

# MINUTES - BOARD MEETING

10 November 2023 - Narrandera

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>RAMJO Board Meeting</b>		
<b>DATE:</b>	Friday 10 November 2023		
<b>TIME:</b>	9:30am – 1:00pm		
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Narrandera Ex-Services Club		
<b>CHAIR:</b>	Cr. Patrick Bourke (appointed following chair election)		
<b>ATTENDEES:</b>	<b>Council / Organisation</b>	<b>Voting Member</b>	<b>Non-Voting Member</b>
	Albury City Council	Cr. Kylie King	Mr. Frank Zaknich
	Berrigan Shire Council	Cr. Julia Cornwell-McKean	Mrs. Karina Ewer
	Carrathool Shire Council	Cr. Darryl Jardine (Apology)	Mr. Rick Warren
	Edward River Council	Cr. Peta Betts	Mr. Philip Stone
	Federation Council	Cr. Pat Bourke	Mr. Adrian Butler (Apology)
	Griffith City Council	Cr. Anne Napoli (Deputy Mayor)	Mrs. Shireen Donaldson
	Hay Shire Council	Cr. Carol Oataway	Mr. David Webb
	Leeton Shire Council	Cr. Tony Reneker	Mrs. Jackie Kruger
	Murray River Council	Cr. Frank Crawley	Mr. Terry Dodds (apology)
	Murrumbidgee Council	Cr. Ruth McRae	Mr. John Scarce (apology)
	Narrandera Shire Council	Cr. Neville Kschenka	Mr. George Cowan
	Office of Local Government		Mr. Cameron Templeton
Regional NSW		Mr. Giles Butler	
<b>RAMJO STAFF</b>	Ms. Yvonne Lingua – Executive Officer		
	Ms. Carolyn Clancy – Office Manager		
<b>OTHER ATTENDEES</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Role</b>
	Mr. Peter Adams	Department of Regional NSW	Director – Regional Digital Connectivity Programs
	Mrs. Katrina Paterson	Profile ID	Manager

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## MEETING MINUTES

Item	Topic	Time
	<b>OPENING</b>	9:30
1	<b>WELCOME</b>	9:30
	1.1 Acknowledgement of Country 1.2 Election of Chairperson to fill casual vacancy – <i>Executive Officer</i>	
2	Apologies and Leave of Absence	9:40
3	Declaration of Items of Pecuniary or Other Interest – Board Members / Designated Persons	9:41
4	Minutes from previous meeting: 11 August 2023 Board meeting – <i>Attachment A</i> 26 October 2023 Extraordinary meeting – <i>Attachment B</i>	9:42
5	Matters and action items arising from previous Board meeting	9:43
6	Correspondence Register	9:44
7	<b>GUEST PRESENTATIONS</b>	9:45
	7.1 <b>Mr. Peter Adams</b> - Dept. of Regional NSW: Director Regional Digital Connectivity Programs 7.2 <b>Mrs. Katrina Paterson</b> - Profile ID: Annual Presentation on State of the Region's Economic dataset	
8	<b>GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND OPERATIONS</b>	10:30
	8.1 Annual Audit FY 2023 – Statements and closing reports – <i>Attachment C</i>	
	8.2 2023/2024 Q1 Budget Review – <i>Attachment D</i>	
	8.3 Proposed changes to RAMJO's Banking Set-up – <i>Attachment E</i>	
	8.4 Update on Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee – <i>Attachment F</i>	
	8.5 Tabling of returns of interest of designated persons – <i>Attachment G</i>	
	8.6 General Managers/CEO's Forum - draft minutes and action items from 13 October – <i>Attachment H</i>	
8.7 Proposed meeting schedule and locations for 2024		
<b>BREAK</b>		11:00
9	<b>UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</b>	11:15
	9.1 Draft Annual Performance Statement and Strategic approach for 2024 - <i>Attachment I</i>	
	9.2 Water sub-committee	
	9.2.1 Tabling of Draft Updated Water Position Paper - <i>Attachment J</i>	
	9.2.2 Notice of Motion – Opposition to buy-backs and Water Amendment ( <i>Restoring our Rivers</i> ) Bill	
	9.3 Energy Security sub-committee	
	9.3.1 Tabling of JONZA report – <i>Attachment K</i>	
9.4 Transport sub-committee		
9.4.1 Tabling of Draft RAMJO Freight Transport Plan – <i>Attachment L</i>		
9.5 Health sub-committee		
9.6 Housing sub-committee		
9.7 Digital Connectivity sub-committee: <i>on hiatus until further notice</i>		

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Item	Topic	Time
	<b>9.8</b> Industry, workforce and jobs sub-committee: <i>on hiatus until further notice</i>	
<b>10</b>	<b>OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT</b> <b>10.1</b> Mr. Cameron Templeton: Office of Local Government Update	11:45
<b>11</b>	<b>REGIONAL NSW</b> <b>11.1</b> Mr. Giles Butler: Department of Regional NSW Update	12:00
<b>12</b>	<b>PROJECT UPDATES</b> <b>12.1</b> Shared Services Project – <i>Attachment M</i> <b>12.2</b> Rural Land Use Strategy – <i>Attachment N</i> <b>12.3</b> Disaster Risk Reduction Fund – <i>Attachment O</i> <b>12.4</b> Waste Services – <i>Attachment P</i> <b>12.5</b> NSW Southern Lights Project – <i>Attachment Q</i>	12:15
<b>13</b>	<b>ADVOCACY</b> <b>13.1</b> Albury/Wodonga Hospital Redevelopment – <i>Attachment R</i>	12:30
<b>14</b>	<b>GENERAL BUSINESS</b> Call for general business	12:40
<b>Meeting Close</b>		<b>1:00pm</b>

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## AGENDA ITEM 1 – WELCOME, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY AND CHAIR ELECTION

Chair to welcome attendees and acknowledgement of country.

### 1.1 **Election of Chairperson**

The Executive Officer acted as the Returning Officer, and announced that one nomination had been received, Cr Patrick Bourke, Mayor of Federation Council, nominated by Cr Ruth McRae and seconded by Cr Patrick Bourke. With only one nomination, Cr Patrick Bourke was elected unopposed as the Chair of RAMJO until 8<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

### 1.2 **Election of Deputy Chairperson**

The Returning Officer invited nominations for Deputy Chair. Cr. Kylie King, Mayor of AlburyCity was nominated by Cr Ruth McRae and Cr Peta Betts and with only one nomination was elected unopposed as Deputy Chair until 8<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

Cr Bourke took the chair for the remainder of the meeting and he thanked the Board Members for their confidence in electing him as Chairperson.

## AGENDA ITEM 2 – APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

**Apologies:** Cr. Darryl Jardine (Carrathool Shire), Cr. Doug Curran and Brett Stonestreet (Griffith City Council), represented by Cr. Anne Napoli and Shireen Donaldson, Mr. Terry Dodds (Murray River), Mr. Adrian Butler (Federation) and Mr. John Scarce (Murrumbidgee)

**Recommendation:** That apologies be **accepted** and that leave of absence be granted.

*Moved: Cr. Peta Betts (Edward River) / Seconded: Cr. Carol Oatway (Hay)*

## AGENDA ITEM 3 – DECLARATION OF ITEMS OF PECUNIARY OR OTHER INTEREST – BOARD MEMBERS / DESIGNATED PERSONS

Attendees to note any declarations.

- None were noted.

## AGENDA ITEM 4 – MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- Draft Minutes of 11 August Board Meeting – *Attachment A*
- Draft Minutes of 26 October Extraordinary Meeting – *Attachment B*

**Recommendation:** That the minutes of both the RAMJO Board Meeting held 11 August and Extraordinary Board Meeting held 26 October 2023, be **received** and the recommendations therein **adopted**.

*Moved: Cr. Tony Reneker (Leeton) / Seconded: Cr. Ruth McRae (Murrumbidgee)*

## AGENDA ITEM 5 – MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS RAMJO BOARD MEETINGS

ITEM	STATUS
Invite Water NSW Director Vince Kelly to RAMJO Water Security Sub Committee meeting to seek clarity on planned infrastructure changes.	<b>NOT COMPLETED</b>
Board to consider coordinating a regional list of events so councils are not competing with each other for attendances.	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>
<b>Item 14.4</b> (From February 2023) Decide on further advocacy or action regarding Country University Centre's within the RAMJO footprint.	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>

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<b>Item 9.2</b> Request that the EO advance the development of a <i>RAMJO Risk Appetite Statement</i> at the next Board Meeting (August) – Councils to assist RAMJO in developing a risk management framework.	<b>PROGRESSED - ONGOING WITH ARIC</b>
<b>Item 9.1</b> Circulate for the boards review, the final draft of the updated Water Position Paper	<b>IN PROGRESS</b>
<b>Item 9.6</b> Organise a presentation from the Director of Regional Connectivity Programs at the Department of Regional NSW.	<b>COMPLETED</b>

**Recommendation:** That the RAMJO Board **note** the status of matters arising from previous Board meetings.

*Moved: Cr. Kylie King (Albury) / Seconded: Cr. Peta Betts (Edward River)*

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## AGENDA ITEM 6 – CORRESPONDENCE REGISTER

CORRESPONDENCE SENT from 14 August 2023 to date

Date	To	Subject	Action
18 August 2023	The Hon. Rose Jackson MLC - Minister for Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth and for the North Coast	RAMJO Region Water and Housing Priorities	Tentatively booked in for February 2024, pending parliament sitting dates
	The Hon. Ryan Park MP - Minister for Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast	RAMJO Region Health Priorities	
6 September 2023	Steph Cooke MP - Member for Cootamundra, Shadow Minister for Water and Crown Lands	Invitation to meet with the Board of RAMJO	Attendance scheduled for February 2024 board meeting
	Helen Dalton MP – Independent Member for Murray	Invitation to meet with the Board of RAMJO	
7 September 2023	The Hon. Kristy McBain MP – Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, Member for Eden-Monaro	Invitation to meet with the Board of RAMJO	

**Recommendation:** That the RAMJO Board note the status of matters arising from previous Board meetings.

*Moved: Cr. Ruth McRae (Murrumbidgee) / Seconded: Cr. Kylie King (Albury)*

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## AGENDA ITEM 7 – PRESENTATIONS

**7.1 Mr. Peter Adams - Department of Regional NSW:** Director Regional Digital Connectivity Programs gave a presentation on that status of the Regional Digital Connectivity Program. A copy of the Presentation will be circulated with the minutes.

**Action Item:** Request a copy of the presentation and distribute.

**7.2 Mrs. Katrina Paterson - Profile ID:**

Katrina Paterson gave a presentation on the Annual State of the Region's Economic Dataset.

**Action Item:** Request a copy of and circulate to members, the Annual State of the Region's Economic Dataset Presentation and query member councils access to Profile ID datasets.

**Recommendation:** That the Board **note** the presentation by the Department of Regional NSW and Profile ID.

*Moved: Cr. Frank Crawley (Murray River) / Seconded: Cr. Neville Kschenka (Narrandera)*

## AGENDA ITEM 8 – GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

**8.1 Annual Audit FY 2023 – Statements and Closing Reports**

Attachment C contains the 2023 FY General Purpose Financial Statements, Independent Auditors Report, and Closing Report, which notes that a Management letter will be sent sometime in November 2023.

**Recommendation:** That the Board **note** the 2023 FY Statements and Closing reports with YTD update.

*Moved: Cr. Ruth McRae (Murrumbidgee) / Seconded: Cr. Peta Betts (Edward River)*

**8.2 2023/2024 Q1 Budget Review**

Attachment D contains the 2023/2024 FY Q1 budget review. Key points include:

Budgeted income for the quarter = \$243,684; Actual income for the quarter = \$228,272

Budgeted expenses for the quarter = \$119,178; Actual expenses for the quarter = \$88,500

*Please note* that work continues on improving RAMJO's internal financial processes, including setting up tracking categories to better differentiate between grant funds tied to projects and operational funds. This is evidenced by the addition of Project Funding streams at the bottom of the Q1 report, however, note that not all projects are listed and budgets for each project have not yet been uploaded for each.

**Recommendation:** That the Board **note** the Q4 with YTD update.

*Moved: Cr. Tony Reneker (Leeton) / Seconded: Cr. Carol Oatway (Hay)*

**8.3 Proposed changes to RAMJO's Banking Set-up**

Attachment E notes proposed changes by the Executive Officer to RAMJO's current banking set-up.

**Recommendation:** That the Board:

- **Note** the summary provided and **endorse** the recommendations
- **Decided** the Chair and Deputy chair to be the second signatories to RAMJO's accounts with the Executive Officer

*Moved: Cr. Peta Betts (Edward River) / Seconded: Cr. Ruth McRae (Murrumbidgee)*

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## 8.4 Update on Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

Attachment G notes the agenda and supporting documents for the next RAMJO ARIC meeting, scheduled for 15 November. The attached includes a draft risk register, with further discussion on advancing general risk management noted on the ARIC agenda.

**Recommendation:** That the Board **note** the update provided regarding RAMJO's ARIC.

*Moved: Cr. Peta Betts (Edward River) / Seconded: Cr. Ruth McRae (Murrumbidgee)*

## 8.5 Returns of interest of voting representatives and designated persons

Attachment G contains redacted returns of persons who held office during the 2022/2023 FY period, they were tabled in line with OLG requirement (MCC cl 4.25)

**Recommendation:** That the Board **note** the tabled returns and endorse the uploading of redacted returns on the RAMJO website, in line with OLG regulations.

*Moved: Cr. Kylie King (Albury) / Seconded: Cr. Neville Kschenka (Narrandera)*

## 8.6 General Managers/CEO's Forum Draft Minutes from 13 October

Attachment H notes the draft minutes from the last General Managers/CEO's forum, for the board's information.

**Recommendation:** That the Board **note** the draft Minutes of the General Managers/CEO's forum.

*Moved: Cr. Kylie King (Albury) / Seconded: Cr. Ruth McRae (Murrumbidgee)*

## 8.7 Proposed meeting schedule and locations for 2024

GM's/CEO's Forum	RAMJO Board	Location
Friday 2 February	Friday 23 February	Albury
Friday 19 April	Friday 17 May	Corowa
Friday 19 July	Friday 16 August	Griffith
Friday 11 October	Friday 8 November	Deniliquin
Extraordinary Board Meeting to sign draft closing auditors report – Thursday 24 October 2024 (online)		

**Recommendation:** That the Board **note** the above proposed meeting schedule and locations.

*Moved: Cr. Ruth McRae (Murrumbidgee) / Seconded: Cr. Carol Oatway (Hay)*



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## AGENDA ITEM 9 – STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### 9.1 Draft Annual Performance Statement 2022/2023

Attachment I noted RAMJO's draft Annual Performance Statement for the 2022/2023 period. With board endorsement, the statement is to be published on the RAMJO website and submitted to the Office of Local Government (OLG) per compliance obligations.

**Recommendation:** That the Board **note** and **endorse** the Annual Performance Statement for 2022/2023 for submission to the OLG and for upload to the RAMJO website.

*Moved: Cr. Carol Oatway (Hay) / Seconded: Cr. Neville Kschenka (Narrandera)*

### 9.2 Water sub-committee – Verbal update

- With the Deputy Chair's approval, RAMJO provided a formal submission to the Water Amendment (*Restoring Our Rivers*) Bill 2023 senate inquiry, noting RAMJO's concerns on the proposed bill. The submission was based on the existing Water position paper and discussions had at recent water sub-committee meetings
- A water sub-committee meeting was scheduled for the 31 October and was planned around the release of the *MDBP Implementation Review 2023 – Interim Report*, to ensure RAMJO's updated water paper considers relevant findings
- The water sub-committee is required to elect a chairperson, to ensure adequate governance structures are in place to advance work on this priority. Following discussions, Cr. Tony Reneker was unanimously elected Water Committee Chair

#### 9.2.1 Tabling of Draft Updated Water Position Paper - Attachment J

- The departure of Cr. Chris Bilkey as long-standing water sub-committee chair and recent Water policy developments at a federal level, has led to delays in the final adoption of the updated water position paper. Discussion had surrounding the need for final tweaks to the paper, prior to it being tabled for the boards final consideration and endorsement. Agreed that these tweaks should be discussed and managed by the Water sub-committee, under the new Water sub-committee chair.

#### 9.2.2 Notice of Motion – Opposition to buy-backs and Water Amendment (*Restoring our Rivers*) Bill

**Recommendation:**

9.2 That the Board **note** the verbal update on the water sub-committee's progress to date

9.2.1 That the board **endorse** the nomination of Cr. Tony Reneker as Chairperson of the Water Sub-committee

9.2.2 That the board discuss the notice of motion on opposition to buy-backs and the Water Amendment (*Restoring our Rivers*) Bill

*Moved: Cr. Julia Cornwell McKean (Berrigan) / Seconded: Cr. Carol Oatway (Hay)*

9.2.3 **National Farmer's Federation Presentation** – Tony Mahar, CEO of the National Farmer's Federation gave a brief presentation and spoke to a Planned Water Bill Demonstration scheduled for November 2023

### 9.3 Energy Security – Verbal Update

- The Energy sub-committee last met on the 27 September
- The Joint Organisation Net Zero Acceleration (JONZA) Project continues to be the vehicle that drives implementation of RAMJO's Regional Energy Strategy

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- A current focus of the Energy sub-committee is exploring the options for a RAMJO collective Power Purchase Agreement (**PPA**)

## 9.3.1 Tabling of JONZA Report

- *Attachment K* provides a written update on JONZA outputs and focus areas

## 9.4 Transport Connectivity – Verbal Update – David Webb

- The Transport sub-committee last met on 7 November
- A meeting with the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads was scheduled for November, however, has been postponed to March 2024

### 9.4.1 Tabling of Draft RAMJO Freight Transport Plan - David Webb

- *Attachment L* notes the draft Freight Transport Plan
- Late entry requests were made and it was agreed that they would attempt to facilitated, where possible

**Recommendation:** That the Board **endorse** and **adopt** the tabled RAMJO Freight Transport Plan, with facilitated additions.

*Moved: Cr. Carol Oataway (Hay) / Seconded: Cr. Frank Crawley (Murray River)*

## 9.5 Health Priority – Verbal Update – Yvonne Lingua for John Scarce

- RAMJO has been invited to join the *Murrumbidgee Health and Knowledge Precinct Alliance*. The purpose of the precinct is to:
  - ✓ stimulate innovation and a thriving research community, with a focus on regional issues that adopt regional solutions
  - ✓ build a resilient workforce and create employment opportunities
  - ✓ Unify services that are accessible and designed for rural people
- It is hoped that Alliance membership provide opportunities to build relationships with our regions Health services and advocacy groups, helping advance our Health paper objectives, once completed.

## 9.6 Housing Sub Committee – Verbal update

- The Housing sub-committee last met on 4 October, 2023
- RAMJO has applied to the *Department of Planning and Environments - Regional Housing Strategic Planning Fund*, seeking funds for the development of a RAMJO Regional Housing Strategy

## 9.7 Digital Connectivity - Phil Stone

- This sub-committee is currently on hiatus.

## 9.8 Industry, workforce and jobs

- This sub-committee is currently on hiatus.

**Recommendation:** That the RAMJO Board **note** the strategic priorities updates.

*Moved: Cr. Tony Reneker (Leeton) / Seconded: Cr. Julia Cornwell McKean (Berrigan)*

## AGENDA ITEM 10 – OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UPDATE

Mr Cameron Templeton gave an update of the work of the Office of Local Government. Wentworth and Balranald Councils will join RAMJO in the new year and it was suggested that they should be invited to join as Associate Members in the interim. Discussions shifted to also include Wagga as invitees for Associate Membership.

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**Action Item:** Invite Wentworth, Balranald and Wagga Councils to join RAMJO as Associate Members in the interim, as Full Membership applications are endorsed by the OLG.

**Recommendation:** That the Board **note** the briefing from the Office of Local Government and **endorse** Associate Membership pursual.

*Moved: Cr. Julia Cornwell McKean (Berrigan) / Seconded: Cr. Ruth McRae (Murrumbidgee)*

## AGENDA ITEM 11 – REGIONAL NSW UPDATE

Mr Giles Butler Director gave an update on Riverina Murray, Department of Regional Development.

**Recommendation:** That the Board **note** the briefing by Mr Giles Butler.

*Moved: Cr. Tony Reneker (Leeton) / Seconded: Cr. Neville Kschenka (Narrandera)*

## AGENDA ITEM 12 – PROJECT UPDATES

### 12.1 RAMJO Shared Services Project

*Attachment M* notes a shared services working group endorsed scoping paper, outlining a proposal to utilise Office of Local Capacity Building funds to employ a part-time project officer to advance RAMJO shared services and procurement needs.

**Recommendation:** That the Board **endorse** the advancement of the tabled shared services scoping paper.

*Moved: Cr. Carol Oatway (Hay) / Seconded: Cr. Kylie King (Albury)*

### 12.2 Rural Land Use Strategy

*Attachment N* seeks to assess member councils' appetite in pursuing a rural land use strategy.

### 12.3 Disaster Risk Reduction Fund (DRRF) Project

*Attachment O* documents the current position of the DRRF project and contains the following recommendations:

**Recommendation:** That the Board **resolve:**

1. That the Executive Officer continue monitoring progress on the non-competitive JO proposal to assess whether the proposal changes to better align with RAMJO priorities and includes a shorter (i.e. one-year) timeframe and specific deliverables that will directly benefit councils.
2. That the Executive Officer and DRRF Project Manager utilise the DRRF Project Control Group as a sounding board to determine support for a collaborative JO EOI (i.e. DRRF 2.0) and to continue exploring other options, including a stand-alone regional RAMJO EOI or a possible partnership with REROC, should alignment with RAMJO priorities be identified.

*Moved: Cr. Kylie King (Albury) / Seconded: Cr. Carol Oatway (Hay)*

### 12.4 Waste Services Projects

*Attachment P* notes a written report on the progress of the waste service delivered by the Resource Recovery Waste team.

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## 12.5 NSW Southern Lights

Attachment Q notes the NSW Southern Lights Group response to the *Revised Essential Energy Public Lighting Pricing Proposal*.

**Recommendation:** That the RAMJO Board **receive** and **note** the project updates.

*Moved: Cr. Carol Oatway (Hay) / Seconded: Cr. Neville Kschenka (Narrandera)*

## AGENDA ITEM 13 – ADVOCACY

### 13.1 Albury/Wodonga Hospital Redevelopment

Attachment R notes public information on developments following the release of the Albury/Wodonga Hospital Redevelopment Master Plan, released in Mid-October 2023.

Cr. Kylie King and Frank Zaknich gave an update on the status on the redevelopment.

### 13.2 Country University Centres – Increase to funding for CUCs

For general discussion. Previous action item was for the RAMJO board to consider if CUCs would become more of a RAMJO focus. Input required from interested councils to advance this work.

**Recommendation:** That the RAMJO Board **receive** and **note** the advocacy update.

*Moved: Cr. Carol Oatway (Hay) / Seconded: Cr. Neville Kschenka (Narrandera)*

## AGENDA ITEM 14 – GENERAL BUSINESS

### 14.1 Cyber Fraud Incident

Cr. Kylie King sought an update on a cyber fraud incident involving a phishing email which resulted in the loss of \$36,400 to the Contaminated Lands Project as funded by the EPA. The Executive Officer informed the board that a lack of internal processes pertaining to creditor master file verification and an inadequate approach to the management of IT services with RAMJO's IT service provider, led to the incident occurring. The board were also advised that the ARIC, Annual Audit team, the EPA and Cyber NSW had all been advised of the incident, and that the incident had been noted in RAMJO's Risk Register.

### 14.2 Thank-you gifts for Matt Hannan & Chris Bilkey

Outgoing board members Cr. Matt Hannan and Cr. Chris Bilkey, in their capacity as RAMJO chair and Water sub-committee Chair respectively, were thanked by the board for their long-standing service to RAMJO and leadership.

**Action Item:** Purchase thank-you gifts from the RAMJO board for Cr. Matt Hannan and Cr. Chris Bilkey.

## MEETING CLOSE