



Cooks River Alliance
Annual Report 2014–15

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 **CooksRiver**
ALLIANCE



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Message from the Chair

In the four years since the Cooks River Alliance was established, it has become increasingly clear that the future health of the River will be determined by not only the efforts of the eight councils in the Cooks River catchment but the continued dedication and hard work of community members.

In 2014-2015, the Alliance, its member councils and local communities worked together to increase the health of the Cooks River catchment and this Annual Report 2014-2015 highlights the many achievements.

In September 2014, the Alliance held the Cooks River Catchment Community Forum at Canterbury Public School. The Forum was a great way to inform residents on changes in the catchment and what current issues are facing the Cooks River. The well-attended forum included music, arts and other cultural activities.

The Alliance partnered with the Ethnic Communities Council NSW to run the Water Wise for Multicultural Communities project. This important initiative directly assisted 224 community members from five ethnic groups to become aware of, and involved with, the Cooks River catchment.

As part of the Environment Protection Agency's 'Cutting the Litter' grant project, the Alliance again partnered with the Ethnic Communities Council and the Cooks River Valley Association to run a comprehensive litter workshop program targeted at a range of culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The workshops were a great way to highlight the impact reducing litter can make to the health of the River.

The Alliance continued to work with member Council's Aboriginal Advisory Committees to foster engagement with Alliance activities. This was best seen with the Alliance's work with the Bankstown Aboriginal Advisory Committee on the Emery Avenue raingarden.

Four workshops were also held with Aboriginal people, including many members of Councils' Advisory Committees, to consult on most appropriate ways to engage both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in the natural and cultural heritage of the River, and build on-going connections to the Cooks River catchment.

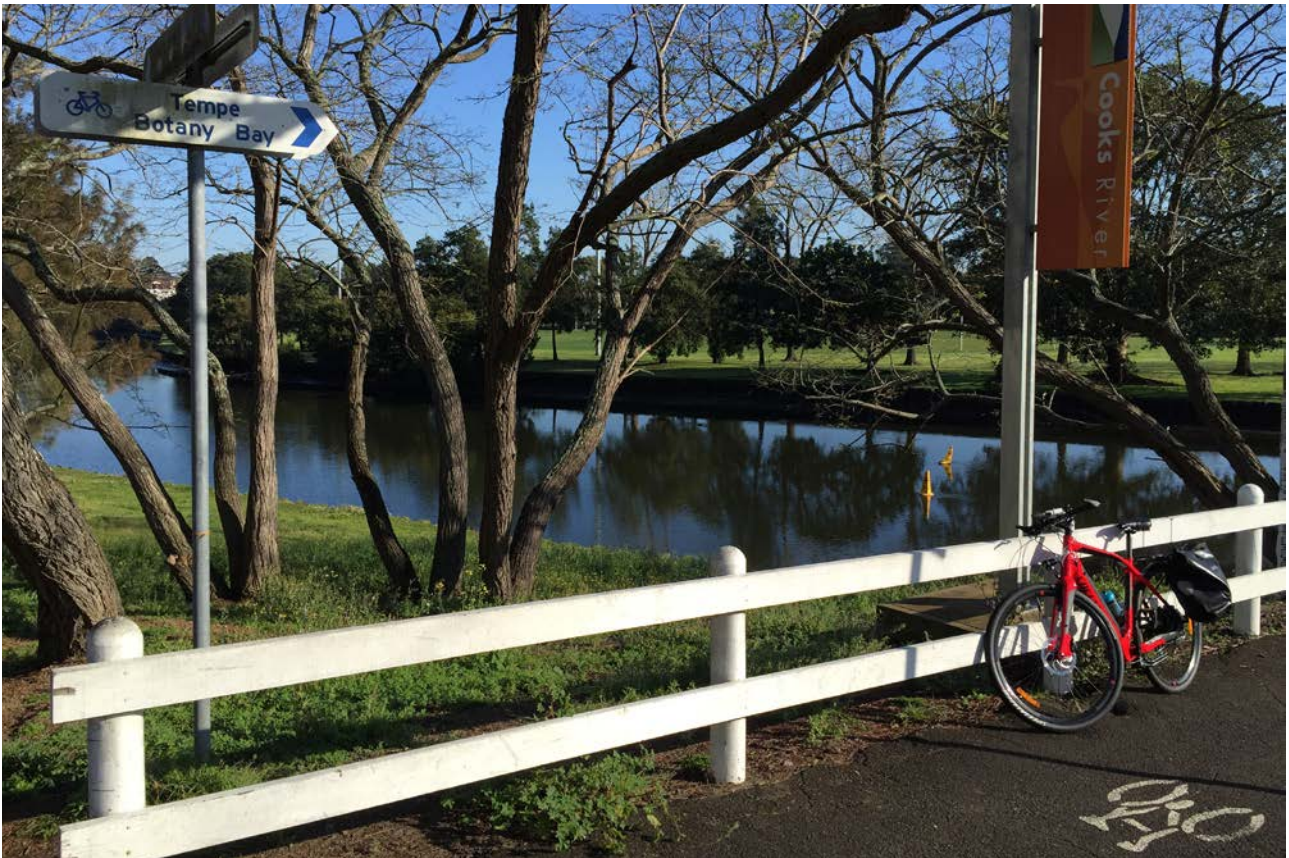
The past 12 months have been a great example of how the Alliance, its member councils and the community can work together to improve the health of the river and foster a greater understanding of the importance of the Cooks River catchment.



Mayor Brian Robson, City of Canterbury
Chair, Cooks River Alliance

About this Report

This **Cooks River Alliance** ('Alliance') Annual Report presents details of Alliance activities in 2014-2015, its fourth year of operation, against the Alliance Action Plan (2014-2017). The Action Plan is available at cooksriver.org.au.



A shared walking and cycling path follows the full length of the River from Homebush to Botany Bay. The path offers beautiful scenery with many parks and destinations to visit along the way.



The Alliance

The Alliance is a regional coordinating body of eight local councils, working together with communities for a healthy Cooks River catchment. The Cooks River is 23 km long and supplied by a catchment of 110 km². The eight member councils in the Alliance represent 92% of the catchment area.

The Alliance secretariat is generously hosted by Strathfield Council. The Alliance operates at an elected and staff level via three key governance committees: the Board, the Executive Committee, and the Steering Committee.

The Board

The Alliance Board is the key governance and decision-making body of the Alliance. The Board is made up of one councillor from each member council, and three community representatives. Board meeting are attended by Board members, Steering Committee representatives and Alliance staff.

Councillors Board members were:

- Cr. Lucille McKenna, Ashfield
- Cr. Najji Najjar, Bankstown
- Cr. Brian Robson (Chair), Canterbury
- Cr. Christine Forster, City of Sydney
- Cr. Linda Scott, City of Sydney
- Cr. Philip Sansom (Deputy Chair), Hurstville
- Cr. David Leary, Marrickville
- Cr. Chris Woods, Marrickville
- Cr. Shane O'Brien, Rockdale
- Cr Andrew Tsounis, Rockdale
- Cr. Andrew Soulos, Strathfield

Community Representatives were:

- John Butcher
- Helen Hume
- Paul Thomas

TABLE 1
Board meeting attendance

Invitees	Council	2014		2015	
		Sept	Nov	Mar	June
BOARD	Ashfield	✓			✓
	Bankstown				✓
	Canterbury	✓	✓		✓
	City of Sydney	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Hurstville	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Marrickville		✓	✓	✓
	Rockdale		✓	✓	
	Strathfield	✓		✓	✓
STEERING COMMITTEE (providing support to the Board)	Ashfield	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Bankstown	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Canterbury	✓	✓	✓	✓
	City of Sydney				
	Hurstville				
	Marrickville	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Rockdale	✓	✓	✓	
	Strathfield	✓	✓	✓	✓

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee oversees Alliance operations, Board meeting agendas, and supervises the Project Manager. The Executive Committee is made up of the Alliance Chair, Deputy Chair, a representative from the host council Strathfield, and representatives from two other member councils. It meets before each Board Meeting.

The Executive Committee was:

- Cr. Brian Robson (Chair), Canterbury
- Cr. Philip Sansom (Deputy Chair), Hurstville
- Janene Harris, Team Leader Sustainability, Ashfield
- Nell Graham, Team Leader Environmental Strategy, Canterbury*
- Jim Fraser, A/Manager Environmental Services, Marrickville
- Cathy Jones, Corporate Strategy Coordinator, Strathfield

*Janene replaced Nell on the Executive Committee in October 2014

TABLE 2
Executive meeting attendance

Invitees	Council	2014		2015	
		Sept	Oct	Feb	May
CHAIR	Canterbury	✓	✓	✓	✓
DEPUTY CHAIR	Hurstville			✓	✓
MEMBER COUNCIL STAFF	Ashfield	N/A	✓	✓	✓
REPRESENTATIVES	Canterbury	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Marrickville		✓	✓	✓
	Strathfield	✓		✓	✓

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee meets regularly to undertake and facilitate delivery of the Alliance Management and Action Plans, direct the work of Alliance staff and Action Groups, and to make recommendations to the Alliance Board. The Steering Committee comprises at least one representative from each member council and all Alliance staff. Throughout 2014-2015, strong attendance demonstrated the commitment and engagement of member council representatives.

Member council Steering Committee Representatives in 2014-2015 were:

- Janene Harris, Team Leader Sustainability, Ashfield
- Sarah Kamarudin, Sustainability Office, Ashfield
- Cherie Blackburn, Catchment Management Planner, Bankstown
- Sean Mooney, Team Leader Urban Policy and Planning, Bankstown
- Nell Graham, Team Leader Environmental Strategy, Canterbury
- Jordon Moy, Sustainability Officer, Canterbury
- Lisa Currie, Manager Water Strategy, City of Sydney
- Alison Hanlon, Manager Environmental Sustainability, Hurstville
- Kathy Godfrey, Coordinator Environmental Sustainability, Hurstville
- Mimy Wang, Environmental Sustainability Coordinator, Hurstville
- Claire Hanley, Environmental Project Officer, Marrickville
- Jim Fraser, A/Manager Environmental Services, Marrickville
- Jean Brennan, Coordinator Water and Catchments, Marrickville
- Sadeq Zaman, Environmental Engineer, Marrickville
- Victoria Currie, Team Leader Biodiversity, Marrickville
- Adam Smith, Natural Resource Management Officer, Rockdale
- Alexandra Vandine, Acting Coordinator Environmental Strategy, Rockdale
- David Dekel, Coordinator Environmental Strategy, Rockdale
- Madeline Hourihan, Environmental Projects Officer, Rockdale
- Cathy Jones, Corporate Strategy Coordinator, Strathfield
- Mark Latham, Sustainability Officer, Strathfield

TABLE 3
Steering Committee meeting
attendance

Invitees	Council	2014			2015			
		July	Sept	Nov	4 Feb	11 Feb	April	May
STEERING COMMITTEE	Ashfield	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Bankstown	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Canterbury	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	City of Sydney		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Hurstville	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
	Marrickville	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Rockdale	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Strathfield	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

Action Groups

Actions Groups are subsets of the Steering Committee that drive particular Programs of the Alliance Action Plan, and promote member engagement. Action Groups are listed under each Program in the following pages.

Alliance Secretariat

The Alliance employs a small team to manage the day-to-day activities of the Alliance, drive the implementation of the Alliance Management Plan and Action Plan, and to maximise the efficient use of member councils' limited resources.

In 2014-15, the Alliance Secretariat was:

- Cath Renwick, Participation Coordinator
- Chris Hudson, Project Manager (2013-Jan 2015)
- Jasmine Payget, Community Engagement
- Meg Wray, Communications Support
- Shefali Chakrabarty, Environmental Engineer (2011-Aug 2014)





Highlights 2014–2015

Highlights of the 2014-2015 reporting period include:

- Constructing two raingardens to slow the flow and improve the quality of stormwater, and conducting related community engagement. These activities were jointly funded through the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme
- Working with all six member council Aboriginal Advisory Committees and stakeholders to develop the heritage and cultural elements of Alliance activities
- Running engagement activities with culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Commissioning a review of the River Health monitoring program to ensure that it is robust, relevant and reliable
- Collaborating with the NSW Intensive Corrections Program resulting in the removal of 3,515 bags of rubbish and weeds from around the River and the spreading of 110 ute loads of mulch in riparian areas
- Producing maps of the Cooks River to aid communication of catchment-wide systems and processes, as well as local engagement
- Sponsoring member council staff to attend capacity building activities to broaden skills and knowledge in sustainable urban water management and facilitate networking
- Convening the Cooks River Community Forum in September 2014 to share with and learn from around 120 community stakeholders
- Communicating on social media to boost stakeholder understanding of Alliance activities including building over 100 Facebook followers
- Facilitating two catchment meetings of 24 stakeholder groups, with one meeting focussing on weeds and one on litter
- Lobbying Sydney Water for an overarching strategic plan for the Cooks River catchment
- Exploring new models for governance to advance sustainable water management
- Engaging an external evaluator to support and report on the effectiveness of the Alliance's Australian Government's National Landcare Programme grant

Financial Statement is provided at Appendix 8.

Factors that impacted on performance

The position of Environmental Engineer was vacant for 11 months, and the Project Manager role was vacant for six months.

Australian Government's National Landcare Programme funding

The Alliance \$2M Australian Government's National Landcare Programme grant is delivering on-ground works to improve the Cooks River, building community capacity and connection with River, and sharing Aboriginal people's cultural values and skills in Caring for Country.

On-ground works are being delivered from 2014 to 2017 at sites across the Cooks River catchment. Revegetation and restoration is being delivered at Landing Lights Wetlands at Banskia in Rockdale. The project is also delivering seven rain gardens to address stormwater challenges at:

1. Graf Park, Yagoona, Bankstown – constructed
2. Scouller Street, Enmore, Marrickville – constructed
3. Butler Reserve, Kingsgrove, Hurstville
4. Forrester Reserve, Kingsgrove, Canterbury
5. Kingsbury Reserve, Kingsgrove, Canterbury
6. Ryan Park, Marrickville
7. Madeline Street, Belfield, Strathfield

Community engagement at Landing Lights wetland in Rockdale included bird watching and habitat planting.



Program 1 Capacity Building



(Top right) A Stormwater Industry Association technical tour for member councils demonstrated water sensitive urban design in the Cooks River catchment.

(Above) An Alliance-funded attendee of CRC for Water Sensitive Cities Conference said it was 'a valuable professional building exercise and was delivered exceptionally well'.

This program increases Alliance members' skills and knowledge, including with Aboriginal advisory committees, for action on catchment health and sustainable urban water management.

Action Group

Ashfield Council, City of Canterbury, City of Sydney, Hurstville City Council and Marrickville Council

Key achievements

- Engaged an external evaluator to evaluate the efficiency and impact of the Alliance
- Sponsored nine member Council staff to attend three capacity building activities to increase and share knowledge about water sensitive urban design and water sensitive cities
- Supported three member Council staff to participate in leadership training
- Organised four guest speakers and one tour for Alliance meetings
- Confirmed a university research partner to understand the pollution removal performance of raingardens
- Worked with all six member Council Aboriginal advisory committees and stakeholders to develop the heritage and cultural elements of Alliance activities
- Employed three Aboriginal people to develop and present a Cooks River video promoting Alliance activities and river health actions to non-English speaking communities
- Engaged an Aboriginal organisation to undertake Cultural Heritage assessments for the Alliance raingarden sites

Detailed reporting is provided at Appendix 1.

Program 2 Catchment Monitoring



(Top right) Our next generation of water managers. Two children learn about water quality sampling at Chullora Wetlands in Yagoona in November 2014.

(Above) The River Health monitors water quality and aquatic ecosystems in the Cooks River catchment.

This program reports, interprets and communicates changes in catchment health, and provides recommendations to member councils. Monitoring sources include catchment agencies and community groups.

Action Group

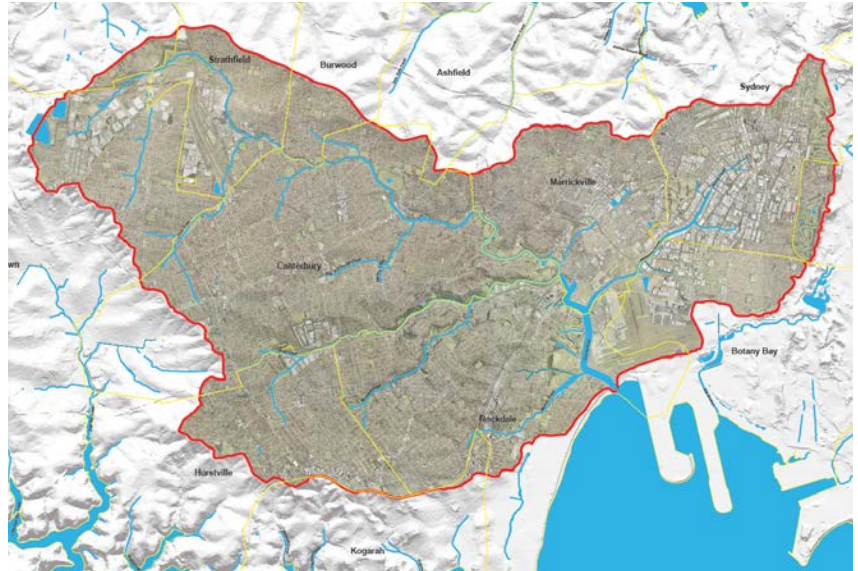
Bankstown City Council, Marrickville Council and Rockdale City Council

Key achievements

- Reviewed and endorsed the revised River Health monitoring program to ensure its validity, utility and robustness
- Completed annual River Health monitoring
- Published the River Health monitoring technical report

Detailed reporting is provided at Appendix 2.

Program 3 Information & Website



(Top right) Detailed maps are an effective tool for community engagement and understanding the complexity of the Cooks River catchment.

This program informs councils and communities about the catchment, with a focus on information that supports Alliance activities.

Action Group

City of Sydney, Hurstville City Council and Strathfield Council

Key achievements

- Maintained website for member councils and stakeholders to access information on Alliance activities and related resources. The website received 15,713 visitors
- Scoped two information and website projects
- Collated 22 layers of mapping data to present a comprehensive overview of the catchment
- Produced two printed maps for events to foster connection and understanding of the catchment

Detailed reporting is provided at Appendix 3.

Program 4 On-ground Works



(Top right) Community engagement at Scouller St rain garden was effective and well-attended.

(Above) The completed Emery Ave rain garden delivers great outcomes for the River.

This program undertakes on-ground works to reduce the quantity and improve the quality of stormwater entering the Cooks River. These works also enhance habitats and ecosystems within the Cooks River catchment.

Action Group

Alliance Steering Committee

Key achievements

- Completed construction of the rain garden in February 2015 at Emery Ave in Bankstown, and was close to completing the rain garden at Scouller Street in Enmore
- Engaged communities at two rain garden and one wetland remediation sites
- Finalised three rain garden functional designs and one detailed design

Detailed reporting is provided at Appendix 4.

Program 5 Collaboration & Community Engagement



(Top right) The Source to Sea tour at Landing Lights explains how water from all across the catchment ends up in Botany Bay.

(Above) In partnership with the Ethnic Communities Council NSW, the Water Wise for Multicultural Communities project directly assisted 224 community members from five ethnic groups (Arabic, Mandarin/Cantonese, Vietnamese and Nepalese) to become involved with the Cooks River catchment.

This program initiates and expands collaborative actions with government, communities, business and the education sector. Community education and engagement is informed by local demographics, and framed by catchment issues such as stormwater, weeds and litter.

Action Group

Ashfield Council, City of Canterbury and Marrickville Council

Key achievements

- Maintained a strong working relationship with NSW Corrective Services in relation to the Intensive Corrections Program. This program contributed on-ground hours valued at \$191,665 – collecting 3,515 bags of rubbish and weeds and spreading 110 ute loads of mulch
- Delivered education activities with 224 culturally and linguistically diverse community members across five language groups – working with seven bilingual educators, and culminating in one art exhibition. Through events and media, a further 620 people were reached to give information about actions they can take to care for the River
- Delivered two workshops to 146 participants and one field trip for 99 attendees from culturally and linguistically diverse communities on a litter prevention project
- Assisted 12 corporate volunteers to remove weeds and do bush regeneration at various sites in the catchment
- Developed and delivered four workshops and field trips with Aboriginal stakeholders and advisory committees, consulting and engaging on the natural and cultural heritage of the River

(Top left) A participant on the Tour and Talk to Gough Whitlam Park 'enjoyed the opportunity to get together and discuss issues that were important...as Aboriginal residents, and water and land management professionals.'



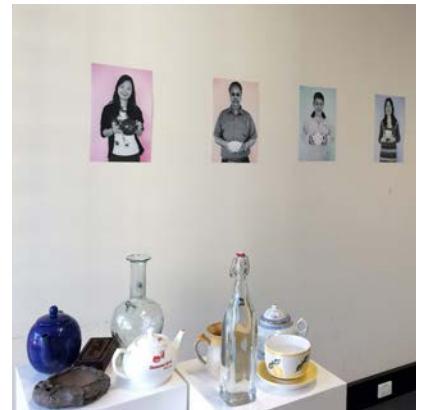
(Top right) Participants on the Roof to River tour learn about raingardens.



(Bottom right) The work with Ethnic Communities Council bilingual educators explored their own connections to water. An art exhibition and short film emerged from the project, curated by Heidi Axelson.



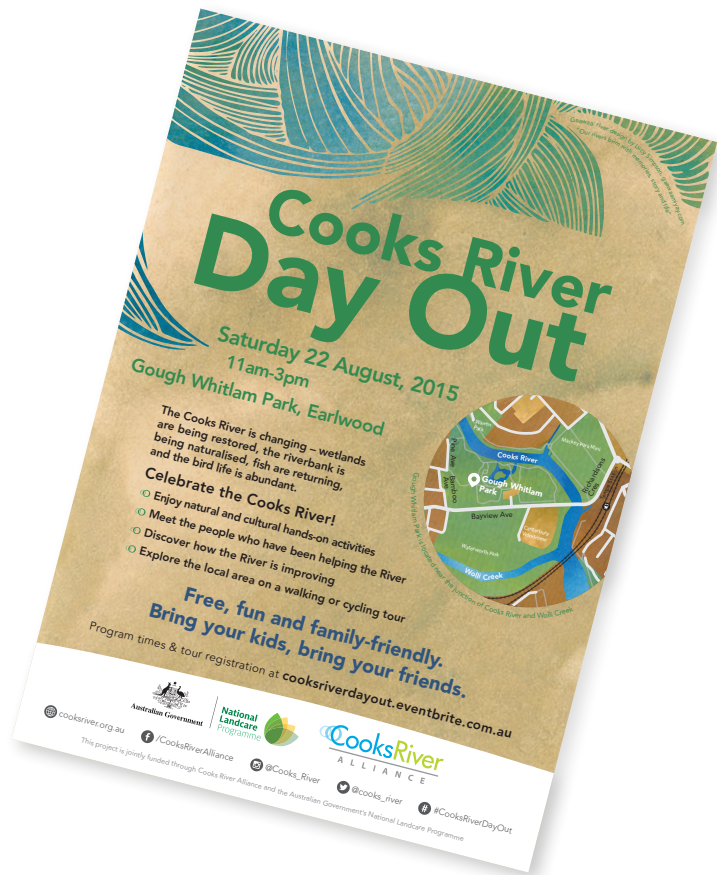
(Bottom left) Rockdale Outdoor Gallery Art Prize 2015 – Cooks River prize winners Selina Springett and Alessandro Berini for Lost Sounds



- Attended 27 meetings and activities with Aboriginal advisory committees and stakeholders
- Educated over 150 students at two primary schools about the Cooks River
- Ran two tours for a water sensitive homes project
- Hosted an open day with 75 attendees at a Sydney Water site in Chullora
- Tested a catchment model at six events, and commissioned a Cooks River catchment model
- Sponsored an art sculpture prize at Rockdale
- Hosted 120 community stakeholders and at the Cooks River Community Forum 2014, which included music, art and other cultural activities

Detailed reporting is provided at Appendix 5.

Program 6 Communications



(Top right) The Cooks River Day Out promotional materials incorporated a Gaawaa River design by Aboriginal artist Lucy Simpson.

This program undertakes communications to encourage actions by communities and stakeholders for a healthier catchment.

Action Group

Ashfield Council, City of Sydney and Strathfield Council

Key achievements

- Delivered numerous social media posts to over 100 Facebook followers, 200 Twitter followers, and 150 Instagram followers
- Delivered three media releases and received media coverage in four newspaper articles
- Commissioned a Communications Strategy
- Developed and distributed eight email newsletters to over 400 subscribers
- Developed Communications Plans for the Cooks River Day Out and other events

Detailed reporting is provided at Appendix 5.

Program 7 Catchment Resilience



(Top right) Weeds along the Cooks River in September 2014.

(Above) Flooding in Marrickville in October 2014.

This program assists councils and communities to increase catchment resilience by identifying the effects of changing environmental conditions and actions to cope with resulting pressures. The changing environment includes human population, pollution, pests and weeds, climate change and land development.

Action Group

Bankstown City Council, City of Canterbury and Rockdale City Council

Key achievements

- Convened two catchment stakeholder meeting, with one meeting focussed on weeds and one on litter
- Lobbied for an overarching strategic plan for the Cooks River catchment
- Made a submission to NSW Department of Planning & Environment about water sensitive urban design, and a submission to the Senate Inquiry on stormwater
- Attended three Local Land Services advisory group meetings
- Held seven Steering Committee meetings, providing a forum for members to meet and discuss catchment resilience challenges and opportunities

Detailed reporting is provided at Appendix 7.

Appendix 1

Program 1 Capacity Building — achievements table

OBJECTIVE: 1.1 To determine, develop and deliver capacity building opportunities for member councils

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
1.1.1 Develop and deliver a capacity building survey to member councils	<p>In 2010, Professor Rebekah Brown and Dr. Annette Bos undertook an organisational capacity assessment of the Cooks River Sustainability Initiative, the predecessor to the Alliance.</p> <p>In April 2015, Cobalt59 was engaged to support, evaluate and report on the effectiveness of the Alliance's Landcare grant. Using a mixed methodology, the evaluation will evaluate Alliance performance – identifying the cause of inhibitors to good performance, quantifying the effect, and developing recommendations. A capacity building survey, building on the previous work of Brown & Bos, will inform future activities.</p>	In progress
1.1.2 Assess capacity building survey results, and develop and deliver a training schedule	<p>Previous capacity building plans were reviewed. Training opportunities, as they have become available, have been offered to member Council staff:</p> <p>CRC for Water Sensitive Cities conference (Melbourne) In October 2014, the Alliance sponsored staff members from Bankstown, Canterbury and Marrickville, along with the Alliance Project Manager, to attend the CRC for Water Sensitive Cities conference.</p> <p>Stormwater Industry Association WSUD technical tour (Sydney) This tour for member councils in March 2015 was to learn about water sensitive devices across four different sites in south western Sydney. Attendees included the Alliance Acting Project Manager, two Strathfield employees, one staff member from Canterbury and one from City of Sydney.</p> <p>CRC for Water Sensitive Cities Industry Partner Workshop (Perth) This workshop in February 2015 explored how research outputs can help cities and towns transition towards water sensitivity. Attendees included one Alliance staff member and two staff from Marrickville.</p>	In progress
1.1.3 Support technical groups and professional forums	Support for technical groups and professional forums will commence in 2015-2016, led by the Alliance Water Sensitive Urban Design Specialist and Project Manager.	Not yet commenced
1.1.4 Encourage/support members to participate in leadership programs	<p>The Alliance supported members to attend the <i>Essential Skills for Emerging Leaders</i> course, with two sessions in 2015 hosted by Marrickville Council. One Alliance staff attended, as well as Steering Committee representatives from Ashfield, Canterbury, and Strathfield. Topics of the Emerging Leaders course included communications skills, motivation, and change management.</p> <p>The Alliance registered ten more 'emerging leaders' for the course in the 2015-2016.</p>	Ongoing

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
1.1.5 Organise workshops, guest speakers or tours, including for senior executive staff	<p>Carl Tippler from CTENVIRONMENTAL Carl presented at the September 2014 Steering Committee, about strategically selecting new sites around the catchment for monitoring the ecological health of the Cooks River.</p> <p>Sydney Park tour In December 2014 the Alliance organised a tour of the impressive stormwater retention system at Sydney Park, which was well-received by Steering Committee.</p> <p>Nathan Moran from Metro Local Aboriginal Land Council Nathan presented at the November 2014 Board meeting on the functions of the Metro Local Aboriginal Land Council in relation to Aboriginal culture and heritage.</p> <p>Keysha Milenkovic from Blacktown City Council Keysha presented at the March 2015 Board meeting about Melbourne Water's 10,000 raingardens project.</p> <p>Brian Keogh from Cobalt59 Brian presented at the May 2015 Steering Committee meeting, and June 2015 Board Meeting, about the effectiveness and efficiency evaluation of the Alliance's Landcare grant project.</p>	Ongoing
1.1.6 Increase affiliation with CRC for Water Sensitive Cities	The Alliance Australian Government National Landcare Programme funded Strathfield Council to join the CRC. In 2014-2015, the Alliance funded members to attend the CRC Conference in Melbourne and the CRC Industry Partner Workshop in Perth (more detail at Action 1.2.2).	Completed

OBJECTIVE: 1.2 To increase members' capacity to design and construct better Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) systems

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
1.2.1 Confirm a research and delivery partner	Western Sydney University has been confirmed as the research and delivery partner.	Completed
1.2.2 With delivery partner, develop, implement and assess a raingarden performance monitoring program	Dr Chris Derry and his team of students from Western Sydney University have designed a water quality monitoring approach for the raingardens and will install monitoring devices in at least three raingardens as they are constructed.	Commenced
1.2.3 Communicate program findings to increase council Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) capacity	Member councils were apprised of program findings at Board and Steering Committee meetings.	Ongoing



OBJECTIVE: 1.3 To enhance member council Aboriginal advisory committee capacity for participation in catchment management processes

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
1.3.1 Work with Aboriginal advisory committees to ascertain and deliver appropriate ways to increase capacity for improving catchment health	<p>In 2014-15, the Alliance worked with all six Aboriginal committees across member councils (Ashfield, Bankstown, Canterbury, City of Sydney, Hurstville, and Marrickville).</p> <p>The Alliance delivered several tours to Aboriginal committee members – designed to network participants, share and grow skills, and build interest and knowledge of the river (more detail at Action 5.2.3).</p> <p>Three Aboriginal people were engaged to deliver content for an Ethnic Communities Council videos about litter around the Cooks River. The videos were published and can be found on the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW Youtube channel.</p>	Ongoing
1.3.2 Engage expert consultants to work closely with committees to identify and deliver increased knowledge and skills	Advice was sought from Aboriginal advisory committees to guide actions. The Alliance is working with Metro Aboriginal Land Council to develop projects.	Ongoing
1.3.3 Closely link advisory committee capacity building with on-ground works	<p>The Alliance consulted with the Bankstown Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee on the Emery Avenue raingarden, and the Marrickville Aboriginal Consultative Committee regarding the Scouller Street raingarden. The Alliance hosted a tour of Chullora wetlands and Yagoona (more detail at Action 5.2.3).</p> <p>As the on-ground works are being delivered, each Aboriginal advisory committee are being encouraged to learn more about the Cooks River and the River’s impact on their local government area.</p>	Commenced
1.3.4 Seek partnerships with Aboriginal groups	In 2014-15, Metro Local Aboriginal Land Council was engaged to undertake Cultural Heritage assessments of all eight on-ground works sites. To date, excavation monitoring has occurred at Emery Avenue and Scouller Street. Excavation monitoring will be included in construction tender documents for the other sites.	Ongoing



Appendix 2

Program 2 Catchment Monitoring — achievements table

OBJECTIVE: 2.1 To monitor, evaluate and benchmark the health of the Cooks River catchment - including water quality, biodiversity and riparian vegetation

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
2.1.1 Conduct the River Health monitoring program in partnership with GRCCC	In 2014 the River Health program de-coupled from the GRCCC and now operates as a stand alone initiative.	Completed
2.1.2 Consider recommendations from the independent review of the River Health and River Science programs and determine program revisions with GRCCC	Based upon the review recommendations, the Board discontinued the RiverScience program and endorsed a modified River Health program based upon a new vision and objectives. The vision is for the monitoring program to be the primary means of engagement and collaboration for understanding and improving the ecosystem health of the River.	Completed
2.1.3 Run revised River Health program	Catchment monitoring for Cooks River was undertaken in spring 2014 and autumn 2015. In 2015-2016, monitoring will continue, including monthly water quality monitoring, seasonal aquatic ecosystems monitoring, and spring estuary monitoring.	Ongoing
2.1.4 Advocate for prioritised River Health recommendations, including at catchment stakeholders meetings	Advocating prioritised River Health recommendations is planned for 2015-2016.	Not yet commenced
2.1.5 Work with Sydney Water to increase understanding of catchment health	The Alliance has been working with Sydney Water to develop a Cooks River Improvement Plan (more detail at Action 7.1.2).	In progress
2.1.6 Utilise Streamwatch data	Streamwatch data is collected by volunteers at several sites in the catchment (steamwatch.org.au).	Not yet commenced

OBJECTIVE: 2.2 To increase understanding and knowledge about catchment monitoring and river health

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
2.2.1 Work with community organisations, schools, and the Australian Museum to grow participation in community based monitoring programs	In March 2015, the Alliance Community Engagement & Education Coordinator attended the Streamwatch Autumn 2015 Day on waterbugs and citizen science. Community water quality testing sessions are scheduled for October 2015 at Yarrowee Wetland in Strathfield and Bardwell Creek in Rockdale.	Ongoing
2.2.2 Deliver catchment monitoring reporting, including consideration of Sydney Water and Streamwatch data	The <i>Cooks River Catchment 2013/14 River Health Monitoring Program Technical Report</i> was released on July 2014. <i>The Cooks River Catchment 2014/15 River Health Monitoring Program Report Card</i> has been designed with Alliance branding, and was released in October 2015.	Ongoing

Appendix 3

Program 3 Information & Website — achievements table

OBJECTIVE: 3.1 To develop a framework for catchment information

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
3.1.1 Define and establish a framework for catchment information	The framework has been scoped. A project plan is in development, and considers the appropriateness of storing information in established information State government portals (such as OpenGov, NSW Spatial Data, TROVE, and NSW State Library).	Commenced

OBJECTIVE: 3.2 To publish and present catchment information engagingly

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
3.2.1 Scope and commission a new website in order to publish and present information engagingly	A new website was scoped and quotes were presented to the Alliance Board for consideration. The Board prioritised the development of an Alliance Communications Strategy (more detail at 6.1.1.) and deferred the development of a new website until 2015-16.	Commenced
3.2.2 Manage and update current and new website	Website analytics shows that in 2014-2015, the Alliance website received 15,713 unique visitors (an increase from 15,266 in 2013-14). The website news page and event calendar was kept up to date with Alliance activities.	Ongoing
3.2.3 Present information through additional modes, such as a mobile App	Maps were used as an important way of presenting Cooks River catchment information. An informal audit was conducted of Alliance mapping (GIS) data, and new data was acquired. A multi-layered map was commissioned (including aerial imagery, topography, governance boundaries, and the River and creeks). This multi-layered map was used to create a map for engagement activities to both show and reduce the complexity of the catchment. The Alliance Communications Support Officer attended a Guardian masterclass on digital strategy in June 2015, which will inform the development of digital communications.	Ongoing

Appendix 4

Program 4 On-ground works — achievements table

OBJECTIVE: 4.1 To reduce the pollutants entering Cooks River and Botany Bay by constructing WSUD systems

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
4.1.1 Prepare and review preliminary surveys and geotechnical investigations of identified sites	In 2014-15, Metro Local Aboriginal Land Council was engaged to undertake Cultural Heritage assessments of all eight on-ground works sites (more detail at Action 1.3.4).	Completed
4.1.2 Prepare functional designs and reports for WSUD at: Scouller St (Marrickville), Madeline St (Strathfield), and Ryan Park (Marrickville)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scouller St, Forrester Reserve, and Butler Reserve functional designs were approved and finalised. Madeline St functional designs are to be finalised in March 2016. Ryan Park functional designs are to be finalised in February 2016. 	In progress
4.1.3 Prepare design specifications, commission consultant and review detailed design and construction drawings for WSUD at: Scouller St (Marrickville), Madeline St (Strathfield), Butler Res (Hurstville), Ryan Park (Marrickville), and Kingsbury Res (Canterbury)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scouller St detailed design was finalised. Madeline St detailed design to be completed in June 2016. Butler Res detailed design to be completed in October 2015. Council is investigating options for combining creative play-enhanced designs. Ryan Park detailed design to be completed in September 2016. Kingsbury Res detailed design to be completed in April 2016. 	In progress
4.1.4 Develop and implement site-specific community engagement plans	<p>Plans were developed and implemented for Scouller St and Emery Ave raingardens. Meetings were well-attended by the community at both sites.</p> <p>Future planning for other sites is underway.</p>	In progress
4.1.5 Provide assistance to councils for tender specifications, documentation, construction & site inspections, and maintenance & evaluation	<p>Emery Ave raingarden was constructed in February 2015, and Scouller St raingarden construction was close to completion at the end of June 2014.</p> <p>Assistance to Councils will commence in 2015-2016, led by the Alliance Water Sensitive Urban Design Specialist.</p>	Not yet commenced

OBJECTIVE: 4.2 To increase habitat for migratory, threatened species and support State listed endangered ecological communities at the Landing Lights Cooks River wetland

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
4.2.1 Provide funding and assistance to Rockdale Council to deliver wetland restoration, including mangroves and weed removal	<p>Funding has been provided for extensive woody weed and casuarina removal and bird surveys at Landing Lights.</p> <p>Over 250 people were engaged at Landing Lights, with bird watching, wetland and bike tours, and community plantings.</p>	In progress

OBJECTIVE: 4.3 To provide technical support to council staff on other WSUD projects

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
4.3.1 Provide support to council engineers for design and implementation of WSUD on-ground works	Support to Councils will commence in 2015-2016, led by the Alliance Water Sensitive Urban Design Specialist.	Not yet commenced

Appendix 5

Program 5 Collaboration & Community Engagement — achievements table

OBJECTIVE: 5.1 To reduce litter, and increase mulching, weed removal and bush regeneration

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
5.1.1 Work with NSW Corrective Services' Intensive Corrections Order (ICO) program - providing mulching, weeding and rubbish removal	In 2014-15, the ICO program contributed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,765 participant and supervisor hours, valued at \$191,665 • 3,515 bags of rubbish and weeds collected • 110 loads (approximately 10m² each) of mulch spread 	Ongoing
5.1.2 Assist community and corporate volunteer programs to work in the catchment	In July 2014, twelve private industry volunteers (from cosmetics company LUSH) worked under the guidance and leadership of City of Canterbury, the Alliance and community groups to undertake bushcare activities.	Ongoing
5.1.3 Deliver place based litter prevention events and activities, including with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities	As part of the EPA 'Cutting the Litter' grant project, the Alliance ran a comprehensive litter workshop program, in partnership with the Ethnic Communities Council and Cooks River Valley Association, to target a range of CALD communities. For each language group (Arabic, Cantonese & Mandarin, Vietnamese and Nepalese communities), there was a series of two workshops (146 participants) and a field trip (99 attendees). EPA messaging on litter was translated into relevant languages, and advertisements were placed in local ethnic media.	Ongoing

OBJECTIVE: 5.2 To increase and develop understanding of Aboriginal traditional and contemporary associations with Botany Bay waterways

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
5.2.1 To collaborate with Aboriginal peoples and agencies, including Aboriginal advisory committees	The Alliance Participation Coordinator attended the Local Government Aboriginal Network conference in September 2014, which was an excellent networking opportunity. The Alliance connected with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, La Perouse LALC and Gandangara LALC.	Ongoing
5.2.2 Run events which provide for communication on Aboriginal understandings of water management	Four workshops/field trips have been held with Aboriginal stakeholders, including many members of Councils' advisory panels. These events were held to consult on the most appropriate ways to engage both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in the natural and cultural heritage of the River, and build on-going connections to the River (more detail at Action 5.2.3). The Alliance Participation Coordinator attended 27 meetings, workshops, and activities with Aboriginal advisory committees and stakeholders.	Ongoing

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
5.2.3 Work with Aboriginal organisations to develop guided tours in the catchment at locations relevant to Aboriginal advisory committees	The Alliance has delivered several tours: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Upper Catchment Tour of Chullora Wetlands and Yagoona raingardens in November 2014 had seven participants. • The Cooks River Tour of Cup and Saucer Wetlands and Kendrick Park in Tempe in November 2014 had 13 participants . • The Cooks River Tour and Talk to Gough Whitlam Park in Earlwood in February 2015 had 20 participants. • The Cooks River Aboriginal Heritage Tour at Steel Park in Marrickville in March 2015 had 45 participants from Marrickville Heritage Society, and was led by two Marrickville Aboriginal Consultative Committee members and their children. 	In progress
5.2.4 Promote Dual Naming in the catchment, determined in conjunction with Aboriginal advisory groups	Discussion has been initiated at a meeting with Aboriginal advisory committees and Metro Land Council.	Commenced

OBJECTIVE: 5.3 To increase educational sector capacity and skills, for a healthier catchment

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
5.3.1 To increase students' knowledge and actions by promoting Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) and biodiversity friendly on-grounds works in educational properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In September 2014 the Cooks River Catchment Forum showcased the work of Canterbury Public School and Canterbury Girls High School. • In June 2015 the Alliance held a workshop and field trip with 120 students at St Mel's Primary School. • In May 2015 the Alliance presented at the Marrickville West Primary School Source to Sea tour. 	Ongoing
5.3.2 Increase capacity of teachers to utilise curriculum resources	The Marrickville West K-6 "We are all Cooks River People" program has been promoted, and reviewed by NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Committee.	Commenced

OBJECTIVE: 5.4 To encourage behaviour change in households by delivering place-based water sensitive homes programs

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
5.4.1 Develop and deliver locally relevant education & engagement plans for households regarding WSUD sites	In partnership with Marrickville Council, the Alliance ran two tours in March 2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Roof to River tour that demonstrated how stormwater goes from peoples' roofs to the River • A Source to Sea tour from Chullora to Kyeemagh. In November 2014, the Alliance hosted a Chullora Wetlands Open Day with around 75 attendees.	In progress



ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
5.4.2 Design and commission a catchment education model, and related educational activities	<p>A Cooks River Catchment Model has been commissioned. Delays have been encountered due to design scheduling issues. Plans have been received, and the model is due for completion in March 2016.</p> <p>In 2014-15 borrowed catchment models were utilised in various community activities at schools, festivals, and events to explain the topography and dynamics of the catchment.</p>	Commenced
5.4.3 Design and develop educational resources and activities for CALD communities, including in partnership with Ethnic Communities Council Sustainable Living Project	<p>The first stage of the Water Wise for Multicultural Communities project, in partnership with the Ethnic Communities Council NSW, used a team of bilingual educators from the Ethnic Communities Council to develop and test activities for the community. A team of seven bilingual educators participated in activities that explored their own connections to water. An art exhibition and short film curated by Heidi Axelson was developed and displayed as part of the Bankstown Art and Environment Crosscurrents festival in November 2014.</p>	Ongoing
5.4.4 Deliver education activities, including for CALD communities	<p>The second stage of the Water Wise for Multicultural Communities project with Ethnic Communities Council directly assisted 224 community members from five ethnic groups (Arabic, Mandarin/Cantonese, Vietnamese and Nepalese) to become involved with the Cooks River catchment. Through events and media, a further 620 people were given information in their own language about actions they can take to care for the River (more detail at Action 5.1.3).</p>	Ongoing

OBJECTIVE: 5.5 To forge strong local relationships with relevant organisations to promote Alliance objectives

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
5.5.1 Work with organisations, including business and industry, on specific catchment issues	<p>The Alliance has worked extensively with Local Land Services and Sydney Water (more detail at Actions 7.1.2 and 7.1.4).</p>	Not yet commenced
5.5.2 Promote artist in residence programs with a focus on the catchment	<p>This Action was broadened to include environmentally-focused artistic programs.</p> <p>In March 2015, the Alliance sponsored a sculpture prize for the 2015 Rockdale Outdoor Gallery Art Prize.</p> <p>The Alliance also hosted a display at the Bankstown Art and Environment Crosscurrents festival (more detail at Action 5.4.3), and attended Ashfield's Carnival of Cultures in March 2015.</p>	On-going
5.5.3 Develop events with cultural organisations	<p>The Cooks River Catchment Community Forum was held in September 2014 at Canterbury Public School. The Forum informed residents on changes in the catchment and provided opportunities to learn about current issues. The Forum included music, arts and other cultural activities, including a performances by the band the Stiff Gins and puppeteers Horizon Theatre. Approximately 120 people attended.</p> <p>Work towards the Cooks River Day Out 2015 (held in August 2015) commenced in the last few months of 2014-2015.</p>	Ongoing



Appendix 6

Program 6 Communications — achievements table

OBJECTIVE: 6.1 To set the overarching framework for Alliance communications

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
6.1.1 Develop Communications Guidelines which cover principles, audiences, branding and procedures	Communications specialists were contracted to develop an Alliance Communications Strategy which will be delivered in the last quarter 2015.	Commenced
6.1.2 Deliver communications through different mediums including: social media, newsletters, media releases and public relations, hard copy communications and branding such as event posters/brochures, and targeted communications	<p>In 2014-15 the Alliance delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight email newsletters to over 400 subscribers. • Three media releases. Four newspapers covered the LUSH volunteering event in July 2014 (more detail at Action 5.1.3). • Numerous social media posts. The Alliance joined social media in July 2014. As of end of 2014-2015 reporting period, the Alliance had around 200 Twitter followers, 100 Facebook followers, and 150 Instagram followers. • Numerous hard copy communications, particularly relating to community engagement events. 	Ongoing

OBJECTIVE: 6.2 To deliver targeted and tailored communications

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
6.2.1 Develop and implement specific Communications Plans for: major Alliance projects, key catchment messages, and advocacy actions as they arise	<p>A detailed Communications Plan was developed for the Cooks River Day Out 2015.</p> <p>Communications and engagement plans were also developed for each raingarden (more detail at Action 4.1.4).</p> <p>Communications Plans for key messages will be developed as part of the Alliance Communications Strategy (more detail at Action 6.1.1).</p>	Ongoing

Appendix 7

Program 7 Catchment Resilience — achievements table

OBJECTIVE: 7.1 To promote and encourage a coordinated and integrated approach by major agencies with catchment responsibilities

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
7.1.1 Convene catchment stakeholder meetings, with State and major agencies. Standing items are: sewage, litter, weed/pests, and jurisdictional issues	<p>The August 2014 Catchment Stakeholder Meeting focussed on opportunities for joint action on weeds. Guest speakers included Sydney Weeds Committee and the Natural Resources Commission.</p> <p>The June 2015 Catchment Stakeholder Meeting focused on litter. The meeting was well-received, with presentations on various elements of litter prevention. The Alliance Steering Committee agreed to hold another Litter Forum in 2015-16.</p>	Ongoing
7.1.2 Lobby and advocate for an overarching strategic plan for the Cooks River catchment – with participation from, and actions for, relevant agencies and all councils in the catchment	<p>In October 2014, Sydney Water held a workshop to progress the Cooks River Improvement Plan, which was attended by representatives from the Alliance and all member councils.</p> <p>The Alliance continues to lobby Sydney Water to progress Sydney Water's Cooks River Improvement Plan.</p>	Commenced
7.1.3 Contribute and collaborate with relevant agencies and on Cooks River catchment planning	<p>In October 2014, the Alliance made a submission on State Environmental Planning Policy No. 65 Design Quality of Residential Flat Development (SEPP 65) and the accompanying new Apartment Design Guide recommending stronger legislation for Water Sensitive Urban Design.</p> <p>In April 2015, the Alliance made a submission to the Senate Inquiry into Stormwater Management addressing the importance of best practice stormwater management for the health of the Cooks River and other waterways.</p> <p>The Alliance is pursuing a collaboration on flooding issues with the NSW State Emergency Service (SES).</p>	Ongoing
7.1.4 Work with Local Land Services on their 'Regional NRM Planning for Climate Change in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Region' project	<p>The Alliance attended a Greater Sydney Local Land Services Local (LLS) Government Advisory Group meeting in September 2014, and investigated membership. The Alliance also attended Metro LLS Community Advisory Group meetings.</p>	Not yet commenced
7.1.5 Work with members to explore joint activities for catchment resilience such as biodiversity	<p>The Alliance held seven Steering Committee meetings, providing a forum for members to meeting and discuss catchment resilience challenges and opportunities.</p>	Ongoing

OBJECTIVE: 7.2 To assist councils take a consistent approach, and make informed decisions, on flood risks arising from changed environmental factors such as climate change

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
7.2.1 Provide technical advice and assistance to members' floodplain risk management committees	In November 2013, the Alliance made recommendations to each member council regarding a review of their flood studies. Technical advice will continue in 2015-2016, led by the Alliance Water Sensitive Urban Design Specialist.	Ongoing

OBJECTIVE: 7.3 To promote and assist members' collaboration on adaptation solutions to the risks posed

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
7.3.1 Review and analyse members' climate change risk assessments and adaptation plans to identify commonalities and collaboration adaptation solutions	Members have provided copies of their risk assessment plans and adaptation plans. Review of the plans will commence in 2015-2016, led by the Project Manager.	Not yet commenced
7.3.2 Convene a workshop to discuss outcomes of review and develop actions strategy	The workshop is planned for 2016-2017.	Not yet commenced



Revenue

	BUDGET 2014 - 2015	ACTUAL 2014 - 2015
Ashfield Council	7,203	7,203
Bankstown Council	11,813	38,073
City of Canterbury	89,523	89,523
City of Sydney	52,479	52,479
Hurstville Council	47,334	47,334
Marrickville Council	66,885	66,885
Rockdale Council	76,146	76,146
Strathfield Council	49,392	40,000
2013/14 Carry forward funds adopted by Council	428,891	428,891
2013/14 Carry forward funds CRFWG	72,958	72,958
Total Revenue	902,624	919,492

Expenses

	BUDGET 2014 - 2015	ACTUAL 2014 - 2015
Salaries & On-costs	389,840	150,021
Salaries & On-costs - Contribution to People, Place, Connection Project	-	89,537
Temporary Staff	-	8,672
Program 1 - Capacity Building	-	1,200
Program 2 - Catchment-wide Monitoring	60,000	36,484
Program 3 - Information Portal	45,000	-
Program 4 - Priority Works	-	200
Program 5 - Collaboration & Community Engagement	80,000	27,700
Program 6 - Communications Strategy	10,000	7,553
Program 7 - Catchment Resilience	-	228
Operating and contingency	5,000	1,684
Car Purchase and Running Costs	35,000	31,791
Hurstville City Council - People, Place, Connection Grant	-	46,727
Total Expenses	624,840	401,798
Net Operating Result for the Quarter ending 30/06/15	277,784	517,693