



**Riverina Water
Workforce
Management Plan
2020-2024**

The workforce management strategy 2020 – 2024 has been prepared by Riverina Water County Council (Riverina Water) to support the implementation of our strategic objectives.

This plan should be read in conjunction with Riverina Water's Strategic Business Plan (2012) and Delivery Program 2020 - 2024

For more information on this document contact:

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Adopted by Riverina Water on 26 August 2020

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1. Introduction

Riverina Water understands that workforce planning is a vital strategic activity designed to support the Council achieving its objectives and long-term strategic vision. Ensuring suitably skilled people are in the right place at the right time will contribute to Riverina Water's continued growth and sustainability.

Since inception in 1997, Riverina Water has developed its own culture and identity. Our mission is to provide our community with safe reliable water at the lowest sustainable cost.

As the Council has grown, so have the skills and abilities of our employees through Riverina Water's commitment to providing workplace learning and development opportunities. Riverina Water has traditionally had a degree of self-reliance in core competencies for staff in regard to training and workforce management.

While our Strategic Business Plan sets out our future directions over ten years, this Workforce Management Plan will focus on the resources required to achieve our Delivery Program over the next four years.



2. Workforce profile

Despite covering a large geographical area, Riverina Water operates with approximately 105 employees (May 2020 comprised of 94 full time, 5 part time, 4 temporary/casual and 2 staff on Senior contracts), working in specialist teams to provide high quality water. While the majority of employees work in traditional Monday to Friday roles, a proportion of our workforce are required to be available 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week to ensure continuity of service.

A critical component of our strategic planning is ensuring that sufficient resources are available to undertake the activities set out in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan. To achieve this, we must ensure the availability of resources with the right mix of skills and capabilities either within our workforce, or through the mechanism of outsourcing.

The following analysis examines the current workforce demographic and assists in determining the various challenges that we face in the near future.

In May 2020 Riverina Water employed 105 staff across 7 keys areas of operations as follows:



Corporate Services	Governance & HR	General Manager	Operations	Projects	Senior Management	Works	Total
12	4	3	23	17	2	44	105

The workforce has grown gradually (90 employees in 2012) to reflect growth in the network and also increasing governance requirements as recommended by Council's Audit Risk and Improvement Committee, legislative obligations in response to the recommendations of various internal audits along with addressing legislative, community expectations and workplace need.

2.1 Gender based analysis

The analysis below shows the gender balance across Riverina Water is male dominated – 16 females (15%) vs 88 males (85%), which is especially evident with regards to the outdoor workers – 1 female (1%) vs 70 males (99%). The Water Industry Outlook annual update (Australian Industry Standards) 2020 reports the gender distribution is female 27% and male 73%. We continue to encourage diversity, which includes gender in applying for these roles.

The gender balance within the number of indoor employees is more equitable with 16 females (48%) vs 17 males (52%).

The percentage of female 3 (13%) to male 13 (87%) managers and supervisors is consistent with our overall gender balance across all employees.

Riverina Water acknowledges the need to improve the imbalance in the gender ratio and the action plan and strategies in section 4.2 provides detail on how Riverina Water will work to correct that imbalance.

2.2 Age based analysis

The following analysis shows that more than half 29 (57%) of Riverina Water's employees are aged between 46 and 65. With 20 (19%) of employees over 56, we can expect at least a reasonable turnover or transition of key personnel within the next 10 years.

This provides us with a significant challenge to maintain our current skill levels, along with corporate knowledge, while continuing to provide opportunity for internal advancement as positions become available. Within current employees there are 39 (37%) employees who occupy a different position since commencement at Riverina Water. This has come about through advancement, reskilling or other internal opportunities. There are opportunities to consider how we transition knowledge, skills and experience whilst considering work practices that engage, support, value and encourage an ageing workforce to maintain productivity and safety within the Council. Management are continuing to look at opportunities to enhance and support this.

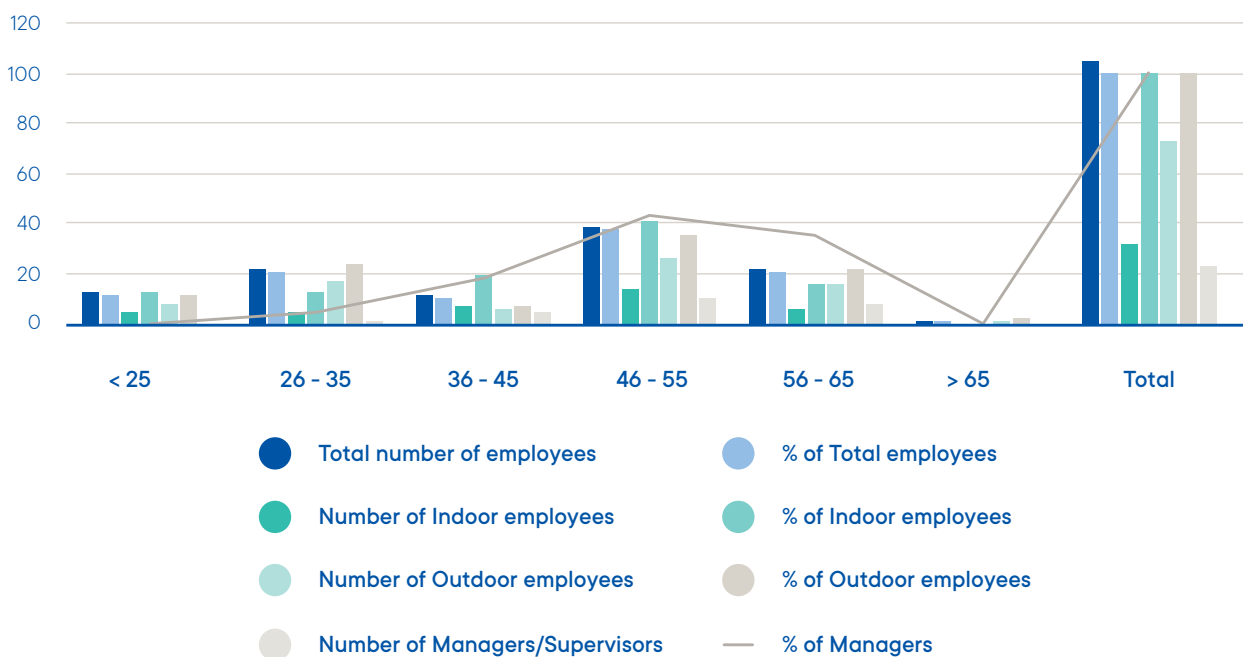
While Riverina Water remains largely a skill and knowledge based organisation, the current levels of young workers (particularly trainees) are low. Riverina Water currently has a modest number of apprentice/trainees, having recently commenced and/or near completion. Over the last four years we have seen six (6) apprentices/trainees complete with four (4) going on to fulltime employment within the Council. The effects can be clearly seen in the analysis with less than 12 (12%) of our entire workforce aged under 25. However, 21 (21%) of Councils workforce are between the 26 – 35 years of age, which provides development opportunities with 33 (32%) of the workforce under 36 years of age. These programs will be reviewed in the medium term to consider improving programs and our intake against budget and position availability.



Total Workforce Age Breakdown

Age group	Total number of employees	% of Total employees	Number of Indoor employees	% of Indoor employees	Number of Outdoor employees	% of Outdoor employees	Number Managers/ Supervisors	% Managers
< 25	12	11	4	13	8	11	0	0
26 - 35	21	20	4	13	17	23	1	4
36 - 45	11	10	6	19	5	7	4	17
46 - 55	39	37	13	41	26	36	10	43
56 - 65	21	20	5	16	16	22	8	35
> 65	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Total	105	100	32	100	73	100	23	100

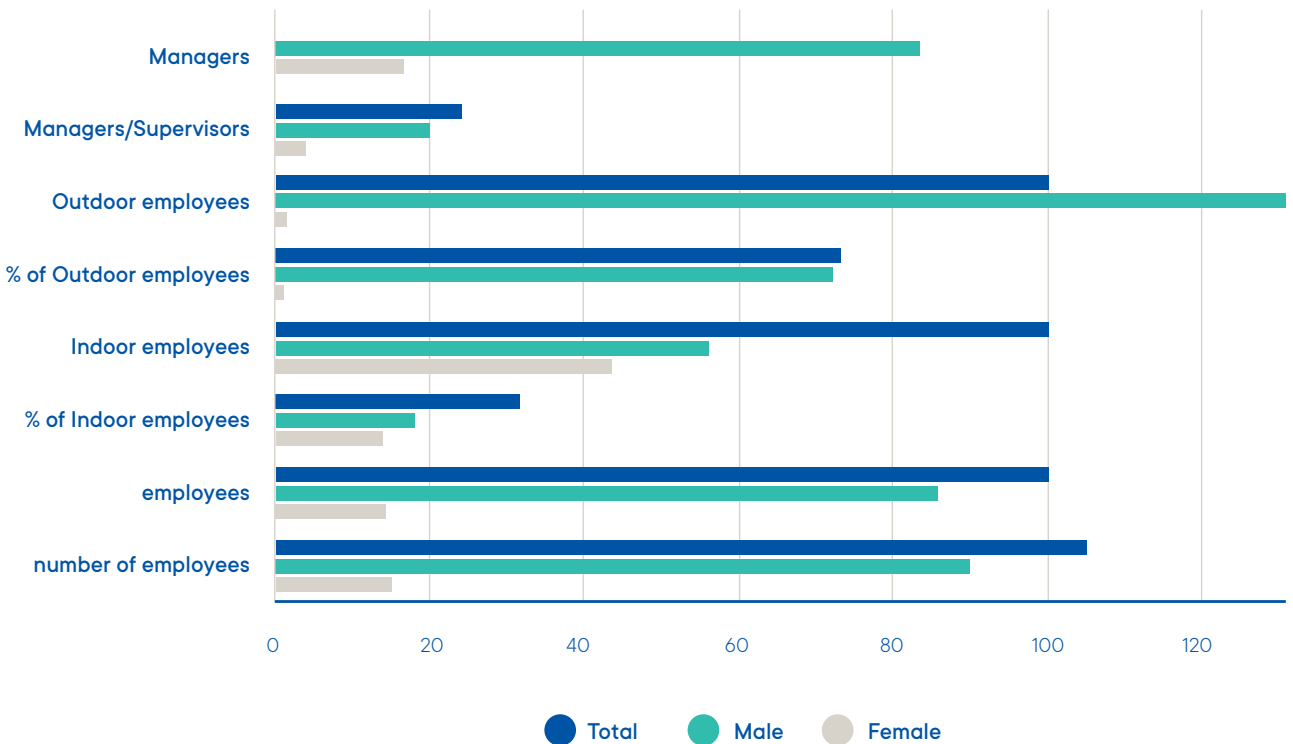
Total Workforce Age Breakdown



Total Workforce Gender Breakdown

Gender	Total number of employees	% of Total employees	Number of Indoor employees	% of Indoor employees	Number of Outdoor employees	% of Outdoor employees	Number Managers/ Supervisors	% Managers
Female	15	14	14	44	1	1	4	17
Male	90	86	18	56	72	99	20	83
Total	105	100	32	100	73	100	24	100

Total Workforce Gender Breakdown



2.3 Length of Service based analysis

Riverina Water has traditionally had low turnover of employees. The employee total turnover rate for 2018/19 was 7.5%. As a comparison, Riverina Water's total turnover for the period ending 2017/18 was 9.68%, while the NSW Local Government median being 18.18% for that period.

This is demonstrated in the fact that 66 (63%) of our entire employee base has over six years of service, with almost 26 (25%) of our employees having worked with us for over 20 years.

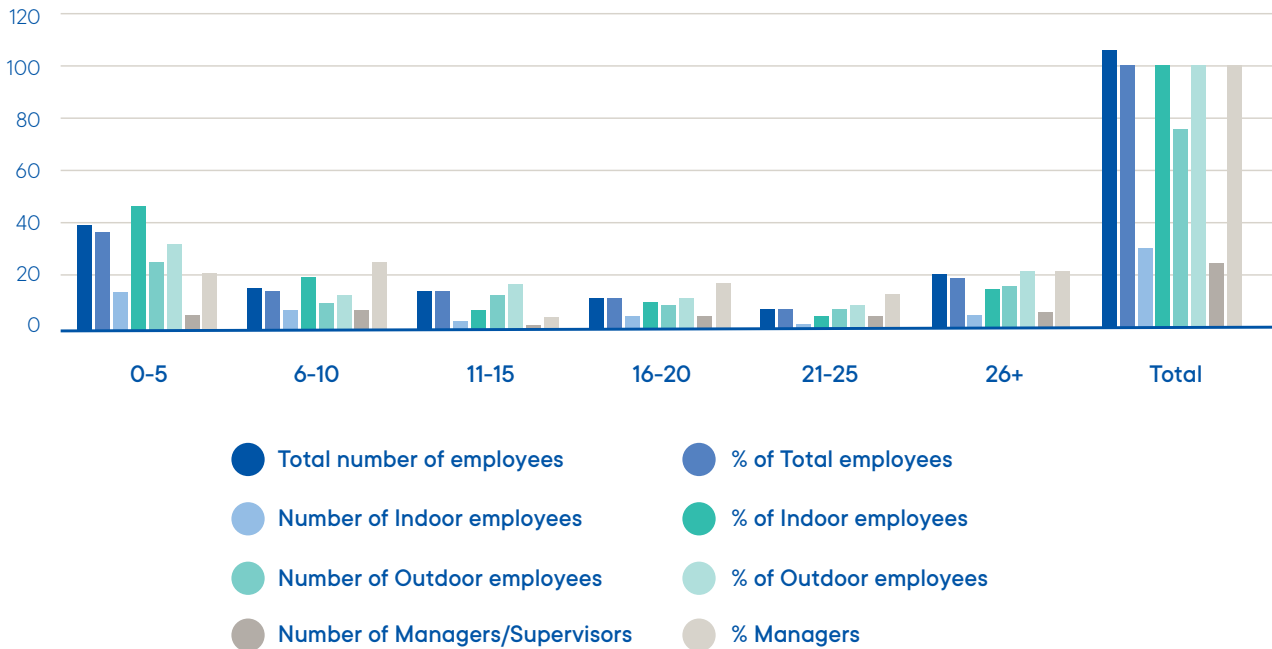
These figures indicate that the current trends in length of service reflect a stable workforce. This is confirmed by employee surveys (2019) where the majority (71%) of employees indicated that they are not currently considering leaving Riverina Water.

In the past three years, Riverina Water average turn over rate has been 7.20% per annum, with approximately half of these positions covering retirement, parental and other long term leave. Over approximately the next decade it is likely to see an increase in turnover at Riverina Water. This is largely due to the retirements with 22 (21%) of our employees between 56 – 65 years of age and may be considering retirement.

Employee Length of Service

Length of Service	Total number of employees	% of Total employees	Number of Indoor employees	% of Indoor employees	Number of Outdoor employees	% of Outdoor employees	Number Managers/ Supervisors	% Managers
0-5	39	37	14	47	25	32	5	21
6-10	15	14	6	20	9	12	6	25
11-15	14	13	2	7	12	16	1	4
16-20	11	10	3	10	8	11	4	17
21-25	7	7	1	3	6	8	3	13
26+	19	18	4	13	15	21	5	21
Total	105	100	30	100	75	100	24	100

Total Workforce Length of Service



2.4 Contract Labor and Plant/Equipment

The use of contractors assists Riverina Water to undertake non-core activities and to engage highly specialised skills that are used infrequently.

Considerations for the use of contractors include:

- › projects where the specialist skill is no longer required after completion
- › the service is difficult or costly for Riverina Water to deliver because it is very demanding on our resources or its delivery is subject to a wide fluctuation in workload;
- › it requires employees that are in high demand or short supply and is therefore associated with high recruitment and/or training costs;

- › the project or service is new, and Riverina Water does not currently have a high level of experience or expertise in the area.

Riverina Water utilises the services of contractors to fulfil the resourcing gap between our current ability to undertake the work and the workload required to meet levels of service.

Where possible and practical Riverina Water seeks to use local contractors and resources.

The Work Health & Safety legislation clearly identify contractors as workers, therefore creating an additional responsibility for Riverina Water to identify and manage every person that enters our sites. This includes the requirement to manage and ensure that the contractors are sufficiently trained and competent to undertake the work activities requested of them.

3. Workforce Planning

Workforce planning is a key component of the Resourcing Strategy that is part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. These requirements are designed to ensure Riverina Water is able to meet the current and future service and operational needs. As well as ensuring that it is appropriately resourced to handle the changes and challenges that will need to be faced over the four (4) years of the Delivery Program, and more generally throughout the life of our Strategic Business Plan and Integrated Water Cycle Management (IWCM) Plan (30-year horizon).

As our workforce ages we continue to explore and support transition to retirement options. We continue to evolve our practice and opportunities to address the support needs and opportunities for Riverina Water and employees in the benefits of transition to retirement options. For the retention of knowledge, skills and

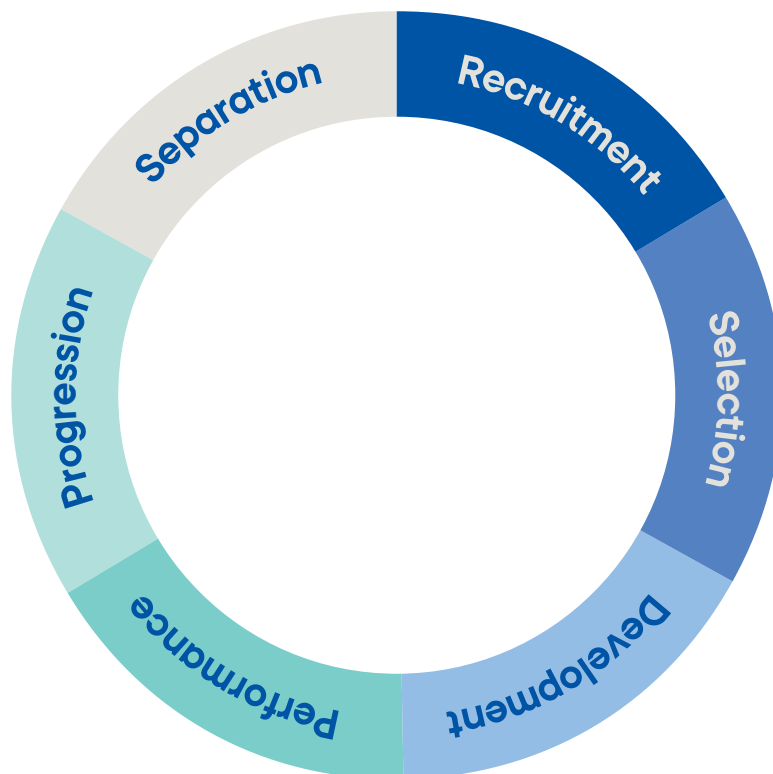
experience and allow employees a smoother transition to retirement.

Learning and development has a significant role in the capability and capacity building within Riverina Water. There is a strong emphasis on skill retention and acquisition. Over the last 2 years (2018/19 – 2019/20) Riverina Water has expended \$449,725 on training and development. This has included competency/required skills, additional skill development, leadership support, conference, workshop and seminar attendance.

3.1 Human Resources Management Plan

The development of a Human Resources Management Plan is integral to the future success of Riverina Water. This plan should cover the entire employee life cycle from recruitment to separation.

Employee Life Cycle



Reference: <https://motivatingemployees1.weebly.com/employee-life-cycle.html>, February 2020

Recruitment

To attract high quality applicants, Riverina Water continues to develop as a socially responsible employer with good ethical values in the community.

To assist with recruitment, several key processes require review and development. The introduction of an on-line application system assists in the selection of applicants.

To continually enhance the skill base, Riverina Water's recruitment philosophy will be to establish and improve on skill, competency and capability requirements for each position.

In addition to an attractive pay structure, Riverina Water offers a range of employee benefits and conditions. These include additional superannuation payments of 15% for all employees which is above the national superannuation guarantee for employees of 9.5% (2019/2020), along with a standard of a nine-day fortnight with the potential for flexible working arrangements.

Selection

A critical component of any selection process is the panel itself. Opportunities to enhance support and training in the recruitment and selection of employees will continue to be explored and provided. Enabling the best opportunity to attract and retain high caliber employees.

Development

Riverina Water invests in ongoing development of our employees to ensure they are able to undertake their work in a safe, professional and informed manner.

There are three specific elements to workforce development

- › Workplace inductions
- › Workplace training
- › Personal and professional development

Skills Development & Performance

Managing the skill development and performance of our employees is an ongoing commitment. Annual skills reviews are conducted by supervisors and managers based around skills acquired, organisational and operational objectives, along with planned training and development.

Progression

Riverina Water is committed to providing opportunities where available, for employees to advance their career, along with retention of skills and experience within the Council. This is supported by funding internal and external learning and development.

Separation

Riverina Water has a professional process for the separation of employment. Among our goals during the separation process is ensuring that knowledge developed throughout the employee lifecycle is retained and can be imparted to relevant employees. Management are encouraged and supported to enable the retention of knowledge of organisation and operational requirements are captured. An exit interview is offered and encouraged for all employees to complete, along with supervisors completing an exit process.

Human Resource Information Systems

To better provide management with the information and tools to manage their employees, a range of computer application-based systems are either being developed or under consideration.

Management Training Program

To support employees in their work, leadership capabilities and aspirations, Riverina Water provides programs and opportunities for employees to learn and develop their skills and experiences. The aim is to provide our employees with skills and knowledge through a variety of mechanisms, including mentoring, experience and education.

Health and Wellbeing

Riverina Water looks for continuous improvement in its workforce by providing opportunities to maintain and improve healthy productive employees.

Riverina Water recognises that under our Duty of Care it is important to ensure that all employees are physically and mentally capable of performing their role without the risk of injury or illness. A process of monitoring employee wellbeing and fitness for work will be a continued priority as will the continuation of Council's Employee Assistance Program, regular staff surveys and monthly Work, Health and Safety meetings. Assistance is offered to employees where a risk is identified.

3.2 Equal Opportunity & Diversity

Riverina Water promotes and supports equal opportunity and diversity in the workplace. We review and refine our processes to ensure we are providing a respectful workplace and culture. Equal opportunity and diversity is included in our employee inductions along with opportunities for reinforcement through consultative and health & safety committees, work group meetings and training.

As a regional County Council, Riverina Water strives to employ the best individuals for Council positions which is reflective of the regions demographics. Approximately 3% of employees are from non-English speaking backgrounds. Work continues to be undertaken to encourage diversity and inclusion at Council.

3.3 Work Health and Safety (WHS) Management

Riverina Water has a strong history of commitment to the health and safety of its workforce.

The changes to Work Health and Safety legislation provided an opportunity to review our WHS management system; identify what is working, what requires improvement, and what, if any areas require management attention. A recent audit of WHS has provided areas of strength and opportunities to enable enhancement of our systems and process.

3.4 Workforce Governance and Code of Conduct

Riverina Water introduced an updated Code of Conduct across the Council in June 2019. In addition, Riverina Water developed a Statement of Business Ethics which is now included in all contractor inductions and has also been sent to all current suppliers and contractors.

In 2018, Riverina Water conducted a series of training sessions on Code of Conduct and Fraud prevention available to all employees conducted by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC). Most employees were able to attend a session.

3.5 Innovation, Technology and change

Riverina Water focuses on innovation and technology to lead efficiencies, engagement and productivity. To achieve this vision, we have identified the skills, competencies, systems and processes required through our Digital Strategy.

Our staff will benefit from Riverina Water utilising timely, cost effective, innovative and industry leading ICT services. Our four guiding principles for enabling the effective use of technology are:

- (1) Deliver business value
- (2) Technology leadership
- (3) Accessible and accurate Information
- (4) Integrated services

Riverina Water is committed to digital transformation. Our Digital Strategy will continue to require us to develop our internal capacity to effectively lead change.

Resourcing the Delivery Program

Riverina Water has a suite of Strategic Plans that set out Council's long-term plans for the operation, management, maintenance and development of the various water supply schemes.

The IWCM Plan is the overarching thirty-year plan that informs the remaining strategic plans. The IWCM Plan (2012) is currently under review and the 2019 IWCM Issues Paper is currently being finalised. The Issues Paper will inform the finalisation of the 2020 IWCM Plan and will also then inform the 2021 Strategic Business Plan and Resourcing Strategy.

Our 2012 Strategic Business Plan and Resourcing Strategy identified thirteen key objectives. These key objectives inform the 2020/21 to 2023/24 Delivery Program and the 2020/21 Operational Plan where actions and responsibilities have been detailed.

Riverina Water has developed a range of multi-disciplinary teams that work in collaboration to manage and deliver projects and services in support of the thirteen objectives.

In addition to overall key accountabilities, individuals have specific accountabilities to lead and/or support actions set out in the Four-Year Delivery Program and annual Operating Plan.

Service Quality and Continuity

Riverina Water has established a highly skilled team of internal employees capable of designing, constructing, operating and maintaining the delivery of services to the community.

Riverina Water's current human resources capabilities are adequate for asset lifecycle management, however external resources are used from time to time and based on the type of project to provide specialist skills to ensure that Councils strategic objectives are met.

Riverina Water has identified over \$77.76 million in capital works projects over the next four years and has a range of specialists, including designers, engineers and project managers to manage these projects. The services of contractors are utilised on an as required basis (and in support of staff) for the delivery of these projects.

In addition, our operators, project administration, WHS officer and other employees are available for project support.

The monitoring and reporting requirements of service quality and continuity are undertaken by suitably qualified internal employees.

4. Strategic Business Planning

4.1 The Strategic Business Planning Process

The strategic business planning process is described by the following flow chart and narrative below.

The water supply businesses aim to deliver agreed levels of service using assets and staff. These are funded through a combination of capital investment and recurrent expenditures.

The financial plan converts funding requirements into annual charges to be levied on customers, making allowance for other sources of funds, in particular developer charges.



Interaction of IP&R Framework and the IWCM Strategy

NSW IP & R Framework for Council activities

NSW Government's BPM Framework for water supply & Sewerage Peak Planning Document - IWCM Strategy, TAMP, LTFP (& SBP)

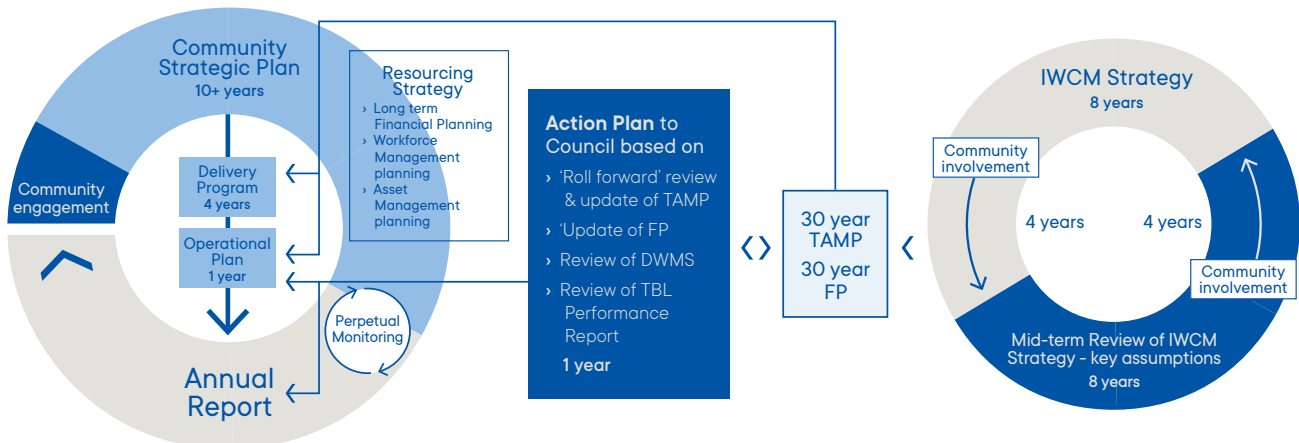


Figure 3 Riverina Water Interaction of IP&R Framework and the IWCM Strategy

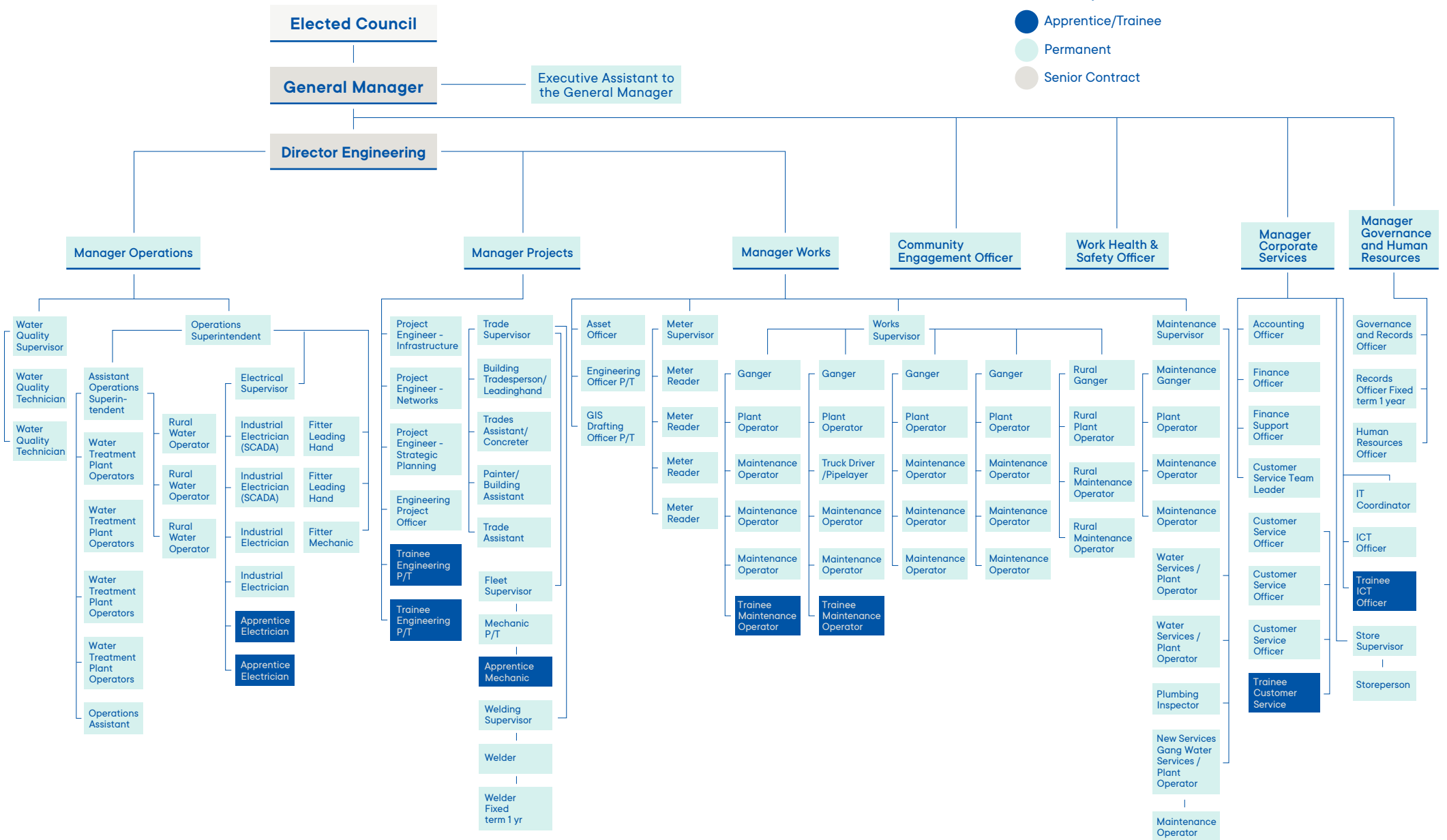
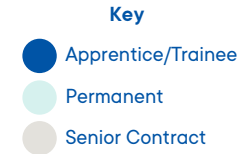
4.2 Action Plan and Strategies

The previous section identifies issues/gaps. In order to develop a focused plan, the key issues have been prioritised. The list below contains key issues that Riverina Water plans to address over the next three years, and actions to address them.

Many of the issues listed below are not unique to Riverina Water. Many local and national organisations suffer similar problems including skills shortages, injuries and more demanding regulatory regimes.

Key Issues	Actions
1 Maintaining employee skill currency and competency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Review and revise salary progression and recognition system that supports organisational objectives by February 2021 › Continue employee skills reviews to identify gaps and training needs › Review and renew staff position descriptions › Align system, practices and framework that support capability and capacity development
2 Ageing workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Identify opportunities and risks associated with an ageing workforce by June 2021 › Develop strategies to address ageing workforce issues including retention and workplace adjustments needs and the concept of “grow your own” staff capability (by December 2021) › Capture current knowledge and experience
4 Overtraining The Riverina Water skills-based award leads the potential for over training and direct training away from essential generic skills to less desirable specific skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Look for alternate remedy within the award structure
5 Communication with staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Regular employee surveys to be conducted triennially › Management and supervisors to work with employees to enhance communication, understanding and outcomes for Riverina Water › Annual skills review process
6 Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Continue to develop leadership capacity and capability › Identify and encourage emerging leadership opportunities.
7 Succession planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Maintain and enhance succession planning initiatives › Include short term planning and identification e.g. long service leave, maternity leave and extended periods of leave.
8 Gender Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Develop an action plan that encourages gender diversity to consider career paths in the Water Sector
9 Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Continue to improve musculoskeletal, ergonomic and workplace modification, enhance, support and training › To provide support for a mentally healthy and resilient workforce

Riverina Water Organisational Structure July 2020



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NSW Audit Office

Internal auditors

National Audits Group

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Uranquinty
(02) 6922 0608 (all hours)

Urana/Oaklands
(02) 6922 0608 (all hours)

Culcairn/Holbrook/Walla Walla
(02) 6922 0608 (all hours)

Customer information – payment facilities



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Australia Post
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Billpay

Please call **13 18 16** to pay your bill using your credit card, or register to pay using your savings or cheque account from your bank, building society or credit union. Please have your water account ready as you will be required to key in payment details. **Your Billpay code and reference number is located beside the Australia Post symbol on the front of your account.** This service is available 7 days a week, 24 hours per day. **(For the cost of a local call).**



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Ring the **13 18 16** number as listed above.



To pay by the internet

www.postbillpay.com.au

(Access to this option is also available via Council's Internet site listed above).



Bpay

Phone your participating Bank, Credit Union or Building Society to make this payment from your cheque, savings or credit card account. **Your Biller Code and Reference Number is located beside the BPAY symbol located on the front of your account.**



Mail

Send cheques to PO Box 456, Wagga Wagga with the "tear off payment slip". Keep the top portion of the account (with details of cheque etc.) for your record. No receipts will be issued unless the whole of the account is returned with the cheque.



In person

Bring your account with you to pay at Australia Post Shops or Post Offices anywhere throughout Australia. Riverina Water County Council office at 91 Hammond Avenue, Wagga Wagga.

