



INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES
Regional Development Organisation
Australia

Annual Report on Outcomes
2022-2023

Chair's report

As Chair of the Indian Ocean Territories Regional Development Organisation (IOT RDO) I am pleased to report on a number of key successes from the past 12 months.

The IOT RDO is funded to facilitate sustainable development in the region, and we are focussed on working with key regional stakeholders to assist the region to become investment ready. The IOT RDO advocates for and works towards the achievement of improvements in local and regional priorities that impact sustainable growth and development, and liveability, that can only be influenced at the macro level.

In August 2022, the IOT RDO published the [IOT RDO 2030 Strategic Regional Plan](#). The plan was developed through research, community and stakeholder engagement, and economic analysis. The Strategic Regional Plan aims to leverage the region's natural and cultural assets and community strengths to foster a more diverse economy and a stronger, more resilient, and capable region. This can be achieved through strategic coordination and collaboration to overcome barriers to investment and economic activity.

The key priorities of the Strategic Regional Plan, which provide the framework for the activities undertaken by the IOT RDO, are to:

- support sustainable growth and development, and improve liveability, for our communities;
- achieve reliable, competitive, and cost-effective supply chains (freight and flights);
- develop regional capability;
- support environmental and sustainability initiatives; and
- maximise sustainable tourism growth potential for long-term business viability.

The IOT RDO Committee started the 2022-23 year with a number of new members from both Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. These appointments resulted in a range of ages and experience, and cultural diversity, on the Committee. Our members work in both the public and private sectors, and in local government.

The enthusiasm and skills of our Committee members and support team have been invaluable in the achievements of the organisation in the 2022-23 year. Our key achievements during this period include: strengthening relationships with key regional stakeholders;

- joining in partnership with the Christmas Island Business Association to commission the independent review of the Indian Ocean Territories (IOT) supply chain, and to form a Joint Committee of key regional stakeholders to oversee the review;
- commencing the co-developing of a draft Digital Action Plan for the Cocos (Keeling) Islands with local government for use in its new role in telecommunications;
- providing the Australian Government, Parliament and key stakeholders with local and regional intelligence to inform decision making;
- advocating for the inclusion of the IOT in the definition of northern Australia for the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF); and
- supporting tourism through construction of the pathway and viewing platform with interpretative signage at Christmas Island.



Rocky Point Viewing Platform, Christmas Island

In addition to the work detailed above, a particular focus of the IOT RDO was to provide information and advice with a regional perspective to relevant Ministers, Australian Government agencies and the Australian Parliament. In the next reporting period, we will continue to advocate for improvements in local and regional priorities.

I commend the work of the IOT RDO, the commitment of our 2022-23 members, and the outcomes achieved over the reporting period.

Farzian Zainal

Ms Farzian Zainal

Chair, Indian Ocean Territories Regional Development Organisation

Administrator, Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands



An Australian Government Initiative



INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES
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Introduction

About the IOT RDO

The IOT RDO is one of 50 organisations located across Australia that are part of the national [Regional Development Australia \(RDA\)](#) network, funded by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA). The RDA network comprises regional Committees made up of local leaders who work with all levels of government, business, and community groups to facilitate and support economic development in their regions. The IOT RDO works to facilitate sustainable development in the IOT, and to build strong and confident local economies on both Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

The IOT RDO Committee is chaired by the Administrator of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Ms Farzian Zainal, who is the most senior Australian Government representative residing in the IOT. The IOT RDO Committee is a group of volunteers drawn from the public, private, local government, and not-for-profit sectors who represent our communities. Our 2022-23 Committee members were Thomas Battcher, John Clunies-Ross, Michael Kirkpatrick, Stephanie Lai and David McKinney. Support for the Committee and the management of the operations of the organisation is provided by Bianca McKinney, IOT RDO Program Manager. Additional resources are provided by staff within the Office of the Administrator and external specialist consultants as required.

About the IOT

Australia’s remote IOT, comprised of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, boast unique natural assets of flora and fauna and marine life, and cultural assets from their multicultural communities. The region is environmentally important - a large part of Christmas Island is a national park, and marine parks have been declared throughout the IOT.



Leveraging these natural assets and community strengths through strategic coordination and collaboration, to create clear pathways to overcome barriers to investment and economic activity, will result in a more diverse economy and a stronger, resilient, and capable region.

Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands are close neighbours geographically and share similar challenges and opportunities, such as remoteness, climate, and proximity to Asia. However, they are also different in terms of demographics, aspirations, and potential opportunities for development.

The territories of Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands are administered by DITRDCA on behalf of the Minister with responsibility for the territories. An Administrator, appointed by the Governor-General, represents the Minister in the region. With no state level of government, the Australian Government is responsible for the provision of state-type laws and services. Local governments on Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands are responsible for local governance and the provision of local government services.

2030 Strategic Regional Plan

Overview

The IOT RDO Strategic Regional Plan is focussed on the entire IOT region. However, it also identifies, acknowledges, and addresses specific areas to ensure it is relevant for the individual communities, business, government and potential investors.

Strategic Regional Priorities

Economic transition planning will reduce the impact of industry disruption, such as the closure of mining on Christmas Island, and enable the region to leverage benefits of growing industries such as environmental sustainability markets, and the visitor economy.

The following key priorities of the Strategic Regional Plan were identified through research, engagement and analysis:

- Support sustainable growth and development, and improve liveability for our communities.
- Achieve reliable, competitive, and cost-effective supply chains (freight and flights).
- Support environmental and sustainability initiatives.
- Develop regional capability.
- Maximise sustainable tourism growth potential for long-term business viability.

Core principles

The Strategic Regional Plan and the work of the IOT RDO is underpinned by these core principles:

- Strive to improve governance, service delivery and funding arrangements through collaboration, genuine partnership, and trust with the Australian Government.
- Strive to maintain and leverage the region's natural, environmental, and cultural assets, and to share these with others while balancing local community needs to ensure equity.
- Think strategically and act locally so that everyone enjoys the benefits.
- Acknowledge the requirement to transition the economy from a narrowly-based and underdeveloped market, to a diversified and more robust market-driven economy.
- Build trust with the community, business, government and key international partners.
- Continue to focus on opportunities and engage in challenges through a problem-solving approach adopting innovation and new technologies to drive efficiency.
- Build transparent communication, engagement, reporting and monitoring.

Summary of key strategic priorities and business activities

Top five strategic priorities for the region

1. Support sustainable growth and development, and improve liveability, for our communities.
2. Achieve reliable, competitive, and cost-effective supply chains (freight and flights).
3. Develop regional capability.
4. Support environmental and sustainability initiatives.
5. Maximise sustainable tourism growth potential for long-term business viability.

Top five key business activities for 2022-23

1. Seek Australian Government commitment to engage in and co-fund a co-design process to develop a robust regional engagement framework with the IOT RDO and other key regional stakeholders; and engage external specialist consultants to support the development and implementation of the framework.
2. Seek Australian Government commitment to conduct a detailed, independent critical review and analysis of the supply chain management model and system; implement recommendations for improvement; monitor and evaluate to inform ongoing improvements; and co-design the terms of reference with the IOT RDO and other key regional stakeholders.
3. Determine the possible benefits of developing a Digital Action Plan using the framework developed by NBN for the RDA network and, if beneficial, use the framework to develop a baseline and forward plan for telecommunications in the IOT.
4. Complete the construction of the pathway and Indian Ocean viewing platform at Christmas Island.
5. Provide regular updates on regional development issues to the Australian Government and other key stakeholders.



Supply ship and barge at the Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Photo credit: Shak Keegan

Implementation of the IOT RDO Annual Business Plan 2022-23

The Annual Business Plan is structured to the IOT RDO's 2030 Strategic Regional priorities and focus areas.

| Workplan Level | IOT RDO role | Status | 2030 Strategic Priority & Implementation Activity | What did we do? | Outcomes | Link to RDA Outcome |
|---|---------------|-------------|--|---|--|----------------------------|
| 2030 Strategic priority: Support sustainable growth and development and improve liveability for our communities. | | | | | | |
| Focus Area: Develop and implement an IOT regional engagement framework that brings together all levels of government, the private sector, and other key regional stakeholders to facilitate discussion and collaboration, and to agree on actions and timeframes for the achievement of outcomes. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: Government, the private sector and other key regional stakeholders are all engaged at different levels to implement solutions and remove barriers to sustainable economic development and liveability improvements in the region. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/champion | In Progress | Seek Australian Government commitment to engage in a co-design process to develop a robust regional engagement framework with the IOT RDO and other key regional stakeholders. | - In May 2023, a funding proposal was submitted to DITRDCA for the co-design of a regional engagement framework (unsuccessful). - The IOT RDO will therefore seek to fund the project through both operational funds and co-funding from other sources. - Another meeting will be requested with DITRDCA to determine level of interest in being actively involved in the co-design of the framework. | - While this initiative is yet to formally commence, it will be informed by the learnings from the Joint Committee for the IOT Supply Chain Review. The Joint Committee provides a case study of how a regional engagement framework can be operationalised. | - Outcome 1 - Outcome 3 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/champion | In Progress | Engage external specialist consultants to work with the IOT RDO to conduct a detailed stakeholder analysis to inform the engagement framework. | - A quote was sought from external consultants to work with the IOT RDO and key stakeholders to co-design the regional engagement framework. | - While the IOT RDO has some budget allocated for this work, further funding will need to be secured for this component to progress. | - Outcome 1 - Outcome 3 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/champion | Not Started | Draft and finalise an agreed engagement framework that meets the needs of DITRDCA, IOT RDO and other identified key stakeholders. | - Nil activity in the reporting period. | - This activity is included in the IOT RDO Annual Business Plan 2023-24. | - Outcome 1 - Outcome 3 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/champion | Not Started | Implement the engagement framework, including a monitoring and review period as required. | - Nil activity in the reporting period. | - This activity is included in the IOT RDO Annual Business Plan 2023-24. | - Outcome 1 - Outcome 3 |
| Focus Area: Develop and implement a feedback and communications framework for the various levels of stakeholders in the region to enable two-way communication regarding macro-level issues. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: Stakeholder groups in the region have two-way channels for communication, and all communication and engagement occur in ways that will suit and benefit each stakeholder group. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/champion | Not Started | As part of the engagement framework, develop a feedback and communications framework and implement recommendations. | - Nil activity in the reporting period. | - This activity is included in the IOT RDO Annual Business Plan 2023-24. | - Outcome 1 - Outcome 3 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/Champion | Complete | Re-design the IOT RDO website to enable better communication with stakeholders and easier access to information. | - Minor updates were made to the IOT RDO website in November 2022. | - The minor re-design of the website was completed, which included promoting the Strategic Regional Plan and improving the layout. | - Outcome 2 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/Champion | In Progress | Expand the IOT RDO's existing publicly available imagery assets by commissioning new imagery that captures our multi-cultural communities. | - In May 2023, new images were sourced from a local CKI photographer, and an image use agreement was executed. | - The IOT RDO's imagery assets for CKI that capture the multi-cultural community was expanded. - New imagery for CI will be addressed in the next reporting period. | - Outcome 2 |

| Workplan Level | IOT RDO role | Status | 2030 Strategic Priority & Implementation Activity | What did we do? | Outcomes | Link to RDA Outcome |
|--|---------------|-------------|---|--|---|--|
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/Champion | Ongoing | Continue to provide regular updates on regional development issues to the Australian Government and other key stakeholders. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Throughout 2022-23, the IOT RDO partook in at least 18 engagements with the Australian Government, including five in-person meetings. - Between August 2022 and May 2023, the IOT RDO completed six surveys/submissions to: Jobs Summit, Growing Regions Program, Inquiry into the NAIF Amendment Bill 23, Public Works Committee Inquiry in Seawater Reverse Osmosis Plant Project, and revisions of the NAIF funding requirements. - 11 updates to stakeholders were disseminated through the IOT RDO Community Newsletters and News from the IOT RDO. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Australian Government and local government relationships were further developed and fostered by the IOT RDO throughout the year. - Regional intelligence was provided to the Australian Government. - The IOT RDO maintained a good working relationship with DITRDCA, which is integral to progressing strategic initiatives and activities for the region. - The IOT RDO's advocacy contributed to the changing of the NAIF legislation and projects in the IOT are now eligible to apply for finance. - The IOT communities were kept informed of the activities of the IOT RDO. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outcome 2 - Outcome 3 |
| Focus Area: Achieve improvements in local and regional priorities that impact sustainable growth and development and liveability that can only be influenced at the macro level. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: Improvements in priority areas | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Contribute to | Ongoing | Advocate for improvements in priorities including but not limited to freight and flights, telecommunications, waste, land availability, streamlining of regulatory processes, renewables, housing, insurance, finance and funding opportunities. | - Details about these activities are provided throughout the outcomes table. | - Details about the outcomes of these activities are provided throughout the outcomes table. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outcome 1 - Outcome 3 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/Champion | Not Started | When investment conditions improve revisit/revise the IOT RDO Investment Prospectus. | - Nil activity in the reporting period. | - This activity is included in the IOT RDO Annual Business Plan 2023-24. | - Outcome 1 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Contribute to | Not Started | Advocate for a strategic, open and coordinated approach to assets and infrastructure mapping, including identifying local and regional priorities. | - Nil activity in the reporting period. | - This activity is included in the IOT RDO Annual Business Plan 2023-24. | - Outcome 1 |
| 2030 Strategic priority: Achieve reliable, competitive, and cost-effective supply chains (freight and flights) | | | | | | |
| Focus Area: Conduct a detailed, independent critical review and analysis of the supply chain management model and system, and implement recommendations for improvement, with monitoring and evaluation to inform ongoing improvements. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: Improved reliability and efficiency of supply chains to better support the movement of people, goods, and services into and across the IOT, resulting in business and development opportunities, and improvements in liveability for our communities. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/Champion | In Progress | Seek commitment from the Australian Government to: conduct a detailed, independent critical review and analysis of the supply chain management model and system; implement recommendations for improvement; monitor and evaluate to inform ongoing improvements; and co-design the terms of reference with the IOT RDO and other key regional stakeholders. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In December 2022, the IOT RDO and CIBA joined in partnership to commission an independent review of the IOT supply chain. - A joint committee of key regional stakeholders was formed, to provide project governance and to take a central role in the review. The joint committee has participated in decision making, provided operational direction and stakeholder input, and monitored the project. - Representatives from the IOT RDO, CIBA, Shire of Christmas Island, Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands, and the local Member of Parliament Ms Marion Scyrmgour are members of the joint committee. - The IOT RDO provided the governance framework for the joint committee, and undertook a co-Secretariat role with CIBA. - In May 2023, external consultants were engaged and commenced the supply chain review including stakeholder engagement. - Refer to the case study in this report for further details. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The joint committee of key regional stakeholders was formed by the IOT RDO and CIBA, and secretariat support was provided for the committee. - The supply chain review was commenced. Refer to the case study in this report for further details. - This activity will be completed in the next reporting period. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outcome 1 - Outcome 3 |

| Workplan Level | IOT RDO role | Status | 2030 Strategic Priority & Implementation Activity | What did we do? | Outcomes | Link to RDA Outcome |
|---|------------------|-------------|--|---|---|----------------------------|
| 2030 Strategic priority: Support environmental and sustainability initiatives. | | | | | | |
| Focus Area: Investigate and implement mitigations and solutions to the impacts of projected sea-level rise and climate change impacts at the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: The local community and stakeholders are supported during the Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Planning (CHRMAP) process, and mitigations and solutions are implemented. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Otherwise assist | In Progress | Support the local community and stakeholders during the Coastal Hazard Risk Management and Adaptation Planning (CHRMAP) process. | - The IOT RDO monitored the progress of the CHRMAP process. | - The IOT RDO will discuss the ramifications on sustainable development at CKI once the final report is released. | - Outcome 1 - Outcome 2 |
| Focus Area: Implement mitigations to manage the risks of storm water, flooding, landslide and rockfall on Christmas Island. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: Residences and infrastructure on Christmas Island are protected and preserved, and key areas remain safe destinations to live, work and visit. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Otherwise assist | Not Started | Support the implementation of recommendations from the Christmas Island Stormwater, Landslide and Rockfall Mitigation Works Project. | - Nil activity in the reporting period. | - This activity is included in the IOT RDO Annual Business Plan 2023-24. | - Outcome 1 - Outcome 3 |
| Focus Area: Develop and implement waste management solutions that enable the region to become a leader in waste management for remote islands. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: New solutions and uses for waste are identified and implemented, and new investment in waste management and specifically in new technologies suitable for remote regions is realised. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Otherwise assist | In Progress | Support the Australian Government and local governments in the development and implementation of waste management strategies. | - In July 2023, the IOT RDO informed SOCKI that it would welcome the opportunity to support SOCKI on the waste strategy and implementation plan. | - Collaboration and support were offered to SOCKI to progress the waste strategy and implementation plan. | - Outcome 1 - Outcome 2 |
| Focus Area: Unlock the potential of renewable energy technology to power the region. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: The barriers to the progression of renewable energy projects are removed, with the potential of providing significant savings to government and improving energy security. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Otherwise assist | Not Started | Support initiatives that progress renewable energy solutions and the transition from a reliance on imported fossil fuels to clean energy. | - The IOT RDO monitored the progress of the process to engage a consortium to build the 1MW project on CI. | - The IOT RDO will discuss further advocacy in this area in the next reporting period. | - Outcome 1 |
| Focus Area: Protect marine life and surrounding marine waters and ecosystems. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: Marine life and surrounding marine waters and ecosystems are prioritised and supported, including support for marine research opportunities and marine park initiatives and programs. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Contribute to | In Progress | Support funding of and long-term investment in marine research opportunities. | - Throughout 2022-23, the IOT RDO and IOT Marine Parks met on numerous occasions to discuss where business activities align and ideas for future collaboration. | - The relationship with IOT Marine Parks was further strengthened for future activities. | - Outcome 1 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Otherwise assist | Not Started | Engage with and support Parks Australia on the upcoming Marine Park Management Plans for Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. | - Nil activity in the reporting period. | - This activity was not commenced during the reporting period, and was not considered a priority for inclusion in the 2023-24 Annual Business Plan. | - Outcome 3 |

| Workplan Level | IOT RDO role | Status | 2030 Strategic Priority & Implementation Activity | What did we do? | Outcomes | Link to RDA Outcome |
|---|------------------|-------------|--|--|--|---------------------|
| Focus Area: Preserve and maintain terrestrial ecosystems. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: Terrestrial ecosystems are prioritised and supported, including support for research opportunities and national park initiatives and programs. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Otherwise assist | Not Started | Support ongoing terrestrial research, preservation projects and related activities. | - Nil activity in the reporting period. | - This activity is included in the IOT RDO Annual Business Plan 2023-24. | - Outcome 1 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Otherwise assist | Not Started | Engage with and support Parks Australia on the upcoming National Park Management Plans for Christmas Island and Pulu Keeling. | - Nil activity in the reporting period. | - This activity was not commenced during the reporting period, and was not considered a priority for inclusion in the 2023-24 Annual Business Plan. | - Outcome 3 |
| 2030 Strategic priority: Develop regional capability. | | | | | | |
| Focus Area: Improve telecommunications and digital connectivity. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: Improved telecommunications and digital connectivity across the region, including equitable access to fast and reliable internet and mobile telecommunications. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Contribute to | In Progress | Continue to monitor and support telecommunications and connectivity initiatives to enable businesses to operate and grow, for our communities to be connected, and to support the visitor economy. | - The IOT RDO continually monitored initiatives for CI and CKI telecommunications, and Australian Government funding announcements that could improve digital connectivity. | - The IOT RDO drafted a letter of support for CI Fibre Internet's application for funding under the latest round of the Regional Connectivity Fund, which will be used to offset the cost of accessing fibre on CI. | - Outcome 1 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/Champion | In Progress | Determine the possible benefits of developing a Digital Action Plan using the framework developed by NBN for the RDA network and, if beneficial, use the framework to develop a baseline and forward plan for telecommunications in the IOT. | - During August 2022 and February 2023, three meetings were held with the NBN Community Engagement Manager (WA) to discuss the development of digital action plans for CI and CKI. - In March 2023, the IOT RDO commenced the first phase of the project (desktop review) and the first draft of the CKI Digital Action Plan was drafted. - In May 2023, upon learning of SOCKI's new interest in CKI telecommunications, the IOT RDO shared the draft CKI Digital Action Plan with SOCKI to use in any form and as it sees fit for its work in this area, and offered to provide informal support as required. - In May 2023, IOT RDO discussed telecommunications on CI with CIBA. - In June 2023, the NBN Community Engagement team visited CKI and met with key stakeholders including the IOT RDO, and community members. | - The IOT RDO's work on the draft CKI Digital Action Plan was provided to SOCKI for further development and to support its new involvement in telecommunications. - The development of an action plan for CI will be actioned in the next reporting period. | - Outcome 1 |

| Workplan Level | IOT RDO role | Status | 2030 Strategic Priority & Implementation Activity | What did we do? | Outcomes | Link to RDA Outcome |
|--|---------------|-------------|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| Focus Area: Support the development of local business capability and capacity. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: Local businesses have the capability and capacity to realise their potential, and to obtain maximum benefits from emerging opportunities. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/Champion | Not Started | Continue to explore options for the provision of professional development, including mentoring and other capacity building initiatives for local businesses. | - Nil activity in the reporting period. | - This activity is included in the IOT RDO Annual Business Plan 2023-24. | - Outcome 1 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/Champion | Ongoing | Continue to identify and advocate for grant funding and finance opportunities, and disseminate information about opportunities to the local community. | - Between September 2022 and June 2023, the IOT RDO advertised grant opportunities on six occasions in The Atoll and The Islander, and published the information on the IOT RDO website. | - Grant funding and finance opportunities were monitored and identified. - Local entities were aware of funding and finance opportunities as they arose. | - Outcome 1 - Outcome 2 |
| Focus Area: Support local and regional employment, and workforce development. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: Local and regional employment and workforce development initiatives are supported, and prepare the workforce for the jobs of the future. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Contribute to | Not Started | Monitor Christmas Island Business Association (CIBA) training and workforce development initiatives funded by DITRDCA, and, where appropriate, seek funding to mirror on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. | - Nil activity in the reporting period. | - This activity is included in the IOT RDO Annual Business Plan 2023-24. | - Outcome 1 |
| Focus Area: Increase the benefits of major projects to our local communities. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: Major government and privately funded projects are leveraged to provide direct benefit to our local communities, including but not limited to promotion of the regional business community and skills, and achievement of outcomes across employment, training, contracts, goods and services and legacy infrastructure. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/Champion | In Progress | Continue to maintain and promote the IOT Business Directory. | - The IOT Business Directory was maintained and promoted throughout 2022-23. | - The IOT Business Directory provided investors, businesses and contractors with a platform to identify local sources of personnel and expertise for their projects. - As the IOT economy continues to evolve, it is resources like the IOT Business Directory that will assist with local suppliers and businesses being at the forefront of new economic opportunities. | - Outcome 1 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Contribute to | In Progress | Identify and leverage major projects to provide direct benefit to our local communities. | - The IOT RDO continually monitors project announcements for opportunities to promote the use of local businesses. - In November 2022, the IOT RDO met with the airfield upgrade project team for a briefing and information session. - In March 2022, the IOT RDO met with the Public Works Committee during its visit to CI. The Committee was given a copy of the IOT Strategic Regional Plan, and engagement of local contractors was discussed. | - The airfield upgrade project team confirmed that all efforts are being made to use local contractors for the project. | - Outcome 1 |

| Workplan Level | IOT RDO role | Status | 2030 Strategic Priority & Implementation Activity | What did we do? | Outcomes | Link to RDA Outcome |
|--|---------------|-------------|---|--|---|----------------------------|
| 2030 Strategic priority: Maximise sustainable tourism growth potential for long-term business viability. | | | | | | |
| Focus Area: Build the visitor economy, while respecting social, cultural and environmental needs of the community and other key regional stakeholders. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: Initiatives that improve experiences, lengthen the tourism season and target higher yield tourists to build the visitor economy in a sustainable way are implemented. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Contribute to | In Progress | Support efforts to improve experiences, lengthen the tourism season, and target higher yield tourists to build the visitor economy. | - Throughout 2022-23, the IOT RDO had numerous meetings with stakeholders regarding tourism at CI and CKI. | - IOT RDO partnerships and networks are being utilised to explore location-specific tourism events and opportunities for the region which build the visitor economy. | - Outcome 1 |
| Focus Area: Improve tourism assets, infrastructure and services. | | | | | | |
| Regional Benefit: A coordinated approach to upgrading existing or developing new tourism assets, infrastructure and services is undertaken to maximise benefits to the wider community and visitors. | | | | | | |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Lead/Champion | In Progress | Complete the construction of the walking/cycling path and Indian Ocean viewing platform at Christmas Island. | - Installation of a pathway, solar bollards and a viewing platform at CI was completed in November 2022. - In February 2023, the pathway, solar bollards and viewing platform opened to the public and the assets were transferred to IOTA, DITRDCA. - In June 2023, a final project report and audit was submitted to the Grants Hub. | - The pathway from Rocky Point through Settlement to Tea Garden provides a public amenity for both tourists and the local community. The viewing platform is a significant addition to the island's infrastructure for tourists, and the informative signage, co-developed with Parks Australia, promotes both the marine and national parks. - From a tourism perspective, the pathway and platform add to the experience on CI. This will be increasingly important as the economy begins to diversify in the lead up to the closure of the mine, currently the largest employer and contributor to GDP on the island. - Local companies were engaged to design the platform, and to undertake the construction works for the platform and the pathway. Of the \$1M in funding for the project over 90% was paid to local businesses. | - Outcome 1 |
| RDO Annual Business Plan 12-month implementation activity | Contribute to | Not Started | Support a review of tourism assets and infrastructure, and the subsequent upgrade of existing assets and infrastructure and the development of new assets and infrastructure. | - Nil activity in the reporting period. | - This activity is included in the IOT RDO Annual Business Plan 2023-24. | - Outcome 1 - Outcome 3 |

Note: The **Link to RDA Outcome** column on the far right in the above table refers to the specific RDA outcome each activity is aligned to. The outcomes are as follows:

- **Outcome 1:** Facilitate regional economic development outcomes, investment, jobs and local procurement.
- **Outcome 2:** Promote greater regional awareness of and engagement with Australian Government policies, grant programs and research.
- **Outcome 3:** Contribute to Commonwealth regional policy making by providing intelligence and evidence-based advice to the Australian Government on regional development issues.

Case studies

Case study 1 – IOT RDO Strategic Regional Plan 2030

Vision: Working together to create a thriving future for our island communities

The [IOT RDO Strategic Regional Plan 2030](#) serves as a seven-year plan to guide and inform future priorities for the IOT. It captures the region’s vision, ambition and strategic priorities for all stakeholders including governments, potential investors, and communities. The Plan aligns with the Australian Government’s six key regional development priorities:

| | |
|--|--|
| Connectivity and Infrastructure: | Incorporating digital connectivity, passenger transport links, freight, and supply chain infrastructure. |
| Human Capital and Skills: | Provide skilled and adaptable workforces, training and schooling. |
| Regional Employment and Business: | Develop regional businesses and industry, local research and development and innovation and a strategic regional vision. |
| Leadership and Collaboration: | Investing in regional leadership. |
| Amenity and Liveability: | Providing services, facilities and liveability, and support for local priorities. |
| Sustainable Natural Resources: | To build future resilience, ensure sustainable foundations and provide economic opportunities and jobs. |

Project methodologies

The Project Team followed three core methodologies when developing the Plan:

1. Thematic analysis of historic and current plans, strategies and research related to the IOT.
2. Extensive engagement process using best practice methods, which included an online survey, workshops and individual consultations with a broad range of stakeholders.
3. Thematic and economic analysis on the information and data sourced through the engagement and research process.

Key outcomes

The IOT RDO Strategic Regional Plan 2030 is a realistic plan for the region that represents the voices and experiences of the people across the IOT. The plan leverages the region’s natural assets and community strengths, richness and vibrance, to foster a more diverse economy, and a stronger, more resilient and capable region. Key strategic focus areas from the Plan include:

- Improved collaboration, transparency and decision making to build trust, resolve barriers and realise economic, social and environmental opportunities.
- Business and economic development opportunities are supported through reliable and competitive supply chains.

- Communities and the region can withstand the impact of climate change and benefit from environmental ecosystems.
- Community and business have the technology and skills to deliver quality services, goods and products.
- A thriving tourism industry that does not negatively impact on the community.



Direction Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands
Photo credit: Kirsty Faulkner

Case study 2 – Joint Committee for the IOT Supply Chain Review

The IOT RDO and the Christmas Island Business Association (CIBA) joined in partnership to commission a review of the IOT supply chain. The two organisations have a shared strategic focus to provide clarity and solutions to the very complex and challenging regional supply chain. The review is being conducted by external consultants engaged by the IOT RDO and CIBA.

The IOT Supply Chain Review Joint Committee (Joint Committee) was established by the IOT RDO and CIBA to provide overall project governance, and the IOT RDO and CIBA provided Secretariat support to the Joint Committee and the project. The Joint Committee was comprised of key stakeholders including representatives from the IOT RDO, CIBA, Shire of Christmas Island, Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands, and the local Member of Parliament Ms Marion Scrymgour.

Challenges that led to the review included the fragile and inefficient supply chain, and also the lack of market competition to drive improvements. Government interventions are regularly required to ensure critical supplies, freight and transport are provided to residents, visitors, and businesses.

Key partnerships formed

In planning for the success and cohesion of this project, establishing key partnerships was a crucial first step. This involved the IOT RDO and CIBA working together in order to commission the review, which guaranteed strong foundations and affirmed shared ownership. This partnership was formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding between the two bodies, who agreed to work together under a set of guiding principles, supported by the Project Scope and Terms of Reference which reflected collective values and objectives. This robust governance framework underpinned the cohesion of the partnership, and also served as the basis for strong relationships within the broader stakeholder group.

As several interconnected parts constitute the IOT supply chain, this review involved many different stakeholder groups. The IOT RDO and CIBA ensured that the Joint Committee worked successfully as the mechanism to represent these groups, advocating for their spot at the table and ensuring a balanced input. This required organising meetings to suit everyone’s availability, making sure communications were consistent and informative, and gathering feedback periodically as the review progressed. The success of the IOT RDO and CIBA’s partnership, and in turn the cooperation of the Joint Committee, was key to the success achieved with the review so far. The report of the review is due for release in 2023-24.

Joint Committee for the IOT Supply Chain Review



Third-party arrangements

The below provides details on third-party arrangements, where the IOT RDO has received funding in addition to the RDA funding agreement (above \$50,000 in value).

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Description of activity | Nil to report |
| Risk to IOT RDO in completing the activity and mitigation strategies for these | |
| Contract start and end dates | |
| Contract value and payment milestones | |
| Activity progress to date | |