



**Hunter JO Strategic Plan
Implementation Report - June 2023**



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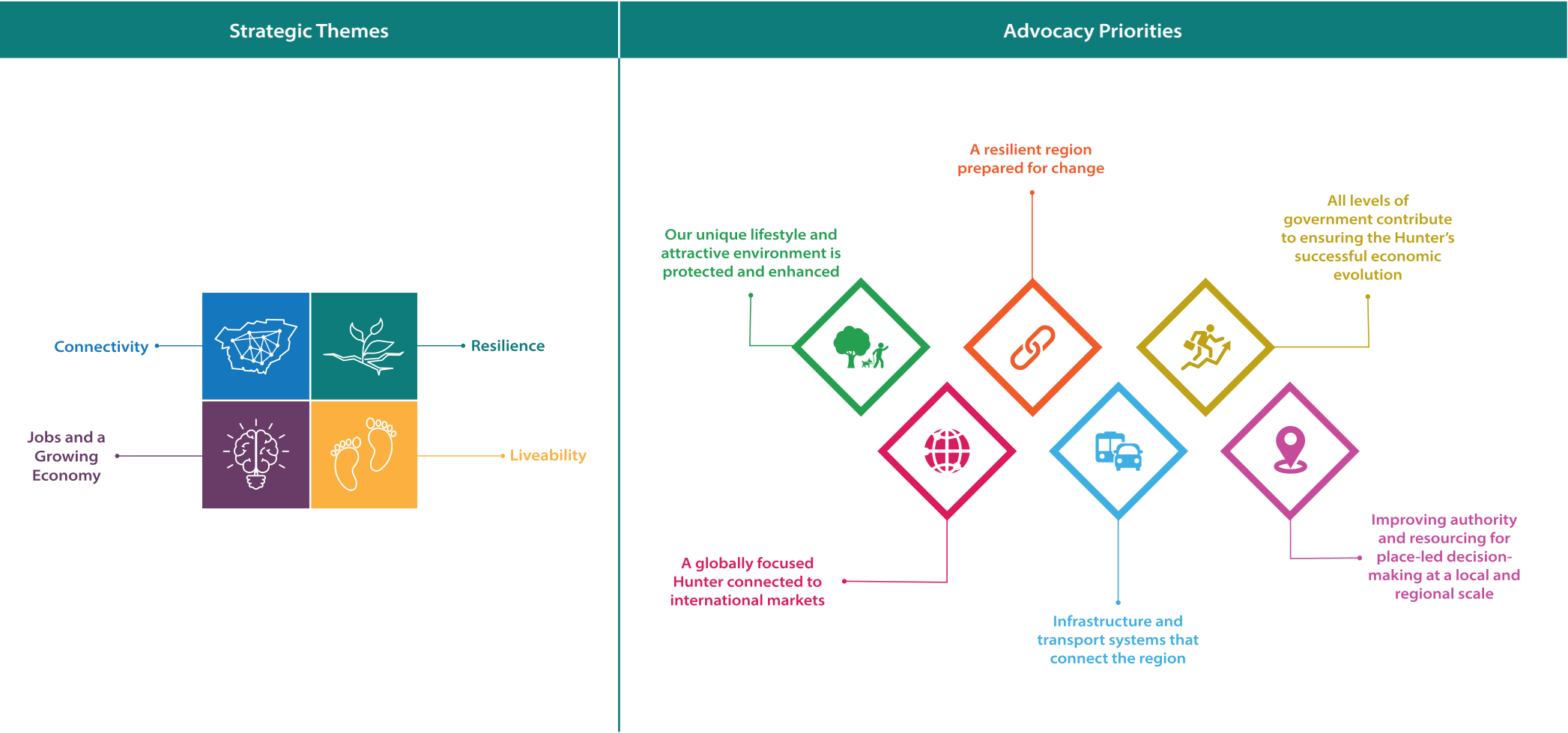
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Connectivity

A globally connected region whose residents enjoy transport and digital infrastructure and systems that enhance their economic and lifestyle opportunities.



Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period		
<p>1.1 Within the region there is a robust integrated transport solution that underpins the experience/liveability and productivity of its residents and visitors comparable to its global peers.</p>	<p>1.1.1 Support local government having a collective voice in the planning and delivery of major transport infrastructure and systems.</p> <p>1.1.2 Proactively facilitate collaboration with key state agencies to support delivery of connectivity solutions that suit the regions current and future needs.</p> <p>1.1.4 Support a Regional Integrated Transport Plan linking key services and centres.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Regional Transport Strategy included in top five priorities underpinning Hunter JO NSW Election Campaign Advocacy. • Integrated Regional Transport Strategy continues to be included in top five advocacy priorities. • Included as a priority in engagement with senior Transport for NSW representatives undertaken through GNMP Subcommittee “Roundtable with the Mayors” session delivered April 2023. Arising from this session, collaborative workshop between Mayors, General Managers and Transport for NSW officials currently being planned to identify shared transport outcomes and priorities for the region. • Participating in ongoing partnership with regional stakeholders (Business Hunter, Committee for the Hunter, UDIA, Property Council and Dantia), through the Hunter Planning Alliance, to advocate for \$500M Enabling Infrastructure Fund. 		
	<p>1.1.3 Support Member Councils to influence other levels of government on a sustainable model for delivery and maintenance of road infrastructure.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road funding reform included in top five priorities underpinning Hunter JO NSW Election Campaign Advocacy. • Road funding reform continues to be included in top five advocacy priorities of the Board. 		
	<p>1.1.5 Identify and facilitate regional approaches for active transport outcomes that deliver connectivity, health, liveability and economic benefits.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Cycling Tourism Strategy (Shiraz to Shore) concept development and Business Case project commenced. 		
	<p>1.1.6 Private and public transport solutions operate on a net zero basis.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EV Feasibility studies underway with all Member Councils (except Lake Macquarie and Muswellbrook, who have received Destination Charging grants). Councils who are further down the EV path are being assisted with promoting EV chargers to businesses. 		

Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
<p>1.2 Through its port and airport the Hunter is a globally connected and economically prosperous city-region, recognised as a key international gateway, providing its communities with a vibrant and unique lifestyle and growth in products and services to replace the economic output of thermal coal.</p>	<p>1.2.1 Partnering with airport and port to identify and pursue priority actions to enable access to international markets for the benefit of the region.</p> <p>1.2.2 Influence government policy to prioritise the importance of access to international markets for the benefit of the region.</p> <p>1.2.3 Leading collaboration in the region between government, industry and community to ensure the benefits of international markets are region wide.</p> <p>1.2.4 Support a transport access strategy for regional connectivity to and from the airport.</p>		<p>Hunter Global Initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flightpath to our Future Report (endorsed by Board June 2023) • Airports Strategy Business Case (Freight and Logistics) and Strategy project commenced • Hunter Global Tourism Project commenced • Hunter Global Partners Group (convened by Hunter JO) to facilitate ongoing regional collaboration around the opportunities posed by an international airport in the region. <p>• Integrated Regional Transport Strategy included in top five priorities underpinning Hunter JO NSW Election Campaign Advocacy.</p> <p>• Integrated Regional Transport Strategy continues to be included in top five advocacy priorities of the Board.</p> <p>• Included as a priority in engagement with senior Transport for NSW representatives undertaken through GNMP Subcommittee “Roundtable with the Mayors” Session delivered April 2023. Arising from this session, collaborative workshop between Mayors, General Managers and Transport for NSW officials currently being planned to identify shared transport outcomes and priorities for the region.</p>
<p>1.3 Digital connectivity that ensures community access to core services on commuter routes across the region and between Sydney and Newcastle and to enable business development, growth and innovation</p>	<p>1.3.1 Support and encourage investment in equitable and competitive digital connectivity and the elimination of mobile black spots across the region to ensure community access to commuter routes, core health and education opportunities, and to enable business development, growth and innovation.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No advocacy or capacity building programs underway (not resourced).
<p>1.4 A region that is built around sustainable transport options</p>	<p>1.4.1 Embed the direction of net-zero in all our connectivity strategies to provide a pathway and level of confidence to investors and community to support the transition to more sustainable transport outcomes.</p>		<p>Net Zero Acceleration Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EV Feasibility studies currently being coordinated for Hunter JO Member Councils • Scoping opportunities underway to progress funding and delivery of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional EV Strategy - Assist councils with preparing EV fleet transition plans and implementing EV chargers.





Resilience

We are prepared for change and ready to withstand, adapt and recover from natural and human induced risks.



Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
2.1 We are recognised as innovative leaders in Council capacity building and policy support for climate change action, resilience and disaster preparedness	2.1.1 We provide guidance and support packages to embed Climate Change action, resilience and disaster preparedness into Councils Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act Now on Coastal Adaptation project • Climate Change IP&R Package • Disaster Risk Reduction project • Simtables for Community Empowerment project • Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resilience IP&R Package - Transport Vulnerability Analysis - Disaster Waste - Disaster Communications - Simtables for community engagement Stage 2.
	2.1.2 We drive council capacity building opportunities supported by an evidence base to improve regional resilience and community awareness.		
	2.1.3 We drive opportunities to collaborate, adopt system thinking and circular economy opportunities to reduce our impact on climate change and increase resilience.	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular Economy Subcommittee • Circular Economy Facilitators Network • Regional Circular Materials Strategy • Hunter & Central Coast Circular Economy Roadmap • Circular Economy Ecosystem project • Hunter Circular website (www.huntercircular.com.au) • Circular Economy Procurement Project • Circular Economy Precincts and Futures Hub Concept Plans and Business Case.


Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
2.2 We take leadership and drive regional best practice in climate action	2.2.1 We lead the way in regional best practice and work with all levels of government to drive policy and strategy on climate change. 2.2.2 Engage and provide thought leadership in local, national and global climate change and resilience networks.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act Now on Coastal Adaptation project • Climate Change IP&R Package • Net Zero Acceleration Program • Hunter Net Zero Network (convened by Hunter JO) • Participation in Hunter Central Coast Coastal Practitioners Network (convened by DPE).
2.3 Our region is resilient to environment risks, natural hazards and climate change	2.3.1 Apply and obtain financial grants for regional programs that support a resilient region. 2.3.2 Facilitate and manage regional programs that support a resilient region.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct engagement (consultation workshop) and submission to the Commonwealth Independent Review into Disaster Funding Arrangements • Act Now on Coastal Adaptation project • Climate Change IP&R Package • Disaster Risk Reduction project • Simtables for Community Empowerment project • Transforming Resilience with the IP&R Framework project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resilience IP&R Package - Transport Vulnerability Analysis - Disaster Waste - Disaster Communications - Simtables for community engagement Stage 2.



Jobs and a Growing Economy

The Hunter economy continues to grow and evolve as a powerhouse of the state and national economies, providing more and higher quality jobs.



Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
<p>3.1 Coordinated planning and investment by all levels of government that empowers the region and its residents to maintain and grow jobs, economic opportunities and quality of life</p>	<p>3.1.1 Support a clear, place-based, integrated whole-of-government policy and planning approach to drive the region's economic evolution and jobs of the future.</p> <p>3.1.2 Support the establishment of an entity that has the authority and resources from the Commonwealth and NSW Government necessary to provide the institutional capacity and expert and empowered, place-based planning and decision-making capability.</p> <p>3.1.3 Support regional institutional capacity to assist businesses and workers impacted by changes in the economy.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for a clear, place-based, integrated whole of government policy and planning approach to drive the region's economic evolution included in top five priorities underpinning Hunter JO NSW Election Campaign Advocacy. • This advocacy focus continues to be included in top five advocacy priorities of the Board.
	<p>3.1.4 Drive collaboration to provide clarity, certainty and fairness in land-use policy and regulation as it relates to the use of former industrial and mining land and assets, or where local communities bear the impacts or have restrictions arising from the contribution of that place to broader regional or state benefits.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The urgent need for legislation and policy change to provide clarity, certainty and a clear pathway to enable adaptation and reuse of mining and industrial lands included in top five priorities underpinning Hunter JO NSW Election Campaign Advocacy. • This advocacy focus continues to be included in top five advocacy priorities of the Board.
	<p>3.1.5 Support government policy and planning that prioritise the investment into key regional catalyst areas.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Subcommittee, including "Roundtable with the Mayors" designed to facilitate collaborative dialogue with State Agencies to progress action on GNMP priorities, including catalyst areas.
	<p>3.1.6 Support the place-based delivery of Aboriginal partnerships and employment programs in the Hunter.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No advocacy or capacity building programs underway (not currently resourced).

Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
3.2 Accelerated and amplified market driven investment in innovation that capitalises on the region's existing natural strengths and attributes which create jobs in future industries	3.2.1 Support and mature the innovation ecosystem in order to drive commercialisation of ventures and start-ups in the region which will provide growth in future jobs.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunter Venture Fund project and Final Report (endorsed by Hunter JO Board June 2023)
3.3 A globally focused region that drives talent attraction and retention	3.3.1 Support efforts that position the Hunter globally in its areas of competitive and comparative strength.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunter JO staff representation on Hunter Identity & Positioning Strategy Project Working Group and Local Government Reference Groups (convened by Regional NSW & HCCDC).
3.4 A region that is built around Circular Economy principles as a driver of future jobs	<p>3.4.1 Support knowledge sharing and embed Circular Economy principles in our strategies and plans to provide a pathway to future jobs creation in our local supply chains and services.</p> <p>3.4.2 Support implementation of the Hunter Central Coast Circular Economy Roadmap.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circular Economy Subcommittee Circular Economy Facilitators Network Regional Circular Materials Strategy Hunter & Central Coast Circular Economy Roadmap Circular Economy Ecosystem project Hunter Circular website (www.huntercircular.com.au) Circular Economy Procurement Project Circular Economy Precincts and Futures Hub Concept Plans and Business Case.
3.5 We are recognised as a destination of choice for international and domestic visitors	<p>3.5.1 Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around regional tourism promotion to grow jobs in the region.</p> <p>3.5.2 Identify opportunities for growth and diversification of employment based in the tourism economy.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunter Global: The Flightpath to our Future Report (endorsed by Board June 2023) Hunter Global Tourism Project Accelerating Event Economies Project.








Liveability

Protect, preserve and improve the high standard of liveability and pristine environments that we enjoy in our region.



Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
4.1 We are recognised as a destination for hosting world class events that align with our unique offering.	4.1.1 Support a coordinated approach and collaborate around events and tourism. 4.1.2 Identify opportunities for growth and diversification of the regional events and tourism economy.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accelerating Event Economies Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KPMG Hunter Event Economic Analysis Report - KPMG Event Economic Modelling Tool - KPMG Event Prioritisation and Assessment Framework - Facilities Audit - Event Planning Guide - Event Licencing Recommendations - Consistent Templates for Event Management - Website to promote the region (Events10) - Hunter Event Prospectus - Cross Regional Itineraries - Major Event Feasibility Study • Hunter Global Tourism Project • Hunter Global: The Flightpath to our Future Report (endorsed by Board June 2023).
4.2 Making use of our opportunity to drive circular evolution of our region's economy.	4.2.1 Support meeting our future regional infrastructure and operations for circular outcomes. 4.2.2 Reduce carbon emissions through better waste and materials management.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular Economy Subcommittee • Circular Economy Facilitators Network • Regional Circular Materials Strategy • Hunter & Central Coast Circular Economy Roadmap • Circular Economy Ecosystem project • Hunter Circular website (www.huntercircular.com.au) • Circular Economy Procurement Project • Circular Economy Precincts and Futures Hub Concept Plans and Business Case • Small Acts Big Change Regional Awareness Campaign • Regional Awareness Campaign - Community Recycling Centres.

Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
<p>4.3 Our natural environments including our bushland, estuaries, waterways and beaches are protected and enhanced.</p>	<p>4.3.1 Our Councils are well supported in protecting and enhancing the environment through regional programs, data collection, support resources and capacity building.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act Now on Coastal Adaptation project • Participation in Hunter Central Coast Coastal Practitioners Network (convened by DPE) • Regional Contaminated Land Program • Regional Illegal Dumping Program.
	<p>4.3.2 Provide support and identify opportunities to improve and protect the regional Blue Green Grid.</p>		
	<p>4.3.3 We drive council capacity building opportunities to protect the environment and human health from pollution.</p>		
	<p>4.3.4 Provide support for regional conservation planning to protect regional biodiversity.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning commenced to deliver regional workshop with Member Councils and agencies in September 2023. The forum will explore regional opportunities for collaboration to facilitate a more strategic and coordinated approach toward biodiversity planning, offsets and habitat conservation.
	<p>4.3.5 Provide support and identify opportunities to enhance the health of the region's estuaries and other waterways.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No advocacy or capacity building programs underway (not currently resourced).
<p>4.4 Supporting our region to be on the path to net zero emissions and paving the way with smart innovative solutions that increase liveability.</p>	<p>4.4.1 Provide support and identify opportunities on regional collaboration around Electric Vehicles.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JONZA Net Zero Acceleration Program (Regional Electric Vehicle Strategy) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Investigating funding opportunities - Project scoping - Working towards opportunities to progress development of a Regional EV Strategy - Assisting councils with preparing for EV fleet transition plans and implementing EV chargers.
	<p>4.4.2 Support regional collaboration around clean energy and future energy initiatives and industries.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial engagement completed with Commonwealth Net Zero Economy Taskforce. • JONZA Net Zero Acceleration Program.

Objective	Strategic Direction	Advocacy Priority	Activity within reporting period
4.5 A region with enriched neighbourhoods and places supported by planned infrastructure that promotes community cohesion, active living and pride in culture and heritage.	4.5.1 Support Improved planning outcomes to enhance liveability and lifestyle.		• No advocacy or capacity building programs underway (not currently resourced).
	4.5.2 Support a healthy and active community.		
	4.5.3 Support a safe and accessible society across the region.	Nil	
	4.5.4 Support enhanced cultural opportunities and protected heritage.		
4.6 A region that is connected, inclusive and fair.	4.6.1 Support affordability and increased access to housing.		• No advocacy or capacity building programs underway (not currently resourced).
	4.6.2 Support an increase in the availability of jobs and services closer to people.		

Communications and Engagement Strategy

Methods for Communicating	Activity within reporting period
<p>Websites Providing updates on our website including project updates and latest news.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent updating of website in line with newsletters and other updates (e.g., new projects/grants) • Updated design of Hunter JO website complete including addition of resources page, advocacy page and priorities page. Improved customer journey and usability • Over 20,000 website views.
<p>Newsletters Publishing a corporate newsletter to share updates on our key projects and priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six newsletters distributed with an average open rate of 43%. This is 22% higher than the international average open rate for email marketing • Changed newsletter delivery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisation update newsletters to be delivered every two months (rather than monthly) - Alternating months we deliver a 'thought-leadership' newsletter focusing on different topics with the aim of being seen as leaders and an authoritative source among our target audience on topics key to the function of the Hunter JO. To add value and generate further opportunities to demonstrate the significance of the Hunter JO in the region - Inclusion of a Board Member Spotlight in which we feature a different Mayor to raise their profile and highlight the collaboration of the organisation.
<p>Social Media Posting social media updates that link to our programs as well as the website and newsletters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 114% increase on social media followers from beginning of the reporting period • 28,141 impressions (post views) on LinkedIn • Development of an updated social media strategy underway.
<p>Traditional Media Communicating with traditional media outlets about key milestones and successes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nine stories covered across 17 publications within the reporting period • Development of a media and profiling framework and updated media list underway • Internal capacity building around building media relations undertaken.
<p>Meetings and Events Hosting or attending meetings and events that are relevant to our strategic priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted eight regional events • Twelve parliamentary/government meetings/engagements • Fifteen additional strategic engagements • Either host or participate in almost 50 networks and committees.
<p>Presentations and Publications Providing updates in the form of presentations and publications on the progress of our strategic priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bimonthly program status report • Four additional publications/reports published online.
<p>Direct Distributions Sending direct distributions on the progress of our strategic priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three Email Direct Marketing (EDMs) distributions sent to 1720 recipients.



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