



Cross Border Commissioner Annual Report 2024-25



Government of South Australia
Cross Border Commissioner



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Cross Border Commissioner

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN CROSS BORDER COMMISSIONER **2024-25 Annual Report**

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN CROSS BORDER COMMISSIONER

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OFFICIAL

2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT for the Office of Cross Border Commissioner of South Australia

To:

The Hon. Peter Bryden Malinauskas, Premier of South Australia

This annual report will be presented to Parliament to meet the statutory reporting requirements of the *Cross Border Commissioner Act 2022 (SA)* Part 3 Section 14 and the requirements of Premier and Cabinet Circular *PC013 Annual Reporting*.

This report aims to advise upon the operations of the Commissioner during the previous financial year. It is verified as accurate for the purposes of annual reporting to the Parliament of South Australia.

Submitted on behalf of the Office of the Cross Border Commissioner - South Australia by:

Kelly-Anne Saffin

Cross Border Commissioner

Date: 30/ 09/ 2025

Signature:



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge this land. The Dreaming is still living. From the past, in the present, into the future, forever.

From the Cross Border Commissioner



It is a privilege to present the 2024-25 Annual Report of the Office of the Cross Border Commissioner (OCBC) to South Australia's cross border communities and the Parliament of South Australia.

The OCBC advocates for improved outcomes for over 109,000 residents who live, work and play across South Australia's five thriving cross border regions. We work to facilitate collaboration between governments, simplify regulations, improve access to essential services, and ensure community voices shape policy.

This year has been one of consolidation and strategic advancement for the OCBC, with its transition to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) in April 2024. Since my commencement as Commissioner in October 2024 and the re-establishment of the Mount Gambier office, the OCBC has focused on strengthening its presence and impact across South Australia's border communities.

Over the past year, I have undertaken 284 formal engagements with 132 organisations, government agencies, and stakeholders. These meetings have ensured that local perspectives remain front and centre in shaping policy and service delivery. Maintaining direct engagement with communities along South Australia's borders continues to be a key priority, reinforcing our commitment to responsive and inclusive governance.

I extend my sincere thanks to the Hon. Peter Malinauskas MP, Premier of South Australia, and DPC for their continued support and acknowledge the foundational efforts of the previous Cross Border Commissioner. I also deeply appreciate the generosity of community members, local leaders, businesses, industry, and SA Government agencies who have contributed to our work.

I wish to acknowledge the local government sector for its collaborative spirit. Local governments have long worked together across the River Murray and Green Triangle regions, and it has been a privilege to support and highlight their shared efforts, ranging from joint projects to standing agenda items at the Limestone Coast and Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association meetings.

A core function of the OCBC is also to identify, champion, and assist government agencies already working to improve the experience of cross border communities. Notable examples in 2024-25 include the introduction of special footrot arrangements for the Mount Gambier and Naracoorte saleyards, Primary Industries

and Regions SA's (PIRSA) swift action to enable fodder access from Western Australia into South Australia and Victoria, the commencement of a review of the Green Triangle Freight Action Plan and the extension of the Alert SA application to cover Western Victoria.

Inter-jurisdictional co-operation

Strong relationships with fellow Cross Border Commissioners in Victoria, New South Wales (NSW), Queensland, and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) are essential to this portfolio.

In October 2024, the Premier announced a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Victoria and South Australia to strengthen cross border collaboration. Similarly reciprocal arrangements with New South Wales have been successfully negotiated. Further cooperation has included the second Victoria, NSW and SA Health Border Forum held in Renmark in October 2024. Following this forum, each Commissioner is now leading cross border working groups focused on ambulance services, workforce, and electronic records management. I also had the pleasure of co-hosting a joint Limestone Coast and South West Victorian local government forum alongside the Victorian Cross Border Commissioner, in Portland, Victoria.

In addition, I convened a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) roundtable with representatives from five jurisdictions to examine funding and skills flow, participating in various joint CBC briefings to Jobs and Skills Australia, the Regional Australia Institute and the National Emergency Management Agency.

In April 2025, I hosted my commissioner colleagues in Adelaide for bilateral meetings with South Australian Police (SAPOL), the SA Skills Commissioner, the South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM), DPC, and the Department for Education (DfE). We agreed to explore opportunities on joint initiatives, including greater mutual recognition of skills, seamless access to Fee-Free TAFE for cross border communities and improved coordination in emergency management recovery arrangements.

This collaboration culminated in June 2025 with the SA Cross Border Commissioner (CBC) leading a local government forum in Canberra, alongside fellow Commissioners and the Jobs and Skills Australia Commissioner. The event included attendance by 60 local government representatives.

Direct Advocacy

Throughout 2024–25, the OCBC has provided direct input into legislation and government reform. This encompasses feedback on the *Education and Children's Services (Enrolment and Attendance) Amendment Bill 2025*, the *Limestone Coast Destination Management Plan*, and formal submissions to the *National Productivity Analysis 2025*, the *Independent Review on Commonwealth Disaster Funding*, and the *South Australian Transport Strategy*.

The CBC has also been invited to participate in several industry and working groups to further the interests of cross border communities. Ongoing commitments include membership of the Green Triangle Forest Industry Hub First Nations Working Group,

ElectraNet Consumer Advisory Panel, PIRSA Drought Roundtable, Green Triangle Freight Action Plan and PIRSA Drought Fodder Working Group.

Transitioning Engagement into Structural Reform

As we enter 2025-26, the Premier has endorsed strategic priorities for the OCBC. Focusing on workforce skills and education, integrated programs, service and infrastructure planning, the ease of doing business, promoting economic outcomes and resilient and connected communities.

The need to support the smooth flow of labour across border communities has been consistently raised. In response, the OCBC have already commenced a rapid review of skills and labour mobility across these regions. The resulting report and implementation plan will be published in early 2025-26.

With the renewal of the OCBC, I would like to especially acknowledge the role of Donna Sims, our Project Support Officer who joined in February 2025, and Jacqui Hawkins, who provided invaluable policy assistance on a short-term contract.

Looking ahead, the Office of the Cross Border Commissioner remains committed to building stronger, more connected, and more resilient cross border communities- where geography does not determine opportunity.



Kelly-Anne Saffin

Cross Border Commissioner

Department of the Premier and Cabinet

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Overview: about the agency

Our strategic focus

<p>Our Purpose</p>	<p>Support improved access to, and seamless delivery of, government services and infrastructure for cross border residents and businesses.</p>
<p>Our Vision</p>	<p>Thriving and resilient cross border communities.</p>
<p>Our Values</p>	<p>Trusted and Transparent –Transparent and accountable in all our dealings, sharing appropriate information and acting in a trusted, fair and honest manner.</p> <p>Facilitating Connections – Facilitate connections, linking key decision makers, sharing relevant information and leveraging opportunities.</p> <p>Responsive and Motivated – Act on matters raised and communicate progress, strategies in the best interest of cross border community members and businesses.</p> <p>Engaged and Knowledgeable – Work hard to engage with communities, key leaders and decision makers to get the right information for evidence-based decision making by government.</p> <p>Promotion – Champion for Cross Border communities in relevant forums, engaging with local, state and federal governments, building strong connections and networks.</p> <p>Accessibility – Be present and accessible to all in our cross border communities.</p>
<p>Our Strategic Objectives and Deliverables</p>	<p>The Strategic Priorities for the Office of the Cross Border Commissioner as follows:</p> <p><i>Workforce skills and education:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the use of mutual recognition of qualifications/ accreditations. • Assist agencies in their efforts to attract in demand skills. • Advocate for equitable access to training and education opportunities. • Examine skills mobility and enabling policy settings. <p><i>Integrated programs, service and infrastructure planning:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help agencies and communities advocate for access to health services and integrated health service planning.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support infrastructure planning focusing on opportunities in freight, transport and energy transmission, planning and digital connectivity. <p><i>Ease of doing business and promoting economic outcomes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Examine options to streamline occupational licensing.• Communicate a clear understanding of different economic and policy settings in key industries including forestry, agriculture and manufacturing.• Examine the opportunities for deemed consent where businesses have achieved registration in a neighbouring jurisdiction for specific functions. <p><i>Resilient and connected communities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partner with leading agencies to ensure consistency of cross border policing and justice settings.• Assist in advocating for seamless access to child protection services.• Support mutually beneficial biosecurity measures to address emerging risks.• Identify practical solutions to cross border issues in emergency management with a particular focus on collaborative recovery efforts. <p>Key Deliverables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver on MoU and arrangements for cross border collaboration with Victoria and New South Wales through agreed priorities.• Work with the Cross Border Commissioners Forum to co-operate on common opportunities and challenges across jurisdictions.• Examine skills and labour mobility covering mutual recognition of skills, exempted professions, occupational licensing, technical colleges, VET and TAFE access for cross border communities.• Conduct a stocks and flow analysis of cross border economies, including service mapping of catchment areas across South Australia's borders.
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Our organisational structure

The Cross Border Commissioner is an agency of the Crown. From 11 April 2024 the Cross Border Commissioner reports to the Premier of South Australia.

Damien Walker, the Chief Executive of Department of the Premier and Cabinet was the Acting Cross Border Commissioner from 11 April 2024 to 7 October 2024.

On 8 October 2024 Kelly-Anne Saffin commenced as Cross Border Commissioner for South Australia.

A Project Support Officer commenced with the Office of Cross Border Commissioner (OCBC) on 17 February 2025. In addition, a short-term contract for a six-month Principal Policy Officer commenced on 17 March 2025.

Our Minister

The Cross Border Commissioner reports to The Hon. Peter Malinauskas MP, Premier of South Australia.

Legislation administered by the agency

The OCBC is required to fulfill obligations and functions defined by the [Cross Border Commissioner Act 2022](#) (SA).

Function of the Cross Border Commissioner

The Cross Border Commissioner role is governed by the *Cross Border Commissioner Act 2022 (SA)*, with a primary purpose to facilitate improved outcomes for people and businesses in cross border communities, among other purposes.

Under Section 7 of the Act – Functions of Commissioner

The functions of the Commissioner are as follows:

- (a) to facilitate collaboration between governments and service providers to address issues involving cross border communities;
- (b) to work and engage with all tiers of government, businesses and the community to ensure the needs of cross border communities are considered in the development and implementation of policy, procedures and legislation;
- (c) to identify key barriers for economic development in the cross border regions;
- (d) to advocate for a simplified regulatory environment for business growth and labour mobility in the cross border regions;
- (e) to facilitate better access to services for cross border communities by working with other jurisdictions and service providers to improve planning for and access to a range of education, justice, health and community services for those communities;
- (f) to update and inform cross border communities and businesses on issues and progress;
- (g) to prepare an annual plan in consultation with the Minister;
- (h) to provide reports on any aspect of the Commissioner's functions at the request of the Minister or on the Commissioner's own initiative;
- (i) any other functions conferred on the Commissioner by or under this or any other Act or by the Minister.

The agency’s performance

Performance at a glance

The Office of Cross Border Commissioner’s role is to facilitate improved outcomes for people and businesses living in or near South Australia's borders.

Key highlights for the 2024-25 financial year:

- Signed an MoU between South Australia and Victoria on Cross Border Collaboration and Priority Focus Areas.
- An agreement for Cross Border collaboration with New South Wales on cross border matters.
- Commencement of skills and labour mobility examination report in South Australian cross border communities.
- Stocks and flows analysis of South Australia's cross border communities and benchmarking of economic opportunity across local government areas.
- Increased co-operation across jurisdictions through vehicles including the Victoria, NSW and SA Border Health Forum, Limestone Coast and South West Victoria local government forum and Cross Border Local Government Forum in Canberra.
- Agency improvements in trade and flow including the import of hay in drought conditions from Western Australia, special conditions at Naracoorte and Mount Gambier saleyards for footrot restrictions, the extension of Alert SA to Western Victoria and commencement of Green Triangle Freight Action Plan review.
- 284 formal stakeholder engagements, resulting in issues and advocacy across over 50 cross border matters.

Agency specific objectives and performance

Agency objectives	Indicators	Performance
Review the issue monitoring and triaging system used by the Office of the Cross Border Commissioner.	Improved issue identification and enhanced capability to capture outcomes.	The Cross Border Commissioner adopted the previous PIRSA systems. A new issue monitoring and triaging system is in the final stages of development. The OCBC by 30 June was triaging over 50 cross border issues raised, of various scale.
Re-establish the Office of the Cross Border Commissioner and presence.	Open, accessible and operational Office of the Cross Border Commissioner.	The Office of the Cross Border Commissioner was re-opened at 27 Sturt Street, Mount Gambier in October 2024.

Agency objectives	Indicators	Performance
		<p>The Cross Border Commissioner was appointed on 8 October 2024 and a Project Support Officer to manage the office commenced on 17 February 2025.</p>
<p>Work with the Cross Border Commissioners Forum to co-operate on common opportunities and challenges across jurisdictions.</p>	<p>Build strong relationships with the other Cross Border Commissioners and jurisdictions to foster collaboration.</p>	<p>The CBC undertakes routine engagement with counterparts from Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.</p> <p>This includes a quarterly Cross Border Commissioner forum encouraging jurisdictional collaboration and ongoing issue-based forums jointly led by all Cross Border Commissioners.</p> <p>The CBC’s collective advocacy has included a presentation and submissions to the National Emergency Management Agency, Jobs and Skills Australia Commissioner, Regional Australian Institute and Australian Productivity Commission.</p> <p>In addition, the South Australian CBC hosted the annual cross border local government forum in Canberra bringing together more than 60 local government representatives alongside the Jobs and Skills Commissioner.</p>
<p>Deliver on MoU arrangements with Victoria and New South Wales through agreed priorities.</p>	<p>MOUs both signed and Priority Focus Areas agreed upon between South Australia and New South Wales and Victoria.</p>	<p>The Victoria MoU has resulted in the development of joint areas of work including the holding of a local government forum annually.</p>
<p>Ease of doing business and promoting economic outcomes.</p>	<p>Reducing regulatory barriers and improve business and industry needs.</p>	<p>Led a joint CBC submission to the <i>National Competition Policy Analysis 2025</i> on training and licensing recognition to improve productivity outcomes.</p>

Agency objectives	Indicators	Performance
		Commissioning of economic stocks and flows data for all cross border local governments and health and journey to work movements.
Improve workforce skills and education mobility	Greater access and equity for educational opportunities across borders and strengthening outcomes for workforce in cross border communities.	Undertaken, with Skills Frontiers, a skills and labour mobility examination report with CBC response to findings in consultation and planning. Convened a TAFE access roundtable with all Cross Border Commissioner regionals and TAFE representatives regarding Fee Free TAFE access across borders.
Integrated programs, service and infrastructure planning.	Support improvements in service delivery and planning.	The Victoria New South Wales South Australia Health Border Forum was held Renmark which was led by Riverland Mallee Coorong Local Health Network and the Victoria Cross Border Commissioner. All the health services along the three borders attended. This has resulted in co-operation areas in electronic records management, workforce and ambulance services.
Resilient and connected communities.	Improve cross border cohesion in approaches to emergency management, national resource management and social justice.	The CBC held the second roundtable with emergency services and notes SAFECOM's work to extend Alert SA, a nationally consistent framework used to communicate the risk and severity of emergencies, to Western Victoria.

Corporate performance summary

The Office of the Cross Border Commissioner is resourced through the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Therefore, administrative and operational functions comply with the DPCs policies and procedures, established in accordance with public sector requirements. This report will refer to DPC’s Annual Report where appropriate.

Total number of employees (as at June 30 2025)	Current year 2024-25	Past year 2023-24	% Change (+ / -)
Persons	2	2	0%

Employment opportunity programs

Program name	Performance
Please refer to DPC’s Annual Report.	

Agency performance management and development systems

Performance Management and Development System	Performance
Participation in monthly discussions with the Chief Executive of DPC and/ or Executive Director of Strategic Engagement, DPC	The Cross Border Commissioner meets regularly with the Chief Executive and Executive Director of Strategic Engagement of DPC to discuss key initiatives for the Office of the Commissioner.
Participation in discussions with the Minister	The Cross Border Commissioner regularly briefs the Premier and Ministers on key initiatives of the Office of the Commissioner.

Work health, safety and return to work programs

Program name	Performance
Workplace Health Safety (WHS) & Injury Management System	All staff participated in training programs in accordance with DPC’s policy directions and were provided with information about WHS committee updates, incident reporting requirements and other relevant information.

The Office of the Cross Border Commissioner leverages programs supported by DPC which include:

- Injury and Workers Compensation Management
- Wellbeing and Engagement
- Self-Insurer Audit and Verification System (AVS) results

Further information is provided in the DPC Annual Report.

Workplace injury claims	Current year 2024-25	Past year 2023-24	% Change (+ / -)
Total new workplace injury claims	0	0	0%
Fatalities	0	0	0%
Seriously injured workers*	0	0	0%
Significant injuries (where lost time exceeds a working week, expressed as frequency rate per 1000 FTE)	0	0	0%

**number of claimants assessed during the reporting period as having a whole person impairment meeting the relevant threshold under the Return to Work Act 2014 (Part 2 Division 5)*

Work health and safety regulations	Current year 2024-25	Past year 2023-24	% Change (+ / -)
Number of notifiable incidents (<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA) Part 3</i>)	0	0	0%
Number of provisional improvement, improvement and prohibition notices (<i>Work Health and Safety Act 2012 ISA Sections 90, 191 and 195</i>)	0	0	0%

Return to work costs**	Current year 2024-25	Past year 2023-24	% Change (+ / -)
Total gross workers compensation expenditure (\$)	0	0	0%
Income support payments – gross (\$)	0	0	0%

***before third party recovery*

Executive employment in the agency

Executive classification	Number of executives
The Cross Border Commissioner is a statutory appointment as is recorded as the only executive	1

The [Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment](#) has a [workforce information](#) page that provides further information on the breakdown of executive gender, salary and tenure by agency.

Financial performance

Financial performance at a glance

The Office of the Cross Border Commissioner’s financial performance and position is included in the audited financial statements of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet for the year ended 30 June 2025.

Consultants disclosure

The following is a summary of external consultants that have been engaged by the agency, the nature of work undertaken, and the actual payments made for the work undertaken during the financial year.

Consultancies with a contract value below \$10,000 each

Consultancies	Purpose	\$ Actual payment
All consultancies below \$10,000 each - combined	N/A	N/A

Consultancies with a contract value above \$10,000 each

Consultancies	Purpose	\$ Actual payment
Skills Frontier	Skills and Labour Mobility Report	\$ 35,000.00
BDO Services Pty Ltd	Stocks and Flows Cross Border Report	\$ 15,852.00
Geografia Pty Ltd	Provide expenditure data of SA cross border LGAs	\$ 20,000.00
	Total	\$ 70,852.00

See also the [Consolidated Financial Report of the Department of Treasury and Finance](#) for total value of consultancy contracts across the South Australian Public Sector.

Contractors disclosure

The following is a summary of external contractors that have been engaged by the agency, the nature of work undertaken, and the actual payments made for work undertaken during the financial year.

Contractors with a contract value below \$10,000

Contractors	Purpose	\$ Actual payment
Randstad Pty Ltd	Agency Staff	\$4,648.51

Contractors with a contract value above \$10,000 each

Contractors	Purpose	\$ Actual payment
Robert Walters Pty Ltd	Agency Staff	\$ 50,187.66
	Total	\$ 54,836.17

The details of South Australian Government-awarded contracts for goods, services, and works are displayed on the South Australian Tenders and Contracts website.

[View the agency list of contracts.](#)

The website also provides details of [across government contracts.](#)

Risk management

Risk and audit at a glance

The Office of the Cross Border Commissioner is committed to ensuring that effective risk management is integrated into regular work outcomes. Risk management is embedded in operational processes, contributing to the office’s strategic goals.

Fraud detected in the agency

Category/nature of fraud	Number of instances
Nil cases reported	0

NB: Fraud reported includes actual and reasonably suspected incidents of fraud.

Strategies implemented to control and prevent fraud

The OCBC is committed to ensuring that effective risk management is integrated into regular work activities. The aim is to ensure that risk management is embedded in decision-making and operational processes, contributing to the achievement of strategic objectives and creation of a positive organisational risk culture.

The OCBC adopts DPC’s policies and procedures relating to the controls around risk and reporting relating to effective risk management and compliance requirements.

Public interest disclosure

Number of occasions on which public interest information has been disclosed to a responsible officer of the agency under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018*:

Nil

Note: Disclosure of public interest information was previously reported under the *Whistleblowers Protection Act 1993* and repealed by the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2018* on 1/7/2019.

Reporting required under any other act or regulation

Reporting required under the *Carers’ Recognition Act 2005*

N/A

Public complaints

Number of public complaints reported

Nil*

Although not recorded as a complaint directly to the Office, the incoming Commissioner has been informed for awareness on a matter relating to a constituent concern regarding service coordination which was raised with the Acting Cross Border Commissioner in 2024-25.

Complaint categories	Sub-categories	Example	Number of Complaints
			2024-25
Professional behaviour	Staff attitude	Failure to demonstrate values such as empathy, respect, fairness, courtesy, extra mile; cultural competency.	0
Professional behaviour	Staff competency	Failure to action service request; poorly informed decisions; incorrect or incomplete service provided.	0
Professional behaviour	Staff knowledge	Lack of service specific knowledge; incomplete or out-of-date knowledge.	0
Communication	Communication quality	Inadequate, delayed or absent communication with customer.	0
Communication	Confidentiality	Customer's confidentiality or privacy not respected; information shared incorrectly.	0
Service delivery	Systems/technology	System offline; inaccessible to customer; incorrect result/information provided; poor system design.	0
Service delivery	Access to services	Service difficult to find; location poor; facilities/ environment poor standard; not accessible to customers with disabilities	0
Service delivery	Process	Processing error; incorrect process used; delay in processing application; process not customer responsive.	0
Policy	Policy application	Incorrect policy interpretation; incorrect	0

Complaint categories	Sub-categories	Example	Number of Complaints
			2024-25
		policy applied; conflicting policy advice given.	
Policy	Policy content	Policy content difficult to understand; policy unreasonable or disadvantages customer.	0
Service quality	Information	Incorrect, incomplete, out-dated or inadequate information; not fit for purpose.	0
Service quality	Access to information	Information difficult to understand, hard to find or difficult to use; not plain English.	0
Service quality	Timeliness	Lack of staff punctuality; excessive waiting times (outside of service standard); timelines not met.	0
Service quality	Safety	Maintenance; personal or family safety; duty of care not shown; poor security service/ premises; poor cleanliness.	0
Service quality	Service responsiveness	Service design doesn't meet customer needs; poor service fit with customer expectations.	0
No case to answer	No case to answer	Third party; customer misunderstanding; redirected to another agency; insufficient information to investigate.	0
		Total	0

Additional Metrics	Total
Number of positive feedback comments	0
Number of negative feedback comments	0
Total number of feedback comments	0
% complaints resolved within policy timeframes	0

Compliance Statement

The Office of the Cross Border Commissioner is compliant with Premier and Cabinet Circular 039 – complaint management in the South Australian public sector	Y
The Office of the Cross Border Commissioner has communicated the content of PC 039 and the agency’s related complaints policies and procedures to employees.	Y

Appendix: Audited financial statements 2024-25

The Office of the Cross Border Commissioner's financial performance and position is included in the audited financial statements of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet for the year ended 30 June 2025.