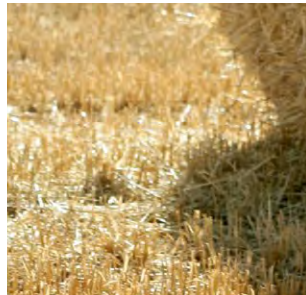




JOINT ORGANISATIONS

'Working together for regional communities'





The Hon John Barilaro MP

Deputy Premier
Minister for Regional NSW



The Hon Gabrielle Upton MP

Minister for Local Government

In an Australian first for regional communities, the Joint Organisations network will be established to help drive better planning, economic development and service delivery. Legislation will allow councils to voluntarily join new Joint Organisations to strengthen regional co-ordination and improve the delivery of important infrastructure and services for communities across regional NSW.

We, together with the Premier, have been working with councils to get the Joint Organisations model right. We have listened to their feedback of what is needed to address the unique challenges in regional NSW.

Joint Organisations will bring local governments together with the State Government to focus on the issues that matter most to regional communities such as growing local economies, creating more jobs, securing water supplies, and improving regional transport, community infrastructure and services.

Deputy Premier
Minister for Regional NSW

Councils choosing to take up this option will get a seat at the table in planning infrastructure and investment for their region, and access to better ways to get things done, with support and funding from the State Government.

The Office of Local Government will be providing hands on support to councils wishing to become a member of a Joint Organisation and will work closely with them once established.

To make sure no region is left behind the NSW Government will provide \$3.3 million to support the establishment of Joint Organisations with plans for further investment to boost regional economies and communities.

Following the passage of legislation through parliament, councils from regional NSW (excluding the Far West region) will be invited to resolve to join a Joint Organisation.

Minister for Local Government

Joint Organisations Pilot

The NSW Government piloted different Joint Organisation models during 2015 in five regions – Central NSW, Hunter, Illawarra, Namoi and Riverina – to test and reflect the different working relationships and priorities of each area.

An independent evaluation of the JO pilot process encompassing 66 key stakeholders found the JO pilot was a success and that JOs deliver real benefits for regional councils and communities.

Key findings from the evaluation include:



84%

Agreed the JO pilot improved shared regional planning and priority setting



82%

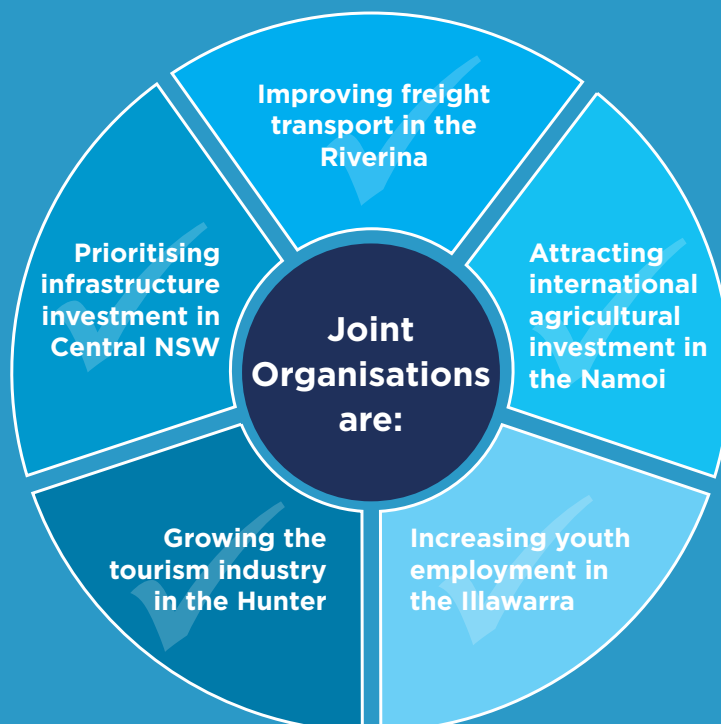
Agreed the JO pilot improved intergovernmental collaboration



76%

Agreed the JO pilot had improved council's ability to undertake effective regional leadership and advocacy

Joint Organisation success



How Joint Organisations will work

Joint Organisations will transform the way that the NSW Government and local councils collaborate, plan, set priorities and deliver important projects on a regional scale. These new partnerships will benefit local communities across regional NSW by working across council boundaries.



Legislation

The core requirements for JOs will be included in the Local Government Act and supporting regulations.

Having a legislative foundation will ensure that JOs are able to work effectively to advance regional priorities, while remaining accountable to their communities through their member councils.

As well as providing a robust foundation for JOs to build on, the legislative framework will also allow flexibility to take on additional agreed functions.



Charter

The legislative model provides that each JO is to adopt a Charter that may be tailored by them to suit the needs of each regional group.

Charters will set out the way that a JO intends to operate and govern itself.



Leadership

Each council will be represented by its Mayor and there is scope to add an additional elected representative, if member councils agree.

The JO Board will choose its own Chair but each member council will have equal voting rights to reflect that they are equal partners in strengthening their region.



Membership

The NSW Government will be represented on each JO Board as an Associate (non-voting) Member.

JOs will be able to invite neighbouring councils, county councils and other organisations to participate as non-voting members of the JO.



Day-to-day management

Each JO may appoint a suitably skilled and capable Executive Officer to oversee day-to-day operations.



Principal functions

The principal functions of each JO will be:

- Strategic planning and priority setting
- Intergovernmental collaboration
- Shared leadership and advocacy.

One of the first activities for each new JO will be to establish a Statement of Regional Priorities.

This work will elevate shared priorities in councils' Community Strategic Plans, as well as draw on other regional plans.

The statements will form the basis for discussions with the State Government about key projects and programs in each region and how shared priorities may best be delivered.



Optional functions

JOs will be able to perform additional optional functions including delivering shared services or overseeing shared arrangements, such as procurement.

Although the focus for the first year will be on the core functions, JOs will have the tools they need to start working on their optional functions from commencement.



Resourcing

The NSW Government is providing \$3.3 million in seed funding to support the establishment of JOs. They will also be able to directly apply for grants and generate income to help fund their ongoing operations. It is up to each JO to decide how councils will contribute to the organisation.

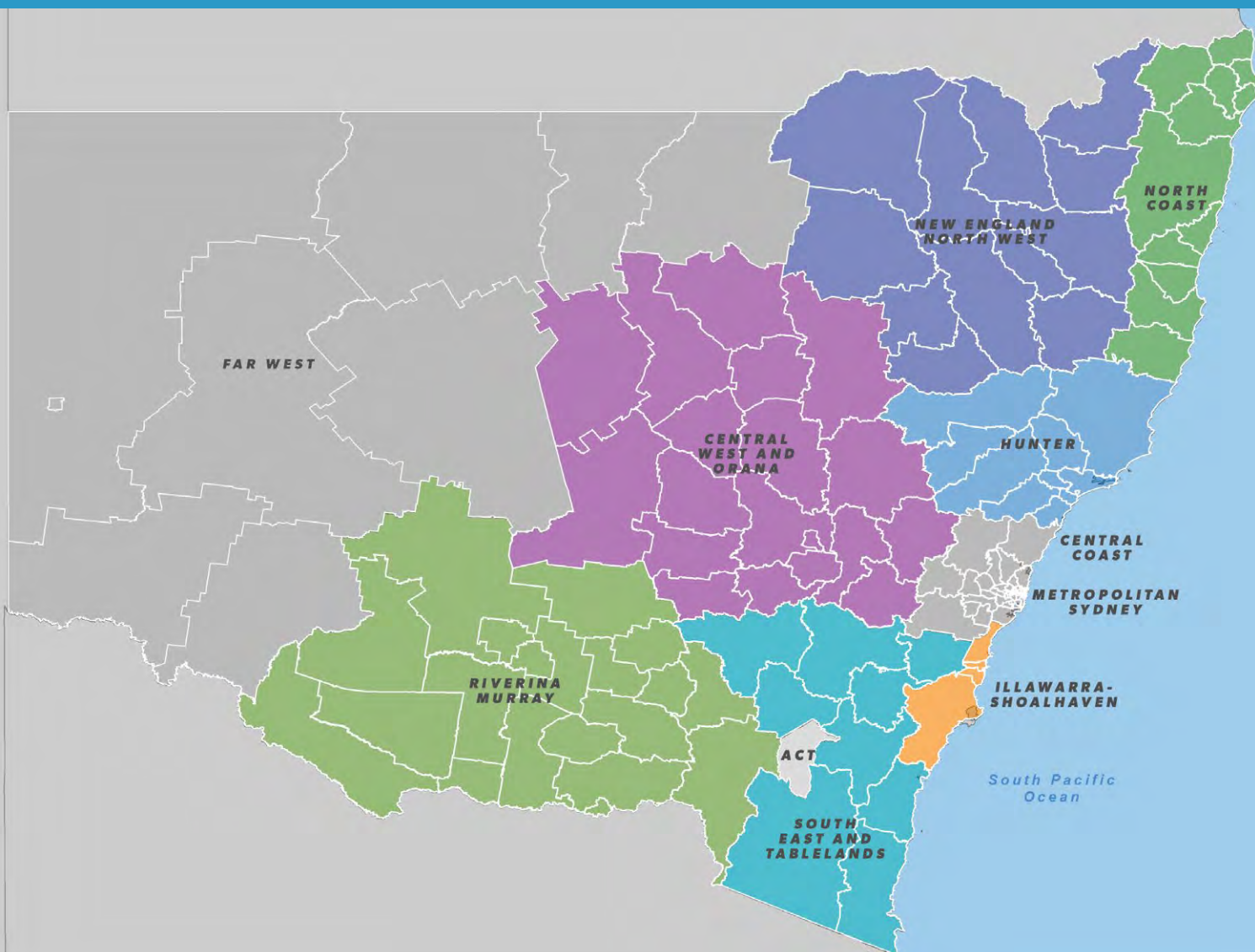
Supporting Joint Organisations

The NSW Government is committed to supporting the successful establishment of JOs and their ability to deliver early benefits to member councils and communities. The Office of Local Government (OLG) will provide a range of support that will be

tailored to meet the needs of each region. OLG will work closely with the Department of Premier and Cabinet and other Government agencies to ensure that opportunities for collaboration with the NSW Government are identified and acted on early.



Forming your Joint Organisation within State Government planning boundaries



Key Design Criteria

The NSW Government has consulted extensively with councils in regional NSW on the best design and governance model for Joint Organisations. An effective JO should:

- align with, or 'nest' within one of the State's planning regions (map above)
- demonstrate a clear community of interest between member councils and regions
- not adversely impact on other councils or JOs, e.g. leaving too few councils to form a JO
- be based around a strong regional centre or centres
- be of appropriate size and capacity to partner with NSW Government and Commonwealth Government agencies and other organisations.

Joint Organisations – Next steps for councils

Following the passage of legislation through parliament, councils will need to take the following steps:

Plan

- Identify your council's planning region (map on previous page)
- Consider the guidance material to be provided by the Office of Local Government (OLG)
- Review existing arrangements for regional collaboration in your area
- Consider the Key Design Criteria for JOs (see previous page)
- Consider the criteria for seed funding

Consult

- Consult with councils within your preferred regional grouping to reach agreement on JO membership
- Each JO must have a minimum of 3 member councils
- OLG is available to facilitate and support consultations in your region

Endorse

- Once the proposed JO membership is agreed, ensure each member endorses the proposal by a resolution of council

Nominate

- Submit your request to establish a JO to OLG by 28 February 2018
- More information on this process will be provided shortly

Establish

- The final JO network will be finalised in March 2018
- Funding allocations will also be announced in March 2018
- JOs will be proclaimed in April 2018
- OLG will support the establishment of JOs and work closely with them once operational to ensure they are successful
- JOs will be ready to start in July 2018

Commence

- Hold your first JO meeting and elect a chairperson
 - Recruit the Executive Officer
 - Work with member councils, DPC Regional Director and OLG support team to fully establish the JO
 - Work with member councils to draft the first JO Charter and Statement of Strategic Regional Priorities.
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Who to contact for further information?

Please contact the Office of Local Government on 02 4428 4100 or olg@olg.nsw.gov.au. Staff will be available to support councils in understanding the opportunities and processes to join a Joint Organisation.



For more information visit:
www.olg.nsw.gov.au