



Dumaresq – Barwon Border Rivers Commission

2024-27 Business Plan

Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country. We recognise the ongoing spiritual and cultural connection Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with land, water, sea and sky. We pay our deep respects to their Elders past and present, support future leaders, and acknowledge First Nations peoples' right to self-determination.

About the Business Plan

The Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission Business Plan describes the 4-year high level strategy outlook for financial years 2024 to 2027. It is refreshed annually after the Commission's Strategic Planning Day.

The Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission operates in the upper Murray Darling Basin. It is recognised as a not-for-profit, unincorporated government Statutory Body in both Queensland and New South Wales.

Public availability

Limited printed copies are available by phoning the Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission (07) 3330 4455 Monday to Friday between 9am-5pm or emailing brc@rdmw.qld.gov.au.

Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission

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Overview

This document outlines the high-level business plan for the Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission (the Commission). The plan has a 4-year outlook and will be refreshed annually after the Commission's Strategic Planning Day.

This Business Plan was updated following the Commission's 2023-2024 Strategy Day (held in February 2024).

It informs the Commission's strategic direction and budget for the 2024-2025 financial year and beyond.

About the Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission

The Commission operates in the upper Murray Darling Basin.

The Commission was constituted under the provisions of the New South Wales-Queensland Border Rivers Agreement made on 27 August 1946. The Agreement was ratified by legislation in each State. The Agreement provides for the sharing of waters of the rivers and streams which either form or intersect the boundary between the two States and the associated groundwater resources and sets out the functions of the Commission.

The Commission determines, enables, and monitors each State's eligible share of water. Specifically, the purpose of the Commission is to implement the agreement made between the governments of Queensland and New South Wales in relation to:

- Implement agreed water sharing arrangements in the Queensland-New South Wales border region.
- Operate and maintain jointly "owned" water infrastructure (investigating, constructing and operating works to converse and regulate those waters where considered desirable); and
- Certain investigative functions to identify and report on potential improvements for water sharing equity between the States in the border region.

The Commission is made up of an Independent Chair and two Commissioners from each State (which includes Deputy Commissioners from each State).

The Commission is a joint operation with each State retaining 50% shareholding control, Commission expenses incurred are funded 50:50 by each State and each State has 50% ownership of the Commission's \$178 million bulk water infrastructure asset portfolio.

The Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission is recognised as a not-for-profit, unincorporated government Statutory Body in both Queensland and New South Wales.

The Commission's goal and objectives

The Commission's goal is to ensure that the rivers at the New South Wales – Queensland border are managed sustainably with clear and simple governance and service delivery arrangements in place. The Commission will get its fundamentals right to support good governance, effective service delivery and run the business as a going concern.

We will do this by:

- Managing the business prudently and efficiently whilst ensuring financial sustainability
- Establishing long-term plans (10 years) for sustainably managing the business, the desired levels of service and associated assets
- Clearly identifying risks and developing relevant mitigation plans
- Ensuring high levels of transparency in relation to our activities.

Goals

The border rivers are managed sustainably with clear and simple governance and service delivery arrangements.

Business Objective	Key Initiatives
Prudent and efficient management	Scope of service obligations Governance framework Long-term financial plan Cost and price review
Sustainable service delivery	Asset strategy and management plan Sustainable service provider arrangements
Risk management	Risk management plan and framework Public safety strategy Business continuity
Transparent operations	Stakeholder engagement plan Performance reporting review Performance audit

Key initiatives description

1. Prudent and efficient management

Table 1: Business Objective Prudent and efficient management key initiatives

Key Initiatives	Description	Outcomes
Scope of service obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Commission undertakes certain activities (such as the provision of water supply and sewerage services to the Glenlyon Tourist Park) that are not clearly prescribed in any current legislation or other arrangements with its shareholders. The purpose of this initiative is to seek written confirmation from the shareholders of their expectations of the Commission in respect of its service obligations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the Commission is compliant with its legislative and other requirements and is fulfilling the statutory obligations expected of it by its Shareholders. Clarity about services needed from Shareholders (An Agreed Scope of Services) Ensure that the Commission is not conducting activities that are the responsibility of others (duplication of service and not over servicing)
Governance framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Commission will have a Governance Framework that identifies or includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An updated governance structure A forward calendar of meetings A regular review of Indemnities and Insurances A regular review of documentation and critical business processes A delegation matrix A succession plan for Commissioners and key personnel (to also address Diversity within the Commission) Code of conduct Appropriate charters and performance reporting requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a robust governance framework to provide the Commission and its key stakeholders with the confidence the Commission's activities are well managed Clear delegations of authority documented and in place Mature governance arrangements with high performance committees Has established budgeting and financial management manuals that detail arrangements for budgets, financial reporting, management accounting and invoicing and reporting details from service providers. Clear policies and procedures for the management of the annuity account including accumulation of funds, draw down and use of funds and any agreed debt facility.
Long term financial plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on the Asset Management Planning, this business plan, and the reform program, develop a 10-year financial plan for the business The plan is to include a forward" call-up" for the Commission The plan will incorporate the Commission's Service Provider's prudent and efficient costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A model that clearly sets out the Commission's costs and associated call-up for the future 10 years Financial sustainability for the Commission Transparency to State Governments Ensure that the Commission would have access to sufficient funds for emergency repairs. Could be funded from insurance and/or call up from States.
Cost price review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an initial (and then regular) external review of the Commission's costs and prices to ensure cost transparency (prudency and efficiency) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third party assurance that the Commission's costs and services are prudent and efficient

2. Sustainable service delivery

Table 2: Business objective sustainable service delivery key initiatives

Key Initiatives	Description	Outcomes
Asset strategy and management plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission has an existing Asset Management Plan (AMP) which is primarily used for financial reporting requirements • This initiative is aimed at updating the AMP in conjunction with the 'service provider/s' to ensure that it is consistent with ISO55000. • This plan is to clearly sets out the service standards for the Commission's assets; • Develop a condition-based renewals program for the Commission's assets; and • Identify an external obligations that may trigger upgrades to the Commission's assets (e.g. Dam Safety, Public Safety, and Environmental, such as fish migration). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear strategy and understanding of the service standard expectations from the Commission's assets, now and into the future • Clear objectives for each facility • A robustly costed plan to ensure those service standards can be achieved or sustained into the future
Sustainable service provider arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the Sunwater Contract that is in place between the QLD Department and Sunwater. The Commissions major service provider. • This initiative aims to review and put in place secure arrangements with all the Commission's Service Providers • Establish appropriate financial timelines for budgets, invoicing, and reporting details from service providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear assignment of risks & contractual and commercial arrangements with Service Providers: • Asset manager (Sunwater) • River manager (WaterNSW) • Hydrometric network operators (DRDMW & WaterNSW)

3. Risk management

Table 3: Business objective risk management key initiatives

Key Initiatives	Description	Outcomes
Risk management plan and framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission will maintain a robust Risk Management Plan (RMP) that defines the approach that the Commission will take to the management of risks that may have an impact on the achievement of Commission business and operational outcomes. The RMP includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – clear risk policy, – definition of risk appetite and tolerability, – dynamic risk register with risk treatment plans to inform this business plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The risk management plan and framework provides the Commission and stakeholders with clarity and understanding of the risks to be managed by and within the business and informs works programs, priorities and budgets.
Public safety strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Plan will identify and set out how the Commission manages and mitigates risks associated with its assets and operations. • This is to include risks to the general public and the Commission's key stakeholders. • The Plan is to include linkages to the Commission's other strategies, such as Dam Safety. • The Public Safety Plan will be developed in partnership with the Commission's Service Providers. • Audit of facilities against the public safety plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure and associated hazards are managed to keep people safe.
Business continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This plan will ensure the Commission and its service providers have arrangements in place to effectively manage emergencies and ensure the continuity of its operations in the case of events such as asset failures, natural disasters, or water quality incidents. • Consideration needs to be given to the activities of both agricultural and urban users of the Border Rivers Scheme. • Regularly review operational and business critical documentation, including water sharing, asset planning and WHS, SOPs, O&M Manuals, Work Instructions, and Computerised Asset Management Systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission clearly understands its roles and responsibilities in regard to Emergency Action Plans and associated communication strategies. • Community and stakeholders are confident that the Commission has arrangements to manage emergencies and ensure business continuity following such events. • Commission to hold current versions of documentation and data • Specialist skills required by the Commission, for example, legal, engineering, or asset management have been identified, and retainer arrangements are in place.

4. Transparent operations

Table 4: Business objective transparent operations key initiatives

Key Initiatives	Description	Outcomes
Stakeholder engagement plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This plan identifies key stakeholders and define roles and responsibilities between the Commission and service providers for engagement. The plan outlines the Commission's approach for ensuring proactive and constructive engagement with its key stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transparency of the Commission's activities to key stakeholders Informed understanding of and input to the overall reform process for the Commission.
Performance reporting review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular review of the Commission's current Performance reporting regime and ensure it aligns with its Legislative and other obligations. Reporting is also to be provided in respect of the key initiatives within this Business Plan and the identification and management of key risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear and transparent understanding of the Commission's performance and the performance of service providers, key risks and mitigation strategies. Drive value for the Commission from service providers.
Performance audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a performance audit to review and validate the robustness of the Commission's governance framework and business processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Third party assurance that the Commission's governance framework and business processes are appropriate.

Commissions ongoing continuous improvement initiatives

Table 5: Commission's ongoing continuous improvement initiatives

Initiative	Alignment to Business objective
Business continuity	Risk management
Governance framework	Prudent and efficient management
Risk review	Risk management
Stakeholder engagement	Transparent operations
Performance Audit	Transparent operations
Public safety strategy	Risk management
Performance reporting	Transparent operations
Long term financial plans	Prudent and efficient management

Commission's high-level works program timeline.

Table 6: Commission's works program from January 2024 to December 2027

Key Initiative	Period	Alignment to Business objective
Succession Plan	Ongoing	Risk management
Financial Management and Sustainability	Ongoing	Prudent and efficient management
Business and Operations Support Continuity	Ongoing	Risk management
Assets Management Strategy and Asset Decision Framework	June 2024	Prudent and efficient management
Sunwater contract arrangements	Ongoing	Sustainable service delivery
Finalise public safety strategy	Ongoing	Risk management
Performance reporting review and development	Ongoing	Transparent operations
Review and update hydrometric service agreements	July 2025	Sustainable service delivery
Scope of service obligations	Ongoing	Prudent and efficient management
Cost and price review	June 2024	Prudent and efficient management
Review and update river management arrangements	July 2025	Sustainable service delivery
Asset Management Plan and Asset revaluation	March 2024	Sustainable service delivery
BRC Reform Review	December 2027	Prudent and efficient management

Identification of risks

Critical Success Factors (CSF) are those areas against which the consequences/impacts of risk will be measured. The CSFs used within the Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission for risk analysis are as follows:

- Financial
- Service Delivery
- Legal, Regulatory and Compliance
- Reputation
- Environment, Culture & Heritage and
- Safety.

Risk appetite and tolerance statements have been developed for each of the following strategic risks:

- Drought
- Negligence or misconduct
- Asset and process performance
- WHS Safety
- Dam Safety
- Public Safety

- Environmental impacts
- Data quality and security
- Reputation
- Financial Sustainability

Further details are found in the Commission's Risk Management Plan and risk register.

Commission stakeholders

The Commission recognises that it operates within a complex arrangement for stakeholder engagement through its service providers, government shareholders, and the broader community. Accordingly, it has developed a Stakeholder Engagement Plan that details how and which entity engages with each of these stakeholders.

Table 7: Commission's stakeholders

Stakeholder group	Stakeholders
Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water users (agricultural and urban) • Peak bodies (BRFF, LGA) • Park operators • Natural environment
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional owners • Flood plain residents • Communities • Local members • Media
Shareholders and Service Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Water Departments • WaterNSW • Sunwater
Regulators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queensland and NSW • Environmental • Safety • Economic • Water Resource Management

Implementation and Governance

- The Commission will oversee the implementation of this Business Plan.
- Regular reports showing the progress of the key initiatives against the high-level program will be reviewed by the Commission.
- Where indicated, Project Plans will be developed to scope a key initiatives prior to commencing delivery and implementation.
- Where feasible, key initiatives will be developed in partnership with the Commission's Service Providers.