

ANNUAL REPORT

**ANNUAL REPORT
AND FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS**
2023/24



ANNUAL *Report*

AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work; the Jagera, Giabal and Jarowair tribes. We extend that respect to the Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the cultures and the hopes of Australia's First Peoples.



2023/2024

TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

353 Ruthven Street,
(Access via Russell Street)
Toowoomba Qld 4350

PO Box 3629,
Toowoomba
Queensland 4350

PH 07 4638 0400
ABN 78 423 372 476

Office Hours:
8:30am - 4:30pm
Monday to Friday



The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce is one of Queensland's largest regional Chambers. Together we represent a significant voice and as a group we can make a positive difference for our local business community. Contact our Chamber team today to learn more on how we can help you. We work for business. **Email:** admin@toowoombachamber.com.au



Partners & Members

The Toowoomba Chamber receives no direct government funding, which allows us to put our partners and members' interests first.

It also means that our partners and members play a critical role in the financial health of the Toowoomba Chamber and our long-term sustainability.

The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce is an independent organisation that advocates on behalf of local businesses at local, state, and federal levels to ensure the business community has a voice.

The Toowoomba Chamber plays a critical role in connecting members

across the local business community to establish and grow strong, lasting networks as well as explore opportunities to access supply chain networks and build member's brands.

Through its full program of networking events, the Toowoomba Chamber provides members with a platform to strengthen their existing networks, develop new contacts and connect with business leaders to maximise growth opportunities for their businesses.

Our partnerships are structured around partner needs and therefore come in all shapes and sizes.

Our partnerships are about working together to unite around our goal to be the champion of the local business community. Our partnerships create

opportunities to share messaging, team up to deliver events, to raise cash to help the most vulnerable or to help nurture career development and progression, work with business to tap into their experience to share with others or to help build an individual company's brand.

Chamber members can also contribute to key strategic projects to ensure business requirements are considered while helping to shape the future direction of the local business community.

With more than 600 members, who employ over 6000 people, at the end of the financial year, Toowoomba Chamber membership is one of the most cost-effective and beneficial peak member organisations that businesses can belong to.

As a member organisation we understand that we need to adapt and evolve by listening to their members' needs. We understand this includes perceived value and actual value.

We offer our members access to a range of services and benefits for their membership and most importantly opportunities to participate in educational development, connect with others and be involved in understanding member needs to be able to advocate for the business community.

Our membership benefits are communicated to our members through our on-boarding program and online to ensure everyone knows what their membership gives them, to ensure our members understand that we fully appreciate them.

We continually reflect on our partner and member value offering and know that we need to adapt and evolve to ensure partner and member growth and sustainability.

Membership benefits include:

- access to a Board or staff member as MC or facilitator;
- grab member discounts with direct access to the Toowoomba Chamber database;
- need your voice heard, seek out the Toowoomba Chamber to be involved and engaged in advocacy at all levels of government;
- targeted B2B introductions in person or by email;
- invitation to member only events;
- engage with and interact with the voices of the Toowoomba Young Chamber;
- discounted Boardroom prices for members;
- opportunity to promote business offers, events, or services as provided to the Toowoomba Chamber via our digital platforms at our discretion;
- access to Toowoomba Chamber Jobs Board;
- up to 50% off tickets to networking, learning and advocacy events;
- your business recognised in the Toowoomba Chamber Annual Report;
- new member announced at Business@Dusk;
- opportunity to participate in advisory groups, special interest groups or specific projects;
- Toowoomba Chamber suppliers are secured from the membership base first;
- discounted advertising opportunities in Toowoomba Chamber publications;
- advertised member to member offers via website;
- business listing in Toowoomba Chamber businesses directory; and
- share your blogs, news stories, and resources via our website.

LUCAS WEGENER

Executive Officer

THANK YOU TO OUR VALUED PARTNERS



**FOOD & AGRI
NETWORK**



Foundation Partner



Platinum Partners



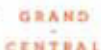
bernorthproperties



PeopleFirst
Bank



Gold Partners



Silver Partners



Members List

Members Financial Year 2023-2024

Life Members:	Ben Liesch - Ray	Concordia Lutheran	Enterprise Legal	Happy Healthy Hq
S Charles	White Toowoomba	College Toowoomba	Erlandson Finance Group	Harness Training
G McDonald	Ben Loxley	Cooper Commercial	Ethicol	Harvey Norman
J Mingay	Bendigo & Adelaide Bank	Coordinated Consultancy	Evan Khiro	- Computers
-----	Bernoth Properties	Copper Bench	Event Cinemas	HB Group
7 Toowoomba	Betros Bros	Corella Office Furniture	Excavation Equipment	Hello Little Creative Studio
7Springs Building Services	Bishopp Outdoor	Corey Davis	Fadya Fihed	Heritage Bank
Aaron Jones	Advertising	Country Caller	Falak Zghla	Hey Marketing
Abby Ussher -	Blake Clark	Regional News	Family Business	Hey Media Pty Ltd
Future Leader	Bloom Holistic Collective	COUNTRY SYNERGY	Association	Highfields Chamber
Aberfeldy Farm & Barn	Blooming Gorgeous	PTY LTD	Farhad Khdhir	of Commerce
Ability Enterprises	BlueprintHQ	Cracker Print & Paper	Faris Al Ali	Highlands Campus
Abundant Organic Life	BNI Toowoomba	Create Consult Research	Feather & Lawry Design	Hind Mousa
Access Automatic Doors	Bondimedical Pty Ltd	Creative Blinds	Ferriby Group of	Hip Pocket Workwear
& BHB Electrical	Bone Idol	Toowoomba	Companies Pty Ltd	& Safety
Accession3 Business	Bonjour Toowoomba	Creativore	Fibonacci Band	Hodge Real Estate
Advisers	Bookkeeping by CMS	Creevey Horrell	Finch Legal	Hogans Family Jewellers
Acumen Accounting &	Breakaway Toowoomba	Lawyers Toowoomba	Firas Alabdo	Holly Scarborough
Business Services	Brink Sharpening	Crick Transport Group	Fitton Insurance	Homestead Agribusiness
Afghan Traditional Sweets	Broadhurst Legal	T/a Daimler Trucks	(Brokers) Aust	Homestyle Bakeries
Ahmed Eido	Brown & Co Finance	Toowoomba	Fitzy's Toowoomba	Hooper Accountants
AimBig Employment	Browns Office Choice	Crows Nest District	FK Gardner & Sons	Hope Horizons Inc
Alaa Ali	Bryant Building Contractors	Tourist and Progress	Flaglines Regional	Hopscotch Distillers
ALE Group Australia Pty Ltd	Burke & Wills Hotel	Association Inc	Placement Agency	Horikhan Khudur
Alex Thompson	Bushra Murad	Crows Nest Tourist Park	Flaming Knights	Horizon Accounting Group
Aliva	Business Chamber	Dalia Al Ali	Focus HR	Hoshiyar Khdhir
All Star Brokers	Queensland	Dallas & Leone Hunter	Food Safety Management	Host Dining
Alliance Building and	Calibre Advisors	Dandarriga Farms	Solutions Pty Ltd	Hot Property
Construction Pty Ltd	Cameron Ross	Darling Downs and	Foodie Shots Photography	I&B Tax
Ally Martell	Campbell's Care & Support	West Moreton Primary	Foxtail Productions	Idan Allaw
Alpine Refrigeration (Qld)	Canning Tax & Advisory	Health Network	Freedom IT	Identity Computing
Amar Jarullah	Carmen Darwin Collective	Darling Downs Tarpaulins	Friendlies Pharmacy -	Impact Career Counselling
Ambrosiussen The	Catering People	Darling Fresh Smoke Haus	Discount Drug Store	& Personal Development
Business Accountants	Catherine Belfield	David Fredericks	FutureStudio Agency	Impact HealthCare
Ameen Ahmed	Consulting	Computer Training for	FX Technologies	Consulting
Aneesa Jalki	Catholic Diocese	Senior Citizens®	Toowoomba	Impact Leadership
Angie's Elite Cleaning	Toowoomba	DB3 Advisory Pty Ltd	G Free Donuts	Imperial Group
Solutions	CatholicCare	DC Commercial QLD	Gabbinbar Homestead	Inclusion Access Ltd
AON Risk Services	Social Services	Department of	Galactic Donuts	Ink and Think Pty Ltd
Australia	CB Electrical Solutions	Employment, Small	Gallagher Benefit Services	Inspired Asset
Archers Catering	CDI Pest Management	Business & Training	Garden City Constructions	Finance Pty Ltd
and Events	Chip Saint	Diana Alo	Garth Hamilton MP	Interstate Finance
ASKAFOODTECH	Chrestin Alabdo	Digit IT	Gary Sandell	& Leasing
Aspect Architects &	Christine James -	Digital Dynamics	Gelatissimo Toowoomba	iPartners
Project Managers	Future Leader	Dilovan Ilyas	George Banks Rooftop	Ismat Khudher
Atheer Ahmed	Clarity Consulting Co.	Dilshad Alhito	Bar & Bistro	Issa Fihed
AtWork Australia	Classic Recruitment &	Dilshad Khalaf	Georgie Carswell	Itow towing
Aurora Training Institute	Business Services	Dine Darling Downs	Ghalya Zindinan	toowoomba ptyltd
Aussie Bookkeeping Basics	Cleanaway Toowoomba	Diya Hatson	GHD	Jaklen Abdullah
Australia and New Zealand	Clear Logic Media	Donaldson Law	Globetrotters	Janeta Campbell
Banking Group Limited	Clear Pixel	Doug Allen	Travel & Cruise	Business Advisory
Australian Red	Clifford Gardens	Douglas Wilson	Golden West	Jasmine Theodosis
Cross Lifeblood	Shopping Centre	Downs ICT	Apprenticeships	JG Audit & Assurance
Australian Retirement Trust	Clifford Gouldson Lawyers	DP Wealth Advisory	Goodyear Autocare	Jimbour House
Bandland Toowoomba	Clifford Park -	Dust 2 Clean	Toowoomba	Jim's Test & Tag
Bank of Queensland	Toowoomba Turf Club	E & E Waste	Graham Financial	Jinan Fihed
Agribusiness	Clifton Chamber	Eakoh Australia	Grand Central	JM Creative Studio
Bank of Queensland	of Commerce	ECM Consulting	Grant Daniel & Long Pty Ltd	JMK Retail
Rangeville	Clontarf Foundation	Elders Rural Services Ltd	Greenridge Press	Joe Doyle's JRD
Bank of Queensland	Clutterbuck Insurance	Elevate Communication	Grinding Equipment and	Accounting
Toowoomba	Brokers	ELIA Architecture	Reline Support Pty Ltd	Joe Wagner Group Pty Ltd
Barry Sheehan	Cobb+Co Museum	Ellen Ronalds KeenePerk	GRIVITY	Joel Andrade
Psychology Pty Ltd	CoBright Marketing	Digital / Self-Care	Ground One Civil PL	Joshua Bamford
Basam Ajo	Coffee Gazette	for Teachers	GTH Accounting Group	Joshua McLean
Base Elias	Colliers Toowoomba	Elliotts Accounting	Hakar Abod	Joy Mingay
BASE Services	Commonwealth	Embellish Embroidery	Hallmark Property	Junktion coffee house
BBS Communications	Bank Australia	EMJAE Consulting	Hanan Khudher	Kareem Alabdo
Group Pty Ltd	Community Access Care	Emmos Fine Foods	Hannah Griffiths	Kath Dickson Family Centre
BE Power	Concinnity Consulting	Empire Theatres Pty Ltd	Hannas Toowoomba	Katrina Lacy
Beadles		Empowered Consulting		
		& Events		

Members List

Members Financial Year 2023-2024

Kehoe Myers Consulting Engineers	Murdoch Lawyers	Recognition Plus	South Toowoomba Junior Rugby Club Inc.	Toowoomba Community Organic Gardens Association (TCOGA)
Kenanah Kusah	Music for you	Recruit With Me	Southern Cross Austereo	Toowoomba Dermal & Oedema Clinic
Keryn Welsh	MV Bookkeeping	Red Bolt Engineering Pty Ltd	Southern Cross Bookkeeping Services	Toowoomba Farmers Market
Keys Property and Yard Maintenance	NAB Toowoomba	Reflections Lake Cooby	Southern Queensland Country Tourism	Toowoomba Fashion Festival
Khalida Khalaf	Nada Sheebo	Regional Development Australia Darling Downs and Southwest	Specialised Property Consulting	Toowoomba Golf Club Ltd - Middle Ridge
Khayal Ismael	Nariman Qasim	Reilly Real Estate	Srhad Khudher	Toowoomba Grammar School
Kialla Pure Foods	Naser Chikan	Renas Abdullah	St Andrews Toowoomba Hospital	Toowoomba Hospital Foundation
Kingfisher Creative	National Tiles	Renew You Wellness Clinic	Standout Recruitment	Toowoomba Municipal Band And Drayton Memorial Hall Association
Krazy Kevin	Navigate Finance and Lending	Reparator Pty Limited	STATIM	Toowoomba Regional Council
Krush Design Co	Nawar Khalaf	Retrohex	Step By Step Training	Toowoomba Sports Ground
Lailah Flett	NBN co	Rob Cattle	Steve Roberts	Toowoomba Trails
Lena Nabizada	Nehad Qasim	Robertson Scannell	Stirling & Truffles	Toowoomba Wood Fired Pizza
LifeRoad Enterprises PTY LTD	Nizar Adi	Rochford Solicitors	Stock Locker Pty Ltd	TOTALLY WORKWEAR TOOWOOMBA
Lions Club Toowoomba West	Nizar Hatson	Rohan Mckerrow	StruXi Design Pty Ltd	TrainWreck
Little Pâtisserie Cafe	Northbuild	Rojina Ahmed	Study Toowoomba	Transformational Brand Lab
Little Pig Consulting	Construction QLD	Roma Hamad	Suad Sulaiman	Trevor Manteufel
Living Entertainment	Oakey Beef Exports	Rosalie House Cellar Door Restaurant	SumNedia	Trevor Watts MP
Liza Lange	Oakey Chamber of Commerce	Rotary Club of North Toowoomba	Suncorp Agribusiness	Trice Consulting
LJ Hooker Toowoomba	Occupational Therapist's Do Pty Ltd	Rowes	SuzieHolt4Groom	TruSports
LocalTeam Australia	Octec Employment Service	RSM	SWQ Training Pty Ltd	TS Burstows
Luxe Lawns & Gardens	Oh Tilly Brand Photography	Rukkus Co Marketing	Synergy Accountants & Business Advisers Pty Ltd	Funerals Pty Ltd
Maarof Zandinan	Omer Majon	Rumours International Convention Centre	TAFE Qld south west region	Tursa Employment & Training
MacDonald Law (Qld) Pty Ltd	OMG Donuts	Russell Mineral Equipment	Tahneea Hoffman	University of Queensland - Southern Queensland Rural Health
Madlen Abdullah	Darling Downs	Ruzanna Penty	Tax Partner Pty Ltd	University of Southern Queensland
Magenta Community Services	Operational Alchemy	RWC Toowoomba	TAYLOR SAFETY	Unlocking Connections Pty Ltd
Magnifico Creative	Oras Abdullah	Ryley Jewellery Creations	TED-L Consulting	Urth Cafe & Co
Maier Al Ali	Ortem Cafe	Saado Ismael	Thawra Zindinan	Vali Garage
Majid Bishar	Outstanding Occasions	Saaod Khalaf	The Barmen	Vanguard Laundry
Make A Dent Leadership	Pacific Steel Detailing & Estimating	Safe Resolutions Pty Ltd	The Brand Shop	Venn Financial Group Pty Ltd
Maktrans QLD	Paradise Outdoor Advertising	Sage and Butler	Agency Pty Ltd	Verba Proposals
Master Hire Pty Ltd	Pat Weir MP	Salar Khudher	The Chronicle	Veronica Farmer Healing Therapy
McAdam & Turnbull Realty	Pathways2Industry	SalesGrow Advertising	The coffee club toowoomba	VHD Studio
McConnell & Saldumbide Criminal Lawyers	Pechey Coffee Co	Salih Alo	The Downs Club	Vigour Graphics
McDonalds Harristown	Pechey Distilling Co	Salt Studios	The Graziers Daughter	VIM Cover
McNab Constructions Aust Pty Ltd	Pensare	Salwa Gharbi	Souvenirs & Hampers	Visual Focus
Meals on Wheels St Stephens Toowoomba	Perseverance IT	Samir Abdalla	The Lawrence Group	Viyan Alhito
Medibank	Peter Eldridge	Samya Guli	The Lolli Shop	Waheeda Al Hasan
MegaBuzz Pty Ltd	Petrena Windscreens	Sanar Khudher	The Macfab Group	warrina community coop ltd.
MFE	Phil Currey Management Consultant	Sarah Jane Hilton - Future Leader	The Plate Restaurant	Wearing Memories
Mia Rennick - Student	Pittsworth District Alliance	Sarah Springate	The Rock Pub	Western Clydesdales RLFC
Millmerran Commerce & Progress Inc	Porter Designs	Savvi Finance Pty Ltd	The Sandalwood Connection	Wilsonton State High School
Milton & King	Power Tynan	SE QLD Holiday Homes Pty Ltd	The Toowoomba Gallery	Wippells Autos
Minor Hotels - Oaks Toowoomba Hotel	Pratheep K Annamalai	Serengeti Print Group	The Toowoomba Minute	Woodstone Legal Consulting Pty Ltd
MinStaff Survey	Precinct Urban Planning	Shamia Shaqoli	The Trusted Advisor Network	WOTSO Toowoomba
Miracle of Life Toowoomba	Precision OT Pty Ltd	Sharné Consulting	The Water Cooler Guys	Wölfe Marketing
Mirza Alkhalil	Protea Place Inc.	Shawqi Khdir	Tiffany Wilson	Yasir Chikan
Mirza Khalaf	Proterra Group	Shelan Sulaiman	Tilly's Crawler Parts	YellowBridge QLD
MIS Insurance Brokers	Pulse DC Pty Ltd	Shell's Kitchen	Tim Rigby	YWCA Australia
MJH Finance	Purpa	Shipshape Consult	Toddlands	Zainab Alo
MOA Benchmarking	Queensland Country Marquees	Shireen Ali	TONY'S COMMUNITY LTD	Zesty Collective
Molly Bell	Queensland Professional Engineering Group	Shoebbox Theatre Company	Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise	
Momentum Mental Health	Queensland Rural, Regional and Remote Women's Network Inc.	Signature Projects	Toowoomba Anglican School	
Monkey Business Catering	Quest Toowoomba	Sirwan Alhito	Toowoomba Body Sculpting	
Morgan's Financial	Quipco	Smart Cleaning Services	Toowoomba Central Plaza Apartment Hotel	
Mort & Co	R & O Communications	SMITH Diesel Fitting Pty Ltd	Toowoomba Choral Society Inc.	
Mosaic Hues	Raad Adi	Smithstock Investment Company		
Mrs Deidre Young	Rana Al Ali	SMK Land Surveyors Pty Ltd		
MTA Travel	Randa Tamar	Social Me		
Multicultural Australia	Rashi Khalaf	Solar Power Store		
	RDH Integration Services			

PRESIDENT'S Report

We are proud partners of the Darling Downs Regional Alliance which represents over 1000 businesses in the Toowoomba Regional Local Government area.



The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce is an independent organisation that advocates on behalf of local businesses at local, state, and federal levels to ensure the business community has a voice. We remain fiercely protective of our independence.

The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce journey commenced on 12 October 1899, stirred into action by the business community due to the "special opportunities afforded by a digest of the ideas and experiences of an association of business" and the need that "a vigilant and united body can readily discuss anomalies and abuses which if left unchecked work to the detriment of the community".

As we enter our 125th year, the Toowoomba Chamber of today continues to build on those foundations.

The Toowoomba Chamber plays a critical role in connecting our members across the local business community to establish and grow strong, lasting networks as well as explore opportunities to access supply chain networks and build business brands.

Our network and learning events and research and development continues to drive what we do every day.

We have continued to create connections, deliver business learnings, and worked hard to influence all levels of government for the betterment of the community.

This year our program of 50 events and activities attracted 5977 attendees, with our Business at Dusk continuing to grow in popularity and attendance. We partnered with our valued partners and members to co-facilitate or support their events including business breakfasts, business lunches, networking functions and much more.

The Focus HR Business Excellence Awards (Business Excellence Awards) again shone brightly as our business community's night of nights!

Our extensive program helps ensure the business community are connected to the Toowoomba Chamber and each other and their individual and b2b profiles

are boosted. It also created a shared learning environment to grow and develop businesses, which we see as a fundamental source of the region's future success.

With over 600 members, the Toowoomba Chamber is one of the largest regional Chamber of Commerce organisations in Australia and Queensland's largest regional Chamber of Commerce. The 95% growth of our membership over the past four years is critical to our organisation, ensuring our voice is heard. We are proud partners of the Darling Downs Regional Alliance which represents over 1000 businesses in the Toowoomba Regional Local Government area. The Toowoomba business community benefit from the cultivation of this collective power of our membership to create change and to be recognised as a primary source of influence and advocacy by government at all levels

We take our advocacy role very seriously, so we use our voice to highlight the issues, to enable the wider community to become more aware of the impact on our businesses and beyond – as well as pushing for greater accountability and ownership to resolve these concerns by the relevant government.

The Toowoomba Business Sentiment Index, CBD Economic Profile, the potential redevelopment of the Central Business District, and our Annual Survey all contributing to the creation of evidence-based policy to advocate for our members and our region in general. These are influential documents which help in the implementation of our government engagement strategy with federal, state and local elected officials. This year, our Toowoomba Local Election Priorities document developed in conjunction with our members will guide our advocacy efforts, at all levels of Government, in the coming years.

The work of our volunteer advisory groups: Food and Agri Network, Central Business District Revitalisation Advisory Group, and Toowoomba Young Chamber is outstanding and vital cogs in our on the ground understanding of business

opportunity and constraints and an important component of our succession pathway to Toowoomba Chamber and other local Board appointments. I personally thank all members of these groups for their support of the Toowoomba Chamber and the business community in general.

Whilst the last twelve months have seen the Toowoomba Chamber, along with many of our members, continue to adapt to the national economic conditions, the rising costs of living, workforce and supply shortages, increased administration burden and the ongoing housing crisis, we remain committed to the ongoing growth of our great region. We are here to support our members during these headwinds and into the future, whatever it may hold.

Of course, as a member organisation, with no direct government funding, we are only as good as our membership base and as strong as our partners, so I want to say HUGE thanks to each of you! We literally could not do what we do without your generosity, engagement, and support.

Thankfully, the Toowoomba Chamber leadership team is strong, our Vice Presidents Sam Wright and Barton Castley, our Treasurer Peter Rowe and our Board Members: Jenni Butler, Gordon Grover, Rouz Fard, Matt Gregg, Gary Wilson, and Shelley Burchett. You each bring wisdom, insight and governance skills that make an awesome team! I am so grateful for your time, effort, and commitment.

Special acknowledgement to the contributions of our outgoing President, Ms Kate Venables, Vice President Mr Chris Black, and Board members Ms Jenny Rix and Ms Naomi Wilson.

And finally, a huge thank you to the Toowoomba Chamber team Todd, Lucas, Georgie, Faiz and Kelly who have gone above and beyond our expectations, delivering on our strategic goals and juggling the many and varied issues in such a professional and effective manner!

MYF RIGBY
President

Treasurer's REPORT 2024



Continuing to deliver more for our members thanks to their support.

As a small business in Toowoomba, like the rest of the small businesses in the region, the Toowoomba Chamber plans using the information we have on hand, current legislation and current economic sentiment.

The Toowoomba Chamber will continue to advocate for your needs, with our local election priorities document and the looming state and federal elections. We will continue to bring presenters and programs to you designed to increase your knowledge and ability to navigate doing business in Toowoomba and surrounds.

The business parameters we work within are ever changing and as such our business and yours needs to be flexible, agile, and be able to capitalise on opportunities while shielding ourselves from detrimental factors as best we can.

From a financial perspective, the 2023/2024 year was a growth year for the Toowoomba Chamber. The 2024 financial year has resulted in a profit of \$17,715.

When looking at the net asset position of the Toowoomba Chamber at 30 June 2024 and 30 June 2023, our net asset position has increased to \$362,071 from \$344,356.

Income for the year has increased to \$1,430,740 up from \$1,158,483 in 2023 and \$1,044,757 in 2022. This 36.95% income growth over the past 3 years is due to:

- a growing partner base – platinum, gold and silver sponsors;
- continued strong membership growth, exceeding 600 at the end of financial year; and
- an acceleration in grant funding in our business connect program.

Expenses have also risen to \$1,413,025 this year, up from \$1,188,849 in 2023 and \$947,025 in 2022, 49.20% increase over the 3 years. This can be attributed to:

- inflationary pressures associated with supplies like food and beverage and general service delivery, while also maintaining our use of member businesses wherever possible;
- ongoing commitment by the Board to enhance Toowoomba Chamber and member outreach;
- research and development to build evidence-based advocacy work such as the Toowoomba Central Business District Economic Profile, Toowoomba Performance Sentiment Index and Annual Survey;
- industrial relation law changes; and
- wages growth, including the Chief Executive Officer's

remuneration package of \$177,707 including superannuation.

We are a community based not for profit organisation, the increasing expenses show we are investing fully back into our members and the Toowoomba region.

The Toowoomba Chamber Board does not receive any remuneration for their service. Except for tickets to the monthly Business@Dusk event and a ticket to the Focus HR Business Excellence Awards provided to the President, Board members are required to buy tickets to all functions, like all other valued Toowoomba Chamber members.

The Toowoomba Chamber is about support and connection, so I urge you to continue to take advantage of the learning and networking events The Chamber offers as conversations with peers are an excellent way to brainstorm options, solve problems, increase knowledge and make lifelong friends.

The Chamber remains in a positive financial position to continue to deliver more value to our member and partner base as we continue to create connections, discover through learning, and influence others to help businesses flourish.

PETER ROWE
Treasurer

Chamber BOARD MEMBERS



**President,
Myf Rigby**

Myf is a Director at Accession3 Business Advisers, she is a Certified Practising Accountant, has a Bachelor of Business and a Diploma in Financial Services (Financial Planning).

Myf started running her own business, in partnership, in 2009 and has not looked back. Her passion lies in the areas of strategic planning, both business and personal, disposable cash flow and asset growth.

Her ultimate aim is to see a stress free and comfortable lifestyle for clients and their families.

Myf has held community roles in Goondiwindi and has previously served on the board of Toowoomba Anglican School (TACAPS at the time). Myf is an advocate for education and improvement in all areas of personal, business and community life.



**Vice President,
Barton Castley**

An extremely enthusiastic and entrepreneur who has owned/ pioneered businesses within the:

- HR Recruitment industry
- Retail construction industry
- Motor vehicle industry

As well as holding Senior Management/ CEO roles within these industries at a national level along being a registered minister of religion for 5 years and a current registered Marriage Celebrant.

I believe that I bring not only local business knowledge and perspective but also a broader national business insight and connections that the Toowoomba Chamber of commerce may benefit.

Already being entrenched in the building, construction and manufacturing community which may be area of potential growth for the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce, I believe that I am well situated to represent chamber to my section of the Toowoomba community.

From a personal perspective as a member of the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce, I have found the connections over the past 7 years to be key to the growth of my personal brand and our business within the local community. Therefore, I am passionate about being involved in its impact with other businesspeople like me in the future if selected for this role.



**Treasurer,
Peter Rowe**

Peter is an Associate and Equity Partner at Power Tynan, where he has enjoyed working with a wide range of small and medium Toowoomba businesses for almost 15 years. He specializes in strategic planning, business growth, compliance and succession planning, providing clients with valuable insights and practical solutions for navigating the complex financial landscape.

Peter is very passionate about our business community here in Toowoomba and is excited about what the current and next generation of leaders will be able to do. He relishes the opportunity to be the part of working with members to make the most of the strong established business community Toowoomba has. Peter is currently a part of our Future Leader Advisory Group, so looks forward to using this potential position to continue helping Future Leaders grow their networks and skills.

His passion and drive have seen Peter nominated as a finalised in Rising Star of the Year and Young Accountant of the Year in national awards, as well as being a finalist for Future Leader of the Year in the 2022 BEAs.

Outside of work, Peter enjoys taking quality time with his family, especially his young son Emmett who keeps he and his wife on their feet!



**Vice President,
Sam Wright**

Sam joined the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce Board to fill the role of Treasurer from 2016 until October 2019 when Sam was then elected as a Vice President and has been serving in that position since. In the early days of Sam's involvement with the Chamber, he played a crucial part in reshaping the Chamber's financial path and ensuring its long-term sustainability.

Over the past 7+ years, Sam has been a proud contributor to the Chamber's current community presence, including its strong brand, growing membership, successful events and Business Excellence Awards, and advocacy for members.

Sam has a fervent belief that a strong and thriving small business community is a bedrock for a successful society. As a trusted advisor to small businesses, Sam is well placed to bring the challenges and opportunities of small business to the Chamber's governance.

First involved with the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce in 2011 as part Future Leaders, Sam has enjoyed giving back to the Toowoomba Business community through his contribution to the Chamber.

Sam has completed the CPA program, holds a CPA Public Practice Certificate, is a registered Tax Agent, holds a Master of Business Administration through UniSQ, and has graduated the Company Director's Course through the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Sam is a Partner at Ambrosiussen The Business Accountants, a CPA accounting firm in Toowoomba that provides taxation and management accounting advisory services focused on small & medium family businesses and not-for-profit organisations.

Chamber BOARD MEMBERS



Shelley Burchett

Shelley is the Director of Ink and Think, a Toowoomba based marketing consultancy. With a background in marketing and civil engineering, she is passionate about bridging the gap between technical doers and marketers.

Shelley is involved in the local community through fundraising for Momentum Mental Health's 2023 Everest Base Camp Challenge (raising \$8.5K and hiking to Base Camp), participating as a judge over the past 3 years for Chamber's Business Excellence Awards and supporting industry as part of the Institute of Public Works and Engineering SWQ Branch Committee.

Having been a Future Leader Advisory Group member from 2021-2022, I'm excited at the prospect of making a bigger impact with the growth and support and our community through the Chamber board.



Rouz Fard

Rouz Fard is the Associate Director (Industry and Community Partnerships) at the University of Southern Queensland; an experienced relationships manager and partnerships strategist with a demonstrated history of strategic industry and community collaborations, working in higher education partnerships to build a future-ready workforce in various sectors.

Highly skilled in Learning Management, Tertiary and Vocational Education and Training, Industry Linkage, Business Development, and consulting with a great passion for regional Queensland. He is actively building mutually beneficial relationships between industry, communities, and the university to drive innovation in industry collaborations and regional outcomes for our communities through engagement.

Rouz is currently a board member of the Regional Development Australia DDSW, an executive committee member of the Australian Computer Society DSWC, a Committee member of Toowoomba Regional Jobs Committee and an appointed member of Advancing Queensland's Regional Forum DDSW.

Rouz is a strong business professional who graduated from the University of Southern Queensland and holds several professional memberships, including:

- Australian Association of Graduate Employers;
- Australian Computer Society;
- Australian Collaborative Education Network; and
- National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory.



Matt Gregg

Matt is an experienced and dedicated stakeholder engagement professional committed to serving others and working collaboratively to create a resilient and thriving regional community. He has a proven ability to build, develop and maintain communication channels and strong, harmonious relations with major stakeholders across many industries, including the public sector.

Matt is a well-established and connected community leader with a demonstrated ability to broker relationships while facilitating and coordinating group activities, programs and events. He is an agile, versatile, and adaptive individual who works well under pressure and exudes positivity.

He is committed to delivering high-quality community outcomes through collaborative, well-researched initiatives.

With experience in agriculture, retail operations, sales, and stock management, Matt has proven expertise in designing and delivering successful community programs. Matt has a strong commitment to an ethical, transparent, values-based approach that supports a healthy workplace culture and upholds people's human rights and dignity. Matt is known for his dedication to empowering others and pursuing solutions that empower and improve others' lives. Matt is dedicated to the local community and has a firm belief in the region's potential and its people.

Jenni Butler

Jenni worked for a large corporation for 10 years before purchasing a small business in Toowoomba, which she owned and operated for 4 years, employing 5 staff. During this time, she commenced her career at TAFE Queensland. She has over 28 years' experience in the Vocational Education and Training sector as an educator, senior manager, Executive Director, General Manager South West region, prior to being appointed to the role of Chief Academic Officer, TAFE Queensland.

Jenni plays a pivotal role in shaping TAFE Queensland's organisation's educational landscape and is passionate about the VET sector, understanding the importance of what training and skills brings to individuals, businesses and communities. Living and growing up in regional and remote Queensland for most of her life, Jenni has a strong connection and consistently advocates and champions the importance of VET within these communities and across the state. Jenni also believes it is important to support and develop her people to become future leaders for the organisation and local communities.

Jenni is the chair of the TAFE Queensland Academic Board. She holds of Bachelor of Vocational Education and Training and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Gordon Grover

Gordon is the founding Director of Specialised Property Consulting (SPC), a Project Management and Development Management Consultancy which provides a range of services to clients in the property industry.

Gordon grew up in Toowoomba and attended Concordia Primary School before completing his high school at Toowoomba Grammar School. Following school, he spent a few years in Armidale at the University of New England before pursuing a career in Brisbane working for various contractors and consultants delivering some of the largest and complex projects in Queensland.

After 10 years in Brisbane and a short stint back in Armidale delivering the Armidale Hospital Redevelopment Gordon returned to Toowoomba with his young family and the goal to establish his own business.

Outside of business Gordon has a family of 3 small boys which take up a lot of his spare time with school and weekend sports and generally keeping them entertained and busy.



Gary Wilson

As an experienced professional largely in the National Air Traffic Management (ATM) domain, I also have 11 years Small Business experience as a Franchisee. Additionally, I was Group President of the City Heart Toowoomba Group Inc (2013-2018) where I influenced small business growth, ideas and direction within the Toowoomba CBD. My interest in becoming a Toowoomba Chamber Board Member is with a degree of enthusiasm as I am keen to utilise and share my experience within Toowoomba Chamber small business sector to enable better outcomes that will promote, enhance and energise the small business community.

Furthermore, I believe my extensive and diverse aviation operations, training and project management background is well suited to this key role. As a dedicated and accomplished aviation professional and small business owner, I feel I have a strong alignment to the key attributes required. My business management and leadership experience has been developed across several domains including complex projects such as the National OneSKY Program where I was appointed as the Senior Air Traffic Controller responsible for the Operational Training Solution for both the Civil & Military ATC operational domains. I also have experience within capability development management, aviation safety management and regulatory governance & compliance.



Chamber

OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS



Kate Venables

Before joining TAFE Queensland in October 2024, Kate spent 20 years working in the social services sector across Central Queensland, the Darling Downs and Southwest Queensland, in a variety of leadership roles. Kate's passion for rural, regional and remote Australia, has connected her with many varied communities and her core values include a proven commitment to diversity and inclusion, and a lifetime commitment to excellence.

Kate has demonstrated the ability to lead diverse teams of staff and volunteers to achieve successful outcomes for a wide variety of individuals, families and communities, a proven ability to develop and sustain productive, financially successful and growing organisation that ensure individuals (including volunteers) are valued and organisational performance is enhanced.

Kate has held and continues to hold a number of Board and Committee roles, including being an active member of the Jobs Queensland Board, Chair of the QLD Care Consortium, Director of Vanguard Laundry and Council member for the Duchesne Residential College within the University of Queensland.



Chris Black

Chris is purely and simply a business nerd and advocate for Toowoomba and our community. He's the result of diverse experiences and education mixed with unexpected life events. He founded Purpa, which helps businesses and businesspeople find their purpose, uncover their potential, and provide the systems, processes, and accountability to help them succeed.

He's had a few wins, including selling his company to an American Fortune 500 organisation, being named one of Australia's most influential advisers, and devoting his time to meaningful projects and interesting people.

He's the Chairman of Momentum Mental Health, the founder of Darling Downs Angels and Fortress Financial Solutions, and the former Vice President of the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce.

He's happily married to Alisha, who doubles as his clinical psychologist. He's also a proud father and cricket coach to his three boys.



Naomi Wilson Naomi Wilson is a people and leadership expert | international guest speaker | small business founder | and mother of 2 who works with small to medium business owners and managers to help them build winning teams and thriving businesses by getting their people, strategy and leadership right.

Naomi believes we should get to work with people that we would enjoy having dinner with and that when we have great working relationships, we have powerful, engaged teams and ultimately everyone wins. Over her 20+ years in the industry, Naomi has been invited into the trusted space of working with over 500 businesses from local SMEs to state and federal government departments and some of Australia's largest employers. She has been a guest speaker at international events, leadership summits and industry body conferences. Naomi holds an MBA in HRM, is a certified member of the Australian Institute of Human Resources.

2024 Local Election | Toowoomba Business Priorities



Small Business is a BIG Deal

We are an entrepreneurial city, a small business city that is the backbone of the Toowoomba regional economy. We are crucial to the region's sustainability and growth.

As the research undertaken by McCrindle as part of the Toowoomba Business Performance Sentiment Index identified that over 98% of the region's businesses are small. Yes, small businesses dominate the Toowoomba business landscape.

Small businesses are critical for the city's wealth generation and success. They also play an enormous role in our region by giving back to our community by supporting numerous community and sporting organisations and not for profit companies. That means when small business hurts our whole community hurts too.

The Toowoomba Chamber wants to see a turbocharged region, so businesses can expand, and more money can flow directly into the local economy. A region where business and people talk

about Toowoomba being THE place for business, throughout Queensland and around the nation.

Toowoomba Regional Council plays a critical role in small business success. How? By communicating and engaging with small business to enable growth. By creating enabling regulation to bring economic prosperity to a region. Rewarding small business. And much more.

The Toowoomba Chamber has engaged early and often with the business community to gain input into the key priorities that support business locally. With this input, the Toowoomba Chamber has identified key priorities and the commitment required from the next Toowoomba Regional Council Mayor and Councillors to enable small business.

We are the independent voice of business in our region. We will continue to advocate loudly to ensure the voice of business is heard.

Myfanwy Rigby
Toowoomba Chamber President

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Central Business District	
The Matter	<p>"The Toowoomba Central Business District is the jewel of our region. And understanding its business make-up, employment characteristics, strengths, and gaps, along with its roles and impact within the city's urban boundaries, the broader Toowoomba local government area, the region, state, and nation is essential is developing good policy. Any heart needs constant focus and attention to understand the critical factors that keep it activated. The CBD requires a collective effort and collaboration between business, government, and the community."</p>
Current Business Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of effective investment is restricting long-term growth and sustainability. • Local CBD Parking Policies have the biggest impact on the most common business types in the CBD, reducing customers and client base. • Local CBD Parking Policies are inequitable, financially disadvantaging for small business operators. • Business downturn. • Businesses exiting the CBD.
Facts and Data	<p>The CBD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contributes 8.1% of GDP to the Toowoomba region; • employs in the order of 8,521 people; • has a direct and in direct economic impact across the whole Toowoomba local government area, Queensland and nationally; • largest number of businesses by industry share are professional services, rental and real estate and retail trade; • most common business types are cafés and restaurants, hairdressing and beauty services and accounting services; and • when comparing the Toowoomba CBD against a control group of other CBDs consisting of Townsville, Ballarat, Bendigo, Albury-Wodonga; Mackay, Rockhampton, Bunbury, Bundaberg and Coffs Harbour, the control group performs better in key areas being tourism, accommodation, education and training and public administration; and • needs consideration of what other Local government authorities do in other cities like Williamstown who offer a parking permit service for business owners, delivery vehicles, construction workers and the like to support local businesses day to day operations and development. <p>Local government authorities in other cities like Williamstown have diverse parking strategies that offer a parking permit service for business owners, delivery vehicles, construction workers and the like to support local businesses day to day operations and development.</p>
Small Business Voices	<p><i>'The revised parking in the CBD has driven my business to the suburbs'.</i></p> <p><i>'We noticed a downturn in our CBD business when new car parking arrangements were implemented. Our customers say there is no reason to come downtown anymore due to car parking arrangements and poor public amenities. We know businesses have moved from the CBD due to these reasons'.</i></p> <p><i>'More needs to be done to facilitate housing in the CBD. It will bring people, support business growth, and make the area safer', Small Business Owner.</i></p> <p><i>'We need a community-based contribution in parks, streetscape enhancements and a conference facility delivered with the support of all levels of government and the business community to activate the CBD'.</i></p> <p><i>"In 2020, Council advised they will consider developing a public guide for hosting events in the CBD including how to activate laneways for events. I have heard nothing since 2020. Has this occurred?"</i></p> <p><i>"In my communication with many local businesses I've been made aware of red tape that has lost local businesses money and time opened. The handling of parking in the cbd has made it difficult for many businesses to get customers through the door and for staff to find a reasonable solution for their vehicles during work and has led some staff to change to jobs outside of the cbd. Leaving some cbd businesses struggling to find staff unless they have a private park for their team members - which is rare'.</i></p>
Connect with Government	<p>In 2021, Explore and Clarify CBD Priorities collaboration identified several matters as priorities for Toowoomba Regional Council including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a public guide for hosting events in Toowoomba, including information about activating laneways in the city; • repurposing the laneway spaces, they own, and where this fits into existing strategies and budgets; • the outcomes of the workshop to inform the development of this strategic document which will inform the City Centre Action Plan 2022 – 2023.
The Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A consistent, clear, and equitable approach to CBD parking. • Invest in an urban park, improved long-term parking, conference facility, and more accommodation choice in the CBD. • Develop holistic incentives that facilitate increased tourism, accommodation, education and training and public administration uses in the CBD. • All events in the CBD and across the city should be coordinated in one place.

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Identify How It Can Be Done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement 3 hours' free parking in the Bell Street Car Park and Annand Street Car Parks, bringing consistency in parking offerings across the CBD. • Provide parking permit options for business owners and building owners, including trade services to assist with planned and urgent works being conducted in the CBD during business hours. • Extend the one hour parking arrangements to two hours in the CBD. • A complete signage audit and update for parking signage. • Complete a business case for investment in an urban park that includes green space, improved long term parking, a conference facility, and more accommodation choice. • Create an incentive package that facilitates increased tourism, accommodation, education, training and public administration uses in the CBD. • All events needing Toowoomba Regional Council approvals are co-ordinated in one Department.
The Business Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An activated CBD, with increased foot traffic and local spend. • A fairer and consistent approach to CBD parking for all Toowoomba ratepayers. • A safer CBD. • Flourishing businesses that attract and retain employment opportunities.

Rural Areas and Townships

The Matter	<p>The Toowoomba region has a rich resource base driven by agriculture and resource management. The rural areas are abundant with resources, with Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is the region's number 1 industry by business count.</p> <p>The region's unique townships like Oakey, Pittsworth, Millmerran, Highfields, Crows Nest, Clifton, Greenmount, Goombungee, Cambooya, Clifton, Yarraman and other smaller townships, not only support and service the surrounding resources, but are themselves a major tourist attractors and core to the area's history.</p> <p>The region's rural areas and townships need constant attention, support, and care.</p>
Current Business Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor connectivity in rural areas and towns (eg roads and services) is restricting long-term growth and sustainability. • Economic deficient and reduced quality of life from poor quality. • Reduction in tourist opportunities.
Facts And Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries are the region's number 1 industry by business count. In 2023, there were more than 3,500 businesses from this sector located in our region. • In 20/21, Toowoomba 'economy id' identified the total value of agricultural output in Toowoomba was \$1,091m. • The Toowoomba region is agriculture and resource rich. • Rural areas, their resources and townships are significant contributors to the region's character and economic prosperity. • Tourism in the areas townships and rural areas can play a significant part to an area's vitality and opportunity. • Rural areas are not adequately represented at the local political level.
Small Business Voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'The surfacing and repairing of rural roads should be a key priority.'</i> • <i>'Beautification of roadsides entering and existing local rural towns needs improvement.'</i> • <i>'Most elected officials live in Toowoomba, and we feel no one cares about the rural areas and regional towns.'</i> • <i>'Attract more tourists and get Toowoomba people to visit their local towns. Make the whole area be seen, not just Toowoomba city gardens.'</i>
Connect with Government	<p>The Toowoomba region's rich history is built on the back of surrounding high quality agricultural areas. These areas are supported by regional centres of Oakey, Pittsworth, Millmerran, Highfields, Crows Nest, Clifton, Greenmount, Goombungee, Clifton, Yarraman and other smaller townships.</p> <p>The maintenance of infrastructure needed to support this fundamental part of the region's identity, lifestyle and growth must continue to be valued for their important role in our region's economic wealth.</p>
The Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a responsibility for an elected official to lead a Rural and Toowoomba Townships portfolio through oversight and regular reporting. • Create or support an event which celebrates regional areas and agricultural sector. • Fund more township and rural infrastructure.
Identify How It Can Be Done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give greater priority to road, tourism, and other rural and township infrastructure needs. • Working with local event organisers and businesses to enable events in the region. • Implement collaborative strategies for town beautification and to activate main streets of each township. • A Rural and Toowoomba Townships portfolio with a Councillor responsible and a strong advocate within TRC decision making.

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The Business Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved oversight and reporting will ensure attention is paid to rural areas and townships and the impacts in decision making is understood. Wealth generator for business. A strong and diverse economy. Employment creator. Enhanced investment in the region. Decentralisation of the Region's population by increasing the livability of regional centres.
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Regulatory Environment

The Matter	A regulatory environment that is excessive and unnecessarily complex, restricts business confidence and where inefficiently implemented, inconsistently enforced and with poor response times and lengthy delays, is a cost burden on business and increases costs of delivery services and products to the ratepayer.
Current Business Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased costs mean job losses. Inefficiently implemented, inconsistently enforced regulation, with poor response times and lengthy delays from government, results in the cost burden on business increasing. Regulation developed in a vacuum and poorly communicated creates confusion and increased costs on business which is passed onto the local ratepayers. Investment looks elsewhere.
Facts And Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 82% of businesses say that red tape costs have increased since 2021 and the financial administration compliance burden has increased 100% from \$25,000 to \$50,000 in the same period. 43% of businesses have confirmed they spend six or more hours a week on regulatory compliance. The Toowoomba Performance Sentiment Index Findings and Toowoomba Annual Survey of businesses demonstrate that 'red tape and administrative burden' remains the number one issue of concern for local businesses.
Small Business Voices	<p><i>'Toowoomba Regional Council should work harder at streamlining the processes for attaining Council permits for businesses to operate. Currently applying for permits is slow and clunky and costly to small businesses'.</i></p> <p><i>'In January 2023, we wrote to Toowoomba Regional Council about a 'red tape' issue and even included a possible solution. 12 months later, we wait for a response'.</i></p> <p><i>"Council is a barrier and never an enabler. Why aren't they more like Lockyer Regional Council who have open arms in helping small business succeed'.</i></p> <p><i>"Every time my wife runs an event the amount of paperwork she has to fill in would make your eyes water. Quite sad really what it has done to events here. Way over the top!'.</i></p>
Connect with Government	The Toowoomba Regional Council has committed to being a small business friendly Council, which we expect them to implement. This signed commitment says, amongst other things, Toowoomba Regional Council will limit unnecessary administration and implement business improvement processes and regularly review administration and regulatory requirements policies, procedures, and red tape.
The Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interrogate and remove excessive, unnecessarily complex regulation to build business confidence and our region's competitiveness locally, in Queensland and nationally. Develop an inclusive and collaborative approach to drafting and reviewing regulation that is open and transparent. Improve accountability around implementation, regulatory response times and understanding the financial impact of new regulation on business and the community in general.
Identify How It Can Be Done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a 'Red Tape Taskforce' between business and Toowoomba Regional Council to interrogate regulation. Involve the business community in the drafting of new regulations, upfront, in the development of policy. The creation of a Business Liaison Program, similar to the model used by the Reserve Bank of Australia. Create a responsibility for an elected official to be the lead in creating Better Regulation and Reducing Red Tape through oversight and regular reporting. A full report to be included in the Annual Report outlining the ways red tape has been addressed.
The Business Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Efficient regulator protects Toowoomba jobs. Efficiently implemented, consistently enforced regulation, with agreed turnaround times reduces the cost burden on the business and the ratepayer. Regulation developed together in an open and transparent way develops rapport and understanding by all parties, creating the right 'fit for purpose' regulation. Better Regulation and Red Tape oversight and reporting will ensure constant attention is paid to regulatory and business impacts in decision making. Flourishing businesses and industries that attract and retain employment opportunities.

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Small Business Friendly Council	
The Matter	<p>On 16 March 2020, Toowoomba Regional Council signed a Small Business Charter, committing to being a Small Business Friendly Council.</p> <p>The small business friendly council initiative outlines the commitment between local councils, its partners and small business to support a prosperous and sustainable small business sector in communities across Queensland.</p> <p>Toowoomba Regional Council has fallen short of being a Small Business Friendly Council.</p>
Current Business Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stifles innovation. • Increase costs to do business. • Brand awareness for business and the region is limited. • Investment is inhibited.
Facts And Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2021 and 2022, the Toowoomba Chamber undertook a survey with the business community to determine if Toowoomba Regional Council was meeting its commitment to the business community. • In 2021, the outcome was clear. Toowoomba Regional Council was not a small business friendly council. • In 2022, with strong advocacy and steadfast accountability, the business community saw improvement, but noted that significant improvements are still required when it comes to Toowoomba Regional Council meeting its signed commitments to the small business community. • The results from the business community are clear, that on a scale with A+ being outstanding and F, being a failure, the Toowoomba Regional Council, in my assessment has moved from an overall rating in 2022 of a C to a 2023 rating of C+. A pass mark is not good enough. <p>Specifically, the findings from the business community survey are that Toowoomba Regional Council has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significantly improved in communication and engagement with small business; • slightly improved in raising the profile and capability of small business; • marginally enhanced its support for small business resilience and recovery; • made limited inroads to simplify administration and regulation red tape burden; • had good improvement in ensuring fair procurement and prompt payment terms; and • shown no advancement in promoting or showcasing small business.
Small Business Voices	<p><i>'The dealings I have had with the council has shown that like many organisations the bureaucracy of their departments hampers meaningful and helpful information. They do not actively seek to use local businesses for their major projects or events like the Carnival of Flowers. They do not actively support new ideas or events.'</i></p> <p><i>'I don't believe dealing with council is ever 'simple'. Often bureaucracy gets in the way of them being helpful.'</i></p> <p><i>I can only reference the administration and regulation of food licensing by the Council. The information is inconsistent, the 'catch you out and fine you' approach is antagonistic, attending large events and disrupting custom of small businesses is stressful.'</i></p> <p><i>'Council is a barrier and never an enabler. Why aren't they more like Lockyer Regional Council who have open arms in helping small business succeed'.</i></p> <p><i>'Council officers and committees should consult transport providers in a more efficient manner as this has been lacking in recent years'.</i></p> <p><i>"Implement a procurement strategy that proactively priorities social enterprises in local government contracts and tenders'.</i></p>
Connect with Government	<p>The Toowoomba Regional Council has committed to being a small business friendly Council.</p> <p>This signed commitment says, Toowoomba Regional Council will communicate and engage with small business, raise the profile and capability of small business, support small business resilience and recovery, limit unnecessary administration, and implement business improvement processes and regularly review administration and regulatory requirements policies, procedures, and red tape, ensure fair procurement and prompt payment terms for small business, and promote and showcase small business.</p>
The Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicly report on the achievement of the commitments in the Small Business Friendly Council Charter. • Commit to a Small Business Friendly Council in the Corporate Plan. • Include performance against KPI's in Council's Annual Report. • Financial investment in all the Small Business Friendly Charter Commitments.
Identify How It Can Be Done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively collaborate with the Darling Downs Regional Alliance to seek quarterly feedback from small business to help drive business improvement. • Publicly release quarterly reports to the business community on achievement or otherwise of the Small Business Friendly Council commitments. • Publish in the Toowoomba Regional Council Annual Report, Council's performance against the Small Business Friendly Council Charter.

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The Business Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased engagement with the business community. Support in raising business profiles and capabilities. Support business resilience and recovery. Simply the regulation burden so that compliance with what really matters is achieved. Promote programs for small business. Promote and showcase local business. Flourishing businesses and industries that attract and retain employment opportunities.
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Shovel Ready Infrastructure Pipeline

The Matter	<p>Infrastructure spending will future proof the region. New catalytic infrastructure grows the economy, and an identified pipeline of projects ensures the continued flow of employment in the region.</p> <p>Toowoomba Regional Council can create confidence in the business community by committing to and working hard to secure major projects, plan for the future, and have shovel ready projects ready to go that will benefit the region.</p>
Current Business Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of business confidence. Lack of long-term vision inhibits investment. Makes the region uncompetitive. Drives investors to other regions.
Facts And Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure refers to roads, transportation, power and water supplies, phone towers, internet, buildings such as hospitals, police stations, fire stations, art galleries, parks, and the like. These types of infrastructure are vital systems that play an important role in economic development and business growth. An investment in infrastructure enables business to grow, cities and regions to flourish and improves collective wealth. It enables greater productivity and growth in the delivery of goods and services. The right infrastructure facilities business growth provides jobs and reduces economic disruption helping to maintain an equilibrium. Infrastructure investment stimulates the economy as seen by the Toowoomba Bypass which provided an estimated \$2.4 billion dollar boost to the region.
Small Business Voices	<p><i>'As a CBD business owner for over a decade, the need for a legacy project like this that delivers for the community and business sector has been long awaited.'</i></p> <p><i>'As Toowoomba has grown, events have drawn larger crowds while infrastructure lags behind.'</i></p> <p><i>'Ratepayers are developing anxiety symptoms over inaction on transitioning to green technology and infrastructure.'</i></p> <p><i>'If we don't get the framework for future infrastructure development right now the cost of fixing it later will be greater.'</i></p> <p><i>'Plan transport corridors and future water infrastructure.'</i></p> <p><i>'Council needs a solid direction. Where are we headed?'</i></p>
Connect with Government	<p>The Toowoomba Regional Council has committed to plan, build, manage, and maintain infrastructure to support the region's lifestyle and growth</p>
The Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate with community and all stakeholders for the delivery of inland rail and the fast rail between Toowoomba and Brisbane. Advocate with the community and all stakeholders for water security for Toowoomba and the region. Work with stakeholders to deliver a 15,000 to 20,000 seat permanent sports stadium with allied services and programs to develop the sporting opportunities in our region Work with community and all stakeholders to deliver an improved public transport system to move people within Toowoomba and surrounding townships. Create shovel ready projects like major tourist attractors Quarry Gardens and The Jondaryan Woolshed, a convention centre, and regional arts gallery (which includes the completing of relevant business cases).
Identify How It Can Be Done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate and engage with the community early and often. Providing quarterly public updates on progress of major infrastructure investments. Have the Quarry Gardens, Jondaryan Woolshed, a convention centre and regional arts gallery shovel ready. Complete businesses case for a convention Centre in the CBD and a regional arts gallery. Where opportunities to partner with other levels of government arise, prioritise the project management planning and approvals to allow progress to occur. Fund the revitalization of the Jondaryan Woolshed in conjunction with a strategic business plan to ensure its financial sustainability.
The Business Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic investment and diversity in the region. Jobs growth. Builds business confidence. The region is a destination of choice and showcased globally. Flourishing business and industries that attract and retain employment opportunities.

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Housing	
The Matter	Many sectors of the business community understand the impact of a lack of housing is a deterrent to business attraction, is a disincentive to attracting a workforce, impacts on the ability of businesses to deliver their service, affects the image of the city, and inhibits business growth and success.
Current Business Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to attract a workforce. • City image. • Homelessness and affordability. • Business attraction and employment. • Stifles investment.
Facts And Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2021, Toowoomba Regional Council did not have sufficient supply of residential land. • In 2021, Toowoomba Regional Council used constrained land, like Koala Habitat, to boost the residential land supply figures. • In 2021, the Toowoomba business community compiled a range of solutions to address the business impacts from lack of housing. • In 2022, Toowoomba was identified as having the highest amount of rental stress in the country. • In 2022, an affordable housing supply in Toowoomba was questioned as housing prices soared in part due to lack of supply. • In 2023, physical homelessness on the streets of Toowoomba is highly visible.
Small Business Voices	<p><i>'We need workers who don't have to commute'.</i></p> <p><i>'Open up accommodation and infrastructure to support the same as soon as possible'.</i></p> <p><i>'Long term vision and planning to make our region strong into the future'.</i></p> <p><i>'Council is a constant blocker, never a supported'.</i></p>
Connect with Government	The Toowoomba Regional Council has a responsibility to create land supply for residential development and facilitate shelter for all.
The Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the delivery of more housing choice.
Identify How It Can Be Done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboratively work with all stakeholders to deliver more housing and housing choice. • Incentive accommodation in the CBD. • Work with the business community to create housing efficient regulation. • Increase local land supply. • Release unused and underutilised Council land for residential development. • Delivering a new Planning Scheme for the region in 2024.
The Business Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic investment in the region. • Jobs growth. • Housing for all. • Build business confidence. • Flourishing businesses and industries that attract and retain employment opportunities.



Advocacy

The Toowoomba business community benefits from the Toowoomba Chamber's ability to cultivate the collective power of our membership to create change and are recognised as a primary source of influence and advocacy by government at all levels.

The region has over 17,000 businesses, with 98% of those having 19 or less employees. We were left with no doubt, Toowoomba is a city, built on the back of small business.

Our diversity is our strength, delivered on the back of our uniqueness of having multiple well-oiled and successful industry sectors. Something considered unique in a regional Australia setting.

Our largest industries by business count are agriculture, construction rental hiring, and real estate services, professional services, and transport and our biggest employer is the health sector. This business breadth is reflected in our small business operatives who are working in multiple industry sectors, which has created optimism, resilience and is a core feature in the strengthening of the local business community.

Our research, the basis for our advocacy articulated the robust and dedicated business community, with concerns about cost of compliance and regulation, national economic conditions, housing supply, tax policy and government plans,

local economic conditions and infrastructure investment.

Listening to our members, engaging with our business community and undertaking research, the Toowoomba Chamber has developed key priorities that need to be actioned urgently to build business confidence and a thriving region. All part of the business pitch to candidates in the March 2024 Local Government elections.

The priorities related to housing, red tape and administration burden, infrastructure, tourism, our rural areas and townships and the central business district.

We met with local government representatives and elected officials, state government representatives and elected officials and the member for Groom to articulate these local matters that need addressing by government to facilitate a thriving local business community. This forms part of our contact strategy to ensure Toowoomba businesses are heard.

We continue to advocate as part of the Darling Downs Regional



Alliance through collaboration with other Chambers and like-minded associations located in the Toowoomba Region local government boundary areas. An alliance consisting of more than 1000 business advocating for the region. This important alliance, was formed to facilitate:

- working together to coordinate policy and advocacy and training;
- creating joint networking opportunities; and
- promoting business activities of both organisations.

This voluntary framework to foster business growth, support like associations, and better the business environment with the Toowoomba Regional Council boundaries.

Influence & DIGITAL OUTREACH

TOTAL REACH:
7,150,478



903,122
Impressions

833,238
Accounts Reached

92,184
Interactions



158,924
Impressions

173,022
Accounts Reached

9,874
Interactions



188,726
Impressions

40,354
Interactions



110,000
SCA Radio Reach



4,500
Toowoomba Decides
Live Stream



BEA *coverage*

6,000,000

people reached through online, print and social media.

29,179

people reached via externally tagged
social media coverage.





Future LEADERS ADVISORY GROUP

The Toowoomba Chambers Future Leaders Advisory Group (FLAG) provides a platform that supports the development of under 35-year-old entrepreneurs, business owners and employees who are paving the way for Toowoomba's future success and growth.

With thousands of young leaders working in many industries and throughout the Darling Downs, the Future Leaders are the go-to network for young professionals and business owners in our region.

Future Leaders enables participants to develop strong networks that help further individual careers, forge friendships, encourage collaboration, empower upcoming young leaders, and overall strengthen the future of the Toowoomba business community.



The following four key principles provide the framework of FLAG:

- encourage leadership and entrepreneurial spirit of our local young professionals and business owners;
- provide mentorship opportunities connecting with local business leaders;
- boost engagement and networking opportunities; and
- provide access to leading local and national speakers to connect with, learn from and be inspired by!

The year was highlighted by:

The Emerging Leaders Mentor Program

The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce and Regional Development Australia Southwest joined forces to deliver the Emerging Leaders Mentoring Program (ELMP).

It is hailed as a successful platform for individual personal and business growth for the region's future leaders. Helping individuals to thrive, meet their goals and go after their dreams.

The ELMP aimed to foster connections between the younger members of our business community (mentees) and the best leaders that our region has to offer (mentors), support future leaders of our region in their career development as well as providing a forum to give back to the small business community, which is the driving force of our economy. Mentoring is a popular career development strategy, which allows a mentor to share their expertise and leadership knowledge with a mentee in a safe learning environment. We urge all employers to facilitate a mentoring program for future leaders.

The program provided a framework on which mentees and mentors participate effectively and collaboratively. Each mentor and mentee will communicate and achieve their mentoring goals to best fit their needs.

A platform for individual personal and business growth for the region's future leaders, the program is all about helping our up-and-coming business operators to thrive, meet their goals and go after their dreams.

The program to be run over 12 months and included monthly meetings between mentees and mentors, 6 workshops throughout the year covering topics such as leadership, mental health in the workplace, business strategy and financial acumen.

The program was proudly delivered with our partner Regional Development Australia Southwest.

We thank all mentors and mentees who actively participated in the mentor program.

Showcase Toowoomba's Next Generation of Leaders

The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce's Future Leader's Advisory Group invited Year 12 Captains to a forum where students gained valuable insight into the local business community and shared their experiences.

Representatives of the Toowoomba Chamber Board and Toowoomba Chamber Future Leaders Advisory Group were in attendance, hearing student insights on the current job landscape, career goals, and what motivates the next generation of employees.

It will also be a great opportunity for your students to understand the role the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce plays in the local business community, how they can be involved, and how they can leverage the Chamber's programs such as workplace wellness, financial literacy, and work experience programs.

National Supercar Champion and Entrepreneur

Join the Future Leaders Advisory Group (FLAG) hosted an evening with Supercar driver, Will Brown, the recipient of the Mike Kable Young Gun Award, and the Peter Brock Medal by the Confederation of Australian Motorsport (CAMS) for his outstanding year in racing.

A born and bred Toowoomba boy, Will has risen to the heights of the Supercars championship in recent years and is set to make a massive career move to drive for the highly coveted Red Bull Ampol Racing in 2023.

Kindly sponsored by Feather & Lawry Design, we welcome the evening hearing from Will and how he has balanced working in his family business (Cars Galore) and success in professional motorsport at such a young age.

Thanks to Excavation Equipment, every ticket holder will be in the running to win a helicopter flight tour of the region for 4 people.



The Future Leaders Advisory Group Crew

Toowoomba Chambers' Future Leaders are an inspiring and empowering networking, professional development, and mentoring group of young professionals no older than 35, across all industries. We provide fresh, innovative opportunities for our members to network amongst their peers, establish and develop ongoing business relationships, and to develop their professional and personal skills through education and mentoring programs.

The future leader's advisory group for this financial year were:

Emma Haywood (NAB);

Caitlin McManus (CoBright); and

Christine James (EFC).

Thanks to all the members of the Future Leaders Advisory Group for their commitment and contribution to the cause.



FOOD & AGRI
NETWORK

FOOD AND AGRI *Network*

Cafes, restaurants, food outlets, merchants, local farmers, and food producers are all part of Toowoomba's burgeoning culinary culture. The Food & Agri Network (FAN) is dedicated to the growth of this crucial industry. The FAN advisory group has met monthly to debate and strategise how the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce can assist local businesses in expanding supply chain opportunities and assisting those in the industry in increasing long-term profitability and sustainability.

FAN continues to expand the network of opportunities for the food and agricultural industries. Despite challenges, FAN, published materials, and fostered networking opportunities to assist the Toowoomba food and agricultural sector in establishing stronger connections and involvement.

These dedicated individuals have contributed significantly to the success of FAN's events and initiatives over the past year. All thanks to the dedication of our volunteer advisory members:

- Sally Boardman – Sunnyspot Farms;
- Jeff Schultheiss – Darling Fresh Consulting and Darling Fresh Smoke Haus; and
- Kat Lynn – Foodie Shots.

During the last 12 months, the Toowoomba Chamber FAN organised or was involved in several exciting events and activities, including:

Tastes of our Town | Celebrating Local Chefs

The Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration with the Food & Agri Network, was thrilled to introduce the inaugural «Tastes of Our Town» luncheon series, celebrating local chefs.

This culinary celebration debuted in March 2024 at The Downs Club, where well-known local chef Marc Kennedy will tantalise your taste buds with canapes and a drink on arrival followed by a three-course meal, perfectly curated for the event.

Guests got to interact with Marc about his food journey and the Toowoomba foodie scene.

The May event at The Plate Restaurant caused a stir among food aficionados. It featured the culinary prowess of recently appointed Executive Chef Russell Armstrong OAM and Head Chef Vivek Colaco.

The lunch was an exploration of local flavours with a twist. Chef Russell Armstrong brought his extensive experience and

dedication to utilising the freshest local ingredients, while Head Chef Colaco contributed his inventive touch, resulting in a menu that harmonises tradition with innovation.





The Source

Toowoomba's journey in food production began more than 120 years ago, and our reputation for quality has only grown since. From the early days of sheep and cattle grazing on fertile plains, we have expanded into a diverse agricultural powerhouse.

The food scene in Toowoomba continues to rapidly evolve, driven by a new generation of innovative producers gaining recognition both locally and internationally. Our multicultural community enriches this landscape, bringing new flavours, techniques, and culinary traditions that add vibrancy to our local cuisine.

The Source 2024 serves as a comprehensive guide to the region's food producers, showcasing their dedication, passion, and the unique products they create. It is a celebration of the hard work and ingenuity that define the Darling Downs.

Whether you are a local resident, a visitor to our beautiful region, or a food enthusiast from afar, we invite you to explore the pages of this magazine.

The Source uncovers the stories behind the produce, the innovations in farming, and the delightful flavours that make Toowoomba a food lover's paradise.

Download a copy by scanning the below QR code:



The Soup Box

Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce Food & Agri Network worked with Kat Lyn of Foodie Shots, the Toowoomba Farmers Markets, Little Pig Consulting and ALE Clothing and Signs, to run The Soup Box for the second year.

The initiative provides Toowoomba's Basement Soup Kitchen support to support the most vulnerable in our community, in the form of soup boxes which will be used to create warm and nourishing meals throughout our cold winter.

We all know the importance of supporting local not-for-profits (NFPs) and their critical role in supporting the community. In fact, without the regular backing from our generous local business community, many of these organisations could not and would not exist.

On behalf of the entire Chamber Board, I would like to thank all our advisory group members for their support, dedication, and assistance in a very active year for the FAN.

MATT GREGG



CBD – REVITALISATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE



The Toowoomba Central Business District (CBD) is the vibrant heart of our region. Understanding its business landscape, employment trends, strengths, and gaps is crucial for developing sound policy that ensures its continued growth and success. Like any thriving hub, the CBD requires ongoing focus to understand and address the key factors that keep it energised.

Collaboration between business, government, and the community is essential to unlocking the CBD's full potential. Currently, the CBD:

- contributes 8.1% of the GDP to the Toowoomba region;
- employs approximately 8,521 people;
- has a significant economic impact at local, state, and national levels;
- is dominated by professional services, real estate, retail trade, and hospitality sectors;
- is home to a diverse range of businesses, with the most common being cafés, restaurants, hair and beauty services, and accounting firms;
- lags behind other CBDs, such as those in Townsville, Ballarat, and Bendigo, in key sectors like tourism, accommodation, education, and public administration; and
- could benefit from innovative policies, such as a parking permit service for local business owners and workers, similar to what is offered in other cities like Williamstown.

CBDRAAC Achievements in 2024

This year, the CBD Revitalisation Advisory Committee (CBDRAAC) has made significant strides in addressing the needs and opportunities of the Toowoomba CBD. Some of our key initiatives include:

- investigating the role of the CBD and how public asset interventions can help enhance connections, brand identity, and activation strategies;
- promoting the CBD as a unique local, national, and international brand to increase foot traffic and attract investment; and
- continuing the successful Christmas in the CBD and Carnival in the CBD

programs, which have helped draw visitors and boost local business.

Advocacy and Initiatives for 2024

In 2024, CBDRAAC has strongly advocated for several important improvements, including:

- a consistent approach to parking by offering 3 hours of free parking at Bell Street and Annand Street car parks;
- introducing parking permit options for business owners and contractors operating in the CBD;
- a comprehensive audit and update of parking signage to improve accessibility and ease of use;
- holistic incentives to attract tourism, accommodation, education, and public administration to the CBD; and
- centralising all city-wide event coordination to one platform to streamline planning and execution.

A Vision for the Future

For years, the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce has championed the need for a game-changing infrastructure investment to revitalise the CBD and ignite the city's core. Our 2020 work identified this need, which was reaffirmed in 2023 through the release of the CBD Economic Profile. In response, CBDRAAC developed a bold vision for a transformative legacy project.

Key elements of this project include:

- a 12-storey mixed-use building, in line with the Toowoomba Regional Council's Town Plan;
- retail outlets, restaurants, bars, cafés, and an urban forecourt connecting the CBD to the Empire Theatre;
- a hotel and conference centre with a capacity for 1,700–1,800 guests;

- office space covering approximately 4,000m², ideally suited for new Toowoomba Regional Council offices;
- 78 residential apartments, a rooftop terrace, and two levels of basement parking with 300 public car parks; and
- an urban park that brings the beauty of the Garden City into the CBD.

Our Continued Commitment

The CBDRAAC remains committed to advancing this visionary project, which will serve as a catalyst for Toowoomba's economic and cultural revitalisation.

Led by Toowoomba Chamber Board Member, Gordon Grover, the CBDRAAC is supported by a dedicated group of local leaders, including:

- Ben Apsey – Globetrotters;
- Mitchell Bernoth – Bernoth Properties;
- Michael Truskinger – TRUSports;
- Peter Marks – Ray White; and
- Gary Wilson – Gellistissmo.

On behalf of the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce, I extend my heartfelt thanks to all CBDRAAC members for their passion and dedication. Together, we are shaping the CBD into a destination where locals and visitors alike can explore, relax, and stay awhile.

GORDON GROVER
CBDRAAC Chair

BUSINESS *Connect*

MIGRANTS AND REFUGEE EMPLOYMENT 2023/2024

The focus for the Business Connect program over the past 12 months was 'Mentoring, Educating & Creating Connections.'

Toowoomba Chamber's Business Connect program seeks to create connections that will lead to long term integration of refugees into the mainstream Toowoomba business community. Pathways to employment continue to be created for this cohort as an increasing number of employers are seeking out refugee jobseekers to fill workforce gaps.

By sharing stories of refugee employment success, Business Connect aims to change perceptions of refugee employment through education and increased interaction.

In March 2024, Toowoomba Chamber was granted funding of \$169,000 from the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) under the Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) Program to continue the current 'Ready for Work' project model.

Under the SQW 'Ready for Work' program, the following support and training is provided:

- pre-employment training, supporting participants to navigate the employment process including in-depth interview preparation and an understanding of employment documents;
- tailored education sessions teaching about Australian workplace practices and culture, and workplace, health and safety;
- connections to employers, at Chamber events and through direct introductions;
- mentoring throughout the employment process and afterwards;
- an individual membership to Toowoomba Chamber; and
- post-program assistance with connections for employment.

Over the past 12 months, 93 Yazidis jobseekers have received pre-employment training & mentoring under our SQW 'Ready for Work' program. During this time, 77 of our program participants were supported into employment. We had a 100% completion rate for our training which is testament to the success of our program.

The mentoring component has been a key success factor in our program. The mentoring of both the employee and the employer prior to and after job placement has proven to be very valuable. On numerous occasions we have been asked to provide assistance down the track as the employee progresses with their employment. This is important for both parties, ensuring new roles and responsibilities are understood along with new levels of pay.

Another valuable aspect of the program has been our employer engagement and collaboration. In delivering our 'Ready for Work' Program, we readily engaged with employers. We engaged with both Chamber business members and businesses outside of the Chamber network. New job opportunities are regularly being uncovered and employers have begun to contact us requesting additional workers.

Our Business Connect - A Night of Storytelling networking event held in March 2024 provided an opportunity for jobseekers to practice and develop their networking skills. This event also facilitated direct connections to potential employers for our 'Ready for Work' participants. We had 20 jobseekers attend the event and a good line up of businesses attended, including new Chamber members who hadn't previously engaged with our program.



Various direct introductions were facilitated at the event; two jobseekers secured job interviews on the night and one of these resulted in a positive job outcome.

There was a new addition to the Business Connect offering this year with the inception of the 'Assisting Women Into the Workforce' program. In February 2024 Toowoomba Chamber was granted funding of \$72,000 from the Department of Employment and Workforce Relations through the Workforce Australia Local Jobs Local Recovery Fund Program.

The aim of this program is to provide individually tailored one-on-one support to 36 local Indigenous Women, Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Women and Women over the age of 45 to help them into meaningful local employment opportunities. Support includes, job search skills, resume preparation, upskilling and reskilling, interview techniques and facilitated access to industry and employer events.

Learner





Learn

Another year of change. Another year of learning.

During 2023-2024, the Toowoomba Chamber continued its work to create a learning environment that supports the needs of the business community.

Through the member survey our members identified their professional development needs and, as a result, the Toowoomba Chamber hosted a series of learning events that covered matters such as:

- Industrial Relations Reform;
- Cultural Awareness in the Workplace;
- Toowoomba Business Sentiment Index;
- Disability at Work;
- ComSec: Economy 2023;
- Mental Health Awareness;

- Artificial Intelligence;
- Mature Age Workforce; and
- RSM Budget Breakfast.

The learning sessions were created to facilitate the business community's continuous improvement and focus on excellence.

This year, we re-introduced specific industry breakfasts and lunches that included special guests like the Red Bull Marketing Manager and the globally celebrated Milton & King.

Our recourse library continued to grow with contributions from the chamber staff and members with content ranging from podcasts to webinars and training. With our members using these resources and other features, like the blogging tool, the Toowoomba Chamber website continues to grow and highlights the

willingness of local businesses to share their wisdom and knowledge.

We continued our work with platinum partner Southern Cross Austereo who assisted in our podcast program which showcased our Business@Dusk hosts. Through this opportunity we got to explore the trials and tribulations, challenges and opportunities and learnings about small business development, directly from our valued members.

The business journal continues to go from strength to strength sharing important education material and celebrating our business community. A great way for our local business community to express ideas and their experiences, advocate for change and build their own personal business brand.

and the winners are

BEST REGIONAL BUSINESS Power Tynan CATEGORY SPONSOR 	COMMUNITY & NOT FOR PROFIT Momentum Mental Health CATEGORY SPONSOR 	EMPLOYER OF CHOICE Harness Energy CATEGORY SPONSOR 	FUTURE LEADER OF THE YEAR Molly Bell CATEGORY SPONSOR 
GERRY DOUMANY EXPORT AWARD Milton & King CATEGORY SPONSOR 	HEALTH & WELLBEING Momentum Mental Health CATEGORY SPONSOR 	HOSPITALITY Quest Toowoomba CATEGORY SPONSOR 	INDUSTRY X Factor Plumbing CATEGORY SPONSOR 
INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY Milton & King CATEGORY SPONSOR 	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES 10 & UNDER CoBright CATEGORY SPONSOR 	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES OVER 11 Hot Property CATEGORY SPONSOR 	RETAIL Hogans Family Jewellers CATEGORY SPONSOR 
TOURISM Crows Nest Tourist Park CATEGORY SPONSOR 	SOLE TRADER OF THE YEAR Oh Tilly Brand Photography CATEGORY SPONSOR 	MICRO BUSINESS OF THE YEAR Darling Fresh Smoke Haus CATEGORY SPONSOR 	PEOPLE'S CHOICE McAdam & Turnbull Realty CATEGORY SPONSOR 
PROPERTY, CONSTRUCTION & DEVELOPMENT Carmen Darwin Collective CATEGORY SPONSOR 	2023 CHAMBER CEO AWARD Toowoomba Choral Society	2023 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE Mort & Co	2023 BUSINESS OF THE YEAR Power Tynan



focus HR Business
Excellence Awards 2023

PRESENTED BY:



2023

Mort & Co



Hall of Fame INDUCTEE 2023



Hogan's
Family
Jewellers

2022

Tilly's
Crawler
Parts

2020

Stahmann
Farms
Enterprises

2018

Cracker Print
and Paper

2016

Weis

2014

FK Gardner
& Sons

2012

Wagners

2010

Darling
Downs
Brick Sales

2008

Hannas
Department
Store

2006

The
Chronicle

2004

Heritage
Bank

2004

2021

Rowes

2019

St Vincent's
Private
Hospital

2017

Hutchinson
Builders

2015

Taylor's
Removals
and Storage

2013

Betros Bros

2011

Empire
Theatre

2009

Russell
Mineral
Equipment

2007

Burstows

2005

Orford
Refrigeration

2004

Clive
Berghofer
Admin

2004

USQ

Networking & Events

Name of the Events
Future Leaders: NextGen Business Talk
Business Breakfast Disability At Work
Business@Dusk Precinct Urban Planning
Business Breakfast CommSec Business Breakfast
Carnival in the CBD
Leading Women's Luncheon Lunch with Shenae Ciesiolka
Business@Dusk 4 Brothers Brewing
Future Leaders An Evening with Will Brown
Focus HR BEA23 Finalist Announcement Function
Spring Harvest Lunch
New Beginnings Mental Health Awareness Week
Business@Dusk Workforce Now Jobs, Careers, and Skills Expo Launch nbn Local
Focus HR BEA23 Accession3 Sponsors' Soiree
Focus HR BEA23 Demi International Red Carpet Aperitvos
Focus HR BEA23 Awards Night
Looking Back, Looking Forward Partner Only Event
Future Leaders Mentor Program Breakup Party
Toowoomba Chamber Annual General Meeting
Business@Dusk Bernoth Properties
Industry Focus Group with UniSQ
Quarterly Member On Boarding Lunch
Christmas in the CBD
Business@Dusk Heritage and People's Choice
Business@Dusk UniSQ
Racing to new heights Branding Breakfast

Name of the Events
CG Law New IR Laws Business Breakfast
Quarterly Member On Boarding Lunch
Business@Dusk WOTSO
Managing the Risk of Psychosocial Hazards at Work
Tastes of our Town – Celebrating Local Chef The Downs Club
Toowoomba Decides
Business Breakfast Navigating the Economic Landscape RSM Australia
Business Connect Power Tynan
Business@Dusk McNab and Lifeline Darling Downs Southwest Queensland
Business Connect SQW Graduation Ceremony
Business@Dusk Mort&Co and Business Excellence Awards Launch
Business Breakfast AI – How can it help you and your business from now to 2044? – nbn Local
Business Breakfast Workforce Australia Local Jobs Darling Downs
Business Lunch Partner Only Immigration and Business with Dan Tehan
Business@Dusk Hip Pocket Workwear and Safety
Quarterly Member On Boarding Lunch
RSM Federal Government Breakfast
Taste of Our Town Celebrating Local Chefs
Next Generation of Leaders
Business@Dusk The Rock
Business Breakfast with David Crisafulli, Leader of the Opposition





Connect

The Toowoomba business community is connected to the Chamber and each other and their individual and b2b profiles are boosted due to their Chamber membership.

This year our program of 50 events and activities attracted 5977, attendees, with, Toowoomba's Number One Networking Event, our Business at Dusks continuing to grow in popularity and attendance. The 12 hosts in 2023 – 2024 financial year:

- took the unique opportunity to showcase their business to the Toowoomba Business Community;
- provided a dynamic platform to allow the community to meet their team, experience their sector, and learn more about their business;
- discovered new opportunities, through new local supply chain prospects, potential customers, and suppliers; and
- quickly enhanced their business brand locally.

We partnered with our valued partners and members to co-facilitate or support their events including business breakfasts, business lunches, networking functions and much more.

During the 2023|2024 financial year, a summary of workshops and events included:

- Business@Dusk networking evenings;
- Focus HR Business Excellence Awards series;
- business breakfasts;

- business lunches;
- workshops;
- onboarding lunches; and
- Carnival and Christmas in the CBD.

Business to business connections are a core component to the Chamber's work and the new connections and referrals we facilitate help businesses to build profile and new opportunities. We love opening doors for our business community to discover investor, partners, employees, and long-term friendships.

Our events are not only about face-to-face connection. They create learning opportunities responding to the needs of the business community.

We celebrated with the business community at the Focus HR Business Excellence Awards and this year was our night of nights.

A tradition where we get to showcase:

- the diversity and dedication of Toowoomba's business community;
- where we get to celebrate business achievement;
- promote business best practice; and
- recognise the significant contribution that business makes to the fabric of our fair city.

And what a night it was! With 560 people in attendance, it was truly a celebration of local. The Focus HR BEA23 built the region's reputation of excellence, and elevated individual business brands.

And course, none of this was possible without our partners. We are delighted to be joined by our naming rights and employer of choice partner Focus HR, all our other partners:

- Tilly's Crawler Parts;
- Toowoomba Regional Council;
- Vigour Graphics;
- Regional Development Australia Southwest;
- Business Resilience Centre;
- Identity Computing;
- Toowoomba Surat Basin Enterprise;
- Bank of Qld Toowoomba and Rangeville;
- FX Technologies Toowoomba;
- Russell Mineral Equipment;
- Specialised Property Consulting;
- The Chronicle;
- TAFE QLD South-West;
- Serengeti Print Group;
- Department of Employment, Small Business and Training;
- Demi International;
- Little Pig Consulting;
- RSM Australia; and
- Excavation Equipment.

Significantly, each year, a business is added to the Toowoomba Chamber Hall of Fame. This recognition commenced in 2004 with four recipients and in the past 18 years there have been several longstanding businesses recognised that have contributed significantly to the business community over the years.

The stellar line up of past winners include Toowoomba Foundry, USQ, Heritage Bank, Clive Berghofer, The Chronicle, Orford Refrigeration, Hannas, Burstows, Darling Downs Bricks, Russell Mineral Equipment, Wagners, Empire Theatre, FK Garnder, Betros Bros, Weis, Taylor Removal and Storage, Cracker Print, Hutchinson Builders, Stahman Webster, St Vincents Hospital, Tilly's Cralwer Parts, ROWES, and Hogan's Family Jewellers.

In 2023, the Hall of Fame winner was Mort & Co, who are in the business of innovation and creating a sustainable

industry that will service not only our region, but the nation in years to come.

The Business of the Year was Power Tynan. A wonderful winner that offers services beyond the conventional: From Business Services and Advisory to Virtual CFO, Business Intelligence and Data Analytics, Wealth Creation and Financial Planning, Leasing and Finance, Self-Managed Super Funds and audit. They equip their clients with all the solutions to achieve success.

Finally, a big shout out to all our winners:

- Hall of Fame Inductee: Mort & Co
- Business of the Year: Power Tynana
- Micro Business of the Year: Darling Fresh Smoke Haus
- Sole Trader of the Year: Oh Tilly Brand Photography
- Future Leader of the Year: Molly Bell
- Retail: Hogans Family Jewellers
- Best Regional Business: Power Tynan

- Innovation and Technology: Milton & King
- Employer of Choice: Harness Energy
- Property Construction and Development: Carmen Darwin Collective
- Health and Wellbeing: Momentum Mental Health
- Community and Not-For-Profit: Momentum Mental Health
- Professional Services <10 Employees: CoBright
- Professional Services 11+ Employees: Hot Property
- Industry: X Factor Plumbing
- Hospitality: Quest Toowoomba
- Tourism: Crows Nest Tourist Park
- Gerry Doumany Export Award: Milton & King
- People's Choice: McAdam and Turnbull
- CEO Special Recognition Award: Choral Society



Governance

Toowoomba Chamber is committed to good governance.

Significantly, the Board resolved in policy that the Toowoomba Chamber suppliers and services are secured from the membership base first.

The Toowoomba Chamber Constitution is our overarching governance document that set outs our purpose, objects, and the way the Board makes decisions.

The objects for which the Chamber is established are:

1. to establish a rapport with civic, business, ethnic and other sectors of the Toowoomba community and be recognised as representing and presenting the view of commerce to the general community on behalf of the business community of Toowoomba
2. to keep Members informed on important matters affecting trade, commerce and industry, retail, and tourism and to render a varied and comprehensive service to Members according to their requirements from time to time
3. to advocate for Members (individually and collectively) and for positive developments in the trade and commerce space generally, at a local, State and National level
4. to facilitate opportunities for Members to connect and develop mutually beneficial relationships
5. to facilitate and support professional development, training, and upskilling opportunities for Members; and
6. to facilitate opportunities for young people in business to be exposed to professional development and advancement opportunities.

The Chamber has a raft of other policies and procedures which embed the Board's expected behaviour and judgement for staff and contractors in and involved with the organisation and themselves.

Our policy handbook is your companion in your journey with the Toowoomba Chamber. It provides essential information about our policies and procedures, outlining your responsibilities as an employee. By reading, understanding, and adhering to its contents, you will play an integral role in helping us achieve our mission and vision. The handbook is more than just a collection of rules; it's your roadmap to understanding our values, expectations, and the principles that drive our organisation.

This handbook is just one of the documents that sets out the conditions and policies governing everyone's employment. It should be read in conjunction with your Employment Contract.

All employees are required to be familiar with, and abide by, the policies in this handbook; and all those with authority have a duty to administer these policies fairly and consistently and to enforce them when necessary. If questions arise about anything presented here, please contact the Chief Executive Officer.

TOOWOOMBA *Conferences*

After its initial appointment in July 2019, December 2023 marked the final month the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce delivered the portfolio management services for Toowoomba Conferences following a decision by Toowoomba Regional Council at a closed meeting in October 2023 to resume the bureau management in-house.

Throughout the six months between July – December 2023, the Toowoomba Conferences bureau continued to be serviced and delivered by one of the Chamber's member businesses, Elevate Communication. At the direction of Toowoomba Regional Council, the Chamber and Elevate continued to deliver quarterly services to fulfil this scope of work while awaiting a final decision on the outcome of its tender submission.

As noted on the FY23 annual report, the success of the Toowoomba Conferences during the previous financial year was impeded due to limitations on the scope of work and knowing whether work would continue. In August 2023, the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce and Elevate agreed that a reworked scope would be implemented throughout the remainder of the financial year in anticipation of a positive tender outcome. Between September – November, this newly proposed activity included:

- development and production of a two-page brochure outlining the benefits of conducting an event in the Toowoomba region and how the Toowoomba Conferences bureau can support such events. This was distributed digitally to Government departments, conference organisers and other key stakeholders as well as being printed as a hard copy brochure for use by local vendors.
- overhauled design for bid proposal to align with established Toowoomba Conferences branding giving it a fresh, new look in-line with the two-page brochure, which received very positive feedback from conference organisers.
- implemented several major changes on the website back-end to optimise SEO visibility and front-end UX to increase the domain authority score.

In addition to the refined scope of work, the six-month period also achieved excellent lead generation results — particularly for major industry conferences, which has been a continual target over the past year — with 50 percent of all enquiries received relating to corporate conferences, which is an increase of 11 per cent over FY23

results. Of this 50 percent, almost two-thirds were converted and confirmed the Toowoomba region as the destination for their event.

While the total number of leads generated for the period was down slightly over the same period for the past two years, the increase in the quality of these leads is very promising, and when combined with the project income of the converted leads, this is on-par with the same period for FY23. This is also indicative of the average conference size more than doubling to approximately 363 people.

Some of the significant conferences the Toowoomba Chamber has been working with over the past six months include:

- National Renewables in Ag Conference;
- 69th Annual AARES Conference;
- Thiess Summit; and
- Child Protection peak Bi-Annual Conference.

This comprehensive process has included many functions such as:

- bid preparation and submission;
- costing schedules and proposals;
- hosting site and region famil tours;
- negotiating vendor contracts; and
- supplier recommendations and meetings.

The afore-mentioned conferences where all part of separate competitive bids, where the Toowoomba region was evaluated against other major destinations including Brisbane, Gold Coast and Townsville. Through the extensive work undertaken with these conference organisers, Toowoomba was successful in being awarded two of these events.

Although Toowoomba was highly regarded for the AARES Conference and continued discussions were extremely positive, ultimately the organising committee made the decision to hold its 2025 conference in Brisbane. The committee provided the following feedback:

The local organising committee and the AARES Council agreed the Empire Theatre would have had the capacity

to host the conference, while other advantages such as potential local sponsors, sufficient accommodation options and the opportunity the theme the conference around regional economic development, agri-food production and renewable energy were advantageous.

Yet, the key concern about hosting the conference in Toowoomba was the limited accessibility via air between the capital cities and Toowoomba and associated high travel costs. The committee produced various travel itineraries to identify how travel costs and the inconvenience of taking the bus from Brisbane airport (after interstate and international travel) could be minimised for participants. In the end, the committee agreed that there is a significant risk of lower participant numbers than usual due to the accessibility issue for Toowoomba, and the AARES committee member considered this a financial risk they were not willing to take.

Despite the organising committee taking part in a positive famil tour to the city as well as extensive discussions about logistics, this feedback shows there are still some considerable challenges to overcome.

Elevate and the Toowoomba Chamber team also continued to strengthen its partnership with Empire Theatres whereby the regular flow of information enabled both parties to provide support to the other including outreach to conference organisers, provision of materials and coordination of meetings. As at the end of December 2023, the team was working with Empire Theatres on event information for the Planning Institute of Australia Conference, the Institute of Public Works Conference and the Australian Museums & Galleries Conference.

The calendar year concluded with initial discussions with Toowoomba Regional Council about the potential handover process as well as opportunities for the Toowoomba Conferences portfolio for the future. It is anticipated the handover will be completed by Q3 FY24, while Toowoomba Regional Council had previously indicated that a stakeholder model review would be undertaken later in 2024.



Conflict of Interest Form

/ DESCRIPTION OF INTERESTS

Board Member	Position	Material Personal Interest in contracts with the Toowoomba Chamber	Material Personal Interests in any contracts with the below corporations or firms	Offices (position) or property where duties or interests may create a conflict	Other matters where duties or interests may create a conflict
Myf Rigby	President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bookkeeper Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accession3 Business Advisers Pty Ltd - Accounting and Business Advisory Accession3 Pty Ltd Totaliser Pty Ltd ATF Totaliser Trust– Investment Insiprop Pty Ltd – Investment Zethus Pty Ltd ATF Zethus Trust– Investment Peitha Pty Ltd – ATF Rigby Family Trust – Investment. Purple Wet Dog Pty Ltd ATF JKR Investment Trust & ATF TJR Investment Trust- Investment. Olive U Fetta Pty Ltd ATF. Our Super Fund– SMSF. Director Safe Resolutions Pty Ltd. Various ASX listed shares held through investment entities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director Accession3 Business Advisers Pty Ltd - Accounting and Business Advisory Director Accession3 Pty Ltd Director Totaliser Pty Ltd ATF Totaliser Trust– Investment Director Insiprop Pty Ltd – Investment Director Zethus Pty Ltd ATF Zethus Trust– Investment Director Peitha Pty Ltd – ATF Rigby Family Trust – Investment. Director Purple Wet Dog Pty Ltd ATF JKR Investment Trust & ATF TJR Investment Trust- Investment. Director Olive U Fetta Pty Ltd ATF. Director Our Super Fund– SMSF. Investment Property Commercial: 416-422 Ruthven Street (1/3 ownership trust). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountant for Toddlands (owned by Toowoomba Chamber CEO). Accountant to members of TCOC. Accountant for TCOC – preparation of financial statements – Auditor role is performed by a non- related third party Bookkeeping services provided to TCOC. Engage services of various TCOC members in day-to- day business. Personal and Business Bank – National Bank of Australia. Member Public Practice Certificate Holder – CPA Australia Registered Tax Agent – Tax Practitioners Board.
Sam Wright	Vice President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ambrosiussen the Business Accountants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Director and Shareholder Ambrosiussen the Business Accountants Member Liberal National Party Australia and Chairperson Toowoomba South State Electorate Council. Director Wright Professional Investments Pty Ltd Shareholder Ambrosiussen Holistic Advisors Pty Ltd 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal and Business Bank – NAB. UniSQ Alumni. Member Public Practice Certificate holder – CPA Australia. Registered Tax Agent with the Tax Practitioners Board. Partner employed at 7 Springs Medical Centre. Children attend schooling at Highlands Christian College. Member City Club Toowoomba. Account to members and potential future members or TCOC

Conflict of Interest Form

/ DESCRIPTION OF INTERESTS

Board Member	Position	Material Personal Interest in contracts with the Toowoomba Chamber	Material Personal Interests in any contracts with the below corporations or firms	Offices (position) or property where duties or interests may create a conflict	Other matters where duties or interests may create a conflict
Barton Castley	Vice President	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castley Holdings. • Ntfranchiseinvestments PTY LTD T/A National Tiles Toowoomba. • James St Bathrooms • BFKC Investments T/A Carpet Call Toowoomba 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director Castley Holdings. • Director Ntfranchiseinvestments PTY LTD T/A National Tiles Toowoomba. • Director James St Bathrooms. • Director BFKC Investments T/A Carpet Call Toowoomba. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil
Peter Rowe	Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power Tynan – Toowoomba Chamber Silver Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power Tynan – Accounting & Business Advisory • Magnify Wealth – Financial Planning • Natural Capital Co – ESG & Carbon Consultancy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power Tynan – Employee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal and Business Bank – NAB • Member Public Practice Certificate holder – CPA Australia. • Registered Tax Agent with the Tax Practitioners Board.
Shelley Burchett	Board Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ink and Think Pty Ltd. • Institute of Public Works and Engineering Queensland and Northern Territory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Ink and Think Pty Ltd. • Director At Large of the Institute of Public Works and Engineering Queensland and Northern Territory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UniSQ Alumni. • Marketer to members of TCOC. • Engage services of various TCOC members in day-to-day business.
Rouz Fard	Board Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UniSQ is the Foundation Partner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Southern Queensland. • Regional Development Australia Darling Downs and Southwest. • Australian Computer Society Downs Southwest Chapter. • Toowoomba Regional Jobs Committee. • Regional Community Forum Darling Downs Southwest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee at University of Southern Queensland. • Board Member Regional Development Australia Darling Downs and Southwest. • Executive Committee Member of Australian Computer Society Downs Southwest Chapter. • Committee Member Toowoomba Regional Jobs Committee. • Forum Member of Regional Community Forum DDSW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil

Conflict of Interest Form

/ DESCRIPTION OF INTERESTS

Board Member	Position	Material Personal Interest in contracts with the Toowoomba Chamber	Material Personal Interests in any contracts with the below corporations or firms	Offices (position) or property where duties or interests may create a conflict	Other matters where duties or interests may create a conflict
Jenni Butler	Board Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gold Corporate Partner Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce. • Professional Services Partner Focus HR Business Excellence Awards 2022. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAFE Queensland Southwest Region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Manager, TAFE Queensland Southwest Region. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil
Matthew Gregg	Board Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Firebird Consulting Australia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principle Stakeholder Relationship Officer, The Department of Natural Resources and Mines, Manufacturing and Rural and Regional Development. • Owner Firebird Consulting Australia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil
Gary Wilson	Board Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Franchisee Gelatissimo Toowoomba where Gelatissimo Toowoomba supports 'The Scoop' weekly marketing initiative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JVAT • Airservices Australia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract employment with JVAT in support of Airservices Australia's OneSKY CMATS Project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invited member Safer Toowoomba Regional Partnership. • Invited member Police Round Table Youth Crime Discussion Group
Gordon Grover	Board Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Excellence Awards Bronze Partner – Property & Construction Award. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialised Property Consulting Pty Ltd. • Specialised Property Developments Pty Ltd. • Specialised Investments Corporation Pty Ltd. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Specialised Property Consulting Pty Ltd. • Director of Specialised Property Developments Pty Ltd. • CEO of Specialised Investments Corporation Pty Ltd. • President South Junior Rugby League. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner employed by National Australia Bank.



Financial **STATEMENTS**



**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY INC**

Opinion

I have audited the financial report of Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc (the Entity), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, the statement of comprehensive income and statement of changes in equity for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Entity as at 30 June 2024, and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Act Qld 1981*.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report. I am independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Emphasis of matter – basis of accounting

I draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc to meet the requirements of the applicable legislation. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of management and those charged with governance for the financial report

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and has determined that the basis of preparation as described in note 1 is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act Qld 1981* and the needs of the members. Management's responsibility also includes such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives fair presentation and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

My objective is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedure that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the registered entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Entity.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Entity's use of the going concern basis or accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves a true and fair view.



Jessica Galvin

Dated: 23 September 2024

Toowoomba

TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY INC**ABN: 78 423 372 476****CONTENTS****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

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TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY INC**ABN: 78 423 372 476****STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
INCOME		
Donations Income	17,680	-
Grants	419,154	273,278
Interest Received	3,593	2,692
Journal Advertisements Income	1,900	5,450
Memberships	179,432	179,371
Merchandise Sales	1,492	3,405
Merchant Fees Income	62	-
Registrations	273,666	221,651
Service Fees	2,727	57
Sponsorship	531,033	472,578
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,430,740	1,158,483
EXPENSES		
Advertising & Promotion	242,488	185,808
Annual Leave Provisions	6,311	8,743
Bad Debts	6,663	-

continued on next page...

Bank Charges	205	190
Cleaning	6,309	-
Consultant and Subcontractor Expenses	226,371	320,207
Depreciation	159	360
Electricity & Gas	6,738	5,801
Food, Beverage & Venue Expense	257,547	188,679
Hiring Charges	28,748	59,096
Information Technology Expense	-	7,951
Insurance	6,607	4,729
Lease Charges	1,103	92
Legal Costs	6,339	13,988
Loss on Assets Written Off	213	-
Meetings	4,081	6,698
Office Expenses	1,801	1,952
Postage/Printing/Stationery	26,387	26,565
Prizes/Trophies/Certificates/Thank Yous	30,453	14,111
Rent	29,199	28,423
Salaries	444,982	274,286
Staff Amenities	1,877	289
Staff Training	9,600	417
Stripe/Membership Works Fees	6,740	6,456
Subscriptions & Memberships	7,671	5,364
Superannuation	48,239	28,644
Telephone	6,195	-
	<u>1,413,025</u>	<u>1,188,849</u>

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TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY INC

ABN: 78 423 372 476

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

	2024 \$	2023 \$
NET PROFIT (LOSS)	<u>17,715</u>	<u>(30,367)</u>
Retained earnings at the beginning of the financial year	344,356	374,722
RETAINED EARNINGS AT THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	<u><u>362,071</u></u>	<u><u>344,356</u></u>

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TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY INC**ABN: 78 423 372 476****STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS		
Heritage A/c 1029 0044 - S21	168,357	140,090
Heritage A/c 1029 0044 - S26	106,169	102,585
Stripe Clearing Account for Memberships Works	490	991
BOQ A/c 23 290 961	74,367	45,340
Trade Debtors	266,034	213,864
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>615,416</u>	<u>502,870</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Deposits Refundable	2,432	2,432
PLANT & EQUIPMENT		
Plant & Equipment - at Cost	8,018	24,139
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(7,941)	(23,689)
	<u>77</u>	<u>449</u>
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	<u>2,509</u>	<u>2,881</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>617,925</u>	<u>505,751</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Business Visa	475	1,019
Trade Creditors	40,074	35,079
PAYG LIABILITIES		
PAYG Withholding	8,696	9,124
Superannuation Payable	11,314	8,104
Provision for Annual Leave	28,672	22,361
	<u>48,682</u>	<u>39,589</u>
Other Creditors	1,070	1,230
Accrued Income	128,493	55,606
GST Payable	37,060	28,871
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>255,854</u>	<u>161,395</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>255,854</u>	<u>161,395</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>362,071</u>	<u>344,356</u>
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Retained earnings	362,071	344,356
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS	<u>362,071</u>	<u>344,356</u>

TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY INC**ABN: 78 423 372 476****NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024**

The financial statements cover Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc as an individual entity. Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc is a not-for-profit association incorporated in Queensland under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 ('the Act').

Comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

1 Basis of preparation

In the opinion of the Committee of Management, the association is not a reporting entity since there are unlikely to exist users of the financial statements who are not able to command the preparation of reports tailored so as to satisfy specifically all of their information needs. These special purpose financial statements have been prepared to meet the reporting requirements of the Act.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

2 Summary of significant accounting policies**Income tax**

No provision for income tax has been raised as the association has self-assessed exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

Revenue and other income

Revenue is recognised when the amount of the revenue can be measured reliably, it is probable that economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the Association and specific criteria relating to the type of revenue as noted below, has been satisfied.

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is presented net of returns, discounts and rebates.

In kind revenue and expenses

- Revenue is recorded on signing of sponsorship agreement in a contra income account
- The expense is recorded on utilisation and is moved from contra to revenue account
- If agreement covers more than a one year period an entry is made to the accrued income liability account

Business Awards

Revenue from business awards is combined with Registrations and recognised on receipt of revenue.

Membership

Membership to the association runs for a 12 month period from the date of joining. Revenue is recognised on receipt of revenue.

Grant Revenue

Grant revenue is recognised in the income statement when the entity obtains control of the grant, it is probable that the economic benefits gained from the grant will flow to the entity and the amount of the grant can be measured reliably.

TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY INC**ABN: 78 423 372 476****NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024****Interest Revenue**

Interest is recognised on receipt.

Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of GST.

Property, plant and equipment

Each class of plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment.

Items of plant and equipment acquired for nil or nominal consideration have been recorded at the acquisition date fair value.

At the end of each annual reporting period, the depreciation method, useful life and residual value of each asset is reviewed. Any revisions are accounted for prospectively as a change in estimate.

Depreciation

Plant and equipment is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the assets useful life to the Association, commencing when the asset is ready for use.

The Association has a capitalisation policy to fully depreciate any assets with a cost under \$1,000.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Employee Benefits - Provision for Long Service Leave

The liability for long service leave is recognised and measured at the present value of the estimated future cash flows to be made in respect of all employees with 7 or more years service at the reporting date. In determining the present value of the liability, attention rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation have been taken into account.

No long service leave is accrued on the balance sheet as no current staff member has provided more than 7 years of service.

Charges, securities or mortgages

No charge, security or mortgage effects the associations property.

TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY INC**ABN: 78 423 372 476****NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024****Provisions**

Provisions are recognised when the association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

Provisions are measured at the present value of management's best estimate of the outflow required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period. The discount rate used is a pre-tax rate that reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the liability. The increase in the provision due to the unwinding of the discount is taken to finance costs in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income.

Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgements

Those changes with governance make estimates and judgments during the preparation of these financial statements regarding assumptions about current and future events affecting transactions and balances.

These estimates and judgements are based on the best information available at the time of preparing the financial statements, however as additional information is known then the actual results may differ from the estimates.

Key estimates - provisions

As described in the accounting policies, provisions are measured at management's best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period. These estimates are made taking into account a range of possible outcomes and will vary as further information is obtained.

Key estimates - receivables

The receivables at reporting date have been reviewed to determine whether there is any objective evidence that any of the receivables are impaired. An impairment provision is included for any receivable where the entire balance is not considered collectible. The impairment provision is based on the best information at the reporting date.

Key estimates - Useful lives of depreciable assets

Management reviews its estimate of the useful lives of depreciable assets at each reporting date, based on expected utility of the assets. Uncertainties in these estimates relate to technical obsolescence that may change the utility of certain software and IT equipment.

3 Events After the Reporting Period

No matter or circumstance has arisen since 30 June 2024 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect the Association's operations, the results of those operations, or the Association's state of affairs in future financial years.

4 Contingent Liabilities

The Association had no contingent liabilities as at 30 June 2024 and 30 June 2023.

5 Commitments

Association had no commitments for expenditure as at 30 June 2024 and 30 June 2023.

TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY INC

ABN: 78 423 372 476

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 2 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee the financial report:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc as at 30 June 2024 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the committee and is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:



Myfanwy Rigby - President



Barton Castley - Vice President

Dated: 23.9.24



TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER

Our Voice for Business

Advocacy: Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce is an independent organization that advocates on behalf of local business at a local, state and federal levels ensuring our business community has a voice that is heard.

Networking: We offer a full program of member networking events that provides a platform to strengthen existing networks, develop new contacts and connect with business leaders to maximise growth opportunities for your business.

Education: Chamber offers many educational opportunities for members in the form of workshops, webinars and events with guest speakers and panel discussions.

Strategy: Chamber members also have the opportunity to contribute to key strategic projects that shape the future direction of our local business community while ensuring specific business requirements are considered.

For further information about Toowoomba Chamber
Membership email admin@toowoombachamber.com.au



TOOWOOMBA
**CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE**