

Corporate Plan

Infrastructure Australia
2020–21 to 2023–24



Infrastructure Australia is an independent statutory body that is the key source of research and advice for governments, industry and the community on nationally significant infrastructure needs.

It leads reform on key issues including means of financing, delivering and operating infrastructure and how to better plan and utilise infrastructure networks.

Infrastructure Australia has responsibility to strategically audit Australia's nationally significant infrastructure, and develop 15-year rolling infrastructure plans that specify national and state level priorities.

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Chair's foreword

Now, more than ever, Infrastructure Australia plays a vital role in advising the nation on the investments and reforms needed to deliver productivity-enhancing projects and resilient infrastructure networks that will support future generations.

While good leaders have always been agile and good plans adaptable, we are now operating in an environment that is increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous.

A global pandemic, economic and geopolitical instability, cultural unrest, climate change and extreme weather events all challenge our national resilience and make planning, budgeting and forecasting more difficult than ever before.

As Australia's leaders urgently collaborate on immediate responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, we must not lose focus on our long-term trajectory.

Our population continues to grow, age and urbanise. Economic, demographic, environmental and technological shifts continue to transform the way we live. Limited public funds for infrastructure, increasing demand and a mounting maintenance backlog continue to place pressure on existing services.

This influences how we plan, fund and deliver infrastructure.

Infrastructure Australia plays a vital role in providing independent, evidence-based advice on the best opportunities for infrastructure investment and reform.

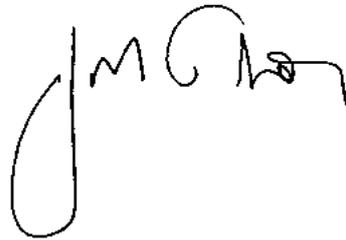
As a collaborative advisor to all levels of government, we identify long-term challenges and opportunities that require action. We also assess business cases for major projects and ensure public infrastructure funds are spent where they are needed most. In all our work, we remain committed to better infrastructure decision-making for the benefit of all Australians.

Charged with identifying the key national opportunities for infrastructure investment and reform, we take our responsibility to the Australian people seriously. We continue to pursue activities that streamline processes, drive transparency and accountability, and aim to place communities at the centre of infrastructure decision-making.

In 2020, we updated our values, which are underpinned by independent, respectful and collaborative relationships (see page 6). These values underscore our enduring commitment to make a tangible difference to the lives of all Australians.

I am pleased to present Infrastructure Australia's 2020–21 Corporate Plan, which outlines our strategic agenda, key priorities and purpose up to 2023–24. It details the strategic context in which we work, and our plan to ensure all Australians share in the benefits of great infrastructure.

In accordance with our responsibilities under section 39B of the *Infrastructure Australia Act 2008* (Cth), Infrastructure Australia has consulted on our Corporate Plan with the office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon Michael McCormack MP, and the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.



Julieanne Alroe
Chair, Infrastructure Australia



Introduction

Infrastructure Australia was established in 2008 to drive better infrastructure outcomes for all Australians.

As an independent statutory body established under the *Infrastructure Australia Act 2008* (Cth), we advise governments, industry and the community on the investments and reforms needed to deliver better infrastructure for all Australians.

Our rigorous and independent analysis identifies infrastructure gaps and opportunities, to ensure that public funds are spent on projects that have real benefits for communities and can kick-start economic growth and job creation. We maintain the *Infrastructure Priority List* to direct investment towards projects that will deliver the best outcomes for our growing communities.

We also develop research and advice on broader opportunities for infrastructure reform. We publish new and interactive data to help governments and industry to better plan for our infrastructure needs.

The *Australian Infrastructure Audit* is our strategic assessment of the most important challenges and opportunities facing infrastructure over the next 15 years and beyond. It provides a ‘big picture’ view of Australia’s future infrastructure needs – across sectors and jurisdictions. Our most recent Audit was released in 2019.

The *Australian Infrastructure Plan* responds to the challenges and opportunities identified in the Audit, provides a roadmap for infrastructure reform, and sets out our detailed recommendations to deliver better infrastructure for all Australians. Our next Plan will be launched in mid-2021.

This Corporate Plan is part of a suite of accountability and reporting documents that outline our strategic goals, key priorities and purpose, as required by paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (Cth).

Working closely and collaboratively with stakeholders across government and the infrastructure sector, we are committed to raising the quality of infrastructure planning and delivery throughout Australia.





Our role

Infrastructure Australia advises governments, industry and the community on the investments and reforms needed to deliver better infrastructure for all Australians.

Our governing legislation, the *Infrastructure Australia Act 2008*, defines our role and responsibilities in guiding nationally significant infrastructure investment and reform.

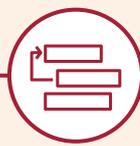
Infrastructure Australia's purposes are to:



improve decision-making on infrastructure matters



better identify and assess key drivers of infrastructure demand and use



improve prioritisation of infrastructure needs and projects



identify, implement and promote best practice in infrastructure planning, financing, delivery and operation

These purposes align with our vision, mission, and strategic goals:

Vision

Improving the quality of life of all Australians through better infrastructure and services.

Mission

Provide independent advice and long-term infrastructure planning, as a valued and trusted partner on best practice and reform.

Strategic goals

- 1 Lead and inform debate about infrastructure policies and reforms across all infrastructure sectors.
- 2 Establish a long-term pipeline of nationally significant, productivity enhancing infrastructure priorities.
- 3 Be a collaborative trusted adviser to government and industry providing forward-thinking, relevant and practical advice.
- 4 Work collaboratively with proponents to continuously improve the quality of infrastructure investment decisions.
- 5 Develop the capability of Infrastructure Australia's systems and people and ensure Infrastructure Australia meets its legislative obligations.



We are independent:

Our independence is a privilege that we use to drive better outcomes. We act with integrity and speak with a credible voice.

We represent the community



We make a difference:

We use our influence for the benefit of all Australians. We promote best practice and focus on outcomes. We are purposeful, pragmatic and relevant to our stakeholders.

We lead change



We collaborate:

We communicate openly and warmly. We share information, work as a team and build trusted relationships with our stakeholders.

We enjoy working together



We are respectful:

We value each other and our differences. We treat each other as equals. We are strengthened by diverse voices and engage stakeholders with humility.

We embrace diversity



We continuously improve:

We pursue excellence. We are resourceful and diligent, embrace change, look for new ways of doing things and keep learning.

We are innovative



Environment

In the face of the COVID-19 crisis and subsequent economic downturn, Infrastructure Australia has played a key role in advising government on our national recovery.

Infrastructure Australia was established in 2008, at the height of the Global Financial Crisis. Since then, we have continued to play a critical role in providing a credible pipeline of infrastructure investments for governments to choose from to sustain our nation's prosperity.

This year, 2020, has been defined by a rolling series of crises – of drought, bushfires, dust storms, flooding, a pandemic and economic recession. This has tested our national resilience and reset our priorities.

Australia's economy is now in its first recession in three decades. Australia's unemployment rate rose to 7.4 per cent in June 2020, the highest level since November 1998. The Reserve Bank expects the jobless rate to hit nine per cent by December – the highest level since November 1994.

While the COVID-19 pandemic was a contributing factor to the economic downturn, the destruction caused by the 2019–20 bushfires also played a role. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the nation's economy recorded its slowest growth rate in a more than a decade before the COVID-19 lockdowns commenced.

There is no doubt recovery from the pandemic will drive infrastructure decision-making in the short term. Infrastructure Australia's advice to government during the COVID-19 crisis has been consistent and aligned with the *Principles of Infrastructure Stimulus and Recovery from COVID-19*.

We developed these principles with the CEO's and chairs of Australia's state, territory and national infrastructure boards and bodies. These principles informed our proposal for a four-stage recovery response:

1. **Protect and maintain** the existing pipeline of projects, activity on worksites and infrastructure services during the pandemic.
2. **Mobilise** new projects, both small and large, to support recovery while infection risk is managed and community infection is contained.
3. **Accelerate** efforts that mobilise projects, boost productivity and increase labour participation.
4. **Reform** to address industry capacity, accelerate infrastructure delivery and enhance transparency.



The February 2020 *Infrastructure Priority List* outlines 147 nationally significant proposals across transport, water, energy, telecommunications and social infrastructure. Our additional mid-year update to the Priority List in August 2020 raised that figure to 155 infrastructure proposals, amounting to a \$64 billion investment pipeline.

The Priority List directs Commonwealth investment towards infrastructure proposals with proven economic benefits. A high-quality pipeline of infrastructure gives confidence to industry, certainty to government, employs Australians, attracts investment and supports the national economy.

Accelerating the delivery of major infrastructure is not without risk. It reduces the opportunity to provide scrutiny of proposals prior to investment. Less scrutiny leaves the door open for cost escalation and risks leaving communities with infrastructure that does not meet their needs.

We can avoid this by ensuring business cases for large infrastructure projects engage in rigorous planning, evidenced-based problem definition, options analysis and independent assessment. We pursue this through our assessment process, guided by our regularly updated Assessment Framework, and through our national program of workshops to share skills in business case development.

A strong evidence base is also crucial, to support long-term planning. The 2019 *Australian Infrastructure Audit* presents a comprehensive picture of Australia's infrastructure challenges and opportunities. It outlines

a community-centred approach to infrastructure planning and delivery that tracks success via three key measures: access, quality and cost.

The Black Summer bushfires and COVID-19 pandemic highlighted existing inequities, especially among regional and rural Australians, and among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, who have higher rates of chronic illness. In developing our advice on how we build back better, we remain cognisant of the diverse needs of Australian communities.

We released Infrastructure Australia's first Reconciliation Action Plan in 2020 as our public commitment to the national reconciliation movement. It commits us to learn, explore new mutually beneficial relationships and develop our capacity to take practical, actionable steps towards reconciliation. In preparing for the future of Australian infrastructure, we acknowledge the importance of learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique history of land management and settlement, art, culture and society that began more than 65,000 years ago.

With the needs of infrastructure users front-and-centre, Infrastructure Australia continues to build a clear picture of our nation's challenges and opportunities, and to strengthen the evidence base to guide infrastructure investment for the benefit of all Australians.



Performance

Infrastructure Australia’s performance is guided by the *Infrastructure Australia Act 2008*, the stated outcomes under the Portfolio Budget Statements, and the directions outlined by the Minister in the Statement of Expectations 2017–2019.

We responded to the Statement of Expectations 2017–2019 with a Statement of Intent 2017–2019.

will undertake to achieve these outcomes and how we will measure our success.

This Corporate Plan summarises the directions, goals and outcomes from these statements by outlining our strategic goals, associated activities and measures. Under each strategic goal, we outline the activities we

Every year we give a detailed report on our success against the measures set in the Corporate Plan via the Annual Performance Statement in our Annual Report.

Relationship between guiding legislation and performance reporting

What we are expected to do	What we will do and how we will measure it	How we performed
 <i>Infrastructure Australia Act 2008</i>	 Corporate Plan	 Annual Performance Statement in Annual Report
 Statement of Expectations as issued by our Responsible Minister	 Statement of Intent	
 Portfolio Budget Statements		

Activities and key performance indicators

Infrastructure Australia strives to ensure that Australia is investing in projects and services that enhance Australians’ future quality of life.

We do this by providing independent advice, and championing reform and best practice in the way Australia plans, funds and delivers key infrastructure services.

In this Corporate Plan, we set out our Key Performance Indicators against our Strategic Goals and Measures. We evaluate our performance with a variety of methodologies, including data analysis and external surveys. We measure our performance against legislative and policy requirements and past performance as benchmarks.

In line with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*, the performance outcomes contained in the Annual Performance Statement will be published in our Annual Report each year.

Strategic Goal 1

Lead and inform debate about infrastructure policies and reforms across all infrastructure sectors

Activities

- Provide robust and independent advice to all levels of government across the transport, water, telecommunications and energy infrastructure sectors, including social infrastructure, with a focus on building productive cities and regions.
- Deliver the *Australian Infrastructure Plan* within statutory timeframes.
- Deliver National Cabinet market capacity work.

Measure (2020–21 and forward years)

- Delivery of agreed activities.
- Stakeholder opinion of Infrastructure Australia's role in driving the infrastructure debate.
- Commonwealth Government response to the *Australian Infrastructure Plan*.
- Delivery of National Cabinet market capacity report by June 2021.
- Number of policy partnerships with stakeholders.
- Social media audience and engagement.

Target (2020–21 and forward years)

- 100% of committed activities completed.
- 75% of stakeholders surveyed agree that Infrastructure Australia is 'leading and informing debate' in infrastructure policy and reform.
- 75% of recommendations in the *Australian Infrastructure Plan* are endorsed or noted by the Commonwealth Government by 30 June 2022.
- 75% of stakeholders surveyed in 2021–22 are satisfied or highly satisfied with the *Australian Infrastructure Plan* and believe it is practical and pragmatic.
- LinkedIn followers increase to 30,000.
- 75% of relevant stakeholders are satisfied or highly satisfied with the market capacity report to National Cabinet.
- One policy partnership with relevant stakeholders.

Strategic Goal 2

Establish a long-term pipeline of nationally significant, productivity-enhancing infrastructure priorities.

Activities

- Develop and maintain the *Infrastructure Priority List* of nationally significant infrastructure projects and initiatives, and produce regular updates.
- Evaluate project proposals of all infrastructure proposals where funding of more than \$100 million is sought from the Commonwealth, excluding defence projects.
- Proactively identify future infrastructure needs in Australia in collaboration with state and territory governments and the private sector.

Measure (2020–21 and forward years)

- Delivery of agreed activities.
- Stakeholder awareness and regard for the *Infrastructure Priority List*.
- Timely and accurate assessment of business cases.
- Percentage of proponents who are satisfied or highly satisfied with the level of engagement and quality of advice provided in the assessment of their business case.
- Number of independently identified infrastructure initiatives added to *Infrastructure Priority List*.

Target (2020–21 and forward years)

- 100% of committed activities completed.
- 75% of stakeholders surveyed are aware of the *Infrastructure Priority List* and support its role in infrastructure decision-making.
- 100% of completed evaluations of project proposals are published on the Infrastructure Australia website within statutory timeframes.
- Clarifying questions are provided to the proponent within 30 working days of receipt of business case 90% of the time.
- Benchmark the percentage of proponents that are satisfied or highly satisfied with the level of engagement and quality of advice provided in the assessment of their business case, with an aim to increase satisfaction year on year.
- Add one or more independently identified infrastructure initiative(s) to the *Infrastructure Priority List* each year.
- One policy partnership with relevant stakeholders.
- Benchmark percentage of initiatives that receive a funding commitment from government with an aim to increase year on year.

Strategic Goal 3

Be a collaborative, trusted advisor to government and industry providing forward-thinking, relevant and practical advice

Activities

- Undertake research and policy development in close collaboration with our stakeholders.
- Develop a sophisticated advocacy and engagement model on issues that are important to our stakeholders and Infrastructure Australia.
- Conduct a stakeholder perceptions Audit.
- Consult, and establish productive working relationships with key infrastructure stakeholders, across all levels of government (Commonwealth, state, territory and local governments) and other relevant bodies and organisations, including industry and state infrastructure advisory bodies.

Measure (2020–21 and forward years)

- Delivery of agreed activities.
- Stakeholder regard for the quality of Infrastructure Australia's advice.
- Co-creation of Assessment Framework and Policy & Research work with our stakeholders.
- Stakeholder regard for the quality of Infrastructure Australia's engagement.
- Number of chapter partners in the *Australian Infrastructure Plan*.

Target (2020–21 and forward years)

- 100% of committed activities completed.
- 75% of stakeholders surveyed are satisfied or highly satisfied with the quality and rigour of Infrastructure Australia's published policy work.

- 75% of stakeholders are satisfied or highly satisfied with the quality of Infrastructure Australia's stakeholder engagement.
- Three partnerships established with external organisations for the development of supporting analysis for the *2021 Australian Infrastructure Plan*.
- Conduct digital engagement to more than 500 stakeholders.

Strategic Goal 4

Work collaboratively with proponents to continuously improve the quality of infrastructure investment decisions.

Activities

- Review the processes, procedures and guidelines for project assessment to ensure they are clear, efficient and fit-for-purpose in compliance with legislative timeframes.
- Conduct national engagement and education to improve infrastructure investment decision making.
- Undertake appropriate research to improve business case development and advice.

Measure (2020–21 and forward years)

- Delivery of agreed activities.
- Engage proponents on business case development and the expectations of Infrastructure Australia's assessment process.
- Business case development presentations meet needs of proponents.
- Early engagement advice provided.

Target (2020–21 and forward years)

- 100% of committed activities completed.
- 75% of states and territories have at least one business case development workshop delivered to both proponents and their advisors each year.
- 75% of attendees at business case development workshops are satisfied or highly satisfied with business case development presentation.
- Benchmark the percentage of Projects that receive a funding commitment from government, and benchmark the percentage of Initiatives that are actively being considered through a business case.

Strategic Goal 5

Develop the capability of Infrastructure Australia's systems and people and ensure Infrastructure Australia meets its legislative responsibilities.

Activities

Our Corporate functions have four main activities that ensure Infrastructure Australia has the resources and capability to deliver on its purposes and the Corporate Plan. These are:

1. Ensuring our business systems are fit for purpose.
2. Establishing rigorous and efficient processes.
3. Complying with relevant legislation.

4. Building organisational capability.*Measure (2020–21 and forward years)*

- Results of internal staff survey (full all-staff survey or pulse survey).

Target (2020–21 and forward years)

- Staff survey results by 2021–22 show an Alignment and Engagement score in the top 25% of all other organisations surveyed.
- Staff survey results improve 20% in the category of 'Investment of Systems' by 2021–22.



Capability

Infrastructure Australia works to maintain the necessary internal capability to provide high-quality, independent advice to governments, industry and the community.

Our organisation is structured to deliver policy and project advice, provide leadership on long-term opportunities for reform and work collaboratively with our stakeholders to drive best practice in the Australian infrastructure sector.

Our internal structure is arranged around six key functions:

- Office of the CEO
- Infrastructure Assessment
- Infrastructure Prioritisation
- Policy and Research
- Corporate Affairs and People
- Finance

This structure aims to build our organisational capability across four key areas:

1. Outcomes

We take an outcome-driven approach to our activities. This ensures the appropriate selection of internal and external resources, which inform our advice to governments and stakeholders.

2. Stakeholder engagement

We work to build long-term strategic relationships across all levels of government and industry. These collaborative relationships strengthen and inform Infrastructure Australia's work program, and enable us to drive best practice across the sector.

3. High-performance culture

We attract, engage, enable, develop and retain talented resources in order to fulfil our objectives. We conduct staff surveys and develop response plans to support our employees in meeting the strategic goals of Infrastructure Australia.

4. Developing external capability

We share expertise with, and develop guidance for government and their advisors on best-practice business case development. This delivers the best outcomes for users, and ensures business cases can be evaluated efficiently by Infrastructure Australia. Infrastructure Australia will continue to develop its corporate capabilities in 2020–21, to ensure that our governance and corporate structures are operating efficiently.

This will include an ongoing review and implementation of the systems, structures and processes that inform our advice on infrastructure matters.



Risk oversight and management

Effective risk management is essential to ensure Infrastructure Australia achieves our strategic objectives and fulfils our legislative mandate within the *Infrastructure Australia Act 2008*.

As a corporate Commonwealth entity, we operate within the rules and regulations prescribed by the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and associated rules.

The key categories of risk associated with Infrastructure Australia can be characterised by four broad categories: financial, people, reputational and operational.

We foster an organisational culture that embraces and promotes risk management activities, and this is embedded in our systems and processes.

Risk Management Framework

Infrastructure Australia's Risk Management Framework is an enterprise-wide approach to managing risk. It supports our Corporate Plan, key objectives and the delivery of core business.

The Framework includes a tailored risk management process to ensure risks are identified and analysed consistently across all areas, and that risk evaluation is linked to practical and cost-effective risk response and controls that are appropriate to the business.

This includes engaging appropriately with risk and recognising that while some risks present a threat to the achievement of organisational outcomes, other risks present opportunities.

The risk management framework is implemented through the Risk Management Policy and Risk Register.

Risk Register

Infrastructure Australia maintains a Risk Register, which identifies and evaluates top strategic and operational risks. The Register is a key tool for management to determine appropriate controls to mitigate and control any risks that are considered to be unacceptably high, with regard to the organisation's risk appetite. The Risk Register is monitored by management and reviewed regularly.

The Risk Management Framework (as noted earlier) is a key tool to identify and manage operational risks. Operational risks are identified and managed through the integration of risk management into business systems and processes, including procurement practices and project management systems.

For example, maintaining the high quality of our advice is a critical risk for us to manage. We manage this risk by ensuring relevant policy papers and models are peer reviewed before publication, and applying gateway processes for finalisation of project business case evaluations.

The Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee

The Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee is a sub-committee of the Infrastructure Australia Board. It ensures that we have a current and sound enterprise risk management framework and associated internal controls in place, in order to identify and manage business and financial risks. The Committee oversee the review of our Risk Management Framework, Risk Management Policy, and Risk Register, and reports regularly to the Board in relation to risk.

We ensure that its approach to risk management remains current and relevant through continuous monitoring and review.

Publication of Infrastructure Australia Corporate Plan

The Department of Finance has provided options for agencies that have been affected by COVID-19 to defer the production of their Corporate Plans and Annual Reports so that they can focus on prioritising resources towards the Government's response to COVID-19. There is an option to defer delivery of the Corporate Plan to 31 January 2021.

The Department of Finance has advised that accountable authorities and directors who choose to defer the publication of their Corporate Plan up to 31 January 2021 will need to explain why they were unable to meet the normal deadline in their 2020-21 Corporate Plan. They will also need

to publish a note on their websites by 31 August 2020, advising that the plan has been deferred and the reasons for the deferral.

Infrastructure Australia has been substantially affected by COVID-19. Substantial resources have been directed towards new work providing advice to government on a potential infrastructure response to the pandemic. At the same time, considerable effort has been directed to ensuring the organisation continues to deliver on its statutory responsibilities whilst staff are working from home.

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Infrastructure Australia has responsibility to strategically audit Australia's nationally significant infrastructure, and develop 15-year rolling infrastructure plans that specify national and state level priorities.

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