the following:

- the Executive Officer
- a person nominated in this policy
- an investigating authority in accordance with the PID Act. Also,

  the JO or investigating authority that received the report must

  have either:

- • decided not to investigate the matter
- decided to investigate the matter, but not completed the investigation within six months of the original report
- investigated the matter but not recommended any action as a result
- not told the person who made the report, within six months of the report being made, whether the matter will be investigated.

Most importantly – to be protected under the PID Act – if you report wrongdoing to an MP or a journalist you will need to be able to prove that you have reasonable grounds for believing that the disclosure is substantially true and that it is in fact substantially true.

If you report wrongdoing to a person or an organisation that is not listed above, you will not be protected under the PID Act. This may mean you will be in breach of legal obligations or the CNSWJO code of conduct – by, for example, disclosing confidential information.

For more information about reporting wrongdoing outside the JO contact the disclosures coordinator or the NSW Ombudsman's Public Interest Disclosures Unit. Their contact details are provided at the end of this policy.

10. FEEDBACK TO STAFF WHO REPORT WRONGDOING

Staff who report wrongdoing will be told what is happening in response to their report.

When you make a report, you will be given:

- an acknowledgement that your disclosure has been received
- the timeframe for when you will receive further updates
- the name and contact details of the people who can tell you what is happening.

The PID Act requires that you are provided with an acknowledgement letter and a copy of this policy within 45 days after you have made your report. We will attempt to get this information to you within seven working days from the date you make your report.

After a decision is made about how your report will be dealt with, you will be given:

- information about the action that will be taken in response to your report
- likely timeframes for any investigation
- information about the resources available within the JO to handle any concerns you may have
- information about external agencies and services you can access for support. This information will be given to you within 10 working days from the date you make your report.

During any investigation, you will be given:

- information on the ongoing nature of the investigation
- information about the progress of the investigation and reasons for any delay
- advice if your identity needs to be disclosed for the purposes of investigating the matter, and an opportunity to talk about this.

At the end of any investigation, you will be given:

- enough information to show that adequate and appropriate action was taken and/or is proposed to be taken in response to your disclosure and any problem that was identified
- advice about whether you will be involved as a witness in any further matters, such as disciplinary or criminal proceedings.

11. PROTECTION AGAINST REPRISALS

The PID Act provides protection for people reporting wrongdoing by imposing penalties on anyone who takes detrimental action substantially in reprisal for them making the public interest disclosure.

The JO will not tolerate any reprisal action against staff who report wrongdoing. The criminal penalties that can be imposed include imprisonment or fines. Detrimental action is also misconduct that justifies disciplinary action. People who take detrimental action against someone who has made a disclosure can also be required to pay damages for any loss suffered by that person.

Detrimental action means action causing, comprising or involving any of the following:

- injury, damage or loss
- intimidation or harassment
- discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to employment
- dismissal from, or prejudice in, employment
- disciplinary proceeding

(a) Responding to reprisals

The JO will act to protect staff who report wrongdoing from reprisals.

When a report is received, we will ensure that a thorough risk assessment is conducted. This will identify any risks to the member of staff who reported the wrongdoing, as well as strategies to deal with those risks.

If you believe that detrimental action has been or is being taken against you or someone else who has reported wrongdoing in reprisal for making a report, you should tell your supervisor, the disclosures coordinator or the general manager immediately.

All supervisors must report any suspicions they have that reprisal action against a staff member is occurring, or any reports that are made to them, to the disclosures coordinator or the general manager.

If the disclosures coordinator becomes aware of reprisal action against a person who has made a disclosure, they will:

- ensure a senior and experienced member of staff, who has not been involved in dealing with the initial disclosure, will investigate the suspected reprisal
- give the results of that investigation to the Executive Officer for a decision
- give the results of that investigation to the Chair for a decision if the allegation of reprisal action is about the Executive Officer
- if it has been established that reprisal action is occurring against someone who has made a disclosure, take all steps possible to stop that activity and protect the member of staff who made the disclosure
- take appropriate disciplinary or criminal action against anyone proven to have taken or threatened any action in reprisal for making a disclosure.

If you report reprisal action, you will be kept informed of the progress of any investigation and the outcome.

The general manager may issue specific directions to help protect against reprisals. These may include:

- issuing warnings to those alleged to have taken reprisal action against the member of staff who made the disclosure
- relocating the member of staff who made the disclosure or the subject officer within the current workplace
- transferring the member of staff who made the disclosure or the staff member who is the subject of the allegation to another position for which they are qualified
- granting the member of staff who made the disclosure or the subject officer leave of absence during the investigation of the disclosure

These directions will only be taken if the member of staff who made the disclosure agrees to it. The disclosures coordinator will make it clear to other staff that this action was taken in consultation with the staff member and with management support and it is not a punishment.

> If you have reported wrongdoing and feel that any reprisal action is not being dealt with
>
> effectively, contact the Ombudsman or the ICAC – depending on the type of
>
> wrongdoing you reported. Contact details for all these investigating authorities are
>
> included at the end of this policy.

(b) Protection against legal action

> If you make a disclosure in accordance with the PID Act, you will not be subject to any liability
>
> and no action, claim or demand can be taken against you for making the disclosure.
>
> You will not have breached any confidentiality or secrecy obligations and you will
>
> have the defense of absolute privilege in defamation.

12. SUPPORT FOR THOSE REPORTING WRONGDOING

The JO will make sure that staff who have reported wrongdoing, regardless of whether they have

made a public interest disclosure, are provided with access to any professional support

they may need as a result of the reporting process – such as stress management,

counselling services, legal or career advice.

We also have staff who will support those who report wrongdoing. They are responsible for initiating and coordinating support, particularly to those who are suffering any form of reprisal.

All supervisors must notify the disclosures coordinator if they believe a staff member is suffering any detrimental action as a result of disclosing wrongdoing.

13. SANCTIONS FOR MAKING FALSE OR MISLEADING DISCLOSURES

It is important that all staff are aware that it is a criminal offence under the PID Act to willfully make a false or misleading statement when reporting wrongdoing.

14. SUPPORT FOR THE SUBJECT OF A REPORT

The JO is committed to ensuring staff who are the subject of a report of wrongdoing are treated

fairly and reasonably. If you are the subject of a report, you will be:

- treated fairly and impartially
- told your rights and obligations under our policies and procedures
- kept informed during any investigation
- given the opportunity to respond to any allegation made against you
- told the result of any investigation.

15. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed by council every two years. For any advice or guidance about this review, contact the NSW Ombudsman's Public Interest Disclosures Unit.

16. MORE INFORMATION

More information around public interest disclosures is available from the NSW Ombudsman's website at www.ombo.nsw.gov.au.

17. RESOURCES

The contact details for external investigating authorities that staff can make a public interest disclosure to or seek advice from are listed following.

For disclosures about corrupt conduct

Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC)

Phone: 02 8281 5999

Toll free: 1800 463 909

Tel. typewriter (TTY): 02 8281 5773

Facsimile: 02 9264 5364

Email: icac@icac.nsw.gov.au

Web: www.icac.nsw.gov.au

Address: Level 21, 133 Castlereagh Street,
Sydney NSW 2000

For disclosures about breaches of the GIPA Act:

Information Commissioner

Toll free: 1800 463 626

Facsimile: 02 8114 3756

Email: oicinfo@oic.nsw.gov.au

Web: www.oic.nsw.gov.au

Address: Level 11, 1 Castlereagh Street, Sydney
NSW 2000

For disclosures about maladministration:

NSW Ombudsman

Phone: 02 9286 1000

Toll free (outside Sydney metro): 1800 451 524

Tel. typewriter (TTY): 02 9264 8050

Facsimile: 02 9283 2911

Email: nswombo@ombo.nsw.gov.au

Web: www.ombo.nsw.gov.au

Address: Level 24, 580 George Street, Sydney NSW 2000

For disclosures about local government agencies:

Office of Local Government

Phone: 02 4428 4100

Tel. typewriter (TTY): 02 4428 4209

Facsimile: 02 4428 4199

Email: olg@olg.nsw.gov.au

Web: www.olg.nsw.gov.au

Address: 5 O'Keefe Avenue, Nowra, NSW 2541

A 20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW

July 2018

NSW
GOVERNMENT

Contents

Cover image: Goulburn

The Hon. John Barilaro
Deputy Premier, NSW
Minister for Regional NSW

Deputy Premier's Foreword

When people ask me what I want to achieve for regional NSW, the answer is fairly simple.

I want people living in regional NSW to have a great life. Moreover, I want people living outside of regional NSW to look to our regional towns and cities and think 'I could also have a great life there', because they know regional NSW is a great place to raise a family, start and grow a business, get a fulfilling job, participate in vibrant community activities, play sport at quality facilities, and access the quality health and education they deserve.

Since 2011, the NSW Government has been hard at work rebuilding NSW. I'm proud of what we've achieved to date, but the job is far from done. We now have the opportunity not just to improve regional living, but transform it.

Today, NSW's economy has been restored to its proper position as the nation's leading economy, with a first-class infrastructure pipeline that is creating jobs, skilling our young people and ensuring NSW has the infrastructure it needs to meet current and future demands.

Regional NSW is at the forefront of this.

People are sick of governments that are short-sighted – failing to plan properly, and in turn, giving priority to the city over the bush.

This government, however, is determined to ensure we are meeting the needs for today while also making sure we are better prepared for a stronger tomorrow.

We are not just futureproofing our regions (making them more resilient to change, so they thrive, not just survive) but also turbocharging visionary projects – so they don't just sit on paper, but actually become reality.

Our 20-year vision will ensure regional NSW is poised to take advantage of future opportunities for growth.

Most importantly, this is a vision for regional people and businesses. Regional NSW is already a great place to live, raise a family, start a business or visit. We also need to support sustainable, thriving regional communities that have a strong local identity, attract younger generations and offer valued alternatives to city living.

Many of our regional centres have room to grow, draw in more investment and attract skilled workers, as well as provide job opportunities for our children. We want our communities to have access to sporting and cultural facilities, without compromising a sense of community and connectedness.

Through strategic investment we can address issues like skill shortages, the ageing workforce and digital disruption, while capitalising on emerging industries that align with a region's local strengths.

Our vision is to accelerate economic growth in key sectors such as agribusiness, tertiary education and health care, taking full advantage of trade and tourism opportunities with Asia to ensure regional NSW continues to play a critical role in the Australian economy.

This work also brings together long-term planning and existing strategies like the *Future Transport Strategy 2056*, *NSW State Infrastructure Strategy*, and the regional plans.

I am personally determined to leave a lasting legacy of strong, sustainable and vibrant regional communities.

This vision will help outline how we will get there.

01
Regional NSW today

Vineyard near Orange

Regional NSW is Australia's largest and most diverse regional economy. Rich with natural resources, it is home to a third of the state's population, and produces one-fifth of NSW's gross state product. Regional NSW has thriving agricultural, energy and resources industries and strong manufacturing, tourism and service sectors.

In this document, 'regional NSW' refers to all of the state except the metropolitan areas of Greater Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong.

A state of many smaller economies

Regional NSW can be divided into five types of regional economy, based on their underlying geography, population and economic features. These are:

• Metro Satellite

• Growth Centre

• Coastal

• Inland

• Remote.

Look more closely, and you will see NSW is actually made up of many smaller local economies across these five categories.[1] The NSW Government refers to these smaller economies as functional economic regions (FERs), each mapping out the regional communities that have strong economic links, mainly where people live and work.[2]

In total, regional NSW can be categorised into 37 FERs, as outlined in the map below. Some of these cross state boundaries into Queensland, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). The FERs are colour coded, to indicate the five types of regional economy.
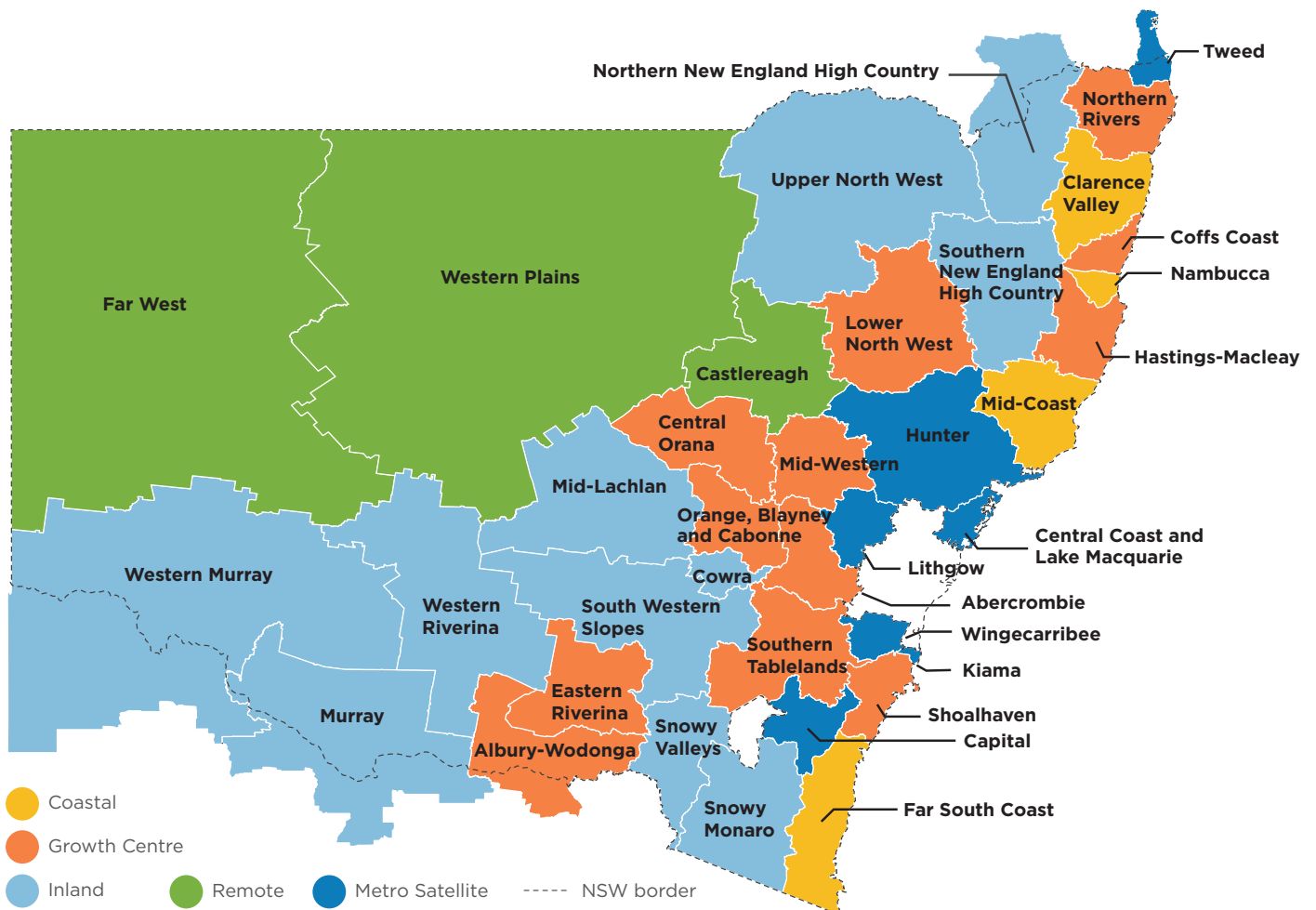

Figure 1: The functional economic regions of regional NSW

1   Centre for Economic and Regional Development (2017), *Regional Economic Growth Enablers Report*
2   Also by community input and economic measures

FER	Included local government areas
Abercrombie	Bathurst Regional, Oberon
Albury-Wodonga	Albury, Federation, Greater Hume Shire
Capital	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional
Castlereagh	Gilgandra, Warrumbungle Shire
Central Coast and Lake Macquarie	Central Coast, Lake Macquarie
Central Orana	Narromine, Dubbo Regional
Clarence Valley	Clarence Valley
Coffs Coast	Bellingen, Coffs Harbour
Cowra	Cowra
Eastern Riverina	Coolamon, Junee, Lockhart, Wagga Wagga
Far South Coast	Bega Valley, Eurobodalla
Far West	Broken Hill, Central Darling, Unincorporated NSW
Hastings-Macleay	Kempsey, Port Macquarie-Hastings
Hunter	Cessnock, Dungog, Maitland, Muswellbrook, Port Stephens, Singleton, Upper Hunter Shire
Kiama	Kiama
Lithgow	Lithgow
Lower North West	Gunnedah, Liverpool Plains, Tamworth Regional
Mid-Coast	Mid-Coast
Mid-Lachlan	Forbes, Lachlan, Parkes
Mid-Western	Mid-Western Regional
Murray	Berrigan, Edward River, Murray River
Nambucca	Nambucca
Northern New England High Country	Glen Innes Severn, Tenterfield
Northern Rivers	Ballina, Byron, Kyogle, Lismore, Richmond Valley
Orange, Blayney and Cabonne	Blayney, Cabonne, Orange
Shoalhaven	Shoalhaven
Snowy Monaro	Snowy Monaro Regional
Snowy Valleys	Snowy Valleys
South Western Slopes	Bland, Gundagai, Hilltops, Temora, Weddin
Southern New England High Country	Armidale Regional, Uralla, Walcha
Southern Tablelands	Goulburn-Mulwaree, Upper Lachlan, Yass Valley
Tweed	Tweed
Upper North West	Gwydir, Inverell, Moree Plains, Narrabri
Western Murray	Balranald, Hay, Wentworth
Western Plains	Bogan, Bourke, Brewarrina, Cobar, Coonamble, Walgett, Warren
Western Riverina	Carrathool, Griffith, Leeton, Murrumbidgee, Narrandera
Wingecarribee	Wingecarribee

Metro Satellites

Metro Satellites are relatively high-density communities on the outskirts of major centres of economic activity such as Sydney, Canberra, Newcastle, Wollongong and the Gold Coast. Metro Satellite FERs include towns such as Gosford, Queanbeyan, Maitland, Kiama, Lithgow and Tweed Heads. Metro Satellites are home to 53 per cent of regional NSW's population and produce the highest economic output of the five broad categories.

Their higher populations reflect strong economic growth, which is based on traded clusters[3], concentrations of industries such as mining, tourism, food manufacturing and residential care, and bolstered by their proximity to growing major cities.

FERs

- Capital
- Central Coast and Lake Macquarie
- Hunter
- Kiama
- Lithgow
- Tweed
- Wingecarribee

Population

- **53.0%** of the population of regional NSW
- Experiencing above-average population growth (**1.7% p.a.** compound annual growth rate (CAGR)*, 2006–2016)

Jobs

- **Gross value added (GVA)** of $105bn**, with a growth rate of 2.1% annually in the past five years (CAGR, 2011–2016)
- **Health and mining** are key traded clusters, with 26,100 employees and 23,100 employees respectively
- **Unemployment rate of 6.4%** (2016), having grown by 2.0% annually in the past five years (CAGR, 2011–2016)***

* Compound annual growth rate is the average growth rate each year over the long term

** Gross value added is the value of goods and services collectively produced in these FERs

*** Jobs numbers from PwC's Geospatial Economic Model based on ABS 2016 Census data

Growth Centres

These areas are hubs of growth in regional NSW.[4] Populations are rapidly increasing as people migrate to regional cities such as Bathurst, Orange, Tamworth, Dubbo, Lismore, Wagga Wagga and Coffs Harbour, attracted by their lifestyles and employment industries. The hubs in Growth Centres typically provide sophisticated health, education and cultural services to surrounding Inland areas.

FERs

- Abercrombie
- Albury-Wodonga
- Orange, Blayney and Cabonne
- Central Orana
- Coffs Coast
- Eastern Riverina
- Hastings-Macleay
- Lower North West
- Mid-Western
- Northern Rivers
- Shoalhaven
- Southern Tablelands

Population

- Growth Centres contain key regional centres and a further **25.9%** of the population of regional NSW
- They are experiencing population growth of **1.0% p.a.** on average (CAGR, 2006–2016)

Jobs

- **$44bn in GVA** in 2016, driven by **1.3% growth** over the five years prior (CAGR, 2011–2016)
- **Agribusiness** is the largest traded cluster in the Growth Centres, with 26,500 employees
- The unemployment rate of the Growth Centres has increased slightly over the years, to **6.6% in 2016**, with a growth rate of **0.5% annually** (CAGR, 2011–2016)

Illabo

Coastal

Coastal areas contain a smaller proportion of the overall population of regional NSW (7 per cent) but are growing. This growth is mainly driven by those aged 65 and over. Coastal areas have remained relatively stable in terms of employment, with pockets of employment clusters (such as health services, agribusiness and tourism) growing moderately.

FERs

- Clarence Valley
- Far South Coast
- Mid-Coast
- Nambucca

Population

- Key coastal areas contain **7.1%** of the population of regional NSW
- They are experiencing average population growth (**0.7%**, CAGR, 2006-2016), mainly driven by those aged 65+

Jobs

- The coastal areas generate a total **GVA of $7.6bn**. In the past five years, the areas grew by **1.0%** (CAGR, 2011-2016)
- Key industries include **health** (3,400 employees) and **agribusiness** (2,600 employees)
- A high unemployment rate of **8.5%** in 2016, with minor decreases in unemployment over the past five years **(-0.02% annually,** CAGR, 2011-2016)

Inland

Inland areas radiate further from the metropolitan areas, lying beyond the Coastal and Metro Satellite areas between and around Growth Centres, and are more rural in character. They have relatively small, stable populations.

FERs

- Cowra
- Western Murray
- Mid-Lachlan
- Murray
- Northern New England High Country
- Snowy Monaro
- Snowy Valleys
- South Western Slopes
- Southern New England High Country
- Upper North West
- Western Riverina

Population

- The Inland regions contain **13.4%** of the population of regional NSW
- They are experiencing stable population growth (**0.3%**, CAGR, 2006–2016)

Jobs

- **Economic decline of 1.2%** annually (GVA, CAGR, 2011–2016). In 2016, the total GVA of the area was **$21.5bn**
- **Agribusiness** is the largest industry in Inland regions, with 27,700 employees
- There was an unemployment rate of change of 1.8% in the last five years (CAGR, 2011–2016). Overall, the unemployment rate was **6.0% in 2016**
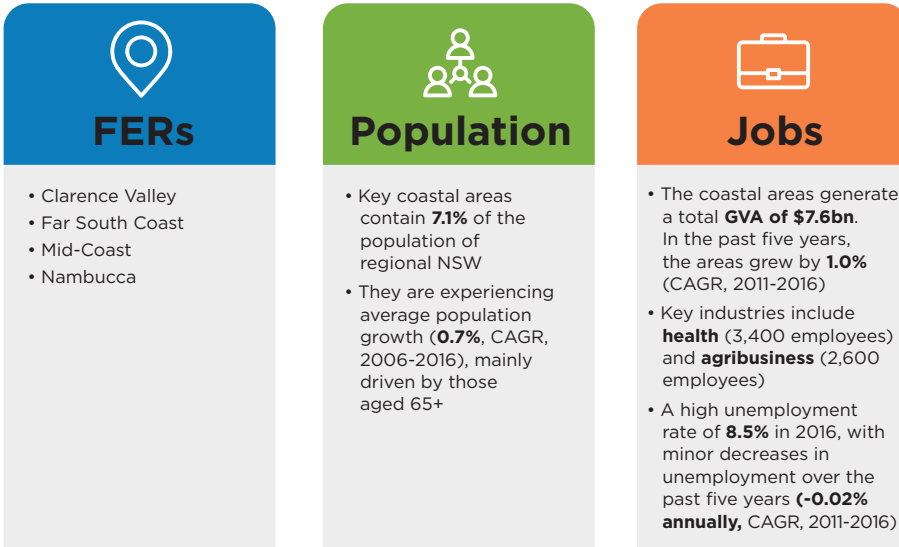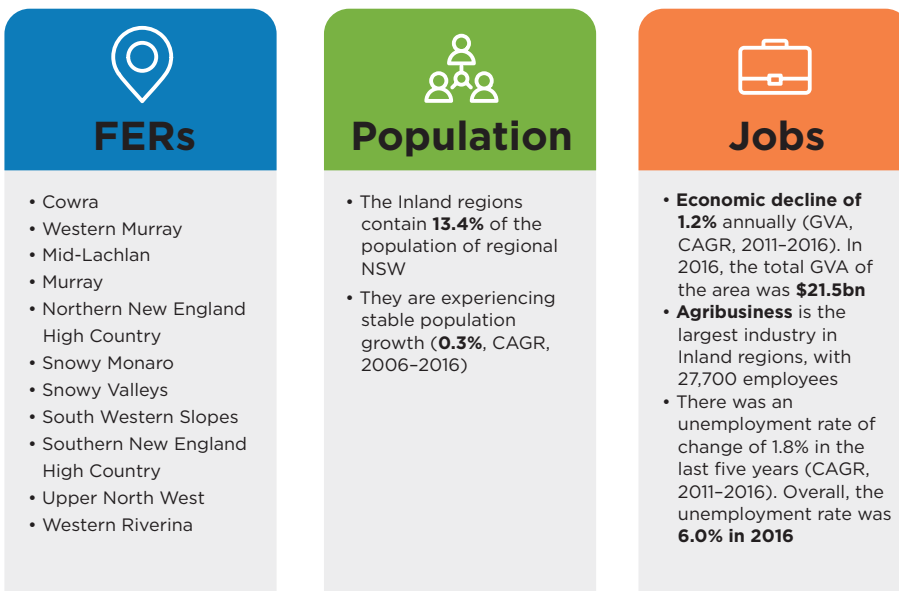
3   Groups of related industries that serve markets beyond the region in which they are located, i.e. sell to other regions and nations
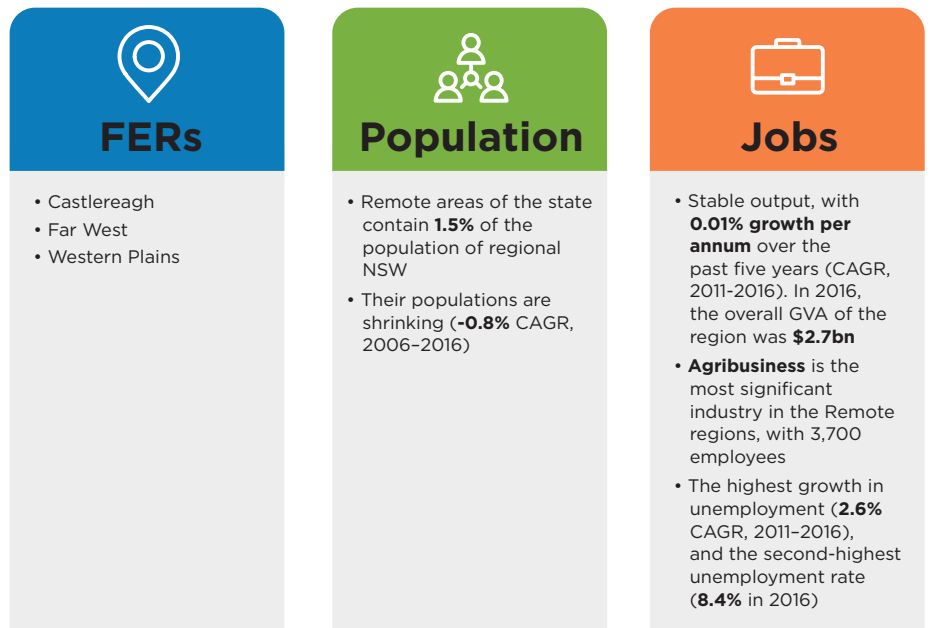
4   Note: Many of these are considered regional centres or regional cities in Transport for NSW's *Future Transport Strategy 2056,* and NSW Department of Planning and Environment's 2016 regional plans

Coffs Harbour

Remote

Remote areas continue to support a significant proportion of agricultural and mining activity in NSW, but are experiencing population decline.

FERs

- Castlereagh
- Far West
- Western Plains

Population

- Remote areas of the state contain **1.5%** of the population of regional NSW
- Their populations are shrinking (**-0.8%** CAGR, 2006–2016)

Jobs

- Stable output, with **0.01% growth per annum** over the past five years (CAGR, 2011-2016). In 2016, the overall GVA of the region was **$2.7bn**
- **Agribusiness** is the most significant industry in the Remote regions, with 3,700 employees
- The highest growth in unemployment (**2.6%** CAGR, 2011–2016), and the second-highest unemployment rate (**8.4%** in 2016)

The 'engine' industries driving our regions

Around the world, economies are narrowing and deepening, including in regional NSW. This means that a smaller number of key sectors are employing a larger share of the workforce.[5]

Key regional industries that are surviving or thriving are linked to economic endowments, or an area's inherent or created strengths. For example, areas rich in minerals can sustain strong performance in mining, whereas an area not located between producers and their markets or distributors will likely yield low or unsustainable growth in transport logistics. These sectors and others that service markets beyond their local region are considered 'traded clusters'.

Regions may also have economic endowments in service sectors such as health or residential care. For example, health services are available throughout NSW. However, a region with a health endowment may have a health-service specialisation that will draw people to relocate there – either as employees or patients.

Engine industries are those that employ a higher proportion of people in that region compared to other regions. They usually reflect the area's competitive advantages. In any region, most of the workforce is employed in population-serving industries. However, engine industries are often a key reason why a town or region exists.

Figure 2 shows an illustration of regional NSW's 'engine industries'.

Broken Hill

5   Centre for Economic and Regional Development (2017), *Regional Economic Growth Enablers Report*

01	02	03	04	05	06	07
Livestock and grain, horticulture, dairy, poultry, food and beverage manufacturing, forestry	Metal ore and coal mining	Accommodation, and food and beverage services	Tertiary education and vocational training services	Health and social care, including residential care	Freight, logistics and distribution services	Defence, aerospace and advanced materials
Agribusiness and Forestry	**Resources and Mining**	**Tourism**	**Tertiary Education**	**Health and Residential Care**	**Freight and Logistics**	**Defence**

Figure 2: Regional NSW 'engine industries'

Source: NSW Centre for Economic and Regional Development (2017), *Regional Economic Growth Enablers Report;* Australian Department of Employment (2017), Employment Outlook to May 2022.

Agribusiness and forestry

NSW is a significant producer of agricultural commodities, using 75 per cent of NSW land and employing more than 60,000 people (6.7 per cent of all jobs in regional NSW). Key products include beef, poultry, wheat, rice, milk, cotton, wool and forestry products, as well as value-added food and beverages.

Resources and mining

For more than a century, regional NSW has been a significant source of resources. Our reserves of coal, gold, copper, zinc, lead, silver, nickel and cobalt are in high demand, while lithium and rare earth deposits may serve future industries. Regions with large-scale mining have had the highest jobs growth since 2005[6], with more than 23,000 jobs in mining in NSW today.

Tourism

Regional NSW's hospitality and diverse natural beauty – including outback, country, alpine, coastal, island and subtropical landscapes – draw more visitors from Australia and overseas every year. Each year from 2012 to 2017, overnight visitor numbers to regional NSW grew by 5 per cent. Altogether, overnight visitors to regional NSW spent more than $12.4 billion in the year to December 2017.[7] More than 81,000 regional jobs – 9 per cent – support tourism.

Tertiary education

The $1.9 billion education sector in regional NSW serves a growing domestic and international market for high-quality education. Leading research centres in agricultural technology have emerged in Orange,

Armidale and Wagga Wagga, while renewable energy research centres have developed in the South East and Tablelands region. More than 82,000 regional jobs – 9 per cent – are in tertiary education and skills.

Health and residential care

Increasing life expectancy and population growth are driving demand for health and aged care facilities in regional NSW, particularly along the mid and north coast. There are almost 139,000 jobs – or 14.9 per cent of regional jobs – in this sector. Regional providers have a key cost advantage. In 2016, they had the lowest expenses per day on average.[8]

Freight and logistics

Freight, logistics and distribution services are the backbone of regional NSW, providing more than 32,000 regional jobs in towns like Albury-Wodonga, Dubbo, Moree, Tamworth and Wagga Wagga.[9] These towns – given they are near major roads and/or freight rail lines to large freight terminals – play a crucial role in connecting businesses to markets throughout Australia and across the world.

Defence

NSW is home to the most defence bases and facilities in Australia[10], with several in regional areas such as Wagga Wagga, Singleton, Bungendore and Nowra, and defence industry clusters in the Shoalhaven and the Hunter. Defence industry capabilities in NSW include systems integration, cybersecurity and advanced materials. Defence and related industries employ 40,000 people across regional NSW.

6   NSW Regional Investment Prospectus: investregional.nsw.gov.au
7   Destination NSW tourism statistics accessed at: www.destinationnsw.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/regional-nsw-snapshot-ye-sep-17.pdf
8   NSW Regional Investment Prospectus: investregional.nsw.gov.au
9   Centre for Economic and Regional Development (2017), *Regional Economic Growth Enablers Report*
10 Department of Industry, investregional.nsw.gov.au/sectors/defence-and-aerospace

People moving to regional NSW

People are moving to regional NSW every year, with it attracting 12,000 more residents overall in the 2015–16 financial year. Close to 90,000 people moved into regional NSW, with many of these new residents coming from Greater Sydney. This continues a long-term trend of migration out of Sydney towards growing regional centres in NSW. Large proportions of new residents are also moving from Queensland and Victoria. While some people are also moving away from the regions, net migration to regional NSW is still positive.

Although overseas migration typically contributes less to growth in regional NSW than in Sydney, some international migrants and refugees are settling in regional areas.
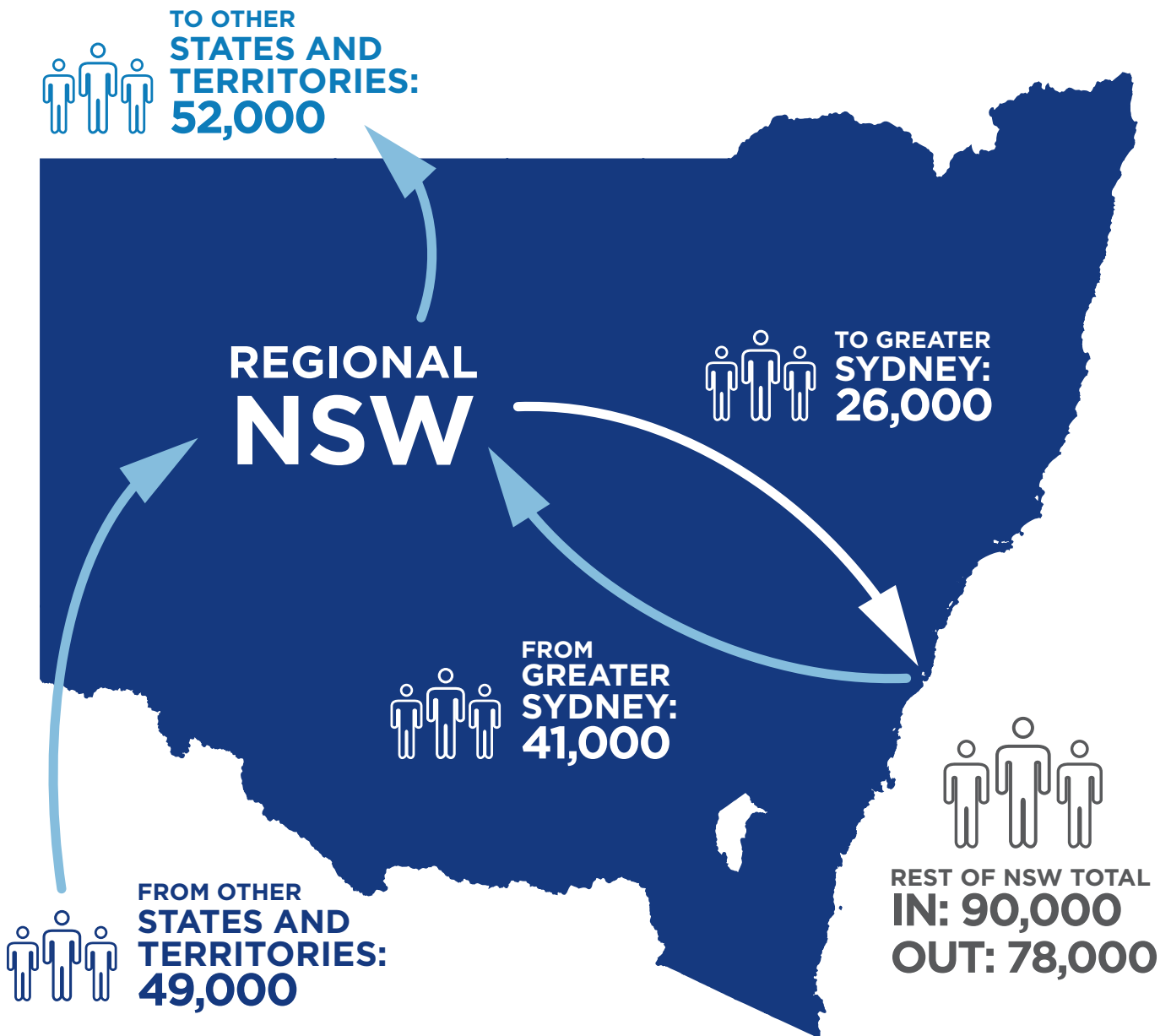
TO OTHER **STATES AND TERRITORIES: 52,000**

REGIONAL NSW

TO GREATER **SYDNEY: 26,000**

FROM GREATER SYDNEY: 41,000

FROM OTHER **STATES AND TERRITORIES: 49,000**

REST OF NSW TOTAL **IN: 90,000 OUT: 78,000**

Figure 3: Regional internal migration estimates by region of arrival and departure, 2015–16[11]

11   ABS regional internal migration estimates by region of arrival and departure (SA4 and above) 2015-16: http://stat.data.abs.gov.au. Note, the referenced data includes Wollongong and Newcastle in regional NSW, while this vision document excludes them

02
Global forces shaping our regional economies

Santos gas fields near Narrabri

Since 2000, the global environment in which NSW competes has radically changed. With the pace of change likely to increase in coming years, we need to consider the implications of trends.

'Megatrends' represent major shifts in environmental, social and economic conditions that change the way people live. While megatrends are often big-picture changes occurring overseas, they influence us too. For example, ageing populations will affect our population's lifestyles, the services they demand, and the structure of the labour force.

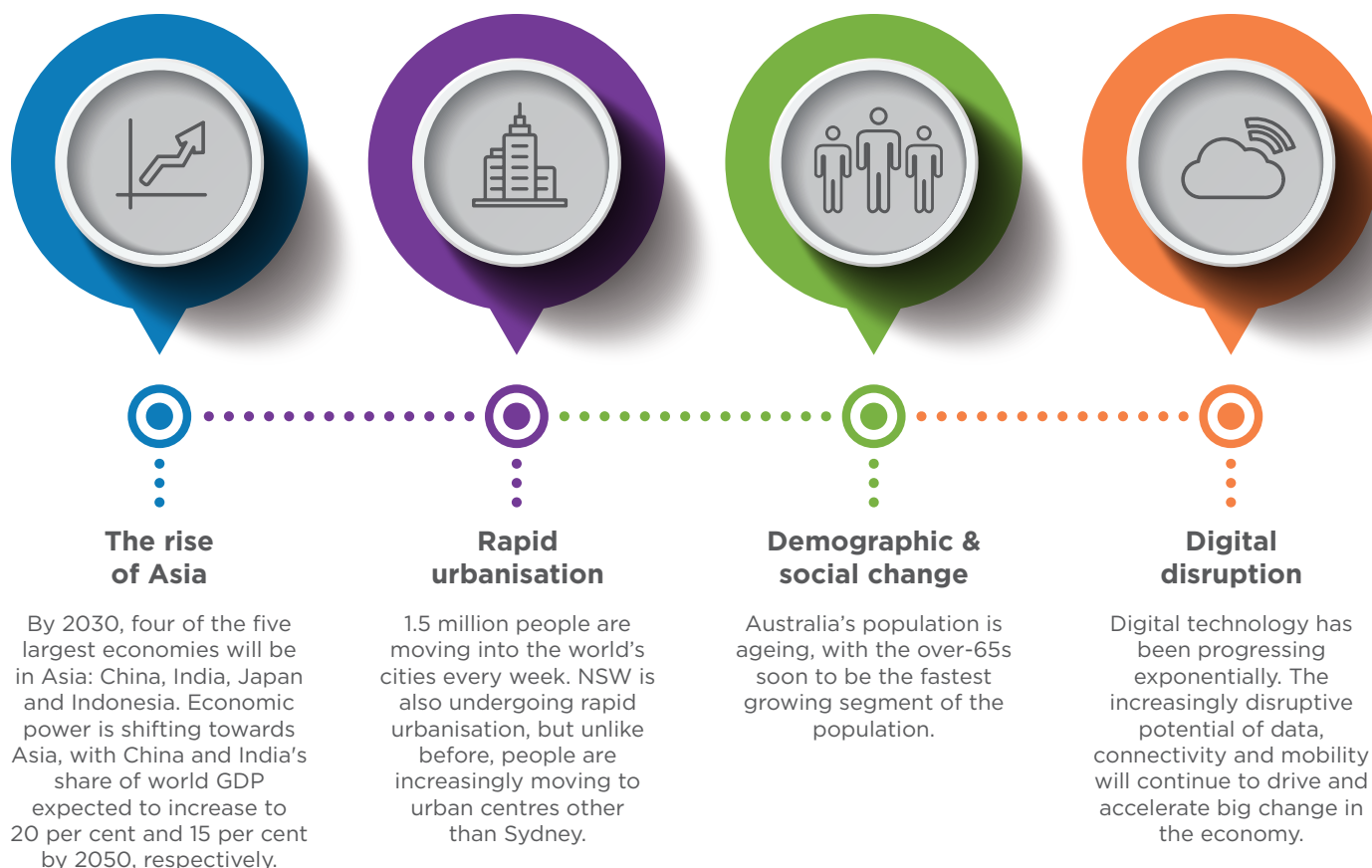There are four key megatrends affecting regional NSW.

The rise of Asia

By 2030, four of the five largest economies will be in Asia: China, India, Japan and Indonesia. Economic power is shifting towards Asia, with China and India's share of world GDP expected to increase to 20 per cent and 15 per cent by 2050, respectively.

Rapid urbanisation

1.5 million people are moving into the world's cities every week. NSW is also undergoing rapid urbanisation, but unlike before, people are increasingly moving to urban centres other than Sydney.

Demographic & social change

Australia's population is ageing, with the over-65s soon to be the fastest growing segment of the population.

Digital disruption

Digital technology has been progressing exponentially. The increasingly disruptive potential of data, connectivity and mobility will continue to drive and accelerate big change in the economy.

Figure 4: Megatrends affecting regional NSW

Source: PwC analysis of open-source data, including megatrends considered by Transport for NSW, NSW Department of Planning and Environment, and CSIRO in their paper *Our Future World*

Megatrend 1: The rise of Asia

A considerable economic shift is taking place, transitioning away from the traditional 'West' and towards Asia. By 2030, four of the five largest economies will be in Asia, with China already the largest economy in the world. Australia is strategically positioned to service these growing economies and their burgeoning middle class.

As incomes in Asia rise, the spending power of younger generations is rapidly increasing, creating a growing market for premium products and quality goods and services. NSW cannot feed all of Asia, but is well-positioned to be its delicatessen, producing and marketing value-added food products. The evolution of the social and consumption patterns of the new middle class will shape the export profile of regional NSW. This is also increasing spending on tourism and higher education, both of which could be significant for regional NSW, particularly with the deregulation of Chinese tourism and consequent growth in the number of independent travellers. Additionally, the advent of longer-distance non-stop international flights will open up more timely market access for regional businesses.

Megatrend 2: Rapid urbanisation

For the first time in 2015, more than half the world's population lived in cities. Urban centres are drivers of productivity and growth (due to 'agglomeration'), generating 85 per cent of global GDP. Mirroring global trends, regional NSW is also experiencing a movement away from its rural areas towards regional cities and towns. This is not to suggest everyone is moving to Sydney, as people choose where to live based on a wide variety of career, family, affordability and lifestyle considerations. Regional NSW offers a diversity of choice in terms of lifestyles, and the increasing importance of regional centres is reflected in the hub-and-spoke model underpinning the *NSW Future Transport Strategy 2056*.

The geographic constraints of Greater Sydney have seen nearby areas of NSW grow. Described in more detail in Section 1, these 'Metro Satellites' are a key destination for people moving out of the dense environment of Sydney. These regional areas have the potential to unlock and capitalise on urban productivity and innovation, but this must be balanced by providing infrastructure and developing cities that are smart and sustainable.

Megatrend 3: Demographic and social change

Developed countries are all experiencing ageing populations, and Australia is no different. This is driven by two factors: Australian families are, on average, having fewer children; and people are living longer. The result is that the fastest growing segment of the population will be the over-65s.

This has implications for regional NSW, as the younger generations move to cities and regional centres looking for education and employment opportunities. However, regional NSW has the potential and opportunity to provide the workforce to serve the older population. The rise in demand for aged care and health services and the changing economic and social patterns provide new opportunities for careers in health care and social assistance, with over 34,000 additional jobs forecast by 2022 in regional NSW.[12]

12 Australian Department of Jobs and Small Business, 2017 Industry Employment Projections, http://lmip.gov.au/default.aspx?LMIP/GainInsights/EmploymentProjections. Note, this report includes Wollongong and Newcastle in regional NSW, though this vision excludes them

Shanghai, China

Installation of the National Broadband Network in Wollongong

Megatrend 4: Digital disruption

Digital technology is driving big changes in the global economy. Increasingly, we are seeing the power and potential of data connectivity and mobility, enabled by technological progress. Australia is on a digital evolution to leverage the potential of technology in accelerating economic change, productivity and growth.

Advances in digital technologies and connectivity have also facilitated an ideal environment for entrepreneurship. Ranked fifth in the world for our favourable entrepreneurship environment[13], Australia is a great place for entrepreneurs, start-ups and innovators. NSW has the greatest opportunity of all states and territories to increase small business income over the next decade, with the potential to unlock up to $16 billion of additional economic output if those businesses can fully leverage mobile and internet technologies.[14]

For regional NSW, state-wide digital connectivity and disruptive technology have the potential to transform the future of farming, education, healthcare, local business and standards of living. This potential is described in more detail in the *NSW State Infrastructure Strategy*.

Whether they choose to work for established businesses or start their own, people will have choices about where to live and how this affects their work, as the need to live close to an office in a metropolitan city reduces. This may manifest in different ways, from people balancing part-week commuting with part-week working from home, to 'digital nomads' working from anywhere with an internet connection.

Regional NSW is well positioned to take advantage of the opportunities presented by these megatrends. It has the quality goods and services demanded by the Asian middle class, and an advanced agriculture and manufacturing base supported by some of the best research and development organisations in the world. Moreover, it has a favourable climate for agriculture with access to global markets; the beaches, parks and bush coveted by tourists and retirees; and the know-how to take advantage of new technologies in freight and logistics, and agricultural technology.

Capitalising on these megatrends will not be possible from a standing start. NSW needs to plan for the long term and give people and businesses the tools and environment they need to seize those opportunities when they arise.

13   Global Entrepreneurship and Development Institute, 2018 Global Entrepreneurship Index,
     http://thegedi.org/global-entrepreneurship-and-development-index/
14   PwC (2015), Small Business: Digital Growth, www.digitalinnovation.pwc.com.au/small-business-digital-growth/index.html

03
Rising to the challenge

Costa Tomato Exchange in Guyra

What it will take

NSW is an economic powerhouse for Australia and an internationally competitive economy in its own right. For regional areas to further flourish, they depend upon these key points:

- Strong trade agreements and relationships – International trade and investment makes up a large proportion of the NSW economy. Relationships and trade agreements are central to driving regional growth in the long term, particularly trade with other Asia-Pacific nations.

- Migration and foreign investment – These will become more important as more skilled workers are demanded by regional businesses, accompanied by a shift in family-owned businesses such as farms being bought by international companies. An emphasis on younger migrants can also serve to balance ageing populations. With the right local support, migrants settling in regional NSW can play a role both in helping to fill immediate workforce shortages and to create new jobs.

- A strong and thriving Sydney – The success of regional NSW is tied to the continued success of Sydney, Australia's largest city and most important global gateway.

- Governments working together – With Commonwealth and local governments working alongside the NSW Government, we can create a growth-friendly environment, from facilitating favourable terms of trade, to providing water connections and streamlined planning approvals.

- Governments and industry working together – Rising to the challenge will overwhelmingly benefit the private sector. We can create a business-friendly environment by ensuring regulatory settings protect the community while not hindering enterprise, and leveraging private-sector investment where benefits are largely private.

- Governments and communities working together – Engaging communities in government decision-making helps local economic development initiatives better address the needs of different community members, and forges a joint commitment to better outcomes.

- Aboriginal economic participation – Aboriginal economic activity is a vital and growing area that will build a stronger foundation for social, economic and cultural prosperity in NSW. Supporting greater participation and opportunities for Aboriginal people will create jobs and employment, lift education and skills, and activate regional economic potential.

- A focus on growth – Targeting investment in regional centres that are forecast to grow will prioritise efforts for the greatest and most sustainable growth, and cement those regional centres as hubs for their surrounding areas, in line with the *Future Transport Strategy 2056* hub-and-spoke model.

Industries driving the economic future of regional NSW

The 'engine industries' that will drive regional NSW economies over the next 20 years include seven established sectors, and three emerging sectors that are gaining ground in their share of the regional economy.

01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10
Agribusiness and Forestry	Resources and Mining	Tourism and Hospitality	Tertiary Education and Skills	Health and Residential Care	Freight and Logistics	Defence	Advanced Manufacturing	Renewable Energy	Technology-Enabled Primary Industries

Established   Emerging

Figure 5: Future 'engine industries' in regional NSW

Source: NSW Centre for Economic and Regional Development (2017), *Regional Economic Growth Enablers Report*; Australian Department of Employment (2017), Employment Outlook to May 2022

1. Agribusiness and forestry

Regional NSW will continue to be a significant producer of agricultural commodities. The shape of employment will change as primary producers move to value-added products and capitalise on the premium branding status of NSW produce. In addition to value-added food and beverages, key products will include meats, vegetables, grains, milk, cotton, wool and forestry products. Success is underpinned by productive farmland, diverse growing conditions, efficient technology use and a reputation for quality.

2. Resources and mining

Resources and mining will continue to be an economic specialisation in a small number of regions. Raw materials from this sector will continue to be in demand across a broader number of regions and in industries such as construction. Advances in automation and digitisation are expected to transform the future mining workforce, reducing total jobs in these industries and increasing the proportion of highly skilled and technical jobs.

3. Tourism and hospitality

A growing international tourist market from Asia and beyond will visit NSW looking for different travel experiences. Regional NSW's diverse and natural beauty will continue to draw domestic and overseas visitors, with opportunities growing for niche and personalised travel experiences championed by small and medium-sized businesses.

4. Tertiary education and skills

Both the domestic and international market for tertiary education will grow, boosted by increasing urbanisation and the rapid economic growth of Asia. Innovation in tertiary education, and vocational education and training will help ensure regional NSW adapts to increased automation in traditional industries while leveraging new opportunities offered by digital disruption.

5. Health and residential care

Australia's population is not only projected to grow and age, but to have an increased life expectancy. Moreover, ageing will be more pronounced in regional NSW. By 2038, the health and residential care industry will employ almost 80,000 extra people, accounting for nearly 20 per cent of regional jobs. Advances in digital and telehealth may accelerate support for older Australians to 'age in place', enabling people to stay in their own home longer if they choose.

6. Freight and logistics

Freight, logistics and distribution services are already a backbone industry of regional NSW. Better freight connectivity with and along the east coast will enable more efficient and cost-effective logistics solutions, and could drive the development of distribution centres in Metro Satellite regions.

7. Defence

Defence and supporting industries will capitalise on the Australian Government's policy of having a locally developed and built defence supply chain, supported by the newly-created Defence NSW organisation and NSW Defence and Industry Strategy. Developing defence industry precincts and networks will focus on locally relevant projects that build on a region's comparative strengths. Each $1 billion in government operational spending on defence in NSW contributes $1.4 billion in Gross State Product and 10,000 jobs.

8. Advanced manufacturing

With state-of-the-art facilities and cutting-edge technology across regional NSW, advanced manufacturing is driving economic growth. Leading manufacturers are attracted to regional areas by skilled workforces, low-cost environments, and access to markets and leading research centres. High-tech design and development, innovative research, product customisation, and client-focused support and repair services are all future drawcards.

9. Renewable energy

NSW has excellent renewable energy resources by international standards. Strategic infrastructure projects such as regional energy zones would capitalise on the state's significant energy resources, and signal to the market new high-potential areas for renewable energy project development, to support a more secure, affordable and clean energy system for people and businesses in regional NSW.

10. Technology-enabled primary industries

Agricultural technology – or 'agtech' – businesses have developed partnerships with research institutions to lead technology advances in regional NSW. Developing local innovations in agricultural practices including planting, fertilising, feeding, monitoring, pest control, harvesting and monitoring livestock movements could significantly grow this sector. Agtech could become an economic engine industry in its own right.

The role of government

Market forces and megatrends will continue to generate economic opportunities and challenges during the next two decades.

Government has the potential to help industries, businesses and communities to better harness those opportunities as they arise.

This means working more closely with regional economies and stakeholders, and better coordinating across government agencies. Fundamentally, each region of NSW is unique and decision-making should be tailored, rather than 'one size fits all'.

The NSW Government should identify and remove market failures that serve as obstacles to competition and regional growth. In doing so, it is important to avoid unsustainable industry assistance. However, where a market failure can be addressed through better coordination, regulatory improvements or efficient public investment, the government can and should act to promote sustainable growth.

The *Regional Economic Growth Enablers Report*, released in 2017, identified key economic enablers that government can most effectively use to encourage growth. These include:

• infrastructure
• skills
• advocacy and promotion
• providing a growth-conducive business environment.

The regional growth plans, *NSW State Infrastructure Strategy* and *Future Transport Strategy 2056* provide a long-term road map of how the government will use its enablers of infrastructure and planning (which shape the business environment) to maximise long-term sustainable growth and amenity across the state.

A great example of where the government has been able to directly foster growth in regions is the health sector in Orange. This vibrant sector has grown from the foundations of basic service provision through government planning, including investment in a new base hospital. It has grown to become the largest employing industry in Orange[15], encompassing not just government services but private industry, tertiary medical education and allied health; and providing services well beyond the local population.

15 Regional Development Australia, investnswcentralwest.com.au/opportunities-by-region/orange-2   **Summer Street in Orange**

Our government's framework for regional economic development

Our 20-year vision is an extension of the Regional Development Framework, which launched three core objectives:

1.	Amenity	Providing quality services and infrastructure in regional NSW
2.	Growth	Aligning effort to support growing regional centres
3.	Potential	Identifying and activating economic potential

Portfolio policies — Our statewide priorities by portfolio

NSW State Infrastructure Strategy
Statewide infrastructure needs and priorities

Future Transport
Statewide transport strategies and plans to 2056

Jobs for the Future
Securing job opportunities across the state

Growing the First Economy
Promoting Aboriginal economic prosperity in NSW

Greater Sydney plans, regional plans
Land planning for future needs across NSW

Regional NSW policies — What we will achieve in regional NSW

Regional Development Framework
The framework for achieving amenity, growth and potential

Regional vision — How we envisage future regional growth

Regional Vision
The vision and principles for future regional growth

Regional economic strategies — How we will deliver economic growth locally

Regional Economic Development Strategies (REDS)

Figure 6: Related NSW Government policies and strategies

Principles for future investment

On top of the Regional Development Framework's three core objectives, we are focused on seven key principles to guide us when making decisions on regional economic development. These principles are aligned with the economic enablers.[16]

INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Improved travel between regional centres and from cities and international gateways

Better transport infrastructure and services enable increased business activity, a wider labour market and better lifestyles.

2. Freight networks that will increase the competitiveness of key regional sectors

Efficient freight transportation underpins the viability and competitiveness of key and emerging sectors. High-performing freight networks are essential for regional NSW to compete in the global marketplace.

3. Affordable, reliable and fast internet to support people and businesses

Fast, reliable connectivity supports business growth, helps rural communities thrive, improves health and wellbeing, and makes it easier for people to access online public services.

4. Reliable accessible water and energy

Energy and water are vital to people and business. Securing climate-resilient water supply is particularly important for key industries, and digital advances will largely require reliable energy.

SKILLS

5. A skilled labour force for current and future needs of the regions

Helping people reskill, upskill and reinvent careers is essential for regional workforces to exploit future opportunities. This includes investing in research and development for jobs for the future.

ADVOCACY AND PROMOTION

6. Recognising each region's strengths and underlying endowments

Each of regional NSW's areas is distinct and claims its own natural, human or built endowments. This requires bespoke government decision-making.

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

7. Regulation and planning to promote commercial opportunities

Planning and regulation settings must maximise employment and income-generating opportunities. Better coordination, joined-up governance and clear signals to attract industries to targeted locations will optimise local advantages.

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16 Note, this does not replace, supersede or negate the important role of business cases, cost-benefit analyses and other investment analyses to determine projects and funding; the principles are a higher-level guide to, for example, the types of project that should be prioritised for further examination. The most efficient funding mechanism would be considered – which may, but would not necessarily, include government spending.

04
An even brighter future

Little Big Dairy Co, Dubbo

Our vision charts economic growth in key sectors, increased regional populations, and supporting infrastructure and services.

This 20-year plan focuses on economic growth that promotes wellbeing in regional communities. It maximises economies of scale in infrastructure and services, while minimising 'big city' characteristics of traffic congestion, pollution and affordability issues.[17] Many regional centres have room to grow to a size that can bring benefits including greater cultural and leisure activities, knowledge economies, and more specialist goods and services, without compromising a sense of community and connectedness.

We envisage more employment opportunities in regional NSW, which in turn retains and attracts younger generations and creates sustainable, thriving regional cities and towns. We see our regions retaining their local identity, rather than becoming more like Sydney. Regional areas will offer valued alternatives to city living and connect via the hub-and-spoke model described in the *Future Transport Strategy 2056*.

Sustainable jobs growth will be supported by regions' endowments, created or natural. Innovation in regional NSW will develop high-value service and commodity sectors to leverage cutting-edge technology. For example, NSW already has nascent industries working on generating and storing energy to meet our future needs. We also see opportunities for innovation on issues such as retaining experienced employees in the workforce for longer, and better connecting young regional people to the training, job exposure and mentorship that those experienced workers can provide.

How we are looking to the future

We modelled two economic and demographic scenarios[18] to see the outcomes of our 20-year vision for regional NSW. These were:

1. Business as usual (BAU), based on current trajectories of economic growth
2. A scenario based on the NSW Government applying this vision's principles to guide economic development decisions.

We looked at trends observed in recent years and forecast using well-regarded economic modelling methodologies and population projections. However, we do not suggest regional NSW's future is constrained by what happened previously, nor can we predict events of the next 20 years. However, based on what we know, there is a wealth of opportunities for regional NSW. Forethought and evidence-based decisions are needed to realise these opportunities.

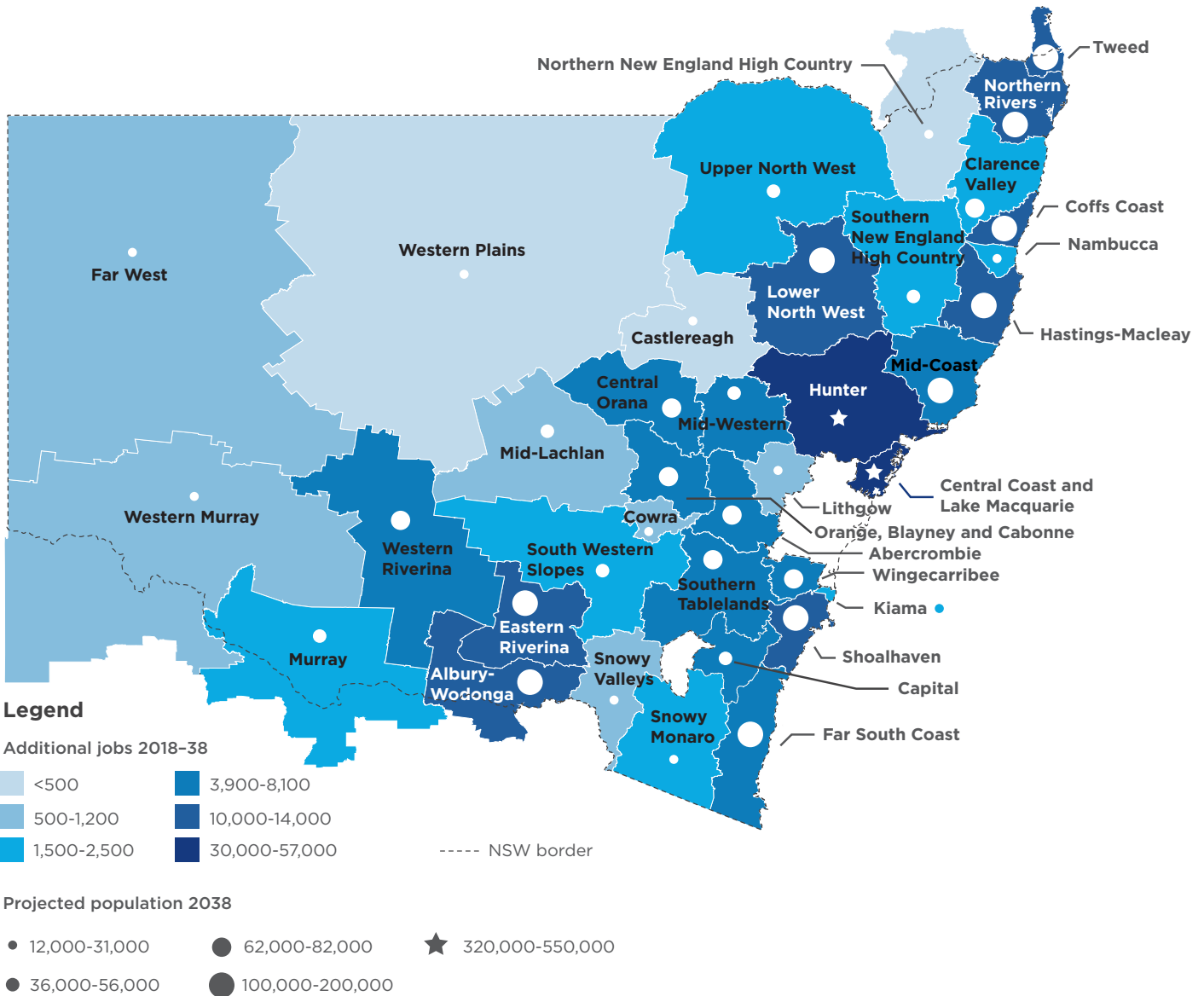For example, scenarios that could drive this growth are:

- investing in transport infrastructure to enable faster and more affordable business links to global supply chains to open new high-value export opportunities
- providing programs for faster and more reliable digital connectivity to complement the Australian Government's National Broadband Network (NBN) rollout. This could increase uptake of tech-assisted production in sectors like agriculture
- prioritising skills and support programs to target youth unemployment in key sectors
- improving regulatory settings to encourage productivity.

17 Pugalis, Lee (2017) 'Optimal Spatial Development Distribution in NSW: Key Issues Associated with New Towns and Accelerated City Development', University of Technology Sydney
18 The 'business as usual' scenario forecast jobs increases to 2038, constrained by the Department of Planning and Environment's NSW 2016 Population Projections. The 'vision' scenario shocked key sectors' growth by different percentages in line with NSW regional investment commitments, and the results were cross-checked against previous instances of investment-induced growth. The 'vision' scenario population figures are not constrained by other population projections, and are based on the vision employment projections and assuming a participation rate derived from demographic projections. The baseline year for both scenarios was 2016, to align with population data and to reflect the impact of the Regional Development Framework and Regional Growth Funds from 2016. Note that employment figures are based on place of work while population figures are based on place of residence.

The future this vision can deliver

We believe that applying these principles will result in higher population and jobs growth. Regional NSW is already forecast to grow by 620,000 people by 2038. However, our visionary approach could boost this by more than 185,000 extra people, so that the regional NSW population grows by close to a million people.

Legend

Additional jobs 2018–38

- <500
- 500-1,200
- 1,500-2,500
- 3,900-8,100
- 10,000-14,000
- 30,000-57,000
- ----- NSW border

Projected population 2038

- 12,000-31,000
- 36,000-56,000
- 62,000-82,000
- 100,000-200,000
- 320,000-550,000

Biggest growth

The Capital region is expected to be the fastest growing, adding more than 65 per cent more people, followed by Hunter, which will grow by close to 50 per cent. Across NSW, projected population growth is on average more than 29 per cent greater than BAU.

Areas forecast to add the most people are Central Coast and Lake Macquarie, and the Hunter, which are estimated to reach approximately 725,000 people and 405,000 people respectively.

Significant growth

The regions which include Albury, Maitland, Coffs Harbour, Wagga Wagga, Port Macquarie, Tamworth, Byron-Ballina-Kyogle, Shoalhaven and Tweed could reach populations of more than 100,000 people. The Mid-Coast area could exceed 90,000 people.

Regional NSW could add over 260,000 jobs between now and 2038. In total, that means almost 1.1 million jobs in the regions by 2038.

Metro Satellites

In the next two decades, Metro Satellites will transform from satellite areas of bigger cities, to become major hubs in their own right, attracting large numbers of families seeking new lifestyle and employment opportunities. Transport links are essential to existing and future Metro Satellites and nearby Growth Centres, to enable the flow of commuters, goods and services.

Most of these increases will be in Central Coast and Lake Macquarie, where populations will reach nearly 725,000, and Hunter, where numbers will reach nearly 406,000. The Capital region and Kiama will also see particularly strong population growth. In the coming 20 years, we forecast the population of Metro Satellites could grow by more than 426,000.

In 20 years there will be more than 110,000 new jobs in Metro Satellites, an increase of 34 per cent from today. There will more jobs in the construction, retail, accommodation and food service industries. As these areas become major hubs, their self-sufficiency will increase and employment sources will shift towards local industries that provide goods and services beyond the immediate region. Metro Satellites' key employing industry will be healthcare and social assistance, which will have almost 25,000 more jobs between now and 2038. This will be particularly apparent in areas such as Tweed, the Hunter and the Central Coast, where growing populations of retirees will generate demand for health and lifestyle services.

Employment sectors in Metro Satellites are diverse, spanning health (particularly in the Central Coast and Lake Macquarie), mining (in the Hunter region), defence (near Singleton), and tourism (linked to the Gold Coast and Hunter Valley). While mining is a particularly large job cluster, future employment is hard to predict due to increasing automation and variable commodity prices. Mining in these areas will face significant competition from other states, and will need to improve productivity to remain competitive. Implementing our vision could see nearly 89,000 more people and 25,000 more jobs across all industries in Metro Satellites compared to BAU.

Growth Centres

Spread along the coast and across inland regional areas, Growth Centres have the potential to welcome more than 300,000 new residents in the next 20 years, and add almost 117,000 jobs. That is almost 90,000 extra people and 35,000 extra jobs compared to BAU. Supporting this anticipated growth will require long-term planning and additional investment to ensure there is adequate infrastructure, housing and services.

Jindabyne

Over a third of the regions' population growth and almost half of its jobs growth will be in Growth Centres. While all will grow, the largest growth rates will be in and around Wagga Wagga, Albury, Nowra-Bomaderry, Port Macquarie-Hastings, Tamworth and the Northern Rivers (including Lismore and Ballina). These places will particularly benefit from growth in population-serving sectors that will drive rises in living standards and contribute to more vibrant communities.

Almost 26,000 new jobs are expected to arise in health care and social assistance, with a further 20,000 in construction, 10,000 in accommodation and food services, and 10,000 in education and training. Other large employment sectors are expected to be retail (adding almost 5,000 jobs) and agriculture, forestry and commercial fishing (9,000 jobs).

Tertiary education will provide a range of jobs in Bathurst and Wagga Wagga; the defence sector will provide more roles in Shoalhaven and Wagga Wagga; while Orange is a centre of medical and health excellence. Agribusiness is also a key employer across regional NSW, and is well-positioned for opportunities presented by increasing international 'food bowl' demands. These areas will need to continue to attract a younger workforce to ensure they have the right skills to support growth.

Coastal

In 2038, we see the opportunity for Coastal regions to grow by more than 35,000 people, primarily in the Mid Coast and Far South Coast – in towns like Taree, Forster-Tuncurry, Myall Lakes, Hawks Nest, Batemans Bay, Moruya, Narooma, Bega and Eden. Together with Nambucca – and the towns of Macksville and Nambucca Heads – and the Clarence Valley towns of Grafton and Yamba, these regions have the opportunity to add more than 14,000 jobs to the NSW economy between now and 2038, with the retail, and health and social care industries being key local employers (adding almost 4,000 and 3,000 new jobs respectively). Other sectors leading jobs growth include administrative and support services (1,400 new jobs) and accommodation and food services (1,300).

The natural beauty of coastal areas should see further growth in tourism and continued migration from across NSW. A challenge will be to see how further expansion of a residential care market can drive ongoing employment opportunities while boosting related sectors such as construction and maintenance.

Darling River

Broken Hill

Inland

We expect more than 19,000 new jobs in Inland regions over the next two decades, with most of these in agriculture, forestry and commercial fishing (4,100), construction (2,500), healthcare and social assistance (2,400) and administrative and support services (2,400). Mining, which is a smaller employer in these regions, could add an extra 39 per cent to current job figures. Population growth in the Inland areas will be led by the Southern New England High Country area (which includes Armidale and Walcha), followed by Murray (containing Deniliquin and Moama), Western Riverina (Griffith, Leeton and Narrandera), Upper North West (containing Moree, Inverell and Narrabri), and South Western Slopes (Young).

Inland areas have specialisation in a number of traded clusters – including agribusiness – and are well positioned to take advantage of future export opportunities as well as growing demand in NSW. However overall economic output has declined in recent years, suggesting further specialisation and productivity improvements are required to build on existing strengths.

Underpinning this is the need for better transport connections, as Inland areas still suffer from relative remoteness and perceptions of distance. Improving connectivity to other regional centres and capital cities will help to boost business activity, deepen labour force pools and improve the overall pull of Inland regions as a destination for people and business. Population growth of almost 47,000 people is expected (almost 3,500 greater than BAU).

Remote

Remote areas continue to support a significant proportion of agricultural and mining activity in NSW, and are vital to maintaining supplies of beef, wool, raw commodities and minerals. Key challenges for remote areas are ongoing growth in these industries and the resilience of local businesses, against the backdrop of ongoing population decline. Regional centres such as Broken Hill will continue to play an important role servicing local communities.

Government will play an important role in ensuring those in remote areas are supported with services and infrastructure appropriate to their populations, supporting potential opportunities and offering pathways for transition into other industries and locations. The government is also committed to funding local innovation, and investing in emerging industries with growth potential.

Life in 2038

Our goal is for people living in our regions in 2038 to enjoy higher standards of living, greater cultural and community engagement, and healthier and happier lifestyles than today. This will be through better incomes, job opportunities, services, infrastructure, access to housing, and support from youth through to old age.

People will have access to high-quality education. New technologies will provide engaging learning experiences. People will build skills through both face-to-face and virtual training, completing simulated and real projects with classmates and teachers from across the state. Education and training pathways will see young and lifelong learners achieve qualifications from well-respected institutions, applying their skills as they learn and gain workplace experience.

People in regions will use fast, reliable internet. They will travel easily to regional centres for work, services or amenities. There will be better access to a regional lifestyle's benefits, yet greater connectivity to larger cities and what they offer. People will upskill more regularly through accessible future-oriented training as skill demands shift. There will be a wider choice of where to live, knowing that quality aged care services are widely available.

We see businesses in our regions in 2038 specialising in key sectors based on each region's competitive advantages. They will employ a local and remotely skilled workforce in a business-friendly regulatory environment. Large amounts of data will be easily accessible to provide insights and real-time updates on multiple business facets. A growing customer base will easily find, order and enjoy boutique regional products. Our regions' businesses will access efficient freight options and online opportunities to connect to ever-expanding markets through global gateways.

05
Priorities now for the NSW Government

Lake Macquarie

To achieve this vision, the NSW Government will prioritise its focus in regional NSW by applying its principles for future investment and using the 'enablers' we know have the greatest likelihood of success.

These priorities will complement the initiatives already committed and recommended under other government strategies and long-term plans, such as the *Future Transport Strategy 2056*, *NSW State Infrastructure Strategy* and regional plans, which are already aligned with this vision. The government will also remain open to future opportunities not yet known or considered in this document, but which align with the pursuit of growth outlined in this vision.

The government expects that the initiatives below will benefit engine industries across the board.

Broken Hill

INFRASTRUCTURE

The government will:

1. Leverage existing infrastructure and other technologies in Growth Centres for a digitally connected future.

Within 5 years we will investigate:	Over 5 to 10 years we will investigate:	In the next 10 to 20 years we will investigate:
• improving digital connectivity across regional NSW beyond the NBN • technology-enabled regional public transport such as on-demand transport • innovative delivery methods for essential services in areas such as health, education and justice, to improve access and quality.	• options to provide uninterrupted mobile phone and internet connectivity along major state and regional roads • low-bandwidth infrastructure for agricultural areas for tech-enabled production and monitoring methods.	• planning for and activating smart cities technologies in Metro Satellites and Growth Centres.

2. Make regional travel faster and easier between and within regional centres, and to metropolitan areas.

Within 5 years we will investigate:	Over 5 to 10 years we will investigate:	In the next 10 to 20 years we will investigate:
• more day-return services to/from and between regional centres • regional public transport to assist commuters to travel to Sydney and regional centres to access work opportunities • options to improve public transport services to access regional centres from surrounding areas.	• rail and road upgrades on lines between regional centres • seamless digital ticketing within NSW and across borders.	• higher-speed rail links between Sydney and regional centres that have Metro Satellite or commuter hub potential.

3. Improve freight networks from regional NSW to global gateways, to increase exports.

Within 5 years we will investigate:	Over 5 to 10 years we will investigate:	In the next 10 to 20 years we will investigate:
• inland intermodals near the production of agricultural products • more efficient transport between inland intermodals and global gateways.	• optimising or increasing container flows through ports • benefits that can be realised from Inland Rail.	• more efficient east–west transport connections, including between inland NSW and Newcastle, Sydney and Wollongong • air freight potential in regional areas.

4. Manage vital energy and water resources sustainably to ensure supply will meet long-term regional needs.

Within 5 years we will investigate:	Over 5 to 10 years we will investigate:	In the next 10 to 20 years we will investigate:
• the potential for energy zones and transmission requirements • research and development investment in energy and water security and resilience, particularly for engine industries.	• focused energy projects relevant to engine industries • climate-resilient water infrastructure options.	• ongoing infrastructure to provide safe and secure water to regional communities.

SKILLS

5. Provide clear skills pathways to jobs in regions.

Within 5 years we will investigate:	Over 5 to 10 years we will investigate:	In the next 10 to 20 years we will investigate:
• models for greater integration of students' learning and work experience, prioritising growth industries in regional areas • training support to improve student success, including mentoring, accommodation and transport assistance • targeted skills and work experience approaches for groups that are under-represented in regional economic participation, including Aboriginal people • advocating the benefits and attractions of relocating to regional NSW, including campaigns and targeted initiatives for skilled workers.	• specialised vocational and technical high schools • innovative training delivery models that leverage online learning, mobile classrooms and hybrid learning models.	• flexible models to acquire job-oriented skills and qualifications – which facilitate a shift from training and work as separate activities, to a more integrated simultaneous progression.

6. Boost regional NSW's knowledge economy and excellence in innovation, particularly in agricultural technology, aged care, energy, aerospace, logistics, advanced manufacturing, and other areas linked to the future of regions.

Within 5 years we will investigate:	Over 5 to 10 years we will investigate:	In the next 10 to 20 years we will investigate:
• industry, government and university partnerships to tackle specific regional NSW issues such as economic and social challenges, or growth sector opportunities to become national leaders in niche fields.	• partnerships to elevate areas of strength from nationally recognised to internationally recognised.	• opportunities to foster industry clusters in sectors of future strength in regional NSW.

ADVOCACY AND PROMOTION

7. Draw in more domestic and international tourists in areas with tourism potential.

Within 5 years we will investigate:	Over 5 to 10 years we will investigate:	In the next 10 to 20 years we will investigate:
• infrastructure and transport to support tourism to wine and produce regions – particularly where those goods are exported internationally and NSW's brand is recognised overseas.	• increasing the efficiency of east–west transport connectivity including across the Blue Mountains • options to activate tourism potential based on regional endowments and cultural heritage • opportunities for underutilised public land and infrastructure to play a bigger role in tourism – for example, as rail trails.	• the potential to sustain a new global gateway in what is currently regional NSW (air or sea) for both people and goods.

8. Attract more domestic and international students to regional NSW.

Within 5 years we will investigate:	Over 5 to 10 years we will investigate:	In the next 10 to 20 years we will investigate:
• marketing and promotion to further raise the profile of regional NSW's education, training and research strengths.	• dedicated campuses or precincts for international students to study in regional NSW.	• tertiary-accredited integrated work-study qualifications in sectors of strength in regional NSW.

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

9. **Provide an attractive environment for businesses** to establish and invest in regional NSW locations, consistent with regions' economic endowments.

Within 5 years we will investigate:	Over 5 to 10 years we will investigate:	In the next 10 to 20 years we will investigate:
• improving the customer experience of planning processes for business investment, set-up and expansion in regional NSW • initiatives to attract skilled labour to regions, and increase the participation of women and older people in the regional labour force • potential growth areas (hubs) for targeted industries in specific locations • options to encourage greater in-country value adding in engine industries such as agriculture and manufacturing.	• streamlining regulatory requirements to attract related and co-dependent businesses in engine industries • supporting engine industries through international trade advocacy, maintaining favourable trade relationships, and considering regulatory and other supports • building flexibility into Crown land use to better respond to economic opportunities while protecting environmental, cultural and other significance.	• cooperative business investment models with key trading partners.

10. Grow vibrant places to live and work to encourage business and population growth.

Within 5 years we will investigate:	Over 5 to 10 years we will investigate:	In the next 10 to 20 years we will investigate:
• cultural infrastructure investment across regional NSW • investment models to improve recreational infrastructure in growing regional centres to enhance wellbeing and lifestyles.	• planning arrangements in all growing regional centres that ensure appropriate housing, utilities and transport to support growth, while maintaining liveability, sense of community and local identity • opportunities to activate regional town centres with growth potential, to support night-time economies.	• management of coastal land to optimise accessibility and balance commercial and residential uses.

More information

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