

Media Release

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Hunter Joint Organisation attends landmark forum at Macquarie Street

The Chair of the Hunter Joint Organisation (JO), Cr Bob Pynsent today came together with the Chairs of other Joint Organisations and senior government officials for the first time, at a landmark forum at Parliament House in Sydney.

Cr Pynsent, who is also the Mayor of Cessnock, said the meeting was an opportunity for the newly elected Chairs of the 12 JOs to unite and discuss priorities for infrastructure and services in regional NSW.

“It was a great pleasure to take part today in what is the first formal recognition of a new era in local government in our State,” said Cr Pynsent. “Joint organisations are new local government entities with legal powers to support councils to work together for better rural and regional outcomes. They are an important initiative to build stronger councils and greater cooperation between all levels of government.”

He added, “It is with considerable pride that I note that the Joint Organisation model is based on the successful structures developed over many years in the Hunter Region. Our balance of strategy and operational support directed and resourced by a Council of Mayors has proven itself to be a winning formula, and the NSW Government clearly hopes that our success will replicated across the State.”

The meeting of the JO Chairs was addressed by the Premier Gladys Berejiklian, Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW John Barilaro and Local Government Minister Gabrielle Upton.

The meeting marks the official launch of NSW’s network of Joint Organisations across regional NSW. The formation of JOs aims to strengthen economic management, planning and service delivery.

The meeting follows the recent release of the NSW Government’s *20-Year Economic Vision for Regional NSW*, which sets out a set of “engine industries” for growth in the regions and the government’s priorities for infrastructure spending, backed by the \$4.2 billion Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund.

Currently 12 JOs have been formed across regional NSW, representing a total of 85 regional councils. 90 per cent of eligible councils have voluntarily joined Joint Organisations, ensuring the strength and success of the new bodies in delivering for regional NSW.

Ends.

For further information please contact:

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Joint organisation chairs

- Canberra Region Joint Organisation – Yass Mayor Rowena Abbey
- Central NSW Joint Organisation – Lachlan Mayor John Medcalf
- Far North West Joint Organisation – Cobar Mayor Lilliane Brady
- Far South West Joint Organisation – Wentworth Mayor Melisa Hederics
- Hunter Joint Organisation – Cessnock Mayor Bob Pynsent
- Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation – Wollongong Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery
- Mid North Coast Joint Organisation – Kempsey Mayor Liz Campbell
- Namoi Joint Organisation – Gunnedah Mayor Jamie Chaffey
- New England Joint Organisation – Uralla Mayor Michael Pearce
- Northern Rivers Joint Organisation – Kyogle Mayor Danielle Mulholland
- Orana Joint Organisation – Gilgandra Mayor Doug Batten
- Riverina and Murray Joint Organisation – Albury Mayor Kevin Mack

Riverina Joint Organisation is yet to hold its inaugural Board meeting to elect its chair

