



Australian Government
High Speed Rail Authority

Corporate Plan

2024-25 to 2027-28

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

In the spirit of reconciliation, the High Speed Rail Authority acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Mural by *Adnate* in Hunter St, Newcastle West.

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The Authority is proud to support small business.

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Chair's foreword

We, as the accountable authority of the High Speed Rail Authority (the Authority or HSRA), present the 2024–25 High Speed Rail Authority corporate plan, which covers the periods of 2024–25 to 2027–28, as required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act) and Part 5, Section 48 of the High Speed Rail Authority Act 2022 (HSRA Act).

The Australian Government is planning for a future high speed rail network to connect Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and regional communities across the east coast of Australia. The proposed first stage is the Sydney to Newcastle connection, a nationally-significant corridor connecting the two largest cities in NSW.

The Authority has been tasked with creating what a future high speed rail network would look like and how it would operate. The Authority will deliver a business case to the Australian Government by the end of this year for the Sydney to Newcastle section.

One year on from the establishment of the Authority, we have made solid progress in foundational and planning work to build strong governance, organisational capability and actively engage with our stakeholders – the Authority is well placed to achieve its corporate plan deliverables, a precursor to enabling the benefits and opportunities of a new high speed rail network to be realised.

New infrastructure like a high speed rail network connects cities, regions and communities – it supports Australia's sustainability goal, creates more jobs in more locations, giving people greater choice as to where they work and live, while also unlocking more diverse and affordable housing options including social housing opportunities.

Some of the parameters for this development work include a network that can move thousands of people an hour between major cities and regional centres on new world class trains at speeds of more than 250km/h.

A transformational network of this scale delivers massive economic growth opportunities, especially in the development of regional areas. The Authority is approaching its task through an economic growth framework – with a world-class high speed rail network at its core – designed to deliver multigenerational benefits to millions of Australians, transforming lives and giving more people greater opportunities.

I am working closely with my Board colleagues and the Authority's CEO, Tim Parker, as we focus our efforts on bringing the benefits to life.

Jill Rossouw
Chair, High Speed Rail Authority

9 August 2024

CEO's message

High speed rail will connect Australians, delivering more job and lifestyle choices, greater housing options and new opportunities.

The High Speed Rail Authority's key priority is delivering the Sydney to Newcastle Business Case by the end of the year, with funding committed by the Australian Government for this work. Our project team including advisers who are already on board is progressing with analysis design, early investigations and planning.

The Authority will also deliver a Product Definition Report, providing an overview of the full East Coast High Speed Rail Program by December 2024 – both will be provided to government for consideration.

To inform these activities, we are working closely with the community, key stakeholders and industry – including international counterparts – to capture key insights, feedback and recommendations.

The Authority has invited Australian and international constructors, suppliers, service providers, operators, financiers and industry bodies to participate in an industry engagement process. Importantly, we are exploring the potential for long-term partnerships with potential supply chains.

The \$500 million commitment from the Australian Government includes progressing planning and corridor protection for the Newcastle to Sydney connection of which the Business Case is the first stage.

Our team will continue to focus on building relationships and furthering best practice engagement with First Nations peoples, local communities, and stakeholders to ensure recommendations on the planning and delivery of the future high speed rail network are considered.

The benefits of high speed rail networks have been proven around the world over many decades, including supporting hundreds of thousands of construction jobs and delivering massive economic growth when in operation, including new jobs, housing and business opportunities.

In planning Australia's new high speed rail network, priorities include supporting local manufacturing through the National Rail Manufacturing Plan and contributing to Australia's net zero commitments by delivering a sustainable low-emission form of transport.

Tim Parker
Chief Executive Officer,
High Speed Rail Authority

9 August 2024



SECTION 1

Our purpose

Planning, developing and overseeing the construction and operation of a high speed rail network which would connect Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne and regional communities across the east coast of Australia



The Authority was established in June 2023, and tasked with planning, developing and overseeing the construction and operation of an east coast high speed rail network.

The Australian Government is planning for a future high speed rail network to connect Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and regional communities across the east coast of Australia, delivering more jobs and lifestyle choices, greater housing and new economic opportunities.

The first stage connects Newcastle to Sydney – a nationally significant corridor – with a fast, reliable and regular rail link between the two largest cities in NSW.

A transformational network of this scale delivers significant economic opportunities, especially in the development of regional areas, supporting sectors like local manufacturing through the National Rail Manufacturing Plan, tourism and regional growth.



High speed rail will contribute to Australia’s net zero commitments by delivering a sustainable low-emission form of transport.

Designed to deliver multigenerational benefits to millions of Australians, high speed rail will help create more jobs in more locations, giving people greater choices in where they live, work, study and play as well as unlocking more diverse and affordable housing options including social housing opportunities.

The first priority of the Authority is the Sydney to Newcastle corridor with an Australian Government commitment of \$500 million to start corridor acquisition, planning, and early works in consultation with the NSW Government.



LEGEND

-  **Newcastle to Sydney line**
Business case under development
-  **Future potential high speed rail network**
Indicative only

Vision and Objectives

High Speed Rail Authority 12 month objectives

Planning the future east coast high speed rail program comprising a network of high speed rail links between Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane and regional centres



Advising Government on planning and developing a high speed rail network for the east coast of Australia



VISION

To connect Australian regions, cities and communities - and to deliver generations of opportunities.



Delivering the Sydney to Newcastle Business Case and a Product Definition Report with trusted advisors



Engaging with state and territory governments, industry, stakeholders and communities to deliver and maximise the benefits of the high speed rail network



Continuing to develop The Authority's organisational capability and governance systems to be a high performing and efficient delivery authority



Key activities



Product Definition Report

Updating assumptions from previous studies, and outlining route alignment, corridor protection and staged delivery options for the entire east coast high speed rail



Sydney to Newcastle Business Case

Defining proposed corridor alignment and station locations, determining economic benefits, rolling stock, cost estimates and construction times



Industry Engagement

Engaging industry experts to inform high speed rail delivery strategy, construction, operations and opportunities for local manufacture and use of an advanced manufacturing facility



Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Engaging with stakeholders and communities to raise awareness and capture information, feedback and insights to inform planning for high speed rail



First Nations

Working with First Nations stakeholders to map and celebrate local culture and heritage, and support First Nations participation in high speed rail delivery



Sydney to Newcastle: Key benefits

A new connection between Newcastle and Sydney – one of Australia’s busiest transport corridors – will use high speed trains that reach speeds of at least 250km/h. This will bring significant quality of life benefits for people, allowing more time at work or at home, and less time travelling. Our services will also be safe, reliable and comfortable – and allow people to start their working day when they board the train, bringing productivity benefits.

The high speed rail journey will take about an hour – that’s more than twice as fast as current train services.

Travel time from the Central Coast to Newcastle or Sydney will be about 30 minutes.

High speed rail will deliver more job and lifestyle choices, greater housing options and new economic opportunities.



HSRA Values

The Authority's actions and decisions are guided by its values. They are the building blocks of the Authority's positive workplace culture, shaping collaboration, respect and continuous growth.

The Authority's values aim to help drive a nationally significant project that is poised to shape the planning of Australia's future.



Safety and wellbeing

We take responsibility to ensure that how we work and what we deliver will be safe. We recognise the importance of wellbeing for our staff and the wider team and will ensure we create a culture where people thrive



Team work and respect

Our people and our culture drive our success. We value diverse perspectives and treat every individual with respect, kindness and consideration. We work together to leverage each other's strengths, share ideas and overcome challenges, creating a positive and productive work environment



HIGH SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY



Accountability and integrity

We take responsibility for our actions and honour our commitments. We foster a culture of honesty, transparency and ethical decision-making to build trust and respectful relationships



Impact and innovation

Our work is meaningful and will make a lasting positive impact for all Australian's. We are committed to using our skills and talents to solve problems and create a better and more sustainable future. We promote creative and forward-thinking ideas and solutions



Agile and learning

We are efficient and undertake rapid issue resolution to inform timely decision making. We have an openness to learn, develop and embrace change

SECTION 2

External environment

The Authority operates within a complex and dynamic environment, and must navigate challenges and opportunities to achieve its strategic objectives and plan for the delivery of a high speed rail network in Australia. This section provides an overview of the key elements of the operating environment that shape the Authority's approach and recommendations to Government.



Economic context

The global and domestic economic and geopolitical landscape is characterised by significant volatility, influenced by supply chain disruptions and fluctuating market demands. Supply chain constraints, skilled labour shortages, productivity challenges and a range of other factors have resulted in delays and cost escalations, particularly impacting the delivery of major rail projects in Australia and across the world.

Australia's economic performance has been marked by robust growth, but this has been tempered by high inflation, productivity challenges and rising interest rates. Australians are facing the challenge of an ever increasing cost of living. These macroeconomic conditions require careful financial planning and risk management to ensure the viability and timely delivery of HSR projects.

The Authority's strategic response involves proactive engagement with suppliers, implementation of cost-efficient methodologies, implementation of productivity improvement opportunities and continuous monitoring of economic indicators to mitigate potential risks.



Climate change and environmental sustainability

Climate change poses a significant challenge for the environment, communities and the economy, with increasing frequency and severity of weather-related events such as heatwaves, floods, and bushfires.

The Australian Government's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and achieving net-zero targets requires the incorporation of sustainability into all aspects of infrastructure development. Reducing transport emissions via high speed passenger rail will provide a significant contribution to achieving these targets.

The Authority is actively exploring opportunities to integrate sustainability into its project planning and development activities and future operation. This includes adopting best practices in sustainable design and construction, utilising renewable energy sources, and minimising the carbon footprint of HSR projects. Lessons from other major projects, such as achieving carbon-neutral certification and using renewable energy, are being considered to ensure that HSR projects contribute positively to environmental goals with a focus on resilience, resource efficiency, and long-term environmental stewardship.



Population growth and development

Australia's population is projected to grow significantly, particularly along the east coast in major urban centres like Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne, and Brisbane.

This growth highlights the need for efficient and sustainable transport solutions to accommodate increasing demand and alleviate congestion in metropolitan areas. Similarly, the transport task between capital cities and regional centres continues to grow, placing greater pressure on existing road, rail and air connections.

The HSR network is integral to enhancing regional connectivity and promoting sustainable population distribution by providing opportunities to stimulate economic activity and foster vibrant, liveable communities around HSR stations. By integrating HSR with existing transport networks and planning initiatives, the Authority aims to improve accessibility, reduce travel times, and enhance the overall quality of life for residents.



Technological change and innovation

The rapid advancement of technology presents both opportunities and challenges for the development and operation of the HSR network. Innovations in rail technology, automation, and digital infrastructure can significantly enhance productivity, operational efficiency, safety, and passenger experience.

Opportunities to leverage new and emerging technology in the design, construction, and operation of the HSR system are being considered as part of ongoing development activities, including the adoption of advanced rail systems and smart infrastructure to monitor and manage high speed rail operations. Together with industry leaders in the rail and construction sector, the Authority is also exploring innovative construction methodologies, materials and implementation of an advanced manufacturing facility to improve project productivity delivery timelines, reduce costs and minimise environmental impact.



Regulatory and policy environment

Navigating the regulatory landscape is a critical aspect of the Authority's operations. The successful implementation of HSR projects requires compliance with a range of federal, state, and local regulations, including environmental approvals, safety standards, and land use planning. The Authority is actively engaging with regulatory bodies and stakeholders. Effective stakeholder engagement is critical for fostering community and stakeholder support and minimising project impacts.



Housing

The development of the high speed rail network presents a unique opportunity to address some of Australia's most pressing housing challenges by improving connectivity to unlock land for housing. With significant population growth expected in major urban centres and surrounding regions, HSR will support sustainable urban development and enhance the liveability of cities and regional areas.

A high speed rail network along the east coast of Australia will be a catalyst for urban development and renewal and promote affordable and diverse housing options. The Authority is committed to working with federal, state and local government agencies including peak stakeholder groups across social services sectors to help respond to homeless and social housing opportunities along the corridor.

Well located high speed rail stations create hubs of activity for people to live and work by encouraging residential, commercial, and mixed-use development. These hubs improve accessibility, reduce travel times, and make areas more attractive for living and investment.



First Nations engagement

The High Speed Rail Authority is committed to engaging with First Nations stakeholders including Land Councils, knowledge holders and community elders to achieve positive outcomes.

Engaging First Nations stakeholders is an opportunity for the Authority to build long lasting relationships based on trust and respect, and will help inform the development of key deliverables to support Cultural Values, Designing for Country and First Nations Participation.

This critical work will enable the Authority to develop an overarching First Nations Framework which sets measure targets for First Nations workforce and training, supply chain and enable First Nations business capabilities and uplift in the program.





SECTION 3

Operational priorities



An east coast high-speed rail system will revolutionise Australian mobility and population settlement by connecting our cities and regional areas with fast and reliable services that contribute to Australia's net zero emission targets. It will promote improved quality of life, provide opportunities for local skills and manufacturing, and provide better access to public services.

A well planned, designed and delivered high speed rail network will unlock sustainable economic growth along the corridor between the cities it serves. The high speed rail project is an economic project rather than just a transport project.

High-speed rail will provide a range of city-to-city and regional services and integrate with complementary transport

systems. Stations and trains will be designed with the comfort, convenience and safety of customers in mind, equipped with everything needed to work or relax while accommodating luggage. They will also be integrated into high amenity precincts with new and affordable housing and complementary commercial and community facilities.

Product Definition report

The Product Definition Report (PDR) will provide the context of the high speed rail network along Australia's east coast including potential station locations. Building on previous investigations and guided by network objectives, the PDR will inform detailed planning for the high speed

rail network and complement the development of the business case for Sydney to Newcastle. The report will be developed in consultation with stakeholders and be complete by the end of 2024.



Detailed Business Case development

The Authority is taking an important step towards delivery of high speed rail in Australia, with the Australian Government allocating \$70 million to deliver the initial Sydney to Newcastle high speed rail business case and \$8.8 million for additional resourcing.

The business case is expected to be provided to the Australian Government by the end of 2024, having determined important aspects of the new rail network including the proposed alignment, station locations, the type of train to be used and importantly the estimated cost and timeframe for construction of the first stage of the network.

The business case starting point is the base case outlined in the 2013 High Speed Rail Phase 2 Report and findings from the 2019 Strategic Business Case.

Whilst the Authority is using these reports as a starting point, there have been some material changes since these reports were completed including:

- Population and demand forecasts.
- Settlement patterns and changed travel following Covid-19.
- Significant advancements in rail technology.
- New infrastructure being developed or constructed including Western Sydney Airport and Sydney Metro West.
- Adoption of net zero targets.
- Land use changes and new priorities such as housing affordability.

The Business Case needs to take into account changes since the original studies were completed to ensure the information is up-to-date and in line with the current environment. A key focus of the Business Case will be optimising the proposed project to set it up for a successful delivery phase using the process to mitigate risks, provide a robust cost and program for completion, and an optimal delivery strategy.

The Business Case will include a detailed assessment of a broad range of options, including alignment, station and technical options as well as potential delivery, funding and financing pathway.

This assessment will be informed by a range of activities undertaken as part of the business case development including design work, cost benefit analysis, community consultation, industry engagement and geotechnical investigations. This work will be supported by a Product Definition Report which will look at the entire HSR Network including an approach to corridor preservation, broader stakeholder and community engagement, and environmental planning.

The Business Case will align with the requirements of Infrastructure Australia (IA) and provide sufficient information to allow Government to make an informed decision on the project and allow the project to move quickly into the delivery phase.

Major Works Packages

The Authority has engaged experts to help develop and plan Stage 1 of an east coast high-speed rail network between Sydney, the Central Coast and Newcastle.

The Government sought tenders for eight work packages that will support the Authority to deliver a business case for the Sydney to Newcastle section of the high-speed rail network by the end of 2024.

The eight packages include Project Controls (costs, schedule and risk), Rail Operations Planning, First Nations Participation and Engagement, and Commercial, Delivery Strategy and Industry Engagement.

This critical work will help inform important elements of the business case including proposed alignment, station locations, fleet, cost estimate and future construction timeframes.

- Business Case Management Services
- Probity Advice Services
- Commercial, Delivery Strategy and Industry Engagement
- Economics, Finance and Demand Modelling
- First Nations People Cultural and Heritage Advisory
- First Nations People Participation and Engagement
- Project Controls Services
- Rail Operations Planning
- Technical Advisory, Design and Environment Assessment
- Transport, Land Use and Property Advisory



Partnerships and Cooperation

The High Speed Rail Authority recognises the critical role stakeholder and community engagement plays in the planning, delivery, and operations of major infrastructure projects. As a nationally significant program of work the Authority takes its role as a responsible, transparent, and accountable agency seriously. The Authority is committed to creating opportunities to proactively engage with Australian, State and Local Governments, industry representatives, community groups, and First Nations peoples.

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Australia's high speed rail infrastructure will contribute to a number of key Australian Government priorities, including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving housing supply and affordability, and creating thriving regions.

The Authority will continue to work closely with a number of Australian Government agencies, including the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts, to plan and deliver a high speed rail network which will help achieve the Australian Government's national and regional priorities.

STATE, TERRITORY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

State and territory governments are essential partners for planning and delivering high speed rail. State and territory government planning and approval regulations influence high speed rail, and these governments are also responsible for planning and delivering transport networks which will help people access high speed rail stations. Local governments also have a significant role in the successful delivery of high speed rail, including planning vibrant and successful precincts around high speed rail stations along the corridor. Close collaboration and partnerships with state, territory and local governments is essential to support the delivery of a successful, well-integrated high speed rail network which unlocks economic development and improves social outcomes along the corridor. The Authority is working closely with all levels of government to plan high speed rail.

FIRST NATIONS PEOPLES

The High Speed Rail Authority is committed to engaging with First Nations stakeholders including Land Councils, knowledge holders and community elders to achieve positive outcomes.

Engaging First Nation stakeholders is an opportunity for the Authority to build long lasting relationships based on trust and respect, and will help inform the development of key deliverables to support Cultural Values, Designing for Country and First Nations Participation.

INDUSTRY BODIES

We collaborate closely with industry representatives and peak bodies to inform high speed rail planning. Local and international firms and peak bodies have a wealth of experience planning and delivering high speed rail networks across the globe, and it is essential the Authority incorporates their knowledge to allow us to deliver a safe, effective and efficient high speed rail network.

High speed rail can also provide new economic opportunities in regional centres, and the Authority is working closely with businesses and industry groups to understand how high speed rail can best unlock economic development along the rail alignment.

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Our work must be done in partnership with community groups and landholders. We will work closely with these groups to ensure our decisions are closely informed by on-ground local knowledge. We also work closely with these groups to deliver a high speed rail network which builds and grows sustainable communities.



SECTION 4

Managing risk



Accountable authorities of all Commonwealth entities must establish and maintain appropriate systems of risk oversight, management and internal control for the entity (section 16 of the PGPA Act).

The Authority has been committed to establishing a risk management culture from the outset that informs a strategic risk framework. We understand that cultivating a proactive and informed approach to risk is crucial for our success and sustainability. By embedding risk awareness and management practices into our operations, we create a framework that supports our strategic objectives.

Through continuous education, transparent communication and shared responsibility for risk oversight, we are dedicated to fostering an environment where potential risks are effectively identified, assessed and mitigated.



Risk Management Framework

By integrating best practice risk management systems and processes, comprehensive risk assessment, risk informed executive decision-making, committee oversight, and internal audit processes, the Authority has established a comprehensive risk mitigation and assurance process to protect against potential threats and uncertainties.

Key elements of the Authority Risk Management Framework:

- **Risk Management Systems and Resources** – The Authority’s risk management policies, procedures, tools and templates, together with our resourcing strategy, have been developed to ensure best practice risk management. The Authority Risk Framework, facilitated by our in-house and external specialist resources, establishes a systematic approach to risk management, thereby supporting consistency, accountability, compliance and transparency.
- **Comprehensive Risk Assessment** – The Authority has implemented a comprehensive process for the identification, assessment and management of risks with the potential to impact the achievement of strategic, operational and project objectives. In addition, the Authority also seeks to incorporate lessons learned and continual improvement mechanisms in order to leverage the experience and expertise that exists within other relevant Federal and State Government agencies and international organisations and projects.
- **Executive Decision-Making** – Executives and senior management are responsible for making risk informed key decisions at enterprise and project level. The Authority’s decision-making is underpinned by defined risk appetite and tolerance levels, appropriate allocation of resources, clear risk escalation and reporting requirements, and approval processes for risk management strategies to address identified threats and opportunities.
- **Committee oversight** – The Audit and Risk Committee plays a key role in the effective operation of the Authority’s risk management framework. It provides oversight, evaluates risks against appetite, and ensures alignment with strategic goals. Through regular reviews it will identify and assess risks to enhance mitigation measures. Additionally, the committee fosters transparency and accountability, promoting open risk communication.
- **Internal audit processes** – The Authority procured internal audit services to provide important key risk and critical controls assurance by planning and performing regular and ad-hoc audits of the Authority’s operations to enhance risk mitigation, strengthen internal controls, confirm compliance, and drive operation efficiency.
- **Risk Culture** – The Authority’s risk management culture focuses on embedding risk management into our daily business activities and processes. Key strategies include:
 - The Authority’s board regularly considers the impact of risks
 - The Authority’s board uses the risk appetite and tolerance to underpin the risk culture
 - Risk management is supported by robust governance and clear accountability
 - The Authority’s executive exemplifies positive risk behaviour by consistently demonstrating it in their actions
 - Decision makers ask questions about risks and seek more information (as required)
 - Risk management arrangements are clearly communicated throughout the entity
 - Business case and policy proposals include consideration of risk, not just benefits
 - Resource allocation is informed by risk
 - Staff are part of risk workshops and participate in relevant training

Risk Environment and Focus Areas

The Authority recognises successful risk management fundamentally relies on a thorough understanding of the organisational risk environment and the various sources of risk to achieving objectives. Comprehensive analysis of key sources of risks provides the necessary platform for risk identification, assessment, and management including escalation and reporting. The Authority is presently developing detailed risk assessments across a number of priority focus areas, the output of which will inform a range of key decisions and deliverables over the year. Priority focus areas for risk management are detailed in the below table.

Enterprise Focus Areas	Program and Project Focus Areas
Resourcing, Capability, Diversity and Culture	Product Definition, Scope and Objectives
Work Health Safety and Security	Project Justification and Benefits Realisation
Environment and Sustainability	Rail Corridor Planning and Options Analysis
Governance and Reporting	Planning and Environmental Approvals
Management Systems and Processes	Land Acquisition and Land Use
Statutory and Regulatory Compliance	Project Staging, Funding and Affordability
Financial Management and Procurement	Stakeholder Engagement and Communication
Cybersecurity, Data Privacy & Protection	Delivery Strategy, Procurement and Supply Chain
Fraud and Corruption	Operations and Maintenance
Business Continuity and Resilience	Opportunities and Innovation

SECTION 5

Organisational capability



About our leadership

The Authority is governed by a board of five experienced independent members, each bringing experience and expertise in the infrastructure sector.

The board meets regularly, either as a full board or as one of three board committees:

- Audit & Risk Committee
- People & Culture Committee
- Business Case Committee.

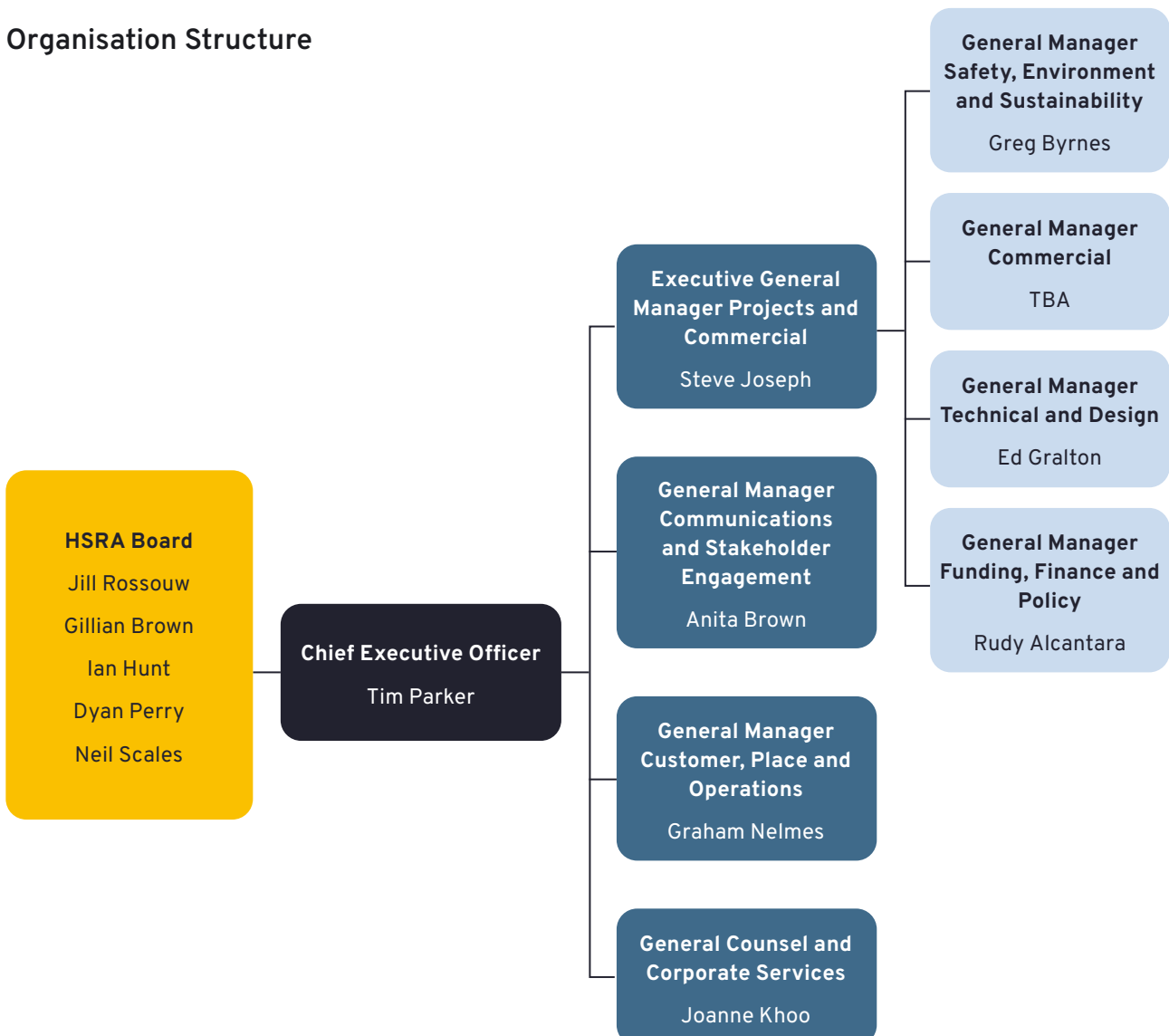
The executive team consists of highly experienced and highly regarded professionals with diverse industry experience and

backgrounds, who are dedicated to driving the Authority towards its strategic objectives. With extensive experience in their respective fields the executive teams collaborative approach fosters a culture of innovation and excellence. The executive team drives the Authority to achieve its goals and deliver value to our stakeholders.

This structure ensures governance, strategic oversight, and a commitment to our core values.

This structure promotes evidence-based decision-making and fosters transparency, accountability, and integrity across all levels of operations.

Organisation Structure



Our priority and focus for the Corporate Plan 2024-25 is to continue to strengthen our organisation by executing a strategy designed to optimise our people, technology and capabilities.

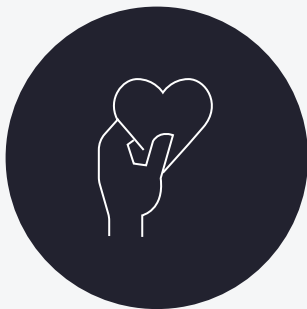
In order to meet the significant undertaking of planning, delivering and overseeing the operation of Australia's pre-eminent, high speed rail network, we need to continue to strengthen our organisational capabilities and effectiveness.

Key priority areas include:



People

Implementing a fit for purpose organisation design building the foundations of high performing culture throughout the organisation through leadership development/training, succession planning, and attracting/retaining, highly skilled and motivated candidates.



Culture

Through various key cultural transformation initiatives, embedding the Culture, Brand and Ways of Working throughout every level of the organisation to promote a healthy, vibrant and positive workplace that is diverse as well as inclusive.



Technology, Systems and Processes

Designing, planning and investing in core corporate ICT infrastructure/solutions and systems to increase operational efficiency, productivity and innovation.

Workforce Capability Planning

Through careful planning, we are building a pipeline of highly experienced, capable and talented individuals to deliver the Sydney to Newcastle Business Case and the Product Definition Report by the end of 2024.

Our workforce capability planning consists of identifying core operational requirements to add strength to the Authority's capabilities. The Authority will also be partnering with leading industry specialists who are experienced at delivering a complex, multi-year, significant high speed rail project, according to a range of scenarios.

Given the dynamic external environment in which we operate, we recognise the need to be agile and thoughtful across our planning and approach.

AVOID DUPLICATION

The Authority will ensure roles and responsibilities are clearly defined to prevent overlap. It will develop standardised processes for training, recruitment and capability assessment that will be followed uniformly across the Authority.

EMBRACE EFFICIENCY

The Authority will implement a new secure IT system. A single platform that integrates various business functions with real time data exchange between different systems.

The Authority will look to automate routine tasks and streamline processes. It will encourage a culture of continuous improvement and clear communication and ensure resources are allocated appropriately, matching skills with the right projects and tasks.

FOSTER EXPERTISE

Develop strategies for recruiting new talent to fill identified gaps. Foster a culture where employees are encouraged to continuously improve and innovate. Implement regular feedback mechanisms to identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments.

EVALUATE OFFICE FOOTPRINT

The Authority currently has offices in Canberra and North Sydney and a temporary project office in Milson's Point. A community consultation hub will also open in Newcastle in early October 2024. Following advice from government on the Sydney to Newcastle Business Case, the Authority will evaluate its future accommodation needs.

FORECAST FUTURE NEEDS

Workforce capability planning will align with the overall strategic goals of the Authority. Workplace initiatives will support the Authority's long-term objectives. The Authority will identify gaps between current capabilities and future needs and predict future workforce requirements.

STRATEGIC COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK

We are committed to the tenets of the APS Strategic Commissioning Framework (SCF), as we build/grow our workforce and will integrate the requirements of the SCF into our processes. Specifically, we will:

- a. Review how existing functions and roles are resourced;
- b. Employ a direct workforce for core work.
- c. Obtain value from outsourced arrangements. Build capability transfer into outsourcing arrangements through identifying gaps in current organisational skills, knowledge transfer (workshops, training, mentoring and job shadowing) and encourage a learning and development culture.
- d. Set targets to reduce the Authority's reliance on inappropriate outsourcing of core work.





SECTION 6

Performance



We are committed to continuing the strong performance that defined our first year of operations. Having met many of our performance measures, we have established a solid track record that positions us well for future success. Our focus remains on achieving our strategic goals, maintaining strong governance and accountability, optimising operations and driving sustained growth, ensuring that we consistently meet our performance benchmarks.

With many key initiatives scheduled for completion by the end of 2024 the Authority consistently tracks both its financial and non-financial indicators to ensure we stay on course. As we move into 2024–25 our top priorities are:

Outcome 1

Developing a high speed rail network between capital cities and key regional centres through policy development and planning, national coordination and strategic advice to enhance Australia’s long term rail investment.

Program 1.1 – Advice supports the Australian Governments objectives for high speed rail.

Performance Measure	2024–25 target	2025–26 target	Benefit	Data source
<p>Sydney to Newcastle Business case</p> <p>Develop a Business Case for the Sydney to Newcastle section of a high speed rail network.</p>	By the end of 2024, deliver the business case including the proposed alignment, station locations, the type of train to be used, the estimated cost and timeframe for construction for the Sydney to Newcastle section.	Support the development of a high speed rail program including a staged delivery strategy.	Provide advice to the Australian Government to support its objectives for high speed rail.	Business case for Sydney to Newcastle document.
<p>Product Definition</p> <p>Develop an updated high speed rail product definition.</p>	By the end of 2024, develop a high speed rail product definition that updates assumptions from previous studies and outlines options for route alignments, corridor protection and staged delivery of entire east coast network from Melbourne to Brisbane.	Support the development of a high speed rail program including a staged delivery strategy.	Provide advice to the Australian Government to support its objectives for high speed rail.	Product Definition Report document.

Performance Measure	2024–25 target	2025–26 target	Benefit	Data source
<p>State and Federal environmental approvals / land acquisition Strategy</p> <p>Develop an approach to progressing state and federal environmental approvals.</p>	By the end of 2024, develop approach to progress state and federal environmental approvals, having due regard to existing frameworks and options for addressing any challenges associated with location-specific issues.	Continue the delivery of the environmental approval pathway.	Informed by engagement with state and ACT governments, to progress state and federal environmental approvals will ensure future high speed rail projects are enabled by efficient and effective assessment and approval processes.	The Authority's board approvals
<p>State and local agreements</p> <p>Develop a strategy to progress state and local agreements.</p>	By the end of 2024, a governance strategy in place to ensure a consistent approach to state and local agreements to support delivery of the network.	Continue the engagement with state and local government and implementation of agreements.	The strategy to progress state and local agreements to ensure the smooth, timely and effective delivery of future high speed rail projects.	The Authority's board approvals
<p>Budget</p> <p>Develop a forward budget.</p>	By end of 2024, develop a forecast budget based on assumptions and budget envelope to align with potential government decisions.	By end of 2025, develop a budget noting that the Authority's ongoing funding from 2026–27 will be subject to future Government considerations.	Approach ensures that financial plans support long-term strategic goals, improves transparency, builds stakeholder confidence and allows for flexible adjustments to changing conditions.	The Authority's board and Audit & Risk Committee endorsement.
<p>Continue to build and strengthen the Authority's organisational capability</p> <p>Continue to review, assess and invest in talent, systems and processes to create a strong foundation for a lean, agile and impactful organisation that is capable of delivering on its Vision, Values and Purpose.</p>	By mid-2025, refresh the organisation design to align with potential government decisions and continue to make key investments in resourcing, systems and processes in order to create the strong governance, compliance and capability foundation for the successful delivery of Government objectives.	Continued review and assessment of enterprise systems and processes to ensure they are fit for purpose and continue to align with the Authority's Purpose, Vision, and Values.	Approach ensures improved performance and productivity, fosters innovation and attracts and retains talent, aids in succession planning and aligns employees with organisational goals.	The Authority's board and People & Culture Committee endorsement. APS Census data.

Performance Measure	2024–25 target	2025–26 target	Benefit	Data source
<p>Continue to raise awareness, build momentum and establish lasting relationships</p> <p>Update and implement communications and engagement plan to build trust, and support for high speed rail planning.</p>	<p>By mid-2024, finalise and seek endorsement on the communications and engagement plan.</p> <p>By late 2024, benchmark stakeholder sentiment through qualitative and quantitative stakeholder market research. Providing an understanding of key issues, needs and opportunities.</p>	<p>Continue to engage with stakeholders and community groups to maintain momentum.</p> <p>Mid-2025 establish corporate reputation principles and objectives.</p> <p>Measure shift in stakeholder sentiment through ongoing engagement activities and outcomes of the qualitative and quantitative insights.</p> <p>Update engagement program to reflect changes in stakeholder interests and needs.</p>	<p>Help brief government on geopolitical environment.</p> <p>Allows Government to establish an understanding of the issues and needs, and a baseline of general stakeholder sentiment.</p> <p>Report on stakeholder issues and mitigation measures.</p> <p>Measure changes in stakeholder sentiment towards high speed rail planning product definition development.</p>	<p>Stakeholder and community market research.</p> <p>Capture feedback from ongoing engagement with key stakeholder and community groups.</p> <p>The Authority's qualitative and quantitative reporting on all the engagements done to date with key themes, issues and recommendations captured.</p> <p>Media reporting to measure sentiment and key topics of public interest.</p>
<p>Alignment with Vision, Purpose and Values</p> <p>Ensure the Authority's activities and initiatives reflect and support the Authority's vision, purpose and values while enhancing economic well-being of communities across the east coast of Australia.</p>	<p>By end of 2024 ensure Business Case has determined the overall economic benefit that the project will generate and a framework for the benefits to be realised.</p> <p>Ensure there has been positive engagement and consultation with stakeholders and feedback is reflected in final Business Case.</p>	<p>Subject to a funding decision by Government move into development and delivery with a clear focus on benefit realisation.</p> <p>Ensure approach to delivery is in line with the Authority's vision, purpose and values.</p>	<p>Ensure there is a focus not just on delivering the project but ensuring it is being undertaken in line with the agreed the Authority's vision, purpose and values.</p> <p>A key focus will be on ensuring the benefits identified in the Business Case are realised.</p>	<p>Through regular surveys and feedback, monitor the Authority has undertaken their work in line with the agreed vision, purpose and values.</p> <p>Undertake regular benefit realisation reviews to ensure approach being taken on the project will ensure benefits identified will be realised.</p>

MEASUREMENT

The milestones and expectations will be assessed against whether they are achieved, partially achieved or not achieved. Evidence to support the performance measure assessment will form the basis of the Authority's Annual Performance Statement.

FACTORS THAT COULD INFLUENCE PERFORMANCE

It is expected that the performance targets would be refined and evolve following future decisions made by the Australian Government and support from state and territory governments may impact on the Authority's ability to achieve the targets.





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