

**-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-**

**7 JANUARY 2026**

**DEMERGER UPDATE: PROGRESSION TOWARD SEPARATE COOTAMUNDRA AND GUNDAGAI COUNCILS**

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council (CGRC) can now release an up to date on the progression of the demerger to re-establish the former Cootamundra Shire Council and Gundagai Shire Council.

In July 2025, the Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Ron Hoenig MP, announced approval of the demerger. Since that time, key governance and operational steps have been undertaken, including the establishment of a Councillor Transition Committee and the appointment of a Transition Manager.

Transition Manager, Mr Bascomb, brings extensive experience in local government and the management of complex structural change. Since his appointment, Mr Bascomb has undertaken a detailed review of the Transition Plan and Financial Sustainability Plan (FSP), which were developed over the two years leading up to the NSW Boundaries Commission inquiries held in February 2025. He has also reviewed submissions made in relation to the demerger over the past six years.

Mr Bascomb and the Transition Committee recently held their first workshop, during which the project objectives were outlined. These objectives focus on two key components:

- **The Proclamation:** This stage is expected to require a six-month timeframe following the submission of all required documentation.
- **Establishing Two Sustainable Councils:** Unlike a merger, a demerger does not allow new councils to simply inherit existing staff, organisational structures, delivery programs, or operational plans. To ensure both councils can operate effectively from commencement, the project must develop two separate suites of Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) documents, along with new governance arrangements, policies, and organisational structures.

The workshop also considered the overall project timeline. While this timeline is yet to be formally confirmed, current discussions assume the new councils will commence operations on 1 July 2027. To meet this timeframe, a substantial portion of the work will need to be completed by December 2026.

Over the coming months and into early 2026, Mr Bascomb and the Transition Committee will focus on key elements of the demerger, including the Financial Sustainability Plan, consideration of Special Rate Variations, staffing structures, asset division, technology systems, Planning and Environment matters, and incumbent legal matters.

“When dealing with such a sensitive issue as the demerger, there is always potential for disputes to arise, particularly given there is no established template for a council demerger.” Mr Bascomb said.

“I will be examining dispute resolution mechanisms and working to finalise a project timetable, which will be presented to the next Transition Committee meeting. The timetable will be partly dependent on further advice from the Office of Local Government.” Mr Bascomb added.

In the new year CGRC will establish a dedicated webpage which will enable Council to continue to provide updates to the community as the demerger process progresses. The webpage will provide access to

all demerger related reports and details of Transition Committee meetings.

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**Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council**  
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**For further media information contact:**  
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