

Report from the Mayor/Deputy Mayor/General Manager attending the Central NSW Joint Organisation Board meeting on 29 May 2025 in Orange

Recommendations

That Council note the report from the Mayor/Deputy Mayor/General Manager on the Central NSW Joint Organisation (CNSWJO) Board meeting on 29 May 2025 held in Orange.

Please find following, advice from the recent meeting of the Central NSW Joint Organisation Board held in Orange on 29 May 2025. On the night before the Board and guests held a farewell for Ms Jenny Bennett who has been the Executive Officer of the CNSWJO, and Centroc before it, for 19 years. Ms Kate Barker will be the Interim Executive Officer as the Board recruits a new Executive Officer.

Delegates were welcomed to Orange by its Mayor, Cr Tony Mileto. Speakers to the Board meeting were Mr Martin Rush from Mining and Energy Related Councils and representatives from the NSW Reconstruction Authority.

More detail on reports to the meeting are below where the agenda can be found on the [CNSWJO website](#).



Image: The CNSWJO Board meeting at the Orange City Council Chambers

Forward budget

The Board adopted its Statement of Budget and Revenue. It can be found on the [CNSWJO website](#). Considerations for the 2025/2026 budget include:

- taking up the rate peg increase of 3.8% for fees where this figure is the lowest rate increase in this region (Blayney);
- noting the decision by the Board to realise \$150K from internally restricted reserves to support the cyber security project;

- noting the Statement of Strategic Regional Priority (SSRP) will be finalised in November of this calendar year and changes to priorities will be funded in the budget;
- based on the pilot with Forbes Shire Council, growth in the service offering for the procurement function to include a “fee-for-service” procurement management service at a reasonable cost to members showing a conservative income stream of \$20K;
- inclusion of \$12,500 to support matching funding for energy projects;
- inclusion of grant funded projects for:
 - Disaster Readiness;
 - Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration Program; and
 - Water Loss Management.

Advocacy

The impact of the significant number of renewable energy development across the region was a hot topic on the day. Not a single council in the Central West is in the so-called Central West and Orana Renewable Energy Zone (REZ). This means that all the support and funding that the communities in the REZ enjoy does not come to our communities. This is simply unfair and the Mayors of the region are working together to go for a better more equitable outcome.

Another area of significant concern is the Belubula Water Security Project. CNSWJO will support Central Tablelands Water as it seeks to get optimal outcomes for the region in water security.

Submissions seeking endorsement were:

- [Submission to the Inquiry into Infrastructure Needed to Support Electric and Alternate Source Vehicles – 1 May 2025](#)
- [Submission on the Draft Guidelines for QBRS – 18 April 2025](#)
- [Inquiry into the Impacts of the Water Amendment \(Restoring our Rivers\) Act 2023 on NSW regional communities – 14 April 2025](#)
- [Submission to the Roads Act 1993 Review – April 2025](#)
- [Submission to the Regional Consultation Guidelines – March 2025](#)
- [Response to the Natural Resource Commission on the review of the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source 2016 – 23 February 2025](#)
- [Submission Council Code of Meeting Practice Review – February 2025](#)
- [Central West Orana Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan – February 2025](#)

Media releases issues in the past quarter were:

- [Central NSW Councils Take Action on Disaster Preparedness with \\$743k in Funding – 20 May 2025](#)
- [Nuclear or not nuclear is the wrong question – 16 April 2025](#)
- [Federal Government’s aspirations for regional communities needs to just add water – 8 April 2025](#)
- [No relief in sight from the Federal Budget for cash strapped councils – March 2025](#)
- [CNSWJO urges member councils to encourage community feedback on Transport Plan – 20 February 2025](#)
- [Central West Orana Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan – February 2025](#)
- [Federal Candidate briefing in Central NSW – February 2025](#)
- [UN Youth Summit – February 2025](#)

Feedback from the UN Youth Summit

Council will recall previous reports on the UN Youth Summit. The event was held on 26 March at CSU Bathurst. A full report is being drafted by UN youth which will be tabled at the UN in September.

A debriefing session was held on 9 April where it was agreed that more events of this type would be welcomed.



Charles Sturt University Medical Scholarship Review

CNSWJO has a policy position recognising that growing our own health workforce, particularly doctors, is the most likely approach to tackling health workforce shortages. After a decade of advocacy supported by CNSWJO, Charles Sturt University (CSU) has opened a medical school.

The Board previously resolved to support three students from the first cohort on the proviso they were from this region. The scholarships were for 5 years and finished this financial year.

The students will complete their study this calendar year and reports from CSU have provided advice that this support has been invaluable, both as a help financially, but also as recognition that the region has for them. One student reported feeling accountable.

A final report was provided by CSU which was considered by the Board who subsequently resolved to continue with the program. Please request the report. Charles Sturt will be asked to track where these students work in the future.

Thank you.

I cannot thank the Central NSW Joint Organisation enough for their generosity in sponsoring the scholarship to support three of our cohort through the five years of our degree.

Their support is much greater than financial, knowing that we are supported by an organisation is an enormous boost to confidence, and is a great source of comfort in some of the more challenging times.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Central NSW Joint Organisation for its hard work and persistence in advocating for the Doctor of Medicine program at CSU over the past years, it is something I have been very aware of, and I am incredibly appreciative for the chance to study Medicine so close to my hometown.

Charles Sturt University has provided advice that these students will be graduating at the end of this calendar year. Advice will be provided to Council accordingly and Councillors are encouraged to attend to support this initiative.

The Board agreed to continue the sponsorship for a further 5 years for 3 more students.

Interim Report to the May Board meeting on recommendations for the Statement of Strategic Regional Priority from the Enduring Financial Sustainability Subcommittee

At the direction of the Board, a subcommittee has been created to provide feedback on programming for this term of the Statement of Strategic Regional Priority (SSRP) to support Council enduring financial sustainability.

This includes consideration of advocacy in two areas. Firstly, for an efficiency dividend for Councils paid from the NSW Government recognising the time-wasting processes of the bureaucracy and its impacts on council resources and secondly for the use by NSW agencies of regulatory impacts statements with particular focus on regional impacts.

From an operational perspective, the Board will receive advice on existing and potential operational support for members in enduring council financial sustainability.

Operational support for Councils Highlights

CNSWJO provides a substantial program of operational support to members through 15 regional operational teams of council staff, delivering a return on investment year-on-year of over 9:1 for membership fees. The teams across the region support staff in many areas ranging from water to roads to planning to HR, WHS and tourism. All teams have terms of reference and plans on a page. Please find advice from five of the region's teams following.

Regional Cyber Security Program Report

The Regional Cyber Security Program (the Program) aims to support member councils in a foundational shift in how cyber risk is addressed across the region.

Recognising the shared nature of cyber threats, and the benefits of collective governance and resourcing, the Program delivers a unified approach that uplifts each council's capability while leveraging regional economies of scale. It responds directly to the [NSW Auditor-General's Report](#) into cyber security in local government and the Office of Local Government's Cyber Security Guidelines (OLG Guidelines).

Ramnicu Valcea

Ramnicu Valcea (rarm-niku vul-ch-a) is known as hackerville, the most dangerous town on the Internet.

Hackers based in this town have raked in on average US \$1 billion annually.



Figure 1 This slide is from a three-part training pack on improving cyber security safety for Council staff. Did you know there are communities for whom hacking is just a day job?

The Program initiated with the appointment of Jordan Welden-Iley as the Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) in February 2025, and to date has developed governance, engaged councils establishing maturity baselines, developed resources and supported quick wins in cyber security uplift as members raise concerns about specific events.

Regional Procurement and Contract Management

Delegates to the Board meeting noted the ongoing growth of the Regional Procurement and Contract Management Program with its corollary cost savings to member councils. There are currently 20 regional contracts available for use by members, with a further 13 under development.

Transport

The Transport Technical Committee (TTC) is scoping a Regional Freight Strategy to address shared priorities such as freight route definition and network mapping, regional road hierarchy and design standards, alternate route analysis, integration of bridge integrity testing findings, link to CNSWJO Matrix projects and natural disaster resilience and recovery; supporting future planning, investment and advocacy. The project is likely to be delivered in-house with council-led GIS support. The timeline and scope are currently being finalised.

Transport for NSW is expected to release the Central West Orana Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan (CWOSRITP) and the Great Western Highway (GWH) Corridor Assessment by mid-2025. A CNSWJO briefing will be scheduled to coincide with the exhibition period, once confirmed. CNSWJO has submitted formal feedback advocating for stronger local input, predictable road funding, betterment investment, and improved multi-modal freight and workforce planning.

Water

Over the past two decades, the CNSWJO's reputation in both operational and strategic water management has made it the go-to for government and other stakeholders seeking advice on the policy, strategic and regulatory framework for town water.

In 2025, CNSWJO program design and implementation are influencing state policy and program delivery with the design of tools to enable replication of programs elsewhere across the state including across portfolios.

The reputation of the CNSWJO and the Water Utilities Alliance (the Alliance) has led to the adoption of a more flexible partnership approach to funding and program delivery for water loss management (WLM) and water efficiency. This [partnership approach](#) has been adopted more broadly by the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's (DCCEEW) Water Efficiency Program team. Hopefully, the success of this partnership will see more fit-for-purpose regional program design and rollout and a move to incentivised project funding leveraging the collaborative power of Joint Organisations (JOs) across the water and other portfolios.

With the NSW Water Minister's support for co-design with the Local Water Utility (LWU) sector of the strategic framework for water management, CNSWJO staff, informed by the work of the Alliance, are often called on by DCCEEW and other stakeholders to participate in consultative processes. This includes sitting on DCCEEW's Skills and Training Focus Group and the Western NSW Council Reference Group formed to progress the Productivity and Equality Commission's (PEC) recommendations for Alternative Funding Models for Local Water Utilities. Where water and its management are the subject of ongoing reform, there is also a steady stream of requests for submissions at both the state and federal level.

Energy

The announcement of JONZA Round 3 has been made (however the formal announcement is under embargo for now) in relation to an 18-month program has been provided internally within the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (NSW DCCEEW). A list of projects has been suggested for inclusion in the upcoming program, where applications closed on 30 May 2025. CNSWJO applied for this funding to continue the work being undertaken over recent years to support councils in emissions reduction.



Water Advocacy

The CNSWJO has been working hard on progressing a number of strategic and advocacy priorities, including:

- Alternative Funding Models for Local Water Utilities (LWU)
- Belubula Water Security Project
- Fish River Wywandy Regional Water Strategy
- Macquarie - Castlereagh and Lachlan Regional Water Strategies
- Work with Charles Sturt University on productive water policy
- Local Water Utility Strategic Planning
- Work to validate the State Government's Water Conservation Cost-Benefit Guidelines



Through the strong collaborative relationship built with the Department of Climate Change Energy Environment - Water (DCCEEW) Water Efficiency team, phase two of the Water Loss Management and Efficiency Hub continues to leverage local expertise and the regional potential of Joint Organisations to ensure a fit-for-purpose regional program design and rollout.

An Expression of Interest has been lodged with the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) for an landfill emissions education officer. The opportunity is funding to embed a resource within a Joint Organisation for a period of up to 18 months. This potential project aligns well with the recommendations from the CNSWJO Emissions Reduction Regional Opportunities Report, which is available on request, and also comes as a direct request from a member council for this support.

An opportunity has arisen regarding biodiversity insetting (as opposed to offsetting) with a program recently being announced under the Low Carbon Landscapes grant. Where General Managers received a presentation from NSW DCCEEW's Sustainable Councils at its May meeting, with interest expressed from Orange and Parkes Councils, this grant opportunity aligns well.

Work is near completion on the procurement process for the supply of electricity for small market sites showing good results which will be reported in due course and contracts are yet to be finalised. The Sponsoring General Managers of the energy priority have oversight of this project.

The Essential Energy network price list has recently been released where initial estimates suggest increases of 7-12%. Advice has been sought from Essential Energy in this regard. A report will be provided to GMAC detailing the increases where it will impact every site connected to an electricity meter.

Value to Council

80% of CNSWJO resources are dedicated to providing its operational support program. For the 2023/2024 year this program delivered a return on investments of 9.3:1 for every dollar Council spends on its membership fees. This value is made up of grant income, monies saved through the CNSWJO procurement program and public relations value from its tourism marketing.

The work the region does in writing submissions, media, supporting projects and project teams, developing collateral and providing opportunities for members in various forums to represent their views is not included in the above figure of 9.3:1 ROI. However, this value is reported quarterly to the Board. Please go to the CNSWJO website to review past [Board agendas](#) or to review last year's [Annual Statement](#).



CNSWJO will be applying for funding under the LGP Capability Fund to facilitate workshops with non-procurement staff on Procurement 101 and also with local suppliers in how to respond to requests for quotations and tenders to ensure they have the best possible chance at winning work.



CNSWJO is leading a project to develop an interactive map to support EV drivers to travel around regional NSW with a focus on increasing spend through spontaneous tourism. Watch this space - a very exciting project!



Congratulations to the 20 staff from 7 councils who have completed the 'Depower and Reinitialise Battery Electric Vehicle (EV) and Hybrid EV' training course which enables them to conduct basic servicing of hybrids and EVs in-house

Attachments

1. Draft Minutes of the CNSWJO Board meeting 29 May 2025

Minutes of the Board meeting 29 May 2025 held in Orange

Voting delegates

Cr R Taylor	Bathurst Regional Council	Cr J Medcalf, OAM	Lachlan Shire Council
Cr B Reynolds	Blayney Shire Council	Cr S Ring	Lithgow City Council
Cr K Beatty	Cabonne Council	Cr A McKibbin	Oberon Council
Cr P Smith	Cowra Shire Council	Cr T Mileto	Orange City Council
Cr C Roylance	Forbes Shire Council	Cr P Best	Weddin Shire Council

Associate Member delegates and others attending

Mr N Southorn*	Bathurst Regional Council	Cr A Rawson	Central Tablelands Water
Mr M Dicker	Blayney Shire Council	Mr C Harris	Central Tablelands Water
Mr B Byrnes	Cabonne Council	Cr B Fry	CTWA
Mr P Devery	Cowra Shire Council	Mr J Gordon	RDACW
Mr R Jane*	Forbes Shire Council	Ms K Annis-Brown	NSW OLG
Mr G Tory	Lachlan Shire Council	Ms G Collins	NSW Premier's Dept
Mr R Gurney	Lithgow City Council	Ms J Bennett	CNSWJO
Mr G Wallace	Oberon Council	Ms K Barker	CNSWJO
Mr D Waddell	Orange City Council	Ms M Macpherson	CNSWJO
Mr K Boyd PSM	Parkes Shire Council	Ms J Webber	CNSWJO
Ms N Vu	Weddin Shire Council	Ms C Griffin	CNSWJO

*Acting General Manager

Voting members in **bold**

Meeting opened at 10.00 am, Chaired by Cr K Beatty

1. Acknowledgement of Country

2. Apologies

Mr D Sherley, Mr S Loane OAM, Cr P Miller OAM, Cr N Westcott, Cr C Coleman

Resolved

Cr C Roylance/Cr A McKibbin

That the apologies for the Central NSW Joint Organisation Board meeting 29 May 2025 listed above be accepted.

3. Conflicts of Interest

Resolved

Cr B Reynolds / Cr P Smith

No conflicts of interest were declared.

4. Speakers

- NSW Reconstruction Authority – Ms Sarah Tasic, Mr Ken Harrison, Ms Beck Dawson (online), Ms Rhian Tough (online)
- Mining and Energy Related Councils (MERC) – Mr Martin Rush

5. Minutes

6a Confirmation of the Minutes of the CNSWJO Board Meeting dated 27 February 2025 held in Oberon

Resolved

Cr S Ring / Cr B Reynolds

That the Minutes of the CNSWJO Board Meeting held 27 February 2025 held in Oberon were accepted.

6b Noting the Minutes of the CNSWJO GMAC Meeting held on 1 May 2025 in Orange

Resolved

Cr B Reynolds / Cr A McKibbin

That the Minutes of the CNSWJO GMAC Meeting held on 1 May 2025 in Orange were noted.

7. **Glossary** – noted.

8. Business Arising from the Minutes - Matters in Progress

Resolved

Cr S Ring / Cr A McKibbin

That the Central NSW Joint Organisation Board note the Matters in Progress, making deletions as suggested, and consolidate the 3 drought preparedness plans for the region and pass the information on to Portfolio Mayors.

9a Financial Report

Resolved

Cr C Roylance / Cr R Taylor

That the Board note the Financial Report and

1. note the correspondence from Local Government Procurement (LGP) in relation to the notice of change to the rebate scheme providing rebates back to councils rather than the JO;
2. note the impact that the loss of rebate income will have to the JO budget and seek feedback from General Managers regarding this issue to inform a report to the Board.

9b Budget and Statement of Revenue 2025/2026 Report

Resolved

Cr R Taylor / Cr P Smith

That the Board adopt the Budget and Statement of Revenue Policy 2025-2026.

9c Shared Audit Risk and Improvement Committee and Internal Audit Service Report

Resolved

Cr S Ring / Cr T Mileto

That the Board note the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) and Internal Audit (IA) Service Report and

1. agree to participate in the cross-JO Shared ARIC and Shared Internal Audit Service using the Hunter Joint Organisation model at an estimated annual cost of \$10-15K per year; and
2. advise Hunter Joint Organisation accordingly.

9d Advocacy Report

Resolved

Cr P Smith / Cr C Roylance

That the Board note the Advocacy Report and

1. note the progress of the Portfolio Mayors and the Opt-in Advocacy Subcommittee; and
 - a. note that through the Chair of the Country Mayors Association seek to invite Andrew Gee to the meeting in Orange on 12 June;
 - b. seek to work with Mr Michael McCormack MP, Mr Jamie Chaffey MP and Mr Andrew Gee MP for the coordination of orange passes for the August meeting at Federal Parliament House;
 - c. explore options for working more closely with the Duty Senator; and
 - d. invite Mr Andrew Gee MP, Mr Michael McCormack MP, Mr Jamie Chaffey MP, Senator Deborah O'Neill and Minister Catherine King to the August meeting;
 - e. endorse the following regarding the Belubula Water Security Project
 - i. a memo be drafted for the Board in relation to the Belubula Water Security Project under the hand of the Chair;
 - ii. coordinate a delegation of Mayors to meet with the Minister in Sydney in relation to the Belubula Water Security Project and other water security issues;
 - iii. provide briefing notes to the delegation for information into the meeting; and
 - iv. provide a letter of support from the Board in regard to the Belubula Water Security Project to CTW for their meeting with the Minister;

- f. the actions from the meeting with Mayors and General Managers regarding the opportunities and challenges for councils regarding large renewable energy generation be progressed, notably:
 - i. develop a lessons learned document which will include case studies from member councils focused on the areas noted in the report; and
 - ii. follow-up with key influencers;
2. at an appropriate time, after to the publication of the draft Great Western Highway Corridor Strategy (white paper), engage with Blue Mountains and Western Sydney councils with regards to the safe, swift and secure link between Central NSW and Sydney;
3. approve the CNSWJO Matrix Regional Priority Projects Review Policy;
4. endorse the following submissions that have been lodged:
 - a. Inquiry into Infrastructure Needed to Support Electric and Alternate Source Vehicles;
 - b. Draft Guidelines for QBRs;
 - c. Impacts of the Water Amendment (Restoring our Rivers) Act 2023 on NSW regional communities;
 - d. Roads Act 1993 Review;
 - e. Regional Consultation Guidelines;
 - f. Natural Resource Commission on the review of the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source 2016;
 - g. Council Code of Meeting Practice Review; and
 - h. Central West Orana Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plan

9e Interim Report to the May Board meeting on recommendations for the Statement of Strategic Regional Priority from the Enduring Financial Sustainability Subcommittee

Resolved	Cr C Roylance / Cr B Reynolds
<p>That the Board note the Interim Report to the May Board meeting on recommendations for the Statement of Strategic Regional Priority from the Enduring Financial Sustainability Subcommittee and;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. amend the Statement of Strategic Regional Priority FROM <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Drive efficiencies and effectiveness saving Councils money TO 1.1 Drive efficiencies and effectiveness saving Councils money in the context of enduring Council financial sustainability; 2. monitor the state and federal government responses to inquiries in council financial sustainability advocating for better outcomes for members and leveraging opportunities as directed by the Board; 3. develop advice for Board consideration for advocacy purposes on <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. an efficiency dividend for Councils paid from NSW Government recognising the time-wasting processes of the bureaucracy and its impacts on council resourcing; and b. the use by NSW agencies of regulatory impacts statements with particular focus on regional impacts; 4. seek advice from members on the need for development and delivery of tailored training for Councillors in financial management; 5. provide support to Councils on reporting Nice to Haves, Have to Haves and rates as a % of total income to help build a better understanding of Council finances in the community; and 6. develop advice for the Board on existing and potential operational support for members in enduring council financial sustainability 	

9f Statement of Strategic Priority Review Progress Report

Resolved	Cr S Ring / Cr J Medcalf
<p>That the Board note the Statement of Strategic Regional Priority (SSRP) Review Progress Report and</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. adopt the Evaluation Plan; 2. note the recommended minor changes in wording of the strategic priorities for 1.1, 1.3 and 7.1.2; 3. note the progress of consultation with State agencies; 	

4. ask the Opt-in Advocacy Mayors to monitor progress including advice from State agencies; and
5. adopt the report from the 11 March workshop with Councils.

9g Policy for Service Provision for Neighbouring Councils Report

Resolved

Cr T Mileo / Cr A McKibbin

That the Board note the Policy for Service Provision for Neighbouring Councils Report and adopt the policy accordingly with review in November 2025.

9h Regional Cyber Security Program Report

Resolved

Cr B Reynolds / Cr P Best

That the Board note the Regional Cyber Security Program Report and note that a presentation on strategy and implementation including Cyber Central will be provided to GMAC and the Board.

9i Regional Procurement and Contracts Report

Resolved

Cr B Reynolds / Cr A McKibbin

That the Board note the Procurement Report and;

1. approve a 50/50 split of contract management fees from new contracts identified by the Transport Technical Committee between the JO procurement budget line and a newly created Regional Transport Projects budget line, noting any existing or renewed transport-related contracts already in place are not included in this approach; and
2. approve the updates to the procurement plan.

Cr B Fry declared an interest in the CSU report, however is not a voting member.

9j Charles Sturt University Medical Scholarship Review

Resolved

Cr J Medcalf / Cr R Taylor

That the Board note the review of the Charles Sturt University Medical Scholarships (CSU) Program and

1. note that the first cohort of three students will complete medical degrees this calendar year;
2. note that the scholarship was integral to the completion of the three students' success;
3. continue funding three new students at \$6K per annum for the next 5 years for a total of \$90,000 or \$18,000 per annum;
4. ask CSU to track the extent to which their student cohort, particularly the CNSWJO scholarships students, work in medicine in this region;
5. encourage members to attend the graduation ceremony at a date to be advised in December of this year; and
6. write to the scholarship recipients to congratulate and wish them well.

9k Regional Resilience Program

Resolved

Cr T Mileto / Cr R Taylor

That the Board note the Regional Resilience Program report and;

1. endorse the Integrated Preparedness Project Plan for the Disaster Ready Fund Round 2 project;
2. note a regional application has been submitted to the Disaster Ready Fund Round 3; and
3. amend the Risk Register to include item 61 and monitor accordingly.

9l Regional Transport Report

Resolved

Cr A McKibbin / Cr B Reynolds

That the Board note the Transport Report and;

1. note that the Transport Technical Committee is progressing the preparation work for the development of a Regional Freight Strategy in-house; and
2. note that the Integrated Preparedness project, funded through Disaster Ready Fund Round 2, has commenced and aligns with the work of the Transport Technical Committee.

9m Regional Water Report

Resolved	Cr C Roylance / Cr R Taylor
That the Board note the Regional Water Report and note the engagement of the CNSWJO Water Utilities Alliance in the co-design of a pilot to test the impact of the Alliance model on the Community Service Obligations / Basic Levels of Service approach for Western NSW councils.	

9n Regional Energy Program Report

Resolved	Cr B Reynolds / Cr C Roylance
That the Board note the Regional Energy Program Report and	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. note the inclusion of Mr Gary Wallace as a Sponsoring General Manager for the energy priority;2. approve the submission of an application for the Joint Organisation Net Zero Accelerator (JONZA) Round 3 program through NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water's (NSW DCCEEW's) Sustainable Councils program;3. endorse CNSWJO's Expression of Interest application to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) for an emissions education resource;4. approve a regional application under the NSW DCCEEW Low Carbon Landscapes program for a biodiversity inseting project;5. advice be provided to councils on the increases in Essential Energy's network charges;6. endorse the proposed expansion of the Southern Lights Group to include energy and network security, where an increased member base is being sought from other Joint Organisations;7. continue to be heavily involved in a cross-regional approach with other JOs for advocacy in streetlighting and energy network security and note that \$10k per year from the energy project budget line already approved will fund CNSWJO's contribution;8. approve a silver sponsorship for the Regional Development Australia Central West Circular Futures Forum of \$5k for its September event.	

9o Quarterly Review of the Central NSW JO Strategic Plan and Statement of Regional Strategic Priority 2022-2025

Resolved	Cr T Mileto / Cr A McKibbin
That the Board note the Quarterly Review of the Central NSW JO Strategic Plan and Statement of Regional Strategic Priority 2022-2025.	

CNSWJO staff and non-member representatives left the room.

10 Resolve into Confidential Committee of the Whole

Resolved	Cr S Ring / Cr J Medcalf
That the Board	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. resolve into closed session to consider business identified, together with any late reports tabled at the meeting.2. Pursuant to section 10A(1)-(3) of the Local Government Act 1993, the media and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that the business to be considered is classified confidential under the provisions of section 10A(2) as outlined above.3. Correspondence and reports relevant to the subject business be withheld from access.	

10a Resignation of the Executive Officer Report

Resolved	Cr S Ring / Cr C Roylance
That the Board note the Resignation of the Executive Officer Report and	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. appoint Ms Kate Barker as Interim Executive Officer (EO) for up to 12 months, commencing 30 May 2025;2. make provision for appropriate resources to be provided for backfilling of staff positions;3. note the EO and Interim EO have two weeks cross-over post the May Board meeting;4. note that an external party is required for recruitment;	

5. authorises the Chair to undertake all necessary steps to commence a recruitment process for an Executive Officer with a report to be provided to the Joint Organisation within an appropriate timeframe;
6. acknowledge the high level of service Jenny Bennett has provided over the years to the Joint Organisation and Centroc and wish her well for the future;
7. note the interim organisational structure;
8. note that all existing EO delegations will be resumed by Kate Barker while in the Interim EO position;
9. terminate Jenny Bennett's credit card from 12 June 2025;
10. increase the limit of Kate Barker's credit card to \$8k with a review once a new EO appointed;
11. terminate Jenny Bennett's access as a signatory on the CNSWJO bank accounts from 12 June;
12. add Meredith Macpherson as a co-signatory on the CNSWJO bank accounts and setup online banking access; and
13. update the delegations register to include Meredith Macpherson as a payroll approver and amend the payroll process as required;
14. facilitate the offboarding process for Jenny Bennett including removing access to systems; and
15. the EO's vehicle to be retained by the JO as an additional pool vehicle for staff in Orange/Bathurst, noting it has been fully depreciated.

CNSWJO staff and non-member representatives left the room.

11 RDA Central West Report

Noted

That the Board note the Report provided by Regional Development Australia Central West.

12 NSW Premier's Department Report

Noted

That the Board received a verbal report by NSW Premier's Department.
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13 NSW Office of Local Government (OLG) Report

Noted

That the Board note the report provided by NSW Office of Local Government.
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14. Late Reports

Nil.

15. Matters raised by Members

- Blayney – MERC presentation
- Blayney – PFAS

16. Speakers to the next meeting

July meeting

- National Farmers Federation
- Regional Australia Institute

Future meetings

- Ms Kate Lorimer Ward – Local Land Services
- Mr Ian Smith – NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development
- Mr Ashley Albury - EnergyCo
- Ms Kristanne Anderson – NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water re regional water strategies

- Ms Kate McMullen – Homes NSW
- Western Region Academy of Sport (WRAS)
- Biosecurity Commissioner

17. Dates for the next meeting

- 30 July 2025 – Canberra, followed by the meeting with Ministers at Federal Parliament House on 31 July 2025
- 12 November 2025 – Sydney, followed by the meeting with Ministers at NSW Parliament House on 13 November 2025

Meeting closed at 1.42pm

Page 7 is the last page of the Central NSW Joint Organisation Board meeting minutes of meeting of 29 May 2025 held in Orange.