



# Annual Sustainability Report

**INLAND  
RAIL** 

FY22-23

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# Acknowledgement of Country

Inland Rail acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and we pay our respect to their Elders, past and present.

**Journey artwork created by Elenore Binge, proud Gomeroi/Kamilaroi woman.**



## 1.1. Our locations

### 1.1.1. Projects

- **Yorta Yorta People, Taungurung People, Wurundjuri People and Boon Wurrung People**  
(Beveridge to Albury project)
- **Wiradjuri People**  
(Albury to Illabo, Illabo to Stockinbingal, Stockinbingal to Parkes, Parkes to Narromine and Narromine to Narrabri projects)
- **Wailwan People, Ngemba People, Ngiyampaa People and Wangaaypuwan People**  
(Narromine to Narrabri project)
- **Jagera People**  
(Calvert to Kagaru project)
- **Gamilaroi/Kamilaroi/Gomeroi People**  
(Narromine to Narrabri, Narrabri to North Star, North Star to New South Wales/Queensland Border projects)
- **Bigambul People**  
(New South Wales/Queensland Border to Gowrie project)
- **Western Wakka Wakka People**  
(New South Wales/Queensland Border to Gowrie and Gowrie to Helidon projects)
- **Yuggera Ugarapul People**  
(Gowrie to Helidon, Helidon to Calvert and Calvert to Kagaru projects)

### 1.1.2. Inland Rail offices

- **Boon Wurrung People and Wurundjuri People of the Eastern Kulin Nation**  
(Melbourne)
- **Wiradjuri People**  
(Albury and Wagga Wagga)
- **Gadigal People of the Eora Nation**  
(Sydney)
- **Wiradjuri People** (Parkes)
- **Gamilaroi/Kamilaroi/Gomeroi People**  
(Moree)
- **Bigambul People** (Goondiwindi)
- **Western Wakka Wakka People, Giabal People and Jarowair People**  
(Toowoomba)
- **Yuggera Ugarapul People** (Gatton)
- **Jagera People and Turrbal People**  
(Brisbane)



## 1.2. Our commitment

**We acknowledge that Inland Rail will be built and operated on the traditional lands of many First Nations communities.**

Inland Rail is actively collaborating with First Nations people, businesses and communities throughout the design, construction and operation of this nation-building project. We're proactively engaging with First Nations communities and their leaders to develop partnerships based on mutual respect and understanding.

We value our relationships with First Nations communities and recognise their inherent connection to their traditional lands and their continuing responsibility of stewardship and caring for country and culture.

We're committed to forging stronger connections with First Nations stakeholders and creating meaningful opportunities for First Nations people, communities and businesses. We welcome and actively foster the participation of First Nations people as employees, delivery partners and suppliers.

Inland Rail is committed to the journey of reconciliation with First Nations people and communities and continues to positively contribute to Australian Rail Track Corporation's (ARTC) Reconciliation Action Plan.

## 1.3. First Nations staff network FY22-23

### Natalie Mogg

First Nations Engagement Advisor (New South Wales)

#### Wangkumarra

I am descended from the Wangkumarra people and language group, whose lands lie in the Channel Country. This is my grandfather's country on which I have been lucky enough, through his teachings and my father's teachings, to learn the stories. On top of that I was extremely honoured to help my father write a book about Country called "Bury Me at Tartulla Hill."

### Jae Spann

Senior Marketing Advisor (Corporate)

#### Yuin

My great-grandmother was part of the Stolen Generations and we've traced our family back to the Yuin people from the South Coast of New South Wales. Growing up I had no idea I was of Aboriginal descent; it was only when my family started drafting our family tree that we found out.

### Cathy Duncan

Senior Skills and Training Advisor (Program)

#### Gamilaroi

I am a proud Gamilaroi woman with ancestral ties to the Wonnarua Nation. My grandmother was born at the turn of the 19th century at Walhallow Aboriginal Mission: however, for the past century, my family

has proudly called Moree, New South Wales, home. I have dedicated my life to the service of my home town, my people and my culture. Through both professional and personal capacities, I am committed to First Nations autonomy, sovereignty and self-determination.

### Jessica Duncan

Sustainability Advisor

#### Gamilaroi

I am a proud Gamilaroi woman from Moree, New South Wales, but I also acknowledge and honour my Wonnarua and Ngarabal ancestors. My ancestors, Elders and community survived unspeakable atrocities and we are still here. It is on their shoulders we stand as I honour their struggles and sacrifices in the ongoing fight for equality and recognition.

### Marlene Carpenter

First Nations Trainee

#### Iningai

I am proudly descended from Iningai people, born in Longreach, Central Queensland, near the Thomson River, home to Iningai Keeping Place. Through my working career I have been lucky enough to have worked alongside Aboriginal activist Matilda House from Ngunnawal Land Council, Queanbeyan, New South Wales, and Sandy Davies from Yamatji Land Council, Geraldton, Western Australia.

## Nikitah Barnes

HR Coordinator

### Bundjalung

My mob are Bundjalung and I grew up on Gooreng Gooreng country.

## Natasha Hamilton

First Nations Engagement Advisor (New South Wales)

### Jaru/Gurindji

I am a proud Jaru/Gurindji woman descending from bordering nations of the East Kimberley and Northern Territory. In my role, I enjoy working with communities along the rail alignment to deliver good social, cultural and environmental outcomes for their mob.

## Lisa Goodman

First Nations Engagement Advisor (Queensland)

### Dharug

I am a proud descendant of the Garigal and Dharug peoples whose lands stretch from the mouth of the Hawkesbury River to the foothills of the Blue Mountains. I continue to walk the path paved by my ancestors so that those who follow need not experience the struggles, sacrifices and injustice of those who have walked before us.

## Kaydi Enoch

First Nations Engagement Advisor (Queensland)

### Noonuccal and Nughi peoples of the Quandamooka Nation

I am a proud Noonuccal and Nughi woman from the Quandamooka Nation, which is also known as Moreton Island and North Stradbroke Island. My professional background is primarily in the social work and community development sector. I have a passion for working alongside First Nations mobs and ensuring the voices of our communities are heard, supported and elevated in all areas of the Inland Rail business.

## Jessica Jackson

Stakeholder Engagement Advisor (Illabo to Stockinbingal)

### Gunaikurnai

I am a proud Gunaikurnai woman, living and working on Wiradjuri Country in Wagga Wagga. I grew up not knowing much about my culture because, like many First Nations people, my grandparents were displaced. I am fortunate enough that I have been

able to trace my roots. While I have always known I was Aboriginal, my mother and grandfather didn't know from which country we originated. Because of that gap in knowledge, I don't have a strong connection to my mob, the Gunaikurnai people of the Gippsland region. My strongest connections have been built on Wiradjuri Country growing up in Dubbo. I have been fortunate in my life to be surrounded by strong First Nations role models, who have aided in my journey to be who I am today.

## Samantha Lubke-Wood

Stakeholder Engagement Advisor

### Wiradjuri

I am descended from strong Wiradjuri (Bularidee) women. I was born and raised in Narrabri on Gamilaroi country where I am currently living and working.

## Jackson Lyons

Facilities Administrator

### Wiradjuri

I am a proud Wiradjuri man from Queanbeyan, New South Wales, who is currently living in Yarrabilba. I work in the Brisbane office as part of the Facilities Team.

## Will Dunball

First Nations School-Based Trainee

### Gamilaroi

I am a school-based trainee with Inland Rail working in the Brisbane office in ICT Operations. I am from the Gamilaroi Nation. I grew up in Brisbane and am currently living in Beaudesert. I am overjoyed with every opportunity I have from working at Inland Rail.

## Tayah Locke-Pouchaeff

First Nations School-Based Trainee

I am a school-based trainee working in the Brisbane office in the Facilities Team.

## Cara Darrell

First Nations School-Based Trainee

I'm an Indigenous woman of unknown descent who is currently working as a school-based trainee with the Communications and Marketing Team. I have grown up and live in Ipswich on Yuggera, Jagera and Yugarabul lands.

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# Foreword

## Welcome to the fifth Annual Sustainability Report for the Inland Rail Program.

Those of us working on Inland Rail have always recognised our responsibility to design and deliver this significant freight infrastructure program as sustainably as possible. Striking the right balance between cost, schedule, design, and benefits – both immediate and future – remains a challenge but also creates exciting opportunities to think and act differently. It's with this mindset, and commitment from our delivery partners, government, and communities, that we've driven the achievements showcased in this report.



During the 2022-2023 financial year (FY23), we've continued to minimise impacts and generate benefits through a wide range of environmental, social, cultural, and economic initiatives. And proudly, once again, we've set sustainability benchmarks for infrastructure in Australia.

Delivering a program of Inland Rail's scope and scale is complex, as Dr Kerry Schott AO recognised in her April 2023 report following the Independent Review of the Inland Rail Program on behalf of the Australian Government. The Government acknowledged that Inland Rail remains an important project to meet the nation's ongoing freight and supply chain demands and made 19 recommendations to progress its staged delivery. We're working closely with the Government to address these recommendations and focus on key priorities to maintain momentum. You can learn more about the report and the recommendations at the Australian Government's Inland Rail website: [www.inlandrail.gov.au](http://www.inlandrail.gov.au).

As we progress, we're keeping our goal of achieving a Program-wide Infrastructure Sustainability (IS) rating of 'Excellent' firmly in focus. Last financial year, the Stockinbingal to Parkes section of the alignment, a small-scale enhancement project, received an 'Excellent' design rating, building on the 'Excellent' rating already achieved by the Parkes to Narromine project (As-Built) and the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project (Design). These IS ratings provide respected third-party assurance that our sustainability claims are genuine and we're delivering sustainable rail infrastructure with tangible, positive benefits for communities on the alignment.

Inland Rail's scale also gives us an opportunity – and responsibility – to help our delivery partners be more sustainable. We recognise that some businesses may not have the capability and capacity to develop strong sustainability practices so, in 2021, the Inland Rail Skills Academy developed a three-part, online series to educate and equip small-to-medium sized suppliers to operate more sustainably. These Business Sustainability webinars and toolkits have since been recognised as an Australian First Innovation by the IS Council and, most importantly, helped boost sustainable business practices in rural and regional Australia.

Giving back to communities has always been an important part of how we deliver Inland Rail. Since 2019, the Program has proudly contributed to more than 300 community groups and associations across Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland through our Community Sponsorships and Donations Program. In FY23, the Program supported 115 community grants, totalling \$287,030 and surpassed \$1 million in total grants. We look forward to future funding rounds and encourage non-profit groups, especially those in communities where Inland Rail is being built, to apply.

While Inland Rail is delivering significant benefits – and will continue to do so long into the future – we must acknowledge, and address as much as possible, the unavoidable impacts of construction, including those on biodiversity. The Inland Rail Biodiversity Offset Program compensates its biodiversity impacts by protecting and managing similar vegetation on land elsewhere. In FY23, we fully offset the biodiversity impacts from construction of the 104km Parkes to Narromine section of Inland Rail, completed in 2019. This represented a significant environmental milestone for the Program and for infrastructure in Australia, given the volume of private land secured through this, our first, Biodiversity Stewardship Agreement. The Inland Rail Biodiversity Offset Program is currently one of the largest offset programs in New South Wales. When complete, it will have secured an estimated 80,000 ecosystem credits, the equivalent of protecting about 200 square kilometres of vegetation in perpetuity.

We also acknowledge Inland Rail is being built and operated on the traditional lands of many First Nations communities. We value our relationships with these communities and recognise their ongoing responsibility for country and culture. In FY23, the Inland Rail team was pleased to return more than 150 stone artefacts, found during construction of the Parkes to Narromine section, to the Peak Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council. The artefacts included a complete hand-axe and fragments that could have been used for cutting tools.

Preserving cultural heritage is part of our Indigenous Participation Plan, as is creating First Nations employment opportunities throughout Inland Rail's construction and operation. In FY23, our two-year partnership with the Clontarf Foundation continued to offer personal development opportunities and job skills to hundreds of First Nations high school students who attend the 14 Clontarf Academies we support along the alignment in New South Wales and Queensland. We hope to inspire some of these young people to work on Inland Rail and were excited to see students from Moree Clontarf Academy participate in courses to further their civil construction studies. We take every opportunity to cut energy use. In our last Sustainability Report, we highlighted the solar-powered signalling system installed on the Narrabri

to North Star section. We're pleased to share we've since approved another 82 solar signalling sites across Queensland and New South Wales. Once operational, these systems are estimated to avoid more than 570 tonnes of carbon emissions annually. Using solar instead of mains power for these 24-hour signalling sites also saves tens of thousands of dollars in construction and electricity costs, and reduces construction disruption to communities.

We're proud the Inland Rail Program continues to be a pace-setter for sustainability within the rail industry and infrastructure sector in Australia. This report reflects once again that with the right people, vision, values, and strategy we can continue to generate opportunities and reduce impacts while connecting Australia by improving our freight network.



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# Annual sustainability highlights FY23



**\$287,030**  
in community grants  
to 91 recipients



**30,513**  
offset credits acquired under  
landholder stewardship  
partnerships



**236**  
Inland Rail staff members  
trained in Sustainability  
Foundations



**233**  
Inland Rail-developed Business  
Sustainability webinars  
completed



**620 students**  
70 teachers, 270 schools  
participated in Inland Rail-supported  
STEM activities (all programs  
and all states)



**518**  
Local construction-  
related jobs



**141**  
First Nations workers on  
construction projects



**\$130.6m**  
spent with local  
businesses



**\$14.2m**  
spent with First Nations  
businesses



**27**  
construction and rail skills  
courses facilitated by the Inland  
Rail Skills Academy in New  
South Wales and Queensland  
(233 participants)



**6**  
workforce development  
events held in regional  
Queensland and Victoria,  
attended by 82 local  
businesses



Stockinbingal to Parkes  
project received an 'Excellent'  
IS Design rating verified  
by the Infrastructure  
Sustainability Council

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# About Inland Rail

Inland Rail is a vital project that will help us keep pace with the increasing freight demands of Australia's growing population.



**As the largest freight rail infrastructure project in the nation, the 1,600km Inland Rail route between Melbourne and Brisbane, via regional Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, will serve as a fast freight backbone to better link regional producers, manufacturers, and businesses to national and global markets.**

During the 2022-2023 financial year (FY23), construction continued in New South Wales with the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 section completed in late 2023.

Extensive community consultation, planning and design also continued in New South Wales, with state government environmental approvals for the Narramine to Narrabri and North Star to New South Wales/Queensland Border sections secured in early 2023, and Australian Government approvals for both projects expected to be secured in late 2023.

Another major milestone during FY23 was the commencement of Inland Rail construction in Victoria, with the first tranche of major works getting underway in Glenrowan, Barnawartha North, Seymour and Wangaratta.

Designs for the second tranche of works including track modifications and enhancements at Wandong, Broadford, Tallarook, Euroa and Benalla also progressed to reference design stage during the year.

Construction contracts for the Albury to Illabo and Illabo to Stockinbingal sections in southern New South Wales were also awarded during the period.

### **Strong regional and national benefits**

When fully operational, Inland Rail will provide a strategic infrastructure corridor for eastern Australia, creating the opportunity for state and local governments to optimise development of road and rail links.

The Program will deliver a competitive freight service, increase national productivity and boost regional economies. Businesses, producers and manufacturers will be able to get their produce and products to market when and where they are required, and take advantage of new opportunities for export growth.

Supply chain costs are a significant component of the price consumers pay for goods. Inland Rail has the potential to deliver both short and long-term economic opportunities for regional Australian communities on and off the rail alignment.



## 4.1. Inland Rail Program status

The Parkes to Narromine section is operational and major construction on the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 section was completed in late 2023. Construction also started on the Victorian section of Inland Rail in late 2022.

Works to establish a Materials Distribution Centre to receive and store manufactured rail sleepers at Narwonah, near Narromine in New South Wales, also commenced during the period.

The remaining 11 projects are at varying stages of environmental approvals and detailed design.



### Concept assessment

- All Inland Rail projects have completed the concept assessment phase



### Reference design

- Beveridge to Albury Tranche 2



### Procurement

- Stockinbingal to Parkes – Lachlan River Bridge and horizontal clearance works



### Project approval

- Albury to Illabo
- Illabo to Stockinbingal
- Narromine to Narrabri
- Narrabri to North Star Phase 2
- New South Wales/Queensland Border to Gowrie
- Gowrie to Helidon
- Helidon to Calvert
- Calvert to Kagaru



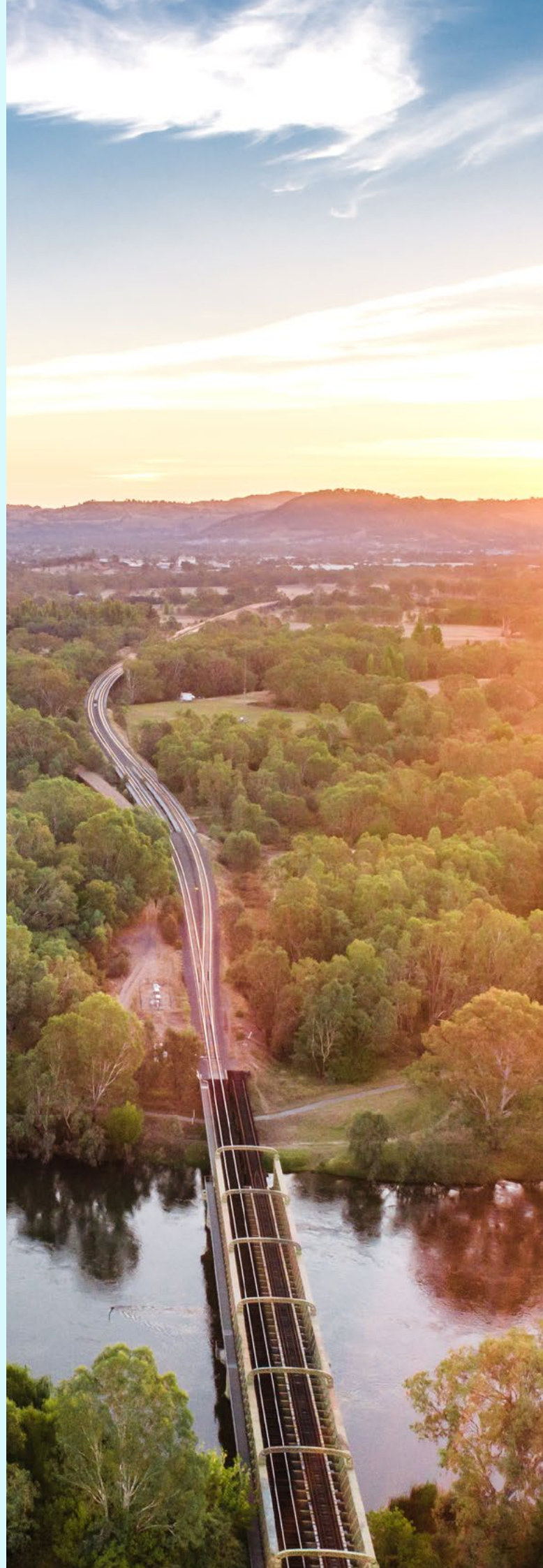
### Detailed design, early works and construction

- Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1
- Stockinbingal to Parkes – Wyndham Avenue Bridge and Daroobalgie Crossing
- Narrabri to North Star Phase 1
- North Star to New South Wales/Queensland Border



### In operation

- Parkes to Narromine





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# About this report

Our fifth Annual Sustainability Report outlines the positive social, environmental and economic outcomes Inland Rail and its project delivery partners have generated during FY23.

It also details our sustainability priorities, achievements and how we strive to create a sustainable asset beyond regulatory requirements.

The Inland Rail Sustainability Strategy objectives and targets provide the framework for reporting on our annual progress. The Strategy was endorsed by our Leadership Team in 2019 and is reviewed annually as part of our commitment to continuous improvement and to address evolving industry benchmarks and community expectations. Our Strategy includes seven objectives, demonstrating Inland Rail's holistic approach to sustainability.

## 5.1. Sustainability objectives



### 1. Leadership and awareness

Creating a Program delivery culture that has the knowledge, skills and resources to maximise sustainability outcomes



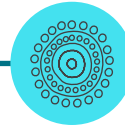
### 2. Governance

Integrating sustainability into core business systems and processes, encouraging innovation



### 3. Community and economy

Mitigating social impacts, responding to community concerns and supporting community aspirations



### 4. Environment and heritage

Extending beyond impact minimisation to creating new opportunities for habitat restoration and heritage interpretation



### 5. Resource use

Reducing water, energy and materials, and generating economic value from waste



### 6. Sustainable procurement

Encouraging our supply chain to contribute to our sustainability priorities



### 7. Future operations

Design and construct for long-term outcomes such as climate resilience and community legacy

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# Leadership and awareness

The Inland Rail Program delivery culture has the knowledge, skills and resources to maximise sustainability outcomes.

 **Key focus areas of this objective:**

- Assessing project performance using the Infrastructure Sustainability rating scheme
- Training and engaging employees and project teams in applied sustainability
- Reporting on progress and responding to risks and opportunities.

# 6.1. Objective: Leadership and awareness

## 6.1.1. Targets and FY23 progress and outcomes

| Leadership and awareness targets and objectives   | Performance at end June 2023   | FY23 performance  |
|---|--|---|
| <p>▼</p> <p><b>Achieve a Program-wide Infrastructure Sustainability (IS) rating of 'Excellent', which is between 50–74 IS points.</b></p> | <p>▼</p> <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ The only project to complete an 'As Built' rating is the Parkes to Narramine section; achieving 73 IS points, or 'Excellent'.</p> | <p>▼</p> <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ The Stockinbingal to Parkes project achieved an 'Excellent' Design rating and the Narrabri to North Star project received its Round 1 'As Built' verification.</p> |
| <p><b>Deliver sustainability training and education to all Inland Rail employees.</b></p>   | <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ 648 Inland Rail employees have completed the Sustainability eLearning induction course.</p>  | <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ A total of 233 employees completed the Sustainability eLearning inductions course.</p>  |
| <p><b>Publish an Annual Sustainability Report.</b></p>  | <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ Inland Rail has published four annual reports showcasing our sustainability work.</p>  | <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ This annual Sustainability Report reflects the activities of the FY23 reporting period and is the fifth report published by Inland Rail.</p>                                |
| <p><b>Report sustainability performance internally to executive management.</b></p>   | <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ Sustainability information is reported internally to both the Inland Rail Leadership Team and the senior leaders of our projects.</p>      | <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ The reporting of sustainability performance continued and has been well received.</p>   |

## 6.1.2. Infrastructure Sustainability Council rating success

Inland Rail is committed to achieving a Program-wide IS rating of 'Excellent'. The IS rating scheme is administered by the Infrastructure Sustainability Council (IS Council), a member-based industry association with the purpose of enabling sustainability outcomes in infrastructure.

The rating scheme provides a comprehensive system for evaluating sustainability across project design, construction and operation phases, and helps create a common language around sustainability as well as a formal framework for its application. Achieving an IS certification for each constructed project throughout Inland Rail provides respected third-party assurance that our sustainability claims are genuine and that we're delivering sustainable rail infrastructure.

A key highlight during FY23 was an IS Council-awarded certified IS Design v1.2 'Excellent' rating for the Stockinbingal to Parkes section of the Inland Rail alignment. The IS Council's confirmation of this project milestone demonstrates not only our genuine commitment to sustainability but that the project is on track to generate excellent sustainable outcomes in project delivery.

“It's fantastic to see the Stockinbingal to Parkes project receive an 'Excellent' Design rating, demonstrating the Program's ongoing commitment to sustainability, innovation and industry leadership.”

Melvyn Maylin,  
Inland Rail Delivery Director, Albury to Parkes

### Infrastructure Sustainability Rating FY23 status

#### The FY23 status of IS rating across the Program's projects include:

- Beveridge to Albury: The project has started construction and is in final stages of detailed design with an expected IS Council design submission in FY24.
- Narrabri to North Star Separable Portion 1: The project has submitted for Round 1 of its 'As-Built' rating with an expected Round 2 submission in FY24.



### 6.1.3. Inland Rail acknowledged as award finalist

FY23 saw the Inland Rail Program being named as a finalist at both the Australasian Rail Industry Awards (ARI) and the IS Council Awards. This recognition showcases Inland Rail's leadership and innovation within the industry in the face of unprecedented challenges such as the impacts of COVID-19, skills shortages and supply chain issues.

The 2022 ARI Awards featured 16 categories recognising individuals, organisations and rail projects. The Australasian Railway Association is the peak body for the rail sector in Australia and New Zealand, and aims to support vibrant, sustainable and connected communities.

Inland Rail was an ARI Awards finalist in two categories: Sustainability and Environmental Excellence, and Safety Excellence. This prestigious awards ceremony highlights the significant range of rail projects underway across the country to increase network capacity and meet Australia's long-term needs through the creation of a sustainable transport network for the benefit of all Australians.

Additionally, Inland Rail was recognised as a finalist in both the Sustainability Leadership and Industry Impact categories at the 2022 IS Council Annual

Awards, an industry event that seeks to continue the Council's tradition of advancing leadership in sustainability by celebrating best practice across the Australia and New Zealand infrastructure sectors.

The nomination for Sustainability Leadership in the 'Excellence in Social Outcomes' category acknowledges the outstanding work being done by the Inland Rail Skills Academy in rural and regional Australia. Through the Academy, Inland Rail is creating opportunities for the communities and regions along the alignment, which includes providing training and skills development, education and employment.

The nomination in the Industry Impact category recognises the Program's leadership within the public sector due to our demonstrated integration of sustainability principals across the entire Program, which has seen sustainability embedded into Inland Rail's everyday processes.

The Program continues to be recognised and receive accolades for the quality of the work being delivered, and the commitment to excellence demonstrated by all team members.



“We're delighted to be nominated for these highly prestigious awards. Sustainability is a key priority within Inland Rail and is prioritised at all levels of the project to deliver exemplar social and economic benefits for Australia. Inland Rail is committed to being a leader in the rail and freight industry. We understand that to drive change in our own organisational operations, our strategies must be ambitious enough to see significant carbon mitigation across the Program.”

Steve Jones,  
*Inland Rail Director, Health, Safety and Environment*

## 6.1.4. Safety and wellbeing at Inland Rail

### Safety lessons learnt visualisations

No Harm is one of Inland Rail's foundational company values. Providing a safe workplace for our staff and ensuring that we do our utmost to safeguard our environment and the wellbeing of the communities in which we work is our number one priority.

With the aim of providing an engaging way to promote safe practices across industry, Inland Rail's Health and Safety Delivery Team collaborated with the Digital Engineering Visualisation Team to create a series of safety event animations. The animations recreated actual serious injury or near miss scenarios and provided an overview of the lessons learnt from each event.

In May 2023, Mark Blackmore, Health and Safety Manager Delivery, and Leigh Donoghue, Digital Visualisation Specialist, presented these engaging animations to hundreds of attendees at the Rail Industry Safety and Standards Board (RISSB) Rail Safety Conference in Sydney.

The lessons learnt animations, available to both internal staff and external delivery partners, have been viewed more than 2,500 times.

### Summer Safe Series campaign

Inland Rail's five Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) graduates collaborated to reinvigorate Inland Rail's Summer Safe Series – a Program-wide awareness campaign that looks at the health, safety and environmental hazards that are more severe during the summer months, such as flooding, bushfires, heat risk, sun safety and snake awareness. In November 2022, the HSE graduates launched a podcast series with supporting resources to engage with internal staff. The team was given the opportunity to interview internal and external experts, asking in-depth questions about how to safely navigate the summer season.

One notable guest speaker was Mr Dave Owens, retired New South Wales Police Force Deputy Commissioner and current Executive Manager at Risk-e Business Consultants, who featured in two of the podcasts. Mr Owens shared his wealth of experience on fighting bushfires and managing

flood situations, discussed the varied impacts of these catastrophic events, and provided multiple invaluable safety tips.

This successful series demonstrated Inland Rail's continued commitment to upholding high safety and environmental standards towards all staff, delivery partners, and the community.

### Inland Rail Wellbeing Month

The wellbeing of those who work on Inland Rail is pivotal to the success of the Program. Developed by the HSE team, Wellbeing Month (March 2023) focused predominantly on physical and mental health, team culture, wellness education, and connecting colleagues with the support they need to achieve their own individual wellbeing goals. A range of organised events and activities provided multiple avenues for employees to get involved.

Weekly challenges through our internal communication platform, Yammer, encouraged the sharing of wellbeing wins, showcased a better sleep and breathing broadcast, and promoted a breakfast event with a nutritionist who provided educational awareness and tips on how to maximise sleep and nutrition outcomes.

One of the Wellbeing Month activities worthy of special mention was the walking challenge, where teams rallied to walk the equivalent of the entire 1,600km length of the Inland Rail alignment, resulting in an impressive tally of 42,189,659 steps recorded.

To round out the month, Inland Rail provided free health checks to those wanting to assess their wellbeing status and improve their health.





### 6.1.5. FY23 workforce sustainability knowledge

At Inland Rail, we know that building awareness and supporting everyone to get involved will drive sustainability achievements across the Program. It's essential for our staff to be educated on sustainable practices, be aware of why sustainability matters, and to maintain their sustainability skillset. An empowered workforce enables sustainability planning, thinking and innovation which delivers better outcomes for communities, businesses and the environment along the alignment.

Testament to our genuine commitment to embedding sustainability in everyday practices, 236 Inland Rail employees completed the mandatory four-part Sustainability Foundations eLearning modules during FY23.

We also conduct an annual Sustainability Awareness Survey to measure how informed employees feel about sustainability and its importance. This barometer provides valuable insights to help develop and shape targeted internal communication and education activities to support future sustainable outcomes.

### 6.1.6. AusRAIL 2022 conference

The annual AusRAIL conference remains a key event on the rail industry's calendar and provides a unique opportunity to network with industry leaders, connect with key decision makers, and hear the latest developments from across Australia and New Zealand. The Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre hosted the 2022 AusRAIL conference. Inland Rail's representation at the event included several speaking engagements, technical and poster presentations from subject matter experts across the business, and an information and engagement booth.

## Speaking engagements and technical presentations

### Performance-based requirements and how to measure them

**Andrew Doe,**  
*Principal Geotech Engineer*

Performance-based requirements in track formation design are often addressed by estimating a movement or deformation. However, this raises the question of how to validate the results of design calculations and so, to obtain the level of accuracy necessary, we have borrowed technology from another area of construction – piling.

This paper focused on the use of a Pile Driving Monitor (PDM) within the Inland Rail Program to safely capture the vertical movement of both the rail line and the underlying formation material due to rail traffic. The PDM is a device that can safely measure the continuous vertical displacement of an object. It uses opto-electronics to make non-contact measurements of an object's movement via directly following a reflective sticker, which is adhered directly to the object – rail and formation in this case.



## Information through construction delivery

**Mark Harvey,**

*Program Spatial Services Manager*

**Matthew Freeman,**

*Digital Engineering Lead*

This paper explored the implementation of digital engineering practices on the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project, a brownfield project spanning 180km that delivered resilient rail over three years with multiple stages to meet industry possession windows.

The paper also shared how Inland Rail and its delivery partner Trans4m Rail with surveying company 3020 Surveys, established digital engineering practices to deliver a reliable and relatable construction information model through the construction phase. This enabled asset information readiness through a digital twin.

Mark and Matthew went on to outline the steps Inland Rail is taking in working with industry to promote improved graphical and non-graphical information delivery methods and an information lifecycle-aware commercial approach to realise a visible 'golden loop' of high-quality digital information that flows through the end-to-end delivery process.

## Delivering ecological enhancement for linear infrastructure

**Dr Vanessa Gorecki,**

*Principal Ecology Coordinator*

Dr Gorecki delivered an engaging presentation on Inland Rail's commitment to moving beyond impact minimisation to create new opportunities for ecological enhancement, which is underpinned by an evidence-based approach and a desire to work collaboratively to leave a positive legacy.

Inland Rail will achieve stated ecology objectives through the development of a framework that seeks to define ecological enhancement within the context of linear infrastructure, determine a method to calculate a baseline to support the effective measurement of ecological enhancement gain, and identify weightings that can be used to measure the gain ecological value. The aim of these guidelines is to address a gap in industry guidelines while complementing existing detailed design options that seek to maintain fauna connectivity.

Dr Gorecki spoke of Inland Rail's desire to extend beyond a business as usual approach to create a new industry standard through the collaborative development of a rail-specific framework to effectively define, calculate and measure ecological enhancement.



## Inland Rail display and information booth

Inland Rail's exhibition space offered event participants a comprehensive and interactive experience, combining Program-related information, and industry engagement with virtual reality visualisations of the rail alignment. This engaging display served as a one-stop hub, providing visitors with access to Inland Rail team members who shared knowledge about Inland Rail while encouraging active involvement. Visitors to the booth had the opportunity to explore the Program through immersive virtual reality, which helped them gain a deeper understanding of the rail alignment's features. More broadly, the exhibition facilitated industry engagement, providing a rail-focused environment for visitors to connect, exchange insights, and contribute to the ongoing development of Inland Rail.

## Poster presentations

Inland Rail featured six poster presentations that provided 'snapshots' of the variety of work being done across the Program to a knowledgeable industry audience.

7



# Governance

Integrating sustainability into core business systems and processes, encouraging innovation.

 **Key focus areas of this objective:**

- New ways of working that enable collaboration, integration and communication
- Procurement and contractual requirements that support our sustainability priorities
- Raising industry benchmarks through innovation.

# 7.1. Objective: Governance

## 7.1.1. Targets and FY23 progress and outcomes

| Governance targets and objectives   | Performance at end June 2023  | FY23 performance  |
|---|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">▼</p> <p><b>Collaborate to continually improve sustainability systems and processes.</b></p> | <p style="text-align: center;">▼</p> <p>➤ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On track.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Inland Rail Sustainability Team received positive feedback for its hosting of external industry sustainability experts to share knowledge with both delivery partners and the wider ARTC team.</p>   | <p style="text-align: center;">▼</p> <p>➤ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On track.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inland Rail hosted four sustainability contractor forums and four sustainability working group forums between ARTC and Inland Rail.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inland Rail launched its online sustainability reporting tool.</p>  |
| <p><b>Sustainability dashboard updated and communicated regularly.</b></p>  | <p>➤ <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity for improvement.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Previously, the tracking of sustainability data against the Program's targets and objectives was reported to Inland Rail and manually collated on a project level.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Due to the scale of the Inland Rail Program, an opportunity to develop a Program-wide online reporting tool was identified.</p> | <p>➤ <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity for improvement.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The Program developed an online reporting tool that tracks Inland Rail contracting partners' sustainability data and feeds it into an automatically updated dashboard to provide contractor monthly data to the Inland Rail team.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Since the launch of the reporting tool, extra metric requirements have been identified.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> This objective's rating remains 'opportunity for improvement' with plans in place to appropriately resolve the metrics issue in the next reporting period.</p> |
| <p><b>Innovative solutions identified, assessed, and implemented.</b></p>   | <p>➤ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On track.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Inland Rail Program has had three Australian First Innovations verified by the IS Council, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Business Sustainability webinars and mentoring</li> <li>- earthworks specification</li> <li>- rail profile.</li> </ul>  | <p>➤ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On track.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The IS Council awarded the Program an Australian First Innovation for Business Sustainability webinars and mentoring.</p>   |

## 7.1.2. Inland Rail's sustainability reporting system

Inland Rail is committed to a culture of continuous improvement and best practice to ensure sustainability is integrated into core business systems across the Program. It's critically important to the Program for us to capture and report against that commitment. The Sustainability Reporting Solution (SRS) is a portal-based sustainability reporting system developed by Inland Rail to capture design and construction performance against our sustainability objectives and targets.

Our delivery partners upload sustainability data into the tool, which provides an automatically updated dashboard and monthly data to the Inland Rail team.

The creation of a tailored online tool benefits both Inland Rail and our delivery partners by improving the efficiency and quality of information gathered. This centralisation of reporting data enables an accurate assessment of how far along Inland Rail is on its sustainability journey.

## 7.1.3. Noise Prediction Tool

Inland Rail's commitment to minimising adverse impacts to communities along the alignment is central to the successful delivery of the Program. The ARTC Noise Prediction Tool has become a key instrument in enabling the achievement of this goal. The tool was developed by ARTC originally for maintenance activities but has since been tailored for construction activity use.

The tool enables projects to deliver accurate and effective quantitative noise assessments for construction activities, improving the accuracy and understanding of noise impacts on the local community. Results generated by the Noise Prediction Tool inform which noise management measures are best suited to mitigate potential noise impacts.

The use of the Noise Prediction Tool allows for a streamlined and more responsive process. It demonstrates Inland Rail's commitment to minimising the adverse impacts of noise for nearby residents and businesses during construction.



## 7.1.4. Inland Rail Mentoring Program

As we continue to work towards creating a more sustainable freight future for Australia, we're also building a pipeline of talent and emerging leaders who are essential to the delivery of Inland Rail and the future of the industry.

To help us achieve this, in FY23 we launched the inaugural Inland Rail Mentoring Program and accompanying Mentoring Toolkit to better support mentoring relationships across the Program.

The Inland Rail Mentoring Program is a voluntary program that supports long-term organisational-wide employee development through the support and guidance of an experienced mentor.

Through an expressions of interest process, mentors and mentees were paired and mentoring partnerships formed based on both strengths and skills/knowledge gaps. A total of 60 mentoring partnerships were formed, which facilitated employee development through the sharing of experiences and offering of advice, all with the intent of supporting employee growth. Mentoring partners met regularly throughout FY23 with all participants sharing the positive benefits from their participation.

### Mentoring program

60 mentoring partnerships established

90% or higher program satisfaction score

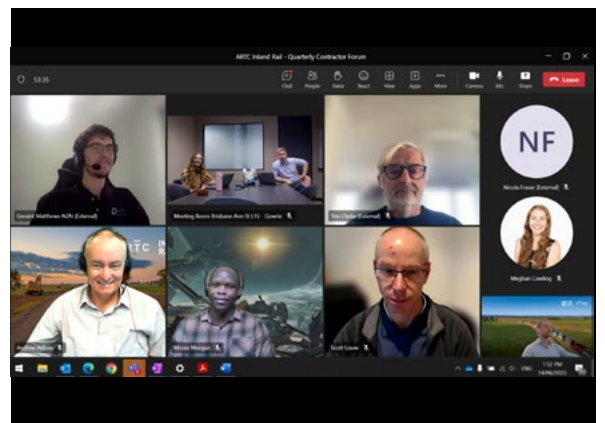
95% or higher partnership satisfaction score



### 7.1.5. Inland Rail Contractor Sustainability Forum

The Inland Rail Contractor Sustainability Forum is held quarterly to facilitate knowledge sharing among our delivery partners to enable consistent sustainability outcomes for the Program.

The Forum has featured learnings from innovative suppliers and industry-leading initiatives that drive practices in line with Inland Rail's Sustainable Procurement Policy. It has become a proactive medium for fostering better communication and information exchange, and collaborative knowledge-sharing between Inland Rail, our delivery partners, the IS Council and our team of consultants and advisors.



### The forum seeks to



**Promote collaboration** between projects to strengthen Program outcomes



**Share lessons learnt** in a collaborative manner to support continuous improvement



**Support leading contractors** to set high standards that can be followed by others

8



# Community and economy

Mitigating social impacts, responding to community concerns, and supporting community aspirations.



**Key focus areas of this objective:**

- Community consultation and engagement
- Industry and workforce participation for local and First Nations residents and businesses
- Developing the job-ready skills of the current and future workforce.

# 8.1. Objective: Community and economy

## 8.1.1. Targets and FY23 progress and outcomes

| Community and economy targets and objectives   | Performance at end June 2023   | FY23 performance   |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Active engagement with local communities and stakeholders.</p>                                    | <p>On track.</p> <p>The Program continued to actively engage with local communities and stakeholders.</p>  | <p>On track.</p> <p>Inland Rail hosted six workforce development events in regional Queensland and Victoria with 115 people from 82 businesses in attendance.</p> <p>The Inland Rail Skills Academy facilitated 27 construction and rail skills courses, which attracted 233 participants.</p> |
| <p>Opportunities created for skilled local and First Nations workers during construction.</p>        | <p>On track.</p> <p>The Program has created 1,816 local construction-related jobs and 706 First Nations workers were employed on construction projects.</p>  | <p>On track.</p> <p>518 local construction-related jobs were created and 141 First Nations workers employed on construction projects.</p>  |
| <p>Opportunities created for local and First Nations businesses during construction.</p>             | <p>On track.</p> <p>The Inland Rail Program has achieved a total spend of \$381m with local businesses and \$38m with First Nations businesses.</p>  | <p>On track.</p> <p>The Inland Rail Program spent \$130.6m with local businesses and \$14.2m with First Nations businesses.</p>  |
| <p>Non-local construction workforce housed with existing accommodation providers where possible.</p> | <p>On track.</p> <p>Strategies to reduce the impact of construction camps have been assessed through the social impact assessment process for projects requiring accommodation options. 293 non-local construction workers have been housed with existing accommodation providers.</p> | <p>On track.</p> <p>Housing strategies to reduce impact from construction camps where possible have continued to be implemented with 66 non-local construction workers housed with existing accommodation providers in FY23.</p>   |



| Community and economy targets and objectives  | Performance at end June 2023   | FY23 performance  |
|---|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">▼</p> <p><b>Implement and support programs that support community wellbeing.</b></p> | <p style="text-align: center;">▼</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ On track.</li> <li>✓ Inland Rail's Community Sponsorships and Donations Program has sponsored 357 community initiatives investing an approximate total of \$1.14m.</li> <li>✓ Since 2020, the partnership between the Inland Rail Skills Academy and the University of Newcastle has supported more than 6,000 students at 284 schools to access STEM on Track's SMART Science shows as well as Science and Engineering Challenge events.</li> </ul> | <p style="text-align: center;">▼</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ On track.</li> <li>✓ This reporting year, the Program sponsored 91 community initiatives valued at \$287,000 through our Community Sponsorships and Donations Program.</li> <li>✓ The Skills Academy launched its STEM Punks initiative, a three-week education program showcasing career pathways in STEM-related fields for grades 7-10 from schools in Victoria.</li> <li>✓ STEM on Track was extended for four years.</li> <li>✓ The Grand Opportunities partnership showcases industry careers to high school students along the alignment through virtual work experience and skills modules, and connecting students to industry mentors.</li> </ul> |

### 8.1.2. Community engagement and consultation

Inland Rail is committed to actively engaging and consulting with the communities in which we work throughout all stages of Inland Rail's delivery. Community engagement provides a necessary and valuable avenue for Inland Rail to understand community sentiment, receive feedback, promote workforce and community opportunities, and ensure Program outcomes align with community values.

#### Seymour Alternative Farming Expo

The Seymour Alternative Farming Expo, held between 31 March and 2 April, was a huge success in 2023. The popular annual event, which runs over three days in the heart of Victoria, gives attendees access to the latest technologies, practices and trends in farming, as well as providing opportunities to connect with local businesses and the projects happening in their region.

We were delighted to welcome around 170 attendees to Inland Rail's information stand who wanted to learn more about the Program. The community members we spoke with were keen to find out about the benefits Inland Rail is bringing to the region, and were specifically interested in how it will improve road safety by reducing the number of long-haul trucks on our roads.



## Albury Emergency Services Work Expo 2023

The Emergency Services Work Expo, held in March 2023, showcased exciting future career opportunities to more than 1,000 students from local high schools in Albury-Wodonga and across the Riverina.

The Inland Rail team hosted an information stand at the Expo and engaged with the local community regarding potential employment and training opportunities with Inland Rail.

Representatives of the Inland Rail Skills Academy and Stakeholder Engagement teams, emergency services, local councils, and universities were available to interact with attendees and provide information regarding a range of potential career and study possibilities.



“We’re proud to team up with the Emergency Services Work Expo this year, which is a fantastic venue for locals to learn all about the amazing opportunities available in the rail sector, specifically for those aged 15 to 25 who are seeking more information about career possibilities.”

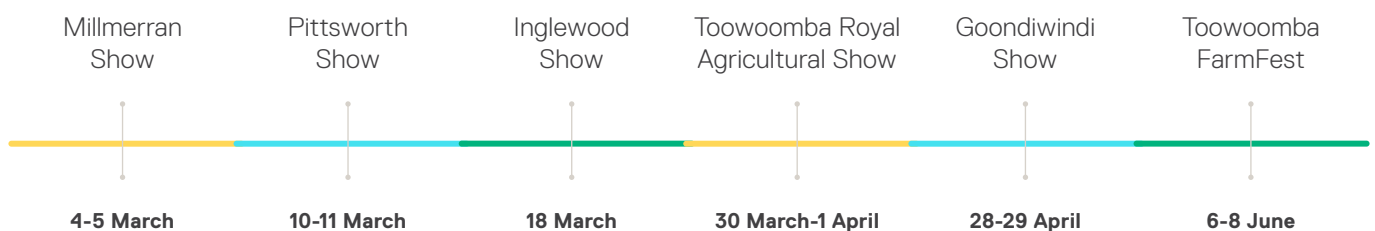
Steve Jones,  
*Inland Rail’s Director of Health, Safety and Environment*

## Learn about Inland Rail at your local show

Inland Rail attended six local agricultural shows as part of our commitment to update our local communities on the status of the New South Wales/Queensland Border to Gowrie section of Inland Rail.

The New South Wales/Queensland Border to Gowrie section of Inland Rail falls between the New South Wales/Queensland border and travels through southern Queensland to Gowrie on the outskirts of Toowoomba.

Our team members, many of whom are local to the region, hit the road to staff Inland Rail information stands at the following shows in 2023:





“We’re taking Inland Rail to a wider audience by attending local shows across our regions. Rural shows are a once-a-year opportunity to reach a broad cross-section of these communities in an informal manner where they are out enjoying their day.”

Ed Matthews,  
*Inland Rail Delivery Director (Northern)*

## Sydney Royal Easter Show

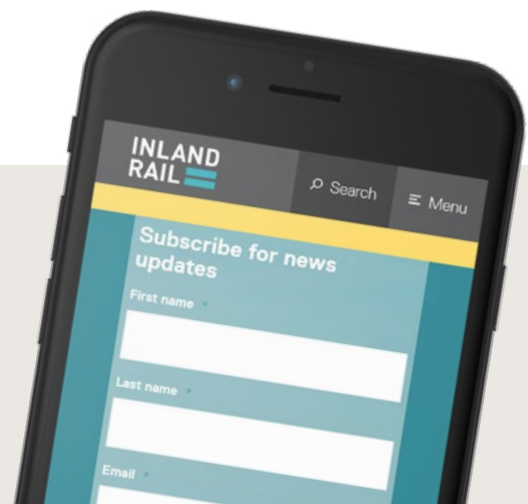
In 2023, Inland Rail hosted its first ever stand at the Sydney Royal Easter Show, which saw around 5,000 people stopping by to talk with representatives from across the Program.

Easter Show attendees were keen to learn more about Inland Rail and how it will improve Australia’s freight network. We found that Program awareness among attendees was generally quite low, so up-to-the-minute information about the alignment was well received, especially by the New South Wales agricultural community. To engage future generations of Inland Rail the stand also featured a children’s colouring-in station and an Inland Rail train diorama.

One of the many positive outcomes from the event was attendees’ interest in receiving ongoing information on progress and construction priorities. More than 1,800 new subscribers signed up to receive Inside Track, our Program-wide quarterly e-newsletter.



Visit [inlandrail.com.au](https://inlandrail.com.au) to subscribe for news updates.



### 8.1.3. Meet the contractor events

Inland Rail's commitment to working with and supporting local and First Nations businesses is well documented. We continue to work to ensure First Nations businesses are prepared for and provided with opportunities to participate in Inland Rail, so as to create meaningful and lasting benefits for individuals, their families, and communities.

Through events like our '**Meet the Shortlisted Contractor**' and '**Meet the Preferred Contractor**' events we:

- Engage and inform local and First Nations businesses about the Inland Rail Program, including its scope, delivery strategy, timeframes, and how to get involved
- Provide an opportunity for shortlisted/preferred contractors to introduce themselves and engage with local and First Nations businesses as early as possible
- Provide an opportunity for local and First Nations businesses to:
  - understand and engage with the supply opportunities available with the shortlisted/preferred contractors
  - learn how to take advantage of possible supply opportunities
  - promote their businesses to the shortlisted/preferred contractors.

#### Meet the Shortlisted Contractor events

During FY23, Inland Rail hosted a series of Meet the Shortlisted Contractor events across New South Wales.

For the Albury to Illabo and Stockinbingal to Parkes projects, events held in July 2022 across Albury, Wagga Wagga, and Forbes attracted almost 200 people to hear from the shortlisted contractors – John Holland, Laing O'Rourke and Partners (FreightConnect), and Martinus Rail.

In March 2023, shortlisted contractors for the Illabo to Stockinbingal project – John Holland Pty Ltd, MBJV (Martinus Rail/BMD Constructions joint venture), and Regional Trac JV (RTJV (Seymour Whyte Constructions/Rhomberg Rail Australia joint venture) – presented at events in Cootamundra and Junee with more than 80 people attending in total.



“These briefings are intended to give as many local people as possible the opportunity to promote their services to our construction contractors. Inland Rail is being predominantly delivered in regional Australia, meaning there is a prime opportunity for our regions to reap the immediate benefits that come with construction.”

Melvyn Maylin,  
Inland Rail Director Program Delivery (Albury to Parkes)

## Meet the Preferred Contractor events

In partnership with McConnell Dowell, the preferred contractor for the Victorian Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1 project, Inland Rail hosted Meet the Preferred Contractor events in Wangaratta in August 2022 and in Seymour in September 2022, attracting 100+ and 90+ attendees respectively.

In New South Wales, a Meet the Preferred Contractor event was held in Moree in February 2023 with 60+ people attending to hear from Laing O'Rourke, the preferred contractor for the Central Civil Works program – Narrabri to North Star Phase 2 project.



“Businesses in the region are excited by the opportunities Inland Rail offers, and the sentiment at the event was that they are excited about what Inland Rail will continue to bring to the region in terms of jobs and economic growth. Local communities and businesses are already seeing the benefits of Inland Rail through Phase 1 of the Narrabri to North Star Inland Rail project.”

Inland Rail spokesperson

### 8.1.4. Community Sponsorships and Donations Program

Since 2019, Inland Rail has proudly given back to community groups and associations across Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland through our Community Sponsorships and Donations Program. In FY23, the Program reached the \$1 million mark in terms of funding granted, with more than 300 community groups receiving support since the Program was launched.

Stephen Jones, Inland Rail Director Health, Safety and Environment said, “The Inland Rail Community Sponsorships and Donations Program is just one example of how we ensure that communities benefit from this nation-building project, and that we leave a positive legacy in the regions along the Inland Rail alignment.”

In FY23, the program supported 115 community grants, totalling \$287,030. Inland Rail encourages non-profit groups, particularly those in communities where Inland Rail is constructing, to lodge their applications for the future rounds of funding.

## Seymour Railway Heritage Centre

The Seymour Railway Heritage Centre’s (SRHC) commitment to health and safety was supported by Inland Rail’s Community Sponsorships and Donations Program, with funding provided to help purchase a potentially life-saving defibrillator.

Established in 1983, the SRHC keeps Victoria's rail history alive by operating special passenger services throughout Victoria and interstate using its fleet of preserved diesel locomotives and heritage passenger carriages. It also offers an opportunity for train enthusiasts to gather, socialise and

contribute to the restoration and maintenance of vintage rollingstock.

The addition of a new defibrillator will enable the SRHC to continue to improve safety for its five full-time staff, 40 active volunteers, contractors, visitors and passengers.

### Kilmore Guide and Scout Hall

Repairs to the Kilmore Guide and Scout Hall will go ahead because of support received from the Inland Rail Community Sponsorships and Donations Program.

The 32-year-old hall hosts meetings for Girl Guides and Scouts on a weekly basis and the Inland Rail support will be used to fix the leaking roof, replace

the worn vinyl kitchen and hall floors with a new non-slip surface, and fix a water leak.

Since 1970, the Kilmore Girl Guides have been empowering girls and young women to grow into confident, self-respecting, and responsible community members.



"We're guiding our young people to not only become good community members, but to contribute and become leaders. Our programs promote citizenship, volunteerism, self-awareness and self-reliance. With a safer and more comfortable hall we will attract more members and increase the sustainability of our membership."

Carolyn Atkinson,  
Kilmore Girl Guides Leader

### Baradine Aged Care Committee

The Baradine Aged Care Committee is a not-for-profit group in Central New South Wales that operates the small community's medical centre. After applying for and successfully receiving funding from the Inland Rail Community Sponsorships and Donations Program, their plans to install a solar power system at the town's medical centre became a reality.

This sustainable solution saw the installation of twenty-five solar panels that will help mitigate the medical centre's operating costs and, additionally, will positively reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This support will enable the Committee to continue this vital service and continue to meet the essential healthcare needs of the community in a more sustainable and environmentally friendly way.



“It is imperative that we do all we can to keep a doctor in our town, but to do this we have to continue to maintain and upgrade the health service infrastructure. We are delighted to be able to reduce the medical centre’s operating costs with this sustainable solar solution and we thank Inland Rail for their much-appreciated assistance.”

*A spokesperson at the Baradine Aged Care Facility expressed appreciation for the funding.*

## Gwydir Industries

Moree National Disability Insurance Scheme service provider, Gwydir Industries, received funding from the Community Sponsorships and Donations Program to support maintenance works that will keep an essential recycling service running and local people with disability employed.

The funding will help Gwydir Industries repair a hydraulic press that prepares plastic for recycling as part of the organisation’s cotton plastic recycling scheme.

Since a key machine component failed about a year ago, employees have been using another press to process plastic and cardboard, which resulted in inefficient double handling.

The recycling scheme has been running for three years and in 2023 processed more than 696 tonnes of cotton plastic from three local gins, as well as other clear plastic from 20 businesses in the region.



“For every tonne of cotton plastic that is recycled about 0.7 cubic metres of landfill space is saved, extending the lives of our landfill sites. Our recycling service helps keep Moree's industry moving, with staff sorting through tonnes of collected cotton plastics, cardboard and paper to ensure it doesn’t end up in landfill.”

Antoinette McNamara,  
*Gwydir Industries Incorporated General Manager*

## Gilgandra and Narromine Emergency Trauma Care Training (CareFlight)

Thanks to the Inland Rail Community Sponsorships and Donations Program, CareFlight received funding that will aid in providing emergency trauma care training in Gilgandra and Narromine for members of organisations such as the Rural Fire Service and SES.

The all-day training sessions will be facilitated by CareFlight, a not-for-profit air ambulance and medical training organisation, for first responders to manage serious trauma incidents they may encounter in their local communities.

Lifelike medical manikins, including a quality cardiopulmonary resuscitation (QCPR) junior manikin, were purchased with the grant funding from Inland Rail. These manikins are essential to providing simulated accident scenarios and help improve participants' ability to connect learning to real-world situations.

The QCPR junior manikin is a vital piece of training equipment that allows first responders to learn and practise paediatric airway management, CPR techniques, and essential trauma care skills to maximise a child's chance of survival in a critical incident.



“This workshop was a boost for the emergency services in the central west. Off the back of an incredibly difficult few years facing fires, floods and the pandemic, CareFlight was delighted to be able to bring the training into the community.

Lara Miller,  
*Head of Operations Education and Training, CareFlight*

## STEM at Goondiwindi State High School

A donation from the Inland Rail Community Sponsorships and Donations Program has helped students at Goondiwindi State High School set up a LEGO robotics club that's furthering their passion for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

The LEGO robotics club aligns with the school's existing programs in fostering an interest in

STEM and providing pathways to further studies and potential future careers for students from grades 7 to 12.

The student-driven club meets twice a week and uses LEGO to introduce participants to engineering, mathematics, and robotics principles to help hone their critical thinking and problem-solving skills on real world problems.



### 8.1.5. Inland Rail Skills Academy

The Inland Rail Skills Academy has partnered with various registered training organisations, including TAFE NSW, to deliver training programs in New South Wales and Queensland. The programs give participants an opportunity to gain practical experience to kick-start a career in the construction industry while

promoting growth and productivity in local communities through skills development. Helping members of the community learn skills for their future through education, training and employment supports Inland Rail's goal to leave a positive legacy long after Inland Rail is operational.

#### Inland Rail Skills Academy Foundations Course



The Inland Rail Skills Academy partnered with TAFE NSW to design a customised Certificate II in Construction program tailored to prepare participants for the construction-related employment opportunities associated with Inland Rail. The program was designed to ensure students are equipped with the essential skills and knowledge of construction processes, with a strong focus on safety, as well as career preparation sessions which include resume writing, interview skills and financial literacy to further build participants' capability and confidence.

Participants throughout Narrabri, Moree, Boggabilla and Gilgandra have benefitted from this dynamic program that leveraged the Inland Rail Skills Academy's knowledge and existing connections with industry. In addition to graduating with a Certificate II in Construction, participants complete a practical group project. One of the Narrabri-based cohorts demonstrated their skills constructing a delightful Cubby House and picnic tables which, once completed, were donated to the Winanga-Li Aboriginal Child and Family Centre.

#### Empowering and upskilling First Nations communities

Engaging with Traditional Owners and First Nations communities along the alignment continues to be a key focus for Inland Rail. The development of skills and provision of access to resources highlights our intentions to deliver strong economic and social outcomes to these communities.

During FY23, the Inland Rail Skills Academy partnered with the Bigambul Native Title Aboriginal Corporation (BNTAC) to support the capacity building and skills development of Bigambul People.



The Inland Rail Skills Academy worked closely with BNTAC to identify and develop meaningful training that addresses existing skills gaps, in preparation for Inland Rail readiness and the employment opportunities in the wider market.

Starting in May 2023, a cohort of six Bigambul people undertook traffic management training, which exposed students to the civil construction industry, provided access to valuable industry-led structured workplace learnings, and built participants' readiness to transition into a career in construction and traffic management.

## Future Careers for Clontarf

The Clontarf Foundation is a charitable, not-for-profit organisation striving to assist young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men to develop values, skills and abilities to aid them in achieving better life outcomes and employment. From November 2021, for a period of two years, Inland Rail is investing \$500,000 to support 15 Clontarf Academies along the Inland Rail alignment, between New South Wales and Queensland.

The Clontarf Foundation provides structure and support for Aboriginal and Islander boys in schools across Australia, to achieve education and employment outcomes.

The Inland Rail Skills Academy partnered with TAFE NSW, in conjunction with the Clontarf Foundation Academies along the alignment, to create pathways to employment through training opportunities for students in New South Wales and Queensland. Students have undertaken 'White Card', 'Working at Heights' and 'Confined Spaces' training to further their practical work skills and awareness.





# 9

# Environment and heritage

Extending beyond impact minimisation to creating new opportunities for habitat restoration and heritage protection.



**Key focus areas of this objective:**

- Avoiding harm to heritage and environment through design, construction and operation
- Opportunities to enhance environmental outcomes for the community.

# 9.1. Objective: Environment and heritage

## 9.1.1. Targets and FY23 progress and outcomes

| Environment and heritage targets and objectives   | Performance at end June 2023  | FY23 performance  |
|---|---|---|
| <p>✓</p> <p><b>Enhance ecological value by a minimum of 5%.</b></p>   | <p>✓</p> <p>➤ ✓ On track.</p> <p>➤ ✓ Tracking at a 18.3% ecological enhancement across the Program. Enhancements are quantified and verified by the IS Council after project construction completion. The Parkes to Narromine project is currently the only project with a complete 'As-Built' rating.</p>  | <p>✓</p> <p>➤ ✓ On track.</p> <p>➤ ✓ The Narrabri to North Star SP1 project is currently preparing the Round 2 'As-Built' rating and it's expected the project will achieve more than the minimum target. The project is expected to be verified during FY24.</p> |
| <p><b>First Nations and non-First Nations heritage values that have been interpreted and/or enhanced.</b></p> | <p>➤ ✓ On track.</p> <p>➤ ✓ Confirmation of project heritage interpretation and enhancement happens at the end of construction during the IS Council 'As-Built' verification process. The Parkes to Narromine project is currently the only project with a finalised 'As-Built' rating and heritage interpretation was recognised and verified.</p> | <p>➤ ✓ On track.</p> <p>➤ ✓ The Narrabri to North Star SP1 project has not finalised the 'As-Built' rating process, with verification to confirm heritage enhancement and/or interpretation expected in FY24.</p>   |
| <p><b>No significant pollution incidents are to occur during construction.</b></p>                            | <p>➤ ✓ On track.</p> <p>➤ ✓ No significant pollution incident has occurred to date on any of Inland Rail's construction projects.</p>   | <p>➤ ✓ On track.</p> <p>➤ ✓ No significant pollution incidents occurred in FY23 across the Inland Rail alignment.</p>   |
| <p><b>No major exceedances of relevant air and noise guidelines during construction.</b></p>                  | <p>➤ ✓ On track.</p> <p>➤ ✓ No major air and noise exceedances have occurred on the Program.</p>  | <p>➤ ✓ On track.</p> <p>➤ ✓ No major air or noise exceedances occurred during construction during FY23.</p>   |

### 9.1.2. Site Hive

The Site Hive is a remote monitoring device being deployed on the Beveridge to Albury project by Inland Rail delivery partner McConnell Dowell.

The Site Hive, which was used on the Inland Rail Program for the first time during FY23, monitors noise, dust and vibration conditions providing real-time data for an on-site setting. The significant advantage of Site Hive is the real-time data provided, which enables the project team to quickly mitigate any negative changes in conditions. This helps the Program manage construction impacts to local communities.



### 9.1.3. Parkes to Narromine biodiversity offset retirement

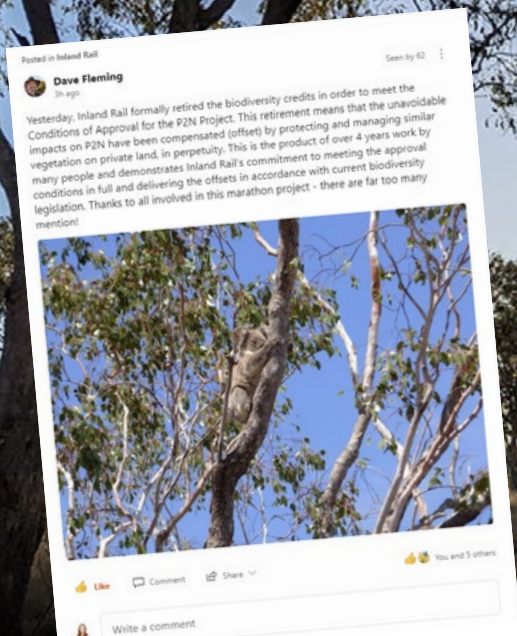
In July 2022, our New South Wales Biodiversity Offsets Team retired all 4,606 biodiversity credits for the Parkes to Narromine section in New South Wales. This accomplishment means that Inland Rail has successfully compensated (offset) the unavoidable impacts on biodiversity from construction of the 104km section by protecting and managing similar vegetation on private land elsewhere, as well as meeting the project's Conditions of Approval.

This is the result of some great collaboration between the Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT), assessors, stakeholders and landowners. This collaborative approach saw the establishment of five new Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements (BSAs) with landowners from the local area, a BSA on an ARTC-owned property, and the full funding of an existing offset site.

Each BSA is an agreement between the landowner and the BCT to manage vegetation for biodiversity gain and ensure that the vegetation on each property is protected in perpetuity. Lengthy negotiations with respective landowners ensured each BSA site would be integrated into existing farming operations.

Inland Rail purchased the credits created from each BSA site and provided funding to enable activities to protect and actively manage the vegetation on each site over the next 20 years.

The Inland Rail Biodiversity Offset Program is one of the largest offset programs being delivered in New South Wales and, once complete, will have secured an estimated 80,000 ecosystem credits, which is the equivalent of protecting around 200 square kilometres of vegetation in perpetuity.



## 9.1.4. Heritage

The dedication of Inland Rail and its construction partners to protecting, preserving, and enhancing heritage matters along the Inland Rail alignment hasn't wavered.

During FY23, the breadth of Inland Rail's commitment to heritage from project outset was demonstrated by the successful conclusion of First Nations artefacts being handed back to the Peak Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council.

### Peak Hill artefacts successfully returned to Country

During FY23, the Peak Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), community members and representatives from Inland Rail visited sites around Peak Hill in New South Wales to return more than 150 stone artefacts found during construction of the Parkes to Narromine section of Inland Rail.

Discovered during a site survey in 2019, the artefacts included a complete hand-axe and fragments that could be used for cutting tools. On discovery, and in line with the project's Cultural Heritage Management Plan, Inland Rail, specialist technical advisors, and relevant First Nations parties have been working closely together to develop an appropriate solution.

Inland Rail offers a unique opportunity to survey and explore areas previously untouched by cultural heritage investigation. Potential discoveries will add to the wider community's knowledge of and respect for First Nations peoples' use of the land and Australia's shared cultural heritage.

We acknowledge that Inland Rail will be built and operated on the traditional lands of many First Nations communities. We value our relationship with First Nations communities and recognise their inherent connection to their traditional lands, and their continuing responsibility of stewardship and caring for country and culture.



“As a Wiradjuri woman from the Upper Bogan River people of Peak Hill, on behalf of the Peak Hill LALC and our community, we appreciate Inland Rail's commitment to working closely with our people and respecting our culture and heritage in a culturally responsive way.”

Judy Bell,  
Board Director of Peak Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council

“It is important for our current and future generations to see the return of their ancestral objects and cultural material, back home to Country in Peak Hill, to the place where our old people, our ancestors left their footprint on our traditional land.”

Frances Robinson,  
Chairperson for the Peak Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council

### 9.1.5. Fauna studies

In FY23, the Inland Rail Environmental Studies Program continued to investigate fauna along the rail alignment with the aim of gathering valuable data to inform and guide decisions made to minimise impacts. Some highlights from the studies conducted throughout the year include the unique techniques employed to study aquatic species, trialling habitat for Brigalow reptiles and tracking microbat movements.

#### Researching aquatic species

Given the difficulty of surveying aquatic species, Inland Rail has partnered with a specialist aquatic ecology consultancy, which has employed a technique called Environmental DNA (eDNA). This technique involves the collection of water samples from the Border Rivers, Balonne-Condamine, Brisbane and Logan-Albert catchments to be analysed for the detection of threatened aquatic fauna trace DNA. The method can also detect the presence of species such as birds, turtles and mammals that have been present in the immediate system.

This valuable methodology can identify whether individual species are present throughout waterways in a more effective and efficient manner compared to other survey techniques. The eDNA data builds on the existing investigations and reporting undertaken for Matters of National Environmental Significance and Matters of State Significance and will be essential for detecting threatened aquatic species in their described habitats as well as aiding in planning to avoid, mitigate and offset. This study will increase our knowledge of threatened species and their preferred microhabitat characteristics in the respective project areas.



#### Trialling habitat for Brigalow reptiles

Focusing on Brigalow reptiles, a collective group of snakes and lizards associated with the Brigalow Belt Bioregion, a research partnership between Inland Rail and the University of Southern Queensland has been formed to study these reptiles from the New South Wales Border to the Gowrie region of Queensland. The research aims to locate threatened reptiles, undertake genetic analysis, and trial different types of habitats to determine best-practice mitigation, habitat management and conservation for these species.

Starting in FY23, this research will provide invaluable scientific and applied data to increase knowledge and understanding of these difficult to survey species and their ecology. This expanded body of research will leave a positive legacy for the Brigalow Belt reptiles' conservation and management.



## Tracking microbat movement

Inland Rail’s successful study to track the movement of two threatened species of microbats across the Narromine to Narrabri and New South Wales/Queensland Border to Gowrie project regions finished during FY23. A combination of survey techniques was used including diurnal and nocturnal surveys and analysis of bat call soundwaves through acoustic recorders to detect and monitor the presence of bat species within the study area.

The individual movement of bats was also tracked using GPS and VHF transmitters to identify the type and species of trees or other habitat the bats used to roost, as well as identifying foraging grounds and homing ranges. The data from the study will prove invaluable as it builds upon the reliability of historical data. It allows Inland Rail to apply robust scientific data from local research to confidently develop construction environmental management plans, plan restoration activities and minimise impacts.



### 9.1.6. Men’s Shed partnership produces nest boxes

The team managing the Beveridge to Albury project enhancement works partnered with the Wangaratta District Men’s Shed in Victoria to source locally produced wildlife nest boxes. Enhancement works at Seymour required the removal of large hollow-bearing trees, largely within the *Environmental Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*-listed Grey Box Grassy Woodland ecological community.

Tree hollows are cavities in the trunk or branches of a live or dead tree, usually formed by lightning strikes, fire, wind, insect or fungal attacks. Hollows can vary in size, catering for a wide variety of species and are especially important for hollow dependent species.

The Wangaratta District Men’s Shed members have skilfully produced nest boxes that range in size and are designed to provide safety and shelter to a variety of species including the Crimson Rosella, Powerful Owl, Sugar Glider, Turquoise Parrot, Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo and Phascogale. The nest boxes were installed to provide an alternative habitat at least three months prior to the removal of the natural hollows.



“Preserving our local flora and fauna is extremely important and we are working closely with our contractors to look after local wildlife. The team at the Wangaratta Men’s Shed has done a great job crafting homes and shelters for local wildlife.”

Ed Walker,  
General Manager Projects Victoria and South Australia, ARTC





### 9.1.7. National Schools Tree Planting Day

To mark National Schools Tree Planting Day, in August 2022 members of the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project team joined staff and students at Croppa Creek School to plant an avenue of native trees and shrubs on their school grounds.

The trees, which comprise a mix of native species to attract birds and provide a shady and colourful welcome into the community, were chosen by the community and funded by Inland Rail.

The project team worked closely with the Croppa Creek community and Gwydir Shire Council to ensure the activity was a success, and even volunteered to get their hands dirty along with Council representatives to help the students plant the trees in their new home.

### 9.1.8. Inland Rail's commitment to education and awareness

Inland Rail is committed to creating and fostering a culture of sustainability awareness and education by increasing staff knowledge about sustainability issues, empowering team members to make sustainable decisions, and embedding visible sustainability practices within the organisation.

Throughout FY23, Inland Rail hosted a series of events to further foster and embed a culture of sustainability across the organisation.

#### Plastic Free July

Plastic Free July is a global movement that challenges individuals, businesses and governments to share plastic free solutions to help eliminate plastic use and waste. The theme for 2022 was 'Turn the tide, one choice at a time', which asked us to recognise the power of choice to combat the current environmental and health challenges posed by plastic pollution.

Inland Rail hosted a variety of activities over the month encouraging staff to get involved and grow their understanding and awareness. A 'Plastic Free Hack' competition encouraged staff to snap a photo and share their favourite tips and tricks for living a more sustainable lifestyle, while a morning tea and pop-up shop showcased the wide variety of plastic free alternatives to staff at Brisbane's Ann Street office.



## National Threatened Species Day

September is National Biodiversity Month. This coincides with National Threatened Species Day (7 September), which marks the date on which the last Tasmanian Tiger died in captivity and aims to remind us that many more species could be lost unless we act.

The month saw staff take a closer look at the work occurring across the Program to protect our native flora and fauna, with a spotlight on the achievements within the Biodiversity Offsets Program.

The Inland Rail team observed this occasion by participating in the Threatened Species Bake Off to increase awareness within the wider community of Australia's remarkable and unique threatened wildlife.

Participating staff baked some delicious desserts in the image of their chosen animal prompting valuable conversations to better understanding and awareness of challenges currently facing threatened species.



## Clean Up Australia Day

Clean Up Australia Day inspires communities to clean up, fix up and conserve our environment. Held annually on the first Sunday in March, Clean Up Australia Day encourages us all to look around us to prevent new rubbish entering our environment and see what we can do to step up and keep Australia clean – not just on the day, but throughout the year.

For Clean Up Australia Day 2023, the Inland Rail HSE team organised a Program-wide message to staff from Pip Kiernan, Chair of Clean Up Australia, and a 'spot-the-difference' colouring competition, which depicted our Sustainable Stevie character cleaning up a local park. Additionally, team members from our Gatton and Brisbane offices volunteered their time to participate in a Business Clean Up at Gatton, while staff from all across the business participated in Community Clean Up events in their local area.



## World Environment Day

The 2023 World Environment Day message reminded everyone that their actions to reduce plastic pollution matter and emphasised the global effort needed to #BeatPlasticPollution. Through this global campaign we're encouraged to reflect on how our actions might be impacting the protection and restoration of planet Earth and implement strategies to help create a more sustainable future.

To mark the occasion, all Inland Rail staff were invited to hear from two of our very own experts on flora and fauna conservation, Dave Fleming, Principal Offset Advisor New South Wales and Keeley Hartzler, Offset Advisor New South Wales, as they discussed 'Biodiversity in the Backyard'. This educational broadcast increased awareness about local reptiles (specifically the Blue-tongued Lizard and Spotted Python) and offered a plant identification masterclass.

In addition, Inland Rail Monopoly, and activity booklets sponsored by Yates Australia, were made available across Inland Rail offices to bring environmental learnings to staff and their families in a fun and engaging way.



10



# Resource use

Reducing water, energy and materials, and generating economic value from waste.

 **Key focus areas of this objective:**

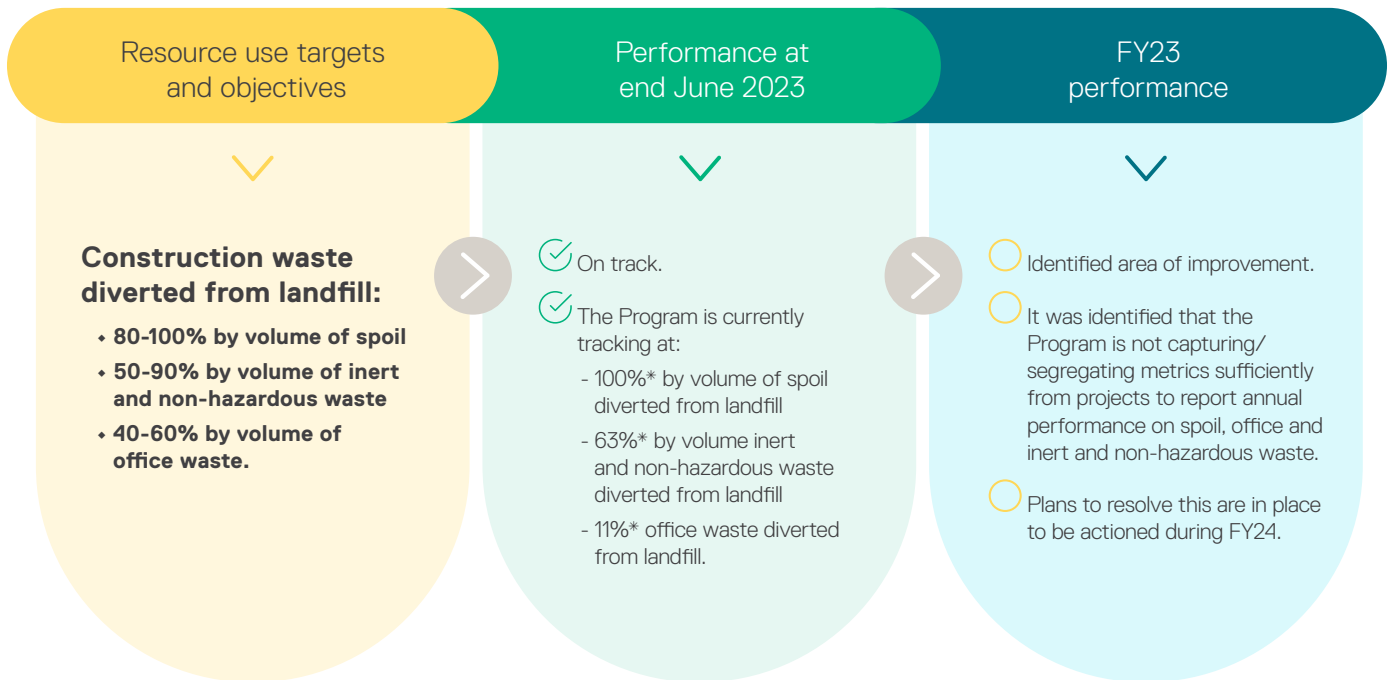
- Reducing energy, water and material use
- Selecting from materials that have a lower environmental footprint
- Diverting waste from landfill through re-use and recycling.

# 10.1. Objective: Resource use

## 10.1.1. Targets and FY23 progress and outcomes

| Resource use targets and objectives  | Performance at end June 2023   | FY23 performance  |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Construction water demand reduced by 15% across the Program.</p>                              | <p>On track.<br/>The Program has achieved a 64%* reduction in water demand compared to base case to date.</p>                            | <p>Identified area of improvement.<br/>It was identified that the Program is not capturing sufficient data and metrics from delivery partners to accurately and progressively report on construction water demand performance on an annual basis.<br/>Plans to resolve this are in place to be actioned during FY24.</p>                  |
| <p>Minimum 10% of materials contain recycled content or have low embodied impact.</p>            | <p>On track.<br/>The Program is currently tracking at 42%* of materials that contain recycled content or have a low embodied impact.</p> | <p>Identified area of improvement.<br/>It was identified that the Program is not capturing sufficient data and metrics from delivery partners to accurately and progressively report on materials that contain low embodied impact performance on an annual basis.<br/>Plans to resolve this are in place to be actioned during FY24.</p> |
| <p>Greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) reduced by 15% across design, construction and operation.</p> | <p>On track.<br/>The Program is tracking at a 27%* reduction in greenhouse gas emissions across design, construction and operations.</p> | <p>Identified area of improvement.<br/>It was identified that the Program is not capturing sufficient data and metrics from delivery partners to accurately and progressively report on greenhouse gas emissions performance on an annual basis.<br/>Plans to resolve this are in place to be actioned during FY24.</p>                   |

\* Based on data submitted to and verified by the IS Council.



\* Based on data submitted to and verified by the IS Council.

### 10.1.2. AutoMate

AutoMate is a site-based system that manages overall power consumption to deliver maximum efficiency, diverting power away from non-essential areas to create financial savings and carbon footprint reduction.

AutoMate was trialled on the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project with the goal of dramatically reducing electricity generation requirements by using this innovative technology for the effective allocation of electricity. The successful AutoMate system trial identified that a 10kVA generator

was suitable for project requirements instead of the 65kVA generators the project had previously been using.

The recognition of its sustainability benefits on the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project has seen the AutoMate system readily adopted by other John Holland infrastructure projects. More generally, the trial demonstrated the merits of this dynamic technology in identifying and streamlining efficiencies in site energy usage and improving sustainability performance.

### 10.1.3. Solar signalling

Following a previously successful trial of an innovative signalling system at Coolleearlee, New South Wales, ARTC approved its use at the 82 other signalling sites across the Inland Rail Program.

ARTC is looking to increase the use of this environmentally friendly solar powered signalling system to provide electricity when Inland Rail becomes operational.

The systems will eliminate the need to use the local power infrastructure or to acquire easements to transmit power to the proposed rail corridor impacting adjacent landholders.

The installation also includes a battery that provides 10 days of back-up operation and ensures the system can run day and night.

Using solar power rather than mains power for the signalling system will deliver an environmentally friendly and sustainable solution to reliably power the signalling system, reducing the impact to local communities, the environment and the cost of delivering Inland Rail.



### 10.1.4. Materials re-use on the Narrabri to North Star project

The Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project has prioritised reducing resource use, deploying a variety of strategies and approaches to achieve substantive results including:



**A targeted focus on reducing virgin materials** where possible through the application of a Program-wide earthworks specification, which enabled the reintegration of existing track formation and spoil into new formation.



**Diverting materials from landfill** with new markets explored for the sale of select timber sleepers.



**Promoting the re-use of materials through a circular economy approach** with five spans of the Croppa Creek tributary bridge transported to ARTC in Newcastle for re-use on other projects, as well as:



**Increasing sustainability benefits through innovative design** where possible through ARTC’s partnership with Liberty Steel to develop a pre-fabricated rail profile to reduce grinding requirements during construction.

- steel repurposed for use on other construction projects at the Gold Coast and Brisbane
- rail ‘jewellery’ donated to the Moree Men’s Shed to be repurposed and made into hat and coat racks
- concrete crushed and re-used on site under apron slabs on the underside of blinding/ geomembrane.

11



# Sustainable procurement

Encouraging our supply chain to contribute to our sustainability priorities.



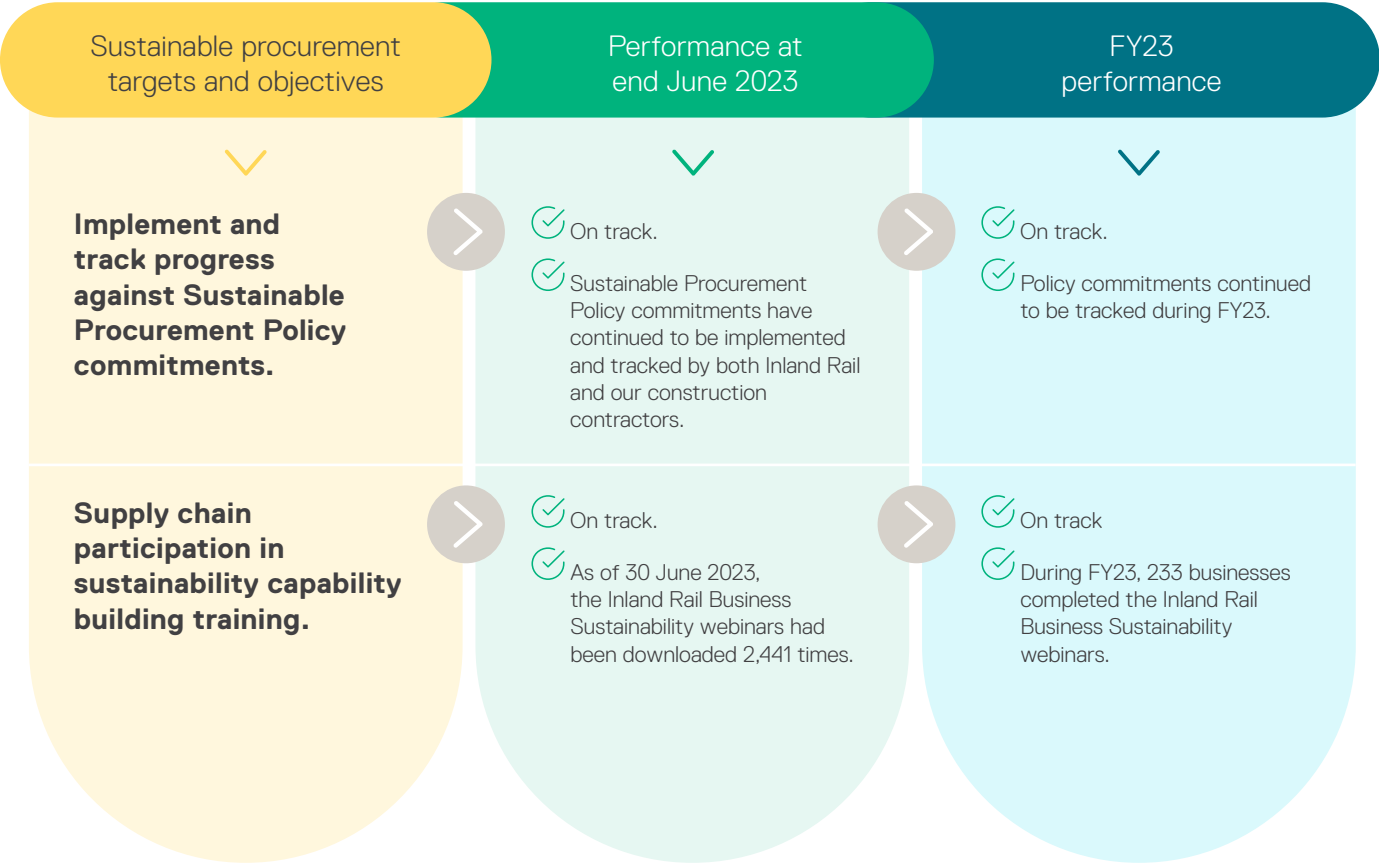
**Key focus areas of this objective:**

- Communicating our commitments through our Sustainable Procurement Policy
- Providing sustainability capability building to small-to-medium businesses near our alignment
- Celebrating suppliers who provide broader social and environmental benefits.



# 11.1. Objective: Sustainable procurement

## 11.1.1. Targets and FY23 progress and outcomes



### 11.1.2. Business Sustainability webinars

The size and scale of the Inland Rail Program means we have an opportunity – and a responsibility – to promote strong sustainability practices within the industry. While sustainability is important to Inland Rail, we recognise that it’s not always easy for businesses to know where to start when it comes to developing sustainable operations and services.

Successfully launched in FY21, Inland Rail partnered with sustainability specialists The Ecoefficiency Group (TEG) to develop an innovative three-part webinar series designed to upskill small-to-medium businesses within the 31 local government areas (LGAs) along our alignment, to transform their approach to sustainability and optimise their sustainable business credentials.

Each webinar provides information and guidance on how to improve and promote a business’ sustainability efforts for both staff and clients. These webinars are free and publicly available on the Inland Rail website and include downloadable toolkits that comprise both templates and checklists to practically assist businesses in transforming their practices and processes.

A particularly unique aspect of this innovation is that businesses who have completed the Inland Rail Business Sustainability webinar series and are located within the alignment’s 31 LGAs are eligible to receive a free, hour-long mentoring session on sustainability practices with TEG.

The Business Sustainability webinars and toolkits provide significant benefits to both Inland Rail and the broader market as they innovatively transform small-to-medium business practices, shifting the sustainability benchmark forward in regional Australia. In recognition of the positive market transformation arising from this innovation, the IS Council verified the Business Sustainability webinar series as an Australian First under their v1.2 Rating Tool.

FY23 has seen 233 businesses complete the Inland Rail Business Sustainability webinar series with a further 594 downloads of the accompanying sustainability templates and checklists. Inland Rail's

dynamic initiative continues to positively grow and support the emerging sustainability culture and practices within regional Australia, leaving a lasting legacy of upskilled and sustainably mature small-to-medium businesses that have transformed the market.

As a result of our work in FY23, in November 2023, the [ARA released a Sustainability Guide for small to medium businesses](#) in the rail industry. Inland Rail was featured as a best practice example for our sustainability webinars and mentoring program, and more.

### 11.1.3. Supply opportunities explored in Victoria

Inland Rail is a project for all Australians, and we warmly invite prospective suppliers and contractors from all backgrounds to apply to get involved with the delivery of Inland Rail.

Throughout the year, we provided various opportunities including 'Meet the Contractor' supplier briefings, networking sessions and business capability workshops along the Inland Rail alignment; in collaboration with our construction delivery partners.

These predominantly in-person sessions are designed to:

- inform and educate local and First Nations businesses about the Inland Rail Program, including its scope, delivery strategy, timeframes and how to get involved
- provide an opportunity for appointed delivery partners to introduce themselves to, and engage with, local and First Nations businesses as early as possible.





As Inland Rail progressed towards construction in Victoria, information sessions were held in Wangaratta to encourage prospective suppliers, subcontractors and equipment providers to meet McConnell Dowell, the preferred contractor for the Inland Rail Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1 works. The event hosted 105 attendees from a range of local and First Nations businesses and companies,

giving them the chance to meet representatives from McConnell Dowell and engage with the Inland Rail Program.

The event proved to be a great opportunity for local businesses to understand how to be part of the Inland Rail Program in Victoria, and how the jobs and economic benefits of Inland Rail will help boost the region.

#### 11.1.4. Gwydir Industries benefits from Inland Rail procurement

Gwydir Industries, a Moree-registered National Disability Insurance Scheme organisation, offers adults with a disability both support and employment, and was engaged by Inland Rail's delivery partner Trans4m Rail in late 2020. In June 2023, Gwydir Industries employed 18 people with a disability plus five support staff.

Gwydir Industries has made an invaluable contribution to the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project delivering a wide variety of products and services including cardboard recycling, secure document shredding and even engraving

coffee cups. However, their largest job has been producing wooden survey pegs to mark out the Inland Rail alignment, worksite boundaries and cadastral survey areas.

A small team of three produced a mammoth 13,000 pegs. Peg production involved cutting long lengths of wood into smaller pieces, shaping one end into a point, and painting the pegs different colours to represent their intended use.

Inland Rail and Trans4m Rail are proud to have supported Gwydir Industries in its mission to provide job skills, training and real work experience for people who live with a disability.



12



# Future operations

Design and construct for long-term outcomes such as climate resilience and community legacy.

 **Key focus areas of this objective:**

- Handover and legacy of projects as they complete construction
- Information sharing and engagement between Inland Rail and the wider ARTC team
- Climate resilience infrastructure outcomes.

# 12.1. Objective: Future operations

## 12.1.1. Targets and FY23 progress and outcomes

| Future operations targets and objectives  | Performance at end June 2023  | FY23 performance  |
|---|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">▼</p> <p><b>Sustainability outcomes and lessons learnt shared to encourage uptake in wider ARTC systems and processes.</b></p> | <p style="text-align: center;">▼</p> <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ Members of the Inland Rail and ARTC networks meet at a monthly Sustainability Working Group to share lessons learnt, and discuss innovations and initiatives from across the business.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">▼</p> <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ During FY23, Inland Rail and ARTC team members met 10 times to share lessons learnt and initiatives from across the business. Activities and topics discussed included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- low carbon concrete</li> <li>- a sustainability guest speaker from the Cross River Rail project</li> <li>- modern slavery policies</li> <li>- IS Council Rating Tool training.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Design and construct a resilient asset adaptive to climate change.</b></p>  | <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ Inland Rail revised its Climate Change Risk Assessment Framework and continues to undertake Climate Change Impact workshops.</p>  | <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ During FY23, the Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1 project completed its climate change risk workshop and assessment.</p>   |
| <p><b>Implement and support initiatives that leave a positive community legacy.</b></p>   | <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ The Inland Rail Program has implemented and supported numerous initiatives that leave a positive legacy, as detailed in previous Annual Sustainability Reports.</p>   | <p>✔ On track.</p> <p>✔ In FY23, several initiatives were undertaken to leave a positive community legacy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- enhancing telecommunications along the alignment</li> <li>- providing sponsorships and donations for local communities</li> <li>- employing a local workforce along the alignment for the construction of Inland Rail projects.</li> </ul>   |

### 12.1.2. The ARTC Sustainability Working Group

Employees from Inland Rail and the wider ARTC network meet monthly to discuss the implementation of innovations and initiatives across the business, best-practice ways of working, and opportunities for the further development and embedding of sustainable practices.

This group actively engages with broader industry and other major infrastructure projects to share knowledge and provide lessons learnt from across ARTC business units. Notable knowledge-shares have included Cross River Rail’s lessons learnt,

Holcim’s innovative carbon neutral concrete and ARTC’s adoption and implementation of an Environmental, Social and Governance Strategy.

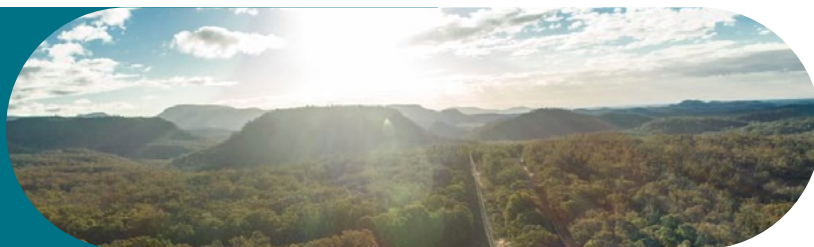
Working Group attendance is open to all at ARTC and fosters a culture of cross-collaboration and information sharing that promotes and further embeds sustainable practices across Inland Rail. This approach, which has at its centre collaboration, communication and innovation, positively benefits the entire ARTC business and the broader industry.

### 12.1.3. Climate resilience

The Inland Rail alignment passes through regions characterised by both extreme and variable weather patterns. Climate resilient design ensures that the asset can withstand these conditions now and into the future.

Accommodating both the harsh existing conditions and the predicted future changes to the climate of our regions is a key goal of the Inland Rail Program. Our approach to ensuring the climate resilience of our future asset is outlined in the Program-wide Climate Change Risk Assessment Framework which identifies climate hazards, impacts and the likely consequences of our changing climate for the alignment, up to the year 2090. The Framework addresses the climate challenges identified for the operation of the asset to determine the most suitable adaptation and mitigation approach to adopt.

Progress towards climate resilience has been ongoing for the Inland Rail Program. During FY23, Inland Rail undertook a review and revision process to ensure that the Climate Change Risk Assessment Framework is up to date and provides the best practice approach for our projects to meet their climate resilience goals. In addition, the Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1 delivery partner, McConnell Dowell, has completed its assessment of climate change impacts on the project, which was developed through a multidisciplinary workshop, and prepared their strategy for mitigating and managing the projected future climate challenges on the asset.



### 12.1.4. Enhanced telecommunications infrastructure along the Inland Rail alignment

As part of the Narrabri to North Star section of Inland Rail, ARTC and Telstra provided new mobile network infrastructure at North Star and Gurley in north-western New South Wales, which Telstra has activated, providing enhanced connectivity for trains operating in the area as well as for local residents and businesses.

The new 50m-high mobile tower at North Star, 90km northeast of Moree, and the upgraded Gurley base station, 30km south of Moree, will deliver improved depth of coverage and performance to local homes and businesses, with the fibre backhaul to both also being upgraded to deliver additional capacity.

In addition, Telstra has installed a new 4G small cell at Croppa Creek, 60km northeast of Moree, and is also planning to begin work on a new mobile tower at Crooble, northeast of Moree.

As the mobile telecommunications enhancements are rolled out, Telstra manages the ongoing operations and maintenance once the infrastructure has been delivered.

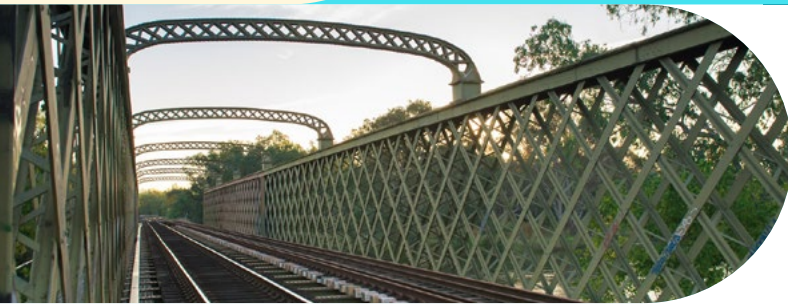
The work, which is funded by Inland Rail and being delivered by Telstra, will form part of the positive legacy the Inland Rail Program will leave with communities along the alignment for years to come.



“Mobile connectivity is so important in today’s world, and we know the huge benefits it can deliver for residents such as providing new business and educational opportunities and being able to connect in more places in case of emergencies.”

Andrew Stormont,  
Telstra Enterprise Channel and Network Sales Executive





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