

Cooks River Alliance
Annual Report 2015–16

Contents

Message from the Chair	3
Message from the Executive Officer	4
About this Report	5
The Alliance	6
Highlights 2015–2016	10
Program 1 Capacity Building	11
Program 2 Catchment Ecological Health Monitoring	12
Program 3 Information & Website	13
Program 4 On-ground Works	14
Case Study: Construction of Community Raingardens	15
Case Study: Restoring Landing Lights Wetlands	16
Program 5 Collaboration & Community Engagement	17
Case Study: Riverwise for CALD Communities	18
Program 6 Communications	19
Program 7 Catchment Resilience	20
Appendix 1 Capacity Building	21
Appendix 2 Catchment Ecological Health Monitoring	25
Appendix 3 Information & Website	27
Appendix 4 On-ground Works	28
Appendix 5 Collaboration & Community Engagement	30
Appendix 6 Communications	37
Appendix 7 Catchment Resilience	38
Appendix 8 Financial Statement	41

Message from the Chair

I am proud to report on another successful year in which the Alliance and its member councils, together with the support and involvement of the community, delivered many important initiatives towards improving the health of our wonderful Cooks River catchment.

In the context of considerable change in local government, we have continued to stress the importance of a coordinated and collaborative approach to managing our valuable waterway assets. The message has been reinforced through our activities - from on-ground works such as building raingardens in our member council neighbourhoods, and delivering a comprehensive water quality monitoring program, to the many community events where we have been able to connect with locals, Aboriginal stakeholders and community groups.

Each activity not only delivers under a specific program of the Action Plan, but also plays an important role to inform and engage the community on the issues surrounding the Cooks River, the efforts that can be made not just at Council level, but also by individuals, families and organisations, and how those efforts can transform the catchment to an even better place to live and recreate. We are particularly proud of our efforts to strengthen the value of and support for positive catchment attitudes and behaviours.

This Annual Report shares the achievements of each program of the Action Plan during the past year and also serves as a roadmap for the year ahead. The Alliance and its partnership of now six Councils will continue to build on these activities over the next 12 months as we bring to fruition the remaining outcomes under the Cooks River Action Plan 2014-2017, and we look forward to continuing to work with member councils and communities to further increase the appreciation and health of the Cooks River.

In closing, I would like to extend my thanks to Brian Robson, Mayor of the former Canterbury Council, for his commendable role as Chair until the Council was dissolved by proclamation in May 2016. I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of those councillor Board members who acted until the dissolution of their respective council.

Cr. Andrew Tsounis, Rockdale City Council
Acting Chair, Cooks River Alliance

Message from the Executive Officer

The Cooks River is precious. It is a wonderfully complex, dynamic, interconnected and adaptive system with a long and rich history which includes traditional inhabitants from the Bidgigal, Gadigal, Gweagal, Kameygal and Wangal clans.

We highly value the River for its amenity, culture and history, existence and bequest benefits and myriad other ecosystem services. It is also a central unifying feature of our landscape connecting communities and biodiversity, and is an essential component of liveability. However, the River is not without significant challenges. It is characterised by multiple stakeholders, overlapping and intersecting electoral boundaries and fragmented governance. The diversity of stakeholders means there are numerous and often-competing interests, values and aspirations. It is also under increasing pressure due to ongoing population growth, urbanisation, climate change, ageing infrastructure and resource limitations.

This is where the Alliance can help. The complex nature of the River and its challenges cannot be addressed singlehandedly, but requires a far-reaching and coordinated approach. Through our regional, integrated, collaborative and participatory approach, we can help enhance the health and resilience of the Cooks River catchment (and, in turn, the health, vibrancy, connectivity, liveability, sustainability and resilience of our communities). We aim to transform urban water management – from the traditional pipes and canals approach, to the sustainable, considering the water cycle as a whole and treating the River as a natural system and resource.

I am pleased to report that the Alliance continues to move from strength to strength. In the last year, the Alliance has leveraged its regional networks for River outcomes, made significant headway with on-ground works and delivered broad multi-stakeholder engagement and capacity building activities.

Many of the Alliance projects and activities that have built council and community capacity (including Aboriginal stakeholders) have been supported by funding from the Australian Government, which is gratefully acknowledged.

Outcomes have been made possible, and significantly enhanced through the passion, drive, commitment and contribution of a dedicated team of Board members, Executive members and Steering Committee representatives. I thank them for their generosity and offer a special thanks to our host council, Strathfield Council, and also to Cathy Jones, Corporate Strategy Coordinator.

The forthcoming 2016-17 year is shaping up to be one of the most defining yet. We will be delivering a suite of projects to assist improving the health of the River including:

- 5 raingardens across the catchment
- Scientific assessment of the best attainable condition of the River to enhance the rigour of the environmental health monitoring program
- Knowledge strategy and hub for Cooks River catchment information
- Best practice sustainable urban water management resources including in relation to strategy, local environment plans, development control plans, water sensitive design and development assessment
- Climate change catchment assessment
- Catchment program to increase the community's knowledge, understanding, value, stewardship of and connectivity to the River
- Aboriginal history of the Cooks River
- Aboriginal traditional ecological River knowledge resources

I invite you to join us in celebrating and enhancing the health of the Cooks River catchment.

Stephen Summerhayes
Alliance Executive Officer

About this Report

This **Cooks River Alliance** ('Alliance') Annual Report 2015-2016 reports upon Alliance activities against the Alliance Action Plan (2014-2017). It is structured as follows:

1. The Alliance - page 6
2. Highlights - page 10
3. Key program achievements - pages 11-20
4. Case studies showcasing activities - pages 15, 16 and 18
5. Detailed list of activities and achievements for each program - pages 21-38
6. Finances - page 41

The Action Plan is available at cooksriver.org.au.



The Cooks River at Earlwood.

The Alliance

The Alliance is a regional coordinating body of six catchment councils united in a common vision to improve the health of the Cooks River and, in turn, the health, vibrancy, connectivity, liveability, sustainability and resilience of surrounding communities. Members represent 98% of the catchment. The River is 23km long, supplied by a catchment of 110 km².

The Secretariat is generously hosted by Strathfield Council. The Alliance operates at the elected and staff levels 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 each Member's administrator or, alternatively up to two councillors. Three community members speak on behalf of catchment communities.

Councillor Board members until May 2016 (council amalgamations) were:

- Cr. Lucille McKenna, Ashfield
- Cr. Monica Wangmann, Ashfield
- Cr. Khal Asfour, Bankstown
- Cr. Naji Najjar, Bankstown
- Cr. Brian Robson (Chair), Canterbury
- Cr. Christine Forster, City of Sydney
- Cr. Linda Scott, City of Sydney
- Cr. Philip Sansom (Deputy Chair until November 2015), Hurstville
- Cr. Chris Woods, Marrickville
- Cr Andrew Tsounis (Deputy Chair from November 2015), Rockdale
- Cr. Shane O'Brien, Rockdale
- Cr. Andrew Soulos, Strathfield
- Cr. Daniel Bott, Strathfield

Community Board members were:

Until September 2015:

- John Butcher
- Helen Hume
- Paul Thomas

From September 2015:

- Mark Kirby
- Justine Langford
- Brian Shaw

Throughout 2015-2016, strong attendance demonstrated the commitment and engagement of representatives:

TABLE 1
Board meeting attendance

Council	Sep 15		Nov 15		Mar 16	
	B	SC	B	SC	B	SC
Ashfield		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bankstown	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Canterbury	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
City of Sydney			✓	✓	✓	✓
Hurstville	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Marrickville		✓		✓		✓
Rockdale		✓	✓	✓		✓
Strathfield	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Community		✓		✓		✓

B = Board Member; SC = Steering Committee Representative

Due to matters pertaining to council amalgamations, the June 2016 meeting was adjourned until 20 July 2016.

Council Amalgamations

The May 2016 Local Government (Council Amalgamations) Proclamation resulted in a reduction in Alliance members from eight to six councils. Administrators assumed the role of councillors.

Post-amalgamation members are:

- City of Canterbury-Bankstown Council (merger of Bankstown City and Canterbury City councils)
- City of Sydney Council
- Georges River Council (merger of Hurstville City and Kogarah City councils)
- Inner West Council (merger of Ashfield, Leichhardt Municipal and Marrickville councils)
- Rockdale City Council
- Strathfield Municipal Council

At the time of writing this report, amalgamations were pending for two unmerged Members: Strathfield Municipal Council (with Burwood and City of Canada Bay councils) and Rockdale City Council (with Botany Bay Council).

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee oversees Alliance operations and supervises the Executive Officer. The Executive Committee is made up the Chair, Deputy Chair, a representative from the host council Strathfield, and representatives from two other member Councils. It meets before each Board Meeting, and as otherwise required.

The Executive Committee was:

- Cr. Brian Robson (Chair), Canterbury
- Cr. Philip Sansom (Deputy Chair), Hurstville
- Cr. Andrew Tsounis (Deputy Chair), Rockdale*
- Janene Harris, Team Leader Sustainability, Ashfield
- Jim Fraser, A/Manager Environmental Services, Marrickville**
- David Dekel, Coordinator City Places & Systems, Rockdale**
- Cathy Jones, Corporate Strategy Coordinator, Strathfield
- Stephen Summerhayes, Executive Officer, Cooks River Alliance

*Cr. Tsounis replaced Cr. Sansom as Deputy Chair in November 2015

** David replaced Jim on the Executive Committee in February 2016

TABLE 2
Executive meeting attendance

Invitees	Council	2015		2016	
		Sept	Oct	Feb	May
CHAIR	Canterbury	✓	✓	✓	N/A
DEPUTY CHAIR	Hurstville / Rockdale	✓	✓	✓	✓
MEMBER COUNCIL STAFF	Ashfield	✓	✓	✓	✓
REPRESENTATIVES	Marrickville	✓	✓	N/A	N/A
	Rockdale	N/A	N/A	✓	✓
	Strathfield	✓	✓		✓

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee develops and oversees implementation of the Alliance Management and Action Plans. The Committee comprises at least one representative from each member council, and all Secretariat staff.

Member council Steering Committee Representatives in 2015-2016 were:

- Janene Harris, Team Leader Sustainability, Ashfield
- Sarah Kamarudin, Sustainability Officer, Ashfield
- Cherie Blackburn, Catchment Management Planner, Bankstown
- Nell Graham, Team Leader Environmental Strategy, Canterbury
- Kate Medcalf, Sustainability Officer, Canterbury
- Lisa Currie, Manager Water Strategy, City of Sydney
- Paul Tatham, Water Engineer, City of Sydney (until 2016)
- Alison Hanlon, Manager Environmental Sustainability, Hurstville
- Kathy Godfrey, Coordinator Environmental Sustainability, Hurstville
- Jim Fraser, A/Manager Environmental Services, Marrickville (until 2016)
- Kate Jackson, A/Manager Environmental Services, Marrickville (From July 2016)

- Jean Brennan, Coordinator Water and Catchments, Marrickville
- Claire Hanley, Senior Environmental Officer, Marrickville
- David Dekel, Coordinator City Places and Systems, Rockdale
- Alexandra Vandine, Senior Project Officer (Environment and Open Spaces), Rockdale
- Cathy Jones, Corporate Strategy Coordinator, Strathfield
- Mark Latham, Sustainability Officer, Strathfield

TABLE 3
Steering Committee meeting attendance

Invitees	Council	2015			2016		
		July	Aug	Oct	Dec	Feb	April
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 Action Plan Programs 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 Management and Action Plans, and to maximise the efficient use of member councils' limited resources.

In 2015-16, the Alliance Secretariat comprised:

- Claudia Hunter, Communications Support Officer (from June 2016)
- Simon Leiva, WSUD Projects
- Jasmine Payget, Community Engagement
- Cath Renwick, Participation Coordinator (until June 2016)
- Stephen Summerhayes, Executive Officer
- Meg Wray, Communications Support (until May 2016)

Highlights 2015-2016

ON-GROUND WORKS



Ongoing restoration of
Landing Lights wetland

COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

200+ interactions with stakeholders

3 tours from an Aboriginal perspective

26 activities for 6 non-English language groups



8 collaborations

900+ people attended 1 Cooks River Day Out

1995 bags of rubbish collected

2 Art Prizes sponsored

CAPACITY BUILDING

16 meetings with Aboriginal advisory committees

Leadership training for 11 Council staff

2 tours for Council staff

4 WSUD training opportunities

CATCHMENT RESILIENCE

2 NETWORKS with top Universities
4 MEETINGS with ministers

6 submissions for legislative REFORMS & other policy INITIATIVES

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS



200+ followers on both &
3 media releases



17,696 unique visitors to website
9 email newsletters to 400+ subscribers

ECOLOGICAL HEALTH MONITORING



Program 1 **Capacity Building**



(Top right) An Aboriginal history of the Cooks River has been commissioned in recognition of the rich history and heritage within the catchment area.

(Above) A tour of the Sydney Tank Stream was organised with Sydney Water for Council staff.

Detailed reporting is provided at Appendix 1.

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

- Attended 16 local Aboriginal advisory committee meetings
- Organised site visits of on-ground works and two tours of key catchment elements for Local Council Aboriginal Advisory committees
- Supported 11 Member Council staff in leadership training
- Facilitated workshops to improve catchment health
- Organised two tours for Council staff including a walking tour
- Offered four capacity building training opportunities to member council staff to increase and share knowledge about WSUD
- Redesigned the delivery of steering committee meetings to include dedicated afternoon capacity building activities
- Installed water quality monitoring devices at two raingardens
- Delivered a raingarden water quality monitoring milestone report
- Fostered Aboriginal participation in the inaugural Cooks River Day Out
- Commissioned an Aboriginal History of the Cooks River catchment
- Facilitated Aboriginal stakeholders participation in a key legislative reform impacting the waterway
- Advanced a project proposal with the CRC for Water Sensitive Cities
- Developed a database of member Council engineers to establish a working group to provide support and share knowledge

Program 2 Catchment Ecological Health Monitoring



(Top right) Community monitoring event at Yarrowee

(Above) Conducting monthly ecological health monitoring

This program monitors, interprets and communicates changes in catchment ecological health and provides recommendations to members.

Action Group

Bankstown City Council, Marrickville Council and Rockdale City Council

Key achievements

- Undertook a deliberative and multi-stakeholder participatory review of the Program to ensure that it kept pace with members' and stakeholders evolving needs as well as good practice monitoring and reporting
- Implemented recommendations from the program review including Report Card enhancements
- Pursued and took advantage of opportunities flowing from the program review including participation in an estuaries symposiums
- Participated in two workshops with Sydney Water to advance the Cooks River Improvement Plan and to advance the development of a Sydney Water Local Government Engagement Plan
- Conducted events at Yarrowee and Bardwell Valley with a total of 75 participants to teach the community about the ecological value of wetlands and the range of Council responses to reducing pollution
- Detailed reporting via an informative Health Report Card

Program 3 Information & Website

(Top right and below) Part of the series of professional images communicating the different values of the river, such as recreation.



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 the website which received 17,696 visitors
- Appointed a consultant through a competitive tender process to update and improve the Alliance website functionality and appearance
- Developed a technical specification to engage a specialist to establish a framework for catchment information
- Developed a series of professional images to be used on the website and other communications pieces, to convey the diverse values of the Cooks River catchment such as recreation and biodiversity

Detailed reporting is provided at Appendix 3.

Program 4 On-ground Works



(Top right) Landing Lights wetland

(Above) Planning for the Ryan Park raingarden in Marrickville.

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 catchment.

Action Group

Alliance Steering Committee

Key achievements

- Delivered five land and soil surveys for identified raingarden sites
- Finalised two raingarden functional designs and two raingarden detailed designs
- Commissioned consultants to prepare raingarden functional designs for three additional raingardens
- Developed and executed community engagement plans in consultation with relevant councils for seven raingarden sites
- Ongoing restoration of Landing Lights Wetland
- Provision of technical assistance to Ashfield Council for a new water sensitive urban design project
- Developed a template raingarden design technical specification to assist members engage consultants to design raingardens

Detailed reporting is provided at Appendix 4.

Case study - Program 4

Construction of Community Raingardens at Scouller Street, Enmore



(Above) On-site community design meeting

(Below) Stormwater at the site before the raingarden



(Below) The completed raingarden



The Cooks River catchment has vast impervious areas. Stormwater from these areas flows into the Cooks River collecting rubbish and other pollutants along the way. Raingardens are specially designed to collect stormwater run-off, filter pollutants and sediments, and slow or stop their flow downstream, in addition to other benefits.

A site in Scouller Street, Enmore (part of the Eastern Channel East Subcatchment) was identified as an ideal site where stormwater could be treated. Through the Cooks River Place.People.Connections project (funded by the Australian Government), in partnership with the Inner West Council and in collaboration with the community, raingardens were designed and constructed on both sides of the road.

Local engagement early on

Locals were engaged to gain useful information on the design and relevant local matters. People also had the opportunity to attend a Community Design meeting to view pre-concept plans, discuss why this intersection was chosen and to provide feedback. A second meeting with the designer, held directly adjacent to the proposed raingarden, was well attended. Post construction, the local community and the mayor assisted to plant out the site at the Community Planting Day

Engagement of Council Staff

Whilst a contractor was engaged to build the raingarden, Inner West (Marrickville) Council staff partnered in the design, engagement and construction process.

How do we know this raingarden is working?

Western Sydney University installed water quality monitoring devices to enable the Alliance to keep track of raingarden performance.

Completed July 2015.

Highlights

- The design enhances and softens the streetscape and also operates as a traffic calming device
- Water quality monitoring by Western Sydney University indicates that the raingardens are performing as designed – the treated stormwater is of a considerably higher quality than that entering the raingardens and suitable for the irrigation of food crops
- Substantial interest was shown from the local community in the design and maintenance of the raingardens
- The project builds on and strengthens the subcatchment action to regional issues and serves as a demonstration project

Case study - Program 4

Restoring Landing Lights Wetland



(Above) Significant weed control and vegetation removal was conducted as part of the restoration project.

(Below) Landing Lights Wetland is one of the last remaining saline wetlands on the Cooks River.



(Below) Birdlife at Landing Lights.

Photo taken by Chelsea Hankin of Avifauna who has undertaken the bird surveys at Landing Lights



Restoring Landing Lights Wetland

An Important Natural Area

Landing Lights Wetland (also known as Riverine Park Wetlands) is located at Spring Street, Banksia and is one of Rockdale Council's most environmentally significant natural areas. The site is one of the last remaining saline wetlands on the Cooks River and includes threatened salt-marsh vegetation. Migratory birds from as far away as Siberia visit during the warmer months to feed and fatten up before returning to breed. The wetland also provides potential habitat to a number of threatened Australian coastal bird species. With significant urban development along the Australian coast, Landing Lights is one of the few suitable Sydney sites that can provide this important habitat.

The Challenge

This site suffers from significant weed infestation from exotic and inappropriate Australian plant species. This is slowly impacting on the condition and extent of the salt-marsh as well as habitat quality.

Council Restoration Works

To protect this site, Rockdale City Council is undertaking significant restoration to protect the existing salt-marsh. This includes the removal of mangroves, Casuarinas, Acacias and other exotic and inappropriate species within and adjacent to the Landing Lights Wetlands.

Council has received approval from NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW Fisheries) to remove the Mangroves at this site. To compensate for this vegetation removal, Council will plant two new local native species throughout the City for each tree removed.

Council also undertakes community engagement activities to raise awareness of the importance of Rockdale's wetlands and the restoration works being conducted. They also monitor the number of native and migratory birds and has compiled a list of migratory and coastal birds seen at the Wetlands.

Restoration activities will continue in 2016/2017.

Highlights

- Undertook significant restoration including removal of mangroves
- Planted new local native species to replace removed species
- Increased community engagement in environmental initiatives
- Developed a community bird watching and monitoring group

Program 5 Collaboration & Community Engagement

(Top right) Bags of weeds and litter collected as part of the Intensive Corrections Order Program.

(Below) CALD Communities education program was conducted for 6 non-English language groups.



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

- Facilitated collection of 1995 bags of rubbish and weeds and spread 1020m² of mulch (a combined in-kind value of \$86,770.00)
- Delivered litter prevention activities
- Consulted with four Aboriginal Advisory panels, LGNSW Aboriginal Liaison Officer and Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Lands Council
- Worked with Koori Kinnections to deliver three tours of the Cooks River
- Commissioned a comprehensive Aboriginal Cooks River history
- Organised public schools activities to increase students' knowledge of WSUD and presentations at the Youth Eco Summit and Sydney University
- Developed four community events and communication material to promote positive action for the river
- Commenced the RiverWise for CALD Communities education program for six language groups - 15 workshops, five field trips, six short films and stormwater resources
- Promoted cross-catchment collaboration at four meetings
- Sponsored and promoted two Art Prizes
- Participated in over 200 interactions with catchment stakeholders



Detailed reporting is provided at Appendix 5.

Case study - Program 5

RiverWise for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities



(Above and below) Field trips with supporting resources were delivered in five different language groups



The Alliance worked with the Ethnic Communities Council NSW to create and run a program that encouraged household level behavioural change in CALD communities towards increased sustainable urban water values, behaviours and actions. During 2015-2016, the program built upon the previous year's activities and reached out to more language groups.

The challenge

The Cooks River catchment community is characterised by diverse ethnic backgrounds - more than 50% of households speak a language other than English in the home. It is therefore vital that culturally appropriate materials and programs are developed to facilitate engagement with them. The language groups supported by the program were chosen based on their relative population size.

The Approach

The program utilised the ABCD engagement model of Ethnic Communities Council that works with existing community groups to increase and strengthen understanding about the local area and local issues. The program developed a three step educational program delivered to five ethnic community organisations to increase participants' knowledge about the Cooks River and to encourage actions to protect and restore the river. The first session was a workshop in a space familiar to the group. The second was a field trip and the final session was a further workshop for reflection and deeper understanding.

Outputs

- CALD Activities delivered at four community events
- Fifteen workshop sessions delivered and five field trips for all language groups
- Short films produced in six languages: Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Korean and Nepalese

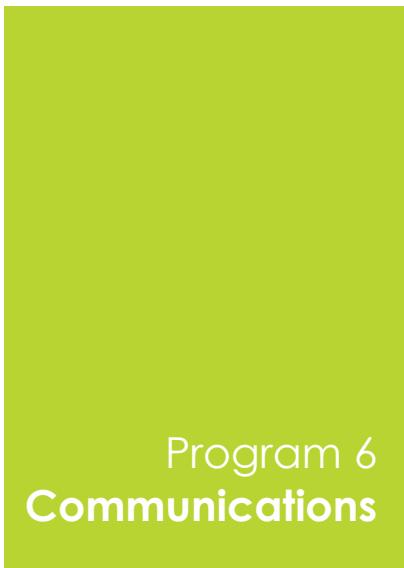


Highlights

These events and activities have helped to raise awareness of the value of healthy waterways and the impacts of stormwater and litter on the Cooks River.

Participants were able to explore, discover and appreciate the Cooks River and become more knowledgeable about the actions at home and in the garden that can contribute to river health.

Evaluation showed a very positive response to the program and improved awareness of the key issues and how they can help make a difference.



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UPCOMING EVENTS



Earth Hour event at Tempe
Cooks River Valley Association is hosting an Earth Hour event this Saturday 19 March from 6pm at Kendrick Park, Tempe. [For more information click here](#) or contact mudcrabs.cooksriver@gmail.com.



Harmony Day at Strathfield
Come talk to us about the Cooks River, and enjoy Harmony Day family friendly activities this Saturday 19 March at Airey Park in Homebush. [Click here for more information.](#)



Ashfield's Carnival of Cultures
Look out for the Alliance stall at Ashfield's Carnival of Cultures this Sunday 20 March at Ashfield Park. [Click here for more information.](#)



Talk: Coastal Vulnerability to Sea Level Rise
Sydney Environment Institute is hosting a talk about climate change Wednesday 23 March. [Click here for more information and to register.](#)

(Top right) Cooks River Alliance Instagram profile

(Above) Cooks River Alliance email newsletter

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

- Prepared and distributed nine email newsletters to over 400 subscribers
- Distributed three media releases
- Posted numerous social media posts to over 200 Facebook followers and over 200 Instagram followers
- Produced a wide range of hard and soft copy collateral for Alliance community engagement events such as The Cooks River Day Out, raingarden consultation events and community water sampling tours
- Developed tailored communication plans for the Cooks River Day Out 2016, each raingarden site, and the Riverwise water sensitive homes program
- Delivered a Cooks River Alliance Communications Strategy

Detailed reporting is provided at Appendix 6.

Program 7 **Catchment Resilience**



(Top right) Stephen Summerhayes, Alliance Executive Officer with Shadow Minister Tony Burke.

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

Action Group

Bankstown City Council, City of Canterbury and Rockdale City Council

Key achievements

- Commissioned a scholarly review of members' climate change risk and vulnerability assessments
- Developed a number of comprehensive submissions to legislative/policy reforms advancing sustainable catchment management
- Held regular engagement meetings with a range of key stakeholders
- Held four meetings with ministers regarding funding for the Cooks River
- Contributed to five forums and submissions to advance the Alliance Mission
- Held a workshop with seven University academics and Sydney Water to develop a Cooks River 'Living Lab' to develop scientific research
- Contributed to two Local Land Services committees
- Established relationships with Sydney and Macquarie Universities
- Secured an agreement for biodiversity mapping along the length of the Cooks River

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	Engaged a consultant to develop and deliver a capacity building survey and to analyse and present results. Results organised for presentation in July 2016 to inform actions under 1.1.2.	In progress
1.1.2 Assess capacity building survey results, and develop and deliver a training schedule	Made the following capacity building opportunities available to member council staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd Water Sensitive Cities Conference • 9th International Water Sensitive Urban Design Conference • Conference: Assets, Not Liabilities • CRC for Water Sensitive Cities Statutory Planning seminars Participation in the steering committee of the Blacktown Council Splash project which aims to build regional capacity in water sensitive urban design. The initiative is in partnership with Sydney Water and funded by State government. To enhance the Secretariat's services to Members, individual staff members participated in the following training courses and workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Values • Council customer service skills • Records essentials • Community-based social marketing to create sustainable behaviour change • Advanced community-based social marketing • Coaching and leadership skills • Change management • From Conflict to Collaboration: Successful Planning for Adaptation • Communication framing 	In progress
1.1.3 Support technical groups and professional forums	Developed a database of member council engineers which will form the basis of a working group to provide support and share knowledge around water sensitive urban design.	On-going
1.1.4 Encourage/support members to participate in leadership programs	Sponsored eleven council member staff to attend the <i>Essential Skills for Emerging Leaders</i> course hosted by Marrickville.	Completed

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
1.1.5 Organise workshops, guest speakers or tours, including for senior executive staff	<p>Sydney Water Workshop</p> <p>Conducted a forum with Sydney Water to address how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve catchment health • Lobby and advocate for an overarching strategic plan for the Cooks River catchment • Work with organisations including business and industry on specific catchment issues <p>IWC foreshore master and management plan</p> <p>Facilitated an interactive workshop with members to learn about and provide feedback on Inner West Council's master and management plans for open space along the Cooks River foreshore.</p> <p>Roof to River Tour</p> <p>Seventeen council staff attended a walking tour from St Peters to Tempe in September 2015. The tour addressed features of the catchment and assisted other councils to consider how they could develop locality based Roof to River tours to engage their own local communities.</p> <p>Tank Stream Tour</p> <p>Alliance and member Council staff participated in the Sydney Tank Stream tour organised by Sydney Water. The tour provided an understanding of the infrastructure legacies and heritage of early European settlement.</p> <p>Bankstown Water Safari tours</p> <p>See 5.4.1</p>	Ongoing
1.1.6 Increase affiliation with CRC for Water Sensitive Cities	<p>2nd Water Sensitive Cities Conference</p> <p>Facilitated attendance of the Alliance Executive Officer and staff from two member councils at the CRC Conference at which considerable networking opportunities were pursued.</p> <p>CRC4WSC NSW Regional Advisory Panel (RAP) Meeting</p> <p>Participated as an advisory panel member to advance Alliance objectives including a project proposal that used the Cooks River catchment as a case study.</p>	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	Confirmed Western Sydney University (WSU) as the research partner.	Completed
1.2.2 With delivery partner, develop, implement and assess a raingarden performance monitoring program	<p>Installed monitoring devices at the two completed raingardens.</p> <p>Delivered the first WSU milestone report. Second and third milestone reports will be delivered in December 2016 and April 2017.</p>	Ongoing
1.2.3 Communicate program findings to increase council Water Sensitive Urban Design capacity	Presented raingarden water quality monitoring methods and results at the November Board meeting.	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>Worked closely with the following member council Aboriginal committees*, attending 16 meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marrickville Aboriginal Consultative Committee • Bankstown Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee • Ashfield Aboriginal Advisory Committee • Canterbury Aboriginal Advisory Committee • Hurstville Aboriginal Advisory Committee <p>Presentations on potential partnership projects were made to the Sydney Committee.</p> <p>Delivered tours to Aboriginal committee members, designed to network with participants, share and grow skills, and build interest and knowledge of the River.</p> <p>*These Committees were suspended in May 2016 as a result of Council amalgamations.</p>	Ongoing
1.3.2 Engage expert consultants to work closely with committees to identify and deliver increased knowledge and skills	Aboriginal advisory committees and the Metro Aboriginal Land Council were engaged to guide actions. A number of projects were scoped for delivery in 2016/17.	Ongoing
1.3.3 Closely link advisory committee capacity building with on-ground works	<p>Engaged Aboriginal advisory committees in the on-going development of on-ground works. For example, invited relevant committees to site visits, workshops and tours such as the Source to Sea or Roof to River.</p> <p>Held Kingsgrove Raingarden and Cooks River Tours with Hurstville Aboriginal Advisory Committee and Canterbury Aboriginal Advisory Group.</p>	Commenced

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
1.3.4 Seek partnerships with Aboriginal groups	<p>Facilitated Aboriginal stakeholder participation in a key legislative reform impacting the waterway (IPART review of Sydney Water's pricing proposal).</p> <p>Represented Aboriginal culture and Country at the inaugural Cooks River Day Out - through Aboriginal public speaking, singing, face painting, arts and crafts workshops, native animal and plant presentations, and tours.</p> <p>Worked closely with the Metro Aboriginal Land Council to develop projects across the catchment for delivery in 2016/17. One project was the commissioning of an Aboriginal History of the Cooks River Catchment, to comprise a comprehensive written historical account of pre-contact, historic and contemporary periods in accessible formats tailored to a range of audiences. The delivery team includes an Aboriginal research assistant who will glean oral histories from Aboriginal people with connections to the catchment.</p> <p>Commissioned Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to undertake Cultural Heritage Assessments at all raingarden sites.</p> <p>Held meetings with members and Aboriginal providers to develop Aboriginal Cultural Awareness training for members.</p> <p>Engagement with Aboriginal stakeholders including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gundangara Local Land Council • La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council • Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (Metropolitan East Regional Committee) NSW – 2 meetings on schools programs • LGNSW Aboriginal Liaison Officer • Local Lands Services – Sydney Catchment (NSW Government) • Officer of Environment and Heritage (NSW Government) 	Ongoing

Appendix 2

Program 2 Catchment Ecological Health Monitoring — achievements table

OBJECTIVE: 2.1 To monitor, evaluate and benchmark the ecological 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*	<p>Managed a comprehensive monitoring program of the ecological health of the Cooks River using water quality indicators, macroinvertebrate richness and abundance, and an assessment of riparian vegetation. The monitoring program was a key means of engagement and collaboration for understanding and improving the ecosystem health of the River.</p> <p>Undertook a two-stage multi-stakeholder deliberative program review to ensure it kept pace with evolving needs and good practice and evolving needs.</p>	Completed
*In 2014, the River Health program was de-coupled from the GRCCC and now operates as a stand-alone initiative.		
2.1.2 Consider recommendations from the independent review of the River Health and River Science programs and determine program revisions with GRCCC	Considered and implemented the recommendations through the program review in 2.1.1 including Report Card enhancements.	Completed
2.1.3 Run revised River Health program	<p>Delivered catchment monitoring including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Water Quality monitoring • Spring and Autumn Aquatic Ecosystems Monitoring • Summer Estuary Ecosystems Monitoring 	Ongoing
2.1.4 Advocate for prioritised River Health recommendations, including at catchment stakeholders meetings	<p>Advocated for river health outcomes through a variety of media including meetings with stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River health citizens jury with members and stakeholders • National Estuaries Network Science Day Symposium • Workshop with Sydney Water on 20 April 2016 • Specific targeted advocacy – see below. 	Ongoing
2.1.5 Work with Sydney Water to increase understanding of catchment health	<p>Worked with Sydney Water to continue development of the Cooks River Improvement Plan - participated in a number of meetings and workshops.</p> <p>Participated in a workshop with Sydney Water to advance the development of a Sydney Water Local Government Engagement Plan.</p>	Ongoing
2.1.6 Utilise Streamwatch data	In accordance with the program review and updates (see above), this data was not required.	

OBJECTIVE: 2.2 To increase understanding and knowledge about catchment monitoring and ecological 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	<p>Held 'Explore Yarrowee' and 'Explore Bardwell' community events in Freshwater Park and Bardwell Valley Parklands respectively. Combined participation was 75 community members. The event allowed participants to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the Yarrowee wetland and learn about the ecological value of the wetlands and its function in filtering the stormwater from the sub catchment • Learn about the range of frogs living in the urban environment and the challenges of life as an urban frog • Voice concerns in regards to recent sewage spill (Bardwell) and better understand the range of Council responses to reducing litter and responses to sewage spills • Visit the river parklands and to volunteer to protect and restore the river. 	Ongoing
2.2.2 Deliver catchment monitoring reporting, including consideration of Sydney Water and Streamwatch data	<p>Apprised members of catchment monitoring progress and outcomes.</p> <p>Issued one Health Report card.</p> <p>Developed an improved reporting structure for the 2014/2015 report card (to be published in August 2016).</p>	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	Developed a technical brief to engage a specialist to establish an online portal for catchment information. A competitive tender process will be undertaken early in the next financial year to appoint the specialist.	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	Retained a consultant through a competitive tender process to enhance the functionality and engagement of the existing website. Developed a series of professionally taken images to be used on the website and in other communications pieces, that convey the diverse values of the Cooks River catchment including recreation and biodiversity.	Commenced
3.2.2 Manage and update current and new website	Managed and maintained the website. During 2015-2016 there were 17,696 unique visitors.	Ongoing
3.2.3 Present information through additional modes, such as a mobile App	Commissioned enhancements to the website to meet the evolving needs of the Alliance. These will include a responsive mobile-friendly design to facilitate accessibility. Commenced an audit of digital communications to develop a content calendar to ensure engaging information is diarised and presented through relevant channels.	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	<p>Commissioned, delivered and reviewed necessary preliminary surveys, geotechnical and soil investigations for all raingarden sites except Ryan Park, Marrickville, which are in progress.</p> <p>Cultural Heritage Assessments were also undertaken (see Action 1.3.4)</p>	Ongoing
4.1.2 Prepare functional designs and reports for WSUD at: Scouller St (Marrickville), Madeline St (Strathfield), and Ryan Park (Marrickville)	<p>Finalised the Forrester Reserve and Butler Reserve functional designs.</p> <p>Commissioned the Madeline Street, Kingsbury Reserve and Ryan Park functional designs for delivery in 2016.</p>	Ongoing
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)	<p>Completed the Butler Reserve and Forrester Reserve detailed designs.</p> <p>Commissioned Madeline Street, Kingsbury Reserve and Ryan Park detailed designs for delivery in 2016.</p>	Ongoing
4.1.4 Develop and implement site-specific community engagement plans	<p>Developed and implemented site specific community engagement plans for all raingarden sites. Engagement activities included on-site meetings, local signage, community plantings, raingarden and catchment tours.</p> <p>Engagement activities are continuing for raingardens that are in development; activities take place at key milestones e.g. completion of draft detailed design, completion of draft functional design etc.</p> <p>Conducted a tour of on-ground works in April 2016 for the Commonwealth grant manager.</p>	Ongoing
4.1.5 Provide assistance to councils for tender specifications, documentation, construction & site inspections, and maintenance & evaluation	Provided assistance to all member councils for the five raingardens still to be delivered: Butler Reserve, Ryan Park, Kingsbury Reserve, Madeline Street and Forrester Reserve.	Ongoing

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>Provided funding and assistance to Rockdale Council. Works have improved habitat for shore and migratory birds. Further details are provided in case study 3.</p> <p>Delivered community activities at the wetlands, including to CALD communities.</p>	Ongoing

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	<p>Assisted Ashfield Council with a new water sensitive urban design project. Technical assistance included in relation to design, MUSIC modelling, and plant selection.</p> <p>Developed a template raingarden design technical specification to assist members' engineers engage consultants to design raingardens.</p>	Ongoing

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	<p>Fostered the relationship with the Department of Corrective Services. Work performed by the Department included mulching, weeding and rubbish collection at a range of parks and streets in Strathfield, Inner West, and Canterbury Bankstown LGAs. Bardwell Creek in Rockdale was included on a monthly litter pick post-May 2016. Program highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2589 participants and supervisor hours, valued at \$86,770.00 • 1995 bags of rubbish and weeds collected • 1020m² of mulch spread in 15 sites • Litter was collected weekly at 6 sites - 5 riverside parks and one highway verge • One park was weeded weekly 	Ongoing
5.1.2 Assist community and corporate volunteer programs to work in the catchment	<p>Provided relevant volunteer opportunities (bushcare, tree planting, litter collection) at all Alliance information stalls and education events.</p>	Ongoing
5.1.3 Deliver place based litter prevention events and activities, including with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities	<p>Cooks River Day Out – August 2015 (details see 5.4.4)</p> <p>This event delivered three elements focusing directly on litter prevention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reverse Vending Machine providing reward for plastic bottle returns • The Big Bottle – information on container deposit legislation • Reuse of materials workshop <p>Riverwise for CALD Communities – January - June 2016</p> <p>Ran field trips for Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese and Arabic speakers which included a segment on litter and its effect on the river. See 5.4.4 for more details and the case study.</p>	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	<p>Consulted with four Aboriginal Advisory committees. Reports to the following committees included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bankstown: natural and cultural heritage in the catchment; project and events updates; and planning for the Emery Avenue raingarden celebrations • Ashfield: natural and cultural heritage; river catchment; and reflection on Carnival of Cultures • Marrickville: natural and cultural heritage in the catchment; project and events updates; advancing Country • Canterbury: project and events updates; marking Country at Forrester Reserve raingarden <p>Met with Local Government NSW's Aboriginal Liaison Officer and Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Lands Council.</p>	Ongoing
5.2.2 Run events which provide for communication on Aboriginal understandings of water management	Scoped projects for delivery in 2016/17 which specifically build Aboriginal understanding of water management (as well as building Councils' understanding of Aboriginal water management).	Ongoing
5.2.3 Work with Aboriginal organisations to develop guided tours in the catchment at locations relevant to Aboriginal advisory committees	Retained the Aboriginal organisation Koori Kinnections to run three tours of the bush tucker sites for the Cooks River from an Aboriginal perspective at the Cooks River Day Out.	In progress
5.2.4 Promote Dual Naming in the catchment, determined in conjunction with Aboriginal advisory groups	Promoted dual naming through liaison with Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, members of Marrickville's Aboriginal Advisory Committee and the City of Sydney's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel.	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	<p>Schools</p> <p>Delivered the "2016 We are all Cook's River People" program to Marrickville West Public School.</p> <p>Supported Canterbury Council with the field trip for Canterbury South Public School (150 students).</p> <p>Engaged local schools around raingarden sites (Butler Reserve, Kingsbury and Forrester Reserves) with a view to delivering field trips and related education sessions in Terms 2 and 3, 2016.</p> <p>Youth Eco Summit - October 2015</p> <p>Delivered six workshops at the Sydney Olympic Park Authority's Youth Eco Summit (in collaboration with Parramatta River Consultative Group, Georges River Consultative Committee, StreamWatch program at the Australian Museum and Sydney Water). The presentation increased students' knowledge and actions by promoting Water Sensitive Urban Design.</p> <p>Sydney University guest lecture</p> <p>Delivered a lecture to environmental management undergraduate students on catchment management.</p> <p>Australia-Spain Water Forum</p> <p>Presented collaborative approaches to sustainable water management.</p>	Ongoing
5.3.2 Increase capacity of teachers to utilise curriculum resources	Commenced development of curriculum materials for high school subjects (Geography, Biology, Food Technology & Community and Family Studies) addressing catchment and urban water management.	In progress

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	<p>Delivered education and engagement activities for households in accordance with relevant plans as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raingardens at Scouller Street, Enmore; Forrester Reserve, Kingsgrove; Butler Reserve, Kingsgrove, and Ryan Park, Stanmore Bankstown: Four <i>Discover Water Safari</i> tours delivered in collaboration with Sydney Water and Council (~80 participants) Strathfield: <i>Harmony Day</i> event – information stall hosted by Alliance and Ethnic Community Council educators Ashfield: <i>Carnival of Cultures</i> – information stall hosted by Alliance and Ethnic Community Council educators Strathfield: <i>Southend Reserve Green and Golden Bell Frog consultation</i> – information stall <p>Produced communication materials to promote positive action for the River for use at community engagement events.</p> <p>Gained approval to use Melbourne Water's 10,000 Raingarden collateral.</p>	Ongoing
5.4.2 Design and commission a catchment education model, and related educational activities	<p>Designed and commissioned the model to be delivered in 2016. Construction was delayed due to moving to an improved 3D printing method. The model will be used as a visualisation and communication aid to encourage behavioural change to increase sustainable urban water values, behaviours and actions in households and at schools.</p> <p>Developed a simple raingarden model with 'live' soil to explain how soil helps to filter water. These models were used at the Youth Environment Summit and the Cooks River Day Out.</p>	In progress
5.4.3 Design and develop educational resources and activities for CALD communities, including in partnership with Ethnic Communities Council Sustainable Living Project	<p>RiverWise for CALD Communities</p> <p>Designed and delivered in partnership with the Ethnic Communities Council the Riverwise for CALD Community education program focussing on five language groups: Arabic, Korean, Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese.</p> <p>Delivered 15 workshops (including 5 field trips) for all five language groups with field trips to Sydney Park (City of Sydney), Cup and Saucer Wetland (Canterbury), Steel Park (Marrickville).</p>	Ongoing

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
5.4.4 Deliver education activities, including for CALD communities	<p>Delivered activities at five community events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marrickville: Seniors Week • Canterbury: Campsie Food Festival • Strathfield: Harmony Day • Ashfield: Carnival of Cultures • Rockdale: ROGAP Sculptures by the Sea <p>Produced a series of short films based upon the 2015 (Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Nepalese and Vietnamese) and 2016 (Korean) field trips (www.eccnsw.org.au/What-we-do/Cooks-River-Water-Wise.aspx), and stormwater information resources in a range of languages.</p> <p>Cooks River Day Out 22 August 2015</p> <p>Held the Cooks River Day Out in August 2015 at Gough Whitlam Park, Earlwood at high tide. The event reached out to the community, with a particular focus on families. It utilised cultural activities (music, workshops, theatre) as well as tours and kayaking to connect people with the River and Country. Participating organisations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metro Aboriginal Land Council • Ethnic Communities Council • Cooks River Valley Association • Mudcrabs (bushcare) • Wollie Creek Preservation Society • Nature Conservation Council • Titans Football Club • First Hand Solutions <p>The event was independently evaluated as successful.</p> <p>Riverwise</p> <p>Delivered local activities at Strathfield (Southend Reserve Green and Golden Bell Frog consultation) and Bankstown (Discover Water Safari).</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>Adopted a portfolio approach to our collaborative activities (distributing resources across a range of relevant issues) to balance diverse priorities. Participated in the following collaborations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-catchments Managers Committee • NSW Regional Advisory Panel – CRC for Water Sensitive Cities • Steering Committee– Building Regional Capacity for WSUD • Expert Committee - Connected Corridors for Biodiversity • Local Government Advisory Group – Greater Sydney Local Land Services • Community Advisory Group - Greater Sydney Local Land Services • Stakeholder Advisory Group - National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility Natural Ecosystems Network • Member – South Sydney Environmental Educators Network <p>Cross catchment engagement</p> <p>Facilitated and participated in cross-catchment meetings with local regional organisations of councils (Parramatta River Catchment Group, Georges River Combined Councils' Committee and Sydney Coastal Councils Group) and Sydney Water. Meetings explored cross-catchment collaborative opportunities to advance sustainable urban water management and resulted in a collaborative approach to a number of activities (e.g. advocacy – see below).</p> <p>Sydney Airport Limited</p> <p>Engaged Sydney Airport Limited to advance environmental projects by the corporation on the River.</p> <p>Participated in over 200 interactions with catchment stakeholders.</p>	On-going
5.5.2 Promote artist in residence programs with a focus on the catchment	<p>Cooks River Day Out</p> <p>Developed the event with cultural organisations (see 5.4.4).</p> <p>Greenway Art Exhibition</p> <p>Created the Cooks River Small Sculpture Prize for inclusion in the exhibition. The exhibition ran during November/December 2015 in Leichhardt (Inner West) and then moved to Campsie Library.</p> <p>Rockdale Outdoor Gallery Art Prize (ROGAP) April 2016</p> <p>Sponsored the Cooks River Environment Prize as part of this art event organised by Rockdale Council in Kyeemagh reserve at the mouth of the Cooks River on Botany Bay.</p>	On-going
5.5.3 Develop events with cultural organisations		

OBJECTIVE: 5.6 To foster collaboration between and among member Councils

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
5.6.1 Facilitate the Steering Committee	<p>Facilitated regularly meetings. Meetings featured an afternoon capacity building session aligned against an Action Plan program.</p> <p>Undertook a comprehensive survey to ensure meetings were tailored to members' needs.</p> <p>Developed a values based Terms of Reference.</p>	On-going
5.6.2 Facilitate the Board	<p>Facilitated regular meetings.</p> <p>Undertook a comprehensive survey to ensure meetings were tailored to members' needs.</p>	

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	Completed the Alliance Communications Strategy.	Completed
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>Delivered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nine email newsletters to over 400 subscribers • Three media releases • Numerous social media posts to Facebook and Instagram followers. • Numerous hard copy and soft copy collateral, particularly relating to community engagement events including posters, banners, information pamphlets, invitations and programs 	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>Developed detailed Communications plans for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Cooks River Day Out 2016 • Each raingarden • Riverwise water sensitive homes program 	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	Engaged regularly with a range of catchment decision makers and stakeholders including Local Land Services, Sydney Water, Office of Environment and Heritage, Environment Protection Authority and catchment Regional Organisations of Councils.	Ongoing
7.1.2 Advocate to advance the Alliance Mission and the interests of the Cooks River	<p>Undertook a wide range of targeted advocacy activities:</p> <p>Cooks River Improvement Plan</p> <p>Met with Sydney Water and advanced a holistic, multi-stakeholder catchment approach.</p> <p>Cooks River projects</p> <p>Developed a list of projects based upon information provided by members. The list was distributed to political parties and a State agency. Meetings were had with a number of politicians. Mr. Nick Varvaris MP and the Hon. Greg Hunt MP announced \$2.45M in funding for specific projects detailed in the list.</p> <p>Reforms</p> <p>Developed and lodged a number of submissions with input from Alliance Board and Steering Committee, and key stakeholders such as the Total Environment Centre, Mudcrabs and CRVA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sydney Water pricing proposal – a joint submission with GRCCC and PRCG and SCCG advancing the intrinsic value of water. The Alliance subsequently represented the consortium at the public hearing. A further submission was made on IPART's draft determination resulting in IPART amending its decision to specifically address liveability. • Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy - advancing the River as an essential part of the system. • LLS State and Sydney Strategic Plans - advancing sustainable urban water management. • NSW Container Deposit Discussion Paper - joint submission with GRCCC, PRCG, and SCCG supporting the introduction of container deposit legislation. The NSW Government has since announced the introduction of a container deposit scheme. 	Ongoing

7.1.3 Contribute and collaborate with relevant agencies on Cooks River catchment planning	<p>See action 7.1.1.</p> <p>Participated in a workshop with seven University academics, Sydney Water and the Alliance to develop a Cooks River 'Living Lab' project which aims to co-develop, conduct and promote adaptive and end-user driven scientific research and citizen science while undertaking environmental remediation of degraded urban sites.</p> <p>Developed a number of grant applications for catchment projects with stakeholders including Office of Environment and Heritage, Environmental Protection Authority, National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility, Macquarie University and Sydney Water.</p> <p>Met with the Marine Estate Management Authority and Office of Environment and Heritage to promote catchment outcomes.</p>	Ongoing
7.1.4 Work with Local Land Services on their 'Regional NRM Planning for Climate Change in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Region' project	Worked with the Greater Sydney LLS through participation in two of its committees: Local Government Advisory Group and the Community Advisory Group. LLS are presenting their climate change adaption framework at the Steering Committee meeting in July 2016.	Ongoing
7.1.5 Work with members to explore joint activities for catchment resilience such as biodiversity	This action is integrated into and delivered via other actions, for example, as an extension of the workshop in action 7.3.2 and the review of program 2.	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	Commenced the development of a framework for engagement and provision of information.	Commenced

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

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
7.3.1 Review and analyse members' climate change risk assessments and adaptation plans to identify commonalities and collaboration adaptation solutions	Retained climate change adaptation experts at Macquarie University to assist in delivering these actions.	Commenced
7.3.2 Convene a workshop to discuss outcomes of review and develop actions strategy	The workshop will take place at the combined Board and Steering Committee meeting in July 2016.	Not yet commenced

OBJECTIVE: 7.4 To facilitate the development and exchange of information, networks, skills, knowledge and ideas

ACTIONS	ACHIEVEMENTS	STATUS
7.4.1 Foster, promote and facilitate research	<p>Developed Memoranda of Understanding with both the University of Sydney and with Macquarie University to further research to advance sustainable urban water management.</p> <p>Participated in the Expert Committee for the Connected Corridors for Biodiversity project run by Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils. This project is developing a regional biodiversity corridor map. The Alliance secured an agreement to extend the mapping along the entire above-ground reach of the River.</p> <p>Secured membership in the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility Natural Ecosystems Network Stakeholder Advisory Group.</p> <p>See also 7.1.3.</p>	On-going

Appendix 8

Financial Statement — for year ended June 2016

Revenue

	BUDGET 2015 - 2016	ACTUAL 2015 - 2016
Ashfield Council	7,369	7,369
Bankstown Council	38,949	38,949
City of Canterbury	91,582	91,582
City of Sydney	53,686	53,686
Hurstville Council	48,423	48,423
Marrickville Council	68,423	68,423
Rockdale Council	77,897	77,897
Strathfield Council	40,920	40,920
2014/15 Carry forward funds CRA	444,735	444,735
2014/15 Carry forward funds CRFWG	72,958	72,958
Total Revenue	944,942	944,942

Expenses

	BUDGET 2015 - 2016	ACTUAL 2015- 2016
Salaries & On-costs	390,868	150,399
Salaries & On-costs - Contribution to People, Place, Connection Project		214,365
Temporary Staff		9,055
Program 1 - Capacity Building		
Program 2 - Catchment-wide Monitoring	52,800	61,380
Program 3 - Information Portal	59,000	
Program 4 - Onground Works	16,500	822
Program 5 - Collaboration & Community Engagement	59,000	56,603
Program 6 - Communications Strategy	35,000	36,741
Program 7 - Catchment Resilience	85,000	2,765
Operating and contingency	5,000	12,629
Car Purchase and Running Costs	6,000	15,469
Total Expenses	709,168	560,228
Net Operating Result for the year ending 30/06/16	235,774	384,715



**Working together
for a healthy
Cooks River catchment**

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