



WAGGA WAGGA
**BUSINESS
CHAMBER**

Annual Report

2025

About Us

As a Chamber we see our role being an advocate, an enabler, a facilitator and a support network for everyone who chooses to do business in Wagga Wagga.

We are an independent not-for-profit organisation, whose purpose is to support members at every stage of their business journey. We do this by providing resources, information, networking and education opportunities.

Established in 1936, we have a strong history of serving the Wagga Wagga business community with a focus on the region's economic prosperity. As a Chamber, we represent 89 years of Wagga Wagga history, over 300 businesses and civic organisations and thousands of jobs.



2025 Golden Crow Awards Finalist Announcement Event

Our Mission

To empower local businesses, impacting positively on the economy by connecting, educating, recognising, and advocating to ensure a stronger future for Wagga Wagga.

Our Vision

The Wagga Wagga Business Chamber is recognised as an energetic and entrepreneurial Chamber. We are a proactive Chamber that gets results.

Business people want to be a part of the Chamber community not only for the benefits that we offer but also so they can contribute to the future of the business community in Wagga Wagga.

Our Values

1

Inclusive

Our community is open to all businesses and those individuals passionate about business.

2

Innovative

Coming up with new ideas on how we can best service our community.

3

Collaborative

We take a combined approach to sustaining successful outcomes for our business community and our region.



Business Manager Sally Manning at the
2025 Golden Crow Awards Finalist
Announcement Event

President's Report

2025 has been a strategic and transformative year for the Wagga Wagga Business Chamber as we strengthened our foundations for long-term sustainability and growth.

Our Board has remained deeply committed, ensuring we continue to deliver real value to members and the broader business community.

A key highlight was securing a new four-year MOU with Wagga Wagga City Council, providing certainty of funding and reinforcing our partnership in supporting local business. Our strong working relationship with Council's Economic Development team and Councillors remains vital in addressing business issues and promoting collaboration.



As we look to update our Strategic Plan we have identified governance as a key focus, leading to proposed amendments to our Constitution to align with the Model Constitution.

Our programs continue to deliver impact, with the Expert in Residence initiative and Industry Tours fostering learning and connection across sectors.

In response to rising CBD crime, we partnered with NSW Police and Wagga Wagga City Council to host a retail safety session, equipping local businesses with practical strategies to enhance security.

Optus General Manager Matt Connell with
President Jennifer Hand

The 2025 Golden Crow Awards brought together more than 275 attendees to celebrate excellence in local business. Congratulations to Bidgee Strawberries and Cream, recipients of the prestigious Golden Crow Award. Next year marks 40 years of the Awards—a milestone that will celebrate the diversity, innovation, and resilience of our business community.

Our success is driven by a dedicated team. I thank Sally Manning, our Business Manager, for her exceptional leadership and service, and welcome Olivia Croker to the Communications role, continuing the strong momentum established by Brittany Hefren, outgoing Communications officer.

Looking ahead to 2026, we will launch our Leadership Program, designed to empower local professionals through skills development and connection. The coming year will also see us celebrate 90 years of the Chamber and 40 years of the Golden Crow Awards—a proud reflection of our community's growth and achievements.

I extend my sincere thanks to my fellow Directors for their expertise and ongoing support. Together, we will continue to build a vibrant, collaborative, and prosperous future for Wagga Wagga.



Jennifer Hand
President



Our Team

Meet our staff and the members of our volunteer board who are passionate about both business and our local community.



JENNIFER HAND
PRESIDENT



TIM SHEATHER
VICE PRESIDENT



KATY DAY
TREASURER



LARA TRITTON
SECRETARY



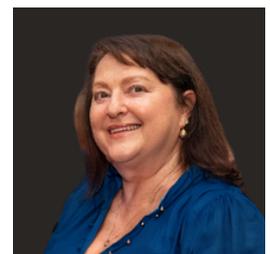
SOPHIA HILL
DIRECTOR



BEN WILLIS
DIRECTOR



CHARLES TALBOT
DIRECTOR



VICKI MEYER
DIRECTOR



STACY MOSES
DIRECTOR

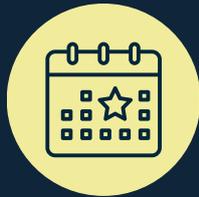


SALLY MANNING
BUSINESS MANAGER



OLIVIA CROKER
MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS
OFFICER

2025 at a glance



47
Total Events



847
Total Event Attendees



710K
Total Social Media Views



337
Total Current Members



Pop Up Stalls for Small Business Month October 2025

Events



DROP IN DRINKS

WAGGA WAGGA BUSINESS CHAMBER



203

Total Attendees



8

Total Events

On the last Wednesday of the month, between February to November we pop up at different member venues, creating a laid back atmosphere for conversation and new connections.



Mercure Wagga Wagga



Romano's



The Riverina Hotel



COFFEE + CONNECTIONS

SMALL BIZ CHIT CHAT

WAGGA WAGGA BUSINESS CHAMBER



219

Total Attendees



11

Total Events

We pop up in various cafes in the CBD on the second Thursday of each month, providing the opportunity for great business conversations while enjoying your morning cup of coffee.



The Press



Makers Coffee House



KAFE BLA9K



The Curious Rabbit



Mint Agency



Hydrogen Park



BUSINESS BREAKFAST

WAGGA WAGGA BUSINESS CHAMBER



211

Total Attendees



6

Total Events

A great way to start the day, our Business Breakfasts consist of a short 20-30 minute presentation followed by a short networking opportunity over breakfast.



BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

WAGGA WAGGA BUSINESS CHAMBER



140

Total Attendees



5

Total Events

Our Business After Hours events are hosted by Chamber Members, giving our members the opportunity to showcase their businesses to all in attendance.



Eastern Riverina Arts



Regional Australia Bank



GOLDEN CROW AWARDS

WAGGA WAGGA BUSINESS CHAMBER

-  **205k**
Social Media Reach
-  **275**
Attendees
-  **240**
Social Media Posts
-  **10**
EDMs
-  **8**
Local News Stories
-  **18**
Winners



Introducing a new award category



OUTSTANDING VISITOR EXPERIENCE

In 2025, the Chamber introduced a new Golden Crow Award category – Outstanding Visitor Experience. This award celebrates businesses that deliver exceptional visitor experiences while actively promoting the region. It highlights the crucial role visitor engagement plays in strengthening Wagga's economy, reputation, and community pride.

Chamber Initiatives

In 2025, the Wagga Wagga Business Chamber delivered initiatives, events, and resources to support the growth, resilience, and sustainability of our local business community.

Communications

In 2025, our members-only newsletter and targeted email updates delivered 84 communications, sharing funding opportunities, events, and practical resources to help local businesses grow, innovate, and succeed.

Expert in Residence Program

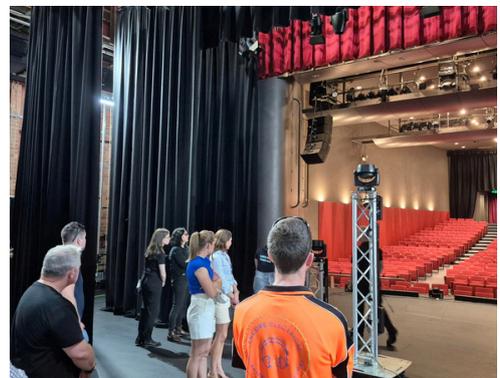
This program connects members with local professionals who share insights to help businesses grow. Each session offers personalised guidance for business owners, managers, and startups.

Industry Tours

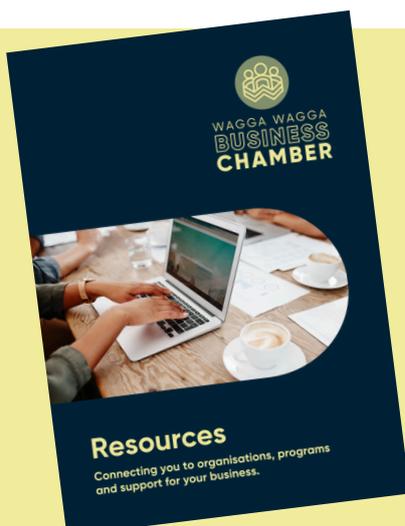
Industry Tours offer members a behind-the-scenes look at leading local businesses. This year's tours featured the Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre and Big Springs Water.



February Experts in Residence: Suzanne and Aaron Haining



March Industry Tour at Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre



Resources

In 2025, the Chamber produced a Business Resources Guide, providing a curated collection of programs, contacts, and links to support startups, small businesses, and anyone navigating the local business ecosystem.

Education

In 2025, we facilitated a range of events addressing key business trends, regional opportunities, and community issues.

Crime Prevention Forum

Presented with NSW Police and Wagga Wagga City Council, this forum addressed retail safety, shoplifting prevention, handling anti-social behaviours, and theft. It provided practical strategies for businesses and strengthened community partnerships.

The Daily Telegraph Bush Summit

Hosted at Charles Sturt University, the summit featured the Prime Minister, NSW Premier and other key business and political leaders. Discussions focused on regional challenges, economic development, equality of services, regulatory simplification, and local opportunities in the Riverina.



July Crime Prevention Forum

ASEAN Growth: ASEAN Market Update for Riverina Businesses

In partnership with Asialink Business and Investment NSW, this event provided local businesses with insights into the growing ASEAN market, highlighting opportunities in food, beverage, and agriculture. Attendees received expert advice on expanding exports and entering dynamic international markets.



October AI Masterclass with psyborg® and Gallagher Insurance for Small Business Month

Small Business Month October 2025

The Chamber partnered with Wagga Wagga City Council to deliver a hands-on AI Masterclass for local business owners. Led by Daniel Borg (psyborg®), the session provided practical guidance on using AI to enhance branding, improve productivity, and strengthen communication, with additional insights from Ben Willis from the Gallagher Insurance team on how to safely implement AI in your workplace and manage associated risks.

Advocacy

We advocate through a range of strategic and collaborative approaches designed to ensure local business voices are heard and acted upon. Our advocacy is informed by direct member input and delivered through strong relationships with government, industry, and the broader community. Key initiatives in 2025 included:

Central Activity District (CAD) Committee

Providing on-the-ground insights to inform advocacy on CBD activation, planning, infrastructure, and economic development.

Business Roundtable

Bringing key stakeholders together to collaborate, share initiatives, and advocate for the city's economic development.



Minister Visit April 2025



Minister Visits

Minister Anoulack Chanthivong joined 26 local businesses for a Trades and Investment Roundtable, in conjunction with Dr Joe McGirr and Committee 4 Wagga, providing a forum to discuss opportunities and challenges for the region.

Gobbagombalin Bridge Petition

A partnership with Dr Joe McGirr MP and Committee 4 Wagga, our aim is to obtain 10,000 signatures in favour of duplicating the Gobbagombalin Bridge, so it can be discussed in parliament in early 2026.

Biggest challenges for CBD Businesses

1. Customer/worker parking
2. Safety
3. Lack of foot traffic

Source: Wagga Wagga City Council's CBD Masterplan consultation

Local Chamber Alliance (Business NSW)

We partner with Business NSW and other chambers to amplify regional issues and strengthen collective advocacy.

Business NSW Riverina Murray Regional Advisory Council

This provides a strong regional voice for local businesses, advising Business NSW on the challenges, opportunities, and priorities affecting the Riverina Murray economy.

"A Morning With the Premier: The State of the State"

In September, the Wagga Wagga Business Chamber partnered with Business NSW – Riverina Murray and Committee 4 Wagga to host A Morning with the Premier, featuring NSW Premier Chris Minns MP.

The event brought together local business leaders to discuss key regional priorities and strengthen collaboration between government and the business community.



"A Morning With the Premier: The State of the State" September 2025

Shop Local Wagga Wagga Program

In 2025, the Shop Local Wagga Wagga program continued its growth, welcoming five new businesses and attracting interest from larger regional projects, presenting a great opportunity to strengthen the local economy. With ongoing social media marketing and community engagement, the program continues to highlight the value of supporting local businesses and making a lasting economic impact across Wagga Wagga.



253

Cards loaded



\$20.5k

Card load value



50

Local shops



96

Social Media Posts



15.9K

Social Media Reach



5

EDMs

Social Media and Website Presence

Social Media

Platform	Total Followers	New Followers	Views	Interactions
	3,883	371	537K	8.7K
	2,456	317	95K	2K
	1,392	303	78K	2.3K



Website



33K

Page Views



14K

Active Users

Top Pages

Events

9715

Views

4267

Users

2.28

Views per user

30s

Average engagement time

Member Directory

8229

Views

3024

Users

2.72

Views per user

56s

Average engagement time

Golden Crow Awards

3588

Views

2301

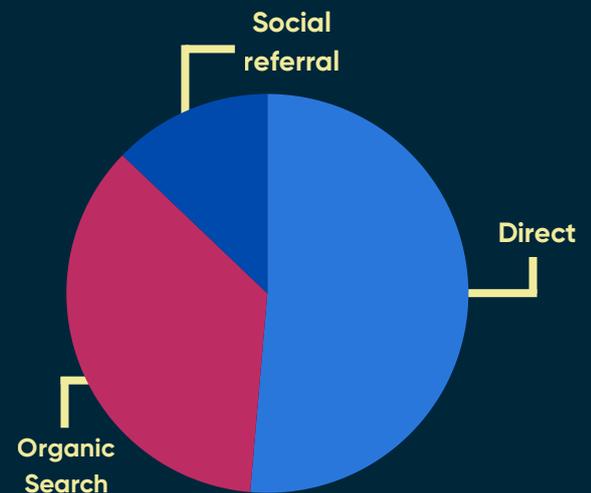
Users

1.56

Views per user

41s

Average engagement time



Campaigns

In 2025 we delivered two ongoing campaigns celebrating new members through “Meet our Members” and existing members through our “Work in Wagga” campaign in partnership with Wagga Wagga City Council.

Work In Wagga

The Work in Wagga campaign, delivered in partnership with Wagga Wagga City Council, showcases local businesses and the diverse career opportunities they offer, promoting Wagga as a vibrant place to live, work, and build a future.



Meet our Members

We offer a Meet our Members post to all new members, giving them the opportunity to introduce themselves to our audience of over 5000 followers. In 2025 we introduced 34 members with 102 posts across LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook.

Looking forward

As we look ahead, the Wagga Wagga Business Chamber is focused on strengthening local leadership, celebrating our proud history, and setting a clear path for the future.

Empowering Leadership

In 2026, we will deliver a Leadership Program for emerging and established business leaders. This initiative aims to develop confident, capable and connected leaders who will shape the future of Wagga's business community. We are currently seeking funding to help subsidise participation costs for local businesses.

Honouring Our Legacy

The year 2026 marks two major milestones – 90 years of the Wagga Wagga Business Chamber and 40 years of the Golden Crow Awards. To celebrate, we will invite our community to share stories, photos and memories that reflect the rich history and evolution of our Chamber.

Planning for the Future

We are also developing a new Strategic Plan to guide the Chamber's priorities and performance through 2026 and beyond. This plan will align with key performance indicators and community needs, ensuring that we have a clear and collaborative roadmap to continue supporting, connecting and advocating for Wagga's business community.



Photo: AI Masterclass with psyborg® and Gallagher Insurance October 2025

Thank you to our 2025 Sponsors

OPTUS

SCA



PYRUS



Join the Chamber

The Wagga Wagga Business Chamber is a community of individuals and businesses that are passionate about all things business.

From the minute you join, you will have access to a network of business people representing all areas of Wagga Wagga's diverse economy as well as advice, learning resources and other member only benefits.

Feel free to reach out at any time to discuss membership and how it might benefit your business.



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[@waggabusinesschamber](https://www.instagram.com/waggabusinesschamber)



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