



Limestone Coast Local Government Association

"Limestone Coast Better Together"

NOTICE is hereby given that an Ordinary Meeting of the
Limestone Coast Local Government Association Board

is to be held at the

**Wulanda Recreation and Convention Centre,
7 Margaret Street, Mount Gambier SA 5290**

on

13 February 2026

commencing at 10am

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Charlotte Edmunds', is positioned above the printed name.

Charlotte Edmunds
Executive Officer
Limestone Coast Local Government Association



Limestone Coast Local Government Association

Ordinary Board Meeting Agenda

13 February 2026

Mount Gambier

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Ordinary Board Meeting Agenda

13 February 2026

Mount Gambier

Board Members

City of Mount Gambier	Mayor Lynette Martin OAM - <i>President</i>
Tatiara District Council	Mayor Liz Goossens - <i>Vice President</i>
District Council of Grant	Mayor Kylie Boston
District Council of Robe	Mayor Lisa Ruffell
Kingston District Council	Mayor Jeff Pope
Naracoorte Lucindale Council	Mayor Patrick Ross

CEO's/Staff

City of Mount Gambier	Paul Simpson	CEO
Tatiara District Council	Kingsley Green	CEO
District Council of Grant	Darryl Whicker	CEO
District Council of Robe	Nat Traeger	CEO
Kingston District Council	Ian Hart	CEO
Naracoorte Lucindale Council	Kelly Westell	CEO
LCLGA	Charlotte Edmunds	Executive Officer

1. PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Time noted

Host Mayor Lynette Martin OAM welcome.

We acknowledge the Boandik peoples as the traditional custodians of the land where we meet today.

We respect their spiritual relationship with the land and recognise the deep feelings of attachment our first nations people have with the land.

2. APOLOGIES

Board Member apologies: Mayor Kylie Boston, District Council of Grant

Board Members leave of absence: Nil

CEO's/Staff apologies: Darryl Whicker, District Council of Grant



Ordinary Board Meeting Agenda

13 February 2026

Mount Gambier

RECOMMENDATION		
That the apology of Mayor Boston be noted.		
MOVED	SECONDED	CARRIED/LOST

3. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

RECOMMENDATION		
That the minutes of the LCLGA Board Meeting held 12 December 2026 held at Kingston SE be taken as read and confirmed as accurate.		
MOVED	SECONDED	CARRIED/LOST

4. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Pursuant to Division 1, Part 4, Chapter 5 of the Local Government Act 1999, a Board Member who has an interest in a matter within the Agenda must disclose the interest to the Board.

Report Number and Title:	
Member Name:	
Member Council:	
Type of Conflict:	
Nature of Conflict:	
Member participating in Meeting:	
Reason for participation:	
Member voting on matter:	

5. **BUSINESS ADJOURNED**

6. MINUTE ACTION LIST

RECOMMENDATION	
Moved:	
Seconded:	
That the minute action list be received and noted.	
CARRIED/LOST	

Completed	Will be removed from Action List	all actions required of the Motion have been completed			
In Progress	Will remain on Action List until completed	A start has been made on the action of the Motion (progress commentary will provide explanation)			
Outstanding/Delayed	Will remain on Action List until completed	Work has not yet commenced or there has been a delay on the action. (progress commentary will provide explanation)			
Meeting date	Agenda Item	Resolution	Progress commentary	Due Date	Updated due date
12/12/25	9.3 Risk register and assurance map	2. That the board supports the establishment of a risk management policy framework register.	Risk register has been drafted and recommended by the Audit and Risk Committee. Further work proposed for an 'assurance map'	13/02/26	10/04/26

Meeting date	Agenda Item	Resolution	Progress commentary	Due Date	Updated due date
12/12/25	9.1 TOURISM	A workshop be held on 12 February 2026 to discuss Tourism.	Workshop 12/02/26	12/02/26	
10/10/25	9.4 Strategic Plan	Transition to a new strategic framework that combines the Annual Business Plan and Budget with a 5-year Strategic Plan. Commence the new budgetary and strategic framework from the 2026-27 financial year, delegating the EO to produce a document that incorporates the functions of a Strategic Plan, Action Plan, Long-term Financial Plan and Annual Business Plan to be presented to the Board in draft at the April 2026 meeting of the LCLGA Board.	Draft to be presented at the April meeting.	10/4/2026	
8/08/25	16.2 LCLGA DIGITAL TOURISM	That the Naracoorte Lucindale Council investigate a proposal to manage social media assets for 3-month 'trial', with	To be discussed at workshop.		

Meeting date	Agenda Item	Resolution	Progress commentary	Due Date	Updated due date
	ASSET MANAGEMENT	constituent councils to provide as much content as possible.			
13/12/24	10.1 4WD messaging	That the LCLGA leverage the learnings from the positive effort to define and control 4WD messaging from Robe to Beachport Coastline and seek to continue this work with all Coastal Councils. That a working party be formed to consider the merit of a consistent approach to 4WD messaging around access to coastlines	EO held stakeholder meetings 10/09/25, 11/09/25 and 29/09/25. DCG and KDC to provide details for maps. Graphic designer has not received details needed to progress.		
16/02/24	10.2.2 Eyes on Eyre	1. Request the Executive Officer to obtain more information about resources, including costing. 2. Present findings to the LCLGA Board at the LCLGA April 2024 Board Meeting.	EO distributed briefing paper on Eyes on Eyre 10 October 2025. National Parks and Wildlife (DEW) rep attended the Tourism Transition Committee meeting 4/11/25 to discuss booking system. EO requested list of possible bookable product from all constituent councils. Refer to report.	19/04/24	

7. PRESENTATIONS/VERBAL REPORTS

Nil

8. EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS REPORTS

8.1 DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Report Author:

Attachments:

Nil

8.2 REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA – LIMESTONE COAST

Report Author: Robyn Verrall

Attachments: Nil

8.3 CROSS BORDER COMMISSIONER

Report Author: Kelly-Anne Saffin, Cross Border Commissioner

Attachments: 8.3 CROSS BORDER COMMISSIONER UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

Moved:

Seconded:

1. That the report be received and noted.

CARRIED/LOST

8.4 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Verbal Report: Andrew Lamb

Attachments: Nil

8.5	UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
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Nil – Apology from Peta Crewe, Regional Manager Mount Gambier, University of South Australia

9. LCLGA REPORTS

9.1 PRESIDENTS REPORT

Report Author:	LCLGA President
Consulted:	N/A
Strategic Reference:	
Budget Implications:	Nil
Risk Assessment:	Low
Attachments:	Nil

RECOMMENDATION

Moved:

Seconded:

1. That the report be received and noted.

CARRIED/LOST

The following activities have been undertaken as President of the LCLGA:

1. Attended Telstra breakfast briefing and media launch on Limestone Coast Project, being the construction of 27 new mobile towers in the region.
2. Attended Prayer Vigil for the victims of the Bondi Beach Hanukkah Massacre at the Catholic Church Mount Gambier.
3. Several meetings with Executive Officer of LCLGA
4. Radio with Anne Stone TripleM re Limestone Coast Priorities for the State Government Election and Budget
5. Interview with Charlotte Varcoe re funding received for nature based tourism development in the region.
6. Attended SAROC and LGA Board Meetings
7. Attended LGA Board Workshop to establish Board alignment and progress CEO Recruitment.
8. Interview with Charlotte Varcoe re Limestone Coast Regional Plan and Transport Strategy

9. LGA Special Board Meeting
10. Limestone Coast Technical College official opening
11. Mayor's meeting with TAFE SA Board
12. Dinner meeting with Minister Boyer, Skills Commissioner and Industry Representatives regarding VET
13. Opening of refurbished TAFE SA Mount Gambier Campus

9.2 EXECUTIVE OFFICERS REPORT

Report Author:	Executive Officer
Consulted:	N/A
Strategic Reference:	Strategic Plan 2020-2025
Budget Implications:	Nil
Risk Assessment:	Low
Attachments:	Nil

RECOMMENDATION

Moved:
Seconded:

1. That the report be received and noted.

CARRIED/LOST

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Update of the activities of the Executive Officer for Members information.

DISCUSSION

Since the last meeting of the LCLGA work has continued to balance the ongoing administration and governance needs of the LCLGA to better reflect the new model and ensure systems and procedures are up to date while gaining momentum in advocacy activities.

Late 2025 saw the finalisation of the 2026 policy priorities document and having a small print run done. This document has been distributed to key Ministers and stakeholders either in person or by post. This document will continue to guide advocacy activities throughout 2026.

Engagement with key stakeholders to advance the priorities and build the profile of the LCLGA has included:

- Green Triangle Freight Action Group meeting
- Telstra Tower Launch
- Aus Industry intro meeting
- Limestone Coast Landscape CEO
- SAFPA CEO
- Drought Resilience Plan Working Group meeting
- Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development
- Minister for Emergency Services and Correctional Services/ Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing
- SATC CEO
- LGA SA Director Advocacy
- Grain Producers SA
- Shadow Treasurer & Shadow Minister for Primary Industries
- Shadow Minister for Primary Industries and Regional Development
- Fraser Ellis MP
- Cross Border Commissioner
- Regional Academy of Sport
- National Rural Health Alliance
- Tafe SA Board
- Murraylands and Riverland LGA Board meeting
- Timberlink

Internally, meetings on matters pertaining to the administration and management of the LCLGA include;

- Intro meeting with City of Mount Gambier CEO
- Weekly meetings with Regional Tourism Manager
- LGRS – webinar re renewal process
- LCLGA CEOs catch up
- Meeting with Mayor and CEO DCG
- Meeting with external finance Consultant re budget review
- Meeting with LCLGA President – admin and governance
- LCLGA Audit and Risk Committee
- Kingston District Council Elected Members
- Naracoorte Lucindale Council Elected Members
- Meeting with LCLGA President re AGM agenda
- Meeting with Regional Tourism Manager re DMP Action Plan
- Workshop planning meeting with 37 degrees consultants

Engaging with elected members is a key focus of the ‘six-month mark’ before budgets are structured and the strategic plan is drafted. These presentations have been made at Robe, Kingston SE and Naracoorte Lucindale Councils. The remaining three are scheduled for the next few weeks.

There are a number of governance and administrative tasks that are required to be completed this year as part of re-setting the governance framework for the LCLGA and complying with legislative requirements.

This body of work includes;

- Review of the Charter
- Review of the policies, procedures and codes
- Development of a 5-year Strategic Plan
- Long term Budget planning
- Risk assurance map
- Updated Limestone Coast Regional Public Health and Wellbeing Plan

As always, the goal is to balance this necessary work against the proactive advocacy work that delivers actions in-line with the strategic direction set by the Board and the very reason for the Association’s existence. Managing the LCLGA as the Regional Tourism Organisation also needs to be factored into time allocation.

9.3 FINANCE REPORT

Report Author:	Executive officer
Officers consulted:	External Finance Consultant Audit and Risk Committee
Strategic Reference:	
Budget Implications:	A reduction in consolidated review of \$123,426.17
Risk Assessment:	Extreme (Mismanagement of funds or fraud)
Attachments:	9.3 BUDGET REVIEW 2

RECOMMENDATION

Moved:
Seconded:

1. That the report be received and noted.

- | |
|---|
| <p>2. That the Board amend the 2025/26 Budget as per updated forecasts presented in Attachment 9.3 Budget Review 2</p> |
|---|

CARRIED/LOST

Executive Summary

The review provides updated forecasts for the LCLGA operating and capital expenditure, comparing them to the original budget.

This report presents the second review of the LCLGAs operating and capital budget for 2025/26.

Budget amendments were adopted by the LCLGA Board in December 2025. The overall Budget presented in this review contains only slight variations.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011, Regulation 9 requires Local Government to:

- prepare and consider the uniform presentation of finances relating to the review of budgets at least twice, between 30 September and 31 May, and
- between 30 November and 15 March (dates inclusive) prepare and consider a report that compares the revised forecast for each item of the financial statements to the adopted budget in a manner consistent with the Model Financial Statements.

The Local Government Act 1999 Schedule 2 Provisions applicable to subsidiaries, Part 2 Section 25—Budget states that a regional subsidiary must have a budget for each financial year and that the budget must comply with the standards and principles prescribed by the regulation and that, A subsidiary may, with the approval of the constituent councils, amend its adopted budget for a financial year at any time before the year ends.

DISCUSSION

Adopted Budget was a breakeven position with a closing cash balance of \$281,466.

Budget Review 1 projected a deficit of \$123,448.95 with a closing cash balance of \$231,415

Budget Review 2 projects a deficit of \$123,426.17 with a closing cash balance of \$231,438. **This represents a \$22.78 change from BR1.**

9.4 RISK REGISTER AND ASSURANCE MAP

Report Author:	Executive Officer
Officers / committee consulted:	Audit and Risk Committee
Strategic Reference:	Strategic Plan 2020-2025
Budget Implications:	Nil
Risk Assessment:	Low
Attachments:	9.4 LCLGA DRAFT RISK REGISTER

<p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>Moved: Seconded:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the report be received and noted. 2. That the Risk Register be adopted as drafted. <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED/LOST</p>

Executive Summary

As per the recommendation of the Audit and Risk Committee made at the November meeting of the committee, the Board resolved on 12 December 2026 *That the board supports the establishment of a risk management policy framework register.*

A Risk Register has now been drafted and the Audit and Risk committee has made the following resolution:

That the LCLGA Audit and Risk Committee;

1. *recommends the Risk Register as drafted*
2. *notes that the development of an assurance map for the LCLGA to provide assurance against corporate risk and business processes will be presented to the committee at the March meeting*

LCLGA is not a complex organisation. It has very small number of employees (1.6 FTEs) and does not own property, plant, equipment, or other assets. Most of LCLGA's financial transactions are of relatively low value and risk, and the size of the budget and cash reserves is modest compared to other local government organisations. In this context, a proportionate risk management approach has been applied in developing the risk register.

The Audit and Risk Committee has recommended that further to the Risk Register, an assurance map now be drafted and updated regularly to outline measures being undertaken to reduce identified risks.

An Assurance Map will be drafted and presented to the next Audit and Risk Committee at the March meeting before being presented to the Board in April.

9.5 CHARTER REVIEW

Report Author:	Executive Officer
Consulted:	NA
Strategic Reference:	Strategic Plan 2020-2025
Budget Implications:	Nil
Risk Assessment:	Low
Attachments:	Nil.

RECOMMENDATION

Moved:

Seconded:

1. That the report be received and noted.
2. That the LCLGA Charter be circulated to Constituent Councils for comment and feedback to inform any necessary amendments to be received by the Executive Officer no later than 1 May 2026
3. That should amendments be suggested, a tender process be undertaken as per the LCLGA Procurement Policy to engage a commercial law firm to draft the amended Charter with the draft to be presented to the Board at its August meeting.

CARRIED/LOST

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks agreement on the process for review of the LCLGA Charter in 2026.

DISCUSSION

As per Clause 6.9 *Alteration and Review of Charter* :

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- the Charter must be reviewed by the Constituent Councils at least once in every four (4) years, and,
- The Charter may be amended by unanimous resolution of the Constituent councils.

It was last reviewed in 2022 and the amended Charter adopted in late 2023.

If the same process is to be undertaken to review and potentially amend the Charter this year this would be undertaken as follows:

- The current Charter will be circulated to Constituent Councils for comment and feedback to inform amendments
- A commercial law firm will be engaged to amend the charter based on the comments and feedback provided by Constituent Councils.
- A draft of the amended Charter will be presented to the Board seeking approval for release
- The released draft will then be sent to our Constituent Councils seeking their approval
- Once unanimously approved by Constituent Councils, the amended Charter will be formally adopted by the Board.

Under clause 19(5) of Schedule 2 to the Act, if the constituent councils amend a regional subsidiary's charter, the constituent councils must;

- furnish a copy of the charter, as amended, to the Minister; and
- ensure that a copy of the charter, as amended, is published on a website determined by the chief executive officer; and
- ensure that notice of the fact of the amendment and a website address at which the charter is available for inspection is published in the Government Gazette.

9.6 DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN

Report Author:	Executive Officer
Consulted:	Nil
Strategic Reference:	Strategic Plan 2020-2025
Budget Implications:	Nil
Risk Assessment:	Low
Attachments:	9.6.1 Limestone Coast Regional Drought Resilience Plan
	9.6.2 Table 3: Pillar Implementation Pathways and Actions

RECOMMENDATION

Moved:

Seconded:

1. That the report be received and noted.
2. That the Board consider appointing an additional LCLGA representative to Limestone Coast Regional Drought Resilience Plan Project Reference Group.

CARRIED/LOST

Executive summary

This report updates the Board on work as a consortia member to the Limestone Coast's Regional Drought Resilience Plan.

In this next phase of the program, additional implementation funding will be provided to PIRSA from the Commonwealth for eligible activities in approved plans.

The proposal put to PIRSA from the Limestone Coast outlines three actions, which together represent the starting point for RDRP implementation.

DISCUSSION

The Project Reference Group including consortia members and other stakeholders met on 12 January and prioritised the actions based on importance, deliverability and potential impact in the current drought response and recovery. Consideration was also given to the need to add value to primary producers and communities, rather than add to their existing burdens.

There are 3 areas of delivery for this project:

Action 1: Regional Coordination

Bringing together industry stakeholders and mental health professionals to ensure open communication, increase effectiveness of services and reduce duplication.

Action 2: Mental Health Support

Mental health professionals and stakeholders inform promotion of available support services and identify barriers to participation.

Action 3: Community Connection

Engagement with First Nations people commenced in preparation for the development of a Caring for Country Plan. Community groups are supported to host events with quick response and minimal red tape.

This first phase project will deliver on actions shown below – (noting that these are not in priority order.)

Pathway	Project Reference	Output
Pathway 1. Business Support - Enhancing the Small Business Support Program to Build Business Resilience for Future Dry Times	1-2	1-2 Create a map of available support services (in a variety of formats) promoting available services (financial, relevant rebates/incentives, farm advice/outreach, Mental Health etc. website with linked services maintained by a lead agency.
Pathway 2. Farm-level drought plans - Supporting primary producers to manage seasonal conditions and develop longer term strategies	2-2	2-2. Promote access to climate science and tools to broaden the awareness of more variable and unpredictable local conditions in the future.
Pathway 3. Industry Collaboration - Fostering Collaboration Between Industry Bodies and Agencies	3-1	3-1-1. Appoint a Project Coordinator for Industry Collaboration.
		3-1-2. Develop a steering committee across Limestone Coast based primary production bodies to share information and as appropriate program and resources.
		3-1-3. Create a calendar of events around key production periods for engagement and networking.
Pathway 5. First Nations Co-design - Empowering First Nations' Caring for Country	5-0	Foundational activity Strengthen existing relationships with First Nations people of the region
Pathway 7. Mental Health - Improve awareness and remove barriers to mental health and well-being resources	7-1	7-1 Mental health first aid for primary production facing service providers.
	7-2	7-2-1. Appoint a Project Coordinator for Mental Health Program.
		7-2-2a. Implement a steering committee with relevant health and social stakeholders.
		7-2-2b. Undertake a desktop review of existing literature resources, gaps and access barriers.
		7-2-3. Create a map of available services/resources.

		7-2-4. Create a gap analysis with recommendations.
Pathway 8. Community Connection – Create Connection in Communities in Good Times and Dry Times	8-1	8-1-1. Promote low-cost opportunities for people to gather.
		8-1-2. Provide seed funding for community groups to gather on local issues or with local interests.

Phase two will write an Implementation Plan (RDALC) to be finalised before April. A meeting of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan Project Reference Group will inform the strategic direction.

Implementation of the remaining Actions will form phase three.

9.7 LCLGA POLICY AND PROCEDURES REVIEW

Report Author:	Executive officer
Officers consulted:	
Strategic Reference:	Strategic Plan 2020-2025
Budget Implications:	A reduction in consolidated review of \$123,448.95
Risk Assessment:	Low
Attachments:	9.7 POLICY AND PROCEDURES REGISTER

<p>RECOMMENDATION</p> <p>Moved: Seconded:</p> <p>That the LCLGA Board resolves that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the be received and noted. 2. the Executive Officer be delegated to review all policies, procedures and codes and draft suggested amendments to the register, including revoking unnecessary policies and procedures and adding any required new policies and procedures and that the amended register be presented to the Board in April. 3. All new or amended policies and procedures be presented to the Board in draft no later than 30 June 2026. 4. Any policies, procedures or codes that relate to financial governance of the LCLGA will be referred to the LCLGAs Audit and Risk Committee prior to recommending to the Board. <p style="text-align: right;">CARRIED/LOST</p>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report informs the Board of current policies and procedures and plans to review them.

DISCUSSION

Policies, codes of practice and codes of conduct are fundamental components of a good governance framework used to:

- set directions;
- guide decision making by the Board and administration; and
- inform the public about how organisation will normally act.

Development of these standards takes time, and it can be difficult to maintain an up-to-date, comprehensive and consistent set of documents, particularly in the recent change over of staff and the re-structure of the Association.

In 2024 an audit of the LCLGAs policies, procedures and codes was undertaken and a register was created (attachment 9.7). There are a total of 77 listed policies, procedures and codes.

Many of these listed in the register are well over due for review and given the new structure of the Association many are no longer required.

A full review of the Register is required in light of the new structure of the Association.

Phase 1 will recommend a condensed Register to revoke policies and procedures no longer needed and suggest additional policies and procedures where value can be added to the governance framework.

Phase two will draft new policies and procedures and update existing. Any policies, procedures or codes that relate to financial governance will be prioritised to allow time for these to be referred to the LCLGA Audit and Risk Committee before being presented to the Board.

9.8 LCLGA SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES

9.8.1 TOURISM TRANSITION COMMITTEE

SUB-COMMITTEE	Tourism Transition Committee
MEETING DATE/s	Next meeting date 3 March 2026
MINUTES	Nil

9.8.2 TOURISM WORKING COMMITTEE

SUB-COMMITTEE	Tourism Working Committee
MEETING DATE/s	Next meeting 24 February 2026
MINUTES	Nil

9.8.3 ROADS AND TRANSPORT WORKING COMMITTEE

SUB-COMMITTEE	ROADS AND TRANSPORT WORKING COMMITTEE
MEETING DATE	Next meeting TBC (last week Feb)
MINUTES	Nil

10. LIMESTONE COAST REGIONAL TOURISM ORGANISATION

Report Author:	LCLGA EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Consulted:	REGIONAL TOURISM MANAGER
Strategic Reference:	Strategic Plan 2020-2025
Budget Implications:	Nil
Risk Assessment:	Low
Attachments:	Nil

RECOMMENDATION

Moved:
Seconded:

1. That the report be received and noted.

CARRIED/LOST

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report updates the LCLGA as the Regional Tourism Organisation on activities undertaken by the Executive Officer and Regional Tourism Manager in this RTO capacity.

10.1 EXECUTIVE OFFICER UPDATE

PR

In late December a media release was drafted and issued to highlight State Government grant funding leveraged by the LCLGA through the *Experience Nature Tourism Fund*.

This resulted in the story being printed in the [Mount Gambier Times \(Jan 11\)](#), [the SE Voice \(Jan 6\)](#) and the Regional Tourism Manager was interviewed on ABC South East 6 Jan.

Advocacy

Meeting with SATC (Emma Terry and Miranda Lang) at their office in Adelaide where we discussed the LCLGAs key priorities for State Government investment. We also discussed the desire to see more industry development programs delivered in the region in 2026. I also advocated for investment attraction. As well as advocacy, this meeting was an opportunity to discuss the *Strengthening Tourism Initiative* and the future of Tourism in the Limestone Coast.

With the 2026 Advocacy Document now published, this has been posted with a cover letter to Minister Bettison and Minister Hood. This follows in-person meetings held last year.

Strategic Engagement

Following feedback from the last Board meeting of the LCLGA (Dec), we have secured the SATC Director, Cruise, Aviation & Access to visit the region and discuss opportunities in regional air/sea travel.

A conversation with RDA LC CEO in late December has led to LCLGA/ RDA partnership to deliver Agri-Tourism Forums/workshops in the region. This is part of a broader initiative to help diversify farm income, and leverage opportunities from a growing interest in agri-tourism for visitors. The Regional Tourism Manager is working with the RDA to finalise details. Funding will be sourced from existing budget.

10.2 REGIONAL TOURISM MANAGER UPDATE

Industry & Stakeholder Engagement

- Maintained a regular program of engagement with South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) teams (fortnightly to monthly), including Regional Tourism Manager catch-ups and targeted meetings with Events, Destination PR, Industry Development, Travel Trade and Destination Development, to coordinate and progress Limestone Coast priorities across events, PR, trade and destination development.
- Participated in the District Council of Robe elected member update session to support engagement in the DMP process and broader regional tourism priorities (10 December 2025).

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- Providing input into SATC's Gather Round campaign planning and rollout, with a focus on leveraging the Limestone Coast's position as a road-trip destination within broader SATC marketing in the lead-up to the event.
- As-required communication updates provided to the Tourism Management Committee, including updates on SATC activity, upcoming media and PR, and general tourism matters. Input was also sought on tourism industry support needs in 2026 across individual council areas, along with support for distribution of the LCLGA industry support survey.
- Planning is underway with RDA Limestone Coast and the Tourism Industry Council SA to co-deliver an Agritourism workshop for Limestone Coast farmers and agricultural businesses, introducing agritourism opportunities for business diversification and including case studies from businesses currently operating in the agritourism space. Event timing is still to be confirmed, with an intention to leverage the upcoming Lucindale Field Days for promotion.
- Coordinating a visit with SATC Director, Cruise, Aviation & Access, Andrew McKinnon, in mid-February to hear updates on SATC's aviation priorities and activities, including discussion of local access considerations.
- Supporting SATC-led PR and media activity through regional coordination and input, including itinerary and route planning and advice on visit timing. Recent examples include Postcards (Channel 9 Melbourne), a targeted investment to support interstate visitation from Victoria and help manage algal bloom perceptions; Hello SA coverage supporting the Dining Cashback program in Kingston; and AFL Gather Round-related filming and content development across the Limestone Coast for broadcast, digital and social channels in the lead up to the 2026 event.
- Providing regional input to maximise Limestone Coast coverage within SATC-funded regional marketing support (2025/26), including planning of upcoming segments with South Aussie with Cosi and Hello SA. Filming is scheduled for February, with segments airing from March to May 2025, strategically targeting the off-peak winter period when visitation typically slows.

Destination Management Plan (DMP)

- The Destination Management Plan draft is being finalised, with minor refinements underway in preparation for the design phase with SATC. As part of the DMP reporting and accountability framework, a draft Year 1 Action Plan (July 2026 – June 2027) has been developed for the Limestone Coast Regional Tourism Organisation (LCLGA).
- The Action Plan is intended as a practical tool to support the RTO and represents a distilled set of priority actions emerging from the Destination Management Plan. It proposes a mix of foundational actions, project scoping and ongoing activities that outline how the RTO can support delivery across the region.
- The draft Action Plan will require refinement based on available resourcing into the 2026/27 financial year.

Communications & Outreach

- Interviewed by Becc Bird, ABC South East Breakfast, on 6 January regarding Experience Nature Tourism Fund outcomes for the Limestone Coast, including discussion on the value of nature-based tourism to the region.
- Continued direct communication with regional tourism sector through updates, promotion of opportunities and one-on-one support. Recent targeted outreach has included:
 - Sharing key information on the algal bloom situation including SATC's Coast is Calling campaign and promotion of the Dining Cashback program (including SA-wide eligibility for seafood retailers), and continued direct engagement with coastal operators to monitor visitor sentiment and emerging needs.
 - Coordinated circulation of the Limestone Coast Tourism Industry Support Priorities – 2026 Survey over December–January to support advocacy and prioritisation of industry support, and to inform RTM outreach and future workshops, mentoring and SATC-supported programs.
- Compiled and distributed the Limestone Coast Tourism Industry Updates e-newsletter, December edition (33.4% open rate), highlighting:
 - LCLGA regional tourism organisation activity and updates
 - Industry support programs available in 2026
 - Progress of the Limestone Coast Destination Management Plan
 - Recent regional press and media coverage
- Continuing weekly updates and ongoing engagement with industry via the Tourism Industry Network Facebook Group (680+ Limestone Coast members), sharing information on marketing opportunities (e.g. Gather Round), industry capability initiatives and upcoming events.
- Targeted outreach to Limestone Coast tourism businesses to promote Intake 4 of SATC's Experience Development Program, due to run in March, to support continued strong Limestone Coast participation. LCLGA has offered a small travel bursary as an incentive to assist successful participants with travel costs associated with the Adelaide-based delivery.

11. MOTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil

12. MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

13. QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil

14. QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

15. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

15.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MINUTES

Pursuant to Section 83(5) of the Local Government Act 1999 the accompanying documents to this agenda item is delivered to the Committee Members upon the basis that the Committee consider the documents in confidence under Part 3 of the Act, specifically on the basis that the Committee will receive, discuss or consider:

(k.) tenders for the supply of goods, the provision of services or the carrying out of works

SUB-COMMITTEE	AUDIT AND RISK
MEETING DATE	30 January 2026
ATTACHMENT	15.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MINUTES PROVIDED IN-CONFIDENCE

CONSIDERATION FOR EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Exclusion of the Public – Section 90(3)(k) Order

Pursuant to Section 90(2) and (3)(k) of the Local Government Act 1999 the Limestone Coast Local Government Association Board (the Board) orders all persons present with the exception of all Board Members and CEOs Paul Simpson, Kingsley Green, Nat Traeger, Ian Hart, Kelly Westell and Charlotte Edmunds be excluded from attendance during Agenda Item 15.1 **Audit and Risk Committee Minutes** The Board is satisfied that, pursuant to section 90(3)(k) of the Act, the associated documents to be received, discussed and considered in relation to this Agenda Item are tenders for the provision of services.

The Board is satisfied that the principle that the meeting be conducted in a place open to the public has been outweighed in the circumstances because the information to be disclosed and discussed has the potential to impact adversely on each of the tenderers as competitive commercial information will be disclosed.

Moved:

Seconded:

CARRIED/LOST

RECOMMENDATION

Moved:
Seconded:

That the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held 30 January 2026 be received and noted.

CARRIED/LOST

CONSIDERATION FOR KEEPING ITEMS CONFIDENTIAL

1. Having considered Agenda Item 15.1 **Audit and Risk Committee Minutes** in confidence under section 90(2) and (3)(k) of the Local Government Act 1999, the Limestone Coast Local Government Association Board (the Board), pursuant to section 91(7) of that Act orders that the documents and minutes relevant to Agenda Item 15.1. be retained in confidence until all tenderers have been notified.
2. The Committee delegates to the LCLGA Executive Officer, pursuant to Section 91(9)(c) of the Local Government Act 1999, the power to revoke the order made by the Committee under Section 91(7) and (9) of the Act at part (1) of this resolution at any time prior to the expiration of the period of the order specified therein.

Moved:
Seconded:

CARRIED/LOST

15.2 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS

Pursuant to Section 83(5) of the Local Government Act 1999 the accompanying documents to this agenda item is delivered to the Committee Members upon the basis that the Committee consider the documents in confidence under Part 3 of the Act, specifically on the basis that the Committee will receive, discuss or consider:

(k.) tenders for the supply of goods, the provision of services or the carrying out of works.

Report Author:	LCLGA EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Consulted:	LCLGA AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE
Strategic Reference:	Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Budget Implications:	Within adopted Budget
Risk Assessment:	Extreme – (Mismanagement of funds or fraud)
Attachments:	15.2 Tender Proposals for Audit Services

CONSIDERATION FOR EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Exclusion of the Public – Section 90(3)(k) Order

Pursuant to Section 90(2) and (3)(k) of the Local Government Act 1999 the Limestone Coast Local Government Association Board (the Board) orders all persons present with the exception of all Board Members and CEOs Paul Simpson, Kingsley Green, Nat Traeger, Ian Hart, Kelly Westell and Charlotte Edmunds be excluded from attendance during Agenda Item **15.2 Appointment of External Auditors**. The Board is satisfied that, pursuant to section 90(3)(k) of the Act, the associated documents to be received, discussed and considered in relation to this Agenda Item are tenders for the provision of services.

The Board is satisfied that the principle that the meeting be conducted in a place open to the public has been outweighed in the circumstances because the information to be disclosed and discussed has the potential to impact adversely on each of the tenderers as competitive commercial information will be disclosed.

Moved:

Seconded:

CARRIED/LOST

RECOMMENDATION

Moved:

Seconded:

1. That the report be received and noted.
2. That the Board resolve to appoint Bentleys as external auditors for a 5-year period 2025/26 through to 2029/30 in accordance with Clause 20 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011.

CARRIED/LOST

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the Tender process, Audit and Risk Committees assessment and recommendation and information obtained since to ensure the Board can make an informed decision on entering into a contract for services.

BACKGROUND

As per 5.3 of the LCLGA Charter, the Board must appoint an external auditor in accordance with the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011.

At the 2024 LCLGA Annual General Meeting held on the **14 February 2024** the following resolution was adopted,

“Undertake a tender process for a 5-year contract for new Auditors to start as of the 1st of July 2024 until 30th of June 2029.”

This resolution was not acted on to date due to the multiple changeovers of staff and the restructure of the Association. A one-year contract to extend Audit Services for the 2024-25 FY was entered into with the previous Auditors. Consequently, the LCLGA has been using the same Auditors for six years.

As the Association’s structure is now settled and the scope of work required from external auditors is clear, the Select tender process is underway in accordance with the LCLGA procurement policy.

Following a call for expressions sent to the three major auditors in South Australia considered suitable to undertake the work, two proposals were received.

DISCUSSION

LCLGA must appoint an Auditor for the purpose of auditing the statutory financial statements and the financial controls exercised by the LCLGA within a relevant financial year.

Audits will be carried out in accordance with legislative requirements ([Section 129 ‘Conduct of audit’](#) of the [Local Government Act 1999](#) and [Regulation 19 ‘Audit Standards’](#) of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011).

Upon making a recommendation under subsection (2), the LCLGA must take into account any factor prescribed by the regulations.

The appointment of the Auditor for a Subsidiary needs to be in accordance with [Clause 20](#) of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011, noting that the ‘5 year rule’ in Section 128 of the Act **does not** apply to subsidiaries:

Section 128

(4a) *The term of appointment of an auditor of a council must not exceed 5 years*

However, the intent of Section 128, 4a could be taken into consideration when assessing the two proposals.

The Audit and Risk Committee Assessed the proposals using an agreed Assessment Criteria and Weighting as follows:

Assessment criteria	Weighting	Bentleys	Dean Newbery
Cost - value for money	20	20	20
Timeframes - ability to deliver in the timeframes as set out in LCLGA Charter	20	20	20
Capability - previous experience, knowledge of LG Act and Regulations relating to Subsidiaries	30	30	30
Performance/Experience - current work/ previous work.	30	30	30
	100	100	100

Mandatory Criteria Y/N

Eligibility under the Act - Clause 20 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011.	N/A	yes	yes
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The Audit and Risk committee resolved:

That the LCLGA Audit and Risk Committee;

1. *recommends the appointment of Bentleys as external auditors for a two-year period 2025/26 through to 2026/27 in accordance with Clause 20 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011.*
2. *Notes that while Section 128 4a of the Act does not apply to subsidiaries, the Committee has taken the intent of Section 128 4a into consideration given there is no substantial quantitative or qualitative difference between the two proposals and Bentleys offers additional value to the LCLGA in providing a fresh look at the Association.*

Mount Gambier

Given the Committee resolved to recommend a two-year period rather than five, the Executive Officer contacted the preferred service provider to question the fee structure.

Subsequently the appointment for a two year period would incur a higher fee due to the additional time spent getting to know the Association and its systems and processes that would otherwise be amortised over the 5 years.

If appointed for just 2 years rather than 5, the fee would be \$6,500 +GST per year.

The alternative service provider has indicated no change in fee structure for a two year contract given this provider has been working with LCLGA for 6 consecutive years.

While the Audit and Risk committee has not met again to re-visit its recommendation, the Executive Officer did seek the opinion of individual members and has drafted the recommendation based on this informal advice.

The preferred provider offers a new or renewed perspective and therefore will add value to the Association, however, this value may not outweigh the additional annual fee of \$2,000, representing an increase of 36% on an annual fee of \$5,500.

Meanwhile the risk of a five-year term is determined to be low.

CONSIDERATION FOR KEEPING ITEMS CONFIDENTIAL

1. Having considered Agenda Item 14. *Appointment of External Auditors* in confidence under section 90(2) and (3)(k) of the Local Government Act 1999, the Limestone Coast Local Government Association Board (the Board), pursuant to section 91(7) of that Act orders that the documents and minutes relevant to Agenda Item **15.2. Appointment of External Auditors** be retained in confidence until all tenderers have been notified.
2. The Committee delegates to the LCLGA Executive Officer, pursuant to Section 91(9)(c) of the Local Government Act 1999, the power to revoke the order made by the Committee under Section 91(7) and (9) of the Act at part (1) of this resolution at any time prior to the expiration of the period of the order specified therein.

Moved:

Seconded:

CARRIED/LOST

16. MEETING SCHEDULE

As per Cluse 3.7.7 of the LCLGA Charter, the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Board (including the Annual General Meeting) fixed by the Board in accordance with clause 3.7.2 will be confirmed at each ordinary meeting of the Board.

Recommendation	
That the Board confirm the 2026 meeting schedule as follows;	
DATE	LOCATION
13 FEBRUARY 2026	CITY OF MOUNT GAMBIER
10 APRIL 2026	DISTRICT COUNCIL OF ROBE
26 JUNE 2026	DISTRICT COUNCIL OF GRANT
7 AUGUST 2026	TATIARA DISTRICT COUNCIL
9 OCTOBER 2026	NARACOORTE LUCINDALE COUNCIL
11 DECEMBER 2026	KINGSTON DISTRICT COUNCIL
MOVED	SECONDED
	CARRIED/LOST

17. MEETING CLOSE

Time noted



Limestone Coast Local Government Association

Ordinary Board Meeting Agenda

13 February 2026

Mount Gambier

ATTACHMENTS

- 8.3 CROSS BORDER COMMISSIONER UPDATE
- 9.3 BUDGET REVIEW 2
- 9.4 LCLGA DRAFT RISK REGISTER
- 9.6.1 Limestone Coast Regional Drought Resilience Plan
- 9.6.2 Table 3: Pillar Implementation Pathways and Actions
- 9.7 POLICY AND PROCEDURES REGISTER

CONFIDENTIAL ATTACHMENTS

- 15.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MINUTES
- 15.2 Tender Proposals for Audit Services

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

2025/2026 ADOPTED BUDGET		2024/2025 AUDITED ACTUAL	2025/2026 ACTUAL 30/9/2025	2025/2026 BUDGET REVIEW 1	2025/2026 BUDGET REVIEW 2
\$	INCOME	\$	\$	\$	\$
282,340	Local Government Council Contributions	915,891	282,340	282,340	282,340
82,261	Other Contributions	40,000	82,261	122,261	122,261
-	Other Income	80,997	3,150	3,150	3,150
-	Project Income	371,024	-	-	-
-	Interest	-	9,412	7,600	14,000
364,601	TOTAL REVENUES	1,407,912	377,163	415,351	421,751
	EXPENSES				
255,846	Wages and Salaries	584,805	150,563	269,223	278,750
78,755	Operating Expenses	187,053	93,595	239,577	236,427
30,000	Project Expenditure	532,627	30,000	30,000	30,000
364,601	Total Expenses	1,304,485	274,158	538,800	545,177
-	OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) BEFORE CAPITAL AMOUNTS	103,427	103,005	(123,449)	(123,426)
-	Net gain (loss) on disposal or revaluation of assets	-	-	-	-
-	Amounts specifically for new or upgraded assets	-	-	-	-
-	Physical resources received free of charge	-	-	-	-
-	TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	103,427	103,005	(123,449)	(123,426)

**LIMESTONE COAST LGA
CONSOLIDATED BUDGET 2025/2026**
CASH FLOW STATEMENT

2025/2026 ADOPTED BUDGET		2024/2025 AUDITED ACTUAL	2025/2026 ACTUAL 30/9/2025	2025/2026 BUDGET REVIEW 1	2025/2026 BUDGET REVIEW 2
\$ Inflows (Outflows)		\$ Inflows (Outflows)	\$ Inflows (Outflows)	\$ Inflows (Outflows)	\$ Inflows (Outflows)
	CASHFLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES				
	RECEIPTS				
364,601	Operating Receipts	1,157,530	367,751	414,929	414,929
-	Investment Receipts	-	9,412	7,600	14,000
	PAYMENTS				
(435,525)	Operating payments to suppliers & employees	(1,199,337)	(274,159)	(785,618)	(791,995)
-	Finance Payments	-	-	-	-
(70,924)	Net Cash provided by (or used in) Operating Activities	(41,807)	103,004	(363,089)	(363,066)
	CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES				
-	Net Cash provided by (or used in) Investing Activities	-	-	-	-
	CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES				
-	NET CASH USED IN FINANCING ACTIVITIES	-	-	-	-
(70,924)	NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH HELD	(41,807)	103,004	(363,089)	(363,066)
352,390	CASH AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	636,311	594,504	594,504	594,504
<u>281,466</u>	CASH AT END OF YEAR	<u>594,504</u>	<u>697,508</u>	<u>231,415</u>	<u>231,438</u>

**LIMESTONE COAST LGA
CONSOLIDATED BUDGET 2025/2026**
BALANCE SHEET

2025/2026 ADOPTED BUDGET		2024/2025 AUDITED ACTUAL	2025/2026 ACTUAL 30/9/2025	2025/2026 BUDGET REVIEW 1	2025/2026 BUDGET REVIEW 2
	ASSETS				
	CURRENT ASSETS				
\$		\$	\$	\$	\$
281,466	Cash and cash equivalents	594,504	550,249	231,415	231,438
-	Trade & other receivables	7,178	3,580	-	-
<u>281,466</u>		<u>601,682</u>	<u>553,829</u>	<u>231,415</u>	<u>231,438</u>
<u>281,466</u>	TOTAL ASSETS	<u>601,682</u>	<u>553,829</u>	<u>231,415</u>	<u>231,438</u>
	LIABILITIES				
	CURRENT LIABILITIES				
-	Trade & Other Payables	239,415	19,676	-	-
-	Other Liabilities	-	-	-	-
-	Short-term Provisions	7,403	-	-	-
<u>-</u>	TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>246,818</u>	<u>19,676</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES				
-	Long-term Provisions	-	-	-	-
<u>-</u>	TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<u>-</u>	TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>246,818</u>	<u>19,676</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<u>281,466</u>	NET ASSETS	<u>354,864</u>	<u>534,153</u>	<u>231,415</u>	<u>231,438</u>
	EQUITY				
281,466	Accumulated Surplus	354,864	457,870	231,415	231,438
-	Asset Revaluation	-	-	-	-
-	Other Reserves	-	-	-	-
<u>281,466</u>	TOTAL EQUITY	<u>354,864</u>	<u>457,870</u>	<u>231,415</u>	<u>231,438</u>

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

2025/2026 ADOPTED BUDGET		2024/2025 AUDITED ACTUAL	2025/2026 ACTUAL 30/9/2025	2025/2026 BUDGET REVIEW 1	2025/2026 BUDGET REVIEW 2
\$		\$	\$	\$	\$
	ACCUMULATED SURPLUS				
281,466	Balance at end of previous reporting period	251,437	354,865	354,864	354,864
0	Net Result for Year	103,427	103,005	-123,449	-123,426
0	Transfer From Reserves	0	0	0	0
0	Transfer To Reserves	0	0	0	0
281,466	TOTAL EQUITY AT END OF REPORTING PERIOD	354,864	457,870	231,415	231,438

UNIFORM PRESENTATION OF FINANCES					
2025/2026 ADOPTED BUDGET		2024/2025 AUDITED ACTUAL	2024/2025 ACTUAL 30/9/2025	2024/2025 BUDGET REVIEW 1	2024/2025 BUDGET REVIEW 2
\$		\$	\$	\$	\$
364,601	Operating Revenues	1,407,912	377,163	415,351	421,751
(364,601)	less Operating Expenses	(1,304,485)	(274,158)	(538,800)	(545,177)
-	Operating Surplus / (Deficit) before Capital Amounts	103,427	103,005	(123,449)	(123,426)
	Less Net Outlays in Existing Assets				
	Capital Expenditure on renewal and replacement of Existing Assets	-	-	-	-
	less Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	-	-	-	-
	less Proceeds from Sale of Replaced Assets	-	-	-	-
	Less Net Outlays on New and Upgraded Assets				
	Capital Expenditure on New and Upgraded Assets	-	-	-	-
	less Amounts received specifically for New and Upgraded Assets	-	-	-	-
	less Proceeds from Sale of Surplus Assets	-	-	-	-
	Net Lending / (Borrowing) for Financial Year	103,427	103,005	(123,449)	(123,426)

LIMESTONE COAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOC

Level 1
9 Bay Road
Mount Gambier SA 5290

Profit & Loss Consolidated

July 2025 To 31 December 25

ADOPTED BUDGET 25/26		ACTUAL YTD	BUDGET REVIEW 1	BUDGET REVIEW 2	\$ DIFFERENCE	NOTES
	INCOME					
\$95,016.84	City of Mount Gambier	\$95,017.00	\$95,016.84	\$95,016.84	\$0.00	
\$46,419.90	District Council of Grant	\$46,420.00	\$46,419.90	\$46,419.90	\$0.00	
\$0.00	Wattle Range Council	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
\$52,167.14	Naracoorte Lucindale Council	\$52,167.00	\$52,167.14	\$52,167.14	\$0.00	
\$20,455.23	District Council of Robe	\$20,455.00	\$20,455.23	\$20,455.23	\$0.00	
\$45,019.39	District Council of Tatiara	\$45,019.00	\$45,019.39	\$45,019.39	\$0.00	
\$23,261.51	District Council of Kingston	\$23,262.00	\$23,261.51	\$23,261.51	\$0.00	
\$82,261.00	SA Tourism Commission	\$82,261.00	\$82,261.00	\$82,261.00	\$0.00	
\$0.00	LGA SA	\$36,000.00	\$40,000.00	\$40,000.00	\$0.00	
\$0.00	Interest	\$9,412.03	\$7,600.00	\$14,000.00	\$6,400.00	Inreased interest and \$1,627 bonus not budgeted
\$0.00	Sundry Income	\$3,150.00	\$3,150.00	\$3,150.00	\$0.00	
\$0.00	Participant Contribution	(\$36.36)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
\$364,601.00	Total INCOME	\$413,126.67	\$415,351.00	\$421,751.00	\$6,400.00	
	EXPENSES					
\$15,000.00	Audit & Accountants Fees	\$6,610.56	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$0.00	
\$250.00	Bank Fees	\$239.95	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	
\$3,000.00	Computing & IT	\$6,490.42	\$8,800.00	\$11,000.00	\$2,200.00	Adobe \$165 per mth, GTE avg \$600 per mth
\$32,000.00	Consultancy	\$4,832.79	\$94,000.00	\$94,000.00	\$0.00	
\$0.00	Occupancy	\$2,315.67	\$2,600.67	\$2,600.67	\$0.00	
\$5,000.00	Governance	\$2,922.33	\$10,800.00	\$10,800.00	\$0.00	Honorarium & Independent Audit & Risk Committee Member Fees
\$5,000.00	Insurances	\$12,969.55	\$16,871.11	\$16,871.11	\$0.00	
\$2,000.00	Meeting Expenses	\$222.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,500.00	(\$500.00)	
\$0.00	Miscellaneous Expenses	\$6.27	\$500.00	\$50.00	(\$450.00)	
\$0.00	Postage	\$132.43	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$0.00	
\$1,000.00	Printing/Stationery	\$312.41	\$1,000.00	\$750.00	(\$250.00)	
\$1,700.00	Subscriptions	\$1,482.65	\$1,700.00	\$2,200.00	\$500.00	Myob \$136.36 per mth, News \$29.09 per mth, Border Watch \$152.73
\$2,000.00	Telephones	\$1,003.37	\$2,000.00	\$1,850.00	(\$150.00)	\$135.86 monthly Phone Account
\$1,000.00	Training	\$288.09	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	
\$3,000.00	Travel/Accommodation/Meals	\$679.98	\$3,000.00	\$1,000.00	(\$2,000.00)	
\$5,000.00	Vehicles - Fuel	\$1,071.93	\$5,000.00	\$2,156.46	(\$2,843.54)	
\$22,000.00	Vehicles - Leasing	\$14,401.20	\$22,000.00	\$24,843.54	\$2,843.54	Due to Lease of DDM not expiring until end of August.
\$500.00	Vehicles - Repairs/Maintenance	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	
\$215,400.00	Wages	\$132,801.46	\$234,929.27	\$242,000.00	\$7,070.73	Assuming all leave is taken this financial year. Variance is due to Allowances not being included in Wages budget
\$25,200.00	Wages - Superannuation	\$16,599.29	\$27,543.51	\$30,000.00	\$2,456.49	Variance due to Superannuation not being budgeted for allowances
\$9,996.00	Wages - Workcover	\$1,162.50	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	
\$5,000.00	Wages - FBT	\$2,541.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	
\$5,250.00	Wage - Accruals	\$0.00	\$5,250.00	\$5,250.00	\$0.00	
\$5,305.00	6. Governance & Collaboration	\$1,536.36	\$5,305.00	\$5,305.00	\$0.00	
\$0.00	8. Promote Value of Tourism	\$0.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	
\$0.00	LCRSA	\$46,100.39	\$46,100.39	\$46,100.39	\$0.00	
\$0.00	Relocation Costs / Restructure	\$17,435.40	\$20,000.00	\$17,500.00	(\$2,500.00)	
\$364,601.00	Total EXPENSES	\$274,158.00	\$538,799.95	\$545,177.17	\$6,377.22	
\$0.00	Operating Profit	\$138,968.67	(\$123,448.95)	(\$123,426.17)	\$22.78	

Wages		\$132,488.96	\$16,599.29	\$0.00
	5/01/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	
	19/01/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	
	2/02/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	
	16/02/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	
	2/03/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	
	16/03/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	
	30/03/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	
	13/04/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	
	27/04/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	
	11/05/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	
	25/05/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	
	8/06/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	
	22/06/2026	\$8,276.92	\$996.23	\$4,138.46

\$240,088.92 \$29,550.28 \$4,138.46

DRAFT Limestone Coast Local Government Association - Risk Register 2026

Risk Rating Legend

Low	Moderate	High	Extreme
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Risk #	Risk Area	Risk Details	Subordinate Risks	Inherent Risk Rating	Key Controls	Responsibility	Residual Risk Rating
1	Statutory and Regulatory	Non-compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements poses legal, financial, and reputational risks to the organisation	Requirements of the Charter / Local Government Act are not met	High	Maintain and monitor up to date policies, procedures and internal controls	Executive Officer	Low
			Lack of effective systems and processes to monitor and respond to regulatory changes.		Prepare and maintain an annual compliance checklist for Charter and LG Act.	Executive Officer	
			Insufficient operational oversight		Maintain annual external audit and promptly attend to all audit findings	Executive Officer	
			Ineffective internal controls environment, including lack of monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement of existing corporate governance practices, resulting in fraud, corruption, misconduct or non-compliance.		Set and monitor operational KPIs for Executive Officer	Board	
2	Ineffective Governance	Ineffective governance leading to poor decision making and poor strategic performance	Inadequate management of conflicts of interest	Moderate	Implement a robust board member induction process	Executive Officer / Board Members	Low
			Absenteeism or presenteeism by Board Members		Implement a biennial Board evaluation process	President / Executive Officer	
			Committee structure is ineffective or lacks clarity		Regular review of Committee Terms of Reference with updates as required	Executive Officer	
3	Financial Sustainability	Financial settings are not sustainable in the long term	Inadequate financial resources to delivery on business plan objectives or to meet member expectations.	High	Compliance with all grant funding conditions and requirements	Executive Officer	Low
			Access to non-competitive grants is lost or restricted		Regular budget reports to Board	Executive Officer	
			Withdrawal or non-payment by constituent councils		Alignment of Business Plan and Budget Process	Executive Officer / Board	
			Compliance with financial controls and policies		Executive Officer / Board		
			Consultation with constituent councils during annual business plan and budget process		Executive Officer		
4	Reputational	Negative reputation and public perception of the Association	Constituent Council withdraws or subsidiary is dissolved	Extreme	Implement and monitor Advocacy Plan and Framework	Executive Officer	Moderate
			Advocacy is misaligned to constituent councils and does not deliver meaningful outcomes		Regular reporting against Business Plan	Executive Officer	

			Ineffective engagement with key stakeholder groups and regional partners		Regular reporting on stakeholder engagement aligned to advocacy and business plan	Executive Officer	
					Regular communication to constituent council elected members about LCLGA activities clearly aligned to Strategic Plan	Executive Officer	
					Biannual face-to-face engagement with constituent council elected members and early engagement with new elected members	Executive Officer	
					Consultation with constituent councils on business plans		
5	IT Systems and Data Governance	Inadequate IT systems and data governance endanger operational efficiency and increase susceptibility to security breaches and regulatory non-compliance	Business systems are not fit for purpose, to enable delivery of efficient operations and meet organisational needs.	High	Compliance with Records Management Policy	Executive Officer	Moderate
					Service Agreements require contractors to maintain adequate IT systems	Executive Officer	
6	Human Resources	Absence of Executive support to the Board.	Inadequate funding leading to remuneration offering not competitive. Unsustainable workload/ low morale leads to resignation. Inability to attract skilled staff. Direction and priorities of the Board adapt and skills no longer match current staff.	Extreme	Alignment of Business Plan and Budget Process with Strategic Plan. Ensure funding is proportional to workload- project funding is adequate to support core staff.	Executive Officer / Board	Moderate
					Employment conditions are attractive inc. flexible hours, WFH etc. Ongoing employment contracts with funding certainty		
					Regular performance reviews and clear KPIs		
					Effective communication between Board and Staff		
					Regularly review and update policies and procedures to give clear direction and support		
					Mitigate reputational risk to ensure the Association is attractive to potential employees		
7.	Financial	Mismanagement of funds or fraud	Financial controls inadequate Ineffective budgeting leads to unplanned deficits and/or insolvency Inadequate insurance to cover unexpected losses Inadequate cyber security	Extreme	Regular review of internal controls, policies and procedures	Executive Officer / Audit and Risk Committee / Board	Low
					Annual Audit conducted by External Auditor		
					Board approved financial delegations		
					Regular meetings of Audit and Risk Committee to review budget		
					Financial reports presented to the Board regularly		



LIMESTONE COAST

Regional Drought Resilience Plan

V.3 January 2025

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Acknowledgement of Country

Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast acknowledges and respects the Traditional Custodians of the ancestral lands of the Limestone Coast. We acknowledge Elders past and present, and we respect the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of Aboriginal peoples to Country.

We appreciate the contributions of First Nations people in the development of this Regional Drought Resilience Plan. We look forward to building on this relationship during the implementation.

Executive Summary

This Limestone Coast Regional Drought Resilience Plan tells the story of dry times in the region and identifies opportunities for strengthening communities to respond to drought. The Plan was built on the findings of community engagement across the Limestone Coast, combined with research-based evidence, and the input of project partners:

- Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast
- Limestone Coast Landscape Board
- Limestone Coast Local Government Association
- Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA
- SA Drought Hub
- South East Aboriginal Focus Group

In this plan, the Bureau of Meteorology (2022) definition of drought is used:

Drought is a prolonged, abnormally dry period when the amount of available water is insufficient to meet our normal use.

For the Limestone Coast, the *timing* of rainfall and the *cumulative effects* of weather are as important to agricultural success as the *amount* of rain. The impacts of weather-related variances across industry are also diverse, with each industry having different water, temperature and timeframe parameters.

Climate projections indicate that the Limestone Coast will spend 40% more time in drought by 2030 (DEW, 2024).

The Plan identifies tangible actions that will help build resilience, with immediate benefits, as well as long-term impacts.

Vision		
A resilient community, economy and environment informed and prepared for drought and dry times.		
Strategic Priorities		
Economic Resilience	Environmental Resilience	Social Resilience
Goals		
Ensuring primary producers and their supply chains have the resources and skills to capitalise on good years and successfully navigate dry times.	Established systems are in place to replenish our waterways, wetlands and landscapes ensuring sustainable future capacity for our environment and industry.	Enhanced community well-being and mental health resilience by creating stronger networks, community collaboration and equitable access to healthcare and education.
Impacts		
Primary production businesses and their communities are self-reliant, productive and profitable.	Primary production landscapes are functional and sustainable, with healthy natural capital.	Primary production communities are resourceful, adaptable and thriving.

The partners will continue to work towards securing funding to deliver the recommendations in this Plan.

1. Introduction

This Regional Drought Resilience Plan (the Plan) has been developed for the Limestone Coast region in South Australia. The Plan development has been a joint project of Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast (RDALC), Limestone Coast Landscape Board (LCLB), Limestone Coast Local Government Association (LCLGA), the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) and the South Australian Drought Hub.

The Plan seeks to bring together local knowledge and lived experiences, with scientific projections to create a roadmap for a resilient Limestone Coast. This has proved challenging with the diversity of industry, climates and geology across the region.

While there are many ways that the region could be divided, for this purpose, this diversity has translated to three distinct zones across the Limestone Coast: Upper (Tatiara District Council and Naracoorte Lucindale Council), Lower (Wattle Range Council, District Council of Grant and City of Mount Gambier), and Coastal (District Council of Robe and Kingston District Council). Each zone has its own unique climate characteristics, influencing the diversity of primary production industries. Each industry varies in the requirements for soil, rainfall and temperatures, often resulting in clusters of similar enterprises across the region aligning within zones.



Figure 1: Limestone Coast region and Aboriginal Language Areas

1.1. Regional Definition of Drought

Drought in this plan is defined as a prolonged, abnormally dry period when the amount of available water is insufficient to meet our normal use (BOM, 2022).

For the Limestone Coast, the timing of rainfall and the cumulative effects of weather are as important to agricultural success as the amount of rain. The impacts of weather-related variances across industry are also diverse, with each industry having different water, temperature and timeframe parameters.

The need for a regionally appropriate definition of drought was raised several times during the RDRP process. Participants engaged in the RDRP program described “*drought as a natural event marked by insufficient rainfall, that impact[s] negatively on water availability and agricultural production*”. Primary producers often referred to these rainfall deficit periods as “dry times,” especially when rainfall is lacking at crucial times or when one or more seasons fail to break. The term dry times is used throughout this document, to reflect our region’s lived experience of relatively short periods between significant rainfall.

1.2. Regional Drought Resilience Plans

The Australian Government’s *Future Drought Fund* seeks to secure drought resilience by assisting farmers and communities to prepare for the impacts of dry times, building a resilient agricultural sector, landscape, and communities. The Fund is delivered against three inter-connected strategic priorities: economic resilience, environmental resilience, and social resilience, which have been brought through to this plan.

The Regional Drought Resilience Planning program is one of the Future Drought Fund’s key programs. Jointly funded by the South Australian Government, this program supports regional consortia to deliver unique, community-led Regional Drought Resilience Plans. The purpose of the Limestone Coast Plan is to benefit communities by:

- building their economic, environmental and social resilience to future droughts
- being in a stronger position to adapt to climate change
- forming stronger connections and networks within and between regions
- applying best practice data and information to make better decisions.

1.3. Building on Existing Work

The Limestone Coast has a long history of industry and government investment in research and resources, which are available to the community. Individuals have also shown their ability to adapt to changing climatic and economic conditions on a farm level scale, as well as uptake of industry wide adaptation. The figure below identifies some of the key stakeholders in primary production in the region and includes their vision statements where appropriate.



Figure 2: Overview of Regional Partners in Sustainable Primary Production

Beyond the vision statements described above, there are many initiatives that have supported primary producers and associated communities to prepare and respond to challenging times. The figure below identifies some of the current programs relevant to drought resilience, although it is not an exhaustive list.



Figure 3: Limestone Coast Existing Programs Snapshot.

The intent of the Plan is to recognise and build on the current and historic work. Significant research and support are available, and the Plan identifies opportunities to maximise the impact of this investment.

1.4. Project Reference Group

Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast were the lead organisation in the development of the Plan, bringing together partners in a Project Reference Group made up of representatives from:

- Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast
- Limestone Coast Landscape Board
- Limestone Coast Local Government Association
- Department of Primary Industries and Regions SA
- SA Drought Hub

The role of the Project Reference Group was to oversee the appointment of a consultant for the community engagement and evidence review, co-design the engagement approach, provide technical advice on the evidence base for the Plan, co-design and review content for the draft Plan, engage with other stakeholders, and approve the response to Independent Review.

2. Dry Times

2.1. What dry times look like in the region

Droughts are a feature of all climates and are defined by regional averages and features. Engagement across the Limestone Coast found terminology such as *'dry times'*, *'when the season doesn't break'*, *'we didn't get the rainfall we would normally get'*, or *'we had to dry sow'*. While these terms relate to a short duration, they are compounded by other stressors, and can have significant impacts. There is also a cumulative effect when dry times run over multiple seasons.

During engagement, the word 'drought' was reserved for multi-year events associated with an almost complete pause in primary production activities and was described as an event that generally affected other regions, not so much the Limestone Coast.

The three main environmental factors contributing to drought and dry times are:

1. Timing, frequency, intensity and quantity of rainfall.
2. Evapotranspiration, soil moisture and runoff; and
3. Temperature including hot days, heatwaves and heat stress.

At the time of writing in 2024, the region was impacted by back-to-back dry growing seasons. Livestock producers involved in the engagement identified that the dry spring in 2023 reduced the amount of hay, silage or grain that was produced on farm. This resulted in both lower on-farm storage of supplementary feed, as well as lower income from sales to others. The dry start to 2024, was amplified by the dry spring prior. Many farmers spoke of having less feed stored than they preferred, as well as lower cashflow impacting the ability to purchase supplementary fodder.

The timing of rainfall in the Limestone Coast is crucial. From a grazing perspective, the autumn break must come before ground temperatures become too cold for vegetation growth. For those involved in cropping, many producers were forced to dry sow crops for the 2024 season. While this is standard practice in other regions, it is unusual for the Limestone Coast. Dry sowing is a substantial investment with no guarantee of a return if sufficient rain does not fall in the days and weeks post sowing.

Other examples of adaptive management during dry times include containment feeding for livestock, reducing overheads, delaying capital improvements, and reducing stocking rates. The flow on effects for the primary production supply chain and local communities are discussed below.

In good years, the Limestone Coast supports other Australian producers who may be experiencing drought. This support includes purchasing or agisting stock, as well as supplying grain, hay and silage. In some instances, assisting with transport of stock and fodder is also provided.

2.2. Impacts of dry times

Primary industry

The impact of drought and dry times on primary production in the Limestone Coast are dependent on many factors, including the:

- Duration of drought conditions
- Frequency of drought conditions
- Presence of other stressors

- Industry resilience
- Farm level resilience; and
- Broader economic climate.

For livestock producers, one of the major and immediate impacts is the need for high levels of supplementary feed such as lucerne, hay, silage and grain. In addition to the cost for purchase and transport from outside suppliers, farmers also have the lost income from the usual sale of fodder produced on farm.

The labour costs for supplementary feeding are significant, both in financial terms, and on wellbeing. The time commitment, as well as the financial burden means that farming families are less likely to be able to leave the farm for social events, travel or holidays. Without a break, particularly during the traditionally quieter winter season, or over the Christmas period, resilience can be further eroded.

Other impacts on livestock producers include:

- Oversupply and market saturation of livestock as farmers destock to reduce farm upkeep and expenditure.
- Heat stress on beef/dairy cattle, sheep, or other animals, impacting feed intake, lowering weight gain, reducing fertility, lowering milk production and increasing susceptibility to death or disease.
- Loss of productive pastures increasing weed infestations, reducing overall productivity and impacting livestock health, reducing farming profitability.
- Loss of genetics as a result of deliberate destocking or livestock losses.
- Wool producers can experience reduced output, having to slaughter adult sheep to meet landscape carrying capacities. Average yields can decline, as well as changes in quality. The value of breeding ewes is recognised, with producers holding onto their strong genetic bloodlines for as long as humanely possible.

For cropping enterprises, the major impact is the dual loss of harvest, as well as the loss of seed grain, legume, and fodder crop to soil condition deterioration, dry conditions, and a lack of rain. Timing and consistency of rainfall, evapotranspiration rates, and temperature can all impact the quantity and quality of pasture and crop production.

Many farms in the Limestone Coast are mixed enterprise, providing diversity of income and spreading the risks associated with market fluctuations. In drought and dry times, the impacts can be magnified by the range of enterprises on-farm.

For the viticulture industry, irrigation availability is a key factor in minimising the impacts of drought and dry times. In addition, hot seasonal conditions can impact vine flowering, bunch growth, and soil water availability (including from irrigation). This can result in shrivelled grapes, early fruit ripening (up to 4 weeks earlier), and sweeter wines (due to elevated sugar concentrations (baumé) and less acidity) with higher alcohol levels in final products. Extreme heat conditions can place strain on refrigeration equipment and chillers, leading to increased running costs and reduced capacity. Wines are also ageing quicker than 'typical' years as they can be susceptible to microbial activity.

The risk of bushfire is significantly increased during drought and dry times. With this, comes the increased threat of loss of life, stock, and infrastructure. While fire is a concern for all communities and producers, the forest industry is particularly susceptible, with potentially catastrophic results. The cost of fire monitoring and emergency response is high, and the long-term impacts from the loss of timber and wood flow are significant.

The forest industry invests heavily in fire protection, not only for their own assets, but for broader community benefit. In addition to the increased fire risk, production in the forest industry is impacted with reduced water availability for tree growth, losses particularly in young trees and lower quality timber during drought.

From a manufacturing perspective, lower capital investment results in lower demand for timber. This results in lower production and/or stockpiling.

For all industries, changes in climate have the potential to increase pest plants and animal numbers, as well as creating seasonal conditions that increase or introduce plant and animal diseases.

Water security landscape

Declines in rainfall at crucial periods of the primary production calendar are likely to increase the pressure on groundwater use. At the same time, recharge of the aquifers is reduced, causing double the impact on the region's water resources. Groundwater monitoring has highlighted some areas of the Limestone Coast that are showing signs of groundwater stress, with increased salinity and lower water tables. These impacts are exacerbated in drought conditions. The region has limited access to surface water for primary production, which would be further reduced in drought conditions.

Access to groundwater can also be compromised, with lower water levels requiring new or re-drilling of bores.

Increased rainfall variability is projected for the region, with high rainfall intensity events predicted to rise. The impacts on water infrastructure will be significant, as will the impact on crops. High intensity rainfall events can lead to increased soil erosion, particularly during or immediately after drought conditions or dry times. There is also increased risk of flooding and damage to buildings. There is some risk that during periods when the region receives 'too much' rainfall, individuals may undertake maladaptive practices such as drainage infrastructure to remove water from the landscape.

From an environmental water perspective, reduced rainfall has a significant impact on wetland ecosystems and increases the risk of saline waters entering into estuaries and aquifers. Water quality is impacted by increased salinity and algal blooms, as well as the amount of water available.

Social and community landscape

The impacts of drought and dry times cause significant strain on farmers and their families, as well as their broader communities. Drought can result in lowered social participation and connection, exacerbating mental health impacts, and compounding risks of isolation. These impacts are particularly amplified within lower socioeconomic populations, who have a reduced capacity to access support services, may rely on a single income, and are vulnerable to fluctuating costs of living (NFF, 2023).

Other social and community impacts of drought and dry times (based on independent evidence review and stakeholder engagement) include:

- Children taking on extra responsibilities, attempting to take on 'adult' roles to ease parent's worries, with school attendance reduced
- Increased cost of living and prices for food
- Burnout and compassion fatigue, leading to other physical health issues such as headaches, difficulty sleeping, and exacerbation of existing health issues
- Self-medication and uptake of excessive alcohol consumption, or other 'risky' behaviours
- Potential for increased anxiety or depression due to financial and/or family pressures.

Reduced spending by primary producers due to drought conditions or dry times can combine with higher cost of living for the general community. This places financial strain on small businesses and can lead to redundancies and business closures, further exacerbating the impacts on community.

Access to healthcare, including mental health services can be difficult in the region due to limited availability of providers, distance to travel, long wait times and cost. The potential stigma associated with mental health can also be greater in smaller communities. During drought and dry times, the financial burden can be too high. In addition, an initial request may be met with significant delays, knocking confidence or motivation at the beginning of the process.

Future outlook and trajectory for the region

Climate projections indicate that the Limestone Coast will spend 40% more time in drought by 2030 (DEW, 2022).

Rainfall

Historical monthly, seasonal, and annual rainfall totals are highly variable across all parts of the region. Within each season, there can be substantial differences between the rain received in one year and what is received in the next. The table below shows decadal average rainfall, over time and compared to the Millennium drought, demonstrating the regional variance.

	Decade Average (mm)					Long term average	Modern average	Millennium drought
	1940s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s	1940-2017	1985-2017	2001-2009
Keith	470	473	463	433	425	466	436	443
Frances	547	537	523	459	511	527	506	453
Lucindale	688	609	527	510	581	596	550	496
Millicent	795	721	662	720	746	732	705	708
Mount Gambier	777	695	697	695	740	711	712	717

Figure 4: Annual Average Rainfall Values Reported via Decadal Averages

Predicted changes in rainfall are more pronounced. For Keith, monthly rainfall is projected to decrease in the months of February, April, May, October, and November. For Naracoorte, monthly rainfall is projected to decrease from historical averages in March, April, October, and November. For Millicent, rainfall variability from one year to the next, for a given month, is smaller than that of Naracoorte, and Keith. However, declines in rainfall are still projected for April, July, October, and November.

The severity of the impact of these changes will depend on the type of activity being undertaken. For example, February rainfall is important for pasture growth, and contributes to water for lucerne seed crops, which are harvested in March and April. April and May rainfall is important for pasture growth to sustain livestock over the cooler months, and for providing sufficient soil moisture for winter cropping. October and November rainfall is important for pasture growth coming out of the cooler months when pasture growth is constrained, and for fruit set to veraison in grapes. For crops, reductions in growing season rainfall can lead to less crop biomass that would otherwise protect soils from erosion (DEWNR, 2013). Impacts will also be dependent upon the soil type and moisture holding capacity of an individual’s soil.

As noted within the South East Drainage and Wetland Strategy (SEWCB, 2019), flooding of creek floodplains as a result of episodic high intensity rainfall events should also be expected under increased climate change scenarios. Simultaneously, reduced aquifer recharge due to rainfall declines and reduced runoff are also expected, altering freshwater inflow availability. Given the significance of habitats for birds, frogs, and other plant and animal species found across the region, protecting existing environments from surface water diversion, increased pollutant levels, groundwater declines, and sea level intrusion within freshwater ecosystems as a result of these changing rainfall patterns must be considered.

These projected changes should be considered in the context of the confidence in the climate models being able to replicate the multitude of processes which influence rainfall generating weather patterns. There is high confidence that winter, spring, and annual rainfall are projected to decrease. Autumn and summer rainfall changes are less clear (Hope, 2015). While changes may occur, caution is recommended given that many of the weather systems that generate heavy rainfall, such as intense frontal systems and severe thunderstorms, are poorly resolved in the climate models.

In the future, the dominant trend is the continuation of interannual variability, but for rainfall declines to potentially occur at critical points in the agricultural calendar. These changes are projected to occur in the context of rising temperatures and potential evapotranspiration, which could lead to a given rainfall total being less effective in producing pasture, crop, vegetables, or vine growth or soil moisture improvement than would historically have been the case.

Evapotranspiration

Potential evapotranspiration is the maximum amount of water that could be evaporated and transpired from soils and plants from the landscape (BOM, 2010). This climate variable is not crop specific. High level data for the different zones in Limestone Coast Region is shown in Table 1, with seasonal increases in potential evapotranspiration relative to a baseline of 1964–1993 for three separate locations. The data indicates increases in the order of 3% in the short-term (2030), 5% in the medium-term (2050) and approximately 10% in the long-term (2090).

Table 1: Potential Evapotranspiration by Season

Timeframe	Baseline (1964-1993)				2030's				2050's				2070's			
	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring
Keith	618	311	171	416	635	320	175	443	646	325	180	453	653	333	184	464
Naracoorte	593	296	163	389	609	303	164	413	620	308	168	423	629	315	172	434
Millicent	535	267	149	358	550	275	153	381	560	278	156	390	568	285	159	400

Higher rates of evapotranspiration will increase the rate of water loss from above ground storage such as farm dams, moisture loss from vegetation such as pasture, crops, vegetables, vines, and native vegetation, as well as from soils, particularly when soil cover is minimal. It is recommended that these changes are read in conjunction with the projected changes in rainfall, as increases in evapotranspiration will exacerbate declines in rainfall.

The projections for increased potential evapotranspiration are modelled with high confidence, but magnitude of change is projected with medium confidence (Hope, 2015).

Hot Days

Hot conditions can exacerbate droughts and dry times, which can amplify impacts including:

- Low soil moisture reduces the ability of evaporation to moderate air temperatures, potentially leading to longer or more extreme heatwave conditions
- Periods of high heat increase evaporation, intensifying soil moisture loss and drought conditions
- Hot dry conditions have a major influence on bushfires by driving up the likelihood of high or extreme fire danger weather, can lead to ‘megafires’, reduce the effectiveness of fire suppression activities and create conditions which have health and safety impacts on fire-fighting staff (Papari, 2021).
- Heatwaves in combination with extended drought conditions have been observed to cause algal blooms in water bodies, increase invasive species, and affect forest productivity (Steffan, 2014).
- Heat stress can affect grain yield and productivity, with potential losses equal to or greater than that resulting from drought or frost. Field data suggests yield losses in the order of 190 kg/ha for every one degree increase in average temperature. Extreme temperatures during the flowering stage (September/October) have an even greater detrimental impact, with reductions of yield in the order of 379 kg/ha for every additional day over 30°C, and a reduction of 837 kg/ha for every additional day over 35°C (GRDC, 2013).

A substantial increase in the temperature reached on the hottest days, the frequency of hot days and the length of warm spells is projected with very high confidence. A substantial decrease in the frequency of frost events is also expected (CSIRO, 2017). The impacts of heat can be further magnified when successive days of extremely hot weather are experienced. The maximum temperature reached can also be a critical factor for agricultural, people or infrastructure, and can represent a tipping point where severe degradation or failures may occur. These temperature extremes can therefore magnify drought impacts. The table below shows the predicted increase in temperature, hot days and hot nights.

Table 2: Hot Day Temperature Predictions for Limestone Coast (DEW, 2024)

Climate Variable	Baseline (1986–2005)	2030 (RCP 8.5)	2050 (RCP 8.5)	2070 (RCP 8.5)
Average Daily Maximum Temperature (°C)	18.8	+1.1	+1.6	+2.3
Average Number of Hot Days Per Year (>35°C)	12	+4	+6	+9
Average Number of Hot Days Per Year (>40°C)	2	+1	+3	+3
Average Number of Hot Nights Per Year (>20°C)	4	+2	+3	+5

Source: Department for Environment and Water 2024.

Drought

The impacts of drought events will likely become more frequent, more severe, or last for longer durations. Heat, bushfires, and other disasters such as floods, will compound these impacts before, during, and after drought periods (CSIRO, 2017). Potential impacts include:

- Increased hot conditions, including increased heatwaves, hot nights, and days over 35 or 40 degrees will make it harder for people to stay cool during the day, sleep at night, and perform daily tasks. This will reduce individuals' mental and physical resilience.
- Extreme heat leading to degradation of sporting fields, which otherwise provide outlets of relief and community cohesion, boosting physical and mental wellbeing.
- The impacts on primary production are significant, and as the major contributor to the local economy, the flow on effects for local businesses and communities are also high.
- Increased disaster frequency and durations impacting more people, locations, infrastructure, and industries, meaning fewer 'good times' and reduced buffer periods to rehabilitate, 'get back on your feet', and cope during droughts.

Cross Border Impacts

Primary production doesn't stop at State borders, with many farmers owning land in both SA and Western Victoria. Similarly, the vast forest estate in the southern part of the region is owned, managed and harvested as a collective "Green Triangle" by timber companies.

It is recognised that the impacts of drought and dry times in Victoria also impacts on the severity and response in the Limestone Coast. With some shared water resources, as well as common markets for product, shared service industries and combined communities, the impacts of seasonal conditions are felt by all.

2.3. Systems mapping Limestone Coast

An initial evidence review (WSP, 2024) and engagement informed the development of two systems maps for the Limestone Coast. Due to the broad diversity of industry and high number of additional external impacts, the maps are extremely complex and do not cover every element.

Figure 5 shows the major impacts of significantly below average rainfall on primary producers, their communities and the environment. One strength of this Plan is the co-design with community through the engagement processes and the Project Reference Group. The weakness of this co-design approach was that the cropping and livestock sectors were well represented, while other industries such as viticulture and forestry were underrepresented. This is reflected in the content of the system map. Future updates to the plan could seek broader coverage of industries and different community sectors.

Figure 6 shows the opportunities for the Limestone Coast to benefit when there is average rainfall in this region and drought conditions experienced elsewhere.

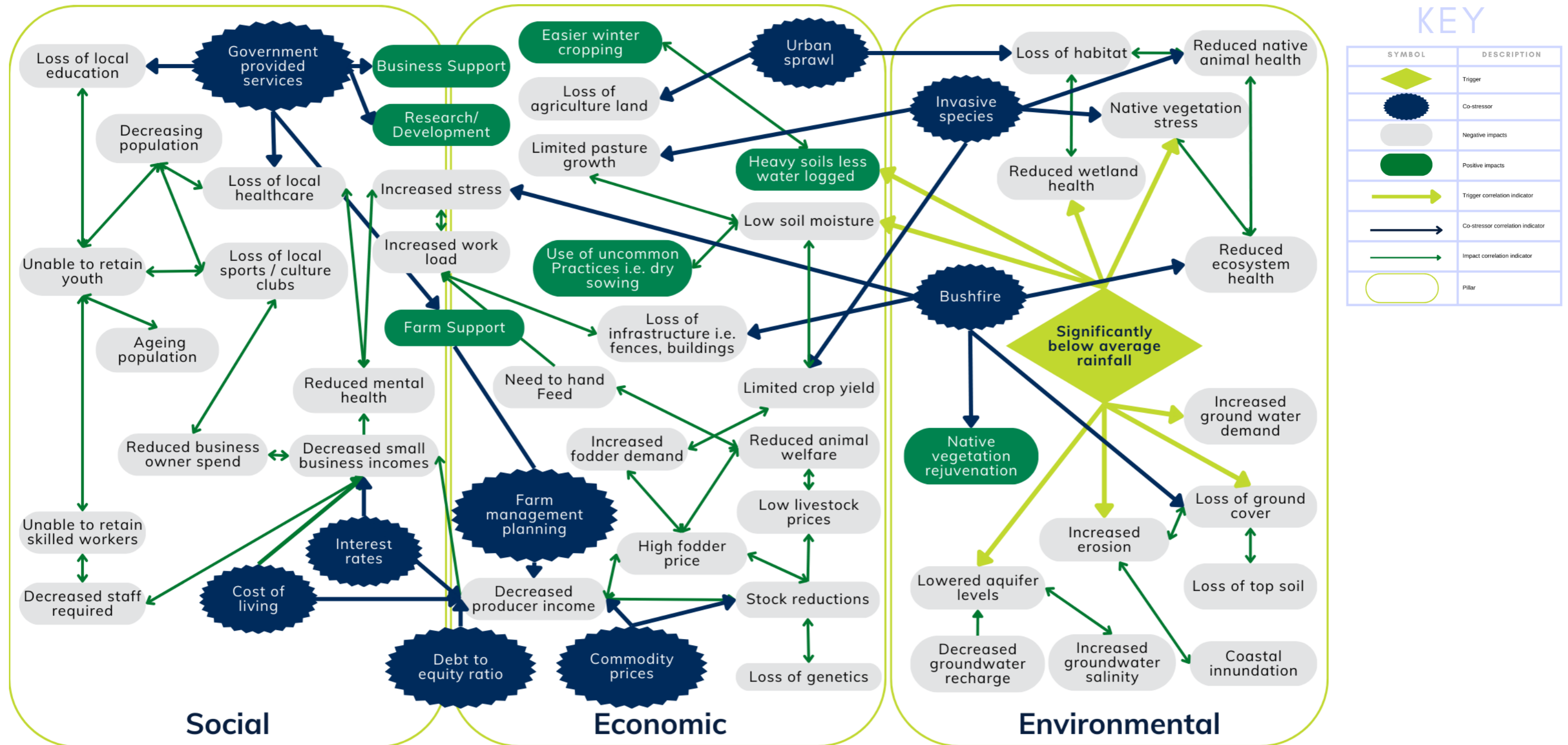


Figure 5: Trigger of Significantly Below Average Rainfall Mapped Against Primary Production

Drought beyond our region

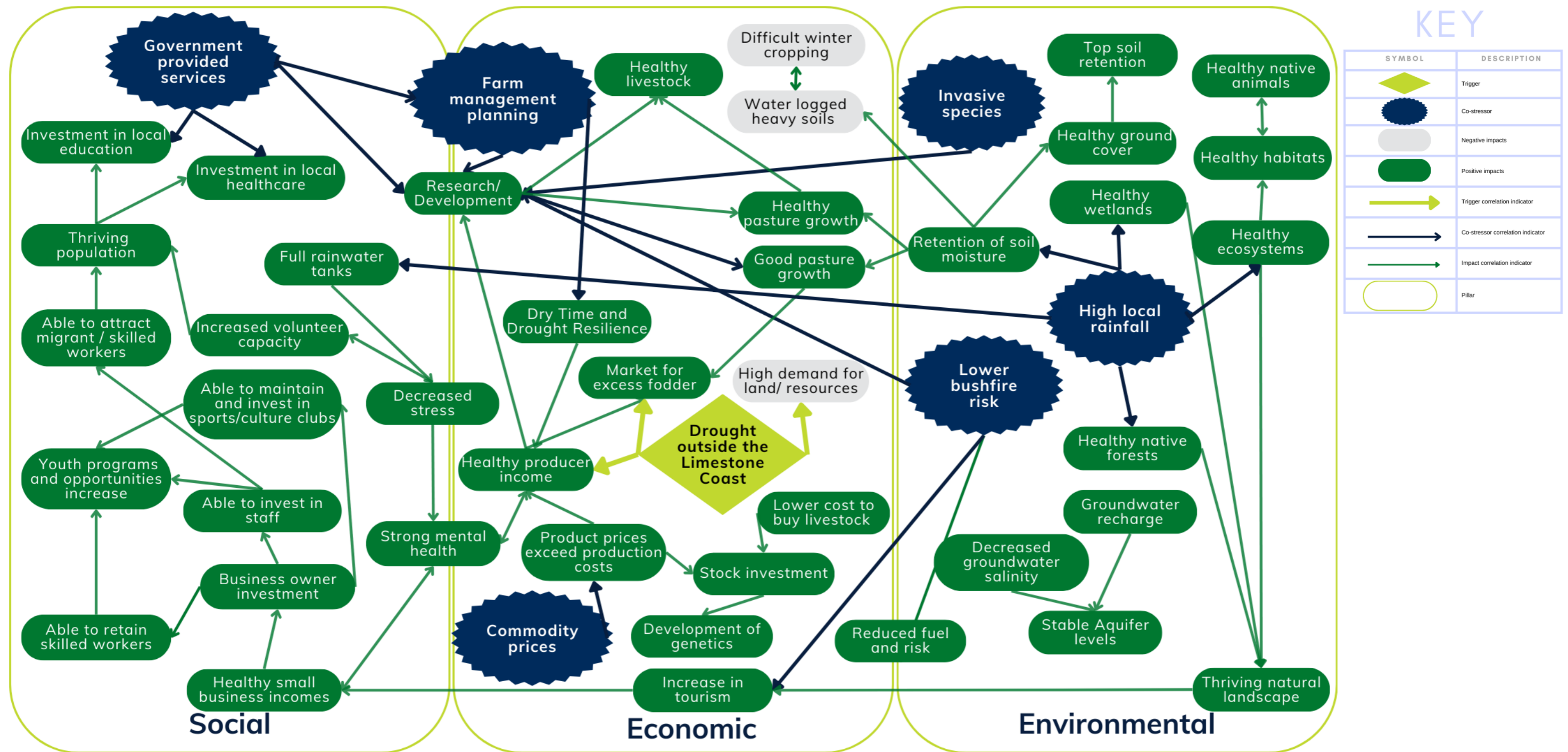


Figure 6: Trigger of Drought Outside the Limestone Coast Mapped Against Primary Production

3. Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities

The Limestone Coast is a unique region boasting diversity in almost every aspect of everyday life. We are a large region, with multiple possibilities.

3.1. Strengths

- **Regional Diversity:** A common theme across all engagement activities was the region's diversity. From soil and climate, to products and practices. The region's existing diversity is a core strength because when one industry has a bad year, others may be ok. This strengthens the region's economic resilience.
- **Enterprise Diversity:** In addition to regional diversity, many primary producers in the Limestone Coast have diverse enterprises at the farm-scale. With many mixed farming enterprises, this region is better placed to respond to drought and dry times than those who rely solely on a single enterprise such as cropping or viticulture.
- **Connectedness:** Our communities support each other. When someone is having a rough time, their neighbours, friends and community will support them. Part of this connectedness is supporting local clubs and groups. These social networks provide residents with outlets and a sense of community.
- **Volunteering:** The engagement activities identified that many services and clubs were provided by volunteers. Whilst this is generally considered to be a strength, it was also noted that often the same people held multiple roles. In dry times, this could put significant strain on volunteers and services.
- **Professionals:** Decision making looks different now to 50 years ago with technical experts being widely accepted into the primary production community. There is also generally a higher level of education on-farm, building on generational knowledge.
- **Economy:** Across all primary production areas, the Limestone Coast contributes billions of dollars into the State and National economies.

3.2. Challenges

- **Healthcare:** Steep decline in local service providers, especially across health and wellbeing providers. Since Covid in 2020, there has been a perceived reduction of services provided in the region. In some cases, there are still shopfronts, however they are largely understaffed or covered by administrators only. This has resulted in long waiting lists for mobile service providers or requires long distance travel to Adelaide or Victoria to seek assistance.
- **Youth retention:** The region has a large geographical footprint and relatively low population. Similar to many regions, retention of young working age people is challenging..
- **Housing:** There are significant opportunities to grow the manufacturing sector, in particular value-add for agricultural products. The Healthcare sector is also one of the fastest growing industries in the region. , However there is no housing available to accommodate workforce growth. Wastewater disposal, potable water sources, and electricity supply are key elements preventing housing and industry growth across the Limestone Coast.

3.3. Opportunities

- **Planning:** Longevity planning is already normal practice in the Upper South East. From engagement we know farmers teaching farmers is a preferred learning style. This means we have a strong base to expand longevity planning and resilience across primary production networks.
- **Migration:** There is a strong history of migrant workers in some parts of the region, which could be continued to meet skills and worker shortages.

- Strategy: During consultation there was a clear desire for farm-level dry season strategy and best practice resources. It was noted that the information is available but was clearly not accessible to people seeking it. This challenge highlights the importance of communicating and promoting resources and services to their target audience.
- Tourism: The Limestone Coast has a diverse landscape, with significant State, National and Internationally recognised natural features offering world class visitor opportunities. These include bushwalking, cave tours, diving, fossil and shipwreck trails as well as renowned coastal beaches and townships. There are also opportunities for expansion of agricultural tourism enterprises building a visitor economy that contributes to the prosperity of the region.

3.4. Strategic Framework

Vision

Based on the evidence review (WSP, 2024) and community engagement (WSP, 2024), a vision for drought resilience in the Limestone Coast has been developed:

A resilient community, economy and environment informed and prepared for drought and dry times.

Strategic Priorities

This vision is supported by the three Strategic Priorities of Economic Resilience, Environmental Resilience and Social Resilience. The Limestone Coast Strategic Priorities have been adapted from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund (FDF).

The FDF's three inter-connected strategic objectives (DAFF, 2025) seek to build:

- economic resilience by growing the productivity and self-reliance of the agricultural sector
- environmental resilience by improving the function of agricultural landscapes through effective management of the natural resource base
- social resilience by strengthening the social capital, wellbeing and connectedness of rural, regional and remote agricultural communities.

Goals

One goal has been developed for each of the strategic priority areas to describe what resilience looks like in this region. Each goal contributes to the vision and guides the actions required. These relationships are further examined in the Theory of Change. The three goals are:

Economic Resilience	Ensuring primary producers and their supply chains have the resources and skills to capitalise on good years and successfully navigate dry times.
Environmental Resilience	Established systems are in place to replenish our waterways, wetlands and landscapes ensuring a sustainable future for our environment and industry.

Social Resilience Enhanced community well-being and mental health resilience by creating stronger networks, community collaboration and equitable access to healthcare and education.

Impacts

To ensure that the goals and vision can be achieved, the actions and outcomes in this plan must have a clear impact. The detail of expected outcomes in the short, medium and long term is described in Section 9.2 - Program Logic. The desired impact that will contribute to each of the goals are:

Economic Resilience Primary production businesses and their communities are self-reliant, productive and profitable.

Environmental Resilience Primary production landscapes are functional and sustainable, with healthy natural capital.

Social Resilience Primary production communities are resourceful, adaptable and thriving.

Summary of Strategic Framework

Figure 7 shows the connection between each of the elements of the Strategic Framework. Section X includes further discussion on how each of the elements fits together and the interactions with the implementation pathways,

Vision		
A resilient community, economy and environment informed and prepared for drought and dry times.		
Strategic Priorities		
Economic Resilience	Environmental Resilience	Social Resilience
Goals		
Ensuring primary producers and their supply chains have the resources and skills to capitalise on good years and successfully navigate dry times.	Established systems are in place to replenish our waterways, wetlands and landscapes ensuring sustainable future capacity for our environment and industry.	Enhanced community well-being and mental health resilience by creating stronger networks, community collaboration and equitable access to healthcare and education.
Impacts		
Primary production businesses and their communities are self-reliant, productive and profitable.	Primary production landscapes are functional and sustainable, with healthy natural capital.	Primary production communities are resourceful, adaptable and thriving.

Figure 7: Strategic Framework for Improving Drought Resilience in the Limestone Coast

4. Intervention Options and Pathways

With a history of infrequent, albeit severe drought, the options and pathways identified by stakeholders and primary producers for this plan focus on building a solid foundation (Stafford-Smith, 2019). As the first plan addressing drought in the Limestone Coast, engagement with the community (WSP, 2024) and review of existing strategic documents (WSP, 2024) demonstrated this need.

The actions focus on preparedness and recognise that as shown in the systems mapping, there are many external factors that impact on enterprise success and regional resilience. The proposed pathways provide an opportunity to bring people along, build trust and give confidence before stretching into the unknown. The proposed pathways will also reduce reliance on external support in the longer-term.

Unlike regions who regularly experience prolonged drought, the lived experience of drought in the Limestone Coast leads towards actions that help to maintain the status quo rather than seeking to transform at this stage.

Resilience Assessment Process

The Resilience Assessment in Table 3 was determined by the Project Reference Group based on the likely significance of change from the current system. A basic qualitative assessment was undertaken due to the maturity level of this plan. The approach was also conservative, given the lack of data available. In future updates, a more data driven approach may be possible, building on the baseline offered by this Plan.

While there are detailed definitions available in the Glossary, the basic definition of the terms used for the Resilience Assessment are:

Maintain:	keep the region the same
Modify:	adapt the system to meet newly defined goal/s
Transform:	radically change or build a new system

Prioritisation

In this first Drought Resilience Plan, all pathways shown in Table 3 are considered to be worthy of investment. Within each pathway, outputs for each pathway have been sequenced where they show a number next to each action.

Some actions identified by stakeholders and participants (see Section 7.1 What we heard) were not included in Table 3 due to a range of factors including:

- External drivers
- Clear responsibility of an agency or organisation
- Key strategy in another document e.g. Regional Growth Strategy
- Not strongly related to drought.

These actions have been captured in Appendix 1 Supporting Pathways to ensure that they are not lost. Future updates of the plan could include some of these external elements into a more mature adaptation pathways approach (Stafford-Smith, 2019).

The delivery of priority actions will be dependent on uptake by partner organisations and community, investment from all three levels of government and changing impacts from external factors.

Pathways Approach

Intervention pathways have been based on the CSIRO Resilience Adaptation Pathways and Transformation Approach (RAPTA) (O'Connell, 2019). The below options, pathways, and interventions have been designed in consultation with the Limestone Coast community and plan partners. By using the RAPTA approach we have taken diverse views of participants and designed responsive pathways to meet community needs and expectations.

As recognised above, this Plan is the first of its kind for the Limestone Coast. As such, the triggers listed in Table 3 are based on the information and feelings of those who participated in the engagement phase of co-design (WSP, 2024). Future updates of this plan could include quantitative triggers for action, as well as longer term priorities, reflecting a more mature adaptation pathways approach.

4.1. Pillar Pathways

Table 3: Pillar Implementation Pathways and Actions

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment	Triggers
During consultation we heard retail stores without a business plan were struggling, whilst those with plans could implement strategies such as moving old stock or had diverse revenue streams to assist whilst primary producers weren't spending.	Promote greater awareness of tools, techniques and approaches to assist primary producers and small business survive a downturn in trade.	1. Business Support - Enhancing the Small Business Support Program to Build Business Resilience for Future Dry Times	Develop new resources for small and medium enterprises to manage periods of reduced trade. Specifically reduced trade caused by dry times and/or drought reducing primary producer spending. Existing small business program could be expanded for efficiency.	1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities. 2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building.	Modify	The 2024 late autumn break highlighted the challenges faced by businesses and primary producers who had not planned for alternative operating conditions. There were increased mental health, animal welfare, and business sustainability concerns.
During consultation we heard that some businesses, retail and primary production, were not saving and planning during the good years to provide a buffer for poor years. It was noted this was because they hadn't considered the inevitability of poor years. especially younger, or less experienced business owners.	Improving the financial viability of small business during the good times (to provide a buffer during dry times)		Create a map of available support services (in a variety of formats) promoting available services (financial, relevant rebates/incentives, farm advice/outreach, Mental Health etc. website with linked services maintained by a lead agency.	3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 5. Increased networking and relationship building.	Modify	
			1. Develop a program focussing on Agriculture/Primary Production business support. To assist these businesses, engage with best practice principles. 2. Appoint a Project Coordinator for an Agri Business Development Program.	14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.	Modify	

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment	Triggers
<p>During consultation we heard that seasons are more variable and harder to predict. An example was that a lot of lower SE farmers were caught unprepared in 2024 due to a wet January followed by the late break. Farms without a drought management plan were struggling and needing to make decisions whilst emotions were high, whilst farms that had plans in place were able to make decisions earlier and benefit as a result.</p>	<p>Encourage greater uptake of Farm-Level Drought Plans that address short term seasonal conditions as well as long term financial and on-farm strategies.</p>	<p>2. Farm-Level Drought Plans – Supporting Primary Producers to Manage Seasonal Conditions and Develop Longer Term Strategies</p>	<p>Supporting primary producers to make multi-year cash flow projections for informed decision making.</p> <p>Short term seasonal management as well as longer term options for adaptation or diversification</p>	<p>2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building.</p> <p>3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought.</p> <p>4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability.</p> <p>6. Increased resilience for local businesses by securing and strengthening income streams.</p> <p>14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.</p>	<p>Modify</p>	<p>The 2024 late autumn break highlighted the challenges faced by businesses and primary producers who had not planned for alternative operating conditions. There were increased mental health, animal welfare, and business sustainability concerns.</p>
			<p>Promote access to climate science and tools to broaden the awareness of more variable and unpredictable local conditions in the future.</p>	<p>1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities.</p> <p>2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building.</p> <p>3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought.</p> <p>4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability.</p> <p>14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.</p>	<p>Modify</p>	
			<p>1. Create resources for farmers to develop personalised Drought Management Plans to pre-plan what steps to take in late breaks, dry times and drought.</p> <p>2. Promote and educate community of benefits in planning and maintaining plans.</p>	<p>1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities.</p> <p>3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought.</p> <p>4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability.</p> <p>14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.</p>	<p>Modify</p>	

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment	Triggers
During consultation we heard there were too many competing priorities for community time. We also experienced scheduling issues when planning engagement workshops with industry bodies and support agencies having workshops or events during the same period, targeting the same communities.	Improving collaboration and cross promotion of events and resources to streamline availability and reduce confusion and disengagement.	3. Industry Collaboration - Fostering Collaboration Between Industry Bodies and Agencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appoint a Project Coordinator for Industry Collaboration. 2. Develop a steering committee across Limestone Coast based primary production bodies to share information and as appropriate program and resources. 3. Create a calendar of events around key production periods for engagement and networking. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 8. Reduced duplication of services and reduced consultation fatigue, providing better outcomes for agencies and farmers. 9. Increased utilisation of existing drought resilience knowledge and information. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought. 	Modify	The 2024 late autumn break highlighted the disconnection between industry bodies and agencies. Several support and engagement activities were planned, however the duplication of content, and competing locations and timeframes often lead to greater confusion and stress for the target audiences.
During consultation we heard that not all farmers want to be trailblazers. Some know they need to change but want to be able to make informed decisions on what could work and if they can make small changes each year to achieve better resilience in a 5-10 year plan.	Promote greater awareness of tools, techniques and approaches to assist primary producers survive dry seasons	4. Sustainable Practices - Increase Engagement in Drought Resilience Farm Management and Economic Diversification Projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a gap analysis of the current research and extension programs with Primary Producers. 2. Encourage co-design research and extension programs with primary producers, SA Drought Hub and Industry Bodies. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities. 2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 9. Increased utilisation of existing drought resilience knowledge and information. 10. Increased understanding and awareness of available support and services. 11. Increased use of support and services thereby increasing preparedness, and future funding. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought. 	Maintain	The SA Climate Change Act is currently being amended to include ambitious statewide targets. To assist primary producers meet the targets, we need to make the existing and continuing research accessible to end users.
	Promote drought resilient practices demonstrated to be effective in the South East. Upper, Lower and coastal practices in addition to whole of region.		Develop case studies to promote drought resilient farm management techniques		Maintain	
			Host field days to showcase available technology, research and production improvements and how they could be implemented.		Modify	
			Develop a multimodal program to identify and promote drought resilience at farm level resources and options.		Modify	
			Identify and implement demonstration sites which show benefits of drought resilient practices.		Modify	
During consultation we heard primary producers wouldn't look to PIRSA or LCLB for advice on research and technology. They would however take advice from their trusted specialists (agronomists, animal dieticians, vets etc) and their networks.	Promotion of latest drought resilience farm management research and emerging income streams.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of drought resilience farm management research and emerging income stream advice. 2. Promotion of material to primary industry supply chains. 3. Maintain resources and up to date research/funding opportunity information. 	Modify			
		Development of Primary Producer facing drought resilience farm management research and emerging income stream advice.	Modify			

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment	Triggers
<p>The short timeframe between engaging a consultant and when a draft plan was due to be submitted for independent review did not allow for meaningful engagement with First Nations representatives. Whilst some meetings did occur and the RDRP added to the agenda, formal discussions had not commenced at the time of completing this plan. The action was derived from the existing strategic priorities of the SEAFG.</p>	<p>Co-design a Caring for Country plan that identifies activities to improve the health of Country and increase regional drought resilience</p>	<p>5. First Nations Co-design - Empowering First Nations' Caring for Country</p>	<p>Develop a holistic Caring for Country plan and deliver on-ground activities.</p> <p>a) Recruit and appoint a project manager to work closely with partner corporation (Burra Aboriginal Corporation) throughout the project</p> <p>b) Develop an engagement plan that effectively captures the needs of the region's First Nations people</p> <p>c) Perform a desktop review of current Caring for Country activities in the region and identify gaps</p> <p>d) Identify future on-ground Caring for Country activities that will support First Nations vision</p> <p>e) Develop a Caring for Country plan</p> <p>f) Engage local First Nations peoples to deliver on-ground Caring for Country activities identified in the plan that will increase regional drought resilience</p> <p>g) Deliver any required training to First Nations peoples</p>	<p>15 Holistic planning of Caring for Country activities with the understanding that activities on Country are interconnected.</p> <p>16 Increased social and economic participation of First Nations; co-design emphasises self-determination, projects, and activities important to First Nations peoples to make up the plan, new fee-for-service opportunities.</p> <p>17 Increased drought resilience.</p> <p>18 Support biodiversity outcomes.</p> <p>19 Reduce the risk and impact of bushfires.</p>	<p>Transform</p> <p>First Nations cultural knowledge and customs are typically not considered in drought resilience. First Nations people are not consistently empowered to determine on ground activities and decision making</p>	<p>Acknowledgement that there are deficiencies in environmental management when the input of First Nations cultural knowledge is not respected or included in decision making.</p>
<p>During consultation we heard that the loss of wetland areas was negatively impacting on water availability in the landscapes and not allowing for ground water recharge to sustainable levels following dry seasons. The availability of quality groundwater for irrigation is also a significant concern.</p>	<p>Advocate for the exploration of alternate water resources and determine the feasibility of Managed Aquifer Recharge.</p>	<p>6. Alternative Water - Retaining water in the landscape and encouraging the use of alternative water sources</p>	<p>Undertake a review of alternative water sources within the region. Would need to include use cases, treatment requirements, economic viability, storage, disposal considerations, and risk assessments for each source/use case.</p> <p>Create water use profiles for regional industries.</p> <p>Undertake a Managed Aquifer Recharge Feasibility Study building on pre-feasibility study and current actions.</p> <p>Ground truthing of predicted managed aquifer recharge sites identified in pre-feasibility study and engagement with landholders to identify future demonstration sites for managed aquifer recharge trials.</p>	<p>18 Support biodiversity outcomes.</p> <p>19 Reduce the risk and impact of bushfires.</p> <p>20 Decrease pressure on groundwater resource so recovery after drought is possible.</p> <p>21 Determine feasibility of storing drain and alternative water sources in the aquifers using managed aquifer recharge (managed aquifer recharge could increase the supply of groundwater available during drought).</p> <p>22 Identify alternative water sources that can be used during drought.</p> <p>23 Assist in carbon sequestration.</p> <p>24 Increase the total volume of water available in the region</p>	<p>Transform</p> <p>This approach seeks to instil a completely new approach to managing water resources in the region to ensure economic and environmental resilience.</p>	<p>The Limestone Coast is facing a long-term climate trend of drying and warming. The region is already experiencing declining groundwater levels and increasing water quality issues. Managing these resources sustainably now and for future generations is critically important.</p>

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment	Triggers
<p>During consultation we heard that supply chain industries felt unprepared to respond to customers who expressed physical, financial, and/or mental stresses associated with dry periods.</p>	<p>Reduce the stigma associated with mental health and capitalise on impromptu conversations within trusted local networks.</p>	<p>7. Mental Health - Improve awareness and remove barriers to mental health and well-being resources</p>	<p>Mental health first aid for primary production facing service providers.</p>	<p>2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building.</p>	<p>Modify</p>	<p>The 2024 late autumn break highlighted the regions long wait list for mental health support, and limited knowledge by general community members in appropriate options and resources to support family and neighbours.</p>
			<p>1. Appoint a Project Coordinator for Mental Health Program. 2. Implement a steering committee with relevant health and social stakeholders. 2. Undertake a desktop review of existing literature resources, gaps and access barriers. 3. Create a map of available services/resources. 4. Create a gap analysis with recommendations.</p>	<p>7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 10. Increased understanding and awareness of available support and services. 11. Increased use of support and services thereby increasing preparedness, and future funding. 12. Increased awareness of mental health information, practices and opportunities.</p>	<p>Modify</p>	
			<p>Encourage investment in popular local initiatives i.e. 'In the Head of a Country Bloke' podcast.</p>	<p>13. Local industry focused program to provide accessible mental health training and services. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.</p>	<p>Maintain</p>	
<p>During consultation, we heard that isolation was an issue during dry times due to increasing workloads (on farm and in small business), combined with reduced cashflow. Groups wanted to help, but needed small amounts of funding with low administrative burden.</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for communities to connect locally during dry times.</p>	<p>8. Community Connection – Create Connection in Communities in Good Times and Dry Times</p>	<p>1. Promote low-cost opportunities for people to gather. 2. Provide seed funding for community groups to gather on local issues or with local interests.</p>	<p>2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 10. Increased understanding and awareness of available support and services. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.</p>	<p>Modify</p>	<p>The challenging 2023-24 season saw previously active members of the community withdraw and become isolated. Already stretched volunteers sought to provide events, however the audit and admin requirements for grants outweighed the benefits.</p>

5. Our Region

This section is based on a detailed evidence review (WSP, 2024), as well as the learnings from community engagement (WSP, 2024) undertaken to inform the development of the Plan. It is intended to give an overview of the diversity of the region as it relates to drought, rather than a comprehensive description of all economic, environmental and social features.



Figure 8: Limestone Coast Regional Snapshot

5.1. Primary Industries

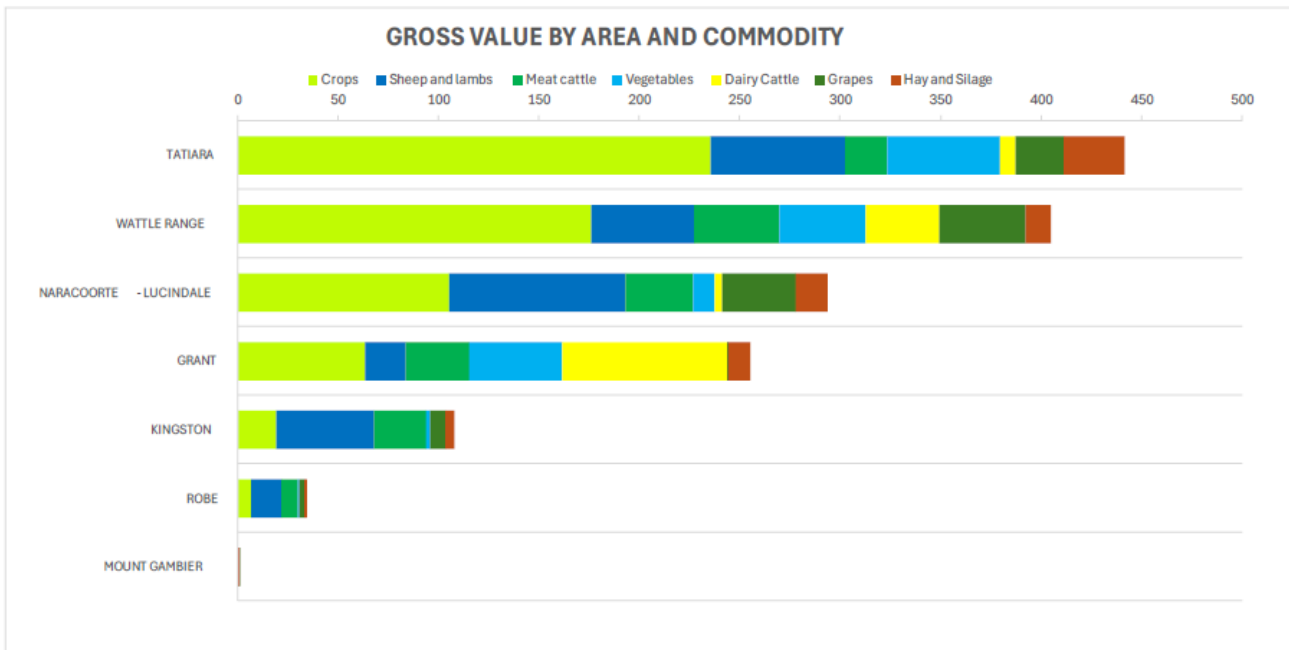
The Limestone Coast is a vital economic hub, with primary producers generating over \$2.5 billion in regional output (RDALC, 2022). National leaders in lucerne, canola, and small seeds, the region produces 83% of Australia's lucerne seed (Tourism SA, 2025). This is further supported by grains including wheat, barley, legumes and other crops.

The region provides significant economic benefit to local communities, State Gross Domestic Product and the country more broadly. Specialising in agriculture and food manufacturing, the Limestone Coast boasts a robust economy and well-established primary production industries. Agriculture, forestry, and fishing employ 17.5% of the workforce (.id, 2024), with 94% of South Australia's dairy herd located here. In seasons with high vegetative growth, hay and silage are sold to other regions or stockpiled, while in poor seasons, it is utilised on farm or sold within the Limestone Coast (Prance, 2023).

Many of the farms across the region are mixed-farming enterprises, with a combination of two or more crops, livestock, viticulture, farm forestry and other sources of income.

The region's fertile soils, historically reliable rainfall, and significant groundwater also support diverse crops such as potatoes, carrots, and onions (PIRSA, 2022). Commercial forestry plantations cover around 2.6% of the land area in the region, contributing 83% of the State's forestry and logging output (Tourism SA, 2025). There are some boutique industries and isolated farms that produce poultry, eggs and specialty pigs, as well as larger enterprises supplying pork to the national market. Fishing, including southern rock lobster, abalone, rainbow trout, salmon, and barramundi, also adds economic diversity.

Food and beverage manufacturing is also significant, with meat, wine and milk products making up the majority of this industry.



Source: ABARES data reproduced by WSP.

Figure 9: Gross Value of Production by Local Government Area and Commodity for 2020-2021

5.2. Water security landscape

The Limestone Coast has limited reliable surface water due to the porous nature of soils and the generally flat topography. This makes the Limestone Coast heavily groundwater dependent. Groundwater supports primary production, industry, town water supply and recreational facilities, and is iconic in how it has shaped the region including globally significant wetlands. The quality and quantity of groundwater available is important to environmental, social, cultural and economic values in the region.

There are two main groundwater systems: the upper unconfined Tertiary Limestone Aquifer (the unconfined aquifer) and the underlying Tertiary Confined Sand Aquifer (confined aquifer). These two aquifers are generally separated by a confining clay layer. The unconfined aquifer, recharged locally through rainfall, is used for 90% of groundwater extraction, mainly for pasture irrigation (ABARES.). The confined aquifer, considered old water, recharges from a site located in the Dundas Plateau in Victoria. Access to the confined aquifer is limited with a precautionary approach to consumption due to the inability to recharge.

Water resources are managed through five water allocations plans (four groundwater and one surface water) and a Water Affecting Activities Control Policy. Water allocation plans set out the rules for the allocation, take, use and transfer of water. The Water Affecting Activities Control Policy regulates activities that can impact the health and condition of water resources, the ecosystems that depend on them and other water users. Water resources have been monitored in some parts of the region since the 1970s.

Water quality in the unconfined aquifer varies across the region, and water quality often influences the uses currently dependent on it. The unconfined aquifer is fresh and shallow to the south but becomes increasingly salty towards Kingston and the southern coast. Towards the Victorian border and to the north, the groundwater is much deeper, and the water tends to be more saline. This has resulted in different irrigation practices in the Padthaway, Tatiara and Tintinara-Coonalpyn area.

Groundwater provides a potential buffer against dry periods, however, not all landowners have access to groundwater for irrigation. The timing of rainfall is particularly important for the autumn and spring breaks. Below-average rainfall, or inappropriate timing can increase irrigation extraction, increasing stress on the water resource and potentially raising soil salinity.

The majority of water supply to townships in the Limestone Coast is managed by SA Water, who draw from groundwater and also work within an allocation. The condition of infrastructure is a key factor in improving sustainability for future needs, including preventing loss of water through leaking pipes and ensuring town water supplies can be met.

The area of land available for agriculture in the Lower South East was significantly increased from the mid 1800s due to extensive drainage works to remove inundation. Drainage in the Upper South East from the 1990s focused on reducing dryland salinity by lowering the water table. The majority of this water has historically flowed to sea; however, investigations have been undertaken to look at options to retain water in the landscape.



Figure 10: South East Drainage System Map

5.3. Social and community landscape

The Limestone Coast offers a diverse range of lifestyles, from a vibrant regional city to charming coastal towns, from stunning natural wonders to luxurious cellar door experiences. The region hosts cultural and food festivals, celebrating local produce and community spirit. There is also a strong focus on sport and recreation, bringing local people together, as well as attracting State and National level competition. As the population ages and dependency rates rise, the region has expanded its community, aged care, and disability services, creating employment opportunities in healthcare and social assistance.

The region's road infrastructure is crucial for productivity, connecting it to major freight routes including Adelaide, Portland, Melbourne and the East Coast. Car dependency remains high across the region, with limited availability of public transport services, and long distances that prevent walking and cycling for most people.

Youth retention is a significant issue for the region, from both a social and economic perspective. Partnerships with educational institutions provide some opportunities for supporting local talent development. In Mount Gambier, the education precinct hosts TAFE and tertiary institutions, with plans in place for a forestry centre of excellence and a technical college. However vocational and tertiary training opportunities are limited outside of the regional centre.

Regional community groups foster social activities and networking opportunities across agricultural industries and eco-based tourism. They also provide access to social infrastructure, including sports and recreational centres, cultural, spiritual, and art facilities.

Statistic	Limestone Coast Average	Regional South Australia Average
Workforce Participation	59.3%	54.1%
Unemployment Rate	3.7%	4.8%
Employed in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	17.5%	14%
Median Weekly Household Income	\$1,311	\$1,133
First Nations Population	2.4%	4.7%
Median Age	44 years	47 years
Population Born Overseas	11%	12%
Population with one or more long-term health condition	34.6%	37.5%
Population with one or more long-term health condition	9.1%	9.9%
Population with and education of Year 12 equivalent or higher.	37.7%	37.6%

Figure 11: Regional Social Profile

5.4. First Nations water focus

The Limestone Coast region is comprised of the lands of the Bunganditj (Boandik), Meintangk (Moandik), Potaruwutij, Tatiara/Ngarkat, Tanganekald (Southern Clans), Marditjali and Ngarrindjeri First Nations Peoples. First Nations corporations and groups in this region include the South East Aboriginal Focus Group (SEAFG), Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation, Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation, and Ngarrindjeri Lands and Progress Aboriginal Corporation.

Connection to, and caring for, Country is vital to the physical, spiritual, emotional, and cultural wellbeing of First Nations Peoples. Country includes all physical and spiritual wellbeing connections of First Nations peoples.

Under colonisation, the land of the Limestone Coast region has been intensely modified over a relatively short period of time, with much of the land now being used for primary production purposes. The below figure shows the impact that land clearing and draining programs have had on the abundance of wetlands in the Limestone Coast; from 44% of the landscape pre-European settlement to 1.5-2.5% in 2016.

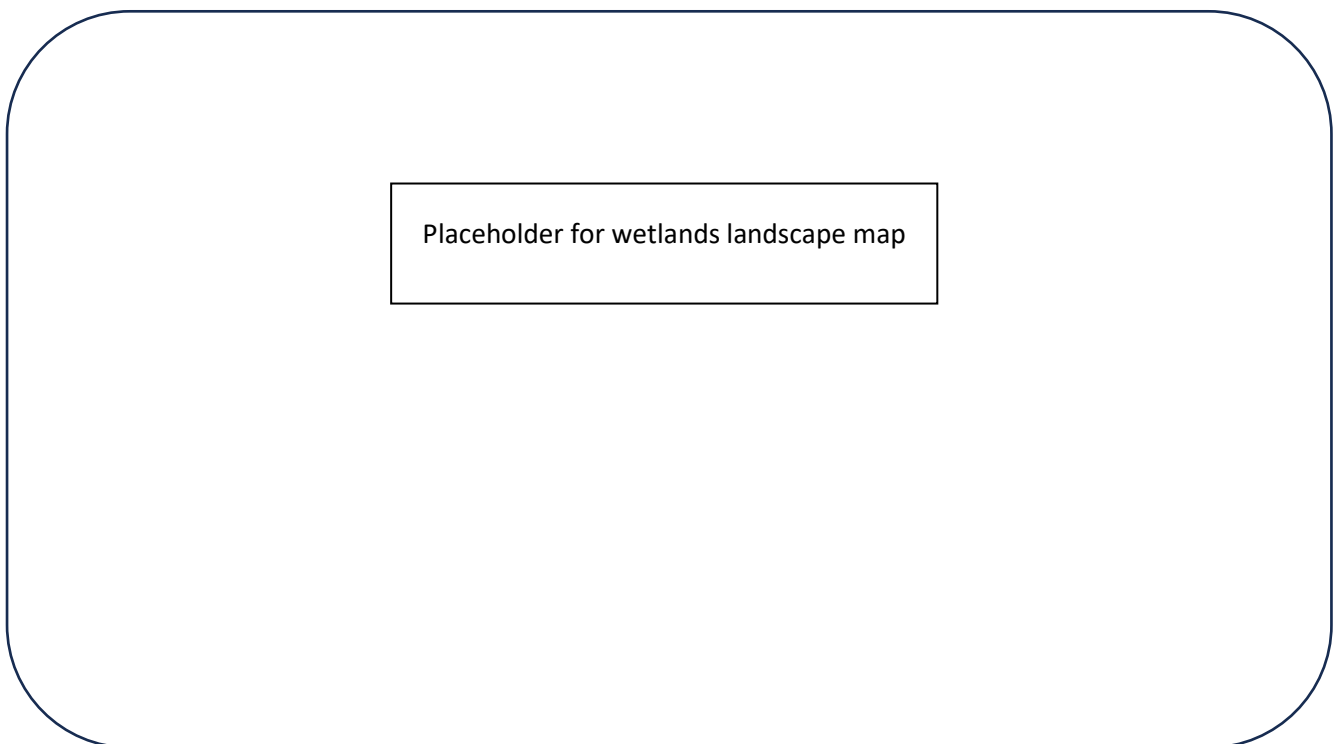


Figure 12: Limestone Coast Wetlands Areas

While many of these landscape modifications are complex and irreversible, it is important to carry out activities that Care for Country and restore the landscape where possible.

The SEAFG vision for Country is that South East Aboriginal people will maintain and respect the natural resources of Mother Earth and surrounding waters to establish sustainable resources for everyone. This vision will be delivered through on ground activities that prioritise self-determination, cultural knowledge revival of First Nations water and land management practices, increased economic participation, and walking together with the Limestone Coast (LC) Landscape Board.

The LC Landscape Board (previously the SE NRM Board) has maintained a close working relationship with First Nation groups in the region for over 20 years. The Lartara-Wirkei Cultural Governance Framework, developed by the SEAFG in 2008, underpins LC Landscape Board's strategic documents.

5.5. Environmental landscape

The Limestone Coast features diverse natural landscapes, from coastal plains to highlands, promoting ecotourism, recreation, and environmental protection. These landscapes provide significant economic and amenity value, supported by water availability, productive soils and a mild, wet climate (LCLB, 2024). The region benefits from abundant water, but as populations grow and the climate changes, landscape-scale water management has become crucial. Sustainable management of these environments, including First Nations sites, is essential to preserving their values. Achieving sustainable water and energy use is vital in protecting against the worsening impacts of climate change and future changes to dry times. Effective water retention landscape-wide will enhance environmental longevity, benefiting both industries and the community in years to come.

5.6. Economic landscape

The Limestone Coast, historically rooted in traditional industries such as primary production, forestry, fishing, and manufacturing, is now experiencing significant growth in tourism and service sectors, particularly health and aged care. This transition is driven by population growth and increasing demand in education and government policy for healthcare. The region is also well-positioned to expand in the renewable energy sector, especially in power infrastructure, to harness opportunities from Australia's energy transition trends.

Contributing \$5 billion to the South Australian economy, the Limestone Coast is a dynamic and diversified region (LCLB, 2024). Long term economic prosperity will depend on maintaining agricultural cost-efficiency, while supporting growth in other industries, and accommodating an ageing population. Ensuring robust freight connectivity will be essential for future success. Overall, the Limestone Coast is poised for a prosperous future, leveraging its rich history and embracing new opportunities in various sectors provided that it can adapt to a changing climate.

5.7. Outlook and trajectory for the region

The Limestone Coast Region's future is bright, with a strategic focus on economic and population growth, agribusiness, healthcare, and tourism. Efforts to attract and retain a working-age population will support vibrant communities, while leveraging competitive advantages in agribusiness and capturing employment opportunities in healthcare and social assistance. Enhancing regional collaboration in tourism and securing infrastructure investments are also key priorities, all driven by a shared commitment from regional leaders.

Key future trends for the region are:

- Adapting to climate change
 - Protecting livelihoods, infrastructure, and people's quality of life as our region's climate continues to change.
 - Key impacts to primary production including fluctuating commodity prices, transformed landscapes and business models, increasing compound risks.
- Net zero and the energy transition
 - Global push to reach net zero, protecting biodiversity and managing resources efficiently.
 - Rapid transition to a low-carbon economy, transitioning from fossil fuels by adopting renewable energy sources like solar and wind, and increasing the use of electric and low-emission vehicles.
 - Key impacts to primary production include adopting carbon offsets, carbon farming, and reducing greenhouse emissions from livestock and other agricultural activities.
- Promote health and wellbeing
 - Rising healthcare demands from demographic changes, emerging diseases, and unhealthy lifestyles requires healthy, sustainable products.
 - Health, nutrition, and food safety will become increasingly important for food and agricultural production.

- Key impacts to primary production include new technologies for monitoring food quality, promoting circular economy nutrients, reducing pesticide use, tracking food quality and health implications, and improving access to diverse foods. Transitions to sustainable food production systems and innovative food technologies such as lab-grown meat and seaweed-fed cattle to accommodate changing customer demands.
- Geopolitical shifts
 - Increased efforts to ensure global stability, trade, and economic growth.
 - Key impacts to primary production: Despite global uncertainties and inequalities, there is potential for enhanced global trade and agricultural exports, as well as growth in domestic markets. Australia's reputation as a high-quality, ethical supplier for sustainably produced products will become increasingly important.
- The digital age
 - The rapid growth of the digital and data economy could exacerbate inequalities, but also create new jobs and alter the labour market. Advances in automation, genetics, and synthetics are transforming food and fibre production.
 - Key impacts to primary production include better decision-making, technological advances like drone seeding and AI fire detection, labour automation, and improved pest and disease control.
- Human Diversity and Inclusion
 - The importance of diversity, equity, and transparency in decision-making is increasing. Economic planning now considers diverse systems, cities, and economies based on human differences.
 - Key impacts to primary production include more agile and interconnected customer engagement, a growing expectation for diverse workforces, and changing values of workers.
- Supply chains vulnerabilities
 - Global and regional supply chains are interconnected but vulnerable to disruptions. Increased extreme weather events will cause community and supply chain disruptions, material scarcity, and higher freight costs
 - Key impact to primary production: greenhouse gas emissions disclosure, buyer-supplier collaboration, adoption of new business models, software security and planning to reduce labour strikes and cyberattacks.
- Circular economy
 - Consumer behaviour is shifting towards reducing waste and supporting circular consumption patterns.
 - Key impacts to primary production include improved farm management for wastewater and waste reduction, energy and compost generation from materials, use of repurposed materials, and adoption of regenerative farming techniques.
- Valuing natural capital
 - Producers are increasingly expected to protect biodiversity and invest in natural resources, maintaining healthy ecosystems and water quality while avoiding habitat and species loss. This enhances environmental stewardship.
 - Key impacts to primary production include aligning with nature-disclosures, carbon sequestration, market drive for biodiversity/ecosystem resilience, greater recognition of landholder knowledge, drought and climate-resilient farming practices, preparation for environmental volatility.

6. About this Regional Drought Resilience Plan

6.1. What is resilience?

The ability of a system to absorb a disturbance and reorganise so as to maintain the existing functions, structure and feedback. Also see general resilience, specified resilience, economic resilience, environmental resilience, and social resilience.

Droughts are a recurring challenge, and future droughts in the Limestone Coast are expected to be more severe and frequent. To tackle this, we must enhance our drought resilience. We want to avoid chronic stresses and episodic shocks degrading the performance of our community, our economy, and our natural environment.

The International Consortium of Organizational Resilience identifies five areas of focus to build community resilience. Each area can be strengthened or weakened impacting on community resilience and vulnerability. For best community resilience outcomes, the system as a whole needs to be strong and flexible. This Plan works on aspects from across the areas to build the Limestone Coast community’s resilience. By targeting pathways across the areas of Healthy Environment, Strong Economy, Responsible Governance and a Prepared System, our Regional Stakeholders can strengthen the community’s foundations to build a more resilient future.



Figure 13: Community Resilience Framework

The ICOR model of Community Resilience was chosen as the five areas align well with this Plan’s three strategic Priorities as demonstrated below.



Figure 14: Plan Strategic Priorities Aligned to ICOR Community Resilience Areas

- A Healthy Environment (ICOR, 2016)**
 - Protects and restores the natural resource base upon which life depends
 - Seeks to reduce climate impacts through adaptation and mitigation efforts and increased resource efficiencies
- Responsible Governance**
 - Provides community services
 - Enforces laws humanely
 - Protects its community members
 - Manages its finances under changing conditions
- Strong Economy**
 - Produces necessary resources
 - Has a diversified economy
 - Has access to financial and physical resources
 - Maintains the value of its currency
- A Prepared System**
 - Risk reduction activities are planned and funded
 - Networks and partnerships exist
 - Community members are preparedness educated
 - Organisations resilience initiatives are recognised
- High Quality of Life**
 - Access to education and information
 - Access to affordable housing and quality healthcare
 - The existence of social freedoms

Economic Resilience

- Essential operations resume quickly after onset of drought
- Diversity of production across regions and organisations
- Profitable businesses and stable cashflows
- Increased productivity and healthy livestock, soils and flora
- Minimal Price Shocks

Environmental Resilience

- Improved water quality and quantity
- Increased ground cover
- Thriving native species and eradication of invasive species
- Caring for Country practices well implemented and respected

Social Resilience

- Rapidly adjust to and successfully navigate difficult periods
- Connected community with healthy wellbeing mental resilience outlets
- Committed to conserving water and implementing environmental strategies
- Prepared for periods of reduced rainfall

Figure 15: What Resilience looks like for each Strategic Priority

6.2. Theory of Change

The Theory of Change for this Plan (Figure 16) seeks to demonstrate the relationships between the proposed intervention pathways, the likely outcomes and impacts, how the impacts will create change towards the three goals, and ultimately, to achieving the vision. The Theory of Change tests the assumptions that underpin the Plan and offer an opportunity to discuss the limitations in the theory (Stafford-Smith, 2019).

In this case, the Theory of Change is broad, with limited depth, identifying the problem, goals and basic design of interventions (Stafford-Smith, 2019). The approach is based on the Future Drought Fund Theory of Change (DAFF, 2020) and is presented in a similar format, with the shared Strategic Priorities of Economic Resilience, Environmental Resilience and Social Resilience. Future versions of the plan are likely to have greater detail, based on more intensive engagement and more quantitative measures.

Situational Analysis

As outlined in this Plan, the frequency and severity of drought is predicted to increase by 40% by 2030 – a prolonged, abnormally dry period when the amount of water available is insufficient to meet our normal use, There is likely to be greater variation in the timing and amount of rainfall, combined with more hot days and more extreme weather.

Logic narrative

The vision of this plan is a resilient community, economy and environment informed and prepared for drought and dry times. The plan focuses on foundational activities that will increase preparedness and connectivity across three priority areas. Nine causal pathways have been identified as necessary and sufficient to address the three goals.

Assumptions

Key assumptions in this Theory of Change include:

- When people have more knowledge, they act differently
- Preparedness for drought will be prioritised over other risks
- First Nations people in the Limestone Coast want to drive biodiversity and water outcomes
- Investment in additional resources will be available
- People and organisations want to connect

Limitations

External factors are the most significant limitation of this Theory. Despite extended dry seasonal conditions at the time of writing, engagement with primary producers and other stakeholders was challenging due to the number and impact of other issues they were facing including rising interest rates, low commodity prices, high input costs, poor mental health, access to skilled workers and increased isolation.

Funding of actions will also determine the success of the theory, with long-term, stable income required to build trust, relationships and results. Short bursts of funding have limited impact, particularly when there is a lack of continuity for skilled staff.

The timeframe and scale of change required to achieve resilience across all three strategic priorities is decades. However, there is a direct connection between the pathways and desired results. Monitoring, evaluation and learning will inform the success of these pathways, with the development of continuous active learning and adaptive governance processes (O'Connell, 2019).

	IF	THEN	HAS THE PATHWAY IMPACT	TO CREATE CHANGE TOWARDS GOALS	WHICH CONTRIBUTES TO THE VISION OF
Economic Resilience	If primary producers and businesses in their communities have access to business support services...	Then more primary producers and businesses will build skills in business planning, financial literacy and risk management, increasing resilience and profit.	Primary production businesses and their communities are self-reliant, productive and profitable.	Modify - Working to adapt part of the system to meet the newly defined goal of: Ensuring primary producers and their supply chains have the resources and skills to capitalise on good years and successfully navigate dry times.	A resilient community, economy and environment informed and prepared for drought and dry times.
	If primary producers had enhanced understanding and tools available to manage changing drought and associated risks for this region...	Then more primary producers have the capacity to develop farm level drought plans that address short term seasonal conditions as well as long term financial and on-farm strategies			
	If industry bodies and agencies work together...	Then there will be greater uptake and efficiency in services for communities with clear communication and reduced duplication of effort.			
Environmental Resilience	If primary producers have access to R&D for drought management and sustainable farming practices...	Then more primary producers will implement best practice techniques, reducing impacts on soils, water, biodiversity and pests.	Primary production landscapes are functional and sustainable, with healthy natural capital.	Transform – radically changing the system with a new structure, function, feedback and identity to meet the goal of: Established systems are in place to replenish our waterways, wetlands and landscapes ensuring a sustainable future for our environment and industry.	
	If First Nations people co-design activities that improve the health of Country...	Then First Nations people will be empowered to improve biodiversity, reduce bushfire risk and increase connection with Country.			
	If there is research into alternative water sources and retaining water in the landscape...	Then reliance on groundwater for irrigation will be reduced, alternative water supplies will be available during drought and the health of production and natural landscapes will improve.			
Social Resilience	If community members have greater understanding of mental health and well-being resources...	Then there will be increased uptake of mental health and well being services, building individual and collective resilience.	Primary production communities are resourceful, adaptable and thriving.	Modify - Working to adapt part of the system to meet the newly defined goal of: Enhanced community well-being and mental health resilience by creating stronger networks, community collaboration and equitable access to healthcare and education.	
	If gaps in mental health and well-being services are understood...	Then investment can be made to ensure adequate services are available for to support communities to be more resilient.			
	If individuals, groups and communities have greater opportunities for connections...	Then communities can foster relationships, share knowledge and build networks.			

Figure 16: Theory of Change for Limestone Coast Drought Resilience Plan (to be formatted as a diagram in final plan)

7. Engagement

To meet the Australian Government's requirements for Drought Resilience Plans, the content was co-designed with stakeholders and the wider community. The Engagement Outcomes Summary Report (WSP, 2024) provides a detailed description of the engagement undertaken. Table 4 provides a summary of the different methods of engagement, the number of participants and the sectors represented.

Overall, engagement from livestock and cropping producers and their supporting industries were most strongly represented. This has influenced some of the plan content, including the systems mapping and pillar pathways.

Due to the timeframes for development of the plan, there were limited opportunities to capture underrepresented industry sectors or communities. There is an opportunity in future planning processes to identify and target sectors of the community and industry that are vulnerable to drought.

Table 4: Engagement Summary

	Location(s)	Numbers Engaged	Groups, Organisations, or Sectors Present
Have Your Say Survey	Online.	22	Primary producers, retail stores, hospitality venues, tourism providers, health and social service providers, construction, mining, retired, education, other.
Street Walk Conversations	Keith, Bordertown, Naracoorte, Penola, Coonawarra, Mount Gambier, Millicent, Beachport, Robe, Kingston.	109	Primary producers, primary producer suppliers, vets, livestock agents, retail stores, hospitality venues, tourist information centres, travel agents, health and social service providers, mechanical services, grocery stores, financial institutes, trades people, volunteer organisations.
Targeted Interviews	Online and telephone.	17	Primary producers, primary producers, suppliers, industry bodies, health and social service providers, emergency services, government agencies.
Workshops	Bordertown, Naracoorte, Mount Gambier, Kingston.	52	Primary producers, primary producer suppliers, vets, livestock agents, retail stores, health and social service providers, financial institutes, trades people, volunteer organisations, emergency services, government agencies.
Online Workshop	Online	0	No registrations were received for this workshop.

7.1. What we heard

Overall, the plan reflects the messages that we heard during the early engagement. In particular, the details and priority of actions or interventions is reflected in Section 4.1 Pillar Pathways. The supporting actions that are important and may be subject to external or other factors, have been captured in Appendix 1 Supporting Pathways. The lists below provide more information about the common themes for action that the community would like to see.

Strategic Priority: Economic Resilience

Conduct a gap analysis of the current research and extension programs with primary producers

To address the challenges faced by primary producers, particularly in the context of drought resilience, it is essential to conduct a comprehensive gap analysis of the current research and extension programs. This analysis should identify the existing knowledge gaps and areas where additional information is needed. By collaborating with local primary producers, a series of tailored recommendations can be developed to bridge these gaps. One significant issue highlighted by multiple stakeholders is the lack of knowledge around dry sowing, which has become a critical concern due to the unusual lack of moisture. This situation underscores the importance of addressing these knowledge gaps promptly. This emphasised the need for localised research and tailored recommendations that are crucial to effectively support the primary producers.

Establishing a one-stop-shop portal of drought resilience resources

This initiative aims to create an online one-stop-shop portal of resources to help primary producers improve their drought resilience. The portal would include seminars, case studies, demonstration plots, and a library of resources provided by multiple agencies.

Raising awareness of available financial assistance and resources

This action aims to raise awareness of available financial assistance and resources. It is envisaged a third party could produce a booklet or series of one-page information sheets outlining available resources and providing basic facts and figures around services and who/what they are designed for.

Empowering farmers to develop and adopt personal drought plans

Recent dry periods have prompted many farmers to develop or reassess their personal drought plans. This initiative involves workshops to support primary producers and empower them to develop, refine, and implement their plans. By determining trigger points for specific activities in their own operations (e.g., reducing stocking levels, sourcing feed, or foregoing a winter crop), primary producers will be better placed to make informed decisions.

Supporting primary producers to make multi-year cash flow projections

Feedback from accountants, bankers, and others indicated the value of multi-year cash flow projections for informed decision making. This can be used to run scenarios of co-stressors (e.g., changing input costs, commodity prices, etc.) and identifying potential pinch points in cash flows. Development of a toolkit of collateral (e.g., case studies, fact sheets, where to find information, webinars, YouTube videos, links to existing resources) supported by a multi-modal promotional campaign is recommended.

Facilitating a formal Young Farmers Network

Younger workshop participants have highlighted the success of young farmer networks in other regions. While informal networks exist, establishing a formal network with broad regional coverage would help these groups become self-sustaining and foster cohesive knowledge sharing and morale.

Adapting the current Limestone Coast Leaders program to include primary producer elements

To enhance the personal leadership skills of primary producers, this initiative proposes adapting the existing Limestone Coast Leadership Program to include a primary producer stream. This would further develop soft skills and networking opportunities for primary producers.

Establishing a mentorship program for young farmers

There is a need for a mentorship program that pairs young farmers (mentees) with more experienced farmers (mentors). Young farmers would benefit from learning from their more experienced counterparts, especially regarding dry times. Conversely, experienced farmers could gain insights into newer and emerging technologies.

Mapping available support services to increase awareness and uptake

Engagement has revealed significant confusion about available support services, including mental health support, financial counselling, relevant rebates/incentives, and farm advice/outreach. This initiative aims to map these support services in various formats that can be promoted widely and increase access to services.

Conducting an agritourism gap analysis to support next steps

Agritourism offers a potential additional income source for some primary producers. This initiative involves conducting a gap analysis, surveying tourists to identify activities of interest, mapping existing agritourism ventures, understanding barriers to adoption (e.g., complex planning regimes, increased workload, new skills), and gauging interest among primary producers. The goal is to identify next steps to address gaps and realise opportunities.

Advocating for a fairer deal from supermarkets for farm produce

Primary producers are significantly impacted by the market shares and pricing tactics of large supermarkets, which reduce profit margins and financial buffers needed to survive dry times. Actions could involve making regional submissions to inquiries into supermarket pricing/market shares or establishing a collective of local industry groups to advocate together.

Promoting and increasing capacity of Rural Business Support Financial Counsellors

Engagement showed that many people had not heard of the services provided by the Rural Business Support Financial Counsellors. In future dry times, it would be beneficial to provide a surge capacity in the workforce, coupled with wide promotion of their existence and service offerings.

Leading an advocacy piece to address skilled and unskilled labour shortages

Feedback from various town businesses highlighted the challenge of attracting and retaining staff, which constrains businesses from capitalising on prosperous times and building financial buffers. This action involves leading an advocacy effort to lobby for increased incentives to attract workers to the region. Workforce planning at the regional scale is also required.

Progress circular economy opportunities aligned with drought resilience

Circular economy practices can significantly enhance drought resilience by promoting sustainable resource management and reducing dependency on finite resources. This initiative focuses on advancing specific opportunities 1, 2, 3, 4, and 9 within the Limestone Coast Circular Economy Opportunities discussion paper. These opportunities align with drought resilience:

1. Value-adding reject fruit and vegetables
2. Value-adding food waste from food processing for human consumption
3. Converting food waste to high-quality animal feed
4. Adopting regenerative agricultural practices
9. Better management of commonly recyclable materials locally

Encouraging and planning major work by tradespeople to be conducted during dry times

Engagement has revealed that the recent lack of rainfall has significantly slowed business for local tradespeople, including fencing contractors, electricians, and builders. Many tradespeople and primary

producers have observed that on-farm construction projects make up a significant component of work for these construction businesses. In contrast, during prosperous times, the demand for tradespeople can be so high that wait times become lengthy, which in turn drives up prices.

Given this dynamic, there are clear benefits to implementing programs that rely on tradespeople during dry periods. For instance, offering grants for projects such as fencing off remnant biodiversity areas or upgrading community facilities could be highly advantageous. These initiatives would not only provide much-needed cash flow for tradespeople, it would also support the suppliers of their materials. This could help to mitigate the financial downturn that typically accompanies dry periods, ensuring a more stable economic environment.

Investigating rental availability and the housing market in the region

Feedback indicates the shortage of rental properties is hindering small and medium enterprises (SMEs) from attracting workers. Without adequate housing options, these businesses may find it difficult to hire new employees, which in turn affects their profitability during prosperous times. This profitability is crucial as it provides a financial buffer during less favourable periods, such as dry times.

Strategic Priority: Environmental Resilience

Expanding the network of demonstration sites to promote increased groundwater recharge

Groundwater underpins primary production, industry, mining, and residential water supplies. Improving groundwater recharge and aquifer management is necessary to support community and biodiversity co-benefits. Expanding the network of demonstration sites to include diverse soil types, rainfall zones, and farming enterprises will help develop an evidence base of benefits and outcomes while quantifying costs.

Encouraging adoption of efficient water use practices across primary industries

This supporting action aims to encourage primary industries to adopt more efficient water use practices. Interest in implementing water use efficiencies across multiple demographics was raised by community members, encouraging maximum use of a scarce, declining resource. A study to assess the feasibility of improving water use would enable primary industry users to do more with less.

Improving access to reputable climate science

This supporting action aims to enhance access to climate science, broadening awareness of increasingly variable and unpredictable conditions and providing options to mitigate these risks. It could include a checklist for primary producers to identify if variable conditions are affecting their enterprise. Complementary information to support adaptation to a changing climate is recommended.

Promoting greater fire preparedness

Major fire events often follow dry periods. Fire preparedness is crucial for both communities and primary producers to avoid compounding impacts. This initiative could involve collaborating with the local Country Fire Service to leverage existing fire preparedness resources and conducting targeted promotions as fire seasons approach.

Providing assistance to adopt more efficient irrigation practices

Providing assistance to adopt more efficient irrigation practices can reduce resistance to Water Allocation updates and help primary producers maintain production levels if allocations are reduced. This action could include personalised assessments, farm tours or demonstration plots to provide firsthand experience and is best timed with prosperous periods (e.g., a bumper season) due to the associated cash influx.

Publishing real-time and historic data on aquifer levels, recharge, salinity, and extraction

This supporting action involves the provision of making up-to-date data on groundwater levels, salinity, recharge, and extraction publicly accessible in an easy-to-understand format. This allows regional stakeholders, primary producers, and others to gain a better understanding of groundwater dynamics. For

example, providing graphs that display water levels or salinity over time, alongside rainfall data, can help create a more informed community. This increased awareness can lead to greater support for necessary changes to water allocations.

It is noted that a significant increase in groundwater monitoring would be required for this initiative to be successful.

Advocating for the adoption of recycled water infrastructure

This initiative is crucial due to the region's heavy reliance on groundwater, where demand often exceeds supply. By utilising wastewater from both industrial and residential sources, the region can significantly augment its water supply. However distance between users is the key challenge.

This initiative could start with mapping out industries that produce high volumes of wastewater and identifying high-water users within the region. This mapping would help pinpoint localised areas where wastewater recycling would be most feasible and beneficial. Implementing such infrastructure would not only alleviate pressure on groundwater resources but also promote sustainable water management practices. Where these arrangements already exist, consideration could be given to higher or highest value use.

This approach could involve collaboration with local industries and residential communities to develop efficient recycling systems. By demonstrating the environmental and economic benefits of recycled water, stakeholders can be encouraged to support and invest in these systems. Ultimately, this would lead to a more resilient and sustainable water supply for the region, ensuring long-term water security.

Strategic Priority: Social Resilience

Incentivising additional medical staff to support the region

Towns under-serviced by doctors and pharmacists face greater challenges during dry times when mental and physical health declines. This action aims to determine and provide incentives to attract additional medical staff to provide health care services in the region, particularly to Penola, Bordertown, Kingston, and Millicent.

Leading advocacy to retain and attract young people back to the region

Engagement feedback highlights recurring difficulties in retaining and attracting young people to the region, who could fill apprenticeship roles in local businesses. This challenge constrains businesses from capitalising on prosperous times and building financial buffers to cope with downturns. This initiative involves leading an advocacy effort to lobby for increased incentives to attract young people to stay, or return to the region.

Providing incentives to encourage adoption of larger residential rainwater tanks

While towns in the region are well-serviced by reticulated water, many people rely on rainwater for home use. Incentives such as co-contributions or rebates would encourage residents to augment their rainwater storage, allowing them to catch more water when it rains for use in dry times.

Understanding the challenges and opportunities for the local volunteer workforce

A consistent theme during the engagement period was the difficulty that volunteer organisations face in attracting members, particularly younger members. Feedback also indicated that administrative processes are burdensome for volunteers. This initiative involves conducting a detailed analysis of the key challenges faced by volunteer organisations and identifying opportunities through a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis. The goal is to identify ways to reduce or consolidate administrative processes and enhance volunteer engagement, while appropriately managing risk.

8. Strategic Alignment

A review of existing strategies and plans with relevance to drought and/or resilience was completed to inform the development of this Plan. The purpose was to avoid any duplication of effort, identify gaps, challenges, opportunities and synergies between existing efforts and drought resilience outcomes (WSP, 2024). The information was used to support the development of this Plan, particularly Section 3 Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities and Section 5 Our Region.

Given the history of drought in the region and the purpose of these documents, it was not surprising that overall, the review found very few references to drought. However, many of the documents acknowledged or sought to address climate change more broadly.

Table 5: Local, Regional, State, National and International Plans Considered.

Local	Regional
City of Mount Gambier Strategic Plan 2020-2024	South East Drainage and Wetlands Strategy 2019
District Council of Grant Strategic Management Plan 2020-2030	Limestone Coast Regional Landscape Plan 2021-2026
District Council of Robe Draft Strategic Plan 2024-2028 Community Engagement Strategy	Limestone Coast Region (Landuse) Plan
Kingston District Council Strategic Plan 2023-2027	Regional Water Allocation Plans (Padthaway, Tatiara, Tintinara, Coonapyn, Morambro Creek, Lower Limestone Coast)
Kingston District Council Community Plan 2019-2029	Lower Limestone Coast Prescribed Wells Area - Groundwater Level and Salinity Status Report 2009-10
Naracoorte Lucindale Council Strategic Plan	Limestone Coast Destination & Tourism Marketing Plan 2025
Tatiara District Council Strategic Plan 2020-30	Limestone Coast Regional Growth Strategy 2018
Wattle Range Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2022	Limestone Coast Regional Climate Change Adaptation Plan and Regional Values and Climate Change Report 2015
Wattle Range Council Strategic Plan 2023-2027	Local Government Emergency Management Framework
State	National
Response to Drought in South Australia: A Case Study in Adaptive Management	The Second National Action Plan to Implement the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework Australia's Tinderbox Drought (2017-2019)
Tracking Changes in South Australia's Environment: summary of our approach to trend and condition report cards 2020	National Drought Agreement 2018

9.6.1 Limestone Coast Regional Drought Resilience Plan

Tracking Changes in South Australia’s Environment: 51 trend and condition report cards 2023	National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy 2021-2025
State of the Environment Summary Report 2023	National Climate Risk Assessment First Pass Assessment Report
Carbon Farming Roadmap for South Australia	Australian Government Drought Response, Resilience, and Preparedness Plan 2019
South Australian Government Response to National Drought Policy Review: Productivity Commission	International
SA Government - Drought Management and Recovery for South Australian Pastoralists 2020-21	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
SA Government – Water Security Statement	
Guide to Climate Projections for Risk Assessment and Planning in South Australia 2022	
New Climate Projections for South Australia Maps and Key Findings 2022	
South Australian Guide for Drought Assistance	
SA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub – Node Co-Design Workshops Report	
SA Drought Hub Annual Report 2022-23	
Climate Change Science and Knowledge Plan for South Australia 2022	

9. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

9.1. Planning Process and Program Logic Overview

Figure 17 shows the largely linear process used to develop this Plan, incorporating the information collected through the initial Evidence Review, testing and adding value through community and stakeholder engagement, influencing the content of the Plan.

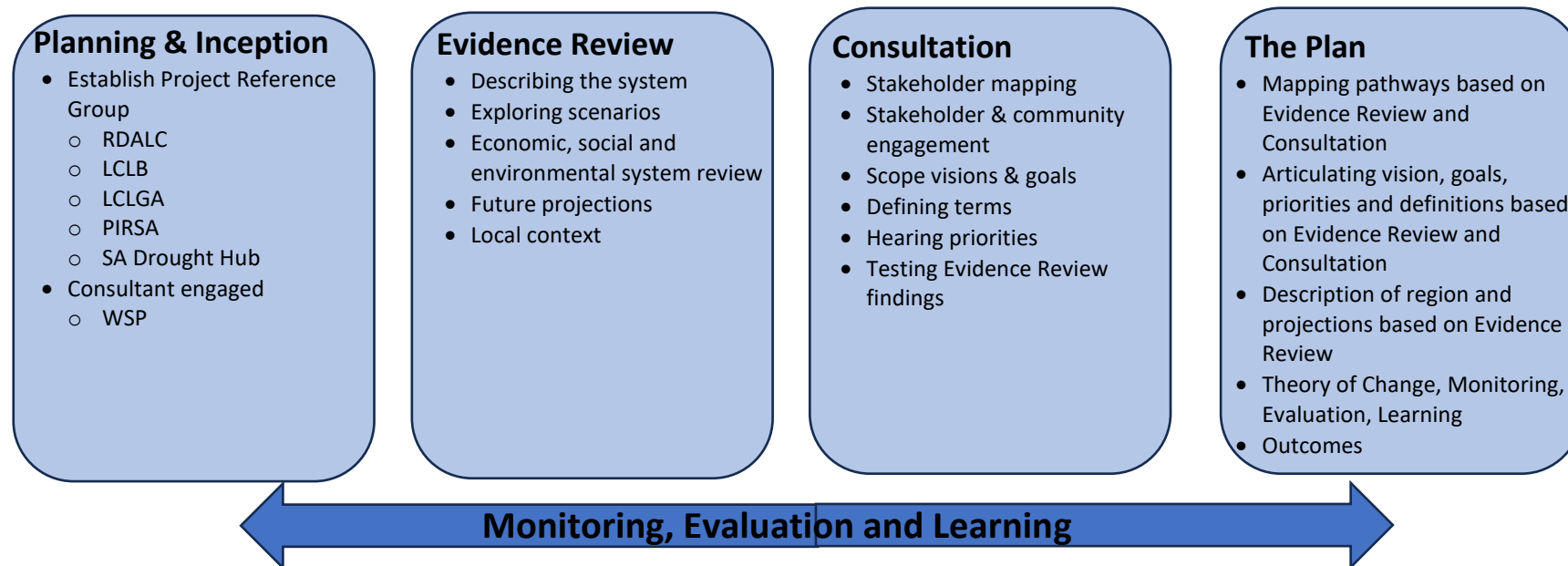


Figure 17: Development of the Plan - Process Pathway



Figure 18 Overview of Program Logic

9.2. Program Logic

Table 6: Program Logic

Inputs	Pathway	Short-Term Outcomes	Medium-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes	Impact
Strategic Priority: Economic Resilience		Goal: Ensuring primary producers and their supply chains have the resources and skills to capitalise on good years and successfully navigate dry times.			
1. Funding 2. Staffing 3. Stakeholder participation	1. Business Support - Enhancing the Small Business Support Program to Build Business Resilience for Future Dry Times.	1. More primary producers and businesses engaged in strategic business planning, financial projecting and risk assessment.	1. Primary producers and businesses have built skills in business planning, financial literacy and risk management.	1. More primary producers and small businesses adopt business planning, financial literacy and risk management to improve their drought sustainability and resilience.	Primary production businesses and their communities are self-reliant, productive and profitable.
1. Funding 2. Staffing 3. Stakeholder participation	2. Farm-level Drought Plans – Supporting Primary Producers to Manage Seasonal Conditions and Develop Longer Term Strategies	1. More primary producers and businesses engaged in farm-level drought planning to address short-term seasonal conditions and plan for longer term options for adaptation or diversification,	1. Primary producers include drought and climate risk in their planning	1. More primary producers are empowered to successfully navigate dry times.	
1. Funding 2. Staffing 3. Stakeholder participation	3. Industry Collaboration - Fostering Collaboration Between Industry Bodies and Agencies.	1. New partnerships are formed between industries and agencies to share knowledge, collaborate and partner more often to build drought resilience.	1. More drought resilience innovative approaches and technologies are being developed and adopted.	1. Industry networks collaboratively promote and implement transformative activities that improve their resilience to drought.	
Strategic Priority: Environmental Resilience		Goal: Established systems are in place to replenish our waterways, wetlands and landscapes ensuring a sustainable future for our environment and industry.			
1. Funding 2. Staffing 3. Stakeholder participation	4. Sustainable Practices - Increase Engagement in Drought Resilience Farm Management and Economic Diversification Projects	1. More primary producers are engaged in the co-design of natural resource management related research, development and extension activities. 2. A monitored central portal to access new and existing resilience practices is accessible to the community.	1. Improved collaboration between natural resource management bodies, governments, communities and primary producers. 2. More primary producers have the skills, data and support to apply better practices.	1. More primary producers have implemented best practice techniques increasing their businesses productivity and / or profitability.	Primary production landscapes are functional and sustainable, with healthy natural capital.
1. Funding 2. Staffing 3. Partner/First Nation right holder participation 3. Stakeholder participation	5. First Nations Co-design - Empowering First Nations' Caring for Country	1. Strengthen existing relationships with First Nations peoples of the region. 2. Holistic strategic planning of Caring for Country activities important to First Nations peoples of the region.	1. The community respects and values Caring for Country priorities and practices. 2. Increased opportunities for First Nations to deliver Caring for Country activities.	1. Community respects and values Caring for Country priorities and practices and seeks opportunities to engage with First Nations 2. Improved wellbeing and health of Country and increased connection of First Nations to Country	
1. Funding 2. Staffing 3. Stakeholder participation	6. Alternative Water - Retaining water in the landscape and encouraging the use of alternative water sources	1. Identification of industry water needs. 2. Verification of pre-feasibility study	1. Establishment of managed aquifer recharge trial sites. 2. Identify alternative water sources that can be used by industry during drought	1. Determination on the viability of managed aquifer recharge in the region.	

Inputs	Pathway	Short-Term Outcomes	Medium-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes	Impact
Strategic Priority: Social Resilience		Goal: Enhanced community well-being and mental health resilience by creating stronger networks, community collaboration and equitable access to healthcare and education.			
1. Funding 2. Staffing 3. Stakeholder participation	7. Mental Health - Improve awareness and remove barriers to mental health and well-being resources.	1. Improved access to, and greater utilisation of local community mental health and wellbeing services. 2. Improvement in the capacity of the regional communities to deal with mental health challenges.	1. Sustainable community led initiatives to deal with mental health issues implemented.	1. Permanent infrastructure and services available for the community in times of drought.	Primary production communities are resourceful, adaptable and thriving
1. Funding 2. Staffing 3. Stakeholder participation	8. Community Connection – Create Connection in Communities in Good Times and Dry Times	1. Increased number of local events to connect primary producers and their communities.	1. Sustainable community led initiatives to build networks, share knowledge and reduce isolation.	1. Community groups are self-sustaining.	

9.3. Program Measures

Table 7: Program Measures

		Outcomes identified in Program Logic	Indicators/Measures	Monitoring and Evaluation Approaches
		Short Term		
		Economic Resilience		
Short Term	1. Business Support	More primary producers and businesses engaged in strategic business planning, financial projecting and risk assessment.	Number of program events organised.	Program participants can be surveyed to get their opinion of whether the activities enabled them to increase their awareness, knowledge and skill levels as a result of their participation. In order to see the change in their awareness, knowledge or skill level it is recommended to conduct a pre-/ post-activity survey. The number of events held, and participant/business numbers can be recorded by the implementing regional stakeholder.
			Number of primary producers who participated in the business planning, financial literacy and risk assessment events.	
			Number of farms and businesses who signed up to the program with implemented drought/financial management plans.	
			Feedback of the participants about the usefulness and value of the events/agencies.	
	2. Farm-level Drought Plans	More primary producers and businesses engaged in farm-level drought planning to address short-term seasonal conditions and plan for longer term options for adaptation or diversification,	Number of program events organised.	Program participants can be surveyed to get their opinion of whether the activities enabled them to increase their awareness, knowledge and skill levels as a result of their participation. In order to see the change in their awareness, knowledge or skill level it is recommended to conduct a pre-/ post-activity survey. The number of events held, and participant/business numbers can be recorded by the implementing regional stakeholder.
			Number of primary producers who participated in the business planning, financial literacy and risk assessment events.	
			Number of farms and businesses who signed up to the program with implemented drought/financial management plans.	
			Feedback of the participants about the usefulness and value of the events/agencies.	

	3. Industry collaboration	New partnerships are formed between industries and agencies to share knowledge, collaborate and partner more often to build drought resilience.	Number of projects and programs started in collaboration between industries and agencies.	The number of projects and programs offered in collaboration between industries and agencies. Program participants can be surveyed to get their opinion of whether the projects or programs were beneficial.	
			Feedback of the participants about the usefulness and value of the projects or programs.		
	Environmental Resilience				
	4. Sustainable practices	More primary producers are engaged in the co-design of natural resource management related research, development and extension activities.	Number of first time participants/businesses signed up to projects and programs, along with details of repeat partners.	Use of simple survey devices i.e. Smilie face push buttons at field days/on websites to allow capture of resource and information access. More in-depth surveys could be accessed by QR codes/links at event/on sites and/or emailed out post event to attendees. The number of requests for information or event attendees can be recorded by the implementing regional stakeholder.	
		A monitored central portal to access new and existing resilience practices is accessible to the community.	Feedback of the participants about the usefulness and value of the events/programs, and resources.		
	5. First Nations Co-design	Strengthen existing relationships with First Nations peoples of the region.	Engagement plan developed with First Nation partner organisations (SEAFG and Burrardies Aboriginal Corporation) to ensure that First Nation groups in the region are invited to contribute to the development of the Caring for Country plan.	A comprehensive engagement plan is co-designed by partner organisations.	
		Holistic strategic planning of Caring for Country activities important to First Nations peoples of the region.	Number and distribution of engagement events held with First Nations groups and individuals.	The number of attendees at engagement events across the regions can be recorded.	
	6. Alternative Water	Identification of industry water needs.	Number of participants at engagement events	Number of participants and industries represented at engagement events recorded.	
		Verification of pre-feasibility study	On-ground verification of predicted Managed Aquifer Recharge sites.	Record of the accuracy of the prediction model developed in the pre-feasibility study to determine sites suitable for managed aquifer recharge	
	Social Resilience				
	7. Mental Health	Improved access to, and greater utilisation of local community mental health and wellbeing services.	Number of people accessing the mental health first responders training.	Program participants can be surveyed to get their opinion of whether the program increased their awareness, knowledge and skill levels as a first responder. In order to see the change in their awareness, knowledge or skill level it is recommended to conduct a pre-/ post-activity survey. The number of activities (sessions/ events/ training programs) implemented can be recorded by the implementing regional stakeholder.	
		Improvement in the capacity of the regional communities to deal with mental health challenges.	Number or participants trained from each Local Government Area.		
		Increased number of local events to connect primary producers and their communities.	Number of community events hosted	The number of events held, and participant/business numbers can be recorded by the implementing regional stakeholder.	
			Number of participants at community events		

		Medium Term		
		Economic Resilience		
Medium Term	Small business support	Primary producers and businesses have built skills in business planning, financial literacy and risk management	Proportion of participants who self-reported an improvement in their business planning, financial literacy and risk management (against a rubric).	Results captured in consultative sessions or focus group discussions with the regional stakeholder. The data collected (participants' surveys, registrations, and feedback data) against the short-term outcomes can also be used to respond to and support the medium-term outcomes.
			Proportion of participants who intend to bring change into their business as a result of their participation in the program.	
	2. Farm-level Drought Plans	Primary producers include drought and climate risk in their planning	Proportion of participants who self-reported the inclusion of drought and climate risk in their planning Proportion of participants who intend to bring change into their business as a result of their participation in the program.	Results captured in consultative sessions or focus group discussions with the regional stakeholder. The data collected (participants' surveys, registrations, and feedback data) against the short-term outcomes can also be used to respond to and support the medium-term outcomes.
	Industry collaboration	More drought resilience innovative approaches and technologies are being developed and adopted.	Number of projects and programs developed and trialled in collaboration between participating industries and agencies.	Results captured in Case studies, or Most Significant Change approach by the regional stakeholder.
	Environmental Resilience			
	Knowledge and best practice	Improved collaboration between natural resource management bodies, governments, communities and primary producers.	Feedback from farm group and industry body members.	Results captured in consultative sessions or focus group discussions with Regional Stakeholders
		More primary producers have the skills, data and support to apply better practices.	Number and type of stakeholders engaged per region.	The data collected (participants' surveys, registrations, and feedback data) against the short-term outcomes can also be used to respond to and support the medium-term outcomes.
	Caring for Country	The community respects and values Caring for Country priorities and practices.	Increased engagement of First Nations to provide Caring for Country activities or cultural advice.	Longitudinal study to determine how First Nations perceive the level of respect for cultural knowledge and practices in the community.
		Increased opportunities for First Nations to deliver Caring for Country activities.	Number of Caring for Country activities delivered, and the number of fee-for-service contracts created for Caring for Country activities.	Record of the number of Caring for Country activities delivered. Record of the number of fee-for-service contracts to deliver Caring for Country activities created.

	Water in Landscape	Establishment of managed aquifer recharge trial sites.	The number of managed aquifer recharge trial sites established on private land.	Record of the number of landholder agreements entered to establish managed aquifer recharge trial sites. The metered volume of water returned to aquifer via managed aquifer recharge.
		Identify alternative water sources that can be used by industry during drought	Adoption of alternative water sources by industry.	Report from local stakeholders on new/alternative water sources used and volumes (where possible).
		Social Resilience		
	Mental Health and Wellbeing	Sustainable community led initiatives to deal with mental health issues implemented.	Number of community led initiatives implemented and/or seeking grant assistance.	Results captured in consultative sessions with the regional stakeholders. The data collected from Grant Guru access data.
8. Connected Communities	Increased number of local events to connect primary producers and their communities.	Number of community led initiatives implemented and/or seeking grant assistance.	Results captured in consultative sessions with the regional stakeholders. The data collected from Grant Guru access data.	
Long Term				
Economic Resilience				
Long Term	Small business support	More primary producers and small businesses adopt business planning, financial literacy and risk management to improve their drought sustainability and resilience	Number of primary producers and businesses with current financial management planning documents, updated within previous 2 year period.	These long-term outcomes are best captured at national level by the federal government through separate evaluation studies and other national statistics.
	2. Farm-level Drought Plans	More primary producers are empowered to successfully navigate dry times.	Number of primary producers who self-report confidence in preparing for and responding to drought.	
	Industry collaboration	Industry networks collaboratively promote and implement transformative activities that improve their resilience to drought.	Stability and number of cross agency network programs.	
	Environmental Resilience			
Knowledge and best practice	More primary producers have implemented best practice techniques increasing their businesses productivity and / or profitability.	Number of profitable primary production enterprises. Decreased number of failed primary production enterprises.	These long-term outcomes are best captured at national level by the federal government through separate evaluation studies and other national statistics.	
Caring for Country	Community respects and values Caring for Country priorities and practices and seeks opportunities to engage with First Nations.	Number of on ground activities undertaken by First Nations.	Record of the number and range of Caring for Country activities undertaken per year.	

8. Connected Communities	Water in Landscape	Improved wellbeing and health of Country and increased connection of First Nations to Country	Increased resilience of Country to drought and climate issues.	Ongoing reports on the wellbeing of Country by First Nations partners.
	Water in Landscape	Determination on the viability of managed aquifer recharge in the region.	Delivery of a report on managed aquifer recharge effectiveness in the region.	Economic feasibility study of managed aquifer recharge for different water sources and systems.
	Social Resilience			
	Mental Health & Wellbeing	Permanent infrastructure and services available for the community in times of drought.	Surge capacity of programs and services can meet increased demand during drought events. Reduced instance of primary producer suicides.	These long-term outcomes are best captured at national level by the federal government through separate evaluation studies and other national statistics.
8. Connected Communities		Community groups are self-sustaining.	Number of community groups self-reporting confidence in continuing their purpose.	

9.4. Evaluation Framework

The Evaluation framework is designed to translate across any of the pillars, to allow consistent evaluation and benchmarking of results.

Note: Target stakeholders are the people the pathway is designed to impact, participants are the people who took part in a particular pathway project/program.

Table 8: Evaluation Framework

Key evaluation questions	Sub-questions	Measures	Proposed measurement methods	Who/what and when
How effective was the pathway in achieving its intended outputs and outcomes?	<p>To what extent has the pathway improved the resilience and wellbeing of regional communities?</p> <p>Is there any change in the target stakeholders towards sustainable resilience?</p> <p>Did the program improve the social connections and networks between the target stakeholders?</p>	<p>Participant’s opinion of whether the activities enabled them to increase their economic, environmental, and/or social resilience as a result of their participation.</p> <p>Number of pathway outputs and outcomes achieved at 12 month intervals post implementation.</p> <p>Sustainability of the achieved outputs and outcomes to provide ongoing benefit to the target stakeholders and the community.</p> <p>Sustainability of resultant social connections and networks to provide ongoing benefit to the target stakeholders and the community.</p>	<p>Data from individual pathway ‘Program Measures’ (9.3) can be used to respond to these measures – it is pertinent to collect data from the start of any intervention or program.</p> <p>Case studies can be used to demonstrate results against some of the evaluation questions.</p> <p>Gap analysis can be undertaken to review;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Target stakeholder’s vs participants - Proposed impact vs achieved impact 	<p>The Project Reference Group intend to appoint a Project Manager to oversee the initial implementation of the Regions Drought Resilience Plan. It is expected a part time 12 month position would manage to keep the program tracking until the pathways begin to generate their own momentum. The position would be responsible for monitoring, evaluation and learning data collection and reporting to the Project Reference Group. Funding for this position will need to be considered outside of this plan.</p>
How appropriate was the implementation process?	<p>Was the implementation process clear and well received by the targeted stakeholders?</p> <p>Did the implementation process engage the target stakeholders?</p> <p>Were any target demographics missed in implementation?</p>	<p>Satisfaction level of participants regarding the overall implementation process of each pathway.</p> <p>Feedback of participant regarding the overall implementation process of the program.</p> <p>If all target demographics were represented in pathway participants.</p>	<p>Program reference group to undertake 6 monthly review meetings to discuss and record implementation progress.</p>	
To what extent did the pathway achieve its intended impact?	<p>To what extent did the pathway improve the economic, environmental and social conditions of the target stakeholders?</p> <p>To what extent do the target stakeholders believe they have improved resilience to any kind of climate change incidents (i.e., droughts, bushfire etc.)</p>	<p>Participant’s opinion of whether the activities enabled them to increase their economic, environmental, and/or social resilience as a result of their participation.</p> <p>Examples of economic, environmental, and/or social benefits experienced by the target stakeholders.</p> <p>Sustainability of the achieved outputs and outcomes to provide ongoing benefit to the target stakeholders and the community.</p>		
What helped or hindered the pathways meet their desired outcomes?	<p>What aspects of the implementation and delivery were successful in achieving the desired impacts?</p> <p>What aspects of the implementation and delivery impeded progress towards the desired impacts?</p>	<p>Project reference group’s opinion of what elements helped or hindered the pathways achieve their outputs and outcomes.</p>		

Glossary

Key Term	Definition
Absorptive Capacity	The ability of individuals and groups to continue without adapting or changing their behaviour in respond to environmental and socioeconomic changes.
Adaptation	Adjustment or modification in natural and/or human systems in response to actual or expected shocks and stresses to moderate harm, reduce vulnerability and/or exploit beneficial opportunities.
Adaptive Capacity	The ability of individuals and groups to adjust and respond to environmental and socioeconomic changes.
Adaptive Governance	Adaptive governance is defined by a focus on decentralised decision-making structures and procedurally rational policy, supported by intensive natural and social science. Decentralised decision-making structures allow a large, complex problem like global climate change to be factored into many smaller problems, each more tractable for policy and scientific purposes.
Adaptive Pathways	A planning approach which the addresses uncertainty and challenges associated with climate change decision-making. This approach allows for decisions that must be made now, whilst identifying those that can be made in the future, providing strategic, flexible, and structured decision-making.
Co-Design	The process of partnership to develop and formulate project delivery and agreed objectives and needs, using participatory methods. A process of working together utilising generative and explorative processes.
Community Led	An approach where the local and regional community work together to identify goals that are important to them, develop and implement plans to achieve those goals, and create collaborative relationships internally and with external actors - all while building on community strengths and local leadership.
Drought	Drought in general means acute water shortage. Drought is a prolonged, abnormally dry period when the amount of available water is insufficient to meet our normal use.
Drought (Limestone Coast Context)	For the Limestone Coast, the timing of rainfall is as important as the amount. The cumulative effects of weather are also a contributing factor. Each industry and geographic location have different rainfall and timing requirements.
Drought Resilience	Drought resilience is a measure of a system's ability to absorb, respond and recover to drought risks.
Dry Times	In the Limestone Coast Region, a lack of rainfall at crucial times in the season, or a failure of a season to break are the terms used by primary producers when describing rainfall deficit seasons. Key differentiation is Dry Times are short, partial-one season in duration, whereas Drought is an extended, multiyear event.
Economic Resilience	The ability of the economy to absorb the economic impact of shocks and stressors without changing the economic status or outcomes.
Environmental Resilience	The ability of the natural environment to cope with a diverse range of shocks and stressors while maintaining natural processes and ecosystem services.

Key Term	Definition
Exposure	The presence of people; livelihoods; species or ecosystems; environmental functions, services, and resources; infrastructure; or economic, social, or cultural assets in places and settings that could be adversely affected.
Feedback Loop	Feedback loop is a process where the output of a system is fed back into the input, resulting in circular cause and effect that can either amplify or diminish the effects of droughts. It is used to visualise the interdependencies and interrelations of causes and effects across different systems
Governance	Governance is the structures and processes by which individuals, groups and agencies in a society share power and make decisions. It can be formally institutionalised, or informal.
Green Drought	Green droughts refer to when the fields are green but there is insufficient rainfall to saturate soils and generate run-off into dams or groundwater recharge. In the Limestone Coast, this can be caused by early rain without sufficient follow up for the season to break, limiting vegetation growth.
Groundwater Recharge	Groundwater recharge occurs via two mechanisms: 'river recharge', where water leaks from the base of a river, lake, wetland or reservoir, and 'rainfall recharge' where water permeates downwards once the soil profile is saturated.
Groundwater Salinity	The process whereby salts stored below the surface of the ground are brought close to the surface by the rising watertable. The accumulation of salt degrades the upper soil profile, with impacts on agriculture, infrastructure and the environment.
Independent Review	CSIRO Assessment of this Plan and supporting documents against guidelines to determine alignment with Future Drought Fund requirements.
Intervention Options	Alternative or complementary actions, projects, programs, policies, initiatives, and investments that are planned to bring about change in the system.
Local Knowledge	Local knowledge and First Nations knowledge incorporate elements of lived experience within a landscape, bearing witness to the operation of systems. It includes aspects of people, landscape, culture – how people interact with surroundings and as part of communities and processes.
Maintain	Preserving the system refers to efforts to keep the region (as it currently exists) the same.
Modify	Efforts working to adapt part of the system to meet newly defined goals.
Primary Production	Primary production includes the following sectors: aquaculture, commercial fishing, grains and crops, food and beverage, forestry, grape and wine, horticulture, livestock, wool, and dairy.
Project Reference Group	Made up of representatives from Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast, Limestone Coast Landscape Board, Department of Primary Industry and Regions South Australia, South Australia Drought Hub, and Limestone Coast Local Government Association.
Resilience	The ability of a system to absorb a disturbance and reorganise to maintain the existing functions, structure and feedback. Also see economic resilience, environmental resilience, and social resilience.
Risk	The potential for adverse consequences for human or ecological systems, recognising the diversity of values and objectives associated with such systems.

Key Term	Definition
Salinity	Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) grams of salt per litre, measuring the amount of salt dissolved within water.
Shock	Shocks are sudden and immediate events causing immediate damage and impact. Examples include disease pandemic, bushfires, water crisis, cyber-attack, and extreme heat.
Social Resilience	The ability of the human society to cope with a diverse range of shocks and stressors while maintaining existing social and community functions.
Stressor	An event that occurs gradually over a timeframe that causes an adverse effect, e.g., drought.
System	The interaction of processes, networks, and inter-dependencies across a complex 'whole'.
Theory of Change	Refers to theories, causal mechanisms and assumptions that explain how and why outcomes and impacts will be achieved through use, implementation and production of proposed inputs, activities, and outputs.
Threshold	The point at which a change in a level or amount a controlling variable causes a system to shift to a qualitatively different regime. Also referred to as a tipping point.
Transform	Radically change or build a new system.
Transformative Capacity	The process of radically changing or building a new system with different structure, functions, feedback, and identity.
Transitions	Transitions involve incremental changes to systems, slowly altering a situation.
Trends	Major global or regional influences that have driven change in the past and are expected to shape change into the future.
Trigger Point	A pre-agreed situation or event, that when met, activates a management intervention. Trigger points are usually defined in the planning phase.
Triple Bottom Line	An approach which seeks to equally focus on economic, social, and environmental outcomes.
Vulnerability	The propensity or predisposition to be adversely affected.

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
\$	(in) Australian Dollars
%	Percent
°C	Degrees Celsius
BOM	Bureau of Meteorology
COVID	Coronavirus disease
e.g.,	For example,
FDF	Future Drought Fund
kg/ha	Kilogram per hectare
LCLB	Limestone Coast Landscape Board
LGA	Local Government Area
LCLGA	Limestone Coast Local Government Association
PIRSA	Department of Primary Industries and Regions, South Australia
RAPTA	Resilience, Adaptation Pathways, and Transformation Assessment
RCP	Representative Concentration Pathway
RDALC	Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast
SA	South Australia
SEAFG	South East Aboriginal Focus Group
SENRM	South East Natural Resources Management Board
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
the Plan	Limestone Coast Regional Drought Resilience Plan
THI	Temperature-Humidity Index

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Appendix 1 Supporting Pathways

Table 9: Supporting Implementation Pathways and Actions

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment
During consultation we heard primary producers are significantly impacted by the commodity price shifts and pricing tactics of large supermarkets, which reduce profit margins and financial buffers needed to survive dry times.	Advocate for fairer deals on farm produce.	Supporting fairer practices towards primary producers.	1. Establishing a collective of local industry groups to advocate together. 2. Make regional submissions to inquiries into supermarket pricing/market shares.	2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building. 3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 5. Increased networking and relationship building. 6. Increased resilience for local businesses by securing and strengthening income streams. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 10. Increased understanding and awareness of available support and services. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.	Modify
			Review local government restrictions and regulations for farm gate sales, artisan, and small business with a view to remove unnecessary red tape across the region.		Modify
During consultation we heard no one could afford non-essential spending leaving tradies (i.e. fencers, electricians, builders and plumbers) with reduced demand. An example given was no longer having waiting lists where previously they were six months long.	Support local labour businesses during a downturn in trade caused by dry times.	Advocate for stimulus funding during significant dry times.	1. Develop and maintain a Limestone Coast database of infrastructure work on public buildings/spaces, and key nature corridors that could be funded during dry times/EOFY budgets. 2. Release funding for additional public maintenance work during dry times as requested by the Local Government Association. 3. Release funding for additional environmental priority programs during dry times as requested by the Local Landscape Board.	3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 6. Increased resilience for local businesses by securing and strengthening income streams. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.	Modify
During consultation we heard businesses are struggling to attract and retaining staff, which constrains businesses from capitalising on prosperous times and building financial buffers. They can't keep young people because there are no opportunities or resources for training or personal and professional development. They cannot encourage migration to fill jobs as there is limited housing available.	Retaining and attracting young people back to the region.	Encouraging sustainable growth of our region.	Undertake research in how to keep and/or attract young people to the Limestone Coast.	1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities. 2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building. 3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 5. Increased networking and relationship building. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 9. Increased utilisation of existing drought resilience knowledge and information. 10. Increased understanding and awareness of available support and services. 11. Increased use of support and services thereby increasing preparedness, and future funding. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.	Modify
			Develop a Limestone Coast Primary Production Leaders program.		Modify
	1. Advocate for accredited training programs within the region so young people have the option to stay local. 2. Focus on in-region training for tomorrows technologies/ jobs.		Modify		
	Lead an advocacy piece to address skilled and unskilled labour shortages		Modify		
	1. Advocate for increased medical services across the region. 2. Incentivising medical staff to reside in the region		Modify		
Increasing medical and professional service access across the region.					
Increase housing availability across the region.			1. Identify businesses and spaces capable of providing affordable worker accommodation. 2. Identify township specific barriers to population growth such as water and wastewater services.		Maintain

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment
<p>During consultation we heard the lasting effects of historic bushfires such as Ash Wednesday but also more recent ones including at Keilira in 2020. Fire preparation was noted as a crucial activity following dry seasons due to the lack of moisture and reliance on stored fodder.</p>	<p>Reduction of unnecessary flammable fuel (fuel load) sources in the region.</p>	<p>Encourage fire preparedness in our communities to prevent future catastrophic events.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Decrease unmonitored vegetation areas within the region. 2. Establish partnerships between First Nations initiatives and industry bodies. 3. Increase the business community awareness of responsibility during dry times. 4. Support increased industry training such as Forestry Fire Crew. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities. 2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building. 3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 5. Increased networking and relationship building. 10. Increased understanding and awareness of available support and services. 11. Increased use of support and services thereby increasing preparedness, and future funding. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought. 	<p>Modify</p>
<p>During consultation we heard there is significant waste across industry. Whether it was using unattractive fruit or food waste or finding ways to recycle agricultural plastics, the region could and should be doing more to lead a circular economy.</p>	<p>Progress Opportunities identified in the Limestone Coast Circular Economy Opportunities discussion paper.</p>	<p>Encourage investment in Circular Economy initiatives</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Value-adding reject fruit and vegetables, finding a use for the estimated 77% SA food produced that is not harvested. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 6. Increased resilience for local businesses by securing and strengthening income streams. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought. 	<p>Modify</p>
			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Value-adding food waste from food processing for human consumption, using potato, onion and wine grape seeds for nutraceutical and bulk food properties. 		<p>Modify</p>
			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Converting food waste to high-quality animal feed. 		<p>Modify</p>
			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Adopting regenerative agricultural practices. 		<p>Modify</p>
			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Better management of agricultural plastics and commonly recycled materials locally. 		<p>Modify</p>
<p>During consultation we heard the need to be proactive in attracting government funding and investment into the region. This will provide opportunities for the region to diversify business opportunities and be prepared to meet State and Global Legislation changes.</p>	<p>Raise awareness of manufacturing income stream diversification opportunities.</p>	<p>Support Industry Transition for a Sustainable Tomorrow.</p>	<p>Link organisations to opportunities such as component manufacture for defence</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 6. Increased resilience for local businesses by securing and strengthening income streams. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought. 	<p>Modify</p>
	<p>Coordination of the Limestone Coast Net Zero Transition.</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appoint a Project Manager to lead a regional transition program. 2. Review existing renewable energy supply chains and opportunities in SA/Vic. 3. Strengthen industry understanding and resilience of Net Zero requirements. 		<p>Modify</p>
	<p>Raising awareness of state, national and international regulations.</p>		<p>Provide advice and resources to businesses on complying with legislation and regulations such as.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State and National Net Zero Targets • International EU Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). 		<p>Modify</p>
<p>During consultation we heard that farmers want to learn from other farmers, not government bodies. Historically industry bodies led local networks and programs that naturally led to knowledge sharing across generations, as well as disciplines.</p>	<p>Implement programs to support Farmers teaching Farmers</p>	<p>Develop Farmer teaching Farmer opportunities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appoint a Project Coordinator to develop and run a Farmer teaching Farmer Program. 2. Establish a mentorship program to facilitate information sharing between farmers. 3. Establish a Young Farmers Network. 4. Establish a primary producers leadership program. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 6. Increased resilience for local businesses by securing and strengthening income streams. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought. 	<p>Modify</p>

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment
During consultation we heard that some industries required greater water allocation and resources than is sustainable for a resilient future.	Advocate for planning regulations and zones to exclude inappropriate industry uses, as well as protect crucial environmental corridors.	Develop consistent planning zones and overlays	Review land use regulations for appropriateness across the seven local government areas. Advocate for required changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 10. Increased understanding and awareness of available support and services. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought. 15. Better future planning and development for the region. 	Modify
During consultation we heard that Rural Business Support Financial Counsellors did not advertise the service because they are only able to meet existing demand without seeking new referrals.	Advocate for the growth of Rural Business Support Services.	Expand the Rural Business Support Program to Increase Accessibility	Increase available Rural Business Support Officer resources and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building. 3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 6. Increased resilience for local businesses by securing and strengthening income streams. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought. 	Maintain
			Secure a surge capacity of Rural Business Support Financial Counsellors for deployment during bad seasons.		Modify
During consultation we heard that local volunteers wear many hats in good times and get burnt out during dry times. The same people often volunteer for several committees and organisations, which is not sustainable whilst also dealing with business and family concerns.	Improving support for community volunteers.	Streamline volunteer process to increase participation.	Undertake a gap and opportunity analysis for pinch points faced by volunteers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities. 2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building. 5. Increased networking and relationship building. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought. 16. Increased sustainability of community club/service preparedness for drought. 17. Improved community club/service outcomes and long-term sustainability. 	Maintain
			Identify where red tape could be removed or reduced from LGA requirements.		Modify
			Create grant writing toolkits for volunteers and clubs including acquittal processes.		Modify

Appendix 2 Master List of Outcomes

Each pathway described in Table 3 of Section 4.1 - Pillar Pathways contains a numbered list of the Outcomes expected to result from the proposed activities. The full list of outcomes is provided for reference below.

Table 10 Master List of Outcomes

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities. 2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building. 3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 5. Increased networking and relationship building. 6. Increased resilience for local businesses by securing and strengthening income streams. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 8. Reduced duplication of services and reduced consultation fatigue, providing better outcomes for agencies and farmers. 9. Increased utilisation of existing drought resilience knowledge and information. 10. Increased understanding and awareness of available support and services. 11. Increased use of support and services thereby increasing preparedness, and future funding. 12. Increased awareness of mental health information, practices and opportunities. 13. Local industry focused program to provide accessible mental health training and services. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought. 15. Holistic planning of Caring for Country activities with the understanding that activities on Country are interconnected. 16. Increased social and economic participation of First Nations; co-design emphasises self-determination, projects, and activities important to First Nations peoples to make up the plan, new fee-for-service opportunities. 17. Increased drought resilience. 18. Support biodiversity outcomes. 19. Reduce the risk and impact of bushfires. 20 Decrease pressure on groundwater resource so recovery after drought is possible. 21 Determine feasibility of storing drain and alternative water sources in the aquifers using managed aquifer recharge (managed aquifer recharge could increase the supply of groundwater available during drought). 22 Identify alternative water sources that can be used during drought. 23 Assist in carbon sequestration. 24 Increase the total volume of water available in the region

4.1. Pillar Pathways

Table 3: Pillar Implementation Pathways and Actions

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment	Triggers
During consultation we heard retail stores without a business plan were struggling, whilst those with plans could implement strategies such as moving old stock or had diverse revenue streams to assist whilst primary producers weren't spending.	Promote greater awareness of tools, techniques and approaches to assist primary producers and small business survive a downturn in trade.	1. Business Support - Enhancing the Small Business Support Program to Build Business Resilience for Future Dry Times	Develop new resources for small and medium enterprises to manage periods of reduced trade. Specifically reduced trade caused by dry times and/or drought reducing primary producer spending. Existing small business program could be expanded for efficiency.	1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities. 2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building.	Modify	The 2024 late autumn break highlighted the challenges faced by businesses and primary producers who had not planned for alternative operating conditions. There were increased mental health, animal welfare, and business sustainability concerns.
During consultation we heard that some businesses, retail and primary production, were not saving and planning during the good years to provide a buffer for poor years. It was noted this was because they hadn't considered the inevitability of poor years. especially younger, or less experienced business owners.	Improving the financial viability of small business during the good times (to provide a buffer during dry times)		Create a map of available support services (in a variety of formats) promoting available services (financial, relevant rebates/incentives, farm advice/outreach, Mental Health etc. website with linked services maintained by a lead agency.	3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 5. Increased networking and relationship building.	Modify	
			1. Develop a program focussing on Agriculture/Primary Production business support. To assist these businesses, engage with best practice principles. 2. Appoint a Project Coordinator for an Agri Business Development Program.	14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.	Modify	

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment	Triggers
<p>During consultation we heard that seasons are more variable and harder to predict. An example was that a lot of lower SE farmers were caught unprepared in 2024 due to a wet January followed by the late break. Farms without a drought management plan were struggling and needing to make decisions whilst emotions were high, whilst farms that had plans in place were able to make decisions earlier and benefit as a result.</p>	<p>Encourage greater uptake of Farm-Level Drought Plans that address short term seasonal conditions as well as long term financial and on-farm strategies.</p>	<p>2. Farm-Level Drought Plans – Supporting Primary Producers to Manage Seasonal Conditions and Develop Longer Term Strategies</p>	<p>Supporting primary producers to make multi-year cash flow projections for informed decision making.</p> <p>Short term seasonal management as well as longer term options for adaptation or diversification</p>	<p>2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building.</p> <p>3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought.</p> <p>4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability.</p> <p>6. Increased resilience for local businesses by securing and strengthening income streams.</p> <p>14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.</p>	<p>Modify</p>	<p>The 2024 late autumn break highlighted the challenges faced by businesses and primary producers who had not planned for alternative operating conditions. There were increased mental health, animal welfare, and business sustainability concerns.</p>
			<p>Promote access to climate science and tools to broaden the awareness of more variable and unpredictable local conditions in the future.</p>	<p>1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities.</p> <p>2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building.</p> <p>3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought.</p> <p>4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability.</p> <p>14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.</p>	<p>Modify</p>	
			<p>1. Create resources for farmers to develop personalised Drought Management Plans to pre-plan what steps to take in late breaks, dry times and drought.</p> <p>2. Promote and educate community of benefits in planning and maintaining plans.</p>	<p>1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities.</p> <p>3. Increased sustainability of local businesses preparedness for drought.</p> <p>4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability.</p> <p>14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.</p>	<p>Modify</p>	

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment	Triggers
During consultation we heard there were too many competing priorities for community time. We also experienced scheduling issues when planning engagement workshops with industry bodies and support agencies having workshops or events during the same period, targeting the same communities.	Improving collaboration and cross promotion of events and resources to streamline availability and reduce confusion and disengagement.	3. Industry Collaboration - Fostering Collaboration Between Industry Bodies and Agencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appoint a Project Coordinator for Industry Collaboration. 2. Develop a steering committee across Limestone Coast based primary production bodies to share information and as appropriate program and resources. 3. Create a calendar of events around key production periods for engagement and networking. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 8. Reduced duplication of services and reduced consultation fatigue, providing better outcomes for agencies and farmers. 9. Increased utilisation of existing drought resilience knowledge and information. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought. 	Modify	The 2024 late autumn break highlighted the disconnection between industry bodies and agencies. Several support and engagement activities were planned, however the duplication of content, and competing locations and timeframes often lead to greater confusion and stress for the target audiences.
During consultation we heard that not all farmers want to be trailblazers. Some know they need to change but want to be able to make informed decisions on what could work and if they can make small changes each year to achieve better resilience in a 5-10 year plan.	Promote greater awareness of tools, techniques and approaches to assist primary producers survive dry seasons	4. Sustainable Practices - Increase Engagement in Drought Resilience Farm Management and Economic Diversification Projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct a gap analysis of the current research and extension programs with Primary Producers. 2. Encourage co-design research and extension programs with primary producers, SA Drought Hub and Industry Bodies. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased awareness of drought resilience information, practices and opportunities. 2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building. 4. Improved business outcomes and long-term sustainability. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 9. Increased utilisation of existing drought resilience knowledge and information. 10. Increased understanding and awareness of available support and services. 11. Increased use of support and services thereby increasing preparedness, and future funding. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought. 	Maintain	The SA Climate Change Act is currently being amended to include ambitious statewide targets. To assist primary producers meet the targets, we need to make the existing and continuing research accessible to end users.
	Promote drought resilient practices demonstrated to be effective in the South East. Upper, Lower and coastal practices in addition to whole of region.		Develop case studies to promote drought resilient farm management techniques		Maintain	
			Host field days to showcase available technology, research and production improvements and how they could be implemented.		Modify	
			Develop a multimodal program to identify and promote drought resilience at farm level resources and options.		Modify	
			Identify and implement demonstration sites which show benefits of drought resilient practices.		Modify	
During consultation we heard primary producers wouldn't look to PIRSA or LCLB for advice on research and technology. They would however take advice from their trusted specialists (agronomists, animal dieticians, vets etc) and their networks.	Promotion of latest drought resilience farm management research and emerging income streams.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of drought resilience farm management research and emerging income stream advice. 2. Promotion of material to primary industry supply chains. 3. Maintain resources and up to date research/funding opportunity information. 	Modify			
		Development of Primary Producer facing drought resilience farm management research and emerging income stream advice.	Modify			

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment	Triggers
<p>The short timeframe between engaging a consultant and when a draft plan was due to be submitted for independent review did not allow for meaningful engagement with First Nations representatives. Whilst some meetings did occur and the RDRP added to the agenda, formal discussions had not commenced at the time of completing this plan. The action was derived from the existing strategic priorities of the SEAFG.</p>	<p>Co-design a Caring for Country plan that identifies activities to improve the health of Country and increase regional drought resilience</p>	<p>5. First Nations Co-design - Empowering First Nations' Caring for Country</p>	<p>Develop a holistic Caring for Country plan and deliver on-ground activities.</p> <p>a) Recruit and appoint a project manager to work closely with partner corporation (Burrandies Aboriginal Corporation) throughout the project</p> <p>b) Develop an engagement plan that effectively captures the needs of the region's First Nations people</p> <p>c) Perform a desktop review of current Caring for Country activities in the region and identify gaps</p> <p>d) Identify future on-ground Caring for Country activities that will support First Nations vision</p> <p>e) Develop a Caring for Country plan</p> <p>f) Engage local First Nations peoples to deliver on-ground Caring for Country activities identified in the plan that will increase regional drought resilience</p> <p>g) Deliver any required training to First Nations peoples</p>	<p>15 Holistic planning of Caring for Country activities with the understanding that activities on Country are interconnected.</p> <p>16 Increased social and economic participation of First Nations; co-design emphasises self-determination, projects, and activities important to First Nations peoples to make up the plan, new fee-for-service opportunities.</p> <p>17 Increased drought resilience.</p> <p>18 Support biodiversity outcomes.</p> <p>19 Reduce the risk and impact of bushfires.</p>	<p>Transform</p> <p>First Nations cultural knowledge and customs are typically not considered in drought resilience. First Nations people are not consistently empowered to determine on ground activities and decision making</p>	<p>Acknowledgement that there are deficiencies in environmental management when the input of First Nations cultural knowledge is not respected or included in decision making.</p>
<p>During consultation we heard that the loss of wetland areas was negatively impacting on water availability in the landscapes and not allowing for ground water recharge to sustainable levels following dry seasons. The availability of quality groundwater for irrigation is also a significant concern.</p>	<p>Advocate for the exploration of alternate water resources and determine the feasibility of Managed Aquifer Recharge.</p>	<p>6. Alternative Water - Retaining water in the landscape and encouraging the use of alternative water sources</p>	<p>Undertake a review of alternative water sources within the region. Would need to include use cases, treatment requirements, economic viability, storage, disposal considerations, and risk assessments for each source/use case.</p> <p>Create water use profiles for regional industries.</p> <p>Undertake a Managed Aquifer Recharge Feasibility Study building on pre-feasibility study and current actions.</p> <p>Ground truthing of predicted managed aquifer recharge sites identified in pre-feasibility study and engagement with landholders to identify future demonstration sites for managed aquifer recharge trials.</p>	<p>18 Support biodiversity outcomes.</p> <p>19 Reduce the risk and impact of bushfires.</p> <p>20 Decrease pressure on groundwater resource so recovery after drought is possible.</p> <p>21 Determine feasibility of storing drain and alternative water sources in the aquifers using managed aquifer recharge (managed aquifer recharge could increase the supply of groundwater available during drought).</p> <p>22 Identify alternative water sources that can be used during drought.</p> <p>23 Assist in carbon sequestration.</p> <p>24 Increase the total volume of water available in the region</p>	<p>Transform</p> <p>This approach seeks to instil a completely new approach to managing water resources in the region to ensure economic and environmental resilience.</p>	<p>The Limestone Coast is facing a long-term climate trend of drying and warming. The region is already experiencing declining groundwater levels and increasing water quality issues. Managing these resources sustainably now and for future generations is critically important.</p>

Option Origination	Option	Pathway	Outputs	Outcomes	Resilience Assessment	Triggers
During consultation we heard that supply chain industries felt unprepared to respond to customers who expressed physical, financial, and/or mental stresses associated with dry periods.	Reduce the stigma associated with mental health and capitalise on impromptu conversations within trusted local networks.	7. Mental Health - Improve awareness and remove barriers to mental health and well-being resources	Mental health first aid for primary production facing service providers.	2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building.	Modify	The 2024 late autumn break highlighted the regions long wait list for mental health support, and limited knowledge by general community members in appropriate options and resources to support family and neighbours.
			1. Appoint a Project Coordinator for Mental Health Program. 2. Implement a steering committee with relevant health and social stakeholders.	7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 10. Increased understanding and awareness of available support and services.	Modify	
			2. Undertake a desktop review of existing literature resources, gaps and access barriers. 3. Create a map of available services/resources. 4. Create a gap analysis with recommendations.	11. Increased use of support and services thereby increasing preparedness, and future funding. 12. Increased awareness of mental health information, practices and opportunities.	Modify	
			Encourage investment in popular local initiatives i.e. 'In the Head of a Country Bloke' podcast.	13. Local industry focused program to provide accessible mental health training and services. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.	Maintain	
During consultation, we heard that isolation was an issue during dry times due to increasing workloads (on farm and in small business), combined with reduced cashflow. Groups wanted to help, but needed small amounts of funding with low administrative burden.	Provide opportunities for communities to connect locally during dry times.	8. Community Connection – Create Connection in Communities in Good Times and Dry Times	1. Promote low-cost opportunities for people to gather. 2. Provide seed funding for community groups to gather on local issues or with local interests.	2. Increased information sharing and knowledge building. 7. Improved collaboration and strengthening of relationships. 10. Increased understanding and awareness of available support and services. 14. Increase in resilient individuals to prepare for, cope with and recover from adverse events such as drought.	Modify	The challenging 2023-24 season saw previously active members of the community withdraw and become isolated. Already stretched volunteers sought to provide events, however the audit and admin requirements for grants outweighed the benefits.

9.7 POLICY AND PROCEDURES REGISTER

Policies Register

Note - All Policies are located on the LCLGA Cloud under \Admin\Policies, Procedures & Forms\Policies

Policy Name	Approval Date	Status	Last Review	Next Review	Policy\Procedure	Internal\External
Advertising & Recruitment	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedurte	Internal
Alcohol & Drugs	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Annual Leave	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Bullying & Victimisation	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Not sure
Business Continuity		Under Construction			Policy	Internal
Business Plan & Budgets		Under Construction			Procedure	Internal
Carer's Leave	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Change Pay Details	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedurte	Internal
Code of Conduct for Board Members - V1	Aug-24	Current		Aug-28	Policy	
Code of Conduct for Employees - V1	9/08/2024	Current		Aug-28	Policy	
Compassionate Leave	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Compensation	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Compliance		Under Construction			Policy	External
Confidentiality	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal\External
Conflict of Interest	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal\External
Correspondence	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedurte	Internal
Covid-19		Under Construction			Policy	Internal
Credit Card	Dec-24	Current	Nov-23	Dec-25	Policy	External
Delegations		Under Construction			Policy	External
Discrimination	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Not sure
Dress Code	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Email	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Emergency	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Emergency Services Leave	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Employment Vacancy	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedurte	Internal
Equal Employment	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Not sure
Equipment & Supplies	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Ergonomic Workplace	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
First Aid	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Flexible Working Arrangement	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Not sure
Fraud & Compliance	Aug-18	Current	Aug-19		Policy	External
General Ledger	Aug-18	Under Construction	Aug-19		Not sure	Not sure
Grants		Under Construction			Policy	External
Grievance Complaint	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedure	Internal
Hours of Work	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Induction	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedure	Internal
Information & Database		Under Construction			Procedure	Internal
Insurance		Under Construction			Policy	External
Intellectual Property	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Internal Control		Under Construction			Policy	Internal
Internet	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Interview	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedure	Internal
Investment		Under Construction			Policy	External
Job Description	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedure	Internal
Jury Duty	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Lateness	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Long Service Leave	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Manual Handling	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Media Liaison	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal\External
Misconduct	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Mobile Phone		Under Construction			Policy	Internal
Motor Vehicle	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Naming Convention		Under Construction			Policy	Internal
Offer & Unsuccessful	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedure	Internal
Overtime & Additional Hours	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Paid Parental Leave	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Payroll Policy	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedure	Internal
Performance Management	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Pregnancy & Breastfeeding	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Not sure
Probation	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Procurement	Apr-24	Current		Apr-25	Policy	External
Reasonable Adjustment	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Not sure
Reference & Medical	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedure	Internal
Reimbursement	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Risk Management	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	External
Room Booking	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedure	Internal
Security	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedure	Internal
Selection & Shortlist	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Procedure	Internal
Sexual Harassment	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Not sure
Sick Leave	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Smoking	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Social Media	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Sponsorship	Oct-16	Current		Overdue	Policy	External
Staff Whereabouts	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Training & Development	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Travel	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Waste	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal
Work Area	Aug-18	Current	Aug-18	Aug-19	Policy	Internal

Limestone Coast Local Government Association Audit and Risk Committee

MINUTES

11am, Friday, 30 January 2026

Microsoft Teams

Membership

Phil Southam	Independent Chair
Mayor Lynette Martin OAM	ex-officio, President LCLGA
Mayor Jeff Pope	Kingston District Council
Mayor Lisa Ruffell	District Council of Robe
Darryl Whicker	District Council of Grant
Kingsley Green	Tatiara District Council
Charlotte Edmunds	LCLGA EO

1.0 Meeting Open

There being three members present (Quorum) the Chair opened the meeting at **11:03am**

2.0 Present

Phil Southam	Independent Chair
Mayor Lisa Ruffell	District Council of Robe
Kingsley Green	Tatiara District Council
Charlotte Edmunds	LCLGA EO
Vanessa McDonald	External Finance Consultant

3.0 Apologies

The Chair informed the Committee that District Council of Grant CEO Darryl Whicker is an apology for today's meeting and has resigned his position on the Committee due to his departure from the Council.

MOVED Mayor Ruffell

SECONDED Kingsley Green

The Committee notes apologies received from Darryl Whicker, Mayor Pope and Mayor Martin OAM.

CARRIED



4.0 Conflicts of Interest

The Committee notes that:

- *LCLGA External Finance Manager is directly employed by District Council of Grant*
- *Chair Phil Southam is a member of the Audit and Risk Committees of both the District Council of Robe and Kingston District Council.*
- *Mayor Ruffell and Mayor Martin are Members of the Audit and Risk Committees of their respective Councils.*

5.0 Minutes from the previous meeting

MOVED: Kingsley Green **SECONDED:** Mayor Ruffell

The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held 19 November 2025 are a true and correct record.

CARRIED

6.0 Action items from the previous meeting

MOVED: Mayor Ruffell **SECONDED:** Kingsley Green

That the Committee notes the progress of action items from the previous meeting and resolves to remove completed items from the Agenda.

CARRIED

7.0 Budget Review 2

MOVED: Kingsley Green **SECONDED:** Mayor Ruffell

That the LCLGA Audit and Risk Committee resolves to recommend to the Board amending the 2025/26 Budget as per updated forecasts presented in Attachment 1 - Budget Review 2.

CARRIED



8.0 Appointment of External Auditors

Please refer to Attachment 2 –Appointment of External Auditors

Pursuant to Section 83(5) of the Local Government Act 1999 the accompanying documents to this agenda item is delivered to the Committee Members upon the basis that the Committee consider the documents in confidence under Part 3 of the Act, specifically on the basis that the Committee will receive, discuss or consider:

(k.) tenders for the supply of goods, the provision of services or the carrying out of works.

Exclusion of the Public – Section 90(3)(k) Order

MOVED: Kingsley Green

SECONDED: Mayor Ruffell

1. Pursuant to Section 90(2) and (3)(k) of the Local Government Act 1999 the Limestone Coast Local Government Association Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) orders all persons present with the exception of Charlotte Edmunds and Vanessa McDonald be excluded from attendance during **Agenda Item 8. Appointment of External Auditors**. The Committee is satisfied that, pursuant to section 90(3)(k) of the Act, the associated documents to be received, discussed and considered in relation to this Agenda Item are tenders for the provision of services.

2. The Committee is satisfied that the principle that the meeting be conducted in a place open to the public has been outweighed in the circumstances because the information to be disclosed and discussed has the potential to impact adversely on each of the tenderers as competitive commercial information will be disclosed.

CARRIED

Assessment Criteria and weighting

Assessment criteria	Weighting	Bentleys	Dean Newbery
Cost - value for money	20	20	20
Timeframes - ability to deliver in the timeframes as set out in LCLGA Charter	20	20	20



External Audit 2025/26	July 2026
Tourism Transition Committee	6 July
Audit and Risk Committee meeting	24 July 2026
LCLGA Board meeting 5 year Strategic Plan & Budget adopted TBC Audited Financial Statements 2025/26	7 August 2026
Tourism Management Committee	Late August 2026
Tourism Transition Committee	7 September
Audit and Risk BR1	25 September 2026
LCLGA Board Meeting Budget review 1 Annual Report 2025/26 with Audited Financial Statements 5 year Strategic Plan & Budget adopted if required	9 October 2026
Council Elections	November
Audit and Risk – TBC Budget Review 2	27 November 2026
LCLGA Board Meeting – Budget Review 2	11 December 2026

12.0 Close Meeting

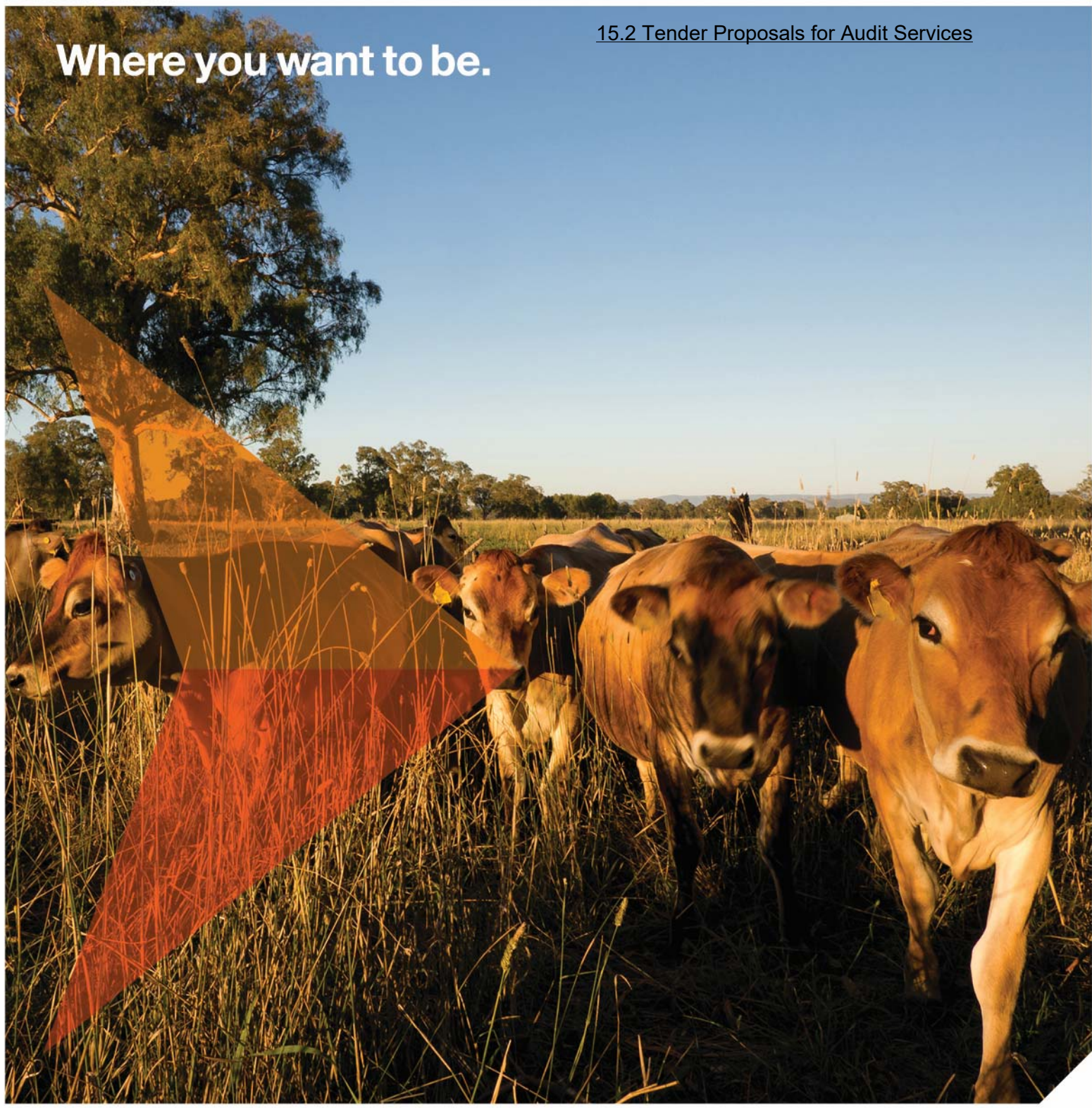
12:20 pm

ACTION TABLE

date	Action/Resolution	Details/Notes	Status/Timing
30/01/26	Committee membership	Resignation of Darryl Whicker, District Council of Grant creates a vacancy.	To be referred to Board as per TORs.
24/09/25	Undertake select tender for audit services for 2025-26 financial year	Requests for Tender to be sent to Dean-Newbery, Galpins, Bentleys. Proposals received from Dean Newbery and Bentleys.	In progress – referred to Board
19/11/25	Risk register and assurance map	Development of a risk register followed by an assurance map.	In progress- risk register referred to Board. Assurance Map to be presented to committee in March.



Where you want to be.



December 2025

**Limestone Coast Local
Government Association (LCLGA)**

External audit services – FY26 to FY30

David Francis, Partner
Level 5, 63 Pirie St, Adelaide SA 5000
Telephone +61 8 8372 7900 | Mobile +61 400 373 469
dfrancis@adel.bentleys.com.au | bentleys.com.au

Executive summary

We are delighted to submit this proposal for the provision of statutory audit services for the Limestone Coast Local Government Association (LCLGA).

In response to the request for tender, Bentleys SA is delighted to present this proposal for the provision of statutory audit services for the Limestone Coast Local Government Association (the Authority or LCLGA).

We believe Bentleys SA offers the following differentiating strengths:

- Significant and highly relevant expertise. Our deep understanding of the local government sector is evidenced by our work with:
 - Fleurieu Regional Waste Authority
 - Adelaide Central Market Authority
 - Local Government Finance Authority
 - East Waste
 - Eastern Health
 - Metropolitan and Regional Councils
- Immediate access to resources. Senior members of our team will support you ensuring the Authority will receive a premium service and value for money.
- Fresh set of eyes to re-visit all aspects of the operations and finance function.
- We are a significant mid-tier accounting firm in Adelaide with a specialised audit division and considerable experience in providing auditing and advisory services. We have 16 experienced auditors, including three registered company auditors, to ensure your audit is timely and of high quality.
- A commitment to strong working relationships. We like to meet directly with the audit committee (or a representative of) to discuss operational issues, risks or concerns and to provide feedback on management if desired.
- We maintain open lines of communication throughout the audit process to ensure there are no surprises and that issues are addressed early and resolved on a timely basis.
- We guarantee an unmatched and high level of service to help the Authority get where you want it to be.
- We tender an audit fee of \$5,500 + GST.

Sincerely,



David Francis
Partner,
+61 8 8372 7900
dfrancis@adel.bentleys.com.au



Introducing Bentleys

Helping businesses
achieve their goals and
aspirations.

Locally owned and operated

Bentleys SA is locally owned and operated – we are in control of our organisation and are not directed by other parts of Australia or Asia Pacific. Consequently, we have no encumbrances regarding decision making, all our resources are resident in SA and every dollar of revenue generated on our engagements stay in South Australia.

Bentleys SA is a contemporary and insightful business advisory, audit and accounting firm, and has been supporting the growth and development of enterprises since its establishment in 1979.

We work with our clients to help them achieve their objectives and get where they want to be.

Your satisfaction guaranteed

Bentleys is committed to upholding its core values and to delivering a high-quality service.

As trusted advisors, we provide the future thinking, strategic direction and business knowledge to add value to your organisation.

International capability

We are a member of Bentleys - an international network of advisory and accounting firms, with more than 700 talented staff delivering solutions from 18 locations across Australia, New Zealand and China.

We work with aspirational businesses and entrepreneurial people to help them achieve their objectives and get where they want to be.

As trusted advisors, we provide the future thinking, strategic direction and businesses and to build personal wealth.

Global presence

Bentleys is a member of Allinial Global, an international association of independent accounting and consulting firms.

With almost 23,000 staff located across 66 countries, Bentleys offers you access to a rich array of resources and professional assistance to support your international growth objectives, as required.

An emerging, contemporary firm

Bentleys SA is committed to innovation and development, in line with changing client needs.

Our recent rise through the ranks of the Australian Financial Review's list of Top 100 Accounting Firms suggests that we are indeed evolving in unison with our clients.

Today, our specialisations include:

- strategic business advisory
- wealth management
- superannuation
- cloud accounting
- specialist tax
- R&D tax
- international advisory services
- finance broking
- corporate finance
- IT and Marketing consulting.



Our understanding of your needs

We will provide you with strategic and practical support.

Background, knowledge and scope

We understand that you have requested firms to tender for the provision of statutory audit services for five years from 1 July 2025 (30 June 2026 audit).

Audit requirements

You require the auditor to provide the following services:

- Financial audit of the general purpose financial statements of the Authority in accordance with financial reporting requirements of the Local Government Act 1999 and the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011.
- Provide written advice and recommended actions on matters arising from the audits.



Methodology and approach

Bentleys participates in regular external quality assurance reviews.

An emphasis is placed on regular training for our employees.

Quality control

Bentleys checks for the adherence to high professional standards by the performance of Quality Assurance reviews. These reviews are performed annually by an Independent expert and selecting a range of files at random. The files are then subject to a detailed review and a formal report is prepared.

Both the National Audit Committee and the National Management Committee of the Australian group of Bentleys then consider the resultant office reports.

In addition to the inter-firm reviews by Bentleys, we are subject to quality control reviews by Chartered Accountants in Australia and New Zealand (CAANZ).

The presentation and disclosure of a client's financial report is important and we use tailored checklists to ensure all errors are identified and the presentation and disclosure is consistent with the accounting framework adopted.

Notwithstanding our formal quality assurance process, the work on the audit would be completed adopting the following quality control procedures.

- All work performed by our staff is reviewed by a partner prior to being finalised;
- Only appropriate staff with the requisite experience, qualifications and skills are assigned to certain jobs;
- Our staff members attend training courses on a regular basis so that their professional knowledge and skills are up to date.

Approach and Methodology

Background

Bentleys nationally adopts a risk-based audit approach, which focuses attention on obtaining sufficient audit evidence to reduce the risk of material error in the financial report to an appropriately low level.

A significant portion of our approach is to consider the control environment that the finances operate in.

We use audit software that is compliant with the Clarity Auditing Standards that have the force of law, and we use computer assisted audit techniques where possible to enable an efficient and focussed audit.

1. Planning

Upon our appointment we will obtain a greater understanding of your organisation, and to perform our review and assessment of the accounting systems and internal controls that exist, as required by ASA 315 Identifying and Assessing the Risks of Material Misstatement through Understanding the Entity and its Environment. We use Internal Control Evaluation matrices and flowcharting to document the key controls that exist for the main transaction streams.



Methodology and approach

1. Planning (cont.)

We will then perform compliance testing on the key internal controls to verify that they are operating effectively. This will ensure all transactions are accurately and completely posted to the general ledger, and that the risk of errors or misappropriation of assets is as low as possible.

Our assessment of internal controls and accounting systems and procedures will determine the level of analytical review and detailed substantive testing we will perform. This enables us to concentrate our time and efforts on the main audit risk areas and thereby providing you with an efficient and cost-effective audit.

The main audit assertions that we will concentrate on during our testing of the transactions streams will be:

- Occurrence
- Completeness
- Accuracy

We will finalise the planning of our audit approach and confirm the scheduled audit visits and reporting deadlines.

Prior to the balance date, we will provide you with the following:

- A checklist of audit requirements, setting out the specific information (including external confirmations for bank accounts, investments and loans) we will need as part of our audit testing; and
- An update on any material accounting standard changes that may impact the financial statements presentation and disclosure.

2. Post balance-date

Final testing will occur once the trial balance and account reconciliations have been completed by your accounting personnel.

The testing performed will be for the verification of the assets and liabilities of the Authority as reported in the reconciliations and subsidiary ledgers provided to us. We will also test whether there are any unrecorded assets or liabilities that should be recognised.

The main audit assertions we will concentrate on during our testing of the balance sheet items are:

- Existence
- Rights and Obligations
- Completeness
- Valuation
- Ownership



Methodology and approach

3. Verification of Financial reports

We will verify that the financial report has been accurately prepared in accordance with the reporting framework adopted, and in accordance with the underlying accounting records. We will use a disclosure checklist to ensure all necessary disclosures have been included and check that the financial information is accurately presented.

4. Audit Clearance

At the completion of our audit and the verification of the financial statements, we will meet with management to **discuss the issues arising from our audit** and provide you with verbal feedback.

We will then issue our Audit Clearance Report, which will include:

- Our intended audit opinion
- Details of any significant adverse practices or financial trends
- Details of issues identified with depreciation and asset management
- Information about the audit issues such as control weaknesses
- Recommendations for improvements
- Upcoming changes in statutory reporting and the Accounting Standards
- Schedule of Adjusted and Unadjusted errors identified during our audit
- Audit Representation letter

We will **meet with Audit Committee** to discuss our audit of the financial statements and the control environment. At this meeting we will provide commentary to assist with recommending the financial report be adopted and signed.

Upon receipt of the final financial statements adopted and signed by the Authority and the signed representation letter, we will sign our audit report for the financial statement. We expect this will be finalised in August.

5. Ongoing support

We encourage Management to discuss technical accounting and audit related matters with us on an ongoing basis throughout the year. We find this helps management in dealing with the issues as they arise, rather than waiting for the annual audit. This also helps the Audit Committee and the Authority in their decision making functions, as they are receiving information throughout the year that will be consistent with the information published in the year end accounts.



Experience

We are ideally placed to provide audit services to the Limestone Coast Local Government Association.

Our Experience

Our current audit client base is focused on small and medium sized organisations. As such, we are ideally placed to provide audit services to your Authority.

We provide services to clients in a broad range of industries and sectors and as a dedicated Audit and Assurance division of Bentleys SA, we provide over 14,000 hours of Audit and Assurance services each year.

Our audit experience includes Local Government, Incorporated Associations, Companies and Charities.

Broad Local Government Experience

As an experienced auditor of Councils and Authorities in the Local Government sector, as well as members of the SA Local Government Auditors Group and the internal controls evaluation working committee, we have a broad knowledge of the local government sector. This helps us to:

- Understand your needs
- Target our audit approach
- Perform an efficient and seamless audit
- Help keep you up-to-date with industry changes
- Provide you with relevant feedback

Local Government – External Audit

Our experience includes

- Fleurieu Regional Waste Authority
- East Waste
- Eastern Health
- Local Government Association of South Australia Inc.
- Local Government Corporate Services
- City of Salisbury
- City of Port Adelaide Enfield
- City of Tea Tree Gully
- City of Burnside
- City of Charles Sturt
- Rural City of Murray Bridge
- Mid Murray Council
- Adelaide Plains Council
- District Council of Coober Pedy
- District Council of Wudinna
- Roxby Downs Council



Your engagement team

In keeping with our belief that public accounting requires substantial top level personnel, all of our audit team personnel are Chartered Accountants or CPA's, or currently in the process of their postgraduate studies.

Our favourable blend of senior and experienced staff allows clients ready access to our key personnel and thereby provides clients with the personal attention, which we consider they deserve. This ratio is also higher than the majority of larger accounting firms operating in Australia and Adelaide and is, in our opinion, one of the major strengths of Bentleys.

In South Australia we have 13 partners and over 110 staff members. Our audit team currently comprises of **16 experienced auditors**; ensuring we will always have the resources to meet your needs.

We have three registered company auditors within our firm:

David Francis - RCA No. 210737

David Papa - RCA No: 405791

Matthew Brunato – RCA. 539914

The following is a summary of your proposed engagement team:

David Francis

Audit Engagement Partner

Matthew Brunato

Audit Director

Binoj Liyanage

Audit Manager

Jackson Larkin

Auditor

David, Matthew, Binoj and Jackson will be supported by a graduate auditor. See Appendix two for individual qualifications and experience.

Independence

Our independence check has confirmed that we are independent of the Authority and the Board and management and have no conflicts of interest.



Conclusion

We propose a high quality service.

We look forward to supporting the Limestone Coast Local Government Association.

Bentleys SA is excited by the prospect of working with the Limestone Coast Local Government Association and to contributing to its strategic development.

Bentleys proposes to provide the Authority with exceptional service in the provision of statutory audit services.

We believe the Authority will appreciate our personal service and enjoy being part of our community.

We have not attempted in this proposal to cover every aspect of the professional services that we would provide. With any queries, please do not hesitate to contact David Francis.

We would be pleased to deliver a formal presentation of our proposal, if helpful.

Contact	David Francis
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Position	Partner
----------	---------

Telephone	08 8372 7900
-----------	--------------

Mobile	+61 400 373 469
--------	-----------------

Email	dfrancis@adel.bentleys.com.au
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What our clients say

In recent times, our audit clients have provided the following unsolicited feedback for our firm:

“Helpful and productive”

“Thanks for the extraordinary effort.”

“Thank you for your assistance over the many years.”

“Thank you again for your firm’s excellent service”

“No-one has surpassed the level of service, expertise and attention afforded to us by you.”

“Again, I thank you for everything.”

“Personal thanks for your efforts... timely responses were much appreciated”

“I was impressed with your quick uptake and understanding of our requirements.”

“Your work is tremendously appreciated.”

Thank you ... I found the audit very helpful and productive”

“My most sincere thanks for the extra ordinary effort... Throughout the process you’ve been willing and able to meet with stakeholders to assist in resolving issues, be succinct with your point of view and open and professional in your correspondence.”

“Thank you for your assistance over the many years in supporting our organisation.”

“Thank you again for your firm’s excellent service, please thank the team.”

“I’ve come across a number of auditors in my time and I must say, no-one has surpassed the level of service, expertise and attention afforded to us by you and the team. My personal thanks.”

“Again, I thank you for everything. I have learnt so much from you and gained significant confidence.”

“Just a brief email of personal thanks for your efforts in undertaking the audit...your timely responses were much appreciated. Please convey my thanks to all at Bentleys as might be appropriate.”

“At our meeting today I was impressed with Theresa’s and your quick uptake and understanding of our requirements and Bentleys role related to the auditing components...we look forward to working with you in further developing the audit program”

“Thank you most sincerely... your work is tremendously appreciated by all the directors”



Appendix one

Resumes for engagement team.

Experienced and
hands-on.

We are delighted to introduce your engagement team:

- David Francis
- Matthew Brunato
- Binoj Liyanage
- Jackson Larkin





David Francis Partner, Audit & Assurance

David supports public sector, private and not-for-profit organisations in a broad range of industries to facilitate compliance, risk management and strategic development.

David leads a high performing and expanding audit and assurance team to facilitate the compliance and growth of a broad range of enterprises.

As a member of the Bentleys SA/NT Executive team and chair of Bentleys' National Audit Group, David is instrumental in designing strategies and services that respond to the changing needs of enterprises across the country.

David's expertise includes financial audits and reviews, fraud investigation and forensic audits, special projects for federal and state government, risk management analysis, corporate governance advice, due diligence, statutory compliance and trust account audits.

David joined Bentleys SA/NT in 1994 after working with a Big Four firm. In 1997, David worked from London with a Bentleys affiliated firm.

As an active member of our local community, David holds a number of board and committee positions.

Services

External and internal audit

Business advisory

Corporate governance

Special projects

Industries

Public sector

Not for profit

Private sector

Qualifications

Bachelor of Accountancy

Chartered Accountant

Professional Memberships

Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand

Registered Company Auditor
RCA No 210737

Australian Institute of Company Directors, Graduate (GAICD)



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www.bentleys.com.au



Matthew Brunato

Director, Risk & Assurance Services

Matthew supports public sector, private and non-for-profit organisations in a broad range of industries to facilitate compliance, financial reporting and risk management.

Matthew Brunato is a Director in the Audit & Assurance division of Bentleys SA/NT.

As a Registered Company Auditor with more than a decade of experience, Matthew supports public sector, private and not-for-profit organisations in a broad range of industries to facilitate compliance, financial reporting, and risk management.

His expertise includes financial audits, statutory compliance, and special projects for federal and state government. With experience across a range of industry sectors including agribusiness, manufacturing, education, local government and aged care, Matthew has a deep appreciation for robust internal control structures and best practice in financial reporting.

Matthew is experienced in due diligence engagements, audit of statements of outgoing for managed properties, charities, sporting organisations, education and trust account audits. In addition to providing expertise in financial reporting advisory services including technical accounting advice, Matthew takes a hands-on approach with strong project management skills to ensure he exceeds his clients' expectations while developing strong relationships.

In addition, Matthew is an active member of the South Australian Local Government Auditors Group and Finance Managers Group (SALGAG & SALGFMG) providing sector advice on issues, trends and the modern audit process.

Services

External and internal audit

Forensic reconstruction

Compliance audits

Financial accounting

Industries

Private sector

Public sector

Not-for-profit

Qualifications

Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting)

Bachelor of Business (Commercial Law)

Professional Memberships

Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand

Registered Company Auditor RCA No 539914



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www.bentleys.com.au



Binoj Liyanage Manager, Audit & Assurance

Binoj has extensive experience working overseas which has exposed him to a diverse range of industries.

Binoj joined Bentleys in 2023 as an Audit Supervisor in the Audit & Assurance Team. Binoj is originally from Sri Lanka, where he successfully completed his specialised bachelor's degree in accountancy and pursued a Chartered Accountancy program. Before making a transition to Qatar in 2013, Binoj dedicated three years to a prominent Sri Lankan-based auditing firm.

In the Auditing sector of Qatar, Binoj's professional journey spanned over nine years, during which he held the position of an audit supervisor at a reputable Middle East based auditing firm. Prior to joining Bentleys, he briefly contributed his skills and knowledge to the team at William Buck, Perth.

Throughout his 12-year career, Binoj has gained extensive experience in many industries, encompassing enterprises of small, medium, and large scales, including listed entities. Noteworthy among these sectors are production entities, hospitality, health care, construction, agriculture, government organisations, and education, among others.

Services

External and internal audit
Compliance audit
Financial accounting

Industries

Private & Public sectors
Education
Government
Agriculture
Health Care
Hospitality

Qualifications

Master of Finance (USQ)
Bachelor of Science (Accounting)

Professional Memberships

Associate Chartered Accountant (CA Sri Lanka – mutually recognised with CPA Australia)
ACCA



Level 5, 63 Pirie Street, Adelaide SA 5000
Telephone +61 8 8372 7900 | bliyanage@adel.bentleys.com.au
bentleys.com.au/sa



Jackson Larkin

Accountant, Audit & Assurance

Jackson's energetic and people-focused approach facilitates an industry leading experience for clients.

Jackson is a motivated accountant with a strong propensity for numbers and a passion for getting clients to where they want to be.

Highly educated with a stellar academic record, Jackson is results-focused and diligent in all he does.

Whilst studying a Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting), double degree and Bachelor of Finance at the University of South Australia, Jackson worked as a AFL/AFLW/SANFL Sports Trainer. This valuable experience has contributed to Jackson's team-focus and sportsmanship - qualities that are appreciated by his clients.

Services

External audits

Compliance audits

Agreed upon procedures

Industries

Private sector

Not for profit

Qualifications (undergraduate)

Bachelor of Commerce (Accounting), University of South Australia

Bachelor of Finance, University of South Australia



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bentleys.com.au

Where you want to be

Address a critical business issue. Gain efficiency. Achieve strategic growth. Propel your organisation's success.

Contact Bentleys.

Bentleys is a network of independent advisory and accounting firms located throughout Australia, New Zealand and Asia. All members of the Bentleys Network are affiliated only, are separate legal entities and not in partnership. Limited liability by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation. Bentleys is a member of Allinial Global – an association of independent accounting and consulting firms.



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 Advisors  Accountants  Auditors



Request for Quotation – External Audit Services

Quotation Response Schedules – Limestone Coast Local Government Association

December 2025

DeanNewbery

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Dean Newbery (DN) – Who We are

DN is a privately owned and client focused professional services firm with a strong history of working with Local Government, agribusiness, commerce, health services and other not for profit organisations.

Our offices are located in North Adelaide and Balaklava. We offer access to a highly experienced, diverse team of dedicated professionals who are passionate about delivering high-quality, value-added services to our clients.

We have built a great deal of knowledge and experience given our long-standing involvement with the South Australian Local Government sector based on:

- The wide range of services we provide in both our audit and advisory divisions means we are strong in our understanding of the local government legislative environment.
- Our ability to adopt a fresh approach to our audit methodology.
- Resourcing our audit division with professional staff who appreciate the unique business environment of local government.

Meeting our Independence Requirements

Should DN be appointed as the external auditor, we will meet all audit independence requirements under the *Local Government Act 1999*.

Strategic Links – Dean Newbery & LCLGA

In our opinion, the key strategic links between the services we offer and that of the Authority are:

- Our longevity and involvement within the local government sector is driven by a desire to achieve the best possible outcomes and value for our clients.
- Our audit approach ensures that we focus on those areas of highest assessed risk.
- Our sponsorship of the South Australian Local Government Financial Management Group (SALGFMG) is a commitment of ensuring the quality of financial management frameworks and resources within the sector.
- DN always has had an active involvement with the South Australian Local Government Auditors Group (SALGAG).

Proposed Audit Approach

We plan to approach the audit applying the following key principals to our service delivery model:

Assemble Audit Team	Audit Mindset	Transition Plan	Communication Strategy	Audit Delivery Model
<p>Assemble an audit team that will deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent delivery of service - Provide a fresh approach - Experienced and capable of undertaking the audit based on the unique environment and operations - Ensure all staff have ongoing training and development to ensure technical skills and services provided are of the highest standard 	<p>Audit team assembled is to demonstrate the following qualities and attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approachable and personable - Knowledgeable and experienced in auditing similar environments - Approach the audit with an attitude that looks to add-value and provide practical solutions to issues identified - Accessible to address audit issues as/when they arise - Gain a full understanding of the operations, risks and strategic objectives 	<p>In Year 1, develop a transition plan that aims to achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gain all required ethical clearances as required by Auditing Standards - Issue Engagement Letter - Meet with the Administration and the Audit Committee to formulate a draft Audit Plan. The purpose is to outline the proposed audit process and timetable 	<p>As part of developing the Audit Plan in Year 1, we aim to develop a communication strategy that incorporates the following key principles (at minimum):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a communication and reporting strategy - Establish due dates for key audit milestones such as Audit Plan, Interim Audit Report, meeting with the Audit Committee, final Audit Report, etc. - Gain feedback from Transition Plan work completed and formulate final Communication Strategy for the audit 	<p>Apply a risk-based approach to the audit applying the following methodology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of CaseWare electronic audit software and working papers to ensure the audit methodology applies the latest standards - Use of Xtend Portal services that enable secure transmission of electronic audit documents and queries as part of the audit service delivery model - Detailed reporting and communication to the Board and Management

Audit Client Portal – CaseWare Xtend

DN utilises CaseWare Xtend online platform that provides a flexible and secure option for clients to upload information remotely. This platform enables us to lodge audit requests with clients and to upload documents and information in one secure place which minimises the need for multiple email transmissions. CaseWare Xtend provides greater flexibility and transparency throughout the audit process which enables all parties to continually track the progress of all outstanding audit matters and requests. This enables better collaboration and continuous auditing to be undertaken throughout the term of the engagement.

DN's System of Quality Management (SOQM) has been developed to ensure that all engagements undertaken are subject to the standards and provides the foundation on which services are delivered. The quality management systems requires all members of the audit team to abide by expected standards of behaviour and compliance with industry professional ethical standards. DN's SOQM is imbedded into our proposed annual work plan and is a key function undertaken annually on the engagement to ensure consistent high-quality standards and outcomes are achieved.

Key fundamentals of meeting Audit Quality standards under our SOQM systems involve the following:

Professional Competence & Experience

All engagements teams assembled are carefully selected to ensure that team members have the appropriate skills and expertise in the areas being audited. We ensure that all staff have the necessary competency, resources, training and experience to undertake the required work to meet quality standards. A high emphasis is placed on providing staff with training on a variety of subject matters so all engagement members have a wide range of subject matters that they are exposed to and can consider as part of the work they undertake.

We also ensure that staff are members of relevant organisations and training bodies that provide technical and industry information relevant to the work they are undertaking which ensure staff remain aware of latest industry updates and trends.

If it occurs that we do not possess the necessary skills and/or expertise in a particular subject area, we consider the need to engage external experts for assistance.

Independence

We ensure that all DN staff meet professional ethical standards are required by our professional bodies as well as ensuring that the specific independence requirements under the *Local Government Act 1999* relating to the work which is permitted to be undertaken by the external auditor is strictly adhered to. We perform an annual independence assessment at the start of each financial year to ensure that independence requirements are appropriately being met.

We annually provide the Authority with a confirmation of compliance with meeting our independence requirements as required by the *Local Government Act 1999*.

Samantha Creten

Director / Lead Auditor

- B. Accountancy
- Fellow Chartered Accountant
- Registered Tax Agent
- Registered Company Auditor – (Registered Auditor Number: 222601)
- Justice of the Peace (JP)



Samantha has over twenty five years' statutory audit and commercial taxation experience. Samantha has been a Partner/Director of DN since 2002 and has an extensive knowledge of technical Accounting Standards issues and performing audits in full compliance with the requirements under the *Local Government Act 1999*, the *Corporations Act 2001* and Australian Auditing Standards.

Samantha has broad experience in servicing clients both in audit and taxation services across a wide range of industries which span across local government, aged care, automotive, importers and exporters, civil construction and not-for-profit entities.

Samantha has previously held the role as Lead Auditor of the Authority and can draw on this valuable experience to deliver high-quality, value-added audit services from the commencement of the audit given she has a strong appreciation of the existing operating environment.

Samantha has experience as the Lead Auditor of other Councils such as the City of Burnside, Mitcham, Holdfast Bay, Onkaparinga, Port Lincoln, Unley, Whyalla and Salisbury as well as Subsidiary entities such as the Highbury Landfill Authority, Brown Hill Keswick Creeks Stormwater Authority and Centennial Park Cemetery Authority ensures she has the relevant experience and appreciation of the quality and work required to be undertaken.

Proposed Engagement Team – Key Members

The engagement team assembled are committed to ensuring that a high quality, value added external audit service is provided.

John Jovicevic

Director/ Quality Reviewer

- B. Commerce
- Chartered Accountant
- Certified Practising Accountant
- GradCertIA
- Professional Member Institute of Internal Auditors (PMIIA)
- Registered Tax Agent
- Member South Australian Local Government Financial Management Group



John is a Local Government Audit Director and his role on the engagement team is to assist in overseeing the audit field work component and to oversee quality assurance services on the performance of the engagement. John has been at DN for over 20 years and has extensive experience undertaking the external audit of South Australian Local Government.

John's Local Government experience spans across a number of different clients including providing external accounting and advisory services currently to Southern Region Waste Management Authority (SRWRA), Northern Adelaide Waste Management Authority (NAWMA) and East Waste. He has extensive experience providing external advisory services to the local government waste sector entities and can draw on this knowledge and experience in overseeing the Quality Review role for the engagement.

John has also held the role as Internal Auditor for the Fleurieu Regional Waste Authority (FRWA).

Daniel Phillips

Engagement Manager

- B. Commerce
- Chartered Accountant



Daniel has strong audit experience in the areas of Local Government, waste management, ACNC, aged care, not for-profit and private entities. He is well versed in Local Government audit programs used by DN which ensures that audits are performed at a consistent high standard.

Daniel has strong knowledge of Section 43 entities having held the role as Engagement Manager for other audits including Adelaide Hills Region Waste Management Authority and Highbury Landfill Authority. Being a senior audit member, Daniel has hands-on experience undertaking detailed internal control reviews and substantive audit testing of Section 43 entities.

Daniel has experience that goes beyond audit and performs accounting assistance roles for clients in the areas of financial statement preparation, accounting standards compliance review and internal audit.

Audit Methodology – Summary Audit Plan

15.2 Tender Proposals for Audit Services

Scope

April

- Gain understanding of business risks
- Identify any concerns and understanding of business operations
- Evaluate general economic/environmental conditions which may impact the audit work required
- Meet with Management to gain preliminary information

Plan

April

- Undertake interim analytical review
- Issue Management and those charged with governance detailed questionnaire on controls, policies, procedures and accounting systems
- Confirm audit milestone dates and key deliverables
- Issue Audit Plan to those charged with governance and Management for financial year

Interim Testing

May

- Conduct sample testing over key business cycles and operations including:
 - Payroll
 - Accounts Payable
 - Income/Receivables
 - Test of internal controls
 - General Ledger Control Account reconciliations
 - Review of minutes and strategic plans
 - Analytical review
- At the conclusion of the Interim Audit, issue a Management report detailing all work completed and findings/recommendations

Balance Date Testing

July - August

- Undertake end-of-year Balance Date audit
- Conduct audit of the annual financial statements
- Testing conducted on the revenue & expenditure and the assets & liabilities presented in the financial report against the financial records maintained
- Consider post-balance date events and disclosures to ensure any contingent items are reported (if required)
- Conduct audit using a mix of substantive and analytical procedures
- Obtain external confirmations to confirm the existence and accuracy of balances reported (i.e. bank confirmations)
- Conduct an 'Exit Meeting' with Management outlining all audit findings and recommendations

Completion

September

- Formulate audit opinion
- Provide those charged with governance and Management with an Audit Completion Report detailing all work conducted, audit findings/recommendations, summary of key audit matters and draft Audit Report
- Meet with the Audit Committee to deliver Audit Completion Report
- Complete audit file review
- Issue final reports for the financial year

Audit Program – Gantt Chart

Our proposed annual audit program is summarised in the below Gantt Chart which provides the Authority with a detailed overview of the expected work to be completed over a typical annual audit cycle:

Key Audit Activities / Expected Completion	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sept
Audit Planning Commencement	█					
Initiate engagement with Administration on annual audit program and conduct risk assessment	█					
Issue annual Audit Plan to the Board and Audit & Risk Committee	█					
Conduct Interim Audit Phase of audit program – test of controls and substantive testing	█	█				
Send Balance Date request for information – through Xtend cloud portal			█			
Issue External Confirmations for Balance Date Audit Component				█		
Conduct Balance Date Audit testing				█	█	
Formulate Draft Audit Opinion & Audit Reports					█	
Meet with Audit & Risk Committee to present full year audit findings and draft opinions					█	█
Issue Final Audit Opinions & Reports after Board Adoption						█

Our Audit Approach

Dean Newbery has developed specific audit programs tailored for the Local Government sector that ensures all audit matters required to be included in the scope of audit services under the *Local Government Act 1999* and applicable Regulations are encompassed in the work undertaken.

Our audits ensure compliance with the following requirements:

- *Local Government Act 1999*
- *Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011*
- Australian Auditing Standards (including Guidance Statements)

In ensuring that we comply with the above requirements, our audits take into consideration the South Australian Local Government Model Financial Statements when designing audit procedures and reports for our clients. Our audit approach is risk based and complies with all applicable Australian Auditing Standards and requirements under the Act and other applicable Regulations and professional requirements of the Accounting industry.

The Audit Plan

The following proposed audit plan assists with identifying and mitigating any audit matters in an efficient and constructive manner by engaging with both the Audit Committee and Administration on a continual basis.

The proposed audit plan outlined below places a high emphasis to at all times consider matters outside of the 'Balance Sheet' audit approach – we place a high emphasis on continually monitoring and reviewing the governance practices and internal controls to ensure that at all times, a high standard is maintained as required of a public entity.

Based on the proposed audit timetable on Page 9, we are flexible to amending the timing of audit attendances to meet any specific deadlines the Authority requires to achieve.

We will consult and factor all of the Authority's deadlines in developing the proposed audit timetable within the Audit Planning phase.

Annual Engagement Key Audit Focus Matters

Audit Matters	Matter Under Review
Delegation of Authority	Review controls and processes relating to amending changes in authority levels for procurement and EFT payment releases.
Statutory Reporting	Review conformance with statutory reporting obligations – i.e. Long-Term Financial Plan, Annual Business Plan and budget revisions, Annual Report, public registers, etc.
Financial Policies	Key policies and registers are maintained.
General Ledger Control Account Reconciliations	Regular reconciliation of general ledger control accounts are undertaken and independently reviewed.
Internal Control Review	Regular review of financial internal controls are conducted by the Administration and all findings and recommendations are reported to the Audit & Risk Committee for their consideration and review.

Audit Technology Strategy

Our approach is unique in that we have hands-on knowledge obtained from over 45 years of working with the Local Government sector. Our audit software is tailored to enable our audit teams to undertake our audits with a high level of efficiency.

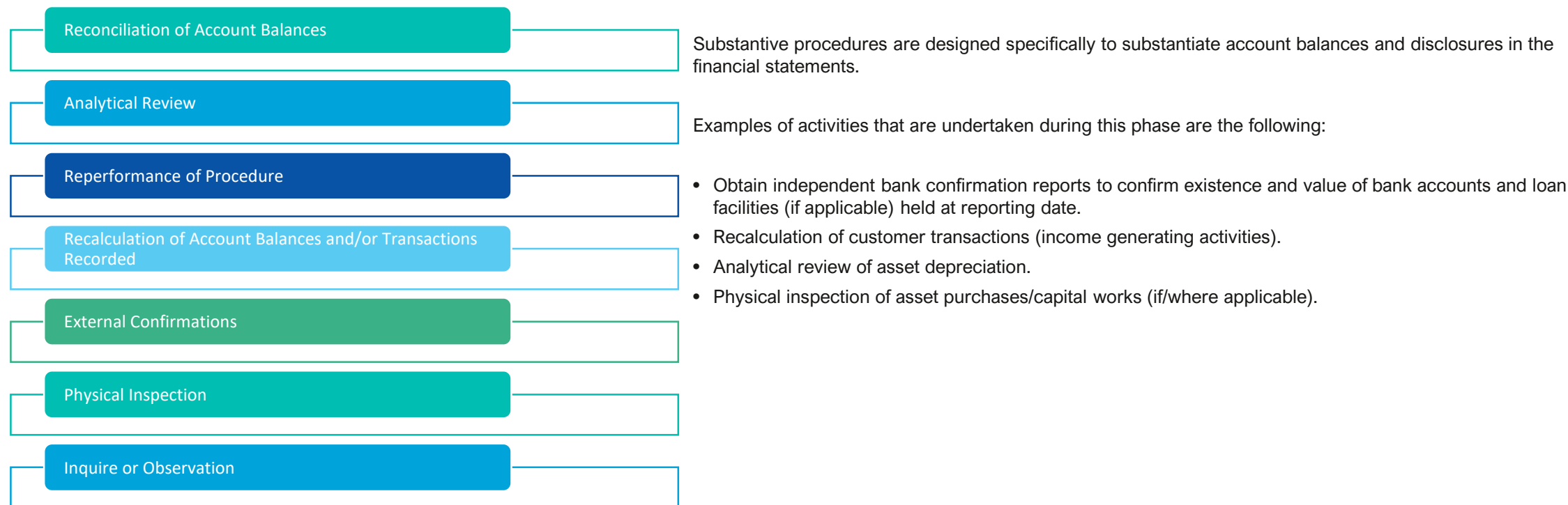
Audit teams use CaseWare audit working papers to assist with the management and analysis of audit working papers. Our audits therefore are undertaken in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards whilst also ensuring audits can be undertaken with a high degree of efficiency.

We have developed specific Local Government audit testing worksheets which we have integrated into our working papers that ensures our audit procedures are specific for the Local Government sector.

Proposed Audit Methodology – Substantive Procedures

Based on the results of our risk analysis, we design our audit procedures accordingly to gain appropriate evidence to substantiate balances and disclosures in the annual financial statements.

Substantive testing procedures include the following:



At the conclusion of the Balance Date audit, we issue our Audit Completion Report together with all other prescribed reports for discussion with the Administration and Audit Committee.

Our Audit Completion Report includes the following:

- Summary of the conduct of the audit
- Confirmation of any remaining outstanding items
- Summary of uncorrected misstatements
- Confirmation of auditor independence compliance per the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1999*
- Summary of results from testing completed and outstanding matters for the Authority to consider
- Draft Financial Statements Audit Opinion

Final Issued Audit Reports

Subject to the Authority's timeframes, once all outstanding matters have been addressed, we will issue the following final audit reports to conclude the audit:

- Financial Statements Audit Opinion
- Actual Wages Declaration
- Other acquittals as required

Audit Fee Structure

15.2 Tender Proposals for Audit Services

Our proposed audit fee has been based on ensuring the audit plan and method of approaching the audit is tailored to the Authority's operations and undertaking the work required to meet the quality standards expected of the engagement.

Our proposed audit fee is outlined as follows:

- The total estimated 25 hours allocated for the audit.
- The audit fee represents an approximate average hourly rate of \$200 p/hour in Year 1. We do not charge for travel time within the hours estimated and/or audit fee set.
- We have considered as part of the total hours the additional quality management work required to be undertaken to meet SOQM requirements as outlined below.
- Should less time be required to undertake the audit, we will only charge for actual time spent on the audit which will result in a saving back to the Authority.
- For future years, we propose to increase the fee by Adelaide CPI (as at June of each respective year) and/or 4% (whichever is higher) to reflect the expected increase in costs associated with professional staffing costs, IT systems, insurance and other general business operating costs.
- If there is any requirement for travel to be undertaken, this will be charged back to the Authority at cost.
- We propose to charge 50% of the annual audit fee by June of each year with the remaining balance to be charged at the conclusion of the audit once the audit report has been issued.

Fee Component	Estimated Fee (GST Excl.)
External Audit Fee	\$5,000
External Bank Confirmation	Disbursed at Cost (estimated to be \$200 p.a.)
Administration & ICT Costs	No Charge
Quality Review – Internal Review	\$500

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Dean Newbery

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