



RIVERINA AND MURRAY JOINT ORGANISATION

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

BOARD MEETING INFORMATION

The Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation (RAMJO) Board meeting was held on Wednesday 12 August 2020 on the secure online platform Zoom.

MEMBER COUNCILS

- Albury City Council
- Berrigan Shire Council
- Carrathool Shire Council
- Edward River Council
- Federation Council
- Griffith City Council
- Hay Shire Council
- Leeton Shire Council
- Murray River Council
- Murrumbidgee Council
- Narrandera Shire

VOTING BOARD MEMBERS

- CHAIR: Cr Kevin Mack (Albury)
- Cr Matthew Hannan (Berrigan)
- Cr Darryl Jardine (Carrathool)
- Cr Norm Brennan (Edward River)
- Cr Patrick Bourke (Federation)
- Cr John Dal Broi (Griffith)
- Cr Bill Sheaffe (Hay)
- Cr Paul Maytom (Leeton)
- Cr Chris Bilkey (Murray River)
- Cr Ruth McCrae (Murrumbidgee)
- Cr Neville Kschenka (Narrandera)

NON-VOTING BOARD MEMBERS

- Frank Zaknich (Albury)
- Rowan Perkins (Berrigan)
- Rick Warren (Carrathool)
- John Rayner (A/g) (Edward River)
- Adrian Butler (Federation)
- Brett Stonestreet (Griffith)
- David Webb (Hay)
- Jackie Kruger (Leeton)
- Des Bilske (Murray River)
- John Scarce (Murrumbidgee)
- George Cowan (Narrandera)

NSW STATE GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES (NON-VOTING BOARD MEMBERS)

- James Bolton - Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (Department of Regional NSW)
- Cameron Templeton - Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (Office of Local Government)
- Justin Clancy - Member for Albury (for parts of the meeting)

RAMJO STAFF (NON-VOTING BOARD MEMBERS)

- Bridgett Leopold – Executive Officer
- Bridget De La Haye – Office Manager

RAMJO BOARD MEETING AGENDA

ITEM	TOPIC	TIME
1	Chair Welcome and Acknowledgement of First Nations	10:00
2	Apologies	10:00
3	Minutes from Board Meeting – 13 th May 2020 Minutes from Extraordinary Board Meeting – 3 rd July 2020	10:00
4	Matters arising from the previous meeting – 13 th May and 3 rd July 2020	10:05
5	ELECTION OF RAMJO CHAIRPERSON	10:10
6	REGIONAL NSW: James Bolton: Regional NSW update	10:20
7	OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT: Cameron Templeton: Update from OLG	10:30
8	GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE 8.1 2019 – 2020 Reconciliation and Preparation of Financial Statements 8.2 2020-2021 Quarterly Budget Outlook and Amendments 8.3 Bringing Voluntary Regional Waste Management Groups In-House	10:40
9	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 9.1 Water – CRC Partner & CSU MOU 9.2 Digital Connectivity TransGrid Partnership & CRC 9.3 Infrastructure Mapping & Regional Freight Plan 9.4 Best Practice Aggregated Procurement	11:10
10	SERVICE DELIVERY 10.1 Adverse Event Management Plans 10.2 Energy Audit and Strategy	11:40
11	PROJECT & WORKING GROUP UPDATES 11.1 Contaminated Land Management 11.2 Riverina Waste Group 11.3 Murray Waste Group 11.4 General Managers Meeting Minutes	11:50
	BREAK	12:00
12	ADVOCACY 12.1 Ministerial Virtual Roundtable – State Ministers 12.2 Ministerial Virtual Roundtable – Commonwealth Ministers	12:10
13	OTHER BUSINESS MATTERS 13.1 RFS Assets 13.2 EO Performance Review 13.3 Statement of Regional Strategic Priorities Reporting 13.4 JO Secretariat Partnership 13.5 Current submissions underway	12:30
14	OTHER BUSINESS	12:45
	Meeting Close	1:00

RAMJO BOARD MEETING MINUTES

AGENDA ITEM 1 – WELCOME

The Chairperson Kevin Mack welcomed the Board Members to the meeting and acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the lands.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – APOLOGIES

- Des Bilske, General Manager Murray River (note that Brian Barrett is acting and present)
- George Cowan, General Manager Narrandera

RESOLVED that the apologies be accepted and that leave of absence be granted.

Moved by Cr Norm Brennan (Edward River), seconded by Cr Chris Bilkey (Murray River).

AGENDA ITEM 3 – MINUTES OF THE RAMJO BOARD MEETINGS – 13TH MAY AND 3RD JULY 2020

Minutes are at Attachments A & B.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the RAMJO Board Meeting held on Wednesday 13 May 2020 are endorsed pending minor amendment to note Hay Shire Council opt-in to the next phase of the Southern Lights Project. The Minutes of the RAMJO Extraordinary Board Meeting held on Friday 3 July 2020 are endorsed.

Moved by Cr Matt Hannan (Berrigan), seconded by Cr John Dal Broi (Griffith).

AGENDA ITEM 4 – MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- **COVID updates via Regional NSW:** these matters were followed up, but continue to evolve and change at a rapid rate.
- **Potential postponement of valuations:** this matter is complete.
- **Shovel ready projects:** completed and at Attachment C.
- **Letter of appreciation to Murrumbidgee Local Health District:** ongoing
- **JO Secretariat Proposal:** was not supported by the entire JO network. (Further discussion held Agenda Item 13.4)
- **Cross Border Commissioner engagement request:** Engagement will occur at State Ministerial Roundtable scheduled for 13 August 2020. The Chairperson noted the Cross Border Commissioner is providing great support and following up requests in the challenging circumstances.

RESOLVED: The Board Members noted the verbal update and notes in the agenda papers.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – ELECTION OF RAMJO CHAIRPERSON

The RAMJO Executive Officer acted as the Returning Officer for the election of the RAMJO Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson. One nomination was received for each position. No late nominations were forthcoming therefore Mayor Kevin Mack was appointed as Chairperson and Mayor John Dal Broi as Deputy Chairperson. Re-elected Chairperson Kevin Mack thanked the Board and acknowledged the RAMJO Board and staff all for their hard work at bringing together a cohesive organisation.

Member for Albury Mr Justin Clancy joined the meeting and was welcomed by the Chairperson.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – UPDATE FROM REGIONAL NSW

James Bolton provided a verbal update to the Board from Regional NSW.

- Regional NSW are working together with other Departments to resolve issues as they arise.
- Broader Regional NSW Team are still focussed working on Bushfire recovery.
- Stimulus packages are being developed for Covid-19 recovery phase.
- Deputy Premier The Hon. John Barilaro MP will talk to the Regional NSW format at the RAMJO Ministerial Forum on 13 Aug 2020.

RESOLVED: The RAMJO Board noted the verbal update from the Director of Riverina Murray, Regional NSW.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – UPDATE FROM OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Cameron Templeton provided a written update at **Attachment D**, and provided further information on critical points.

- Details of a \$395M Covid-19 recovery/economic stimulus package will be released as soon as possible with new employment, job retention and economic growth key focuses.
- Local Government Minister Shelley Hancock has been briefed for the RAMJO Ministerial Forum on 13 August 2020.
- Online pet register is operational, with potential software tests being finalised.
- An update was sought from the OLG regarding the ARIC legislation. The Council Engagement Manager will update on the ARIC legislation will be provided at soon as possible following the meeting.

RESOLVED: The RAMJO Board noted the verbal update from the Council Engagement Manager, OLG.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – GOVERNANCE AND FINANCE

8.1: 2019 – 2020 RECONCILIATION AND PREPARATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Office Manager provided a summary of the reconciliation of 2019-2020. A summary of budgeted expense versus actual is provided at **Attachment E**.

In summary, the reconciliation process has driven out three key findings:

1. **Overall:** Expenditure against budgeted items was generally very accurate.
2. **General Fund:** There is significant underspend in the order of 30% - 50% in some line items, mostly relating to travel cost savings arising from COVID restrictions.
3. **Grant Acquittal:** Reporting against the OLG Establishment Funds \$300,000 (due to be expended by 30th June 2020) demonstrates the total has been acquitted.

The ongoing impacts of COVID are unclear, however we can anticipate that reduced travel will continue for a minimum 3 – 6 months, given RAMJO's office location in a border community. This is likely to result in further cost reductions relating to travel for the FY 2020-2021.

The completion of the reconciliation, along with some outstanding matters relating to RAMROC / RAMJO are in the process of being finalised, with a workplan between Albury City Council and RAMJO to prepare for the drafting of the Financial Statements for audit. The Draft Financial Statements are due to be completed in line with the Audit Plan on the week commencing 14th September 2020, with RAMJO's Audit due to take place the week of 21st September 2020. Following the audit process, the General Purpose Financial Statements for 2019-2020 will be finalised with an Independent Auditor's Report for RAMJO, and must be signed by two Board Members after a resolution by the Board. It is anticipated that this will take place sometime in October, and therefore a short 15-minute online meeting may need to be called to consider the Financial Statements.

In addition to the Financial Statements, RAMJO is required to provide a detailed report against the Statement of Regional Strategic Priorities, demonstrating progress in this space. This will be a key task of the RAMJO team for the coming 4 weeks.

Recommendation:

That the Board:

- **note the end of financial year reconciliation report at Attachment E.**
- **agree to meet via a short online meeting in October to consider RAMJO’s 2019 – 2020 Financial Statements and a report of progress against Strategic Priorities.**

RESOLVED: An extra-ordinary Board meeting will be held in October to consider RAMJO’s 2019 – 2020 Financial Statements and a report of progress against Strategic Priorities.

Moved by Cr Norm Brennan (Edward River), Seconded by Cr Chris Bilkey (Murray River).

8.2: 2020 – 2021 – QUARTERLY BUDGET UPDATE AND AMENDMENTS

The Office Manager noted a report on quarterly spending versus budgeted items will be provided at the next Board meeting once Q1 has ended.

The Executive Officer is currently reconfiguring the OLG Capacity Building grant funds, still delivering the same projects but given the additional resource provided by DPIE’s Sustainable Councils and Communities team, there is some underspent funding in the Energy project space. This will be moved to Digital Connectivity to allow for progress to increase in this space. The recent COVID impacts have seen a greater focus on digital connectivity, and therefore this priority is being accelerated.

Office of Local Government – JO Capacity Building Grant Funding			
Original Funding Budgeted Items		Amended Funding Budgeted Items	
Energy	\$98,000	Energy	\$83,000
Procurement	\$35,000	Procurement	\$35,000
Digital Connectivity / Grants Officer	\$17,000	Digital Connectivity / Grants Officer	\$32,000
TOTAL	\$150,000	TOTAL	\$150,000

All projects will continue to produce the same deliverables in the same timeframe.

The Executive Officer is seeking a casual Project Officer/Grants Officer position to work on the two following streams of work 2 – 3 days per week for the next 6 months:

- Undertake detailed analysis and create a cost benefit analysis for the delivery on bespoke, place based regional connectivity issues, which have been progressed by the Digital Connectivity Sub-Committee.
- Prepare a RAMJO series of interconnecting solutions, partners and outcomes in a high level framework.
- Preparing a possible grant application in partnership with Telstra and TransGrid under the Commonwealth’s Regional Connectivity Program to deliver a solution to address both mobile phone blackspots and data capacity and connectivity in our regional townships.
- Undertake further analysis of grant funding possibilities to continue to build solutions across the region, potentially partnering with neighbouring JOs and Councils.
- Assist the Project Manager and Executive Officer in all project and grant related matters where required.

There is a possibility the Executive Officer may seek to use some of the surplus in this year’s budget, created by the service delivery component, to assist with the large scale project (Adverse Event Management Plans) via this Project Officer resource for an additional day or two per week.

Furthermore, as agreed at previous meetings, to reduce the upfront capital expense component from the 2020-2021 RAMJO budget, Albury City Council agreed to purchase a vehicle and lease it to RAMJO. This change requires an adjustment of the Executive Officer's contract in order to align with Albury City's processes relating to leaseback and FBT. The amendment will ultimately result in a change in the budget, with the restructure creating a **minimum \$10,500 per year annual saving to RAMJO** in FBT, fuel, servicing, insurance, registration, etc.

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board:

- **Agree** to the proposed restructure of funds under the OLG JO Capacity Building Grant
- **Agree** to pre-approve the additional spending of up to \$25,000 from the forecast \$75,000 surplus resulting from the Service Delivery model to ensure sufficient resources are in place to complete the projects.
- **Note** the restructure of the Executive Officer's contract to accommodate a move from a RAMJO owned vehicle to a leased vehicle from Albury City Council, and to format a more economical financial arrangement for RAMJO as it relates to vehicles.

RESOLVED: No questions were raised by the Board on this item.

Moved by Cr Paul Maytom (Leeton), seconded by Cr Matt Hannan (Berrigan).

8.3: BRINGING VOLUNTARY REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT GROUPS IN-HOUSE

Over the last 9 months, the Executive Officer and Office Manager have identified a carryover of grant funding, as a result of the underspend of Voluntary Waste Group Coordinator funds. These amounts total approximately \$600,000, **including** incoming coordinator funds for 2020-2021. These funds are required to be acquitted against regional waste strategy deliverables by 2021, along with other projects and workstreams.

RAMJO originally received approval from the Board to recruit a Regional Waste Manager of Waste, Innovation and Sustainability for a 2-year period to focus on regional strategic outcomes. This role would support the two Regional Waste Coordinators, currently being filled by two consultants on fixed contracts.

Since this time, the Murray Regional Waste Coordinator provided verbal notice in July that they intend not to continue in the role of RAMJO Waste Coordinator at the end of the contract. Given the contracts for both contractors ends on 30 September 2020, this provided an opportunity to review the structure and assess current risks, as well as future opportunities.

While the recruitment process attracted a high volume of outstanding candidates, the uncertainty regarding RAMJO's financial sustainability, combined with an opportunity to change the structure, resulted in RAMJO commencing discussions with Albury City Council (ACC) to create a structure to support regional waste strategy, operations and coordination through the support of Albury City. RAMJO has since ceased the recruitment process and have come to a proposed arrangement with ACC which will benefit RAMJO and the longevity of regional waste management outcomes. This includes the employment of two full-time Regional Waste Coordinators (one for each waste group), a Strategic Waste Manager and a Team Leader of this team managing the day-to-day operations and reporting into the RAMJO Executive Officer. The RAMJO EO will also commence integration of waste operations, outcomes, targets and opportunities into the strategic priorities and framework of the Joint Organisations, its Member Councils and the two non-RAMJO Councils (Balranald and Wentworth) which fall under the Murray Waste Group. The alignment between waste and the strategic focus of the JO are noticeable, with energy, transport, industry and digital connectivity all including opportunities which relate to waste.

The mapping of tasks, outcomes and opportunities has already been completed, as well as addressing risks and gaps in the current and future models.

Benefits:

- **Resource:** in-house delivery of regional waste priorities with 3 full time staff and a Team Leader, as opposed to 2 contractors at up to 20 hours per week.
- **Strategy:** analysis of gaps in the delivery of regional waste strategies and an analysis of each Council and their waste contractual, service and strategic deliverables. Integration of a strategic waste vision with other RAMJO strategic priorities.
- **Delivery:** deliver regional waste priorities, apply for grant funding, identify regional and local waste infrastructure, prepare for the NSW 20 Year Waste Strategy.
- **Regional Cooperation:** opportunity for Council staff to join strategic projects as learning opportunities or stretch targets, including identification of sites for waste infrastructure, participating in State wide waste conferences and workshops, networking and learning best practice.
- **Knowledge:** bringing corporate knowledge, records managements, communications and information sharing in house as a service delivery to Councils.
- **Cost efficiency:** moving to a range of staff across various levels rather than contractors allows for cost efficiencies across staff, systems, travel, reporting and financial management.

Disadvantages:

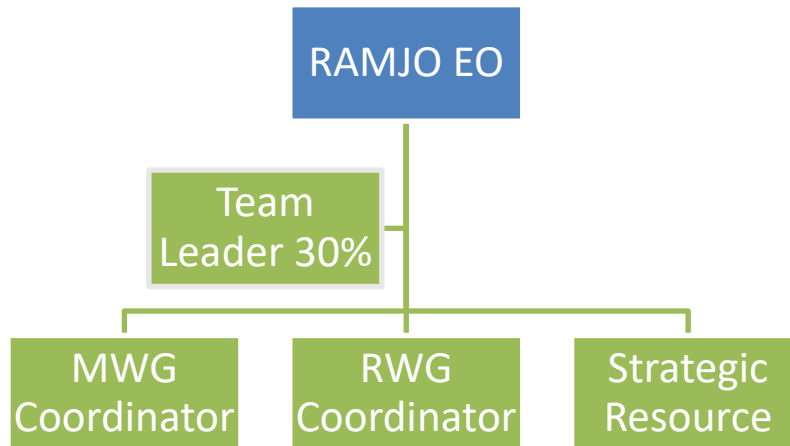
- **Knowledge:** Loss of corporate, technical knowledge, as well as experience.
- **Management:** potential loss of Executive Officer time on regional strategic priorities as a focus on waste intensifies.
- **Relationships:** Not renewing contracts of two long serving contractors to RAMJO.

Summary of estimated spending models (please note, two-year budgets are still being finalised):

CURRENT MODEL		PROPOSED IN HOUSE ALTERNATIVE MODEL	
Income p/a:	\$336,000	Income p/a:	\$336,000
EXPENSE:		EXPENSE:	
RWG Coordinator: (<20 hours per week)	~\$140,000	RWG Coordinator: (full time)	\$75,000
MWG Coordinator: (<20 hours per week)	~\$90,000	MWG Coordinator: (full time)	\$75,000
RAMJO Admin:	\$17,500	RAMJO Admin:	\$17,500
TOTAL:	\$247,500	TOTAL:	\$167,500
		UNDERSPENT FUNDS (per year)	
		Regional Manager 30%:	\$45,000
		Strategic Officer: (full time)	\$85,000
		ACC Office space and supplies (laptops, phones, desks, etc)	\$15,000
		TOTAL:	\$145,000

This proposal is anticipated to drive out progress, better resourcing, cost efficiencies (allowing for more funding for project delivery) for the coming 24 months. At this point it is anticipated that NSW EPA will have an alternative funding model for Voluntary Waste Groups in line with the 20 Year Waste Strategy.

The structure is expected to resemble the diagram below:



Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board endorse the change to RAMJO’s management of the Murray and Riverina Voluntary Regional Waste Groups to a similar structure above for the coming 24 months or until an alternate funding model is released by NSW Government.

Following discussion by the Board the Executive Officer confirmed;

- RAMJO’s financial commitment to the structure will be in-line with the currently confirmed and available funding.
- Flexible and part time arrangements may be considered as suitable employment type.

The General Managers Forum Chair and CEO of Albury City Council (ACC) Frank Zaknich noted that ACC recently brought the Halve Waste Project in-house. Mr Zaknich noted that ACC recognises that regional waste strategy must be contemporary and seek alignment to the new 20 Year Waste Strategy as these points will be critical to securing future waste funding streams from the Government and private sector investment.

RESOLVED: The Board endorsed structural change to RAMJO’s Voluntary Waste Groups to bring the model ‘in-house’.

Moved by Cr Paul Maytom (Leeton), Seconded by Cr John Dal Broi (Griffith).

AGENDA ITEM 9 – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

9.1: WATER – CRC PARTNER AND CSU MOU

The RAMJO Water Sub-Committee continues to make impressive headway with Commonwealth and State leaders, departments and organisations. This includes the MDBA, CEWH, Ministers and universities. Recently, the RAMJO Water Sub Committee negotiated an opportunity to become a Tier 3 partner on the "One Basin" Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) bid, led by University of Melbourne and other partners, is about to be submitted on 29th July. RAMJO has reviewed the One Basin initiative, intended outcomes and existing partners and finds it aligns very well with RAMJO’s intent and strategic objectives: <https://onebasin.com.au/>

RAMJO continues to meet with CSU regarding a MOU and has identified water, along with digital connectivity and regional skills capacity building as opportunities for collaboration.

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board note the significant progress being made by the RAMJO Water Sub-Committee, including partnerships, consultation and relationship building.

RAMJO Chair Cr Kevin Mack acknowledged the progress and thanked the Water Security Sub-Committee and RAMJO staff for their ongoing work. Discussion was had regarding the appointment of the well-respected Sir Angus Houston to the position of Murray Darling Basin Authority Chairperson and RAMJO's need to make contact and establish a relationship.

The Board requested that the RAMJO Executive Officer seek an early meeting with Sir Angus Houston to address the group and discuss the RAMJO Water Position Paper.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the update and progress.

Moved by Cr Chris Bilkey (Murray River), Seconded by Cr Pat Bourke (Federation).

9.2: DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY TRANSGRID PARTNERSHIP & CRC

The Digital Connectivity Sub-Committee has made significant headway in the past several weeks, with relationship building and in-house expertise at our Member Councils resulting in development of proposals which are gaining momentum.

Working in partnership with TransGrid, the RAMJO Digital Connectivity Sub-Committee has progressed to signing a Non-Disclosure Agreement regarding confidential information that forms the basis of a regional solution and local Members. The particulars of the NDA prevent RAMJO including the details in the agenda papers. A confidential summary paper is at **Attachment F**.

The Sub-Committee continues to work with regional stakeholders and the Member for Albury to ensure any regional solution is inclusive and considers all stakeholders that could benefit.

RAMJO is working on the feasibility of lodging a funding application with the Commonwealth Government's Regional Connectivity funding program, released this week.

Finally, RAMJO have agreed to partner with the "Smarter Regions" CRC bid to progress the opportunity to determine the benefits for our region in being involved in the bid and potential future CRC. This matter will be deferred to the Sub-Committee for voting at its next meeting.

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board note the progress of the Digital Connectivity Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the update and progress made and recognised the opportunity for collaboration.

9.3: INFRASTRUCTURE MAPPING AND RAMJO REGIONAL FREIGHT TRANSPORT PLAN

RAMJO has completed a series of significant pieces of work relating to infrastructure.

Shovel Ready: All Councils provided swift input in response to a request from RAMJO to provide a list of "Shovel Ready" projects in preparation for any potential economic stimulus or recovery funding in response to COVID which may become available. The list is at **Attachment C**. The compilation will continue to be used by RAMJO in advocacy, including the Ministerial Roundtables in August at both the State and Commonwealth levels.

Long Term: RAMJO has also continued to map and maintain data on long-term regionally significant infrastructure from the original sprint mapping undertaken with Jillian Kilby in January this year. Please find a live map of the data here: <https://www.ramjo.nsw.gov.au/regional-infrastructure-priorities-map-2020/>

Freight Plan: The final draft of the RAMJO Regional Freight Transport Plan has been completed by the Deputy CEO at Albury City and his team on behalf of RAMJO's Engineering Group. A link to the document has been circulated to all RAMJO Engineers and GMs for final input. The document is 72MB so cannot be circulated electronically but

we are intending to update the final version in the coming weeks and provide it to graphic designers for some small edits. Recognition goes to Albury City, specifically Brad Ferris and his team for the outstanding effort.

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board:

- **note the progress of infrastructure mapping, advocacy and plan developments that relate to strategic priority outcomes as listed in RAMJO’s Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities.**
- **recognise the contribution made by the Deputy CEO of Albury City (Brad Ferris) and the RAMJO Engineering Group in progressing this substantial piece of work.**

Discussion was had regarding the possibility of aggregating the documents into ‘one pager’ for advocacy. The RAMJO Executive Officer will work with the Chair of the Transport Sub-Committee, David Webb, to consider this proposal.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the update and recognised the significant contribution made by the Deputy CEO Albury City and RAMJO Engineering Group.

Moved by Cr Norm Brennan (Edward River), Seconded by Cr Matt Hannan (Berrigan).

9.4: BEST PRACTICE AGGREGATED PROCUREMENT

Stage 1 A & B of the Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement (BPAP), being led by Central NSW JO, is complete – with a detailed report at **Attachment G**. The Executive Officer continues to work with neighbouring JOs covering 39 Councils to deliver this project in the required timeframe. Stage 2 EOIs have been assessed and the project is moving to a selective RfQ based on the submissions. RAMJO will continue to progress aggregate data collation and identification of procurement opportunities for Member Councils.

RAMJO has also prepared a media release (**Attachment H**) should the Board express the appetite to announce this project.

Towards the end of 2020, RAMJO will commence work with Leeton Shire Council, who have offered to undertake a pilot with RAMJO to review procurement best practice at a Council level.

Recommendation:

That the Board:

- **note the update from the Executive Officer regarding the Best Practice in Aggregated Procurement (BPAP) cross-JO project.**
- **consider whether a media release or a communique to select stakeholders would be supported.**

RESOLVED: The Board noted the update and supported to amend the recommendation to ‘joint media release with participating Joint Organisations’.

Moved by Cr Kevin Mack (Albury), seconded by Cr Pat Bourke (Federation).

AGENDA ITEM 10 – SERVICE DELIVERY

10.1: ADVERSE EVENT MANAGEMENT PLANS

As agreed at the last Board meeting on 13th May 2020, RAMJO will undertake the drafting of the Adverse Event Management Plans on behalf of Member Councils where they have opted into this service. This project is anticipated to take 4 months of both the Executive Officer’s and Project Manager’s capacity (part time) from August 2020 to November 2020.

A detailed project plan is currently being developed, and a project kick-off meeting has been held in late July with early stakeholder input. The project plan identifies risks, anticipated stakeholder engagement requirements, critical council timeframes and resourcing.

The project timeframes are tight and will remain the major focus for RAMJO staff between now and the end of the year.

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board note the Adverse Event Management Plan project has commenced, with this project consuming a significant amount of RAMJO staff time until December 2020.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the update and agreed to a proposal by the RAMJO Chair Kevin Mack that the RAMJO Sub-Committee Chairs assist the RAMJO staff workload by attending important relevant third party meetings/webinars and provide summaries back to the RAMJO Executive Officer.

10.2: ENERGY AUDIT AND STRATEGY

This project continues to be progressed by RAMJO's Project Manager / Office Manager with four Councils progressing to full energy audits, planning and strategy. The remaining Councils are in progress and kick off workshops will commence in the coming months. A report is provided at **Attachment I**.

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board note the Energy Audit and Strategy report update.

The RAMJO Project Manager summarised the progress to date noting that almost half of RAMJO Councils had commenced with engagement. The General Manager Murrumbidgee Council John Scarce reinforced the benefit of participation in the project, noting that the flexibility of support and potential cost recovery from a specific solar installation assessment in the LGA was exciting.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the update.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – PROJECT & WORKING GROUP UPDATES

The following attachments provide a brief update of each project currently being managed by RAMJO:

- Attachment 11.1: Contaminated Lands Management – Underground Petroleum Storage Systems (UPSS)
- Attachment 11.2: Riverina Waste Group
- Attachment 11.3: Murray Waste Group
- Attachment 11.4: General Managers Meeting Minutes

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board note the report and working group updates.

RESOLVED: The above items were taken as read and the Board noted the updates.

AGENDA ITEM 12 – ADVOCACY

12.1: MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE – STATE MINISTERS

As discussed at the Extraordinary Board meeting, the Executive Officer sought the assistance of a casual resource (Gabrielle Cusack) for 6 weeks to organise, arrange and coordinate a series of Ministerial meetings based on the significant progress made by RAMJO Sub-Committees and the Board.

In particular, RAMJO Board Members should seize the opportunity to demonstrate the regional outcomes achieved through cooperation, partnership and support of the RAMJO staff to deliver on regional outcomes. RAMJO is making recognisable progress in terms of delivering actionable outcomes relating to strategic priorities, and forming committed advocacy platforms.

RAMJO is divided by three State electoral boundaries, all with differing party Members. By demonstrating clear, consistent messaging in terms of our priorities, outputs and deliverables, RAMJO can work on building relationships with Ministers, Departmental staff and other stakeholders.

All RAMJO Board Members would have received the briefings provided to the Deputy Premier and Ministers, as well as a run sheet to guide the conversation and drive the intended outcomes.

Recommendation:

That the Board:

- **note the progress by RAMJO to arrange a virtual roundtable with a range of State Ministers and the Cross Border Commissioner to create the opportunity to demonstrate Member Council commitment to collaborative regional outcomes.**
- **note the commitment by these State representatives to engage with the JO on matters of regional significance and consider guiding the discussion on these matters.**

RESOLVED: The Board noted the progress made and commitment given by the Ministers to engage with RAMJO.

12.2: MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE – COMMONWEALTH MINISTERS

In line with the abovementioned agenda item, RAMJO has also sought out the engagement of relevant Commonwealth Ministers including the Deputy Prime Minister, as well as the National Farmers Federation to discuss water, digital connectivity and infrastructure. Following this meeting on Friday 14th August, the RAMJO Water Security Sub-Committee will hold a meeting with the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder.

RAMJO is covered by a single Federal electoral boundary, allowing for some consistency in engagement at the Commonwealth level. RAMJO messaging should remain clear and consistent in terms of our priorities, outputs and deliverables.

On Friday 7th August, RAMJO Board Members will receive briefings as provided to the Commonwealth Ministers and a run sheet to assist with guiding the conversation and driving the intended outcomes.

Recommendation:

That the Board:

- **note the progress by RAMJO to arrange a virtual roundtable with a range of Commonwealth Ministers, the National Farmers Federation and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder to create the opportunity to demonstrate Member Council commitment to collaborative regional outcomes.**
- **note the commitment by these Federal representatives to engage with the JO on matters of regional significance and consider guiding the discussion on these matters.**

The Water Sub-Committee Chair Cr Chris Bilkey reinforced the need for positivity and recognition where RAMJO aligns with stakeholder organisations and Ministerial positions.

The Executive Officer updated the Board that the Deputy Prime Minister was no longer available due to other commitments and an alternative date for engagement has been sought.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the progress made and commitment given by the Government and stakeholder representatives.

AGENDA ITEM 13 – OTHER BUSINESS MATTERS

13.1 – RFS ASSETS

Jackie Kruger provided a verbal briefing on this matter. Please see the correspondence at **Attachments J & K** regarding this matter.

Recommendation:

That the Board consider whether a supporting letter from RAMJO would provide the advocacy platform required for this matter.

The Board discussed that Rural Fire Service (RFS) plant and equipment assets belong to RFS and therefore should not be recognised on Councils asset registers (if they have been). (The Board recognised that in instances where RFS tenant Council buildings and land (usually at a nominal rent) the asset is Council owned and included on Council registers). In addition, the Board discussed the increased emergency services levy increase and requested the Executive Officer review the work undertaken on this.

RESOLVED: The RAMJO Board agreed that the Executive Officer will send an accompanying cover letter following the review of Jackie Kruger’s letter by the Albury City Council Chief Financial Officer. The RAMJO covering letter will be cc’d to the OLG Council Engagement Manager and Albury City Council Chief Financial Officer.

13.2 – EXECUTIVE OFFICER PERFORMANCE REVIEW

As a matter of process, the Executive Officer provided an annual performance report to the original recruitment team. The review was based on the legislated requirements of the JO and the Executive Officer’s contracted Position Description.

The confidential summary results are at **Attachment L**.

No discussion was had on the report.

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board note the Executive Officer’s Performance Report for 2019 – 2020 has been completed.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the report.

Moved by Cr Chris Bilkey (Murray River), seconded by Cr John Dal Broi (Griffith).

13.3 – STATEMENT OF REGIONAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (SRSP)

Information only – the Executive Officer informed the Board that as part of the auditing process for the Joint Organisations, JOs must undertake a review of their deliverables against their original SRSP. This report is anticipated to take several weeks to compile, in parallel with the Adverse Event Management Plans.

Recommendation:

That the RAMJO Board note the requirement to review and report on RAMJO’s SRSP.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the update.

13.4: JO SECRETARIAT PARTNERSHIP – WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The JO network meetings have been success over the last 4 months, allowing for JOs to work together on outcomes, such as a Financial Sustainability Toolkit and 2 draft models for ongoing funding with the State Government. However, the proposal to fund a JO Secretariat was not supported by all JO Board. Therefore, this proposal as considered by RAMJO at the Extraordinary Board meeting will not proceed.

Recommendation:

That the Board note the JO Secretariat proposal across NSW did not receive support from other JO Boards.

The RAMJO Board discussed that whilst the JO Secretariat model was not supported by all the JO Board, RAMJO will continue to work closely with solution focused Joint Organisations on select priorities.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the update.

13.5 – SUBMISSIONS UNDERWAY

In light of the release of the RAMJO Water Position Paper, several enquiries are underway, including:

- Productivity Commission Issues Paper on National Water Reform – due 21 August 2020
- ACCC Water Inquiry Interim Report – due 28 August 2020
- Enquiry into NSW Government Grant Programs – due 24 August 2020

Recommendation:

That the Board note that RAMJO is preparing several submissions that relate to JO strategic priorities.

The RAMJO Chairperson Cr Kevin Mack noted the positive feedback received about the RAMJO Water Position Paper from elected members, Government department representatives, and non-governmental organisations.

RESOLVED: The Board noted the update.

11 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. The Chair Cr Kevin Mack offered to circulate a Mayoral Minute which was drafted for Albury City Council with other RAMJO Member Councils on the matter of a Local Government representative on National Cabinet for other Mayors to consider tabling at their respective meetings.
2. That a register with a public map of contaminated lands (suspected and potential legacy sites) has been proposed by EPA. Monitoring is required as there is potential and perceived impact this could result in decreased land values.
3. The General Manager Griffith City Council Mr Brett Stonestreet raised concern regarding the eligibility for Councils to apply for the Public Spaces Legacy Program funding due to cut of dates for planning upgrades not being communicated to Councils prior to funding announcements. Director Regional NSW James Bolton has raised this and the support was given by the Board for Mr Stonestreet to raise this is the relevant Minister at the upcoming RAMJO Ministerial Forum.
4. Cr Matt Hannan (Berrigan) requested Member for Albury Mr Justin Clancy to request postcode 2716 to be included into the border region. Mr Clancy noted this was for discussion with the Cross Border Commissioner. The Board noted that consideration of the regions functional economic zone was important. **The Board requested RAMJO Executive Officer to prepare a thank you letter for Cross Border Commissioner Mr James McTavish.**

5. The RAMJO Chair noted the significant economic issues and the requirement for Councils to undertake pre-emptive planning for differing Covid-19 restrictions and border closure scenarios. **The Board opted to collate a list with each Council General Manager to provide the RAMJO Executive Officer with dot point list of issues particularly regarding upcoming harvest, transportation challenges and access to worker resources.**
6. As part of a campaign to raise awareness of mental health issues Cr Matt Hannan (Berrigan) will wheel (in his wheelchair) from Berrigan to Finley on 30 August 2020. The Board are encouraged to follow and support his campaign. More information can be found here <https://au.gofundme.com/f/rolling-on-for-rural-health-and-wellbeing>
7. Cr Paul Maytom requests that RAMJO Board/RAMJO Water Sub-Committee invite Water NSW Director Vince Kelly to a meeting to seek clarify on planned infrastructure changes.

NEXT MEETING – WILL NOW BE SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER (PLAN FOR IN PERSON WITHIN THE RAMJO FOOTPRINT).

(Instead of the proposed October date which had originally been scheduled to fit with travel to Canberra during the Parliament sitting week).

- An Extra-Ordinary Board meeting will be scheduled for late October to endorse financial and audit requirements.