

20 June 2023

IMA grouping	Canterbury & West Coast
RTOs covered	ChristchurchNZ, Venture Timaru, Hurunui Tourism, Development West Coast, Destination Kaikōura, Mackenzie Tourism, Selwyn, Ashburton, Waimakariri
Reporting period	1 January 2023 – 30 June 2023

Summary report of five key achievements from the IMA grouping during the reporting period

1. Across this reporting period (01 January 2023 – 30 June 2023) 21 events were held in the Canterbury and West Coast Region.

Approximately 92,000 attended the 21 events, attracting approximately 31,000 visitors to the region. The opportunity to use the Regional Events Fund (REF) to increase capability building for event organisers and venues has been invaluable. It strengthens their focus, builds their business, and provides for greater collaboration between operators and RTOs and District Councils. Specific areas of capability building have included:

- Feasibility Studies
- Business Events and Incentives Workshops
- Event Strategy Development

2. Of the 21 events that proceeded in this reporting period, some event highlights include:

- The Elton John Concert was held in Christchurch on 24 January 2023 - 25,000 people attended this event with around 10,000 of those attending coming from out of the region.
- SailGP held in Lyttelton Harbour on 18 & 19 March 2023 attracted 12,613 attendees with 5,790 of those from out of the region.
- Kaikōura Adventure Race 2023 – Held over 3 days in April 2023 attracting 998 attendees, with an estimated economic contribution of \$538,000 to the district over this event period.
- The second Seaside Festival was held at Caroline Bay, Timaru from 27 January - 6 February 2023, 4,000 people attended this event with 1,000 of these from out of the region.
- Xtreme Dirt 2023 was held on 17 January 2023 attracting 2,252 attendees and 1,233 of these from out of the region.
- Skedaddle - one of North Canterbury's newest trail running events attracted 373 attendees with 347 of those from out of the region.

3. Regional updates of note:

Ashburton

- Multi day South Island sports events have proved of great economic benefit to the Mid Canterbury district. Basketball Mid Canterbury's South Island under 13 championships has been funded for the second time, and Mid Canterbury Netball has seen a gap in the market for South Island tournament aimed at senior representative teams.
- The Ashburton Car Club Street Sprint has received funding to increase marketing and promotional activity to out of region visitors with the aim of attracting new first-time visitors to the well-established event.
- The Opuke Gathering, celebrating Irish music and culture, was able to go ahead in April which was a win for both the Irish Community and the Methven community as a whole.

- The Methven Exhibition & Fete has been granted funding again. This event has a large out of district turnout with over 70% of both visitors and stall holders coming from outside the district.
- Funding from 2022 saw the inaugural GLOW in the Park, and off the success of this the event the 2023 event was able to proceed with corporate funding from the community with no need for additional funding from the panel.

Christchurch

- With no COVID in sight event organisers could deliver two events which had previously been postponed; 2023 TSB New Zealand Surf Lifesaving Championships and the inaugural NZ SailGP 2023. These two events generated an estimated \$5.5million in visitor spend to the region and attracted over 9,000 visitors to Christchurch. Over a 136M eyes from around the world were on the Christchurch whilst hosting SailGP in March 2023.
- Christchurch hosted a total of 6 events that were supported through the Regional Events Fund in FY22/23: Black Ferns Test Match, International Tri Series, BLACKCAPS and WHITEFERNS Internationals, Elton John Concert, TSB New Zealand Surf Lifesaving Championships, SailGP.
- MI Associates completed a full event analysis for the NZ Agricultural Show. We look forward to seeing effective changes to allow the growth and development of this event into the future.
- A strong pipeline of prospective business events has been developed that will support priority growth sectors. We have 5 bids to host in Christchurch which we are currently awaiting a decision. If successful, these events will attract approximately 1900 international delegates and will bring an estimated visitor spend of \$5.34M to the region.
- Two partnership agreements confirmed with a focus on growing the global scope of each event and building capability in areas of need. New Zealand Aerospace Summit 2023 & 2024 – long term event strategy; Te Ao Earth Week 2023 – initiative to deliver sustainability and climate change workshops for local industry, including the events and tourism ecosystems.

Hurunui

- Supported a range of events through REF providing a strong events programme between January and June, including the NZPGA Legends ProAm, Hurunui Race Day, Bandquet and Skedaddle.
- New running/walking event held at Island Hills High Country Station with an estimated 450 attendees.
- A feasibility study has been commissioned on the future of an existing event, to assist with the potential direction of this event.

Kaikoura

- Within this period, we have funded Kaikōura Adventure Race, the Middle Hill Mudbuster & the Kaikōura Classic Surf Competition
- We also ran a Business Events and Incentives Workshop on 28 March 2023 through Tourism Marketing Solutions. This was well attended with 12 attendees covering a wide range of sectors. This was to help upskill operators & vendors and help compliment the work Kaikōura has doing in the Business events space. This group has continued to work together with bi-monthly catch ups which is working well.
- Registering 9 businesses with the New Zealand Events Association who now can tap into mentors' knowledge as well as attend online webinars that allows an opportunity to grow in the events space.

Mackenzie

- This period saw two Regional Event Fund events delivered, one event postponed and moved to shoulder season 2024, and a contestable events fund held. In addition the Regional Events Fund has supported the second Matariki Mackenzie festival, which now fully sits with Mana Whenua.
- Delivery of Twizel Salmon and Wine Festival in February 2023. This event achieved all its targets and reached capacity. Owned by Twizel Promotions and Development Association, the Regional Events Funding allowed for significant step change in the delivery of the festival. These step changes included rebranding and repositioning of the festival, bringing professional event organisers onboard to deliver and grow the event, and a comprehensive health and safety plan. Twizel Salmon and Wine Festival is an example of a good established event that is able to go from 'good' to 'great' with the funding and continue to grow domestic economic impact in the region and build the Mackenzie's brand profile and association with salmon production.
- Delivery of Swim Ruataniwha – this new event was delivered by Sport Twizel. The event received a nominal amount of funding for its pilot year and is requesting further funding in this latest contestable round. Upon results from their event survey, they will be moving the timing of the event so it stands on its own as a domestic drawcard event.

Selwyn

- 2022/2023 year was for Event Capacity Building for Visitor Attractor Events based on the Strategic Events Plan for the District.
- Tourism Marketing Solutions facilitated an interactive sales training workshop sharing their knowledge and expertise in the Business Events Sector. Topics included: Prospecting and understanding the market; Knowing your products and competitors along with understanding your clients.
- 360 Degree Events delivered a programme focussing on sponsorship, segmenting target markets, and developing event experiences for events in Selwyn looking to enhance their offering to attract visitors outside of Selwyn to their event. The programme included group sessions and 1:1 sessions.

Timaru

- In this six-month period we have had one event take place funded by REF – the second Seaside Festival. This was held at Caroline Bay from 27 Jan – 6 Feb 2023. The crowds came out in force for the Seaside Festival and the weather was good – it was a wonderful event for the local community and the visitors attracted from the wider region.
- The event has been well established with the REF funding and is now gearing up to be a regular feature of the Timaru District events calendar, with self-sustaining funding. Interest is already good for 2024, with the spectacle of the Kite Day locked in for Waitangi Weekend.
- The event proved to be an excellent fit for the region, capitalising on the seaside theme that Timaru has been famous for since the 1920s.

Waimakariri

- This period we engaged Tourism Studio to work with ENC/Visit Waimakariri (VW) to position Waimakariri as a destination for business events. This involved understanding the business events sector by surveying 30 venues in Waimakariri, with the view to creating a cluster of at least 25 businesses who were willing to work together to offer new business to the MICE market.
- Our VW team also visited venues personally to meet with the operators regarding their aspirations to be part of the cluster to attract the MICE market to entice new business. We

now have enough information to upload onto a specific part of VW website to showcase all venues.

- 4 existing local events have been identified to receive capability building and event funding support to grow their excellent local events to significant regional events over the coming two years. Namely, Eats and Beats (Rangiora), Riversong (Kaiapoi), North Canterbury Wearable Arts Awards (Oxford) and The North Course (Waimakariri hospitality venues and food producers).
- We ran a workshop with 15 venue businesses attending with keynote speakers being Vic Wales, Business Director, House of Travel Events and Bree Jones, Brand and Partnership Manager, Ryman Health Care. This was well received with the aim to build capability of event venue owners/managers on what MICE PCO's are looking for and if they were keen to pursue working with ENC/VW to showcase what the region has to offer.

West Coast

- Funded the Wildfoods Event evaluation and impact assessment for the region. This report will be presented to council for consideration in future development.
- Final report delivered for AgFEST 2022 event by Freshinfo – with full feasibility.
- We have contracted One Picture to support with the event evaluation process.

4. Mackenzie and Christchurch ran funding rounds during this period.

Christchurch recently finished a Major Events funding round in which 12 applications progressed to full assessment by the City Partners' Group for further discussion and investment review.

The Mackenzie held a fourth contestable funding round and received a record 10 applications. This is on the back of proactively approaching event organisers from outside the District to consider the Mackenzie Region as an event destination – particularly focusing on events in shoulder season, and events that build regional profile.

5. Some positive changes have been notable in this 6-month period including:

The Regional Events Fund has allowed us to showcase the region and supported events we may have never been in a position to do so e.g., Christchurch's SailGP. It has allowed the local economies to reap the benefits and for the wider event ecosystem to understand the opportunities that exist from investments and returns from hosting major or uniquely local events reflected through Economic Impact, City Profile and Leverage and Legacy.

As a lot of the regions' RTOs and District Councils have a small ratepayer base and thus limited event budgets, this is a one-off opportunity to seed new events to support off-peak domestic visitor attraction, as well as provide step-change opportunities for established events. Our event partners are incredibly appreciative of the funding, and we are actively working with them to ensure events remain sustainable beyond the terms of the Regional Events Fund.