



Regional Development Australia-
Northern Rivers Inc
ANNUAL OUTCOMES REPORT
2023-2024



An Australian Government Initiative

Regional Development Australia - Northern Rivers Board would like to acknowledge the members and Staff for their assistance in preparing this Annual Report on Outcomes.

I, Donald Page, Chair of RDA-Northern Rivers, certify this is the Annual Report on Outcomes authorised for RDA-Northern Rivers for the period 2023 – 2024.



The Hon Donald Page
Chair
Regional Development Australia- Northern Rivers

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Cover photo: Overlooking Lennox Head

We respectfully acknowledge the Aboriginal peoples of the Northern Rivers – including the peoples of the Bundjalung, Yaegl and Gumbaynggirr 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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1. Chair's foreword or executive summary

The Northern Rivers region continues to recover from the 2022 weather events, and in 2023/24, RDA Northern Rivers played a pivotal role in fostering positive outcomes across the region. Working in partnership with key government agencies such as AusIndustry, the NSW Reconstruction Authority, and Business NSW, RDA Northern Rivers has been instrumental in driving regionally significant initiatives.

One of the most notable achievements has been the successful uptake of users on the first phase of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail, which has seen remarkable success in its inaugural year. This success has garnered unanimous support from all Northern Rivers LGAs for the continued expansion of the Rail Trail. Construction is currently underway on additional sections, with plans for a completed trail agreed upon by all Councils. Securing government funding remains a priority for the completion of these works, and RDA Northern Rivers will continue to advocate and provide assistance where needed.

Additionally, RDA Northern Rivers experienced significant staffing changes this year, including the appointment of a new Director of Regional Development, who will continue to champion the region's priorities.

Throughout 2023/24, RDA Northern Rivers (RDA-NR) engaged successfully with a wide range of stakeholders and all levels of government, resulting in the creation and launch of two website platforms:

- **Jobs Northern Rivers:** <https://www.jobsnorthernrivers.com.au/>
- **Live Northern Rivers:** <https://livenorthernrivers.com.au/>

These platforms serve as valuable resources for prospective, current, and new residents, providing searchable information and supporting employers in their recruitment efforts, both within and outside the region.

In response to regional workforce challenges, RDA Northern Rivers coordinated and facilitated several sector-specific regional workforce webinars, focusing on:

- Agriculture
- Construction
- Hospitality
- Health

RDA Northern Rivers also continued to strengthen partnerships with key regional organisations beyond LGAs, including:

- NSW Reconstruction Authority
- Department of Regional NSW
- Destination North Coast
- Business NSW
- Training Services NSW

Certified by The Hon Don Page, Chair, Regional Development Australia, Northern Rivers



Date: October 24, 2024

2. Strategic context and regional priorities

RDA-NR established five priorities which were designed to address the most pressing needs of the Northern Rivers region and to guide our efforts towards sustainable growth and resilience:

1. Employment and Workforce Development:

Our focus was on enhancing employment opportunities and addressing workforce challenges across the region. This involved identifying and bridging skills gaps, promoting workforce training and education, and fostering an environment that attracts and retains talent.

2. Land Development, Housing, and Accommodation:

Addressing the critical shortage of affordable housing and accommodation was a high priority. We committed to supporting land development initiatives that increased the supply of residential properties, catering to the diverse needs of the community.

3. Enterprise Growth and Industry Development:

We dedicated to fostering the growth of existing businesses while also encouraging the development of new industries that align with the region's strengths. Our efforts were focused on creating a dynamic business environment that drives economic development and enhances the region's competitive edge.

4. Digital Connectivity:

In today's increasingly digital world, ensuring robust digital connectivity is essential for the region's economic and social development. We were committed to improving digital infrastructure, expanding access to high-speed internet, and promoting digital literacy across the community.

5. Infrastructure Development and Liveability:

Building and maintaining critical infrastructure is vital to improving the quality of life and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the region. Our focus has been on developing infrastructure that enhances liveability, supports economic activities, and meets the needs of a growing population.

These five key priorities have guided our actions and investments as we work towards a prosperous future for the Northern Rivers region. By concentrating our efforts on these areas, we are confident that we have made a lasting and positive impact on the region's economic development, community well-being, and overall resilience.

3. Annual Work Plan

Strategic objective 1 – Employment and workforce development			
What will we do?	Role	Expected outcomes	Timeframe
Implement 'Jobs Northern Rivers' platform.	Lead Partners: Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation (NRRC); Training Services NSW; Healthy North Coast.	Facilitate improved interaction and connection between jobseekers and employers. Provide jobseekers in the Northern Rivers with access to more jobs from one single portal. Facilitate filling employment needs of local employers and industry. Identify demand and skills gaps to deliver relevant upskilling programs. Identify and implement skills training needs for the construction industry.	September 2023 / Ongoing
Implement 'Live Northern Rivers' platform.	Lead Partners: NRRC; Training Services NSW; Healthy North Coast.	Support the retention and attraction of workers to settle in our region. Attract new workers to our region to fill the existing labour shortage. Work with industry to attract and retain skilled workers. Act as an investment attraction tool to support industry and local government.	October 2023
Collaborate with the NRRC and Training Services NSW on the flood recovery rebuild 'Workforce Response Unit' (WRN).	Contributor / Lead Partners: NRRC; Training Services NSW	Seek to minimise the workforce and accommodation issues to resource the reconstruction rebuild. Minimise the impact of workforce and accommodation issues on achieving progress with the reconstruction, growing the local construction industry, and housing. Uncover employment opportunities between indigenous and business communities.	Ongoing
Chair the Northern Rivers Workforce Steering Committee.	Lead Partners: Training Services NSW; TAFE NSW; Workforce Australia; Healthy North Coast; NRRC; Department of Employment & Workplace Relations; Southern Cross University (SCU)	Coordinate, guide and inform respective stakeholders in creating effective training and employment pathways for employers to attract, retain and retrain for a job ready workforce across all industry sectors. Adopt the NRRC Workforce Strategy and leverage appropriate initiatives to benefit other sectors, including health and agriculture.	Ongoing
491 and 494 Visa program assessment.	Lead RDA Sydney; NSW Investment.	Provide skilled workers to fill the workforce needs in our region. Increase the pool of available labour to support employment gaps across the region. Support migrants relocating to our region with settlement services to assist with smooth integration to living in the Northern Rivers.	Ongoing

Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce committee.	<p>Contributor</p> <p>Partners: Workforce Australia; Verto; Novaskill; Training Services NSW; Business NSW; Ungooroo Aboriginal Corporation; Opal Healthcare; Department of Employment & Workplace Relations; Nortec.</p>	<p>Compliment the work of careers advisers and student pathways to employment.</p> <p>Bring together employers, industry and employment stakeholders to ensure employment and training opportunities meet the current needs of employers.</p> <p>Identify tailored approaches to accelerate reskilling, upskilling and employment to support local labour needs.</p>	Ongoing
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Strategic objective 2 – Land development, housing and accommodation			
What will we do?	Role	Expected outcomes	
Employment land audit.	Lead / Contributor. Partners: Northern Rivers Joint Organisation	Support the delivery of this regional resource to assist the identification and effective use of strategically located sites and infrastructure. Minimise shortage of service land at appropriate locations so that economic/employment opportunities are not lost. Identify land development sites to assess whether land/tenancy pricing is maintained at a viable level allowing for interregional business competitiveness.	September 2023
Tweed Council Growth Management and Housing Strategy.	Contributor. Partners: Tweed Shire Council.	Provide input to the Tweed Council Growth Management and Housing Strategy 2041. Application of suitable diversification, mix of dwelling density, and affordable housing to support the Tweed regions growth forecast into the future.	Ongoing
Advocacy and intelligence gathering.	Contributor.	Support for improved land use and planning practices. Support initiatives of individual LGA's within Northern Rivers region. Explore opportunities for government support to enable resources that enhance registrations and approvals processing efficiencies.	Ongoing
Strategic objective 3 – Enterprise growth and industry development			
What will we do?	Role	Expected outcomes	
Future Build Northern Rivers.	Lead / Contributor Partners: NRRC; Housing Industry Association (HIA); Business NSW; Northern Rivers TAFE; Southern Cross University; Training Services NSW.	Improve the local construction industries access to large contracting / tendering opportunities. Support the development of local procurement initiatives. Develop the capability of local construction businesses.	Ongoing
Northern Rivers Business Forum.	Contributor Partners: AusIndustry; Training Services NSW; Manufacturing Services Australia; Byron Shire Council.	Deliver interactive Futures keynote session focussed on building adaptable and resilient organisations. Develop and connect local enterprises into business networks. Raise awareness of available business support to assist with innovation and diversification capabilities.	August 2023
Farms of the Future with Agtech field day.	Contributor	Awareness of available Agtech within our agricultural industry. Identify and action connectivity challenges and solutions for agricultural operators. Establish connections with industry leading suppliers of technology.	July 2023

	Partners: Department of Primary Industries; NBN co.	Lower the barriers to technology and encourage adoption of new ways of operating.	
Regional economic development & investment attraction.	Contributor / Lead Partners: Clarence Valley Council; Richmond Valley Council; Kyogle Council; Lismore City Council; Ballina Shire Council; Byron Shire Council; Tweed Shire Council.	Engage local government to: Promote the key strengths of our 7 LGA's to support economic activity. Work with local government to promote their LGA's year round. Act as an investment attraction support aid for our LGA's and region. Leverage the Live Northern Rivers platform for our local councils benefit.	Ongoing
Government program promotion.	Lead / Contributor Partners: AusIndustry; Department of Regional NSW.	Business and industry access to government support resources. Coordinate information and activities with Regional Entrepreneurs to ensure that full information about investment opportunities is provided.	Ongoing
Strategic objective 4 – Digital Connectivity			
What will we do?	Role	Expected outcomes	
Roundtables, forums, direct conversations with stakeholders.	Contributor Partners: Telstra; NBN co.; Optus; Business NSW.	Inform key stakeholders of regional connectivity needs. Develop direct relationships with industry providers. Develop action outcomes to increase network speed and coverage across our region. Collaboration with telecommunications network providers.	Ongoing
Work with industry network and service providers.	Lead / Contributor Partners: Telstra; NBN co.; Optus.	Leverage funding opportunities to support and promote expansions, service developments, and network development. Reduction of blackspots across the region. Improved network capability to respond to disaster through installation of resilient infrastructure.	Ongoing
Information and intelligence gathering.	Lead Partners: Department of Regional NSW; Telstra; NBN co.; Optus.	Provide intelligence to government on telecommunications gaps, performances, and investment opportunities.	Ongoing
Advocate for improved infrastructure.	Lead / Contributor Partners: Department of Regional NSW; Telstra; NBN co.; Optus; Business NSW.	Improve connectivity to support the growth of existing and emerging industries, including manufacturing, creative, and digital industries. Identify potential network enhancement opportunities. Investment in telecommunications assets.	Ongoing

Strategic objective 5 – Infrastructure Development & Liveability			
What will we do?	Role	Expected outcomes	
Local government collaboration.	Contributor Partners: Clarence Valley Council; Richmond Valley Council; Kyogle Council; Lismore City Council; Ballina Shire Council; Byron Shire Council; Tweed Shire Council.	Work with and inform local councils on relevant grant programs and support their endeavours to access funding. Advocate on behalf of councils in relation to government investment.	Ongoing
Collaboration with government agencies.	Contributor Partners: AusIndustry; Service NSW; Department of Regional NSW.	Join with regional agencies in events and other activities that jointly promote grants and government assistance to regional communities.	Ongoing
Promotion and support of Commonwealth regional programmes.	Contributor Partners: AusIndustry; Service NSW; Department of Regional NSW.	Provide an up-to-date information service for easy access to the range of grant opportunities.	Ongoing
Information dissemination	Lead	Distribute regular e-newsletters, and use RDANR website and social media to promote policies and new grants and to identify successful grant applicants. Maintain current and relevant information on our RDANR website. Leverage our Live Northern Rivers platform to showcase the liveability of our region.	Ongoing

4. 2023-2024 Outcomes and performance Indicators Tables

Priority 1 – EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT			
What will we do?	Role	What we did do	Timeframe
<p>Implement ‘Jobs Northern Rivers’ platform.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate improved interaction and connection between jobseekers and employers. • Provide jobseekers in the Northern Rivers with access to more jobs from one single portal. • Facilitate filling employment needs of local employers and industry. • Identify demand and skills gaps to deliver relevant upskilling programs. • Identify and implement skills training needs for the construction industry. 	Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched and maintained the Jobs Northern Rivers Platform: Successfully launched the Jobs Northern Rivers platform, a dynamic and user-friendly online resource designed to connect job seekers with employment opportunities across the region. The platform has been meticulously maintained to ensure its continued relevance, reliability, and ease of use, offering a centralised hub for both employers and job seekers. • Implemented a region wide marketing campaign to drive traffic to the Platform: Executed a comprehensive, region-wide marketing campaign aimed at raising awareness and driving traffic to the Jobs Northern Rivers platform. This campaign utilised a multi-channel approach, including digital marketing, social media outreach, print advertising, and community engagement, to effectively reach a broad audience across the Northern Rivers. The strategic promotion has significantly increased the platform’s visibility and user engagement, making it a go-to resource for employment in the region. • Engaged with local businesses, councils, Chambers of Commerce, and community organisations to enhance, promote, and improve the Platform: Actively engaged with a wide range of stakeholders, including local businesses, Councils, Chambers of Commerce, and community organisations, to gather feedback and insights that have been instrumental in enhancing and promoting the Jobs Northern Rivers platform. These collaborations have not only helped to refine the platform’s features and functionality but have also strengthened its presence within the community. By fostering strong partnerships, we have ensured that the platform remains a valuable and effective tool for supporting the region’s workforce development and economic growth. 	Complete/ Platform is Ongoing

<p>Implement 'Live Northern Rivers' platform.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the retention and attraction of workers to settle in our region. • Attract new workers to our region to fill the existing labour shortage. • Work with industry to attract and retain skilled workers. • Act as an investment attraction tool to support industry and local government 	<p>Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched and maintained the Live Northern Rivers Platform: Successfully launched the Live Northern Rivers platform, an innovative and comprehensive online resource dedicated to showcasing the unique lifestyle, opportunities, and community offerings within the Northern Rivers region. The platform has been meticulously maintained to ensure it remains up-to-date, user-friendly, and reflective of the region's evolving dynamics, providing both new and prospective residents with essential information to help them make informed decisions about relocating to the area. • Engaged with Councils and local Business Chambers to enhance content: Actively collaborated with local Councils and Business Chambers to refine and enrich the content on the Live Northern Rivers platform. Through these engagements, we have gathered valuable insights and feedback, enabling us to continually improve the platform's offerings. These partnerships have been crucial in ensuring that the platform accurately reflects the diverse opportunities and vibrant communities within the region, making it a more valuable resource for residents, businesses, and stakeholders alike. • Designed, wrote, and implemented a region wide promotional campaign to drive traffic to the Platform: Developed and executed a strategic, region-wide promotional campaign aimed at increasing awareness and driving traffic to the Live Northern Rivers platform. The campaign was carefully crafted to resonate with a broad audience, utilising a mix of digital marketing, social media outreach, print media, and community engagement initiatives. This comprehensive approach has significantly boosted the platform's visibility, attracting both new residents and investors to the region and highlighting the Northern Rivers as a desirable place to live, work, and invest. <table border="1" data-bbox="792 1062 1731 1468"> <thead> <tr> <th>Events & News</th> <th>Q1</th> <th>Q2</th> <th>Q3</th> <th>Q4</th> <th>TOTAL</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Events Listed</td> <td>1539</td> <td>12765</td> <td>31152</td> <td>34014</td> <td>79470</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Feed</td> <td>1532</td> <td>12553</td> <td>30770</td> <td>33937</td> <td>78792</td> </tr> <tr> <td>User Created</td> <td>7</td> <td>212</td> <td>382</td> <td>77</td> <td>678</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Event Views</td> <td>1985</td> <td>8185</td> <td>2742</td> <td>4992</td> <td>17904</td> </tr> <tr> <td>News Listed</td> <td>0</td> <td>5</td> <td>8</td> <td>0</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>News Views</td> <td>0</td> <td>16</td> <td>50</td> <td>25</td> <td>91</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Business Directory</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Events & News	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL	Events Listed	1539	12765	31152	34014	79470	Feed	1532	12553	30770	33937	78792	User Created	7	212	382	77	678	Event Views	1985	8185	2742	4992	17904	News Listed	0	5	8	0	13	News Views	0	16	50	25	91							Business Directory						<p>Complete/ Platform is Ongoing</p>
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Business Listings Added	3	10	8	24	45
Business Listings Viewed	10	187	136	435	768
Google Analytics	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Page Views	1893	11855	11291	16106	41145
Users	382	3355	3202	5654	12593
Page Views Per user	4.96	3.52	3.68	2.85	53738
Avg Time spent	1m:40s	1m:42s	1m:52s	1m:37s	

- Identified and curated information for new residents to facilitate their settlement in the region:**
 Conducted extensive research to identify and curate essential information specifically tailored to the needs of new residents in the Northern Rivers region. This content, which includes practical guidance on housing, employment, education, healthcare, and community services, has been integrated into the Live Northern Rivers platform to help newcomers settle smoothly and confidently. By providing these resources, we aim to support new residents in their transition, ensuring they feel welcomed and well-informed as they establish their lives in the region.

Collaborate with the NRRC and Training Services NSW on the flood recovery rebuild 'Workforce Response Unit' (WRN).

Expected Outcomes

- Seek to minimise the workforce and accommodation issues to resource the reconstruction rebuild.
- Minimise the impact of workforce and accommodation

Contributor

- Supported the Workforce Response Unit in retaining workers within the region:**
 Actively collaborated with the Workforce Response Unit to enhance the retention of workers in the Northern Rivers region. Our efforts focused on identifying and addressing key challenges, ensuring that the region remains an attractive and viable place for employees to continue their careers.
- Promoted regional employment opportunities through the Jobs Northern Rivers Platform:**
 Leveraged the Jobs Northern Rivers platform to effectively highlight and promote employment opportunities across the region. By showcasing a wide range of job openings, we have facilitated connections between employers and job seekers, helping to sustain the local workforce and support regional economic growth.
- Collaborated with the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation to address workforce and accommodation challenges:**

Complete/ Ongoing

<p>issues on achieving progress with the reconstruction, growing the local construction industry, and housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncover employment opportunities between indigenous and business communities. 		<p>Partnered with the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation to mitigate the impacts of workforce and accommodation issues in the region. Through joint efforts, we have worked to develop solutions that address these critical challenges, ensuring that the region can continue to recover and thrive despite ongoing difficulties.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair the Northern Rivers Workforce Steering Committee. <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate, guide and inform respective stakeholders in creating effective training and employment pathways for employers to attract, retain and retrain for a job ready workforce across all industry sectors. Adopt the NRRRC Workforce Strategy and leverage appropriate initiatives to benefit other sectors, including health and agriculture. 	<p>Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attended and chaired three Northern Rivers Workforce Steering Committee meetings: Over the last year, we have actively participated in and chaired three Northern Rivers Workforce Steering Committee meetings, members are Training NSW, Healthy North Coast, NSW Reconstruction Authority, TAFE NSW and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR). These meetings were pivotal in setting the strategic direction for workforce development in the region. Our role involved leading discussions, facilitating collaborative decision-making, and ensuring that the committee's objectives were met effectively and efficiently. Engaged with all committee partners to promote and address workforce shortages in the region: Proactively engaged with all partners of the Northern Rivers Workforce Steering Committee, including government agencies, local businesses, educational institutions, and industry representatives. Through these engagements, we worked to elevate the profile of workforce challenges in the region, fostering collaborative initiatives aimed at addressing the critical shortages. This included advocating for targeted training programs, recruitment strategies, and support systems to attract and retain talent within the region. Disseminated and shared information across Workforce Steering Committee partners and the wider region: Ensured that vital information and insights from the Workforce Steering Committee were disseminated effectively across all partners and the broader Northern Rivers community. By sharing best practices, research findings, and strategic updates, we helped to keep all stakeholders informed and aligned on workforce development efforts. This transparency and communication was essential in driving coordinated action and achieving meaningful progress in addressing the region's workforce needs. NRRRC Workforce Strategy: The workforce Strategy is yet to be made public, preventing the committee from formally adopting. 	<p>Completed/ Ongoing</p>

<p>491 and 494 Visa program assessment.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide skilled workers to fill the workforce needs in our region. • Increase the pool of available labour to support employment gaps across the region. • Support migrants relocating to our region with settlement services to assist with smooth integration to living in the Northern Rivers. 	<p>Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDA Northern Rivers processed 27 494 Visas, with zero 491 Visas due to a change in processing by the NSW State Government: Over the course of the reporting period, RDA Northern Rivers successfully processed 27 494 visas, providing critical support to individuals and businesses seeking to navigate the complex immigration landscape. However, due to a change in processing protocols by the NSW State Government, there were no 491 visas processed during this time. Despite these changes, RDA Northern Rivers remains committed to facilitating visa applications and supporting the region's workforce and economic development objectives through effective migration management. 	<p>Completed/ Ongoing</p>
<p>Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce committee.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliment the work of careers advisers and student pathways to employment. • Bring together employers, industry and employment stakeholders to ensure employment and training opportunities meet the current needs of employers. • Identify tailored approaches to accelerate reskilling, upskilling and employment to support local labour needs. 	<p>Contributor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participated in the Northern Rivers Careers Fair, engaging with senior students from across the region: Actively participated in the Northern Rivers Careers Fair, a key event that draws senior students from various schools across the region. This event provided an excellent platform to engage with the next generation of the workforce, offering guidance and insight into career opportunities within the Northern Rivers. Our involvement included interacting with students, answering their questions, and providing them with valuable information about the diverse career paths available in the region. • Collaborated with training services NSW to identify regional employers for targeted training opportunities: Partnered with Training Services NSW to identify employers within the Northern Rivers region who could benefit from targeted training programs. Through this collaboration, we focused on matching the specific needs of local businesses with appropriate training initiatives, helping to enhance the skills of the workforce and meet the demands of regional industries. This proactive approach has been instrumental in supporting the growth and development of local businesses by ensuring they have access to a skilled and capable workforce. • Conducted Industry-Specific Webinars on Agriculture, Construction, Hospitality, and Health Sectors: Organised and facilitated a series of webinars focused on key industries within the Northern Rivers region—Agriculture, Construction, Hospitality, and Health. These webinars provided comprehensive information on the opportunities, requirements, and challenges associated with each sector. By bringing together industry 	<p>Completed/ Ongoing</p>

		<p>experts, employers, and potential job seekers, these sessions offered valuable insights into the specific needs of these industries and the career prospects they offer. The webinars also served as a platform for discussion, enabling participants to gain a deeper understanding of the regional job market and how they can position themselves for success in these vital sectors. Due to significant change in personnel over the course of the year, exact attendance numbers are not available.</p>	
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Priority 2 – LAND DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING AND ACCOMMODATION			
What will we do?	Role	What we did do	Timeframe
<p>Employment land audit.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the delivery of this regional resource to assist the identification and effective use of strategically located sites and infrastructure. • Minimise shortage of service land at appropriate locations so that economic/employment opportunities are not lost. • Identify land development sites to assess whether land/tenancy pricing is maintained at a viable level allowing for interregional business competitiveness. 	Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed a comprehensive Employment Land Audit: Successfully conducted and completed a thorough audit of employment lands within the Northern Rivers region. This audit was designed to assess the availability, suitability, and potential of land designated for employment purposes, ensuring that our region is well-prepared to meet current and future demands for commercial and industrial development. The audit provides a detailed analysis of existing employment land, identifies gaps, and offers recommendations for optimising land use to support economic growth (copy available on request). • Distributed audit findings to local Councils for future planning initiatives: The results of the employment land audit were distributed to local councils across the Northern Rivers region. This distribution was aimed at informing and supporting future urban planning and development initiatives at the municipal level. By providing councils with detailed insights into the current state of employment lands, we have equipped them with the necessary data to make informed decisions that align with long-term strategic goals, ensuring that adequate land is allocated and prepared for future employment opportunities. • Shared audit findings with other levels of government to support regional development: In addition to engaging with local councils, the findings from the employment land audit were also shared with other levels of government, including state. This collaborative approach ensures that all stakeholders are aligned and that the audit's insights contribute to broader regional development strategies. By sharing this information, we have helped to highlight the Northern Rivers' capacity and readiness for economic expansion. 	Completed
<p>Tweed Council Growth Management and Housing Strategy.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input to the Tweed Council Growth Management and Housing Strategy 2041. 	Contributor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to the Development of the Tweed Council Growth Management and Housing Strategy: Actively participated in the engagement process for the development of the Tweed Council Growth Management and Housing Strategy. Provided valuable input by offering a region-wide perspective that considers broader economic, social, and environmental factors impacting growth and housing needs within the Tweed region. Emphasized the importance of integrating local strategies with regional priorities to create a cohesive approach to sustainable growth and community development. 	Completed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application of suitable diversification, mix of dwelling density, and affordable housing to support the Tweed regions growth forecast into the future. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration with the Northern Rivers Employment Land Audit: Advised on how the Tweed Council Growth Management and Housing Strategy could be effectively aligned with the Northern Rivers Employment Land Audit. Highlighted opportunities to incorporate insights from the audit to ensure the strategy supports the development of employment lands that meet current and future needs. This integration was aimed at promoting balanced growth, optimizing land use, and enhancing employment opportunities across the Northern Rivers region. 	
<p>Advocacy and intelligence gathering.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for improved land use and planning practices. Support initiatives of individual LGA's within Northern Rivers region. Explore opportunities for government support to enable resources that enhance registrations and approvals processing efficiencies 	<p>Contributor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided strategic support for organisations seeking expansion and enhanced service provision: Offered tailored support to a diverse group of organisations within the Northern Rivers region as they pursued opportunities for expansion and increased service provision. This support included strategic guidance, resource allocation, and facilitation of connections with key stakeholders, enabling these organisations to scale their operations effectively. By assisting in the identification of growth opportunities and addressing potential challenges, we have played a crucial role in helping these entities expand their footprint and enhance their service offerings to better meet the needs of the community. Distributed a monthly newsletter to over 1,850 Recipients monthly: Consistently distributed a highly informative monthly newsletter to a growing audience of over 1,850 recipients. This newsletter serves as a vital communication tool, providing timely updates on regional developments, funding opportunities, upcoming events, and other relevant news. Through this publication, we ensure that our stakeholders, including local businesses, government bodies, community organisations, and residents, remain informed and engaged with the latest initiatives and opportunities within the Northern Rivers region. The newsletter has been instrumental in fostering a well-connected and informed community, facilitating collaboration and driving collective progress toward regional development goals. 	<p>Ongoing</p>

Priority 3 – ENTERPRISE GROWTH AND INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT			
What will we do?	Role	What we did do	Timeframe
<p>Future Build Northern Rivers.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the local construction industries access to large contracting / tendering opportunities. • Support the development of local procurement initiatives. • Develop the capability of local construction businesses. 	Contributor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration on the Development of "Future Build Northern Rivers": Actively engaged with key stakeholders, including the NSW Reconstruction Authority, Business NSW, and Training Services NSW, to collaboratively formulate the "Future Build Northern Rivers" initiative. This initiative aims to address the region's construction and infrastructure needs in response to future growth and development challenges. • Strategic Partnership with NSW Reconstruction Authority: Worked closely with the NSW Reconstruction Authority to leverage their expertise in disaster recovery and infrastructure rebuilding. This partnership focused on integrating resilient building practices and infrastructure planning into the "Future Build Northern Rivers" framework. The collaboration aimed to enhance the region's preparedness and response capabilities, ensuring that future developments are both sustainable and resilient to natural disasters. • Engagement with Business NSW for Economic Growth: Partnered with Business NSW to align the "Future Build Northern Rivers" initiative with regional economic development goals. Focused on identifying opportunities for local businesses to participate in upcoming construction and infrastructure projects, fostering economic growth and job creation. By engaging with business leaders, ensured that the initiative supports a vibrant, diversified economy while meeting the region's long-term infrastructure needs. • Coordination with Training Services NSW for Workforce Development: Collaborated with Training Services NSW to address workforce development needs as part of the "Future Build Northern Rivers" initiative. This engagement aimed to create targeted training programs and apprenticeships to equip the local workforce with the skills required for upcoming infrastructure projects. By focusing on workforce readiness, ensured that the region is prepared to meet future construction demands while providing sustainable employment opportunities for local residents. 	Ongoing
<p>Northern Rivers Business Forum.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p>	Lead/ Contributor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Partnership with AusIndustry and Business NSW for the Northern Rivers Business Forum: Established a strategic collaboration with AusIndustry and Business NSW to develop and host a comprehensive region-wide forum dedicated to driving business growth and strengthening resilience within the Northern Rivers business community, with in excess of 150 attendees. This forum was a critical platform for local 	Completed

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver interactive Futures keynote session focussed on building adaptable and resilient organisations. • Develop and connect local enterprises into business networks. • Raise awareness of available business support to assist with innovation and diversification capabilities. 		<p>businesses to gain valuable insights, access resources, and network with industry leaders. Over 85 participants attended, with the forum covering key topics such as business growth strategies, economic recovery, and the integration of artificial intelligence in business operations. The event played a significant role in equipping businesses with the knowledge and tools needed to navigate economic challenges and leverage emerging opportunities.</p>	
<p>Farms of the Future with Agtech field day.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of available Agtech within our agricultural industry. • Identify and action connectivity challenges and solutions for agricultural operators. • Establish connections with industry leading suppliers of technology. • Lower the barriers to technology and encourage adoption of new ways of operating. 	<p>Contributor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participated in the Farming for Climate Resilience and Productivity Field Day: Actively engaged in the Farming for Climate Resilience and Productivity Field Day to support regional agricultural stakeholders. The event provided an invaluable opportunity to learn about innovative practices aimed at enhancing climate resilience and boosting productivity in the farming sector. By participating, RDA Northern Rivers demonstrated its commitment to sustainable agricultural development and fostering resilience among local farmers. • Contributed to the Development of the Field Day Blueprint: Played a key role in shaping the strategic direction of the field day by contributing to the creation of the event blueprint. This involved collaborating with key stakeholders to identify the primary themes and objectives, ensuring that the event effectively addressed the critical issues facing the farming community. • Produced Marketing and Promotional Materials: Developed and designed a range of marketing and promotional materials, including flyers, brochures, and digital content, to effectively promote the event. The promotional efforts aimed to attract a diverse audience, including farmers, agronomists, researchers, and policymakers, ensuring a well-rounded and impactful event. • Distributed Information Across the RDA Northern Rivers Network: Proactively disseminated information about the field day throughout the RDA Northern Rivers network. Leveraged extensive regional contacts and communication channels to maximize outreach and awareness, ensuring that key stakeholders were informed and 	<p>Completed</p>

		engaged. This included using newsletters, social media, and direct communication with partners to spread the word about the event and its significance.	
<p>Regional economic development & investment attraction.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <p>Engage local government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the key strengths of our 7 LGA's to support economic activity. • Work with local government to promote their LGA's year round. • Act as an investment attraction support aid for our LGA's and region. • Leverage the Live Northern Rivers platform for our local councils benefit. 	Contributor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Collaboration and Regional Economic Development: Worked in close partnership with Economic Development Managers from the Department of Regional NSW (DRNSW) to ensure that regional initiatives were strategically aligned with state-level objectives. This collaboration was critical in identifying and leveraging opportunities that would enhance the economic resilience and growth of the Northern Rivers region. • Close Collaboration with DRNSW Economic Development Managers: Worked in close partnership with Economic Development Managers from the Department of Regional NSW (DRNSW) to ensure that regional initiatives were strategically aligned with state-level objectives. This collaboration was critical in identifying and leveraging opportunities that would enhance the economic resilience and growth of the Northern Rivers region. • Leadership in Strategic Economic Development Meetings: Actively chaired and participated in quarterly strategic meetings with representatives from DRNSW. These meetings served as a platform to discuss and advance economic development opportunities, ensuring that key initiatives were coordinated effectively across all levels of government and aligned with regional priorities. • Engagement in Regional Economic Development Managers' Meetings: Consistently attended the quarterly meetings of the Regional Economic Development Managers, which included representatives from RDA, DRNSW, and the seven local government areas (LGAs) within our region. These meetings were essential for fostering collaboration, sharing best practices, and addressing the unique economic challenges and opportunities within each LGA. • Active Participation in Business NSW Economic Forum: Engaged with key business leaders and government representatives from across the region at the Business NSW Economic Forum. This participation facilitated critical discussions on economic trends, challenges, and strategies for driving sustainable growth and development in the Northern Rivers region. The forum also provided a platform to strengthen relationships and build networks that support regional economic resilience. 	Ongoing
<p>Government program promotion.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p>	Contributor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Newsletter Distribution: Proactively distributed monthly newsletters designed to profile and detail newly released government programs, ensuring that the community and stakeholders remain well-informed about the latest opportunities and 	Ongoing

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business and industry access to government support resources. • Coordinate information and activities with Regional Entrepreneurs to ensure that full information about investment opportunities is provided 		<p>initiatives. These newsletters serve as a critical communication tool, providing timely and relevant information on available grants, funding opportunities, and policy updates. Additionally, the newsletters include success stories and case studies that highlight the positive impact of these programs within the Northern Rivers region. Regular updates are provided to ensure that subscribers are always aware of the latest developments, helping them to make informed decisions and take advantage of available resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing Collaboration with DRNSW: Maintained consistent and regular communication with colleagues at the Department of Regional NSW (DRNSW) to deliver comprehensive briefings and updates on government initiatives. This ongoing dialogue ensures that the RDA-NR is always aligned with state-level strategies and that local needs are effectively communicated to state representatives. Through these interactions, the RDA-NR is able to advocate for the region’s priorities, provide feedback on the implementation of government programs, and ensure that the unique needs of the Northern Rivers are considered in the planning and execution of state policies. • Engagement with the Economic Development Manager Network: Engaged directly with the Economic Development Manager network across the Northern Rivers region to promote and highlight key government programs. This engagement includes organising meetings, workshops, and information sessions that bring together Economic Development Managers from the seven local government areas (LGAs) within the region. By fostering strong relationships and open lines of communication, the RDA-NR ensures that Economic Development Managers are well-equipped with the information and resources they need to support local businesses and communities. This collaborative approach helps to maximise the impact of government programs and ensures that they are effectively tailored to meet the specific needs of each LGA within the Northern Rivers. 	
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Priority 4 – DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY			
What will we do?	Role	What we did do	Timeframe
<p>Roundtables, forums, direct conversations with stakeholders.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform key stakeholders of regional connectivity needs. • Develop direct relationships with industry providers. • Develop action outcomes to increase network speed and coverage across our region. • Collaboration with telecommunications network providers. 	Contributor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement with key telecommunications stakeholders: Established contact with key stakeholders within the telecommunications industry to discuss and highlight connectivity issues across the region. This initiative aimed to bring awareness to the existing challenges and foster collaboration towards improving regional connectivity. • Collaboration with Service Providers for Comprehensive Solutions: Engaged extensively with service providers throughout the region to develop a comprehensive, region-wide solution for addressing connectivity issues. These efforts focused on creating a coordinated approach to enhance network performance and reliability for all users. • Direct Collaboration with NBN Co: Worked directly with NBN Co to address concerns related to internet speeds and coverage. This collaboration aimed to ensure optimal service delivery and improve internet access and quality for the region. 	Ongoing
<p>Work with industry network and service providers.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage funding opportunities to support and promote expansions, service developments, and network development. 	Contributor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with Local Chambers of Commerce and Business NSW: RDA Northern Rivers (RDA NR) worked in close collaboration with local chambers of commerce and Business NSW to foster strong relationships with service providers throughout the Northern Rivers region. This strategic partnership focused on creating opportunities for direct engagement with service providers to discuss the specific challenges faced by businesses and individuals in the region. • Highlighting Regional Business Challenges: Through a series of coordinated presentations and meetings, RDA NR, in conjunction with local chambers and Business NSW, effectively communicated the pressing issues experienced by businesses and individuals. These discussions covered a wide range of topics, including supply chain 	Ongoing

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of blackspots across the region. • Improved network capability to respond to disaster through installation of resilient infrastructure 		<p>disruptions, workforce shortages, and regulatory challenges. By providing a platform for open dialogue, RDA NR ensured that service providers were well-informed about the evolving business landscape and the immediate needs of their clients.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating Effective Communication: By relaying real-time feedback from businesses directly to service providers, RDA NR played a critical role in facilitating effective communication and ensuring a responsive service delivery model. This proactive approach helped bridge communication gaps, strengthened relationships, and encouraged a more coordinated and comprehensive response to regional economic challenges. • Strengthening Regional Economic Resilience: Through these collaborative efforts, RDA NR reinforced its position as a key advocate for the local business community. By working closely with chambers of commerce, Business NSW, and service providers, RDA NR contributed to enhancing the economic resilience and sustainability of the Northern Rivers region, ensuring that the needs of local businesses and individuals were effectively addressed and supported. 	
<p>Information and intelligence gathering.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide intelligence to government on telecommunications gaps, performances, and investment opportunities. 	<p>Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with Key Regional Stakeholders: Engaged directly with representatives from the Department of Regional NSW (DRNSW), local councils, and Business NSW to conduct a comprehensive assessment of telecommunication performance across the region. This collaboration focused on identifying critical gaps and areas for improvement in network coverage, service quality, and infrastructure resilience. • Identification and Highlighting of Telecommunications Performance Gaps: Through coordinated efforts with DRNSW, local councils, and Business NSW, systematically identified and highlighted existing gaps in telecommunication services throughout the region. This process involved analysing current service levels, understanding community needs, and pinpointing specific areas where connectivity and service quality were lacking. 	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Advocate for improved infrastructure.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve connectivity to support the growth of existing and emerging industries, 	<p>Contributor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy for Improved Regional Infrastructure: RDA-NR actively engaged in advocacy efforts across all levels of government to address the limitations of the current telecommunications infrastructure throughout the region. These efforts involved presenting evidence-based analyses and highlighting specific challenges faced by residents and businesses due to inadequate network coverage and outdated infrastructure. • Collaboration with Infrastructure Providers: Collaborated closely with infrastructure providers to communicate the identified limitations and advocate for targeted 	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p>including manufacturing, creative, and digital industries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify potential network enhancement opportunities.• Investment in telecommunications assets.		<p>investments and upgrades. By highlighting the gaps and deficiencies in the existing infrastructure, RDA-NR worked to ensure that infrastructure providers understood the critical need for enhanced services and the positive impact that improved connectivity would have on the region's economic growth, social inclusion, and disaster resilience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engagement Across Government Levels: RDA-NR maintained continuous engagement with local, state, and federal government representatives to secure support for infrastructure improvements.	
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Strategic objective 5 – Infrastructure Development & Liveability			
What will we do?	Role	What we did do	Timeframe
<p>Local government collaboration.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with and inform local councils on relevant grant programs and support their endeavours to access funding. • Advocate on behalf of councils in relation to government investment. 	<p>Contributor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Quarterly Economic Development Meetings: Actively participated in the quarterly meetings of Economic Development Managers across the region, providing comprehensive updates on RDA-NR's activities and strategic initiatives. During these meetings, highlighted the various eligible grant programs available to local governments and organizations, promoting opportunities for regional economic development and infrastructure enhancement. • Collaboration with Council General Managers for Funding Access: Worked closely with council general managers to facilitate access to relevant funding opportunities. This involved identifying potential funding sources, assisting in the preparation of grant applications, and providing strategic advice to align council projects with funding criteria. These efforts helped maximize the region's ability to secure necessary financial resources for local development initiatives. • Support for Government Grant Applications Provided robust support for government grant applications by drafting and submitting written letters of endorsement for key applicants. These letters underscored the significance of proposed projects and their alignment with regional development goals, enhancing the likelihood of securing funding. This advocacy was crucial in promoting projects that aimed to improve regional infrastructure, stimulate economic growth, and address community needs. 	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p>Collaboration with government agencies.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join with regional agencies in events and other activities that jointly promote grants and government assistance to regional communities. 	<p>Contributor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborated with key regional agencies: Including the Department of Regional NSW (DRNSW), AusIndustry, Destination North Coast, and Business NSW, to deliver strategic outcomes across the Northern Rivers region. These partnerships focused on aligning efforts to enhance economic development, support local businesses, and promote sustainable growth. By leveraging the expertise and resources of each organisation, we were able to address unique challenges of the region, foster innovation, and strengthen the regional economy. Together, we worked to ensure coordinated action and achieve shared objectives, maximising the impact of our initiatives throughout the Northern Rivers. 	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Promotion and support of Commonwealth regional programmes.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an up-to-date information service for easy access to the range of grant opportunities. 	<p>Contributor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant Information Service Initiative: RDA NR provided an up-to-date grant information service to assist local businesses, community groups, and individuals in accessing a wide range of funding opportunities. To further support the community, RDA NR offered workshops, webinars, and personalised consultations to help applicants navigate the grant application process, enhancing their chances of success. This initiative has become a valuable resource for the Northern Rivers region, improving access to funding and contributing to regional growth and development. 	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Information dissemination</p> <p>Expected Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute regular e-newsletters, and use RDANR website and social media to promote policies and new grants and to identify successful grant applicants. 	<p>Lead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distributed monthly e-newsletters to over 1,850 recipients, ensuring timely and relevant communication of updates, opportunities, and initiatives. These newsletters served as an essential touchpoint for stakeholders, keeping them informed about regional developments, upcoming events, and available grants. Promoted the RDA Northern Rivers website and social media channels on a monthly basis, highlighting key policies, funding opportunities, and new grants to foster regional development and community engagement. Engaged with multiple businesses to explore grant opportunities, providing tailored advice and support to help local enterprises access funding that aligns with their strategic objectives and growth plans. 	<p>Ongoing</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain current and relevant information on our RDANR website.• Leverage our Live Northern Rivers platform to showcase the liveability of our region.		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducted a comprehensive review of all information on the RDANR website to ensure accuracy, relevance, and alignment with current initiatives, making the website a trusted resource for stakeholders seeking up-to-date information.• Promoted the 'Live Northern Rivers' platform to highlight the region's lifestyle, amenities, and opportunities, supporting efforts to attract new employees by showcasing the unique liveability of the Northern Rivers area.	
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5. Communications Strategy (recommended)

RDANR Communications Report – Outcomes 2023-24

Progress on strategy

RDA Northern Rivers continues to utilise our key communication channels to share and disseminate information about Government programs and local opportunities for the Northern Rivers business and wider community.

The key channels used over the year were:

- Regional Development Australia – Northern Rivers (RDANR) website.
- RDA NR Facebook (FB)
- RDA NR Instagram (IG)
- RDA NR LinkedIn (LI)
- RDA NR Google Business
- Jobs Northern Rivers (JNR) website
- Jobs Northern Rivers (JNR) Facebook
- Live Northern Rivers (LNR) website
- Live Northern Rivers (LNR) Instagram

During the year the JNR Facebook and LNR Instagram were updated to reflect the two platforms across both social media services as Jobs+Live Northern Rivers.

Over the reporting period we have promoted Government funded projects through the announcement of successful local government and grant applicants as part of the local council news updates and Funding and Opportunities section of the RDA Northern Rivers eNews, and in quarterly funding updates.

Performance against priorities:

PRIORITY 1. Employment and workforce development

- JNR and LNR platforms promoted at NR careers expos, Primex Field Days, (check with Fliss re other events we were involved with, TAFE trades day)
- Engaged Bare Fruit Marketing to develop social media campaigns that were run across the JNR and LNR FB and IG (check with Fliss re dates/FY) and shared through RDANR FB
- Promoted industry, skill development and training opportunities through RDA NR eNews, website and social media, and JNR/LNR platforms
- NSW State and local government positions shared on RDA NR LI
- Hosted 5 industry webinars with Dept Home Affairs re regional work visas

PRIORITY 2. Land development, housing and accommodation

- Employment Lands Audit promoted through RDA NR eNews and made available through the RDA NR website
- Promotion of NSWRA projects and opportunities through RDA NR social media

PRIORITY 3. Enterprise growth and industry development

Collaborated with the following agencies for industry workshops/event

- AusIndustry - Opportunity Knocks: Northern Rivers business future proofing, Byron Bay (1 day workshop)
- AgTech Field Day, Alstonville

Utilised RDA NR media channels to promote activities, workshops and events for small business and industry.

- Regular feature in Monthly eNews dedicated to local small business and industry events and activities.
 - Sharing information about local events and opportunities through RDA NR social media e.g. Primex, funding opportunities
- Promotion of the Live Northern Rivers tender portal to encourage local procurement.
Regular promotion of government initiatives through RDA NR media channels
- Regular Government News section and featured funding programs in Monthly eNews
 - Quarterly eNews Funding update
 - eNews Alerts promoting government programs as required

PRIORITY 4. Digital connectivity

Maintained relationship with NBN Co re ongoing digital connectivity in the region, including promotion of NBN Co upgrades, free student NBN and funding opportunities.

PRIORITY 5. Infrastructure development & Liveability

Promotion of government programs and support through Monthly eNews, eNews Alerts and Funding Updates.

Data
Social Media

Channel	Posts	Average Reach	Engagement
Facebook	169	107	343
LinkedIn	88	84	650
Instagram	63	36	124

Government program posts performance on RDANR socials

Channel	Posts	Average Reach	Engagement
Facebook	38	54	21
LinkedIn	24	67	84
Instagram	16	25	22

Note: Google Business no longer provides data for posts

eNews

Over the year 36 email campaigns were sent to RDA NR subscribers

Average # subscribers	1884
# Regular eNews campaigns sent	19
# eNews Alerts sent	19 (13 Gov)
# Government stories	89
# Government consultations	50
# Government grants	107

Website traffic

Site	Users	New Users	Sessions	Page View	Engagement
RDANR	14449	13925	18788	46667	16716
Recovery	350	331	496	464	342

188 Government Grants and 10 Government Awards were featured on RDA Northern Rivers website.

6. Case Studies

Case Study 1

Case Study: Liveability Platform for Northern Rivers

A companion platform for Jobs Northern Rivers

As chair of the regional Work Force Development Steering Committee, Regional Development Australia (RDA) Northern Rivers, sought support for, and rolled out, the Jobs Northern Rivers platform – to support employers to promote their job vacancies to local job seekers.

At a time when unemployment had reached some record lows, a jobs platform for the region was not enough to support employers finding candidates. In recognition of the need to attract a workforce from beyond the region, a liveability platform was proposed as a companion to the jobs platform.

Specifically, the target audience groups to be reached by a liveability platform include:

- relocators researching infrastructure and lifestyle choices of the Northern Rivers,
- returning residents and
- intra-region relocators.

The objectives of the liveability platform are to provide information, for the above target audience groups, to showcase the region's:

- Economy
 - Business/Employment Statistics,
 - Key Industries,
 - Connection to uWorkin Jobs Platform through widgets
 - Local Business Directory
 - Business Events
- Lifestyle
 - The LGAs
 - Real Estate
 - Health & Wellbeing
 - Education
 - Local Event Feed
- Community
 - News & Events
 - Community Sports

Events aggregation platform to support engagement

A review of other regional liveability platforms was undertaken including Live Capricorn Coast, Canberra.com.au, Live Launceston and Live North Queensland.

Everi Pty Ltd was identified as a technology platform that:

- Demonstrated successful implementation across various regions;
- Delivers an automated events feed generating hundreds of events to keep visitors engaged;
- Provided an appealing, intuitive and professional user experience;
- Provided a ready module for business listings;
- Solid support and technical team with a strong development pathway for their product;
- Offered opportunity for ongoing functionality development and customization.

Funding & Support from Regional Stakeholders

Members of the Northern Rivers Work Force Development Steering Committee. This process of stakeholder engagement led to financial support from:

- Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation (since renamed to the NSW Reconstruction Authority)

Case Study 2

Case Study: Portal for Tender Opportunities in the Northern Rivers

Industry feedback driving a new initiative

In consultation with NSW Reconstruction Authority, Regional Development Australia (RDA) Northern Rivers, identified a need for local building and trades businesses to be able to see, at a glance a summary of tender opportunities in the region.

With seven local government areas and various NSW government departments providing tender opportunities, building and trades businesses were frustrated with the need to monitor tender opportunities across separate procurement and tender portals.

The collaboration with NSW Reconstruction Authority contained synergies with the funding of disaster recovery efforts. The anticipation in the industry is for a pipeline of projects that would require local building, construction and trades businesses to be alert to these opportunities that would come through councils, public works, main roads and other agencies.

Live Northern Rivers provides an opportunity

The Live Northern Rivers platform initiative is to showcase the lifestyle, work and business potential in our region. The need for an online summary of local tender opportunities fits in well with this objective.

RDA Northern Rivers worked with the technology provider to design a feature that would integrate with the existing platform functionality. Leveraging the technology provider's expertise, a seamless solution was brought together that would:

- Aggregate tender opportunities relevant to the Northern Rivers;
- Deliver a friction-free solution to include council tenders without any effort on their part;
- Connects the summary direct to the source tender/procurement portal for businesses to get more information or submit an application;
- Provide businesses with a single page summary of the latest tender opportunities in:
 - Clarence Valley Council
 - Richmond Valley Council
 - Lismore City Council
 - Kyogle Council
 - Ballina Shire Council
 - Byron Shire Council
 - Tweed Shire Council
 - Rous County Council
 - Buy.NSW
 - Local Government Procurement (LGP.com)
- Allow users to register for a **Weekly Email** summarizing new tender opportunities
- Allow users to shortlist tenders they are interested in for alerts
- Allow users to create a custom alert for any tender opportunities that contain a keyword

Live Northern Rivers Tender Portal Development

In close collaboration with the NSW Reconstruction Authority's Infrastructure Coordination unit, RDA Northern Rivers was able to:

- Design, review, test and track the development of the tender portal
- Adjust the functionality to allow hiding of non-relevant tender opportunities
- Design elements of the alert functions to build engagement from the industry
- Communicate the new function to other regional agencies and chambers of commerce to promote awareness

The new local tenders portal went live on 6 November 2023.



Photo Credit: My Clarence Valley

Below is a summary list of current tenders from across the Northern Rivers. More information about the specific tenders must be directed via the official portal for that tender. You can also **shortlist** tenders, register for **tender alerts** and **weekly updates**.

More information : [Tenders FAQ page](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Features for Registered Users :

[Register/Login](#) | [View Your Shortlist](#) | [View Your Alerts](#) | [Get Weekly Updates](#)

Receive Weekly Updates via Email

Search Tenders

Enter Keyword Or Agency... Category Status **SEARCH**

RESULTS: 1 - 20 OF 750 TENDERS

TENDER DETAILS	POSTED	AGENCY	CLOSING
ROUS-1104679 Tender for the Upgrade of the Broadwater Reservoir - DN150 Inlet Works Category: Not Categorised Updated: 26-Aug-2024 Location: Lismore, NSW	26/08/2024	Rous County Council	23/09/2024
Panel of Providers for Spray Seal, Asphalt & Stabilisation Services What the buyer is requesting Byron Shire Council invites tenders from suitably qualified and experienced organisations to join a panel of providers for the supply of Spray Seal, As... Category: Building And Property Updated: 19-Aug-2024 Location: Mullumbimby, NSW	19/08/2024	Byron Shire Council	11/09/2024
Supply of Traffic Management Services What the buyer is requesting Byron Shire Council seeking to engage the services of a suitably qualified Contractor to provide Manual Traffic Control teams for Council's roadworks a... Category: Not Categorised Updated: 19-Aug-2024 Location: Mullumbimby, NSW	19/08/2024	Byron Shire Council	11/09/2024

Funding from Regional Stakeholders

Funding of the tender portal function was provided as a variation on the funding provided by NSW Reconstruction Authority

Tender Portal Analytics

Some key analytics since the launch of the platform in Quarter 2 FY2024:

Tenders	Q2	Q3	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Q4
Tenders Listed	64	159	49	50	44	143
Tenders Viewed	50	1052	487	731	615	1833
Tenders Clicked	7	191	84	195	162	441

7. Third Party Arrangements

Organisation Name	Description of activity being undertaken	Impact that the activity will have on Funding Agreement outcomes	Risks to the Committee in completing the activity and the mitigation strategies for these	Contract start and end dates	Contract value and payment milestones	Activity progress to date
Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation (Now: NSW Reconstruction Authority)	Establish, implement and support the marketing and stakeholder engagement on the Northern Rivers Liveability and Jobs Platforms			April 2023 – April 2024	21/04/23 Contract Execution \$65,000 12/06/2023 Jobs platform go-live \$25,000 April 2024 Year 1 report Year 2 Marketing Strategy Adoption \$50,000	Complete Complete Complete
Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation (Now: NSW Reconstruction Authority)	Live Northern Rivers Tender Portal Development (Phase 1 & 2)			11/09/2023 – 02/02/2024	06/11/2023 Tender Portal Phase 1 Go-Live \$24,243.50 02/02/2024 Phase 2 Go-Live \$35,979.62	Complete
NSW Reconstruction Authority	Live Northern Rivers Tender Portal Scope Variation - Admin Controls			21/11/2023 – 05/12/2023	05/12/2023 Admin Functions Go-Live \$4,851	Complete

NSW Reconstruction Authority	Live Northern Rivers Business Listings Accreditation Tagging (Admin controlled)			25/01/2024 – 07/02/2024	07/02/2024 Additional Tagging goes live \$4,729.24	Complete
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8. Professional Development Program Round Five Variation

The Director of Regional Development (DRD) has registered and been accepted into the Regional Australia Institute's executive education program for the dates of December 1-4, 2024.

It is expected that this program will provide the DRD with:

- **Vision for Sustainable Change**

Through this program, alongside substantial networking opportunities, developing a sustainable change model tailored to the unique needs of the Northern Rivers region. The region can no longer rely on its traditional approaches; instead, it is imperative to adopt a forward-thinking strategy that is both sustainable and backed by regional support. As a community leader, it is the role of the DRD to lead this transformative effort and drive meaningful, long-lasting change.

- **Embracing a Forward-Thinking Approach**

With significant changes on the horizon, such as upcoming local government elections, increased government investment, and the launch of a 10-year "Future Build" program, it is crucial to enhance the impact of our initiatives across the Northern Rivers. The region is on the brink of one of the most profound transitions in its history. To ensure a successful recovery and long-term prosperity, we must be prepared to navigate and influence these changes strategically and effectively.

- **Leadership and Responsibility in a Time of Change**

As the Northern Rivers region faces these pivotal moments, strong leadership is essential to guide the community through this period of transformation. By actively engaging in the development of innovative strategies and fostering collaboration among key stakeholders, I am committed to playing a central role in shaping a brighter, more sustainable future for the region.