

REROC

RIVERINA EASTERN REGIONAL
ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS



Annual Report

2019 – 2020

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REROC Board meets with Deputy Prime Minister, Hon Michael McCormack MP

REROC CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I'm pleased to present my fourth report as Chairman of the REROC Board. What an exciting, interesting, heart-breaking and challenging year we've had for our REROC family councils and communities. With the drought, terrible bushfires and COVID, it's all certainly tested our patience, however, it's our councils' strength and resilience that I warmly respect.

COVID has thrown up many challenges for councils, too numerous to mention. This certainly has changed our way of life, to varying extents, however, I think we should give our Premier, Government and Opposition genuine praise for the manner in which, overall, they've worked well together to keep us as safe as possible. The new world of Zoom meetings has been most interesting for us all, and I have learned to appreciate it – in its place. As far as COVID restrictions will allow, I still firmly believe our Board meetings, at a minimum, must continue to be face-to-face, for obvious reasons.

That being said, the REROC Board and staff have continued to have an extremely busy and productive period.

I now note some of the many REROc activities the Board have carried out during the past twelve months;

- We have continued our extensive lobbying activities through the JO and have continued to meet with our State and Federal Local Members of Parliament, to appraise them of various issues, as well as meeting with various Ministers, where appropriate. We met with NSW Planning Minister, the Hon. Rob Stokes MP, last year, to discuss problems with the application of s7.12 contributions to State Significant Developments, particularly solar farms. I thank Greater Hume General Manager, Mr Steven Pinnuck and our Chief Executive, Mrs Julie Briggs for making time to be part of this important delegation.
- The Southern Lights NSW Project is, as we understand it, the largest roll out of smart-ready LED lighting, by geographic area, in Australia. REROc took on the management role, with our CEO, Mrs Briggs as Project Manager, assisted by Senior Project Officer, Mrs Kate Hardy. Southern Lights covers an astonishing 41 LGAs across southern and central NSW. There have been over 30,000 LED, smart-ready lights deployed across the Southern Lights footprint. The project is a collaboration between REROc, Central NSW Joint Organisation, RAMJO, CRJO and Broken Hill City Council. We continue to work closely with Essential Energy on this crucial project. Our consultants, Next Energy, have provided high level technical support and guidance which has ensured that we have pursued the best possible outcomes for our members. To this end, I would like to formally acknowledge our CEO, Mrs Briggs for the phenomenal effort she has put into Southern Lights. The Board warmly thank her and our team as it will be our Councils and communities which are the ultimate beneficiaries.
- The *Recycle Night? Recycle Right!* campaign has continued promoting the work of our regional recycling operations and the dedicated people they employ. The campaign reminds us that our recyclable materials are sorted by hand and that we can help by putting only recyclable material in our kerbside waste bins. Well done to Senior Project Officer, Mrs Kate Hardy, on keeping this successful campaign running so well.
- We have continued to monitor the implementation of the now mandatory NSW Public Lighting Code and contributed to a small review that was held in June. A larger review is scheduled to be held in the second half of 2020. The Code is the set of rules by which Essential Energy and other street light providers have to abide by when delivering services. The Code is the means by which councils hold Essential Energy and other DNSPs to account in the delivery of street lighting services. While Councils pay for the service, Essential Energy are the owners of the lights so the Code provides a mechanism for accountability and is administered by IPART.
- Our Regional Biodiversity project concluded in May. We embraced the new legislation, which provided our Member Councils with much needed assistance in dealing with the new Biodiversity Conservation Reform legislation. Our Project Officer, Mr Marcus Wright strongly supported our councils with advice and training prior to his departure to take up an appointment with DPIE. In May we ran four webinars for all senior staff and councillors to provide information on the legislation and its impact on council operations, this was very successful.

Hon Brad Hazzard, NSW Minister for Health and REROc Chairman, Cr Rick Firman OAM at Parliament House, 2020



A man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit and a striped tie, is speaking into a microphone at a podium. The podium has a sign that reads "REROC" and "RIVERINA EASTERN REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS". The background is a light-colored wall with some text that is partially visible, including "BLAND", "OLAMON", "DRA - GUNDAGAI", and "STER HUME". The man is wearing a name tag and a small pin on his lapel. The foreground shows the backs of several audience members' heads.



Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon Michael McCormack, addresses the REROC Board at Parliament House, Canberra



Shane Baldry GWCC (left), Cr Rick Firman OAM, REROC Chairman and Ethan Butson. Shane and Ethan were keynote speakers at the 2019 Take Charge Youth Leadership Forum



The Board met with Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communications and Local Government in December 2019

- Our REROC Waste Forum continues to deliver environmental outcomes for the Riverina region. The 'King and Queen of Green' visited eight schools in the region with their RRRR Pirates Show promoting the recycle, reuse, re-think, re-purpose to almost 750 students. Congratulations to all involved in this unique program.
- We embarked on a ground-breaking project to recycle end-of-life solar panels. Working with the Smart Centre and Circular NSW, the Board are exploring ways in which we can transform this waste into useful products. We see this as an emerging waste issue, with approximately 4.75 million being deployed in the Riverina-Murray over the next 5 years. This is a most important issue that we must continue to immerse ourselves in.
- We have continued our participation in RENEW NSW. This is a state-wide organisation that brings all the Voluntary Regional Waste Groups, like the REROC Waste Forum, together.
- Traditionally, the REROC Board would host a meeting in either State or Federal Parliament House. That role now falls to our Riverina Joint Organisation. For interest sake, the RivJO Board held our first meeting for 2020 at Parliament House, Sydney in late February. This was an outstanding success with most Board members attending and meeting, with the plethora of guest speakers who included, the Hon. Paul Toole MP (NSW Minister for Roads and Regional Transport), the Hon. Adam Marshall MP (NSW Minister for Agriculture), the Hon. Shelley Hancock MP (NSW Minister for Local Government), the Hon. Melinda Pavey MP (NSW Minister for Water) and the Hon. Dr Geoff Lee MP (Minister for Skill and Tertiary Education). We are most grateful to the Ministers for giving of their time so generously. We also acknowledge the State MP for Cootamundra, Ms. Steph Cooke and her office, for making the necessary arrangements. It is most important we continue to reach out to our State and Federal MPs and Ministers, on their 'turf'.

- Our visit to Parliament House in Canberra in September 2019 was also a great success. We were able to meet not only with the Deputy Prime Minister, Hon Michael McCormack MP, but through the work of his office meetings were arranged with a number of minister including Hon David Littleproud MP (Minister for Water Resources, Drought, Rural Finance, Natural Disaster and Emergency Management, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash (Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business), Hon Trevor Evans MP (Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management), Hon Mark Coulton MP (Minister for Regional Services, Decentralisation and Local Government), Hon Sussan Ley MP (Minister for the Environment) and Senator the Hon Mark Buchholz (Assistant Minister for Road Safety and Freight Transport).

This is a general and brief overview of the meetings, roles, conferences and events REROC immerses itself in. All of us as a Board, as mayors, councillors, staff and citizens can be most pleased with the genuine commitment we have to each other and our respective communities, through these exciting and important activities.

The past 12 months has seen the Board host several guest speakers, even though Covid-19 has restricted this to an extent. To each of our guests, the Board and I extend (again) our thanks for making time available to share information with us, to further strengthen our communities and, in turn, our Riverina region.

The Board, Chief Executive, staff and I wish to express our thanks to our respective State Members of Parliament, for their ongoing support of REROC. To Ms Steph Cooke MP (NSW Member for Cootamundra), Dr Joe McGirr MP (NSW Member for Wagga Wagga) and Mr Justin Clancy MP (NSW Member for Albury) - we thank them very much, for their constant commitment to REROC, which is most appreciated by our Board and our Member Councils.

We also take this opportunity to thank our Deputy Prime Minister and Federal Member for Riverina, the Hon. Michael McCormack MP. Deputy Prime Minister McCormack is a strong ally of REROC and we appreciate the support given to us by he and his staff. It is crucial we continue to enhance our genuine relationships with our State & Federal MPs and their Advisors. If we continue to 'play with a straight bat', we can't go too far wrong.

The Board also acknowledges our Riverina-Murray Director of Department of Regional NSW, Mr James Bolton. Mr Bolton has been of tremendous assistance to us and we are grateful to him.

I take this opportunity to thank our REROC Executive Committee. The Executive for the past 12 months has included; myself as Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, Mayor John Seymour OAM (Coolamon Shire), Mayor Neil Smith (Junee Shire), Mayor Abb McAllister (Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional), Mayor Rodger Schirmer (Lockhart Shire), General Managers in Messrs Tony Donoghue PSM (Coolamon Shire), Ray Smith PSM (Bland Shire) & Steven Pinnuck (Greater Hume Shire). This added commitment to REROC, on top of their role as a Board member, is certainly appreciated by us all.

I take this opportunity to formally congratulate the new Deputy Chairman of our REROC Board, Mayor John Seymour OAM (Coolamon Shire) on his election to the role at our last AGM. I also acknowledge and thank the immediate past Deputy Chairman, Mayor Neil Smith (Junee Shire) for his efforts and appreciate his continuing service on the Board and Executive.

A special mention to our Treasurer, Mr Tony Donoghue PSM (General Manager - Coolamon Shire). Mr Donoghue does a very good job, ably assisted by Mrs Courtney Armstrong. Their contributions and wise counsel is most appreciated. We also take this opportunity to acknowledge Mr Donoghue's mention in the 2020 Queen's Birthday Honours List, receiving the Public Service Medal (PSM). This is a well-earned honour for a genuine & dedicated man of local government.

At this time, on behalf of the REROC Board and our Member Councils, I formally pay tribute to our warmly regarded Chief Executive, Mrs Julie Briggs. Mrs Briggs is a lady who dedicates a major portion of her existence to serving her much loved Members of REROC. Besides the work the Board, Executive and Working Groups allocate her, as the Chairman, I can advise we speak nearly every day and/or night – she is always 'on duty'. Mrs Briggs also holds several other regional, State and National roles, which all benefit from her impressive talents. Mrs Briggs has been in the role for over 20 years - and our respect and affection for her grows each and every year. The genuine belief Mrs Briggs has in our Member Councils and our cherished Riverina region is very real and very special. The Board and I extend our warm thanks to Mrs Briggs for her inspiring efforts.

REROC Chairman, Cr Rick Firman OAM and Hon Scott Buchholz MP at Parliament House Canberra



The Board and I also acknowledge our other REROC team members, who include Mrs Kate Hardy, Mrs Claire Garrett and Ms Anneke Gehrmann. These three are committed to giving us their very best, for which we are most grateful.

I extend a warm vote of thanks to the distinguished Board Members of REROC. I consider it a very real privilege to serve as Chairman, and particularly to be elected by my esteemed, fellow Mayors and General Managers from across our REROC footprint. It is an honour to work beside each of you, with the ultimate goal of enhancing our much-loved Riverina region.

Finally, to our Member Councils, to each councillor and staff member who make up our strong nine-member REROC 'Family'; I extend my personal thanks for your commitment, loyalty and belief in REROC. What has been achieved over the organisation's lifetime is mind-blowing. With your continued commitment, we have much more to achieve together, to ensure that our Riverina Region thrives and prospers, long into the future.

Thank you very much indeed.

CR R B FIRMAN OAM CHAIRMAN

REROC Chairman Cr Rick Firman OAM and Senator Hon Michaelia Cash at Parliament House Canberra



SPEAKING OUT

Matters where the REROC Members require lobbying and advocacy to occur are now referred by REROC to the Riverina Joint Organisation (JO). The matters, particularly operational ones, are referred primarily by the Technical Groups, which have a JO Board member on them and sometimes by the REROC Board itself.

REROC feeds information to the JO which is used to inform and guide the activities that it undertakes. The REROC Board made the decision in 2018 that advocacy and lobbying would be ceded to the JO as part of a suite of reforms initiated by the State Government that resulted in the formation of the Joint Organisations.

A wide variety of issues have been referred to the JO during the last 12 months, however some issues, like the Public Lighting Code continue to fall to REROC for response because of the Organisation's long history in the field.

NSW Public Lighting Code

After over a decade of lobbying by REROC and others, the NSW Public Lighting Code finally made mandatory, the new Code commenced in July 2019. IPART now provides the oversight for the operation of the Code with Distribution Network Providers (DNSPs) like Essential Energy being required to comply with it as part of their licence to operate.

The Code is due for a complete review at the end of 2020 but a small review was carried out in April and May 2020. As REROC is listed as one of the authors of the Code we were asked to comment on the proposed amendments and we did so on behalf of the Southern Lights NSW group. During the process we identified a number of larger issues which will be taken up when the full review is conducted.

Section 7.12 Contributions to State Significant Developments

REROC, through the JO, is continuing to pursue the issue of the payment of section 7.12 contributions by developers for State Significant developments. In February of this year in a meeting between the JO Board and the Minister for Planning, Hon Rob Stokes MP, indicated that he was in support of a change of wording for the section from "may impose" to "must impose" as this would provide certainty for developers, councils and the Planning Commission in relation to the developments.

However, nothing further has occurred on this front and the JO and REROC Members are continuing to follow-up with the Minister in this long-winded battle to ensure

every development, in every LGA is treated the same way regardless of whether the State or the council is assessing it.

Impact of the Increase in the Emergency Services Levy (ESL)

The REROC Members continue to express concerns about the rising cost of the Emergency Services Levy (ESL). The Levy covers the operation of the Rural Fire Service, the SES and the NSW Fire Brigade. The ESL cost increases are never consistent with the rate peg which means that councils are forced to pay for the Levy by cutting back on other services to residents. Our analysis last year showed that on a regional level, of the \$990,243 in additional income raised through the rate peg, \$485,498.00 was to be paid out in ESL, leaving our Member Councils with budgets which no longer balanced.

At some point there must be a recognition that councils have limited sources of income and that every time there is a significant increase in the ESL, it is residents that pay one way or another. Our Member Councils noted with concern that the Local Government contribution to the ESL for the 20/21 year increased by a \$32 million on the back of the previous year's increase of \$16 million. While the State has said that it will meet the increased cost, saving councils from having to cut services to pay for the State agencies' increased fees, Members are very concerned that come 21/22 if the State does not continue to meet the increases then local government will suffer a significant financial hit.

The REROC Members have committed to continue lobbying about this issue through the JO.

A New Risk Management and Internal Audit Framework for Local Councils

The Government released a Discussion Paper on the introduction of this new framework in September of last year with responses due by the end of December.

The Member Councils closely scrutinized the requirements and REROc estimated that even if we were able to implement a shared delivery arrangement, the proposed new Audit Risk and Improvement Committees and the accompanying regime, would cost each Member approximately \$170,000 per year.

Through the JO, Members provided feedback to the Government about the proposed regime, including expressing concern that existing, cheaper internal audit and risk committee arrangements which over 70% of councils in NSW already had in place were not considered as possible models by the Office of Local Government.

The REROc Members are very concerned about the additional expense associated with the proposed regime which appears will result in more bureaucracy without improving productivity. We are yet to hear from the Minister of Local Government or the OLG about what the next steps will be.

Roads of Strategic Importance Consultation

We met with representatives from the Federal Department of Infrastructure to provide input into the development of the Roads of Strategic Importance (ROSI) initiative. The meeting took place in Narrandera in February.

We were able to provide the representatives from the Department with copies of our latest version of the Regional Freight Transport Plan and also provide input into the projects that would be of value to our Region.

We have remained in contact with the Department and are continuing to provide them with information on possible ROSI projects for our Region.

Regional Roads Classification Review

The Review is the outcome of an announcement made during the 2019 State Election by the Deputy Premier, Hon John Barilaro MP, that the Government would look at transferring some Regional Roads to State Government ownership.

While Member Councils are very supportive of the Review, one of the main concerns is that jobs in local government are not lost as a result of the transfer. An Independent Panel was appointed in early 2020 to progress the Review and it released a Terms of Reference in March. Members responded to the Terms again reiterating concerns in relation to local jobs, the retention of road funding and ensuring that local government was given the final say on the transfer.

Consultations were scheduled by the Panel for July and this was to be followed by councils lodging expressions of interest in relation to roads in their LGAs that they wanted to earmark for transfer.

Review of the NSW Planning Infrastructure Contributions Scheme

In May the Department of Planning released a bundle of proposed changes to the infrastructure contributions scheme in NSW. Unfortunately, while the changes included a proposal for a higher section 7.12 percentage it did not include the change that REROc has lobbied for since 2018 in relation to enforcing the obligation to pay the section 7.12 contribution.

The REROc Planning Technical Group reviewed the papers and proposed changes and provided feedback to the JO. The JO subsequently captured that feedback and included it in a response to the Department of Planning.

Cr Doug Meyers, Deputy Mayor, Greater Hume and Peter Veneris, General Manager, Lockhart at Parliament House, Sydney





Cr Rick Firman OAM with former REROC Chairs, Paul Braybooks OAM and Lola Cummins OAM at the 2019 AGM Lunch



Hon. David Littleproud MP, addresses the REROC Board at Parliament House in September 2019



Hon Rob Stokes MP, Minister for Planning takes questions from the floor, Parliament House Sydney

Meetings with State and Federal Members of Parliament

We continue to seek opportunities to engage with State and Federal Members of Parliament, including visiting both State and Federal Parliaments to engage directly with Ministers

We thank our local State representatives for their support over the last 12 months: Dr Joe McGirr (Member for Wagga Wagga), Justin Clancy (Member for Albury) Member for Albury, Steph Cooke (Member for Cootamundra and Parliamentary Secretary for Southern NSW) as well as our local MLC, the Hon Wes Fang.

Our engagement with our State Members was enhanced with a visit to NSW Parliament House in February arranged through the JO. At that meeting Members heard from:

- Minister for Local Government, Hon Shelly Hancock MP
- Minister for Skills and Tertiary Education, Hon Geoff Lee MP
- Minister for Planning, Hon Rob Stokes MP
- Minister for Regional Roads, Hon Paul Toole MP
- Minister for Youth, Women and Mental Health, Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC
- Minister for Health, Hon Brad Hazzard MP
- Minister for Agriculture, Hon Adam Marshall MP
- Minister for Water, Hon Melinda Pavey MP
- Parliamentary Secretary for Southern NSW and Member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke MP

The visit was co-ordinated through the JO and Steph Cooke's Office and we are very grateful to Steph and her staff for all their assistance.

In September 2019 we made a second visit to the Federal Parliament where we met with:

- Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development, Hon Michael McCormack MP
- Minister for Regional Services, Decentralisation and Local Government, Hon Mark Coulton MP

- Assistant Minister for Road Safety and Freight Transport, Hon Scott Buchholz MP
- Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash
- Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and Environmental Management, Hon Trevor Evans MP
- Minister for Water Resources, Drought, Rural Finance, Natural Disaster and Emergency Management, Hon David Littleproud MP
- Minister for Environment, Hon Sussan Ley MP

The visit was arranged through the Member for Riverina's office, the Hon Michael McCormack MP and we thank the Deputy Prime Minister and his staff for making the visit such a success.

We also stay in contact with our Federal Members Hon Michael McCormack, Deputy Prime Minister and Member for Riverina and the Hon Sussan Ley, Member for Albury and Minister for the Environment about Federal issues such as Mobile Phone Blackspots and Roads to Recovery funding.

In addition, the Hon Mark Coulton MP then Minister for Regional Services, Decentralisation and Local Government attended our December 2019 meeting. Minister Coulton spoke at length about his portfolios and local government's role in supporting regional communities.

Our regular guest speaker visits have been put on hold this year due to COVID.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Councils in regional areas are either the largest or one of the largest employers in their LGA, consequently the on-going development of this workforce is of great importance. This year has presented special challenges as we have had to find ways to provide opportunities for professional development while addressing the demands of working in a COVID world.

Councillors are also an important part of the professional make-up of councils and are strongly encouraged to attend REROC Conferences and Forums. We are always looking for opportunities to design and conduct training activities for both staff and councillors. This year, in response to COVID restrictions, REROC invested in webinar software so that we could move our training on-line, this has proved to be a very positive outcomes as it has enabled more staff to attend training opportunities.

No Time to Waste Conference 2020

A decision was made following the 2019 *No Time to Waste* to move our annual conference to later in the year. The Conference focuses on waste management and resource recovery in regional and rural locations. Initially the move was to September 2020, however with COVID we were forced to move it further back and it will now be held in February 2020.

We are thankful to our speakers and trade stand businesses for their patience as we have had to accommodate the challenge of event management in a COVID world.

Speaker presentations from the *No Time to Waste* Conference can be downloaded from the new REROC Waste Forum website waste.reroc.com.au

Mapped Out

The 2019 conference was held on Wednesday 6 and Thursday 7 November at The Rules Club, Wagga Wagga. The success of introducing a second day of programming continued. It is evident that being able to devote a dedicated half-day to what is happening in Spatial Services NSW assists both the agency in its outreach and attendees in their work.

Almost 100 people attended the Conference to hear about the ways that spatial data and mapping are being

used across a multitude of service delivery scenarios. The Executive Director of Regional Arts Australia presented the arts in a different context when she demonstrated how mapping regional arts' activities across Australia was informing RAA's narrative. The application of spatial mapping to the presentation of where grant funding was going and for what purposes could clearly be transferred to many other programs and projects particularly in the local government sector.

Furthering the goal of showing the diversity of applications for mapping technology, Tony Rowley and Anthony Burton from Three Stone Architecture and Design spoke about using GIS and associated technologies in the design and planning processes for sports and recreation trails, mountain biking and tourism projects.

Modelling for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure was the focus of Veronika Emetc's presentation. Veronika is part of the Transport for NSW project that models future transport options, her presentation focused on the development of optimal placement of EV charging stations in NSW.

Chartis Technology who have attended almost every Mapped Out Conference provided an address on spatially enabling environmental decisions. Matt Robinson spoke about his role in leading a project that developed a cloud-based decision tool for undertaking Environmental Impact Assessments.

Attendees at Mapped Out 2019



Presentations from the event can be downloaded from the REROC website at www.reroc.com.au Emergency Services Agency spoke about

Annual Planners' Workshop

Each year at the end of September we host a Planners' Workshop that focuses on specific issues identified by the Planners' Technical Group. We also invite planners from the RAMJO region to attend. The 2019 workshop was held on 24 September and focused on two main areas: heritage issues and Crown Lands and Native Title.

Noel Thomson from Noel Thomson Architects who is a heritage advisor spoke about heritage building and planning for development. Mr Thomson used his extensive experience as a heritage advisor to talk about how councils can consider the heritage values of buildings when assessing developments that re-purpose or change the use of historic buildings.

John Gilding an archaeologist from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment spoke about Aboriginal cultural heritage and planning and how planners can consider cultural issues in the planning process.

Virginia Newell, Director of Indigenous and Local Government Allocations with Crown Lands spoke about the processes associated with assessing Native Title on

Crown Lands. The transfer of Crown Lands to councils has created considerable concern among councils about their ability to manage Native Title claims, which had previously fallen within Crown Lands' jurisdiction. During the presentation, Virginia spoke about how Crown Lands managed Native Title and the processes that councils could adopt in their own management.

Local Strategic Planning Statements were the focus of Meredith McIntyre's presentation. All councils were required to develop a LSPS and Meredith went through the steps required in the development of the Statements.

Biodiversity Conservation Reforms Webinars

In response to the COVID restrictions, REROC delivered webinars for the first time this year. At the end of March and again in May of 2020 we delivered four webinars that focused on the biodiversity conservation reform legislation. The webinars were delivered as part of REROC's Biodiversity Conservation Reform project.

Our first webinar, held on 30 March, focused on the legislation in general and council obligations. Our trainer, Tara Kennedy from Golder and Associates covered the following topics:

- Overview and refresh of the legislative regime
- Part 4 and Part 5 Pathways

Planners Workshop is addressed by representatives from Crown lands

Noel Thomson addresses a Planners' Workshop about Heritage and Planning



- What Happens when the Scheme Applies
- General Discussion of different scenarios IC

Thirty-four people attended the workshop, with virtually all remaining for the entire 2-hour duration. The chat feature was used for questions, with Ms Kennedy reading out the questions and then providing answers.

We received very positive feedback from the webinar and as a result scheduled three more 2-hour sessions for May to cover topics that were identified through a survey conducted on knowledge gaps at the end of 2019 and the questions that were asked by participants during the first webinar. The topics covered were as follows:

- Biodiversity Stewardship Sites and Vegetation SEPP and LLS Act Pathways
- Biodiversity Certification and Specific Aspects of the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme
- A Deep Dive into Biodiversity Development Assessment Reports (BDARs)

All the sessions were recorded, and participants were provided with the PowerPoint presentations. Private links to the recordings were uploaded to the REROC YouTube channel. This means that participants can return time and again to view and listen to the materials.

Skills Shortages in Local Government

The Workforce Development Group looked at skills gaps in our Member Councils with a view to informing future strategies in workforce development and recruitment.

Virginia Newell from Crown Lands addressed the Planners Workshop on Native Title



Positions identified as having critical or serious levels of difficulty to fill were:

- Engineers
- Surveyors
- Mapping & GIS Officers
- Information Technology
- Town Planners
- Strategic Planners
- Building Inspectors

Other positions councils said they were having difficulty filling were:

- Human Resources
- Arts and Cultural Workers
- Environmental Science Officer

The results were provided to RDA-Riverina as part of their review of skills shortages in the Riverina and were also used to inform the Riverina JO's skills shortages project.

The Riverina JO commenced a project to address skills shortages in local government in early 2020. The REROC Workforce Development Committee is the steering group for the project. The project is looking at three key activities:

- *Start Your Career Here Days* – for high school students to visit their local council and learn more about careers in local government
- *Career Start Placements* – for CSU and TAFE student to undertake work placements that progress their chosen career. The placements can be for credit towards their course or simply a volunteer placement.
- *Come and Try Days* – directed activities and events, similar to Build A Bridge, that target high school students providing them with a taste of what a career in their chosen field would be like. It is a hands-on activity that is guided by council staff acting as mentors.

The JO project will be completed by June 2021 and it is anticipated that the Workforce Development Group will be pivotal in running pilots for each of the key activities.



The Build A Bridge Camp was cancelled this year due to COVID

Workshops and Training Opportunities

REROC will be developing and implementing more training opportunities, including conferences and workshops, for councillors and staff. This year has thrown up unexpected challenges in delivering COVID-safe events, however moving forward we expect this to be an increasing part of our mix of offerings for Member Councils.

Build a Bridge and Get Over it

Unfortunately, the 2019 Build a Bridge event had to be postponed until April 2020 because our erstwhile trainer, Nigel Worne fell ill just prior to the event. All the successful applicants for the activity were advised that their places would be held until April.

We were fortunate that our sponsors for the event, Riverina Water, IPWEA (NSW) and Charles Sturt University's Faculty of Engineering all agreed to holdover their funding.

However, with the onset of COVID restrictions, the April event had to be cancelled.



BUILDING STRATEGIC CAPACITY

Identifying and implementing ways to build strategic capacity for Member Councils is one of REROC's key roles. This is achieved through leveraging the economies of scale and scope that are created when councils work together.

While procurement is the most obvious form of collaboration that captures economies of scale, the work that is done to identify and implement solutions, develop shared intellectual property and to share knowledge and projects is critical.

Southern Lights NSW shows how we collaborate across the State. The project which covers 41 LGAs is an initiative of REROC, RAMJO, CNSWJO and CBRJO. We were joined by Broken Hill City Council once the project was underway. REROC provides the project management for Southern Lights and works closely with the other regional organisations to deliver the project into their regions.

REROC has also worked with CNSWJO and RAMJO on aggregated procurement projects including on

the development of a Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement project. The Best Practice project will provide regional organisations and joint organisations with tools and guidance on procuring for groups of councils.

REROC recognises the importance of pursuing collaborations with state agencies and other regional organisations on projects that benefit our Member Councils and the communities they represent. Our relationships with state agencies have been very positive, working with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, Department of Regional NSW, Transport for NSW, the EPA, the Department of Primary Industries and the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Our on-going collaborations with Eastern Riverina Arts and the Regional Development Australia – Riverina, who share similar footprints provides both strategic and operational outcomes.

Collaborating Strategically

Southern Lights NSW

Southern Lights NSW is one of the largest deployments of smart-enabled LED lighting in Australia, with over 75,000 LED streetlights deployed across a geographic area that is approximately the same size as the United Kingdom.

The project was initiated by the Project Partners over 3 years ago, initially as a simple street lighting improvement program it grew to encompass the deployment of the latest technology in smart-enabled LED lighting that incorporated a communications system that allowed dimming and also the deployment of smart city devices. The Smart City devices that could be deployed include flood levels, bin sensors and parking sensors. Some of the lights will also include Zhaga ports that can be enabled to provide environmental sensing to monitor for smoke, flood, climate and noise.

Covering 41 Local Government Areas, the Southern Lights project is evidence of the capacity for local government to collaborate on multi-million dollar projects. Southern Lights' Project Partners are REROC the Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO), Central NSW Joint Organisation (CNSWJO), Canberra Region Joint Organisation (CRJO) and Broken Hill City Council.

The deployment of the new lights commenced in Albury in October 2019 and has gone apace since then, following on from Albury came Orange, Bathurst and then Wagga Wagga. At the end June 2020 there were approximately 28,000 energy efficient, LED, smart-ready streetlights deployed across the Southern Lights footprint.

The new technology will substantially decrease streetlight energy use for councils as well as reducing their overall running costs. The Return on Investment for most of the participating councils, who are funding deployment, is 3.5 years.

We have worked closely with Essential Energy, the Distribution Network Service Provider (DNSP) for the Southern Lights' Region. Essential Energy is the owner of the street lights so it was critical to not only convince them that this was the best way forward but then to work with them to implement the project. This close working relationship has been pivotal to the successful delivery of the project.

REROC provides the day-to-day management of the project, constantly liaising with the project partners and individual councils, preparing correspondence and other support materials, arranging meetings as well as participating in the procurement process with Essential Energy for lighting and for the communications platform that will support the smart technology.

Meetings are held regularly to inform the project and develop the pathway forward, during COVID these have been held via Zoom. The Southern Lights representatives, ensure that the needs of local government are paramount in the decision-making process. Most if not all of the outcomes, processes, procedures and technology choices that have been made over the 3 years the project has been running will be of benefit to every council in Essential Energy's footprint.

We have been ably supported through out the process by our consultants Next Energy, who have gone the extra distance to ensure that we are always up to speed with the latest innovations in the street lighting field and that what is being proposed is in the best interests of the councils.

More information on the project can be found at www.southernlightsnsw.org.au. specifications for the communications backbone that will support the delivery of smart lighting.



Waide Elliott from Essential Energy addresses REROC Members about LED street lighting upgrades

Regional Biodiversity Support Officer

This project came to an end in June 2020, we were fortunate to attract additional funding to extend the project but unfortunately were unable to find someone to fill the project Regional Biodiversity Support Officer position after Marcus Wright left in May 2019.

We did however, continue to provide services to the 22 REROC and RAMJO councils that were participating in the project. At the end of 2019 we conducted a follow-up survey of the participating councils to determine the gaps that they still felt they had in their knowledge. This resulted in a decision to hold workshops in early 2020 to address the identified gaps.

As with so much that has occurred in 2020, due to COVID those workshops were transferred to webinar. The first workshop, held during April, was so successful that it was followed by another three webinars in May. The feedback from the workshops was extremely positive a great way to finalise the project.

Prior to Marcus' departure we commenced work on a web-based resource to assist councils with decision-making on biodiversity.

The web-based resource provides a decision-making pathway and includes flowcharts, information sheets and hyperlinks that provide guidance to both the public and councils.

We are grateful to Tara Kennedy from Golder and Associates for her work on the site, to ensure that it accurately reflected the legislation. We also thank Marcus Wright the former project officer who is now working as a Senior Conservation Planning Officer Biodiversity and Conservation with the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment who provided substantial amounts of the information on the website.

The webinars that ran in April and May highlighted the web-based resources showing council staff how the information could be accessed and used.

Our challenge now is to keep the website information up to date. We appreciate the assistance offered by Marcus Wright to support the site.

While the project is formally completed, the issues that impact on the implementation of the biodiversity conservation reform legislation such as Biodiversity Offsets continue to be addressed during the Planning Technical Group meetings.



Participants at the 2019 Take Charge Youth Leadership Forum

Australian Road Research Board Forum

We worked with the Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) to host a Forum in Wagga Wagga on 30 August 2019. The Forum was launched by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Hon Michael McCormack MP.

The Forum was part of a consultation process undertaken by the ARRB, a National Transport Research Organisation, to develop a series of guides to assist local governments in enhancing their capabilities in road asset management and maintenance, with a focus on regional areas.

The ARRB was working on the development of a suite of guides that would support national and international best practice in the procurement, design and management of materials for road construction, sealed & unsealed roads and structures. The project was funded as part of the 2019/20 Budget.

Contaminated Land Regional Project Officer

In early 2019 REROC received funding from the EPA to engage a regional project officer to work in Contaminated Land and to assist councils with the transition to the management of Underground Petroleum Storage Systems (UPSS).

Despite our best attempts we were unable to recruit a person into the position and when RAMJO found itself without a project officer we agreed that the best way forward was to collaborate.

REROC and RAMROC had collaborated on a Contaminated Land Management (CLM) project in 2015/16 which was very successful, so we decided to revisit this mode of delivery. In early 2020 we were able to attract a well-



Hon Michael McCormack MP, Deputy Prime Minister opens the ARRB Consultation

qualified project officer in Matthew Dudley and the project commenced.

As a result of our previous CLM project we found that many of our councils were well prepared for this project and we have been able to build on those strengths. COVID has restricted some of the activities that would have been undertaken, but we have moved meetings and workshops on-line and council staff have adapted well.

The project will run until 2022.

Regional Freight Transport Plan

We joined forces with the Riverina Joint Organisation to update the Regional Freight Transport Plan. The updated Plan was released in late November 2019 and included additional local roads that were of significance from a freight transport perspective. This was to ensure that freight-significant local roads were identified to support Members looking to apply for Fixing Local Roads funding.

The Plan has been very important in providing evidence to support funding requests by councils for road upgrades and to inform decision making in relation to freight transport planning. The Plan aims to deliver an integrated, regional approach to freight transport planning for the eastern Riverina region with the goal of building a network of efficient and effective freight transport routes that increase economic outcomes for our Region.

A key outcome of the Plan is the identification of constraints that impact on the effective movement of freight within and through the Region. In determining the impact one of the issues that has consistently been identified as being needed is more robust data on freight movement and the value of freight using the identified routes.

This year a project was initiated by Riverina JO to obtain the much-needed data. The team at CSIRO TraNSIT has been contracted by the JO to provide the data, the project is due for completion before the end of 2020. CSIRO TraNSIT have previously been heavily involved in providing data for the business cases relating to Inland Rail. Once the data has been compiled, the Plan will be updated once more. This will be the fourth update since the Plan was first released in 2014.

The Plan, can be downloaded from the REROC website and has also been mapped at www.reroc.giscloud.com. We thank Dan Smith and Coolamon Shire Council for providing the mapping services for this project.

Mobile Phone Blackspot Mapping

A project undertaken by the REROC Infrastructure Group over the last 4 years, we have been mapping the location of mobile blackspots with a view to identifying projects that can be undertaken to address the issue.

The mapping has also been used by the Riverina JO to advocate for funding to address blackspots. The mapping has been prepared for REROC by Dan Smith at Coolamon Shire Council and we thank Dan and Coolamon for the time and resources provided.

Native Title Expert Panel

This was a project identified by the Planning Technical Committee and responds to the new responsibilities that the State Government has legislated for councils in the management of Crown Lands. Members recognised that they were going to struggle to build expertise necessary to undertake informed judgements on Native title and that they would need support.

It was agreed that the creation of a panel of experts that councils could access when required, would provide the necessary backup that councils needed. Following an EoI process, a panel of experts all law firms with substantial experience in Native Title and Local Government were selected. The Panel information can be accessed from the Members' Section of the REROC website.



REROC CEO, Julie Briggs, speaks to Assistant Minister Trevor Evans MP about waste management and resource recovery issues for regional communities, Parliament House Canberra

Collaborating Operationally

One of the key platforms for collaboration for council staff are the REROC Technical Groups that operate as sub-committees. Most of the Groups meet every second month, however some meet every 3 months. The committees draw their membership from Member councils' operational staff and in some cases state government agencies. We are encouraging state agency involvement in the groups as it significantly improves the collaborative opportunities and information sharing.

These groups are a valuable professional development opportunity as they provide a platform for participants to learn from each other, share information and hear from experts in their particular field through the attendance of guest speakers.

A General Manager from the Board of the Riverina Joint Organisation is also a member of each of the Technical Groups in order to provide a mechanism for reporting back to the JO when the Technical groups identify an issue that requires the JO to lobby for change or to respond to a policy development.

REROC Waste Forum

The Waste Forum is our longest running technical group, it was first established in 1998. The Waste Forum is partially funded through the EPA as one of NSW's 8 Voluntary Regional Waste Groups (VRWG). The EPA's funding comes through the Waste Less Recycle More initiative, the funding enables the Forum to deliver a wide variety of programs in waste management and resource recovery.

The Forum is chaired by Coolamon Shire Council General Manager, Tony Donoghue. The Group meets on a bi-monthly basis and its activities are showcased in the section Managing Waste, Promoting Resource Recovery and Environmental Sustainability. The Forum is also a member of RENEW NSW.

Riverina Spatial Information Group (RivSIG)

RivSIG supports staff who work in the spatial data field. It draws its membership from local government and state

agencies. The Group has been ably chaired this year by Narelle Johnson from Junee Shire who took over from former long servicing Chair Laurie Thiele from Wagga Wagga City Council.

RivSIG takes the lead role in the organisation of the Mapped Out Conference and provides staff working in spatial data with much needed networking and professional development opportunities. The Group decided to meet in different locations around the Riverina-Murray region this year to reflect its diverse membership.

Infrastructure/Engineers Sub-committee

The Committee considers major infrastructure and engineering issues in the Region. The sub-committee deals with issues that impact on road use and maintenance, and is primarily responsible for the delivery of the Regional Freight Transport Plan. The sub-committee also addresses specific issues that arise from the engineering functions within our Member Councils.

The Committee considers issues relating to freight transport, roads, access arrangements, the identification of collaborative projects, joint procurements, as well as other infrastructure issues like mobile phone connectivity.

The Committee meets in Coolamon, once every three months and is chaired by Coolamon Shire Council's General Manager, Tony Donoghue.



Members of the Infrastructure/Engineers Group listen to a presentation by the NVHR

Planning Technical Committee

This Committee is made up of staff involved in the planning area and meets every second month. The Committee looks at ways to solve common planning issues through the development of regional policies that can be applied in individual LGAs.

The committee also provides responses to draft planning documentation, draft SEPPs and regional plans prepared by the State.

It is responsible for the agenda on the annual Planners Workshop which brings together planners from across the Riverina-Murray Region. The committee has regularly met with representatives from the Department of Planning and from the Department of Primary Industries.

Youth and Community Development Network

The REROC Youth & Community Development Network brings together all the council staff working with youth and community development in the REROC Region. The Network meets bi-monthly and aims to assist member councils by working together to enhance youth and community development services in the Region. Prior to COVID, meetings were held at Eastern Riverina Arts and with thank Scott Howie and Tim Kurylowicz for their support.

A key activity on the calendar for the Network is the Take Charge Youth Leadership Forum.

Energy Management Group

The Group meets every 2 months and looks at ways in which energy efficiency initiatives can be progressed in the councils. Representatives from DPIE attend the meetings providing great information on programs that the State is delivering.

The Group are looking at projects in EV charging, electric vehicles for councils, community solar projects and the ways that councils can use the latest in energy technologies to reduce energy use.

Water and Waste Water Technical Committee

This Committee is comprised of council staff from the Member Councils that are working in water and waste water and from both county councils.

The Committee comes together to discuss issues that specifically relate to delivering water and waste water services. Members share knowledge about their activities and share ways in which they have addressed and resolved issues.

The Committee also identified opportunities for group procurements this year identifying liquid alum and sodium hydrochlorite. Training for staff working in the area has also been a focus, as concerns have been raised about the lack of availability of training opportunities particularly in regional areas.

Workforce Development Sub-committee

This Committee meets on a quarterly basis to address issues that relate to Member Councils' human resource and workforce development issues. The Committee is chaired by Steve Pinnuck, General Manager of Greater Hume Shire Council.

This year the Committee has taken on the Steering Committee role for the Riverina JO's Skills Shortages' project. The project is developing pathways for students at high school, TAFE and university to experience careers in local government. The Member Councils have a strong commitment to "growing their own" workforce and this project will be a key to developing this approach.

Anneke Gehrmann from Riverina Jo and Kate Hardy from REROC at a REROC board meeting



Hon Mark Coulton MP and Cr Rodger Schirmer at the December REROC Meeting



Collaborating with Communities

An important role for REROC is reaching out to communities to provide programs where appropriate. We do this by working closely with our Youth and Community Development Network primarily to deliver activities targeting young people.

This year once again our major activity was the Take Charge Riverina Youth Leadership Forum

Take Charge Riverina Youth Leadership Forum returns to Wagga Wagga for 2019

After taking to the road in 2018 visiting schools, the 2019 Take Charge Riverina Youth Leadership Forum was held in Wagga Wagga on Wednesday 28 August at the CSU Convention Centre. A total of 88 students, teachers, REROC and Council staff were in attendance on the day. Students from Billabong High School, Temora High School, St Anne's Central School, Aria Park Central School, Junee High School, Gundagai High School, West Wyalong High School, The Riverina Anglican College, Mt Austin High School and Wagga Wagga High School were represented on the day. We were also fortunate to have the REROC Chairman, Cr Rick Firman join us for the day to welcome the students to the event. Cr Firman was also able to experience first hand what the day involves by joining in on workshops and liaising with students throughout the day.

It was an exciting program for the students with a great variety of speakers covering areas of science and the digital world, careers and the arts. This together with three interactive workshops throughout the day on Mindfulness, presentation tips for speaking on camera and Battle Bots (Sphero and App workshop) made for a full, fun and engaging day for the students and teachers who participated.

Presenters at the 2019 Forum

Ethan Butson, Scientist and Inventor

Ethan Butson is the creator of the VisionMaster system, a camera-based device that helps people overcome stroke and vision impairment. Ethan is also developing a new way to aid the treatment of cancer using radiotherapy with a device that can reduce the radiation dose delivered to a patient's skin. Ethan has been named the National Australian BHP Billiton Science and Engineering Young Scientist three times and has represented Australia at



the INTEL International Science and Engineering Fair on numerous occasions. In 2014, Ethan won first place in the world for best medical invention to aid humanity for the SMART System and in 2015 was a finalist for NSW Young Australian of the Year.



Shane Baldry and Blake Hingerty

Shane is the Mechanical Coordinator for Goldenfields Water and spoke with the students attending the Forum about his career path at Goldenfields Water. Blake Hingerty who is an apprentice Fitter/Machinist at Goldenfields Water also attended to talk with the students about his apprenticeship with Goldenfields Water, how he decided on his career path and what his job involves.



Tayla Martin, Photographer

Tayla Martin is a regional artist who graduated in 2017 with a Bachelor of Creative Arts and Design (Photography & Graphic Design) from Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga NSW. Growing up in rural NSW, in the small country town of Nyngan has influenced much of Tayla's photographic practice and her understanding for the need of arts in Regional NSW. Tayla received a Young Regional Artist Scholarship, with her latest work being a result of this ongoing series.



Jackie Okot

Jackie Okot was our MC on the day of the Forum, Jackie is a young emerging poet who is undertaking a mentorship program curated by Eastern Riverina Arts to develop her creative practice.



Workshops

All students and teachers participated in three workshops on rotation throughout the day. Students were divided into groups for the workshops.

Workshop 1: Digital Storytelling and Employability Skills

This workshop was run by Ms Amiee Morris from Launchpad Labs and included teaching students skills on how to understand effective communication on camera and how to create scripts that reflect their work. Aimee also stepped the students through production tips and how to edit video content.

Workshop 2: Mindfulness session

We once again worked with Ms Anna Gannon, The Mindful Warrior to deliver her popular Mindfulness sessions that we have run at both the Take Charge Leadership workshops in 2018 and the 2017 Take Charge Riverina Youth Leadership Forum.

Workshop 3: Spheros and App workshop

This was a fun interactive workshop where students worked in pairs to explore the SpheroEdu app and the use of Spheros. Mrs Cindy Smith, Library Manager and Community Services Manager Cootamundra – Gundagai Regional Council delivered this workshop for the students and created a 'Battle Bot' arena for the students to design robots using the Spheros and then battle them against opponents using programming skills on the ipads.



Students program their Spheros at Take Charge



Students learning the art of speaking on camera at Take Charge 2019



The Mindful Warrior, Ms Anna Gannon guided students through a meditation session at Take Charge 2019

Each participant was given a carry bag that contained brochures, water bottles and hats from our sponsors for the event - Essential Energy and the Murrumbidgee Primary Health Network.

Evaluations were completed by students and teachers prior to leaving the event. The feedback received was very positive with 100% of students participating in the Forum saying they enjoyed the day overall.

When asked what youth opportunities they would like to see in the REROC region 68% of students said they would like to see more Leadership Activities, 56% of students said they would like to see more Mindfulness and Career activities delivered in their LGAs and 45% said they would like to see Work Experience opportunities in their local council.

Students were also asked what they liked and didn't like about the Forum.

Some responses are shown below:

- *"I liked all the talks, they were very inspiring and the workshops were amazing"*
- *"I did enjoy today and I liked how interactive it was. Loved the mindful warriors session"*
- *"I learnt a lot of new things and I have a more positive and motivated mindset. I enjoyed the meditation"*
- *"It was fun, the hands on stuff was great and the speeches were inspiring"*

- *"I liked how engaging it was and how inclusive it was to everyone"*
- *"I liked that I was able to let go of all the stress"*
- *"I did because it made me relaxed and taught me more about leadership"*
- *"Learning different career paths and learning to ground yourself with mindfulness"*
- *"I liked the meditation and bots and devices. I liked the meditation because I felt relaxed. I liked the bots and devices because they were fun"*
- *"I thoroughly enjoyed today, especially the*
- *Interactive activities"*
- *"I liked everything, it was just amazing"*

The event was sponsored by Essential Energy and also supported by funding through the Primary Health Network Murrumbidgee Community Grants Scheme. We warmly thank our sponsors and supporters for their assistance.

MANAGING WASTE AND PROMOTING RESOURCE RECOVERY

The RERO Waste Forum has operated continuously for over 20 years. The length of operation recognises the importance that the ROC places on managing waste and resource recovery at the most optimal levels possible.

The Waste Forum is one of the eight Voluntary Regional Waste Groups operating in NSW with funding support from the EPA through the Waste Less, Recycle More initiative funded from the waste levy. The RERO Waste Forum meets every second month.

It has been a challenging year in the world of waste with many changes to 'business as usual' being rolled out across the board. The first of these being the planned phase in of Waste Export Bans for Australia and the second, the development of a 20 Year Waste Strategy for NSW.

RERO has participated in numerous consultations, webinars and meetings to provide a regional perspective to both the Waste Export Bans and the 20 Year Waste Strategy.

The impact of COVID-19 has also been felt everywhere. Restrictions that have been in place since early March have impacted on quite a few of our programs and projects. Where possible we have readjusted our programs to meet the new requirements, all RERO Waste Forum and RENEW meetings are now held online by video conferencing. Community and school programs have been postponed and organised for later in the year and our annual waste conference No Time to Waste postponed until early 2021.



E-Waste Collections

RERO Member Councils, their residents and small businesses have been utilising the RERO subsidised e-waste collection service in their LGAs for over seven years. This service is provided free of charge to residents and small businesses located in RERO Member Council LGAs.

The e-Waste collections fall under the Federal Government's National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme (NCRS), which requires that importers and manufacturers of televisions and computers put arrangements in place for the collection and recycling of their end-of-life products. The waste is collected from the RERO LGAs by a local contractor and is then taken to Kurrajong Recyclers in Wagga Wagga to be processed.

Computers, computer peripherals and televisions are eligible for collection. E-waste collection points are located in Coolamon, Cootamundra, Culcairn, Gundagai, Junee, Lockhart, Temora, West Wyalong and in Wagga Wagga are at Kurrajong Recyclers and the Gregadoo Landfill.

During the 2019/20 period close to 250 tonnes of e-waste has been collected from across the RERO. All the waste is processed locally by Kurrajong Recycling Region which is a very important outcome for RERO.

Regional Collection contracts

We have continued to provide regional collection opportunities for RERO Member Councils throughout the 2019/20 period with councils being invited to participate in two Metal Waste Collections and a regional Tyre and Mattress Recycling contract.

During the 2019/20 period 2,861 tonnes of waste metal was collected from the participating councils' landfills providing councils across the Region with hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue that can be utilised to offset the costs of running landfills.

Recycle Night? Recycle Right!

Following up on the great success of the initial Recycle Night advertising campaign, three new television advertisements were commissioned for the RERO Waste Forum in the 2019/20 year. The advertisements were created with the same goal as the first campaign, to remind residents that what goes in the yellow lidded bin is sorted by hand! We have also incorporated a new 'no lids on bottles' message in response to requests from the Materials Recycling Facilities (MRFs) in our area, Kurrajong Recycling and Elouera. The new advertisements focus on saying thank you to residents for the efforts they have made to change their recycling habits. We also use the advertisements to remind residents of what should not go in the yellow lidded bin.

The new Recycle Night? Recycle Right! advertising campaign was run over a 4-month period on WIN TV throughout the 2019/20 period and was also accompanied by a targeted social media campaign.

Both campaigns have proven very effective with the targeted social media campaign generating a large number of views for Kurrajong Recyclers at Wagga and Elouera at Cootamundra with views of the ads via Facebook being 23,144 and 8,370 respectively.



Kindy Kits

Over 1,800 library bags were packed and delivered to the new Kindergarten students in the RERO Waste Forum LGAs at the start of 2020. Each bag contained the following information:

- Recycle Roo Material – bookmark, colouring sheet
- Compost Doctor Colouring and Activity sheets
- Letter from the RERO Waste Forum
- Info from Primary Health Network
- Healthy Eating for Children Flyer
- Recycle Night information Fridge Magnets
- CRC Information Flyer

King and Queen of Green

The King and Queen of Green have become regular favourites and were booked again to tour the RERO Region in June this year with visits scheduled for Temora, Gundagai and Bland Shires. We decided to cluster the schools together this year to enable more students to participate in the shows and booked a central venue, with students from years 3-4 from each of the primary schools located in that LGA invited to attend. The show this year was to focus on saying no to single use plastics and what can be used instead, it was also to highlight messaging from the RERO Waste Forum Kindy Kit bags.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 restrictions that came into place early in the year led to the inability to visit schools or schools to participate in excursions, so the shows have been postponed until later in 2020.



The Kindy Kits are designed to raise awareness of waste avoidance and resource recovery for Kindergarten students and their families. Each child starting kindergarten was given a RERO Waste Forum calico library bag that contained materials aimed at promoting classroom discussions on waste management, resource recovery and promoting the Reduce, Reuse, Recycle message.

Schools were encouraged to use the information to discuss ways to reduce waste and manage recycling at home and within the school environment.

**"I didn't know
I could
get fined."**

Victoria, Lawyer



EPA Litter Grant

REROC was successful in obtaining an EPA Litter Grant of \$115,800 to complete a two-phase program during the 2019/20 period. This project was aimed at reducing litter in council-owned parks and recreational areas.

The REROC *Own it and Act* and *On Ground* projects funded through the LRIP Round 4 funding filled identified gaps to build REROC's and its Member Councils' capacity to implement litter reduction strategies at a regional level. The project increased council and community understanding of the cost of litter and the effectiveness of some of their current responses to litter reduction.

The project involved two sites nominated by each REROC Waste Forum Member, one being a council owned park and one a sports ground. Litter audits were conducted at each of the sites using the EPA Online Litter Tool with a

case study developed from the results of these audits.

The second stage of this project allowed for new bin infrastructure to be installed at the nominated sites and new signage directing people to where bin facilities are located.

A radio and social media campaign ran as part of this project with two radio ads run in April and June and a social media campaign completed in the same timeframe.

Due to the restrictions put in place as a result of COVID-19 at the start of 2020 project completion has been delayed and will now be finalised in the 2020/21 financial year.

Safe Sharps

Safe Sharps was first launched in 2011 with 350 sites, today it has approx. 3,500 locations listed, mainly in NSW but also across Australia. Site analytics introduced in January of this year have allowed us to better track the level of usage. It was exciting to see that for 19/20 year there were 23,000 site users. Diabetes NSW who use the site as a core source of information for their clients have advised that they made 8,000 referrals to the site in a three-month period.

We crowdsource updates to the data by providing opportunities on the website and the mobile device apps for users to inform us when information needs to change, or new sites added. We supplement this by writing to all councils in NSW, each year and to councils in other States in alternate years to ask them for updated information.

The Safe Sharps project assists sharps users to find the most convenient location to dispose of their sharps safely. Users can search for the locations of single needle disposal points, sharps' container disposal points or sellers of sharps' containers. Safe Sharps also runs as a Smart Device and

the apps can be downloaded from Google Play and the App Store, it is also available for Apple Watch.

During 2019/20 year we have written to all councils in NSW, Victoria and Queensland to check and update all their sharps disposal information, we received a huge response to this mailout with hundreds of entries to be updated or entered as new sites. South Australia, ACT, Western Australia and Northern Territory will be contacted throughout the 2020/21 year to update locations on the site.

In June this year we commenced discussions with Diabetes NSW about some potential upgrades they would like to see to the Safe Sharps website, that would further facilitate their use. The maintenance and possible upgrade to the Safe Sharps website is very costly and we will continue discussions with Diabetes NSW and the Ministry for Health over the coming year for possible assistance with funding for the upgrade.

Community Recycling Centres (CRCs)

The RERO CRC program continues to be very successful and provides a valued service to each of the RERO Waste Forum Member Councils.

CRCs are operating in Coolamon, Cootamundra, Culcairn, Gundagai, Junee, Lockhart, Temora and West Wyalong. We also have a CRC mobile trailer service which is hosted by Greater Hume Shire Council and available for all Member Councils. The trailer is used to provide an outreach service to smaller communities in an LGA, without easy access to a CRC. The trailer was used in Greater Hume, Junee and Lockhart LGAs over the last financial year. The trailer was also booked to operate in Coolamon in the 2019/20 year but unfortunately had to be postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The focus of the RERO Waste Forum CRC Campaign over the 2019/20 period was to reinforce the locations of the CRCs and to highlight all the materials that can be recycled at the CRC. This was done through a variety of advertising channels including social media, television and council newsletters. The effectiveness of the program is evaluated each year through interviews and surveys conducted with residents at community events and landfill visits.

Unfortunately, due to the restrictions put in place as a result of COVID-19 not all of the scheduled community events could proceed in the 2019/20 year however, we were still able to collect some data from community events held in Temora and Coolamon prior to the restrictions coming into place. We were also able to collect data from Cootamundra, Gundagai, Greater Hume and Lockhart through online surveys which were distributed to councils to circulate via social media and council websites. Bland Shire and Junee were scheduled for community events at the end of May which we were hoping might be able to go ahead but unfortunately with restrictions still in place these were not able to proceed.

As a result of the restrictions put in place for COVID-19 the scheduled landfill site visits to conduct surveys were all postponed except for Temora and Tumbarumba

which were completed prior to the restrictions coming into place. Each year the RERO Waste Forum organises for these surveys to be conducted at each of the RERO CRC landfills, this allows us to survey users of the CRCs to ascertain their level of knowledge about the facilities.

Over the 2019/20 period 115 community surveys were received in total which is a large drop in responses when compared to the 2018/19 respondents (242). We have however, aimed to still collect as much data as possible through face-to-face surveys and online.

The community surveys that were undertaken in the 2018/19 period showed that 78% of people had heard of the CRC in their town. 40% of respondents said they had heard about the CRCs through TV advertising, 27% through newspaper advertising and 48% through their local council website.

In the responses received to community surveys that were undertaken in the 2019/20 period (Coolamon, Cootamundra, Gundagai, Greater Hume, Lockhart, Temora and Tumbarumba) 86% of people said they had heard of the CRC in their town 24% of respondents said they had heard about the CRCs through TV advertising, 8% through newspaper advertising and 38% through their local council website. Once again, these figures do not include data from Bland Shire or Junee.

It is pleasing to see that even with the reduced number of surveys that were conducted this year, the surveys still show that residents have a good knowledge relating to the locations and the services that CRCs provide. In the 2019/20 community surveys 23% of people said that as a result of CRC communication material they had visited their local CRC, 30% said they had started sorting out their problem waste at home and 32% said they had told their family and friends about the service.

The RERO Waste Forum CRC education campaign for 2019/20 was communicated with residents through a variety of platforms including television, radio, cinema, press council newsletter and websites and social media:

CRC Mobile Trailer



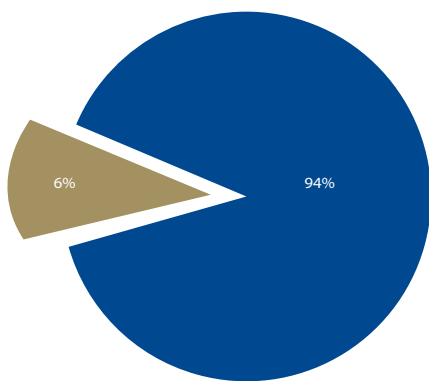
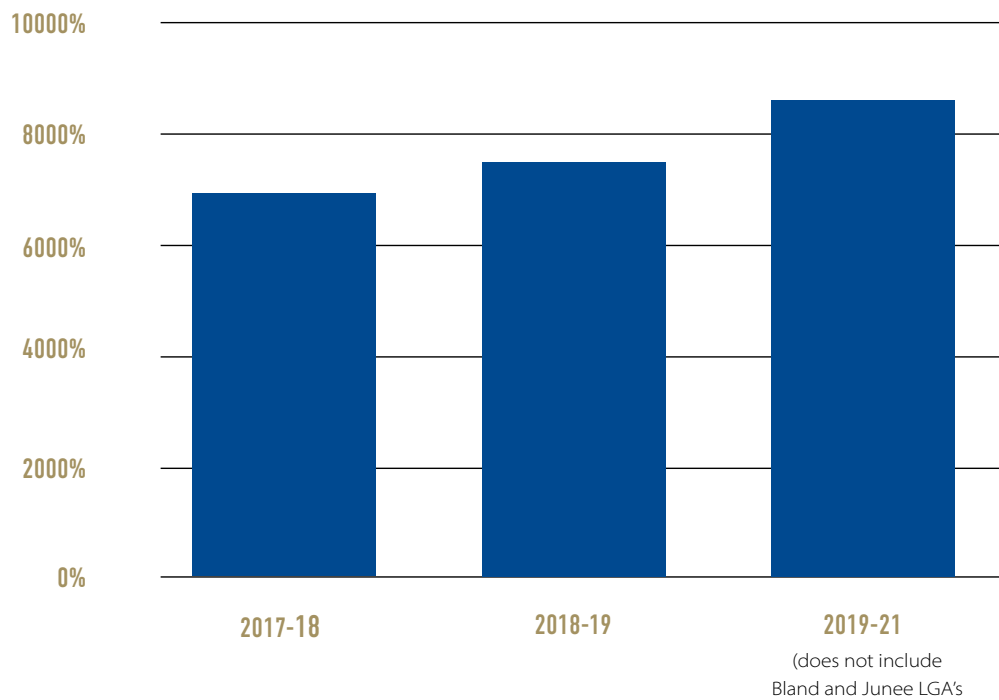
Chrissie Pinzcuk was joined by Cr Rick Firman OAM while conducting CRC community surveys in Temora



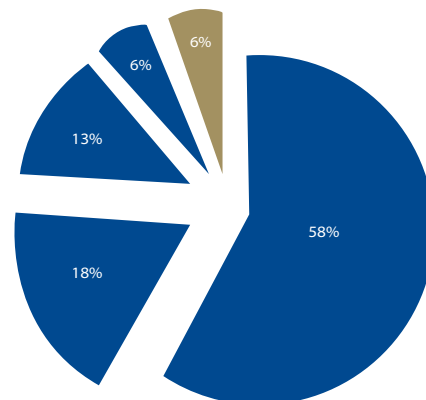
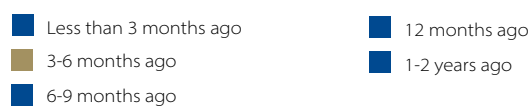
The Litter Project produced pavement signage showing the way to rubbish bins in parks



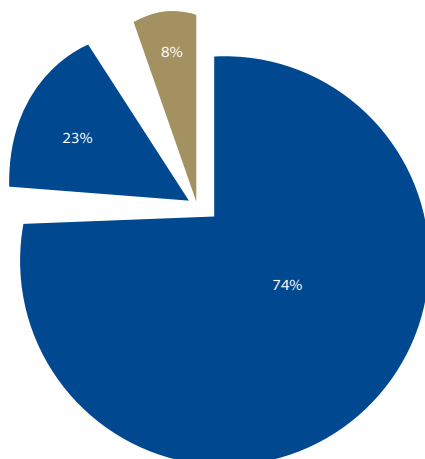
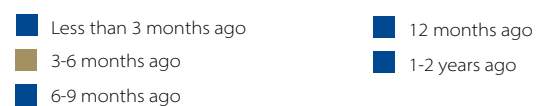
People who have seen or heard about their local CRC



When did you last visit the CRC?



When did you last visit the CRC?



How likely are you to recommend the CRC to family and friends?



CRC Small Drop Off Stations

We were successful in obtaining funding to purchase additional CRC Small Drop Off stations for councils to utilise in the community. As part of this project we will also be creating a new television advertisement which will promote the use of the drop off stations.

The provision of the CRC Small Drop Off stations at central locations in LGAs will enable a greater number of residents to access and utilise the service, in particular, elderly residents who find it difficult to get to the local landfill. The CRC stations will be located in council foyers, community libraries and museums as well as local supermarkets.

The participating councils for this project are Bland, Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Greater Hume and Junee. This program will be rolled out over the 2020/21 financial year.

CRC Battery Boxes

The Waste Forum has also obtained a number of CRC Battery Boxes to be distributed throughout the REROC region, these boxes are small, cardboard boxes that act not only a visual reminder that batteries can be recycled but also offer a short term storage solution before taking them to the local CRC or CRC small drop off station.

The battery boxes will also be highlighted in our small CRC drop off stations campaign. This program will be rolled out over the 2020/21 financial year.

The number of CRC Small Drop-off Stations will increase as a result of additional funding from the EPA

Circular Economy Innovation Network - Solar Panel Pilot program

There are a number of large solar farms established or planned for the Riverina-Murray region over the next 5 years, if all proposed solar farms go ahead there will be approximately 4.75 million solar panels in use. If just 1% of those panels fail each year councils will have a large waste problem for which there is currently no solution other than landfilling. The potential for a serious emerging waste problem raised concerns with the Waste Forum members.

REROC contacted the Centre for Sustainable Materials Research and Technology (SMaRT) at the University of New South Wales to enquire about solutions for the disposal of solar panels. As a result of that contact we have established a partnership with Circular NSW and the University of NSW Centre for Sustainable Materials (SMaRT) to develop a pilot project that aims to find ways that end-of-life solar panels can be reused and/or recycled, instead of ending up in municipal landfills.

Dr Farshid Pahlevani and Mr Keith Monaghan from the SMaRT Centre ran a workshop on the Solar Panel Pilot Program with members from the REROC Waste Forum in February 2020. This workshop was the next step in identifying issues, barriers and possible solutions to this emerging waste problem.

The Circular Economy Innovation Network Board has since approved the pilot to proceed and the REROC will be acknowledged on all material associated with the pilot program. This is an exciting program for the Region and if successful will provide a solution for the recycling of solar panels at a regional level.

Dr Farshid Pahlevani from the SMaRT Centre speaks to the Waste Forum about solar panel recycling



Garden Smart Workshops

Our Garden Smart workshops planned for the 2019/20 financial year were postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions. We will revisit this in the coming financial year.

RENEW

RENEW is the umbrella organisation for the Voluntary Regional Waste Groups (VRWGs) that operate in regional NSW. Scheduled to meet every four months, RENEW offers the REROC Waste Forum the opportunity to hear directly from the EPA about the latest issues and to provide feedback from a regional perspective on their initiatives. In addition, we are able to identify opportunities to collaborate with other VRWGs in the State and this is exemplified by our joint approach to advertising for the CRCs.

COVID-19 has impacted on the number of face to face RENEW meetings that have been held throughout the

2019/20 financial year, we have however still been able to meet as a group via online meeting platforms which has proved an effective way to still hold our meetings and keep in contact with the EPA and the other VRWGs.

20 Year Waste Strategy Discussion Paper

Throughout the 2019/20 period REROC has participated in numerous consultations, webinars and workshops on the development and implementation of the proposed 20 Year Waste Strategy. A discussion paper for the Strategy - *Cleaning up our Act: The Future of Waste and Resource Recovery in NSW* was released in March 2020 with an invitation to respond to the paper by May 2020. The Riverina Joint Organisation in consultation with the REROC Waste Forum prepared a response which was submitted on 8 May 2020.

The REROC Waste Forum also submitted a copy of the Riverina Joint Organisation response with a supporting letter.

Waste Export Bans

In December 2019 a Consultation Regulation Impact Statement on phasing out certain waste exports was released by the Department of Energy and Environment. This paper was in response to the August meeting of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), where it considered waste and recycling issues and agreed Australia should establish a timetable to ban the export of waste plastic, paper, glass and tyres, while building Australia's capacity to generate high value recycled commodities and associated demand. The Export Bans were scheduled to commence in July 2020 with a phasing in of the bans until July 2022.

We continue to liaise with the regional MRFs to discuss the impacts of these Waste Export Bans on their businesses and the services that they are able to provide. We have also raised the concerns of our local MRFs with both EPA and LGNSW who have used the information provided when lobbying on the issue. The industry has had a small reprieve with the export ban for unprocessed glass postponed from end June 2020 to January 2021. We have been advised that this was in response to consultation from industry and in response to restrictions relating to COVID-19 impacting Parliament's ability to pass legislation by 1 July 2020.

We remain concerned because the thin markets and large transport distances in regional areas, may result in there being little appetite from Australian based re-processors to take our recyclable materials. If there is nowhere for our MRFs to sell the recyclables that are collected in household kerbside collections this is likely to impact on the cost of waste services for councils.

No Time to Waste 2020

We made the decision this year to change the timing of the annual conference from the usual June date to September 2020. This move was for a number of reasons with the main one being the usual June date is too close to the National Waste Conference which is held annually in May in Coffs Harbour. We felt that the September date was a better option for many delegates who would like to attend but found it difficult to do so following so closely on the heels of the May Waste Conference. It is also a better time of year for travel in and out of Wagga Wagga.

This year we also developed sponsorship packages for all REROC conferences which have a range of sponsorship options for industry to take up and be part of the conference.

Unfortunately, due to the evolving COVID-19 situation and concerns surrounding people not being able to attend due to restrictions in place No Time to Waste 2020 has been postponed and will be run in early 2021.

WORKING WITH OTHERS



Eastern Riverina Arts

Eastern Riverina Arts and REROC share a similar footprint which facilitates collaboration between the two organisations. Tim Kurylowicz, the Eastern Riverina Arts Executive Director attends REROC's Youth and Community Development Network meetings providing invaluable advice and assistance to Member Councils as well as working with them to develop joint projects. Eastern Riverina Arts actively supports the delivery of the Take Charge Youth Leadership Forum.

The Youth and Community Development Network meets at the Eastern Riverina Arts' Office and we are very grateful for their support, although for the later half of the year our meetings moved to video conferencing.



RENEW NSW

The REROC Waste Forum is one of eight Voluntary Regional Waste Groups (VRWG) operating in regional NSW. RENEW NSW is the banner organisation for the VRWGs which are partially funded by the NSW EPA.

RENEW members usually meet on a quarterly basis generally alternating between a Sydney location and a regional location, however this year most of the meetings have been via video conferencing. RENEW is convened by NSW EPA, Kate Hardy is REROC's representative on RENEW and she is regularly joined at meetings by Waste Forum Chair Tony Donoghue and REROC Chief Executive Officer Julie Briggs.

RENEW is an important and influential group as it is often first in line to receive information and advice from the EPA about directions, funding and issues relating to waste management and resource recovery. REROC's involvement in RENEW is invaluable in ensuring that we are at the forefront of developments in the environmental sector.



The Compact

Compact and REROC have worked collaboratively for over 15 years. Compact is REROC's conduit into high schools across the Region where we promote careers in local government.

Increasingly, Member Councils are embracing the opportunity to grow their own staff and critical to this is engaging with young people about to embark on their future careers. The Compact's role in engaging with schools is vital to Member Councils' success in bringing young people a greater understanding of the potential careers in local government.

The Compact is our primary partner for the delivery of the *Build a Bridge...and Get Over It!* Project.



Regional Development Australia

REROC maintains a strong and on-going relationship with RDA-Riverina. The RDA has an important role in furthering the economic development of the Region, a goal that is important to our Member Councils.

RDA delivers the Country Change project to which most of the REROC members support. We believe that it is important that the Region puts forward a cohesive voice on these issues in order to have a chance to attract much needed funding. RDA Executive Officer, Rachel Whiting regularly attends REROC meetings where she provides an update on RDA activities.



Aaron Drenovski, GM Goldenfields Water and Steve Pinnuck, GM at Greater Hume, at the NSW Parliament House Meeting February

NSW Department of Regional NSW

The regional office of this newly created Department is an important conduit to State agencies operating in the Region.

Julie Briggs, in her role as CEO of RivJO, attends the Regional Leadership Executive meetings which are convened by the Department for the Riverina-Murray region. The DPC Regional Manager, James Bolton is an Associate Member of the RivJO Board and regularly attends REROC Board meetings and events in order to provide updates on activities at a State level.



Joint Organisations are a new type of local government-based collaborative organisation created by the NSW Government. The Riverina JO is one of 13 Joint Organisations that were proclaimed in 2018.

The Riverina JO's Member Councils are: Bland, Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Greater Hume, Junee, Lockhart, Temora, Wagga Wagga and Goldenfields Water and Riverina Water County Councils.

The principal functions of the Riverina JO are to:

- establish regional strategic priorities and develop strategies and plans to deliver those priorities;
- promote regional leadership and be an advocate for our regional strategic priorities; and
- identify and take up opportunities for intergovernmental co-operation on matters relating to the Joint Organisation are

The majority of the REROC Member Councils are also members of the Riverina JO. REROC works with the JO to develop regional strategic plans and to inform its advocacy and lobbying activities. These activities are facilitated by General Managers from the JO being members of the REROC Technical Groups.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

SPECIAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 2020

Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

Special Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2020

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Overview

These financial statements are Special Purpose Financial Statements and cover the operations for the Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils.

All figures presented in these financial statements are presented in Australian currency.

These financial statements were authorised for issue by the Executive.

REROC has the power to amend and reissue these financial statements.

Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

Special Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2020

Statement by Executive

The attached Special Purpose Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with:

the Australian Accounting Standards and professional pronouncements

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

- present fairly REROC's operating result and financial position for the year, and
- accord with REROC's accounting and other records.

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



Rick Firman
Chairman



Tony Donoghue
Treasurer

Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

Income Statement

for the year ended 30 June 2020

Budget 2020		Notes	Actual 2020	Actual 2019
Income from Continuing Operations				
Revenue:				
9,500	User Charges & Fees	2a	85,560	79,128
5,000	Interest & Investment Revenue	2b	11,730	12,724
38,000	Other Revenues	2c	169,142	167,005
0	Grants provided for Operating Purposes	2d	375,723	679,387
207,171	Contributions provided for Operating Purposes	2e	207,171	238,676
Other income:				
0	Net gains from the disposal of assets	4	0	0
259,671	Total Income from Continuing Operations		849,326	1,176,920
Expenses from Continuing Operations				
206,600	Materials & Contracts	3a	710,691	948,174
0	Depreciation & Amortisation	3b	7,390	7,390
58,000	Other Expenses	3c	74,950	62,529
264,600	Total Expenses from Continuing Operations		793,031	1,018,093
(4,929)	Net Operating Profit/(Loss) for the Year		56,295	158,827

Statement of Financial Position

for the year ended 30 June 2020

	Notes	Actual 2020	Actual 2019
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash & Cash Equivalents	5a	907,520	871,508
Receivables	5b	106,988	103,056
Total Current Assets		1,014,508	974,564
Non-Current Assets			
Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	6	12,585	19,975
Total Non-Current Assets		12,585	19,975
TOTAL ASSETS		1,027,093	994,539
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities			
Payables	7	110,451	134,192
Total Current Liabilities		110,451	134,192
TOTAL LIABILITIES		110,451	134,192
NET ASSETS		916,642	860,347
Equity			
Retained Earnings	8	916,642	860,347
TOTAL EQUITY		916,642	860,347

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2020

Budget 2020	Notes	Actual 2020	Actual 2019
Cash Flows from Operating Activities			
<i>Receipts</i>			
90,083	User Charges & Fees	72,788	93,844
9,465	Interest & Investment Revenue	14,947	16,960
207,171	Grants & Contributions	582,894	918,063
38,000	Other	169,142	167,005
<i>Payments:</i>			
(322,784)	Material & Contracts	(714,325)	(898,767)
(58,000)	Other	(74,950)	(62,529)
(36,065)	Net Cash provided (or used in) Operating Activities	50,496	234,576
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
<i>Receipts</i>			
0	Sale of Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	0	0
<i>Payments:</i>			
0	Purchase of Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment	0	0
	Purchase of Investment	(14,484)	(3,223)
0	Net Cash provided (or used in) Investing Activities	(14,484)	(3,223)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities			
<i>Receipts</i>			
0	Proceeds from Borrowings & Advances	0	0
<i>Payments:</i>			
0	Repayments of Borrowings & Advances	0	0
0	Net Cash provided (or used in) Financing Activities	0	0
(36,065)	Net Increase/(Decrease in Cash & Cash Equivalents	36,012	231,353
	plus: Cash & Cash Equivalents - beginning of year	871,508	640,155
(36,065)	Cash & Cash Equivalents - end of the year	907,520	871,508

Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

Statement of Changes in Equity for the year ended 30 June 2020

	Actual 2020 IPP&E		Actual 2019 IPP&E	
	Accumulated Surplus	Revaluation Reserve	Accumulated Surplus	Revaluation Reserve
Notes	Total Equity		Total Equity	
Opening Balance	860,347		701,520	
Restated Opening Balance	860,347	0	701,520	0
Net operating result for the year	56,295		158,827	
Restated net operating result for the year	56,295	0	158,827	0
Other Comprehensive Income				
- Gain/(loss) on revaluation of IPPE	0	0	0	0
Other comprehensive Income	0	0	0	0
Total Comprehensive Income	56,295	0	158,827	0
Equity - balance at end of reporting period	916,642	0	860,347	0

The above Statement of Changes in Equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

Notes to the Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2020

Contents of the notes accompanying the financial statements

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Notes to the Special Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 1. Significant accounting policies

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial report preparation requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009*. The board have determined that the organisation is not a reporting entity.

The financial report was approved by the Executive.

The financial report is for the entity Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils as an individual entity. Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils Inc is an Association, incorporated and domiciled in New South Wales, Australia. Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils is a not-for-profit entity for the purpose of preparing the financial statements.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009*. The financial report complies with the recognition and measurement requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards but does not comply with the disclosure requirements of these standards.

(a) Basis of preparation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement requirements specified by the Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB') and the disclosure requirements of AASB 101 'Presentation of Financial Statements', AASB 107 'Statement of Cash Flows', AASB 108 'Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors', AASB 1048 'Interpretation of Standards' and AASB 1054 'Australian Additional Disclosures', as appropriate for not-for-profit oriented entities.

Historical Cost Convention

The financial report has been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by revaluations to fair value for certain classes of assets as described in the accounting policies.

(b) Revenue

Revenue from the rendering of services is recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customers.

Membership fees are recognised as revenue when no significant uncertainty as to its collectability exists, if the fee relates only to membership and all other services or products are paid for separately, or if there is a separate annual subscription. Membership fees are recognised on a basis that reflects the timing, nature and value of the benefit provided if the fee entitles the member to services or publications to be provided during the membership period, or to purchase goods or services at prices lower than those charged to non-members.

Interest revenue is recognised when it becomes receivable on a proportional basis taking in to account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

Notes to the Special Purpose Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 1. Significant accounting policies (continued)

(c) Contributions - Government Grants and Donations

A non-reciprocal contribution or grant is recognised when the entity obtains control of the contribution or grant and it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the entity, and the amount of the contribution or grant can be measured reliably.

If conditions attached to the contribution or grant that must be satisfied before the entity is eligible to receive the contribution, recognition of contribution or income is deferred until those conditions are met.

A non-reciprocal donation is recognised when the right to receive a donation has been established. When the entity receives grants but is obliged to give directly approximately equal value to the contributor, recognition of grant income will be deferred until the delivery of service.

(d) Income tax

No provision for income tax has been raised as the organisation is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

(e) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand and at banks, short-term deposits with an original maturity of three months or less held at call with financial institutions, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities in the statement of financial position.

(f) Property, plant and equipment

Each class of plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is measured at cost. Where plant and equipment was acquired at no cost or for a nominal amount, cost is deemed to be the fair value as at the acquisition date.

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated over their estimated useful lives commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Land and the land component of any class of fixed asset is not depreciated.

(g) Trade and Other Receivables

Trade debtors are carried at their nominal amount. Collectability of debtors is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Debts known to be uncollectable are written off. A provision for doubtful debts is raised when some doubts as to collection of the debt exists.

(h) Trade and Other Payables

Trade and other payables represent the liabilities for goods and services received by the entity that remain unpaid at the end of the reporting period. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within normal trading terms.

Notes to the Special Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 1. Significant accounting policies (continued)

(i) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the statement of financial position are shown inclusive of GST.

Cash flows are presented in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis, except for the GST component of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

(j) Going concern basis of preparation

REROC reported a net profit for the period of \$56,295 (30 June 2019: profit of \$158,827).

REROC reports net cash flow provided by operating activities of \$50,496 (30 June 2019: provided by \$234,576). REROC has a surplus of working capital (being the amount the current assets exceed current liabilities) of \$904,057 as at 30 June 2020 (30 June 2019: \$840,372).

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis which contemplates continuity of normal business activities and the realisation of assets and settlement of liabilities in the ordinary course of business. The value attributed to REROC's assets represent true and fair values on the basis that REROC is a going concern.

The Association has ongoing financial support from the member Councils and is satisfied that it is appropriate to prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis.

(k) Comparatives

Where necessary, comparative information has been reclassified and repositioned for consistency with current year disclosures.

(l) New accounting standards

The following new standards are effective for the first time at 30 June 2020.

- AASB 15 Revenue from contracts with customers
- AASB 1058 Income of NFP Entities
- AASB 16 Leases

The application of these standards have minimal impact of the presentation of the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2020.

Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

Special Purpose Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 2. Income from Continuing Operations

	Actual 2020	Actual 2019
(a) User Charges & Fees		
"Build a Bridge" Project	4,500	5,000
Energy & Innovation Conference	100	5,800
e-Waste Transport	20,594	8,215
Mapped Out Income	19,750	14,122
No Time to Waste Conference	4,000	14,872
Scrap Metal	36,616	31,119
TOTAL USER CHARGES & FEES	85,560	79,128
(b) Interest & Investment Revenue		
Interest on REROC Account	11,730	12,724
TOTAL INTEREST & INVESTMENT REVENUE	11,730	12,724
(c) Other Revenues		
Bitumen Emulsion Rebate	12,043	11,165
JO Contribution	28,892	27,887
Meetings & Catering	0	622
Procurement	0	10,000
Strategic Collaboration	95,348	94,874
Sundry Income	10,550	14
Sustainability	18,809	0
Waste Management	0	16,443
Youth Network	3,500	6,000
TOTAL OTHER REVENUES	169,142	167,005
(d) Grants		
Biodiversity Officer Project	0	101,500
CRC Education	67,500	75,440
EPA CRCB Funding	0	139,960
EPA CRC Small Drops Offs	78,000	0
EPA Household Hazardous Waste Funding	0	75,000
EPA Waste	204,723	205,687
L-RIP	25,500	81,800
TOTAL GRANTS	375,723	679,387
(e) Contributions		
Council Contributions	207,171	238,676
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	207,171	238,676

Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

Special Purpose Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 3. Expenses from Continuing Operations

	Actual 2020	Actual 2019
(a) Materials & Contracts		
Executive Services	175,413	213,858
- "Build a Bridge" Project	1,648	12,984
- "No Time to Waste" Conference	3,049	10,088
- Biodiversity Officer Project	52,281	118,148
- CRC Education	60,833	78,434
- CRCB Contaminated Lands Project	2,886	1,297
- Energy & Innovation Conference	0	5,844
- EPA Household Hazardous Waste	0	56,616
- EPA Waste	179,346	213,959
- e-Waste	6,016	5,787
- GIS	1,614	620
- L-RIP	70,328	0
- Mapped Out Expenditure	11,763	11,446
- Procurement Officer	5,838	32,469
- Strategic Collaboration	108,795	147,039
- Sustainability Project	18,000	25,800
- Waste Management	5,385	0
- Youth Project	7,496	13,785
TOTAL MATERIALS & CONTRACTS	710,691	948,174
(b) Depreciation		
- Waste Management Depreciation	7,390	7,390
TOTAL DEPRECIATION COSTS EXPENSED	7,390	7,390

Special Purpose Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 3. Expenses from Continuing Operations cont.

	Actual 2020	Actual 2019
(c) Other Expenses		
Action Plan Projects	0	2,568
Consultancy - REROC/RivJO Review	15,000	0
Insurance	8,083	8,008
IT & Computer Expenses	2,774	0
Legal/Accounting/Audit	4,961	5,007
Meetings/Catering	7,362	8,012
Phone	3,818	3,512
Printing/Stationery/Postage	7,506	5,042
Rent	21,910	21,828
Representations	91	1,254
Subscriptions	540	694
Sundry	695	405
Training	0	966
Travel	1,762	1,501
Web Site	448	3,732
TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES	74,950	62,529

Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

Special Purpose Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 4. Gains or losses from the disposal of assets

	Actual 2020	Actual 2019
Plant and equipment		
Proceeds from disposal - plant and equipment	0	0
Less: Carrying amount of plant and equipment assets sold/written off	0	0
Net gain/(loss) on disposal	0	0

Special Purpose Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 5 - Cash & Cash Equivalents & Receivables

	Actual 2020	Actual 2019
(a) Cash & Cash Equivalents		
Cash on Hand and at Bank		
- REROC Account	389,783	368,225
- CRC Account	1	1
- Beyond Bank	29	59
Investments		
- Beyond Bank	517,707	503,223
TOTAL CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS	907,520	871,508
(b) Receivables		
User Charges & Fees	93,355	80,583
Accrued Interest	1,248	4,465
GST Receivable	12,385	18,008
TOTAL RECEIVABLES	106,988	103,056

Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

Special Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 6 - Infrastructure, Property, Plant & Equipment

	as at 30/06/2019				as at 30/06/2020			
	At Cost	At Fair Vale	Acc Dep'n	Carrying Value	Additions	WDV of Disposals	Dep'n Expense	Carrying Value
Plant & Equipment	36,962	0	16,987	19,975	0	0	7,390	12,585
TOTAL								
INFRASTRUCTURE, PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT	36,962	0	16,987	19,975	0	0	7,390	12,585

Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils

Special Purpose Financial Statements

for the year ended 30 June 2020

Note 7 - Payables

	Actual 2020	Actual 2019
(a) Payables		
Goods & Services Operating Expenditure		
- Materials & Contracts	110,451	75,492
GLE Strategic Planning	0	58,700
TOTAL PAYABLES	110,451	134,192

Note 8. Retained earnings

	Actual 2020	Actual 2019
(a) Retained Earnings		
Movements in Retained Earning were as follows:		
Balance at beginning of Year	860,347	701,520
a. Correction of Prior Period Errors	0	0
b. Changes in Accounting Policies	0	0
c. Other Comprehensive Income	0	0
d. Net Operating Profit/(Loss) for the Year	56,295	158,827
e. Transfers between Equity	0	0
Balance at End of the Reporting Period	916,642	860,347
Retained Earnings are represented by:		
REROC	100,739	87,598
Strategic Collaboration	123,960	137,406
Sustainability Projects	10,000	9,191
Biodiversity Officer Project	30,589	82,870
Youth Project	0	0
EPA Waste	31,015	5,639
EPA Household Hazardous Waste	18,384	18,384
Illegal Dumping	0	0
CRC Education	12,683	6,017
EPA CRC Small Drop Offs	78,000	0
L-RIP	36,972	81,800
Waste Management	69,730	59,585
Scrap Metal	249,579	220,353
"Build a Bridge" Project	0	0
GIS	19,214	12,841
Contaminated Land	135,777	138,663
CRC Project	0	0
	916,642	860,347

REROC DELEGATES AS AT 30 JUNE 2019



The REROC Board met with Federal Ministers at Parliament House in September 2019

Bland Shire Council

Cr. Brian Monaghan
Mr. Ray Smith PSM

Coolamon Shire Council

Cr. John Seymour OAM
Mr. Tony Donoghue PSM

Cootamundra – Gundagai Regional Council

Cr. Abb McAlister
Mr. Phil McMurray

Goldenfields Water County Council

Cr. Dennis Palmer
Mr. Aaron Drenovski

Greater Hume Shire Council

Cr. Heather Wilton
Mr. Steven Pinnuck

Junee Shire Council

Cr. Neil Smith
Mr. James Davis

Lockhart Shire Council

Cr. Rodger Schirmer
Mr. Peter Veneris

Riverina Water County Council

Cr. Greg Verdon
Mr. Andrew Crackanthorp

Temora Shire Council

Cr. Rick Firman OAM
Mr. Gary Lavelle PSM

Regional Development Australia

Ms. Rachel Whiting

Department of Regional NSW

Mr James Bolton

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REROC

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ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS

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