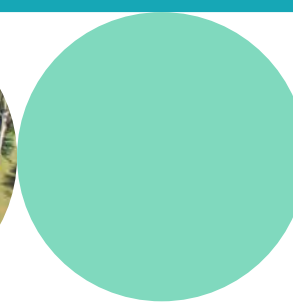


# Annual Sustainability Report

# FY2023-24



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**Digital Communication Team:** Inland Rail, GPO Box 2462, Brisbane Qld 4001

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# Acknowledgement of Country

Inland Rail acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waterways on which we live and work. We also pay our respects to their Elders, past and present and emerging. We value the contribution and rich cultural heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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





# Our locations

## Projects

- **Yorta Yorta People, Taungurung 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)

## Inland Rail offices

Our offices are located on the Traditional Lands of the:

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

# Our commitment

We acknowledge the project will be built and operated on the Traditional Lands of many First Nations Peoples across the states of Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland.

Inland Rail values 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 are committed to forming stronger connections and respectful relationships with First Nations stakeholders by creating meaningful opportunities for First Nations peoples, communities and businesses, welcoming and actively promoting their involvement and contribution as employees, delivery partners and suppliers.

We are actively collaborating with First Nations peoples, businesses and communities throughout design, construction and operation of this nation-building project. Proactive engagement with First Nations communities and their leaders is developing partnerships based on mutual respect and understanding.

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



# First Nations staff network FY24

## Cara Darrell

Communication Officer

I am a proud First Nations woman of unknown descent based in the Brisbane office working as part of the Internal Communications Team. Though I have little cultural knowledge because of my family's displacement from our land, I have a strong desire to connect with my First Nations peers and learn our history. I have grown up and live in Ipswich on Yuggera, Jagera and Yugarabul lands.

## Cathy Duncan

Senior Program Skills and Training Advisor  
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, near Tamworth. However, for the past century, my family has proudly called Moree in northern NSW, home. I have dedicated my life to the service of my hometown, my people and my culture. Through both professional and personal capacities, I am committed to First Nations autonomy, sovereignty, and self-determination.

## Dylan Nelson

First Nations Engagement Advisor  
Noongar

I am a proud Noongar man who grew up in Perth, WA. I am proud to be living and working on Yuggera and Turrbal Country in Brisbane.

To be in my role as First Nation Engagement Advisor gives me great pride. Understanding what our ancestors fought for gives me the opportunity I have today.

## Jess Jackson

Stakeholder Engagement Lead – Albury to Parkes  
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 peoples, my grandparents were displaced. I am fortunate 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.

## Lisa Goodman

First Nations Engagement Advisor  
Dharug

I am a proud descendant of the 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.

## Marlene Carpenter

HSE Team Administrator  
Iningai

I am proudly descended from Iningai people, born in Longreach, Central Queensland, near the Thomson River, home to Iningai Keeping Place. Through my professional 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.

### Natasha Hamilton

First Nations Engagement Advisor  
Jaru/Gurindji

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

### Samantha Lubke-Wood

Stakeholder Engagement Advisor  
Gamilaroi

I am a proud Gamilaroi women from Narrabri NSW, descended from strong Wiradjuri women, living and working on Gamilaroi country. I am part of the stakeholder engagement team in rural NSW.

### Samantha Wheeler

Stakeholder Engagement Advisor  
Gamilaroi

I am born, raised and working in stakeholder engagement in Narromine on Wiradjuri Country. My grandfather was part of the stolen generation, and we have been able to trace his family back to Pilliga in Gamilaroi Country.

### Will Dunball

Travel and Fleet Administrator  
Gamilaroi

I am a proud Gamilaroi man working in the Brisbane office, where I look after the Inland Rail Fleet. My journey began as a school-based trainee, and I am overjoyed to have transitioned into a full-time role. I am also deeply grateful for the help I've received from my grandparents in connecting more with my Aboriginal identity, and I am eager to share this connection with others.





## CEO Foreword

I am pleased to present the Inland Rail Annual Sustainability Report for 2023-2024. This year saw some remarkable achievements in the delivery of Inland Rail, supported by our commitment to sustainability and the positive legacy we aim to leave for Australia's future.

Inland Rail is transforming Australia's freight future. As we complete each section of this 1,600-kilometre freight rail line between Melbourne and Brisbane, we are not just addressing the increasing demand for freight as our population grows, we are building the backbone of a more sustainable and efficient supply chain. We're enhancing Australia's economy, supporting regional communities, protecting the environment and delivering more resilient rail infrastructure.

Sustainability is at the heart of everything we do. From the design phase to our ongoing construction work, we set ambitious goals which exceed regulatory standards, create long-term value for our communities and reduce our environmental impact.

During the year, our teams achieved significant milestones in environmental conservation, community engagement and economic development. These successes were driven by our focus on leadership, governance, community and economy, environment and heritage, resource use, sustainable procurement, and future operations.

At Inland Rail, we're passionate about proactively engaging with local communities and stakeholders to connect people and businesses. Since 2019, we have invested over \$1.36 million in 427 community initiatives through our Community Grants Program, spanning education, health and local community initiatives.

Through our Inland Rail Skills Academy, we partnered with regional schools, vocational training centres and First Nations communities to empower young Australians through scholarships, training and educational workshops.

Since 2019, we have awarded 26 scholarships to undergraduate students, and trained over 550 individuals in civil construction and rail competencies. We also engaged more than 11,500 students in STEM education opportunities. These outstanding results demonstrate that Inland Rail is not just delivering infrastructure, we're contributing to the long-term economic and social resilience of our regional communities.

During the year, we improved public safety by closing level crossings along key sections and working closely with local stakeholders to improve the performance of road and rail infrastructure interfaces.

We also progressed construction of the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project. Our initiatives included diverting 20,000 tonnes of steel from landfill for reuse in other construction projects. By prioritising materials re-use, we are not only reducing waste but also minimising greenhouse gas emissions that would otherwise result from producing new materials.



We are also committed to protecting Australia's rich biodiversity. By investing in wildlife protection programs, such as installing 3D printed nesting boxes in Victoria, we helped safeguard native species during construction activities.

Since 2019, we have awarded over \$4.8 billion in contracts and spent more than \$460 million with regional businesses. These regional investments have generated more than 5,400 jobs for local residents and First Nations people.

The economic benefits of Inland Rail extend far beyond the construction phase. By enhancing Australia's freight capacity as each section is completed, we are making the country's supply chain more competitive and efficient. This, in turn, is reducing costs for businesses and consumers, fostering innovation and supporting Australia's economic growth.

Our collaboration with First Nations communities is something we cherish. Inland Rail recognises the significance of the lands on which we operate and the deep cultural connections that First Nations Peoples have to these regions. Through various partnerships, we are creating meaningful employment opportunities, business partnerships and cultural connections with First Nations communities.

This year, we expanded our investments in First Nations businesses, spending over \$44 million with these enterprises. Through workshops, information sessions and partnerships, we are helping First Nations companies understand and seize supply and employment opportunities with Inland Rail. This commitment reflects our broader goal of fostering sustainable, inclusive growth for all Australians.

The achievements outlined in this report would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of our team, delivery partners, and stakeholders. Together, we are building more than a rail line; we are building a legacy of sustainability, innovation, and community engagement that will benefit generations to come.

Looking ahead, I am excited about the positive legacy our future sustainability initiatives can leave for our environment, the economy and the communities we serve.

Thank you for your continued support of Inland Rail and sharing our commitment to a more sustainable future. We look forward to the journey ahead and to achieving even greater milestones in the years to come.



**Nick Miller**  
*Chief Executive Officer, Inland Rail*



# Highlights

# FY24



## \$226,144

in community grants to 70 recipients



## 27,523

offset credits acquired in NSW



## 86%

 enhancement of ecological value

verified by the Infrastructure Sustainability Council on the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project



## 1,019

local construction-related jobs created



## 123

 First Nations workers

on construction projects



## 3

 sustainability contractor forums

## \$78.3m

spent with local businesses and \$6m spent with First Nations businesses



## 53 | 30

 people | businesses

attended workforce development events held in regional NSW



## 133

 webinars

Inland Rail-developed Business Sustainability webinars completed\*



## 20,000

 tonnes of steel

diverted from landfill on Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project



## 23

 construction and rail skills courses

delivered to 207 participants by the Inland Rail Skills Academy



## 549

 downloads

of sustainability capacity toolkits from the Inland Rail website\*



## 167

 schools

participated in Inland Rail-supported STEM activities, taking the total to 609 schools involved since 2020



## 11

 local business capability workshops

upskilling 121 local businesses



## 1,500+

 students

participated in Inland Rail-supported STEM activities in FY24, taking the total to over 11,500 students since 2020

\*Data was impacted by a change from Google Universal Analytics to GA4. Data is only reliable after 1 Jan 2024.



# About Inland Rail

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Inland Rail is a fast freight line that is connecting Australia and generating regional opportunities during construction and beyond



As one of the largest freight rail infrastructure projects in Australia, the 1,600-kilometre freight line will connect Melbourne and Brisbane via regional Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland, linking businesses, manufacturers and producers to national and global markets and generating opportunities for industries and regions during construction and beyond.

Inland Rail will enhance our national freight network and supply chain capabilities, connecting existing freight routes through rail, roads and ports, and supporting Australia’s growth.

Delivering Inland Rail will help us keep pace with the increasing freight demands of Australia’s growing population.

With a staged delivery approach, the project is prioritising the construction of sections between Beveridge in Victoria and Parkes in New South Wales by 2027.

## Our progress

During the 2023-2024 financial year (FY24), two major construction milestones occurred on the Inland Rail Program. In September 2023, construction commenced on the Stockinbingal to Parkes project and the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 section was completed in late 2023, with this section now operational.

The Stockinbingal to Parkes project includes enhancements to increase horizontal and vertical clearances around the rail track to enable double-stacked container freight to travel on the alignment. During rail track possessions in September 2023 and March 2024, work started at the new Daroobalgie Crossing Loop and upgraded level crossing and track lowering under Wyndham Avenue road bridge, with smaller discrete works also undertaken at other sites.

On the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project, 176 kilometres of track was upgraded along the existing corridor, marking the completion of the second Inland Rail project. The project delivered strong social and economic outcomes for the local community, including:

- jobs for 678 local residents (185 of whom were local First Nations peoples) on the project
- more than \$243 million spent with local businesses and suppliers
- 57 level crossings upgraded to comply with current safety standards, including 10 public crossings upgraded from passive to active with bells, lights and boom gates.

As this section of track became operational, the first grain train to use the upgraded track was loaded at the Croppa Creek silos. The Pacific National train loaded up to 55 tonnes of canola in each of its 48 wagons. The train was the first of 12 to transport canola to the Port of Newcastle during a month long period, carrying over 33,000 tonnes of product for export to European markets. By comparison, over 600 B-double trucks would have been required to transport this volume of canola by road, demonstrating the carbon-saving benefits of freight movement by rail rather than road.

Design and construction work progressed in Victoria and southern NSW during FY24. The Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1 project is on track for its anticipated construction completion in 2025, with works undertaken at Glenrowan, Barnawartha North, Seymour and Wangaratta, including the opening of the Beaconsfield Parade Bridge in Glenrowan and major works at Wangaratta Station.

On the Beveridge to Albury Tranche 2 project, the design and construction contract was awarded in June 2024 for works at eight sites across Euroa, Benalla, Broadford, Wandong, Seymour and Tallarook. The detailed design process commenced in June 2024 and major construction is expected to start in 2025.

The Albury to Illabo project also commenced detailed design in FY24, with major construction expected to start in late 2024.

Extensive community consultation and planning also continued in New South Wales, with Australian Government approvals for the Narromine to Narrabri section secured in mid-2023 and for the North Star to New South Wales/Queensland Border section in early-2024.

Inland Rail Pty Ltd was established as a wholly owned subsidiary of ARTC in May 2024, in line with the Australian Government's response to the April 2023 Independent Review of Inland Rail conducted by Dr Kerry Schott AO. Inland Rail Pty Ltd is responsible for building Inland Rail on behalf of the Australian Government, with each completed section handed to ARTC to operate and manage.





## Strong regional and national benefits

When fully operational, Inland Rail will cut rail freight travel time between Melbourne and Brisbane by almost a third, from 33 hours to less than 24 hours, making it competitive with road and enabling faster, safer, more resilient delivery of freight and reduce supply chain costs.

It will help us keep pace with the increasing freight demands of our growing population, and deliver competitive pricing and reliability for freight customers compared with road freight.

As sections of Inland Rail come online, Australians will experience the much-needed benefits of a reliable and future-proofed resilient freight rail network.



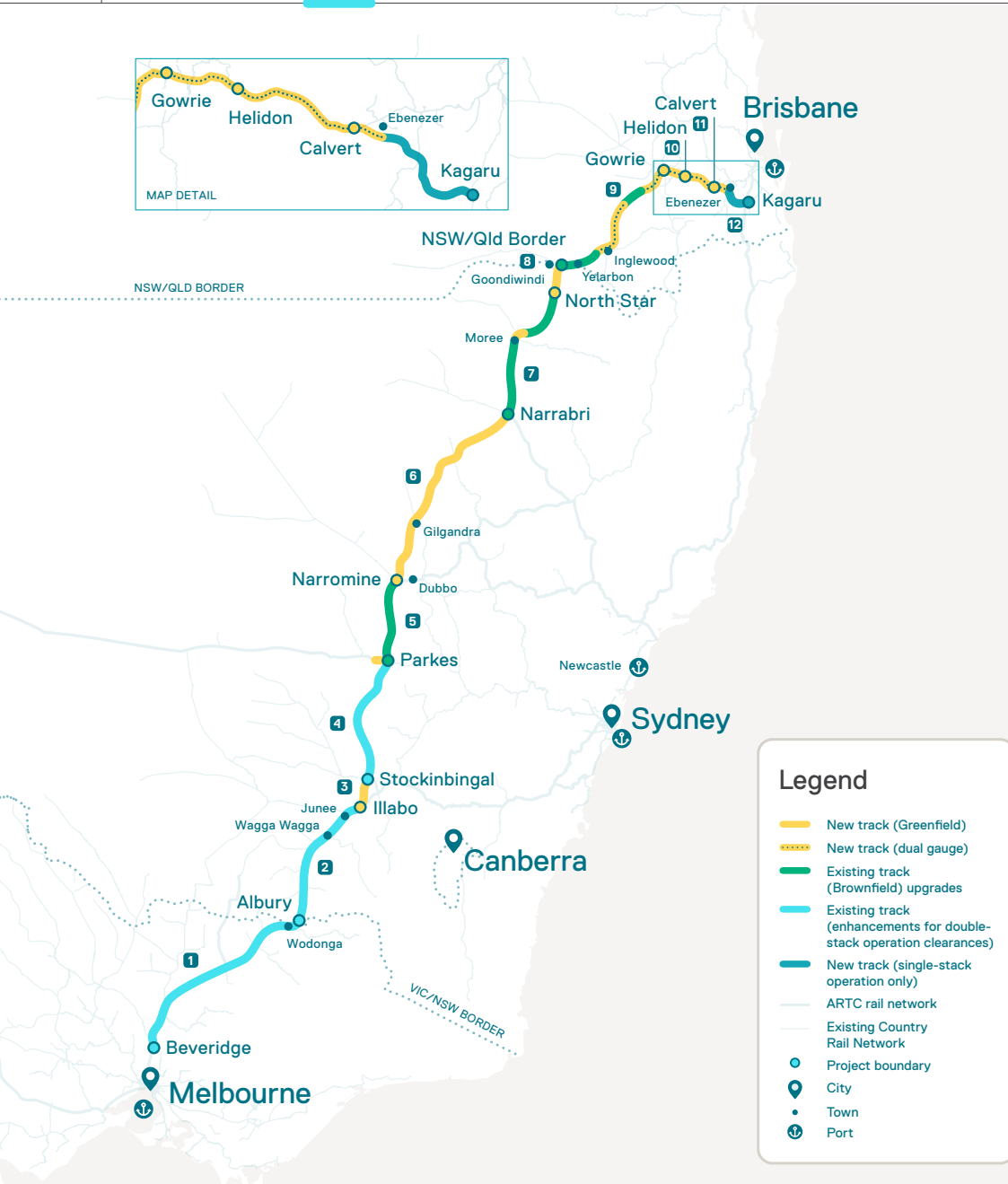
NSW/QLD BORDER

NSW/QLD BORDER

NSW/QLD BORDER

NSW/QLD BORDER

VIC/NSW BORDER



**Legend**

- New track (Greenfield)
- - - - New track (dual gauge)
- Existing track (Brownfield) upgrades
- Existing track (enhancements for double-stack operation clearances)
- New track (single-stack operation only)
- ARTC rail network
- Existing Country Rail Network
- Project boundary
- 📍 City
- Town
- 🚢 Port

# Inland Rail Program status

The Parkes to Narrabrie section and first phase of the Narrabri to North Star section are now operational. Construction is underway on Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1 and Stockinbingal to Parkes.

The remaining 10 projects are at varying stages of environmental approvals and detailed design.

	<b>Concept assessment</b>	All Inland Rail projects have completed the concept assessment phase
		Albury to Illabo Illabo to Stockinbingal Narrabri to North Star Phase 2
	<b>Project approval</b>	New South Wales/Queensland Border to Gowrie Gowrie to Helidon Helidon to Calvert Calvert to Kagaru
	<b>Pending Preliminary design</b>	Narrabrie to Narrabri North Star to New South Wales/ Queensland Border
	<b>Detailed design</b>	Beveridge to Albury Tranche 2 Albury to Illabo
	<b>Construction</b>	Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1 Stockinbingal to Parkes
	<b>In operation</b>	Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 Parkes to Narrabrie



# About this Report

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Our sixth Annual Sustainability Report outlines the positive social, environmental and economic outcomes Inland Rail and its project delivery partners have achieved during FY23-24. It also details our sustainability priorities, achievements and how we strive to create a sustainable asset beyond regulatory requirements.

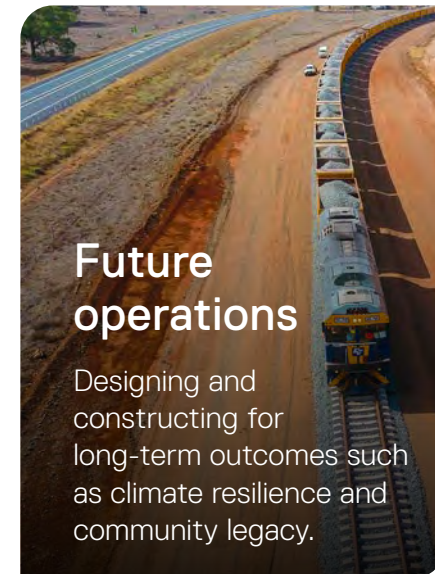
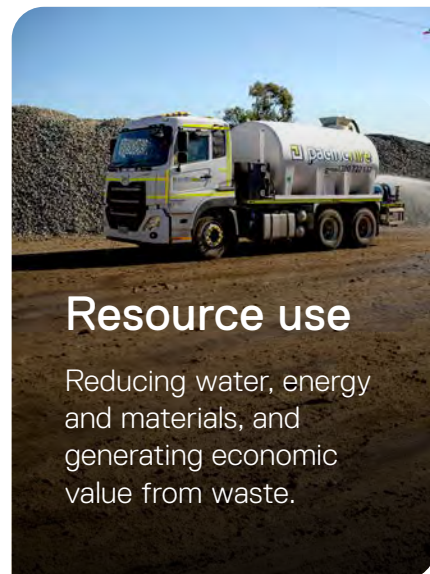
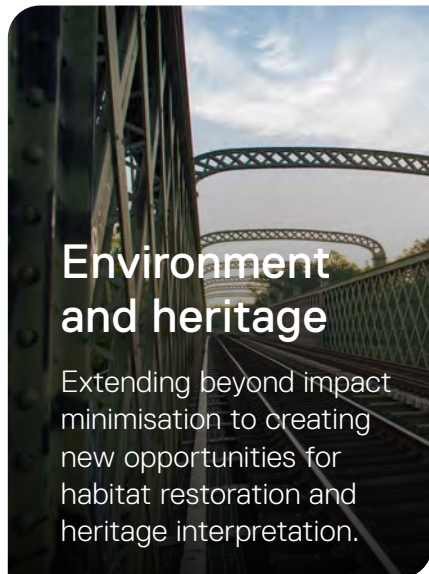
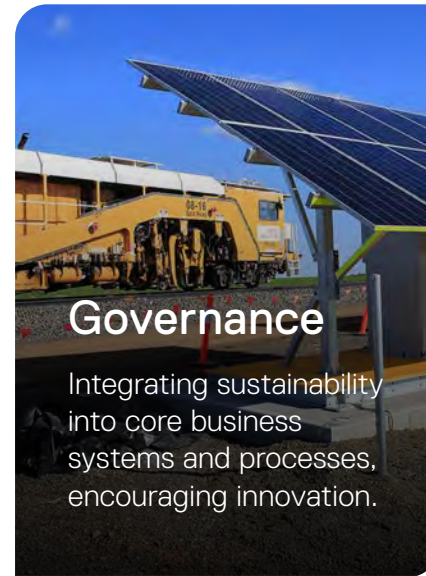
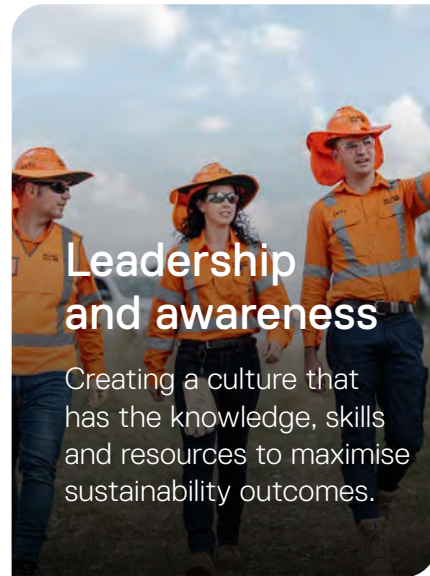




# Sustainability objectives

The Inland Rail Sustainability Strategy objectives and targets provide the framework for reporting on our annual progress.

The Strategy was endorsed by our Executive 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.





# Leadership and awareness

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Creating a culture that 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.





# Objective: Leadership and awareness

## Targets and FY24 progress and outcomes

### Leadership and awareness targets and objectives

### Progress to date

### FY24 progress

**Achieve a Program wide Infrastructure Sustainability (IS) rating of 'Excellent', which is between 50–74 IS points.**



**On track**

- The Parkes to Narromine project has been verified as 'Excellent' for its final As Built rating
- The Narrabri to North Star SP1 project has been verified as 'Excellent' for its interim Design rating
- The Stockinbingal to Parkes project has been verified as 'Excellent' for its interim Design rating



**On track**

- The Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project submitted its final As Built submission for verification
- The Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1 project is preparing to submit its Design rating

**Deliver sustainability training and education to all Inland Rail employees.**



**On track**

Mandatory Inland Rail Sustainability eLearning induction modules were launched in 2021.



**On track**

An updated eLearning induction course has been developed and will be rolled out in FY25.

**Publish an Annual Sustainability Report.**



**On track**

Inland Rail has published five annual reports showcasing our sustainability work.



**On track**

This Annual Sustainability Report reflects the activities of the FY24 reporting period and is the sixth report published by Inland Rail.

**Report sustainability performance internally to executive management.**



**On track**

Sustainability information is reported internally to both the Inland Rail Leadership Team and the senior leaders of our projects.



**On track**

The reporting of sustainability performance continued and has been well received.



## Major sustainability award for Stockinbingal to Parkes design

The design of the Stockinbingal to Parkes project was recognised by the Infrastructure Sustainability (IS) Council for its economic, social and environmental performance, which delivers best-practice sustainability outcomes, receiving an ‘Excellent’ Design rating. This rating will be reassessed when the project finishes construction and replaced with an ‘As Built’ rating.

As a comprehensive system for evaluating sustainability across design and construction of infrastructure, the IS rating provides an independent assessment that rewards beyond business-as-usual outcomes.

The project design of Stockinbingal to Parkes involved modifying specific sites along the existing rail corridor to accommodate double-stacked freight trains. Works within the IS rating included:

- Increasing vertical clearance under the Wyndham Avenue road bridge in Forbes.
- Building a new crossing loop north of the Daroobalgie Road level crossing and upgrading the level crossing from stop sign controls to flashing lights and boom barriers.

This recognition is the third sustainability award Inland Rail has received from the IS Council, with the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project awarded an ‘Excellent’ Design rating, and the Parkes to Narromine project the first section of Inland Rail to be awarded an ‘Excellent’ As Built rating.

### Innovative sustainability webinar series for businesses

As part of the Design rating submission, the IS Council verified an Australian First Innovation for Inland Rail, Inland Rail Business Sustainability Webinars and one-on-one mentoring. One of the key objectives of the Inland Rail Sustainable Procurement Policy is to ‘encourage our major suppliers and service providers to adopt sustainable and ethical practices in their organisation and drive such practices in their own supply chain’.

Through the ICN Gateway procurement process, 2,574 businesses were asked whether they were interested in learning more about sustainability and if they were currently implementing sustainable business practices.



Are you interested in learning more about sustainability and how it can benefit your business (e.g. help reduce operational costs, engage and motivate staff and provide reputational benefits)?

YES 90%

NO 10%



Does your organisation implement sustainable business practices (e.g. highly efficient use of energy, water and raw materials; low emissions technologies; ethical supply chains; circular economy and waste repurposing; or supporting local environmental and community initiatives)?

YES 94.5%

NO 5.5%

The three-part webinar series was developed by the Inland Rail Skills Academy in partnership with sustainability specialists, The Ecoefficiency Group (TEG). Each webinar provides information and guidance on how to improve and promote the sustainability efforts of a business for both staff and clients.

The webinars also include downloadable toolkits with templates and checklists that allow businesses to easily and immediately apply webinar content, assisting them practically in transforming their practices and processes.

A unique aspect of this program is that businesses who have completed the webinar series and are located within the alignment's local government area are eligible to register their interest to receive a free hour-long mentoring session on sustainability practices with TEG.



ISC Council Annual Conference Certification ,September 2023.

## Education and training key for a culture of sustainability

Fostering a culture of sustainability at Inland Rail begins with having a clear sustainable strategy and prioritising sustainability as a key focus. Education and training about sustainability is crucial to the success of Inland Rail and takes a variety of forms.

### Online learning

With training and engaging employees and project teams in applied sustainability a key focus area of the leadership and awareness sustainability objective for Inland Rail, all employees are required to complete a Sustainability eLearning induction course.

The short, mandatory online course is designed to support innovative thinking and a culture of sustainability, and provides an overview of sustainable development, climate change, infrastructure sustainability, and implementing change on the program.

### Experiential learning

Ahead of construction work starting on the Stockinbingal to Parkes section, Inland Rail staff and major project contractor Martinus Rail enjoyed an immersive Cultural Appreciation Tour to learn about the history of the area and the local environment.

Hosted by the Forbes Wiradjuri Dreaming Centre, the tour included a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony, and a lunch featuring native foods. The group then visited sites of cultural significance along Lake Forbes, including a yarning circle, totem poles telling the stories of Wiradjuri culture, and an iconic bronze statue by artist Brett 'Mon' Garling called Family Matters, which features two Indigenous women and a child returning from gathering food.

Inland Rail is committed to working with First Nations leaders and communities throughout the project and to work in harmony with the cultural heritage and values of the regions touched by the project.

“ The day was a fantastic opportunity to start new relationships between the Wiradjuri people and Inland Rail, and we look forward to working collaboratively to preserve our cultural heritage along the alignment. ”

**Aunty Wendy,**  
*Forbes Wiradjuri Dreaming Centre*





# Governance

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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.



# Objective: Governance

## Targets and FY24 progress and outcomes

### Leadership and awareness targets and objectives

**Collaborate to continually improve sustainability systems and processes.**



**On track**

- Sustainability knowledge sharing and collaboration forums with delivery partners and ARTC
- Inland Rail online sustainability reporting system is in place and being used on all active projects
- Inland Rail continue to collaborate with the broader industry.



**On track**

- Inland Rail continue to collaborate with ARTC to provide support with ARTC sustainability ratings on the Botany Rail Duplication
- Hosted three sustainability contractor forums with project Principal Contractors and ARTC
- Inland Rail participated and provided secretarial services to the Queensland Infrastructure Sustainability Community of Practice
- Collaborated with the Australasian Rail Association on the development and publication of their Sustainability Guide.

**Sustainability dashboard updated and communicated regularly.**



**On track**

The Inland Rail Program developed an online reporting tool that tracks the sustainability data of Inland Rail contracting partners which is fed directly into a dashboard to provide up-to-date data about contractors each month to the Inland Rail team.



**On track**

A new online reporting system, iSystem, has been commissioned with expanded reporting metrics. It is expected that this system will be implemented in the next reporting period.

**Innovative solutions identified, assessed, and implemented.**



**On track**

The Inland Rail Program has had three Australian First Innovations verified by the IS Council, including:

- Business Sustainability webinars and mentoring
- earthworks specification
- rail profile.



**On track**

While no projects were certified by the IS Council in FY24, additional innovations will be included in the submissions expected in the next reporting period.



## Inland Rail – A new way forward

In line with the Australian Government’s response to The Delivery of Inland Rail; An Independent Review, a staged approach has been adopted to deliver the project.

Inland Rail Pty Ltd (IRPL) was established as a subsidiary company of ARTC and commenced operating with its own governance and delivery arrangements. This includes IRPL’s own Chief Executive Officer Nick Miller and Board of Directors, who were chosen for their skills and experience, including in the delivery of nationally significant freight infrastructure projects.

The new subsidiary is responsible for building Inland Rail on behalf of the Australian Government, with each completed section handed to ARTC to operate and manage.



*Our Inland Rail Board of Directors with CEO Nick Miller*

## Collaboration ensures continual improvement and innovation

Sharing sustainability knowledge and collaborating with delivery partners, ARTC and the broader industry continues to contribute to the success of Inland Rail by raising industry benchmarks through innovation and improvement of sustainability systems and processes.

### Innovation celebrated

At the Excellence in Surveying and Spatial Innovation (EISSI) in September 2023, Inland Rail received three major awards, highlighting both the importance of surveying for project and an area where the project is leading the industry.

Hosted by the Institute of Surveyors NSW and the Association of Consulting Surveyors NSW, the EISSI awards recognise and acknowledge excellence in the surveying and spatial industry and help the industry grow and mature through its achievements in innovation, business, and project management.

Surveying contractors Monteath and Powys were recognised for their outstanding contribution to the Inland Rail project and innovative approach to surveying project management. Headed by Andrew Baker and supported by Brett Kittel, Matthew Jasiulec, David Haasnoot and Drew Butterworth, the team won the following two awards:

- Sir Thomas Mitchell Award for best overall project for their work on Inland Rail
- Surveying Project Management Award with their submission *Managing Australia's Largest Infrastructure Project: Inland Rail – A Surveyors Perspective*.

Tom Casey from Casey Surveying and Design also won the Rural Cadastral Surveying award for their work at Carmel Lane, Baradine in support of the Inland Rail biodiversity offset requirements.

### What is surveying?

Surveying is the measurement and mapping of land through mathematics, specialised technology and equipment.

Information collected through land surveys forms the basis of accurate spatial information that Inland Rail is using to help accurately define the boundaries of property and the rail corridor as well as determining the layout and location of both natural terrain and physical infrastructure, like utilities. This informs design requirements, flood modelling and route selection.

Surveying plays a key role during construction too by ensuring the design is accurately represented and the As-built documentation at the end of the project is correct, which is essential for the long-term operation and maintenance of Inland Rail.

### Collaborative initiatives

In the past 12 months, collaborative initiatives have included:

- Providing support for ARTC sustainability ratings on the Botany Rail Duplication
- Hosting three sustainability contractor forums
- Taking part in the Queensland Infrastructure Sustainability Community of Practice and providing secretarial services
- Collaborating with the Australasian Rail Association on the development and publication of their Sustainability Guide.



Surveying contractors Monteath and Powys at the Excellence in Surveying and Spatial Innovation awards (L to R) Mark Pierce, Andrew Baker, Brett Kittel, Matthew Jasiulec]



# 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.





# Objective: Community and economy

## Targets and FY24 progress and outcomes

### Leadership and awareness targets and objectives

### Progress to date

### FY24 progress

#### Active engagement with local communities and stakeholders.



#### On track

- The Inland Rail Program continued to actively engage with local communities and stakeholders
- Since the start of FY23, 11 workforce development events have been held with 170 people from 119 businesses attending
- To date, 556 training competencies have been obtained by 426 individuals through the Inland Rail Skills Academy – of whom 263 are First Nations people. 249 individuals have completed competencies in civil construction courses, 92 individuals in rail industry courses and 85 individuals in other regional priority courses.



#### On track

- Inland Rail hosted 2 workforce development events in Wagga Wagga and Albury, which were attended by 53 people from 30 businesses
- The Inland Rail Skills Academy facilitated 23 construction and rail skills courses for a total of 207 participants – of whom 121 are First Nations people.

#### Opportunities created for skilled local and First Nations workers during construction.



#### On track

The Inland Rail Program has created a total of 2,779 local construction-related jobs and employed 821 First Nations workers on construction projects to date.



#### On track

1,019 local construction-related jobs were created and 123 First Nations workers employed on construction projects.

#### Opportunities created for local and First Nations businesses during construction.



#### On track

The Inland Rail Program has spent more than \$460 million with local businesses and more than \$44 million with First Nations businesses.



#### On track

The Inland Rail Program spent more than \$78.3 million with local businesses and more than \$6 million with First Nations businesses.



## Targets and FY24 progress and outcomes (con't)

### Leadership and awareness targets and objectives

### Progress to date

### FY24 progress

#### Implement and support programs that support community wellbeing.



#### On track

- 427 community initiatives have received more than \$1.36 million from the Community Grants Program
- Since 2020, the partnership between the Inland Rail Skills Academy and the University of Newcastle has supported 51 STEM on track events, with over 11,500 students across 609 schools involved. These events have seen First Nations people represent 10% of participants and females represent 46% of participants
- 26 university scholarships have been granted across 3 regional universities, of whom 4 recipients are First Nations people and 17 recipients are female
- 738 students have been engaged through the Inland Rail supported Grand Opportunities partnership with Grandshake.



#### On track

- 70 community initiatives received a total of \$226,144 from the Community Grants Program
- Over 1,500 students participated in STEM on track events, with the overall representation of First Nations people at these events increasing to 10% and the overall female representation at these events remaining at 46%. A further 167 schools participated in STEM on track events in FY24
- 2 further university scholarships were granted
- The Grand Opportunities partnership completion rates increased from 41% to 57%.

## Partnerships help First Nations youth in regional communities

Industry and workforce participation for local and First Nations peoples and their businesses are being shared through strategic partnerships, capacity building and promotional events and are proving to be mutually beneficial.

Providing opportunities for young First Nations people in regional areas to access education and training will help create a skilled workforce throughout regional Australia. Supporting First Nations-owned businesses in communities along the rail corridor will also contribute to regional development across the alignment.

The project is helping to improve education and practical skill development, supporting life skills, and building the self-esteem and employment prospects of First Nations youth in regional communities on the Inland Rail alignment through two milestone partnerships, the Clontarf Foundation and the Stars Foundation.

- In March 2024, Inland Rail announced a two-year extension of a partnership with the Clontarf Foundation, which targets in-school mentoring, education, and training opportunities to young First Nations men.
- A new two-year partnership with the Stars Foundation was also announced. The Stars Foundation provides in-school mentoring for First Nations young women, and through the partnership, the Inland Rail Skills Academy will offer pathways into the construction and rail industries for these young women.

To help celebrate this double milestone, international rugby league great and mental health advocate, Greg Inglis, joined Inland Rail representatives at James Fallon High School in Albury for a rugby league carnival with students from the Clontarf Foundation and surrounding academies.

In 2020, the State of Origin legend and former Kangaroo established the Goanna Academy, an accredited and Indigenous-owned mental health education provider dedicated to making a change one conversation at a time. Its programs are designed to help end the stigma surrounding mental health and improve social capacity to identify, talk about, and manage mental health, particularly for at-risk groups including males in regional areas, youth, and First Nations communities.

During the event, Greg put the students through their paces with a fun training session and spoke about his own mental health journey.

“ Together, we have the potential to create so many opportunities for our youth to empower, thrive, succeed, and proudly uphold our cultural heritage. ”

**Greg Inglis**  
*Goanna Academy founder*



*Peta Tucker and Greg Inglis, Founder of the Goanna Academy, at the Clontarf Foundation event. (Source: Inland Rail)*

## Economic benefits for First Nations businesses

As a project priding itself in providing regional development opportunities, Inland Rail is delivering economic benefits for First Nations businesses, with more than \$9 million spent with First Nations businesses during the construction of the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 section. The project also employed 372 First Nations workers, including 185 from the local community.

Capacity building and readiness support for First Nations businesses intending to get involved in the project is being offered through dedicated workshops and information sessions.

Inland Rail Social Performance team members attended an event called 'Gather and Grow' networking event in Wagga Wagga in May 2024 and provided First Nations businesses and community members the opportunity to learn how to get involved in future opportunities with the project.

Hosted by Regional NSW and NSW Treasury, Gather and Grow sessions bring together NSW Government buyers, Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal businesses, support services and job seekers to support growth of the First Nations business sector across NSW.

Approximately 80 people attended the event in Wagga Wagga, which proved a great opportunity for Inland Rail staff to provide a program update, and share information on business development, employment and skills and training opportunities in the region that the critical infrastructure project in the region.

“ These events are a fantastic way for us to connect to First Nations businesses and community members, and to share information about the benefits Inland Rail is bringing to regional communities.

We're seeking lasting connections with local workers and suppliers which allow for future procurement, employment opportunities, and business exposure.



**Joel Johnston**  
Inland Rail Social Performance Principal





## Skills Academy puts students on track for a bright future

Developing the job-ready skills of the current and future workforce in regional Australia is imperative for the future of the project. The Inland Rail Skills Academy is encouraging an interest in careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and work readiness among local community members along the corridor through workshops and training.

During FY24, the academy facilitated 23 construction and rail skills courses which attracted 207 participants. These courses included STEM workshops in schools and adult programs in ‘Safely Access the Rail Corridor’, a three-day ‘Rail Industry Readiness’ course, Working at Heights and Confined Spaces training, and a Certificate II in Rail Infrastructure, which prepares participants for rail and construction work opportunities in the future.

Held in regional centres, the training prepares participants for rail and construction work opportunities in the future, providing participants a head start to take advantage of fantastic future employment opportunities along the Inland Rail alignment.

The ‘Certificate II in Rail Infrastructure’ includes mandatory training required for a Rail Industry Worker card, and any potential offer of employment

with Inland Rail contractors. Throughout the course, participants studied modules including work health and safety procedures, fatigue management, rail-install, repair, maintain, and operate minor equipment.

A total of 37 locals from Albury and Wagga Wagga, including 23 First Nations participants, completed the accredited Certificate II in Rail Infrastructure course during FY24, a qualification required to work on the track maintenance crew or as a track worker or track installer.

The academy is also nurturing the next generation of STEM professionals through supporting the University of Newcastle to deliver Science, Mathematics and Real Technology (SMART) tours in regional communities along the Inland Rail alignment.

“ There is no better legacy than helping local people learn new skills that set them up for new careers that can help them build better lives for themselves and their families. ”

**Stephen Jones**  
Inland Rail Director of Health, Safety,  
Environment and Sustainability



The SMART Science Shows are exciting, interactive science shows where students explore the effects of common contact and non-contact forces including gravity, air-resistance, and magnetism. Presenters also investigated ‘spin forces’ and rocket science.

A two-day award-winning Science and Engineering Challenge was also held in Albury-Wodonga and Wagga Wagga, with around 750 local students from 26 schools taking part in the fun, with activities including constructing model bridges, designing earthquake-proof towers, building a model glider, using 3D printed rocks to build ‘fish traps’, and creating codes to send secret messages. The team challenges are helping them to identify future career opportunities in the highly valued STEM sector.

With the aim of inspiring career pathways in STEM-related fields among students in Years 7-10, education program STEM Punks visited three schools in Wangaratta and Wodonga.

Through hands-on engagement, the program connects industry with schools to raise awareness of career pathways and job opportunities within the STEM field, helping to future proof the industry’s workforce needs.

Developed by industry professionals and teachers to align with the Australian curriculum, the in-school delivery of the program is based on Inland Rail-related problem-solving scenarios and Inland Rail staff attend to provide real world connections for students with STEM professionals and share their knowledge and experience of working on one of Australia’s largest infrastructure projects.

“ At Inland Rail sponsored events, we have had over 9,500 students competing in our STEM activities since the partnership launch in 2020. Of these participants, over half are from areas of low social-educational advantage and really benefit from the financial aid provided by Inland Rail.

**Lisa Campbell**  
Team Leader Engagement Science  
and Engineering Challenge





# Environment and heritage

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



## 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.





# Objective: Environment and heritage

## Targets and FY24 progress and outcomes

Leadership and awareness targets and objectives	Progress to date	FY24 progress
<p><b>Enhance ecological value by a minimum of 5%.</b></p>	<p> <b>On track</b> Tracking at a 52% ecological enhancement across the Inland Rail Program. Enhancements are quantified and verified by the IS Council after project construction completion.</p>	<p> <b>On track</b> The Narrabri to North Star SP1 project claimed an 86% enhancement of ecological value in its 'As Built' submission.</p>
<p><b>First Nations and non-First Nations heritage values that have been interpreted and/or enhanced.</b></p>	<p> <b>On track</b> Heritage interpretation works have been completed on the Parkes to Narromine project, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reusing old rail bridge timbers for a community garden in Parkes</li> <li>• A photographic archive of the Pioneer Rail Line.</li> </ul>	<p> <b>On track</b> Heritage interpretations on Narrabri to North Star SP1 progressed, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using salvaged materials to construct interpretive signage at Gurley Railway Station</li> <li>• Historical signage for Bellata, Edgeroi and Woolenget railway stations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>No significant pollution incidents are to occur during construction.</b></p>	<p> <b>On track</b> No significant pollution incident has occurred to date on any of Inland Rail's construction projects.</p>	<p> <b>On track</b> No significant pollution incidents occurred in FY24 across the Inland Rail alignment.</p>
<p><b>No major exceedances of relevant air and noise guidelines during construction.</b></p>	<p> <b>On track</b> No major air and noise exceedances have occurred on the Inland Rail Program.</p>	<p> <b>On track</b> No major air or noise exceedances occurred during construction during FY24.</p>

## Wildlife prioritised with sustainability programs

As part of our commitment to minimising the impact of the project, we are always seeking to protect local wildlife, particularly where their habitat may be affected by construction.

In Victoria during the past 12 months, the Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1 project has installed wildlife shelters near a construction site, donated a termite mound to a local wildlife rescue shelter, provided logs for vital habitat for threatened and native fish, and even rescued a native turtle from the tracks in Victoria.

### Hand-crafted nesting boxes protect local wildlife

Twenty-four nesting boxes were installed near the Seymour-Avenel Road project site by Inland Rail major project contractor McConnell Dowell, to provide safety and shelter for wildlife potentially affected by upcoming site activity.

Hand-crafted by volunteers from the Wangaratta District Men’s Shed, the hardy boxes provide homes for many native birds, bats and marsupial species, including the crimson rosella, turquoise parrot, yellow-tailed black cockatoo, powerful owl, sugar glider and the phascogale.

Made of marine ply, the boxes are strong enough to survive the harsh conditions experienced in the Australian bush and will remain in position near the construction site.

“ The volunteers at the Wangaratta Men’s Shed have done a great job building the nesting boxes. ”

**Ed Walker**

*Inland Rail Delivery Director, Beveridge to Albury*

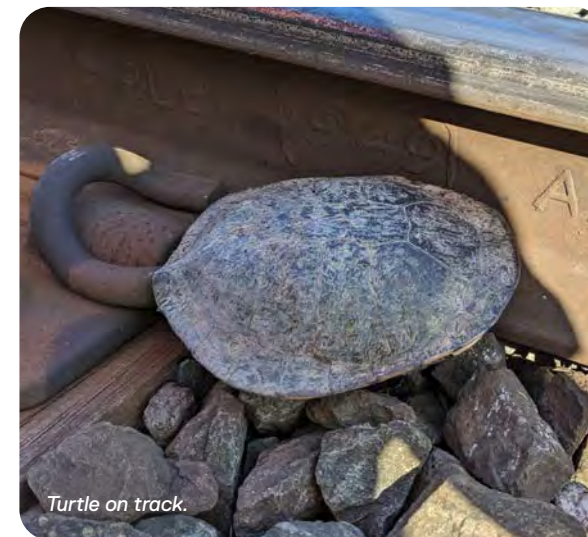




*Timber logs are helping maintain a healthy ecosystem in the Goulburn River.*



*Bubbles the echidna enjoying a healthy feast of termites. (Source: Inland Rail/Murrindindi Ranges Wildlife Shelter)*



*Turtle on track.*

### Local fish habitat improved

Timber logs from project worksites have provided vital habitat for threatened and native fish in the Goulburn River near Mitchellstown, Victoria.

Major project contractor McConnell Dowell has been working with the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority to improve the habitat for fish species, including the endangered Macquarie perch, Trout cod, and Murray cod.

The timber provides important shelter, food sources and breeding areas needed to maintain a healthy river ecosystem.

### Donated termites aid injured echidna's recovery

When a termite mound was located during site establishment works at the Seymour-Avenel Road site, major project contractor McConnell Dowell used the opportunity to provide a tasty treat for a local injured echidna at the nearby Murrindindi Ranges Wildlife Shelter.

A not-for profit organisation run by volunteers, the wildlife shelter happily accepted the unusual donation, with termites an excellent source of protein for animals – and proved to be a healthy feast for an injured echidna called Bubbles, who was able to quickly recover and be returned to the bush.

### Turtle rescue

While working in the rail corridor at Seymour in October, major project contractor McConnell Dowell came across an eastern long neck turtle tucked between the broad-gauge tracks. As per the project's Construction Environment Management Plan, the turtle was safely handled by an accredited fauna handler and relocated to the safety of a nearby creek.



The Late-Flowered Flax-lily is carefully wrapped, ready for transportation.

## Preserving rare plants and animals

Avoiding harm to heritage and the environment during design, construction and operation is an important consideration for Inland Rail.

Our environmental approach is centred on the principles of:

- Avoiding damage to the environment
- Minimising any damage to the environment
- Offsetting any damage to the environment

Using this approach during design, Inland Rail is required to survey the existing environment to understand the flora and fauna species in the region, and any cultural or non-cultural heritage.

Once the existing environment is understood, management plans can be created to avoid and minimise any impacts during construction. If these measures are exhausted, Inland Rail may need to offset the impacts. Although offsets are the least desired outcome, positive environmental outcomes have been delivered at Inland Rail managed sites, and we continue to engage with researchers to undertake further study into flora and fauna species.

With sustainability embedded throughout the project life cycle, our major project contractors are committed to best practice environmental management practices during major construction.

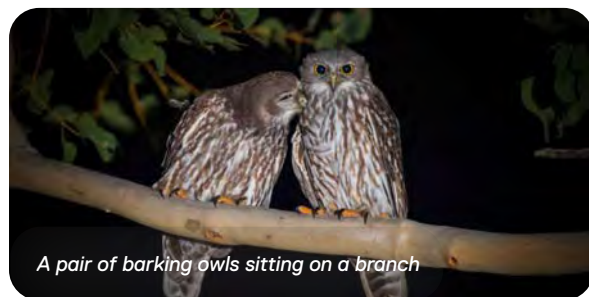
### Rare flower given a chance to flourish

The Late-Flowered Flax-lily has been given a chance to flourish after being identified during pre-clearing ecology surveys at the Seymour-Avenel Road site of the Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1 project.

After notifying the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, the local population of the critically endangered *Dianella tarda*, also known as the Late-Flowered Flax-lily, were skilfully removed and will be cared for at a specialist nursery until they can be relocated to an approved site nearby with the same ecological attributes.

The flowers of the Late-Flowered Flax-lily are an important food source for several species of butterflies and moths and have cultural value for Traditional Owners. Plants outside the works area have been entered into the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas, which ensures that future activities or projects in this area are aware of the presence of this species.

The identification of the species and conservation approach implemented highlight McConnell Dowell's commitment to best practice environmental management practices during major construction.



*A pair of barking owls sitting on a branch*

### Ecologists spot Barking Owls during additional studies

In mid-2023, the project’s environmental approvals team spent several months undertaking additional studies in areas of ecology, hydrology and operational noise impacts to provide further information to the Department of Planning and Environment for the Environmental Impact Assessment for Phase 2 of the Narrabri to North Star section.

One of the requests was for further studies into the prevalence of the Barking Owl, with the project undertaking field investigations at seven sites over a week in early August. During this time, a team of ecologists visited the sites at different times of the night and played a three-minute recording of the Barking Owl’s call to draw a response from any birds in the area.

While previous studies hadn’t identified any Barking Owls, a pair was sighted on the third night of the survey, much to the team’s surprise and delight. The team is now considering how impacts on the species can be reduced, including conserving more habitat as part of the project’s biodiversity offsets obligation.



*Australia’s rarest waterbird, the Australian Painted Snipe, thrives at Inland Rail biodiversity offset site.  
Credit: Ausecology/Inland Rail*

### Rare waterbird thriving at biodiversity offset site

Australia’s rarest breeding waterbird, the Australian Painted Snipe, is thriving at an 800ha biodiversity offset site near Yelarbon.

As part of a research partnership with Inland Rail, researchers from the University of Southern Queensland first identified the Australian Painted Snipe while undertaking monitoring on the Queensland property. It was purchased by Inland Rail in April 2022 as part of a portfolio of properties that will contribute to the offset obligation to protect and manage threatened ecological communities and species habitat that will unavoidably be impacted by NSW/Qld Border to Gowrie construction activity.

The Australian Government estimates that the total population size of the Australian Painted Snipe has declined substantially, with the reported sighting rate of the bird in eastern Australia decreasing by more than 90% since the 1950s.

The Australian Painted Snipe generally inhabits shallow terrestrial freshwater wetlands, including temporary and permanent lakes, swamps and claypans, they also use inundated or waterlogged grassland or saltmarsh, dams, rice crops, sewage farms and bore drains.

Biodiversity offset advisors, Ausecology, have identified and photographed a total of 78 bird species at the site, including the vulnerable Painted Honeyeater, the Brown Treecreeper, and the Glossy Ibis.



### Biodiversity offsets acquired in NSW

Where environmental impacts to flora and fauna cannot be avoided and minimised, biodiversity offsets can be obtained as a like-for-like replacement of these impacts.

During the financial year, Inland Rail acquired 27,523 credits in NSW which will be used to meet the biodiversity offset obligations for Narrabri to North Star SP1, Illabo to Stockinbingal and Albury to Illabo projects. The total amount of credits required for each project is calculated based on the type or flora or fauna impacted and the scale of the impact. Whilst offsetting environmental impacts is Inland Rail’s last principle in our environmental approach, it ensures where unavoidable impacts occur, there is no net loss to biodiversity from our impact.

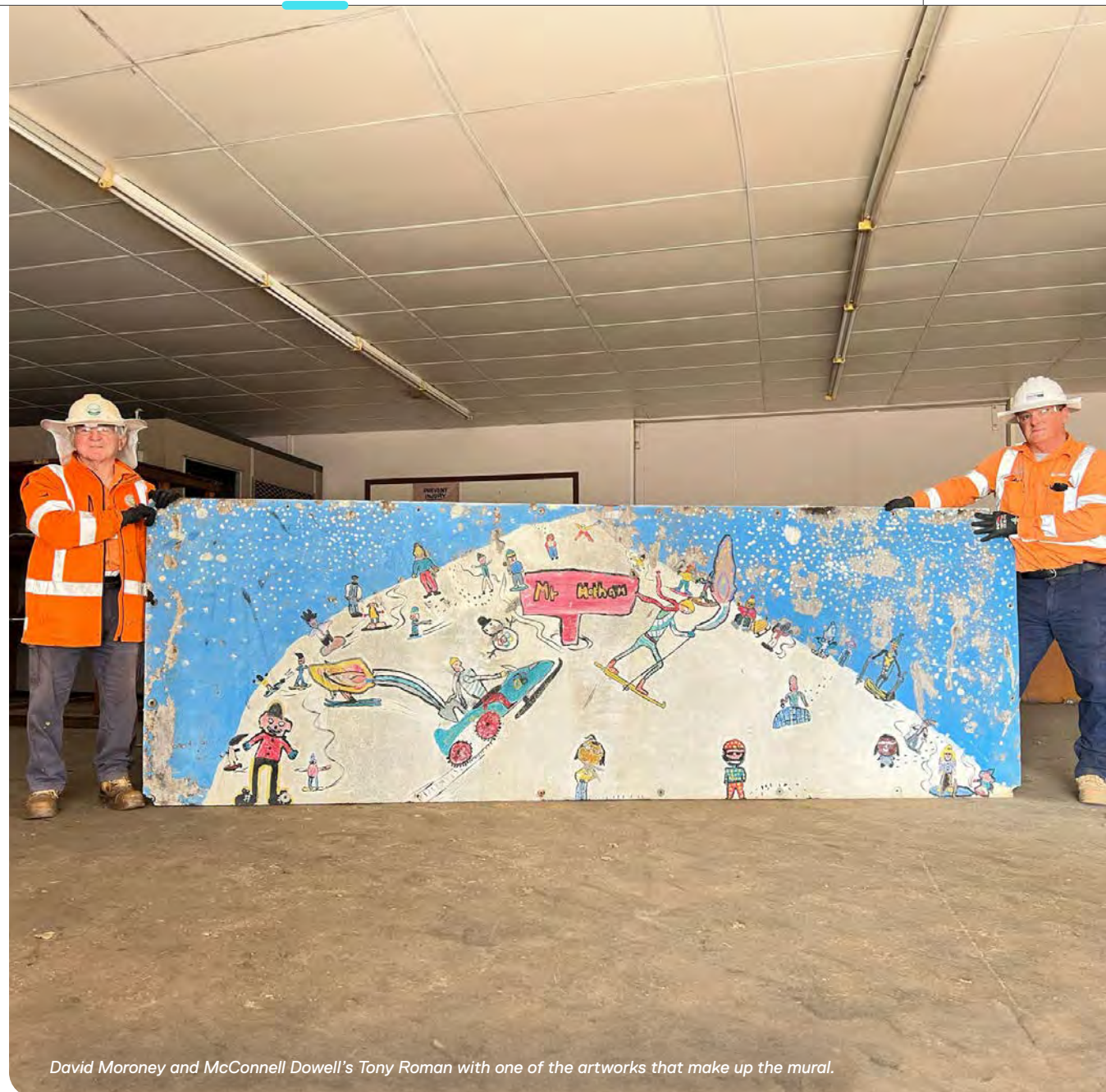
## Preserving contemporary heritage

### Artwork returned to Wangaratta community

A community artwork at Wangaratta Railway Station commemorating the 2000 Sydney Olympics has been saved as part of the Inland Rail works on the Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1 project.

Made up of 18 large painted artworks, the mural had been displayed along the station's lower platform for more than two decades but had to be removed to make way for a new pedestrian underpass, which will provide improved safety and accessibility across the station.

The panels were removed and returned to the local community, with Wangaratta Rail Action Group hopeful the artwork can be restored and placed on display once again in the community.



David Moroney and McConnell Dowell's Tony Roman with one of the artworks that make up the mural.





# Resource use

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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.





# Objective: Resource use

## Targets and FY24 progress and outcomes

Leadership and awareness targets and objectives	Progress to date	FY24 progress
<p><b>Construction water demand reduced by 15% across the Inland Rail Program.</b></p>	<p>✓ <b>On track</b> The Inland Rail Program has achieved a 37.1%* reduction in water demand compared to base case to date.</p>	<p>✓ <b>On track</b> No verification results were received from the IS Council in FY24, to be updated in FY25.</p>
<p><b>Minimum 10% of materials contain recycled content or have low embodied impact.</b></p>	<p>✓ <b>On track</b> The Inland Rail Program is currently tracking at 17.98%* of materials that contain recycled content or have a low embodied impact.</p>	<p>✓ <b>On track</b> No verification results were received from the IS Council in FY24, to be updated in FY25.</p>
<p><b>Greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) reduced by 15% across design, construction and operation.</b></p>	<p>✓ <b>On track</b> The Inland Rail Program is tracking at a 38%* reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.</p>	<p>✓ <b>On track</b> No verification results were received from the IS Council in FY24, to be updated in FY25.</p>
<p><b>Construction waste diverted from landfill:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80-100% by volume of spoil</li> <li>• 50-90% by volume of inert and non-hazardous waste</li> <li>• 40-60% by volume of office waste.</li> </ul>	<p>✓ <b>On track</b> The Inland Rail Program is currently tracking at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 95%* by volume of spoil diverted from landfill</li> <li>• 77%* by volume inert and non-hazardous waste diverted from landfill</li> <li>• 51%* office waste diverted from landfill.</li> </ul>	<p>✓ <b>On track</b> No verification results were received from the IS Council in FY24, to be updated in FY25.</p>

\*based on data submitted to the IS Council

## Diverting project waste from landfill

Implementing initiatives to reduce resource use throughout construction is an important way to minimise the amount of water, material and energy consumption required by projects. Where waste cannot be re-used or repurposed on the project, opportunities are sought for it to be re-used elsewhere in the local community.

### Dirt donated for 4WD training course

At Barnawartha North, 13,000m<sup>3</sup> of soil was removed during a 60-hour rail possession which closed the Sydney to Melbourne line for two-and-a-half days in September 2023 as part of major works to lower the railway line to allow double-stacked trains to pass safely under the Murray Valley Highway bridge.

While some of this soil was re-used to construct levee banks on site, the remaining 5000 tonnes – almost 300 truckloads of dirt – was donated to the Wodonga TAFE driver training complex to reshape their advanced four-wheel drive training course at the campus. The challenging new track is helping locals hone their four-wheel driving skills and improve on-road safety.

Throughout the life cycle of a project, we work closely with suppliers and construction partners to create opportunities to repurpose materials and support communities along the alignment.

### Mulch much appreciated by local students

Vegetation mulch from works surrounding the Wangaratta Railway Station site was donated to the Wangaratta District Specialist School to use in their agriculture and horticulture program.

The mulch donated was welcomed by the Victorian Pathways Certificate students who used the mulch for their landscaping and gardening projects in the local Wangaratta community while developing valuable skills to transition out of school into the workforce.

“ The soil from Inland Rail is a welcome donation as we refurbish parts of our 4WD drive training course. We look forward to continuing to offer a variety of tracks and terrains, providing drivers a hands-on learning opportunity to develop safer off-road driving skills and improving on-road safety. ”

**Jason Atteridge**  
Wodonga TAFE



Agriculture and horticulture students Don, Tori, Aaron and Jack from Wangaratta District Specialist School with the donation of mulch.



### New lease of life for calibration tool

Among the many different types of equipment used in the rail industry, the A-frame rail aligner is a unique-looking precision calibration tool designed to ensure rail is laid at the correct stress-free temperature. The correct stress-free temperature is important because if the rail is too hot it risks buckling, and if it is too cold it risks breaking.

When an A-frame rail aligner is due to be replaced, the device can be reused for another purpose instead of going to waste. One old A-frame from the Barnawartha North site was reused to clamp the rail in position during the welding process to ensure a perfect weld geometry and increase worker safety during track lowering works at the Murray Valley Highway on the Beveridge to Albury Tranche 1 project.



### Innovative energy systems

The Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project completed in 2023 included several sustainability innovations to reduce the operational energy needs of signaling systems.

A passive cooling system was trialled on the Murgoo Loop section that involves passive building design that minimises heat gain and cools the buildings with 26% less energy compared to standard airconditioning.

The operational energy needs of signal huts were further reduced at Coolleeearlee where an innovative solar powered signaling system was trialled. The solar signaling system provides many benefits including:

- Eliminating the need for a 2.2km trench through local properties to deliver mains power to the signaling system
- Savings of around \$300,000 in construction costs
- Reductions in vegetation removal on local properties to create the trench
- Savings of \$10,000 in operational electricity costs annually
- Reduction in maintenance costs as the solar signaling system allows for remote system monitoring of performance and efficiency, removing the need for travel to the site
- Battery capacity providing 10 days site autonomy.

## 20,000 tonnes of steel repurposed

Sustainability was at the forefront of the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 section, which was completed during FY24, with 20,000 tonnes of steel salvaged for future use. Additional steel and other materials were donated to construction projects in New South Wales and Queensland, and to local community groups.

By prioritising reuse principles, the project has prolonged the life of these materials by avoiding them going to landfill, and reduced emissions that would have been generated through the production of new components.

This included five steel spans of an old bridge at Croppa Creek in northern NSW re-used on other ARTC bridge projects in Newcastle and steel repurposed for an access platform for a bridge construction project along the Nerang River on the Gold Coast, and for other projects in Brisbane.

Principal contractor Trans4m Rail also donated the pins connecting sections of track to the local Moree Men’s Shed, with this rail ‘jewellery’ used by members to create hat and coat racks.



At Inland Rail, we’re trying to reduce, reuse and recycle – and are fully committed to building a sustainable future. Striking the right balance between cost, schedule, design, and benefits remains a challenge but also creates exciting opportunities to think and act differently.



**Stephen Jones**  
*Inland Rail Director of Health, Safety,  
Environment and Sustainability*



*Rail, sleepers and rail clips in Moree, NSW.*



# Sustainable procurement

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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.





# Objective: Sustainable procurement

## Targets and FY24 progress and outcomes

### Leadership and awareness targets and objectives

### Progress to date

### FY24 progress

**Implement and track progress against Sustainable Procurement Policy commitments.**



**On track**

Sustainable Procurement Policy commitments continue to be implemented and tracked by both Inland Rail and our construction contractors.



**On track**

Policy commitments tracked during FY24.

**Supply chain participation in sustainability capability building training.**



**On track**

Inland Rail-developed Business Sustainability webinars and document templates have been available for download from the Inland Rail website since 2022.



**On track**

- During FY24, the Inland Rail Business Sustainability webinars were viewed 133 times\*
- During FY24, there were 549 downloads of sustainability capacity toolkits from the Inland Rail website – including 485 downloads of the Sustainability Policy Template\*.

\*Data was impacted by a change from Google Universal Analytics to GA4. Data is only reliable after 1 Jan 2024.

## Boosting regional communities through building capacity and procurement spend

To meet the project’s sustainable procurement objective, Inland Rail is helping local small-to-medium businesses near the alignment to build their sustainability capability through supplier workshops, capacity building for workforce readiness and procurement spend.

### Procurement spend boosts regional communities

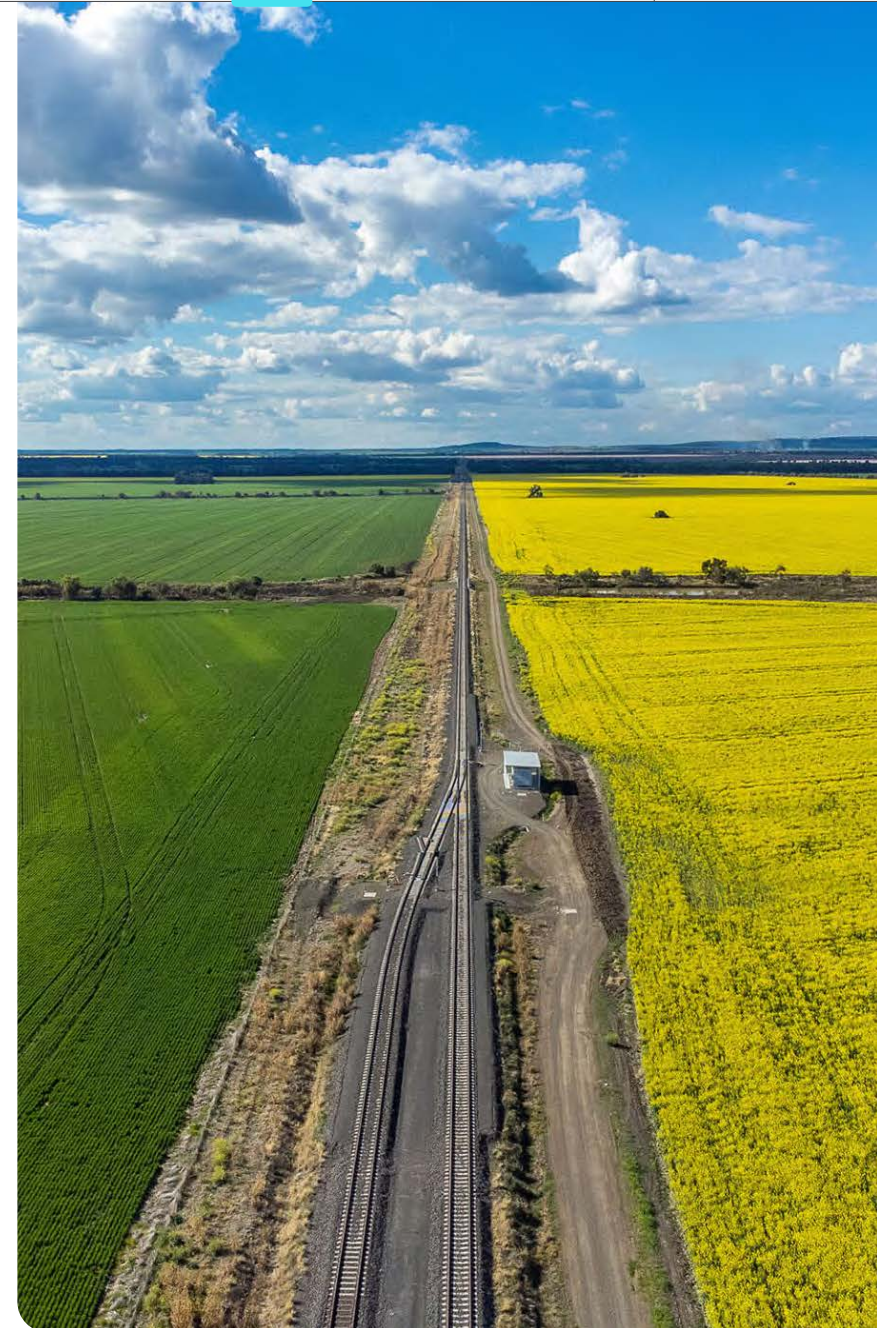
Regional communities in north-west New South Wales, including Moree, Narrabri and Tamworth, reaped a major economic boost with \$244 million spent as a result of construction of the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 section of the Inland Rail project, with 137 local businesses in northwest New South Wales, with nearly \$9 million spent with First Nations businesses.

Local businesses provided a range of services during the project, which started in September 2020 and finished in October 2023, including office fit out, accommodation and catering, workforce training, equipment supply, earthworks, signage, waste services, hardware supplies, plant and equipment hire, electrical and plumbing services and fencing.

The Phase 1 project upgraded 176 kilometres of track along the existing corridor from Narrabri to North Star, providing jobs for nearly 700 local residents, who represented more than 30% of the total workforce on the project, including nearly 200 local workers from First Nations communities.

“ From coffee shops to heavy machinery contractors the positive economic injection was substantial and far reaching. ”

**Mayor Mark Johnson**  
*Moree Plains Shire Council*







### Supplier workshops build capability

In July 2023, around 70 local businesses in southern New South Wales, including 15 First Nations businesses, attended introductory workshops held in Albury, Wagga Wagga, and Parkes as part of Inland Rail’s Supplier Capability Development Program.

Funded by the Inland Rail Skills Academy and facilitated by the local content team with Procurement, the new supplier capability development program was delivered across five workshops over nine months, with one-on-one mentoring support available to participating businesses in between.

The aim of the Program was to assist local businesses to assess and develop the following four key themes in their businesses:

- Being visible and compliant
- Being prepared to tender
- Meeting buyer requirements
- Being prepared for contract management and delivery.

These themes were seen as highly relevant for local businesses in positioning themselves for opportunities with Inland Rail, and more broadly among a range of industries in the region, such as local government procurement, mining, solar, infrastructure and defence projects.

During each workshop – and especially in the final workshop – local businesses met ‘buyers’ from within the Inland Rail program (such as major project contractor Martinus Rail) and other industries in the region.

Over the five-workshop series, 207 regional businesses registered with the program. All received learning material online, and 86 took the opportunity to attend some or all of the workshops in person, with 145 hours of one-on-one mentoring was provided.



We’re just a small business at the moment, but I see with the Inland Rail and other large infrastructure projects going ahead in the area that there is a real opportunity to grow our business, and I want to be a part of that.

“We’re a proud 100% Indigenous owned business. I’d love the chance to bring more staff onto our team and help train them, work with more young people from our community and give them the chance to get skilled up and earn a good living. That’s the plan.

“This is all about making sure we’re ready to get involved when things really get going here. Inland Rail is working closely with communities like ours to create legacies that’ll keep growing long after the freight trains are running.”



**Brad Wighton**

*Owner & Manager, 1st Class Landscaping Services*

### Getting local businesses workforce ready

In April 2024, more than 50 people from businesses in Wagga Wagga, Albury and surrounds took part in two events to get workforce ready with Inland Rail, including structural engineers, steel fabrication businesses, truck and vehicle maintenance providers, labour hire services, and First Nations businesses.

Hosted by the Inland Rail Skills Academy and held at the Wagga RSL and Albury Commercial Club, the free events provided attendees an update on the Albury to Illabo project, an explanation of potential supply chain opportunities for their companies, a snapshot of the local labour market, and information about support available to grow their workforce to take on apprentices and trainees.

Attendees were able to build professional connections and network with employment service providers, local schools, federal and state agencies, Australian Apprenticeship Support Network providers, Regional Development Australia, Workforce Australia, and other related organisations.

“ The Inland Rail project is providing upskilling, training and employment opportunities to local individuals while expanding the workforce of local businesses. We are excited to collaborate with Inland Rail’s Albury to Illabo project and provide support to local businesses and individuals. ”

**Faye D’Helin**  
Employment Facilitator – Goulburn Murray,  
Workforce Australia Local Jobs



Workforce Development Event at the Commercial Club, Albury.  
(Source: Inland Rail)

## Social benefits of sustainable procurement

Engaging local suppliers who provide broader social and environmental benefits is part Inland Rail's commitment to sustainable procurement.

### Supporting businesses guided by a social purpose

Social enterprise is an important part of sustainable procurement. These businesses are guided by a social purpose, like employing people with disabilities or from disadvantaged communities who operate on a not-for-profit basis with profits being donated to charities. When certified by the sector's leading industry body Social Traders, these businesses have a strong and measurable community focus.

Our principal contractors are supporting social enterprise across Inland Rail. In Victoria, for example, major project contractor McConnell Dowell has engaged social enterprise Worktrainers Ltd for its traffic management services and temporary fencing.

Other social enterprises engaged by the project include the following First Nations businesses:

- A2B Personnel Pty Ltd – labour hire
- Cable Containment Services Pty Ltd – drainage supply
- Cycon Monero Group Pty Ltd – bulk earthworks
- Kulbardi Pty Ltd – office supplies and furniture
- Trimble Plumbing Pty Ltd – water and sewer relocations
- Wamarra Pty Ltd – landscape and carpark design
- Yurringa Pty Ltd – labour hire.

### Opportunities for success of local businesses

For Moree-based business Mobas Batteries, the Inland Rail project has led to business growth and a need to hire new staff to service new diversified opportunities. Since buying the business in 2015, owners Craig and Melinda Atherton have seen first-hand how supporting the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 section can expand growth horizons and provide sustainable opportunities for locals – and they are excited about the business and the future prospects of the region.

After moving their operations to a larger operations site in 2019, Mobas have also diversified their offering beyond battery supply and install by hiring a qualified auto electrician ahead of the start of project construction. Having the extra manpower and expertise on site enabled them to expand their range and diversify the once exclusive battery business to include an auto electrical component.

By investing in the business, Mobas have increased non-battery product sales and become a supplier of choice for small and large projects. With a growing product range and a reputation as the first stop for many tradespersons and businesses with parts and accessories, Craig and Melinda are feeling positive about the future, upskilling staff and adding more team members to their roster.



Craig and Melinda Atherton at the front desk of their auto supply business Mobas Batteries.



First Nations Broadford map.

### Building capacity of First Nations businesses

Reducing barriers of entry for First Nations businesses seeking commercial opportunities on the Inland Rail project will provide broader social and environmental benefits across the project footprint.

To help First Nations companies in the surrounding area understand employment and business opportunities on Inland Rail in Victoria, a workshop was held in Broadford in August 2023 with local First Nations businesses attending to find out about future opportunities that might be available as part of the project.

Designed to help First Nations companies better align their service and product offerings with the specific skilling and supply needs of Inland Rail in Victoria, and delivered by the Inland Rail Social Performance and First Nations teams, the businesses learnt how Inland Rail can help build capability by identifying skills and development opportunities and also highlighting potential workforce management and industry participation opportunities on the project.

“ My company is already doing some early works on the project... My advice to other First Nations businesses is to go online, register on the ICN Gateway and get involved in Inland Rail. ”

**Lionel Dukakis**  
*First Nations Traffic Management Director*



# Future operations

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Designing and constructing 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.





# Objective: Future operations

## Targets and FY24 progress and outcomes

### Leadership and awareness targets and objectives

**Sustainability outcomes and lessons learnt shared to encourage uptake in wider ARTC systems and processes.**



**On track**

Sustainability outcomes and lessons learnt shared at the Quarterly Contractor’s Forum.

Ongoing collaboration and learnings shared with ARTC as well as supporting the application of the IS rating tool to the Botany Rail, Duplication and Cabramatta Loop projects.

Inland Rail continue to collaborate with the broader industry.

### Progress to date

### FY24 progress

**Design and construct a resilient asset adaptive to climate change.**



**On track**

Inland Rail maintains a Climate Change Risk Assessment framework and requires all projects to assess client change risk and identify adaptations.



**On track**

- A climate change risk assessment was completed for the Albury to Illabo section.

**Implement and support initiatives that leave a positive community legacy.**



**On track**

Inland Rail continues to support initiatives that leave a positive community legacy. 427 community initiatives have received more than \$1.36 million from the Community Grants Program.

Inland Rail has successfully closed 28 private level crossings, and 3 public level crossings, with no additional level crossings constructed on existing brownfield sections.



**On track**

70 community initiatives valued at \$226,144 were delivered through our Community Grants Program.

## Grain trains back on track north of Moree

Designing and constructing for the long-term outcomes of future operations is a major focus for Inland Rail. As sections of track are completed, they are handed over to the track operator, the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), unlocking a whole range of benefits for regional development and local communities.

During FY24, grain trains returned to service grain silos at Milguy, Croppa Creek and North Star after two and a half years of major construction on Narrabri to North Star Phase 1.

The upgraded section of track between Camurra and North Star was returned to ARTC in October 2023, with the first GrainCorp train in more than six years traveling on the track north of Moree in February 2024 to load canola from silos at Croppa Creek.

For its first trip on the new line, a Pacific National train loaded up to 55 tonnes of canola into each of its 48 wagons at the Croppa Creek GrainCorp site, carrying a total of approximately 2,600 tonnes of product. It was the first of a dozen trains that were loaded out of Croppa Creek in the following month.

The canola was transported to the Port of Newcastle and shipped to Europe. Transporting this volume of canola by road would have required 50 B-double trucks driving across New South Wales, increasing transport carbon emissions.

The upgraded section of track has provided local producers with a more efficient and reliable line to enable produce to be transported to port. The new railway also boosts resilience against extreme weather events and withstood the worst flood to hit Moree in 2022.

Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 was the second section of Inland Rail to complete major construction, following the commissioning of the Parkes to Narromine line in September 2020.

Phase 2 of the project will involve further upgrades and two kilometres of new track north of Moree and is currently in the approvals phase. Once Phase 2 is completed, the upgraded track between Narrabri and North Star will allow freight customers to transport heavier freight volumes at higher speeds through its access to the ARTC Hunter Valley Rail Network, boosting their productivity and efficiency.

“ Delivering the Narrabri to North Star Phase 1 project was always about building a better, safer, and more resilient rail line that would create new opportunities for primary producers in regional Australia...and we are looking forward to seeing more regional benefits in coming years with construction between Parkes and Albury prioritised for completion by 2027. ”

**Peter Borrelli**

*Inland Rail Project Director  
Narrabri to North Star*



GrainCorp grain train on Narrabri to North Star line.  
(Source: Inland Rail)



## Two-year survey upgrades Queensland’s spatial cadastre

A two-year survey of nearly 233,000 hectares of land – equivalent to the size of the Australian Capital Territory – to upgrade Queensland’s spatial cadastre has been completed.

A crucial part of delivering Inland Rail, the spatial cadastre is a digital representation of every parcel of land on the Inland Rail route in Queensland and is used to accurately identify the location of the new rail line and manage land use and ownership along the route.

Working with the Queensland Department of Resources, Inland Rail has updated the spatial cadastre and enhancement of the survey control register of more than 7699 land parcels including 601 easements covering a total of 232,811 hectares.

The Inland Rail team conducted extensive ground-based surveys and used field data to develop detailed and accurate reference files to further enhance and update the accuracy of the spatial cadastre, a great example of the legacy of the Inland Rail project.

The spatial accuracy of the Inland Rail corridor was updated to between 10cm and 1m for more than 300 kilometres from the Queensland/New South Wales border to Kagaru. The Department assessed the survey data against high-resolution imagery to upgrade the current land parcels to represent a more accurate spatial cadastral fabric.

More than 450 new permanent survey marks were added to the survey control register as part of the control network being installed to support the design, construction, and ongoing maintenance of Inland Rail.

These survey control marks are now part of Queensland’s geodetic network and positioning infrastructure, and support the project’s commitment to enhancing regional infrastructure and providing legacy community benefits for future surveying, engineering, road building and mapping purposes.

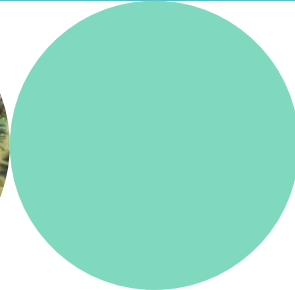
An additional five new continually operating reference stations have also been installed along the alignment to enhance coverage between the Queensland/New South Wales border and Toowoomba. This work was done in collaboration with Geoscience Australia as part of the Positioning Australia initiative.

Updating the Queensland spatial cadastre is an important step in ensuring accurate information is available for use by Inland Rail when engaging with key stakeholders. These new data sets will be used to accurately identify the location of the new rail line and manage land use and ownership along the route.

**Mark Pierce**  
Inland Rail Survey Program Manager



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