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NORTHERN RIVERS

Annual Report on Outcomes – 2022-23

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Regional Development Australia - Northern Rivers Board acknowledges its members and Staff for their contribution and assistance in preparing this Annual Report on Outcomes.

I, Dr Susan Vinncombe, Acting Chair of RDA-Northern Rivers, certify this is the Annual Report on Outcomes authorised for RDA-Northern Rivers for the period 2022 – 2023.



Susan Vinncombe
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Regional Development Australia- Northern Rivers

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We respectfully acknowledge the Aboriginal peoples of the Northern Rivers – including the peoples of the Bundjalung, Yaegl and Gumbayngirr nations – as the traditional custodians and guardians of these lands and waters now known as the Northern Rivers and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

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INTRODUCTION

As part of the national RDA network, RDANR is grateful for the opportunity it has to work across government, industry and community to support the development and liveability of our region.

The past four years have been a time of great challenge for our region as we have, and continue, to navigate through the impact of drought, fire, COVID-19, and the catastrophic flood events of 2022. While full recovery will take many years, the backdrop of the macro pressures of employment and workforce access, housing availability and affordability, rising costs of living, and increasing costs of doing business, all contribute to exacerbating the challenges we are facing in the Northern Rivers.

The devastation endured has seen an increase in the priorities requiring an ongoing, long-term, and sustainable approach to meet the significant impact that has taken place. This is notable when reviewing the alignment between RDANR's established priorities for both the 2022-23 and 2023-24 reporting periods. Both periods are heavily represented with a focus on consistent priorities in the areas of housing, accommodation and land development, employment and workforce development, industry development and enterprise growth, and ongoing needs for infrastructure development.

With the Commonwealth Government's introduction of the Regional Investment Framework (RIF) we have endeavoured to align this Annual Report on Outcomes with the RIF's priority focus areas of investing in people, places, services, and in industries and local economies.

The Northern Rivers is fortunate to have a highly committed and invested stakeholder network that runs deep across all three levels of government, industry, local and regional businesses. This brings opportunities for meaningful collaboration and short and long-term development initiatives to benefit the region. This Annual Report on Outcomes 2022-23 aspires to highlight the work and developments being undertaken with a mix of input, support and leadership from RDANR.

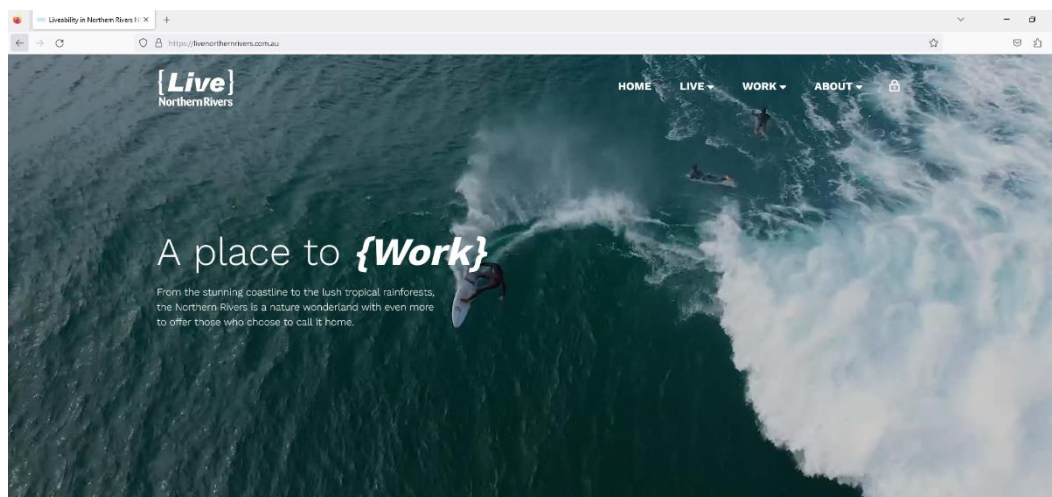
KEY DEVELOPMENTS AND OUTCOMES 2022-23

People

- RDANR undertook a comprehensive project to transition from the My Future Workforce (MFW) employment platform to the far more robust and purpose-built uWorkin platform (Jobs Northern Rivers). As MFW began to show its limitations and was losing the confidence of stakeholders we engaged in the process of shifting platforms led by our work with the Northern Rivers Workforce Development Steering Committee. The Jobs Northern Rivers Platform is now capturing in excess of 800 job openings across all industries on a daily basis. Additionally, the platform enables us to provide data to Training Services NSW to assist with identifying workforce development opportunities aligned with the skills and qualifications in demand by employers.
- We provided ongoing contribution and leadership across numerous employment and workforce initiatives, including:
 - o Continued to Chair the Northern Rivers Workforce Development Steering Committee.
 - o Committee member of the North Coast Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce.
 - o School to Further Education, Training and Work Industry reference group.
 - o Member of the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Workforce Strategy Steering Committee.
- To support broad availability and community access across the entire region we developed an innovative online version of the Regional Economic Recovery Plan (RERP), <https://www.rdanorthernrivers.org.au/recovery2025/>.

Places

- During the 2022-23 reporting period RDANR collaborated with regional stakeholders to undertake delivering a liveability platform, Live Northern Rivers, for our region. Live Northern Rivers will support our work in employment and workforce development by showcasing the Northern Rivers as a place to live and work. Launching early in the 2023-24 FY Live Northern Rivers seeks to retain existing residents and attract new residents. This project has been undertaken with the support of the Northern Rivers Workforce Development Steering Committee and funding support from the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation (NRRC), Training Services NSW, and Healthy North Coast.



Live in the Northern Rivers

- Collaborated with the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation (NRJO) in the development of an Employment and Industrial Land Audit.
- Continued our ongoing work to promote and support access to commonwealth funding and grant programs. This is undertaken by utilizing our e-Newsletter, e-Alerts, and social channels, along with our face-to-face stakeholder meetings.
- Produced a Regional Economic Recovery Plan to capture the broad impact of the 2022 flood events. The plan proposes guidance for economic development professionals in progressing to full recovery and tables the collective priorities for the region.
- RDANR are a member of the Tweed Growth Management Housing Strategy Project Reference Group.

Services

- Regularly attended the Northern Rivers Joint Organisation (NRJO) and General Managers Advisory Committee (GMAC) meetings.
- Participated in numerous roundtables, including: RDA Housing and Affordability Roundtable; Telstra Roundtable; Regional Roundtable with NSW Minister for Planning.
- Supported the promotion of government grants and funding programs.
- RDANR was a member of the Insurance Sub-Committee seeking to raise the challenges being faced by businesses and work through support solutions over the short, medium and longer term.

Industries and local economies

- Continued our support of regional projects including the Northern Rivers Rail Trail. The Rail Trail launched in March 2023 and has achieved great success with more than 70,500 people using the trail during its first four months of use.
- Continued to provide flood recovery support to businesses and industry.
 - o During the first half of the 2022-23 reporting period, we continued to chair the Australian Government Regional Business Network (Northern Rivers) to provide regional intelligence to the NSW Government's Business, Industry and Tourism Advisory Group (BITAG).
 - o Coordinated a roadshow to take flood support to multiple locations across the Northern Rivers region.
 - o Advocated for the flood recovery needs of business and industry, liaised with multiple government organisations regarding funding support and assistance.
- Continue our ongoing support as a committee member of the Northern Rivers NSW Regional Brand.
- Actively involved with initiatives to support industry development and growth, these include agriculture, circular economy, and manufacturing.
- Participated in regional research projects such as, the Great North Coast Trail Feasibility In-Region Workshops, RAI (Regional Australia Institute) Labour Market Research Project.
- Worked with Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and NBN Co. (National Broadband Network) to develop an Ag Tech Field Day to drive the integration of Agtech in the industry. The planning for the field day took place during 2022-23, however the event date was July 2023.

OUTCOMES 2022-23

Summary of Key Priorities

Identified priorities for the 2022-23 year:

1. Development of a Northern Rivers Regional Recovery Plan
2. Increase housing and accommodation stock and facilitate innovative solutions
3. Employment and industrial land audit
4. Business and industry recovery
5. Promote local supply chain and procurement programs
6. Infrastructure reconstruction
7. Employment and workforce development
8. Flood mitigation

Identified priorities for the forward 2023-34 period:

1. Employment and workforce development
2. Land development, housing and accommodation
3. Enterprise growth and industry development
4. Digital connectivity
5. Infrastructure development and liveability

Case Study: Improved Jobs Platform for Northern Rivers

An existing platform not meeting the needs for growth and engagement

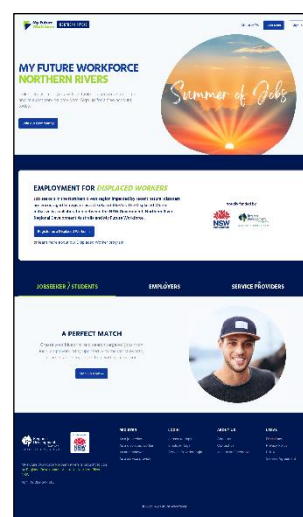
The chosen jobs platform My Future Workforce was initially launched in August 2020. Engagement was initially positive with the jobseeker and employer community embracing the platform. However, some issues with the platform were identified as potential constraints to continued growth.

Specifically, the platform's main issues were:

- The technology base had restricted opportunities for accelerated growth in engagement.
- The platform owners did not have an independent development pathway for growth.
- The user experience threatened the positive response for a region-specific platform.

A review of the platforms value in line with the strategic planning of RDA Northern Rivers led to the ultimate decision to seek an alternative platform that provided:

- A broader appeal to the jobseeker and employer communities.
- Future proofing through an independent, proven technology provider.
- Improved user experience to promote positive (and repeat) engagement with the jobseeker and employer communities.

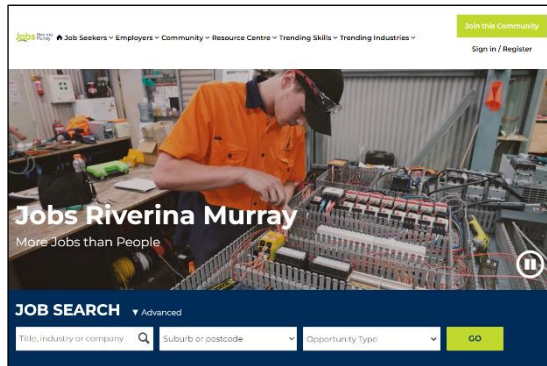


A new technology partner is identified

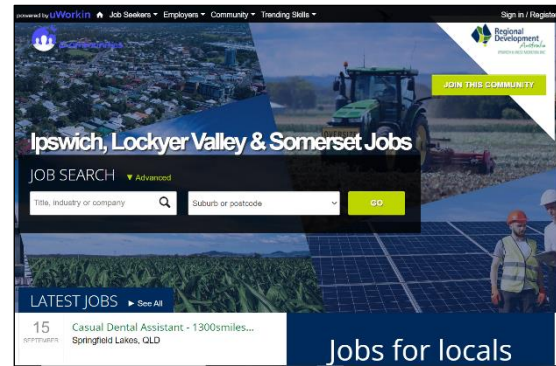
Following discussions with other RDA Committees (Ipswich West Morton, Riverina) and economic development bodies (Capricorn Enterprise), the RDA Northern Rivers team reviewed the functionality

and product offering of uWorkin. The review determined that the uWorkin platform met the needs identified above including:

- A broader appeal with an unlocked platform – jobs were visible without having to log in.
- Demonstrated successful implementation across various regional and industry groups.
- An automated jobs feed generating hundreds of jobs that keep job seekers engaged.
- A site offering expanded content (resources, news) for job seekers and employers.
- Increased functionality for employers to reverse market to job seekers.



<https://jobsriverinamurray.com.au>



<https://iwmjobs.com.au>

Funding from Regional Stakeholders

In order to build support and source funding for the rollout, the RDA Northern Rivers presented options to the Northern Rivers Workforce Development Steering Committee which is chaired by RDA Northern Rivers. This process of stakeholder engagement led to financial support from:

- Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation
- Healthy North Coast – Primary Health Network
- Training Services New South Wales



Regional Workforce Steering Committee Presentations



Northern Rivers
Reconstruction
Corporation



phn
NORTH COAST
AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE



Training Services NSW

Discussion within the Workforce Steering Committee identified that the jobs platform, on its own, would not be sufficient without addressing the issue of low unemployment and the need to attract a wider workforce to the region to meet the resourcing demands of local businesses. RDA Northern Rivers was able to address this concern with a companion platform to promote the liveability of the region. This platform would focus on information to:

- Support relocators researching infrastructure and lifestyle choices.
- Reignite interest for potential returning residents.
- Encourage intra-region relocation.

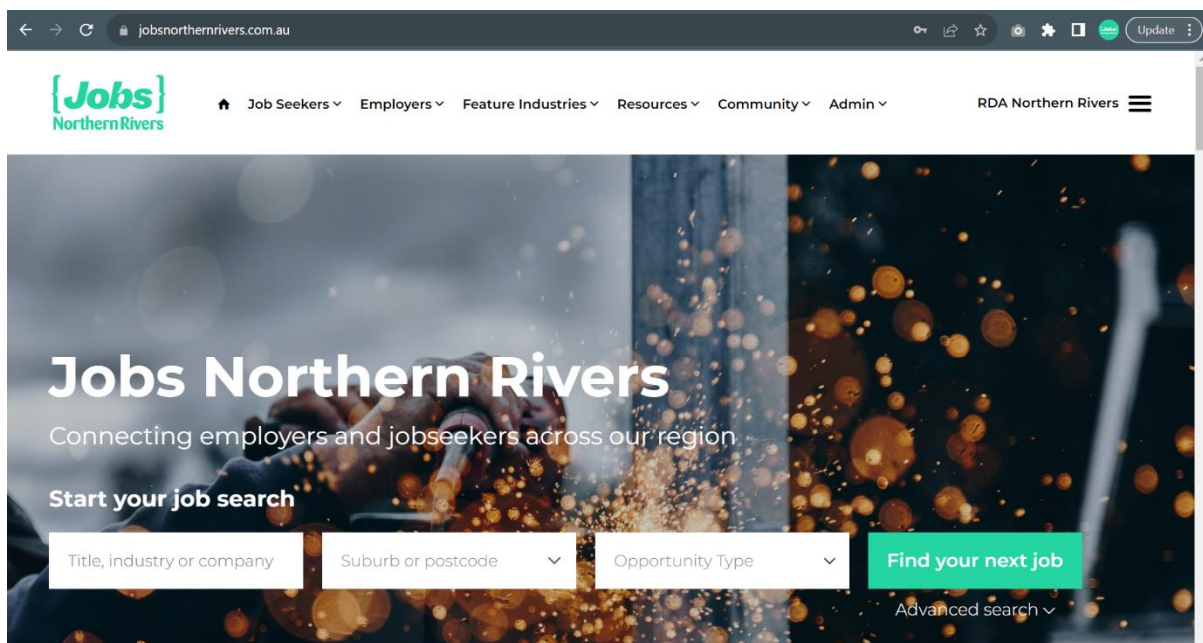
While the development and rollout of the liveability site, Live Northern Rivers, commenced within the reporting period, it was not made live and accessible until late July 2023.

Development and launch of Jobs Northern Rivers

With the funding in place, the Jobs Northern Rivers project commenced on 18 April 2024 with key efforts in:

- Platform customisation for Northern Rivers Region.
- Content creation for resources.
- Marketing strategy and activity calendar.
- Branding design direction and collateral creation.
- Media and stakeholder engagement.

Jobs Northern Rivers was made live on 23 May 2023.



Platform Analytics

Some key analytics since the launch of the platform:

Analytics	May 2023	June 2023	July 2023	August 2023
Jobs – Automated Feed	257	190	275	396
Job Views Analytics	920	2511	958	1262
Google Analytics - Views	N/A	4040	4158	2816

Case Study: RDA Northern Rivers Response in Times of Major Natural Disasters

Background

Regional Development Australia offices occupy a unique space in regional Australia operating in both strategic and operational spheres. They create strategic economic plans but are also responsible for the coordination of the implementation of those strategies. RDA Northern Rivers publicly releases a Board- and department-approved economic development strategy for the region on an annual basis. These plans are intended to drive the development of the regional economy after receiving broad consensus from key stakeholders but as seen below are not fit for purpose during times of major natural disasters. The history making rain and flood event of 2022 which devastated much of the Northern Rivers' region was just such an occurrence that required a unique response.

The Northern Rivers' communities are no stranger to large flood events. Communities are prepared for these events and are responsive when they occur. The business communities are typically well-drilled, have plans in place prior to, and when the floods arrive, are quick to clean up post-flood and often reopen within a matter of days to a week. The devastation wreaked by the February 2022 flood was beyond even the best prepared and planned business operator. The size of the flood meant that in each council area at least one town or locality suffered medium and long-term damage to critical telecommunications

infrastructure, buildings, council assets, roads and transport infrastructure and more.

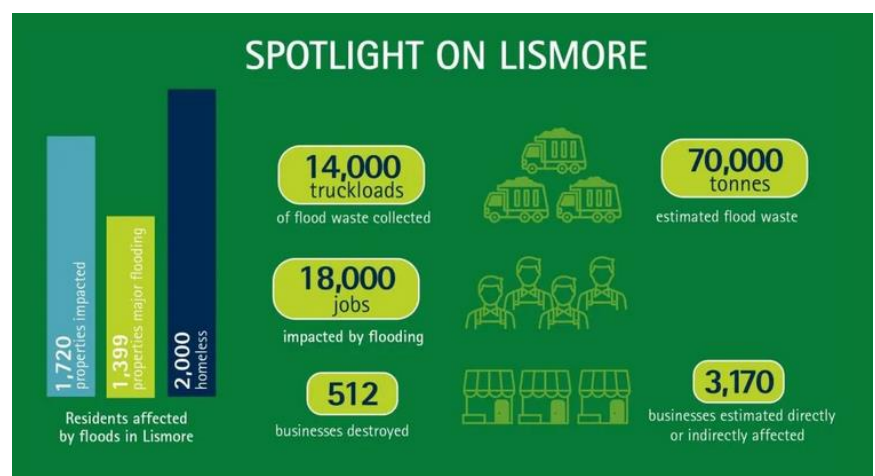
The timing of the 2022 rain event occurred as the region was recovering from an extended period of natural disasters, including earlier rain events, drought, bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic. As the region emerged from the pandemic, it was struggling with a tight labour

market and a problematic affordable and social housing situation. Immediately after the rain event available labour who could find accommodation and jobs outside of the region quickly relocated. The housing issues were exacerbated by the number of dwellings which became uninhabitable.

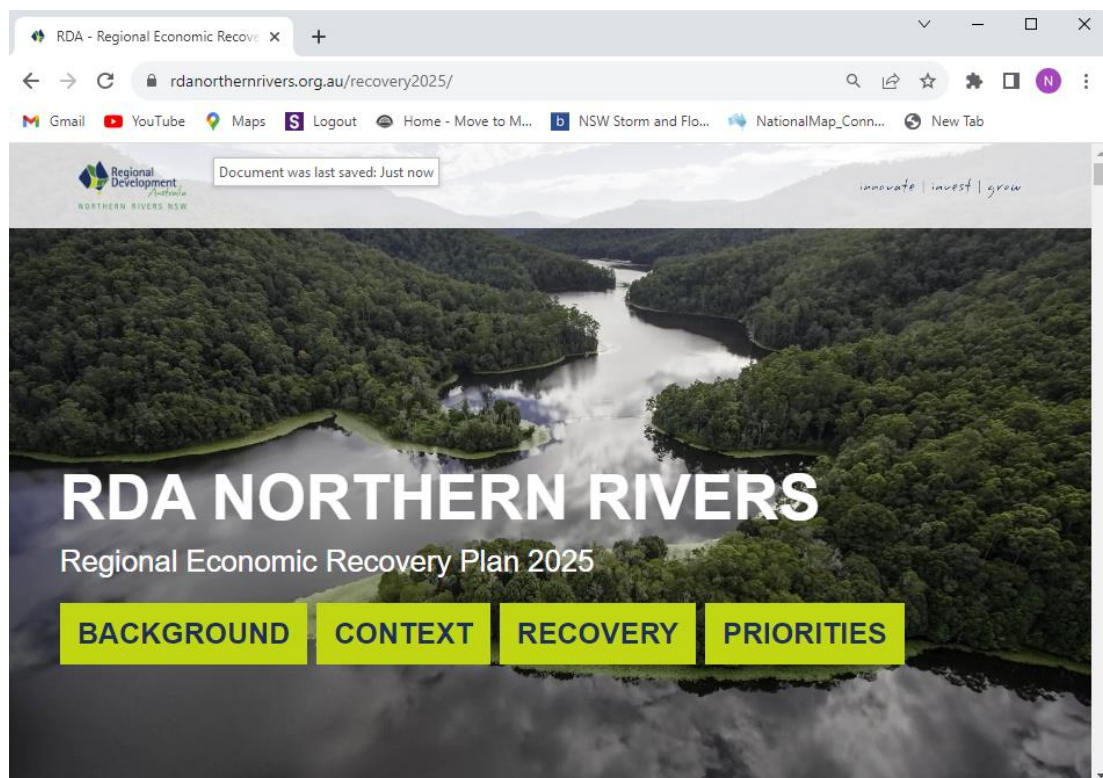
The Need

This single event demonstrably required a response from RDA Northern Rivers as it was clear that the size and scope of the event and the length of time communities would need to recover and rebuild the damage to buildings, infrastructure, social services and networks was beyond the scope of the existing planning. Furthermore, as this major event played out, response and recovery were confounded by a lack of coordination by lead NSW government agencies, and it was the community groups which led the way in providing whatever assistance and resources were available at a micro level. Anticipating delays to NSW Government planning efforts while the responsible organisation, the Northern Rivers Recovery Corporation, was being established the Northern Rivers RDA was well situated to fill the planning vacuum.

The RDA Program understood that the cost of the region-wide recovery program would require billions of dollars and require an estimated time of up to five years. RDA Northern Rivers Board welcomed the release of funds to develop a plan which identified the key issues and developed



actions which addressed the immediate to long-term issues (see priorities below). The RDA Board approved a set of priorities which form the foundation for the Regional Economic Recovery Plan, identifying the key areas in which the local RDA office could make an impact. Typically, a regional plan requires very broad consultation across three levels of government, community groups, industry and industry groups, universities and more. Given the time-urgency of the need for the Regional Economic Recovery Plan and many of the usual personnel being stretched professionally as well as suffering their own personal losses, a smaller than usual reference group was brought together and consulted to ensure a rigorous plan was delivered. RDA recognises the key personnel who offered assistance and advice who were largely drawn from the local government economic and community development officers. After considering the options for broad distribution and access, the RDA Board approved the funds to be spent on developing an innovative online version, <https://www.rdanorthernrivers.org.au/recovery2025/>.



Agreed Regional Economic Recovery Plan priorities:

High Priority

- Housing and accommodation
- Employment lands audit
- Business and industry recovery
- Local buy supply chain development

Medium Priority

- Infrastructure recovery
- Employment and workforce development
- Flood mitigation

Other Priority

- CBD/main street recovery

PART 2 OUTCOMES TABLE

OUTCOME 1	Support the Northern Rivers region on the road to economic recovery by facilitating regional economic development outcomes, investment, jobs and local procurement
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A Regional Recovery Plan will be developed by Q3 2022 b. All seven local government areas economic recovery progress will be mapped c. Support the \$1.5bn reconstruction program d. Unemployment levels have stabilised
PART 1 – FOR THE ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN	
What will we do?	
Priority 1 - Development of a Northern Rivers Regional Recovery Plan	
<p>RDANR will lead this activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipate receiving approval by RDANR Committee in August 2022. • Methodology will include a meta-analysis of existing recovery plans and economic plans including NRRRA, Resilient NSW, REDs (NSW Govt), Local Govt Strategic Plans, North Coast Plan 2036 (NSW Govt), Infrastructure plans and more. • Consultation will take place on an ongoing basis with government agencies, councils, business, industry and community 	
Priority 2 - Increase Housing and Accommodation Stock and Facilitate Innovative Solutions	
<p>RDANR will lead and support relevant agencies and NFPs to establish affordable housing critical to attracting and retaining workers.</p> <p>Activities Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on innovative solutions, using local suppliers. • Support first nations people and organisations to promote pathways to construction jobs. • Ensure primes and lead government agencies are connected to local suppliers and workforce. 	

Priority 3 - Employment and Industrial Land Audit

RDANR and NRJO will jointly a regional study into the opportunities and constraints for increasing employment lands

- Completed by end 2022

Activities include:

- Joint lead in regional steering committee
- Project manage to completion
- Promote recommendations and develop a follow up action plan

Priority 4 - Business and Industry Recovery

RDA NR will both lead and support key stakeholders.

- Ongoing
 - Provision of advice for grants and assistance, reactive and proactive workload.
 - Advocating for expedited delivery of funding to all applicants
 - Participate actively on recovery committees, advocate for policy and program improvements, provide intelligence from the business community and liaise between committee and federal government program deliverers and managers.

Priority 5 - Promote Local Supply Chain and Procurement Programs

RDA NR will both lead and support key stakeholders.

- Ongoing
 - Identify major project opportunities.
 - Work with the seven LG procurement teams to establish local procurement policies and practices.
 - Assist LPP such as the pilot “Local Connect” and ICN to hold local workshops and events.

Hold or promote “winning tenders” type workshops.

Priority 6 - Infrastructure reconstruction

To 2025

- Assist councils to access large value infrastructure grants to “build back better”.
- Assist with resilience planning for key infrastructure


<p>Priority 7 - Employment and workforce development</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the more complex work of the entire program. Over 9000 displaced workers and hundreds of businesses will require a regional plan, resourcing, innovative thinking and solutions • Employers and workers will need assistance with training, reskilling, workforce development, displaced worker programs • Promotion of, and linking employers to Local Job Program and other assistance programs
<p>Priority 8 - Flood Mitigation</p> <p>2022-2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain an advocacy role for flood mitigation, water security and water quality. • Liaise between all levels of government, Rous Water and communities to deliver effective and timely solutions to flood mitigation issues.
<p>Priority 9 - CBD and main st. redevelopment</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CBD and Main St are the heart of communities, and it is imperative that these spaces are quickly rebuilt and resettled. • Advising Council redevelopment committees on 'open for business' campaigns

PART 2 – FOR THE ANNUAL REPORT ON OUTCOMES

What did we do?

Activity 1 - Development of a Northern Rivers Regional Recovery Plan

<p>Status: Report Completed / Engagement Ongoing</p> <p>Developed a Regional Economic Recovery Plan for the Northern Rivers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Captured and consolidated the flood disaster data within a single document. ○ Proposed a plan to guide economic development practitioners to fully recover from recent disasters, largely the 2022 flood event. ○ Facilitated regional workshop with key stakeholders to gather a regional perspective and common recovery priorities. Stakeholders included economic development 	Provide details of outcomes		\$ / Number
	Investments (\$)		
	Jobs (number)		
	Local procurement (\$)		
	Other regional development outcomes (\$ / number)		
	Other facilitation activities:		Implemented an online version to provide broader access across the region, https://www.rdanorthernrivers.org.au/recovery2025

<p>representatives from our regions seven LGA's, National Emergency Management Agency, Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation, AusIndustry, and Training Services NSW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implemented an online user-friendly web version to provide broad reach and accessibility across our region. ○ The web version enables ongoing access to anchor measuring progress made over the mid to long-term rebuild. ○ The Plan informs our regional residents on government agencies roles during the times of disaster. ○ Provides informative intelligence capturing the impact of the floods, financial burden, and the need for ongoing public and private investment. ○ Engagement with stakeholders is ongoing. 		<p>Analytics for the online Recovery Plan from April to September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 364 users ○ 526 page views <p>Provided printed publications to key stakeholders, including Council Mayors, economic development managers, local Members of Parliament, other government agencies and stakeholder organisations.</p>  <p>RDA Regional-Recovery-PI</p>
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Priority 2 - Increase Housing and Accommodation Stock and Facilitate Innovative Solutions

<p>Status: Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ RDANR have taken an observation and supporting role to complement the work of other stakeholders on this regional priority. ○ Participant on the Tweed Growth Management and Housing Strategy Project Reference Group. To date the Strategy has progressed to completing the Draft Interim Report, which is a bridging document, responding to housing and employment land supply, demand and gap analysis, opportunities, and constraints investigations. ○ RDANR have worked integrally with the NRRC on their Workforce Development Strategy to resource the construction for projects related to flood recovery. This includes the proposed Future Build Northern Rivers (FBNR) initiative aimed to support industry to navigate challenges 	Provide details of outcomes		\$ / Number
	Investments (\$)		
	Jobs (number)		
	Local procurement (\$)		
	Other regional development outcomes (\$ / number)		
	Other facilitation activities		

<p>that can impact on accommodation and timely construction. The FBNR initiative is still in development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Participated in information gathering to inform community research directed at housing and homelessness in a flood recovery. 														
<p>Activity 3 - Employment and Industrial Land Audit</p>														
<p>Status: Audit Document nearing completion / engagement ongoing</p> <p>The Employment and Industrial Lands Audit seeks to better understand the region's land and industry types to inform positive planning provisions to ensure the economic well-being of the Northern Rivers and its residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o RDANR chaired the initial project and partnered with Northern Rivers Joint Organisation (NRJO) to develop an Employment and Industrial Lands Audit. o RDANR have contributed \$25,000 to the development of this document. o The Land Audit encompasses all seven LGA's with the Northern Rivers (Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Kyogle, Lismore, Richmond Valley and Tweed Shires) to provide a holistic view of the region. o Additional scope has been added to better inform the audit outcome. This addresses the possible need for the identification of future precincts, which is subject to the results from the constraints mapping (please refer to adjacent 'Other facilitation activities'). 	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="956 451 1641 486">Provide details of outcomes</th> <th data-bbox="1641 451 2076 486">\$ / Number</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="956 486 1641 521">Investments (\$)</td> <td data-bbox="1641 486 2076 521"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="956 521 1641 557">Jobs (number)</td> <td data-bbox="1641 521 2076 557"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="956 557 1641 592">Local procurement (\$)</td> <td data-bbox="1641 557 2076 592"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="956 592 1641 627">Other regional development outcomes (\$ / number)</td> <td data-bbox="1641 592 2076 627"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="956 627 1641 1161"> <p>Other facilitation activities</p> <p>Further funding was sourced to enable Scope Variation works to be undertaken. By undertaking a 'Constraints Analysis' it gives the opportunity to determine the amount of land that is development ready, and the possible amounts that could contribute to the medium term and longer-term pipelines subject to constraints and servicing being addressed.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1641 627 2076 1161"> <p>\$20,000 of additional funding provided by the NRRC (Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation).</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Provide details of outcomes	\$ / Number	Investments (\$)		Jobs (number)		Local procurement (\$)		Other regional development outcomes (\$ / number)		<p>Other facilitation activities</p> <p>Further funding was sourced to enable Scope Variation works to be undertaken. By undertaking a 'Constraints Analysis' it gives the opportunity to determine the amount of land that is development ready, and the possible amounts that could contribute to the medium term and longer-term pipelines subject to constraints and servicing being addressed.</p>	<p>\$20,000 of additional funding provided by the NRRC (Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation).</p>
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<p>Activity 4 - Business and Industry Recovery</p>														
<p>Status: Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o RDANR advocated for swift delivery of funding and provided intelligence to relevant agencies regarding funding challenges facing businesses and industry. 	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="956 1197 1641 1232">Provide details of outcomes</th> <th data-bbox="1641 1197 2076 1232">\$ / Number</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="956 1232 1641 1267">Investments (\$)</td> <td data-bbox="1641 1232 2076 1267"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="956 1267 1641 1302">Jobs (number)</td> <td data-bbox="1641 1267 2076 1302"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="956 1302 1641 1337">Local procurement (\$)</td> <td data-bbox="1641 1302 2076 1337"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="956 1337 1641 1361">Other regional development outcomes (\$ / number)</td> <td data-bbox="1641 1337 2076 1361"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Provide details of outcomes	\$ / Number	Investments (\$)		Jobs (number)		Local procurement (\$)		Other regional development outcomes (\$ / number)			
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Other regional development outcomes (\$ / number)														

<p>Proactive communications have been provided to Service NSW, NEMA (National Emergency Management Agency), NRRC, local government, local state and federal members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Primary producer flood recovery grants have been advocated for through NEMA. ○ Convened and Co-Chaired with AusIndustry the Australian Government Business Recovery committee to coordinate in region government support services, and to collate and feedback local intelligence. Committee included representatives from: Rural Financial Counselling Services; Services Australia; Regional Investment Corporation; Service NSW for Business; Entrepreneurs Programme; Tradestart; Australian Small Business Advisory Services; National Recovery and Resilience Agency. ○ Leveraged the Australian Government Business Recovery Committee to deliver a Resilience Roadshow to LGA's across our region. This gave business and industry visibility and access to knowledge of the government flood support available to them. The roadshow took government services to flood impacted communities including Evans Head, Casino, Kyogle, Lismore, Murwillumbah. ○ Participant on the Insurance Sub-Committee which is looking at innovative insurance vehicles for the region, e.g. community discretionary insurance fund. ○ Provided early-stage support and information for new and existing industry development, i.e., fermented agri foods opportunity, Geographic Identification (GI) within the horticulture industry. This work is in early development and is ongoing. ○ Contributor to the NRRC's regional growth strategic framework initiative. This initiative is to build business confidence and increased investment in the region, including investment in new industries and adaptation out of the flood rebuild. This work is in development and ongoing. 	<p>Other facilitation activities</p>	<p>Secured \$187,000 funding for The Northern Rivers Brand under the Regional NSW - Business Case and Strategy Development Fund.</p>
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Activity 5 - Promote Local Supply Chain and Procurement Programs		
Status: Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ RDANR are working with NRRC on projects that drives and complements local procurement activity, particularly to leverage the flood reconstruction works. These projects include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Future Build Northern Rivers - partnership between government and industry to accelerate development of the construction industry and increase work opportunities for locals and new entrants to the region. ○ Regional growth strategic framework initiative – This initiative is to build business confidence and increased investment in the region, including investment in new industries and adaptation out of the flood rebuild. This work is in development and ongoing. ○ Regional Tender Portal – in discussion with NRRC to deliver an online Tender Portal that captures regional construction tenders in one single online location. The Tender Portal project has been approved and will simplify tender access and visibility for local suppliers and firms. 	Provide details of outcomes	\$ / Number
	Investments (\$)	~\$8 bn in public works under the flood rebuild.
	Jobs (number)	
	Local procurement (\$)	
	Other regional development outcomes (\$ / number)	
Other facilitation activities		
Activity 6 - Infrastructure reconstruction		
Status: Ongoing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continued to provide timely notification of grants and funding opportunities to business, industry and local councils. ○ Worked across land and housing projects and initiatives to support future planning that supports accommodation infrastructure placement and improved liveability. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employment and Industrial Land Audit ○ the Tweed Growth Management and Housing Strategy Project Reference Group 	Provide details of outcomes	\$ / Number
	Investments (\$)	
	Jobs (number)	
	Local procurement (\$)	
	Other regional development outcomes (\$ / number)	
Other facilitation activities	Promoted 204 Governments grants via our e-News and e-Alerts. Promoted 181 Government funding programs on our websites grant page.	

Activity 7 - Employment and workforce development

Status: Ongoing

- Chair the Northern Rivers Workforce Development Steering Committee (NRWDSC). The committee has representatives from Training Services NSW, Workforce Australia, Healthy North Coast, NRRC, NSW Rural Doctors Network, TAFE NSW.
- Transitioned the NRWDSC from a focus on displaced workers to targeting needs of the construction and other more business as usual activities.
- As an initiative of the NRWDSC RDANR has secured funding to establish a liveability platform for the region, Live Northern Rivers. This platform will work to attract workers to our region as well as retain existing workers within the Northern Rivers.
- Transitioned from My Future Workforce platform to Jobs Northern Rivers to better support the growing workforce requirements of the region.
- Via our Jobs Northern Rivers platform we are providing Training Services NSW with data to assist with targeting what industries and businesses need in regards to workforce skills development.
- Member of the Local Jobs Taskforce (DEWR) committee.
- Developed an Agriculture Industry Blueprint in collaboration with PIEFA (Primary Industry’s Education Foundation Australia) to encourage careers in agriculture. The blueprint is used by teachers and educators to encourage students to consider careers in agriculture.
- In collaboration with NRRC we produced a Careers in Construction marketing flyer to encourage school leavers and job seekers to consider careers in construction.
- Part of cross agency group assisting NORCOs workforce transition.

Provide details of outcomes		\$ / Number
	Investments (\$)	
	Jobs (number)	Additional direct construction workforce for the 23/24 FY estimated between 3,900 to 5,000. Furthermore, an additional 7,100 estimated across the wider supply chain.
	Local procurement (\$)	
	Other regional development outcomes (\$ / number)	
	Other facilitation activities:	In excess of 800 job openings on Jobs Northern Rivers on any given day.

Activity 8 - Flood Mitigation		
<p>Status: Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSIRO is developing data and analysis for the entire Northern Rivers region, this work is not due for completion until Dec 2025. These data sets will be used to undertake scenario analysis to recommend long-term flood mitigation actions. Mitigation plans are largely on hold until this analysis is completed. 	Provide details of outcomes	
		\$ / Number
	Investments (\$)	
	Jobs (number)	
	Local procurement (\$)	
	Other regional development outcomes (\$ / number)	
Other facilitation activities		
Activity 9 - CBD and main st. redevelopment		
<p>Status: Ongoing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in Lismore Business Renewal workshops in Lismore, Nimbin and online. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Lismore City Council by providing input to revitalise local shopping, boost visitation, and strengthen the business centre's economy. Participated in the Reimaging Lismore workshop. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Big picture visioning of the future of Lismore. Provide perspectives relating to future risks. Developing community-driven strategies for adaptive scenarios in a changing climate. 	Provide details of outcomes	
		\$ / Number
	Investments (\$)	
	Jobs (number)	
	Local procurement (\$)	
	Other regional development outcomes (\$ / number)	Lismore CBD occupancy rate has lifted from 60% in January 2023 to 70.1% in June 2023.
Other facilitation activities		

THIRD PARTY FUNDING

Overview

During the 2022-23 financial year RDANR signed third-party agreements that were established in 2023 and will extend across to 2024-25 FY. These agreements are captured in the table below.

Funding received during the 2022-23 reporting period totaled \$184,500.

THIRD PARTY FUNDING PARTNERSHIPS					
Funding Organisation	Agreement Description	Agreement Period	Funding Received 2022-23	Total Agreement Funding	Status
NRRC (Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation)	Delivery and management of Jobs & Live Platforms	Apr 2023-2025	\$90,000	\$145,000	Work-in-Progress
Healthy North Coast	Delivery and management of Jobs & Live Platforms	Apr 2023-2024	\$49,500	\$99,500	Work-in-Progress
Training Services NSW	Delivery and management of Jobs & Live Platforms	Apr 2023-2024	\$45,000	\$90,000	Work-in-Progress

Project Description

Project Title: Northern Rivers Liveability and Jobs Platform.

Services: Develop, implement and guide the marketing and stakeholder engagement on the Jobs Northern Rivers and Live Northern Rivers platforms.

Year 1 Activities, commencing April 2023:

RDANR entered agreements with platform creators Everi and uWorkin to commence development of employment and liveability platforms for Northern Rivers, known as Jobs Northern Rivers (JNR) and Live Northern Rivers (LNR). JNR supersedes the previous MFW Platform.

RDANR's responsibilities under our partnership agreements are:

- Platform development and implementation.
- Content creation.
- Third party provider management, platform developers and marketing agency.
- Develop a marketing strategy that is approved by the Northern Rivers Workforce Development Steering Committee.
- Jobseeker engagement, industry engagement.
- Staff/contractor resourcing.
- Expo and event representation.
- Reporting and data.

Risk Mitigation

Risks identified for this project include the potential for budget over-runs, vendor issues and technical complexity challenges, and resource constraints.

Strategies

Budget Over-runs:

- We factored in contingency funding that we carry over to year two of the project.
- We have secured second year funding agreement from one partner and have verbal agreements for funding for year two.
- We received sponsorship interest from other parties which we will seek to provide additional income into year two.

Vendor issues and technical complexity:

- Vendor selection with a long-established record in successful service delivery.
- RDANR engaged with existing clients of the chosen vendor to inform background and capability checking.
- Researched an established platform rather than a built for purpose platform.

Resource constraints:

- RDANR have engaged a contractor with specialist skills to manage the project.
- Involvement from the broader RDANR team has established a familiarity with the platform, its goals, and objectives.
- The platform provider has support services.

Progress

The Jobs Northern Rivers platform is progressing well, after a soft launch in May 2023 the platform is currently capturing in excess of 800 job openings on any given day.

Our funding partners are pleased with its performance to date, as are the members of the Northern Rivers Workforce Steering Committee.

Please refer to the Case Study: Improved Jobs Platform for Northern Rivers for more details on the progress made.

Funding Partners



Training Services NSW



Northern Rivers
Reconstruction
Corporation

SUMMARY OF COMMUNICATIONS

An important part of our core activities is the promotion and dissemination of information of regional interest and government programs and initiatives across the Northern Rivers. Our communications target a broad audience that includes business and industry, communities, and local government. Our communications distribute details on government grants and funding, local impact surveys, community and business events, infrastructure upgrades and projects, state and local government initiatives, and so on.

We have established channels that reach our e-Newsletter and e-Alerts database of approximately 1,900 subscribers. Other channels include social media via Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and our RDANR website.

Communications during the 2022-23 reporting period included:

- Total of 22 e-News campaigns and 20 e-News Alerts.
- Total sent emails per campaign, between 1,937 and 1,990.
- Average e-News open rate of 32%.
- Promoted 204 government grants, 73 government stories, and 27 government consultations.
- Reached 34,048 users via our RDANR website.
- Promoted 181 government funding programs through our website's grant page.
- 74 government program socials post across Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

