



Annual Business Review 2024-25

Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Custodians

Community Enterprise Queensland (CEQ) acknowledges our business touches Country — living, breathing, and storied — and we honour the Traditional Owners and knowledge holders who uphold the law and custom, and enduring relationships that care for Country and people.

CEQ Acknowledgement and Commitment

We recognise it is our collective efforts and responsibility as individuals, communities, all levels of government and non - governments to ensure equity, recognition, and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across all aspects of society and everyday life.

We are committed to improving and promoting our services by building the knowledge and skills of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members. CEQ will contribute to creating healthier, more resilient communities and provide a better environment for social and economic outcomes by forming collaborative partnerships to embrace opportunities.

As we reflect on the past and strive for a better future, we walk together on a shared journey and vision of reconciliation where all Queenslanders

are equal and the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, languages, traditions, and communities across Queensland is recognised and valued by all Queenslanders and is embedded across our organisation. We will build relationships through consultation and shared goals.

CEQ acknowledges all team members of diverse backgrounds working collaboratively as a family unit to deliver a culturally inclusive service to our families within the communities we serve.

CEQ applauds all team members currently living in remote communities who continue to be empowered through their work experiences and skills acquisition whilst delivering essential services to those communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples should be aware that this publication may contain images or names of people who have since passed away. CEQ respects the right of families and communities to request the removal from subsequent publications of any image or name that causes distress.



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CEQ's complete Annual Report is available through
www.ceqld.org.au/about/governance



About Us

Who we are and the communities we serve



Community Enterprise Queensland (CEQ) is a not-for-profit Queensland Government Statutory Body committed to delivering essential goods and services to remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across the Torres Strait, Northern Peninsula Area (NPA), and mainland Queensland.

Operating under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984, CEQ is governed by a board of at least five, but not more than 10, members appointed by the Governor in Council.

CEQ manages IBIS (Islanders Board of Industry and Service) and ABIS (Aboriginal Business, Industry and Service) remote stores, as well as other stores, including Col Jones, Mona's Bazaar, and Mitre 10, under its Community Home and Hardware (CHH) banner on Waibene (Thursday Island). During the year, we opened a new CHH store in Bamaga.

We have a store network of 41 retail operations, including 7 fuel stations, 2 cafes, and 3 e-Market kiosks. Our aggregate model strengthens our purchasing power, enabling consistent pricing benefits across all locations.

Our Cairns-based Store Support Office provides centralised services including procurement, finance, IT, payroll, training, workplace culture, and store maintenance—ensuring operational efficiency and responsiveness to community needs.

With a workforce of over 617 team members at the end of June 2025, CEQ is proud to be an employer of choice in Queensland. We are deeply committed to Indigenous employment and development, with 86% Indigenous representation in our remote store operations as of 30 June 2025. Through internal and external training programs, CEQ supports career pathways and accredited qualifications for our Indigenous team members.

Our History

CEQ's origins were manifested from the work of Reverend Fredrick Walker, a former missionary who established Papuan Industries Limited (PIL) in 1904 with the intention of aiding the people of Papua and the Torres Strait.

Stemming from these roots, since 1930 there has been an overseeing body responsible for the government and welfare of Torres Strait Islanders, although changes to legislation or passing of new legislation have changed the identity of the overseeing body through the years.

CEQ's mission is grounded in care and community:

- We promote health and wellbeing by offering affordable, nutritious food options.
- We are embedded in the social and economic fabric of the communities we serve.
- We actively support local and regional events through sponsorships and donations.
- We operate with integrity and purpose as a registered charity.

CEQ continues to evolve as a people-first organisation—valuing cultural wisdom, community partnerships, and sustainable practices. Our aim is to be more than a retailer: to be a trusted partner, a community ally, and a catalyst for positive change.

1904 – 1930

Papuan Industries Limited (PIL)

Established by Rev. Frederick Walker on Badu Island. PIL sought to promote local enterprise by encouraging Torres Strait Islanders to cooperatively rent or purchase their own pearl luggers.

1930 – 1939

Aboriginal Industries Board (AIB)

In July 1930, Papuan Industries was taken over by the Queensland Government and renamed the Aboriginal Industries Board, managed by the Aboriginal Protector on Thursday Island before a new Aboriginal Industries Board was constituted in 1934.

1939 – 2016

Island Industries Board (IIB)

In 1939 the work of the AIB was continued on by the IIB, establishing many of the stores that now trade under the Island Board of Industry and Services (IBIS) brand name.

2016 TO PRESENT

Community Enterprise Queensland (CEQ)

With the merger of six Queensland Government owned remote retail stores with the stores managed by IIB, Community Enterprise Queensland became the new body responsible for providing essential goods and services to these communities.

Good Pasin (Give-back)

Recognising the cost-of-living challenges faced by our communities, throughout the year CEQ has focused on alleviating cost burdens where possible.

Various initiatives have included advocacy, partnerships, absorbing product and supply chain price increases, cost of living assistance to our team members and our Good Pasin (Give-back) Program whereby we have donated nearly \$600K to community organisations, schools, families and individuals.

CEQ's focus will remain on supporting the community members we serve.

Remote Retail Stores



IBIS (Islanders Board of Industry and Service) operates 19 retail grocery stores, 2 large supermarkets, 1 service station and 5 fuel outlets associated with outer island stores. Primarily providing communities a place to buy fresh fruit and vegetables, meat and groceries, IBIS stores also offer general merchandise such as whitegoods and electrical appliances, housewares, furniture, clothing, power cards, fuel and gas.

21
LOCATIONS



ABIS (Aboriginal Business, Industry and Service) operates 6 supermarkets in remote Aboriginal communities. ABIS is committed to providing fresh, healthy food and groceries at the best price possible. ABIS stores stock fresh fruit and vegetables, meat and groceries, as well as whitegoods and electrical appliances, housewares, furniture, clothing, power cards, fuel and gas.

6
LOCATIONS



CHH is a combination of CEQ branded 'Col Jones Homewares' and Mitre 10 Hardware. 'Col Jones and Monas' are iconic local retail stores (founded 1978) in the Torres Strait and NPA which offers quality homewares, furniture, whitegoods, electrical, and traditional island clothing.



Waibene (Thursday Island) Hardware is a Mitre 10 supplier for all things hardware and outdoor related to both the domestic and trade segments of the market.

Bamaga CHH opened in November 2024 and offers locals a wide range of products at affordable prices, leveraging the buying power of leading groups including Mitre 10, Sportspower and Betta Home Living.



This year, our **Wis Wei Cafe** concept was developed to roll out a convenient, mostly healthy self-service cafe into our stores. The cafes will contain family and individual grab-and-go meals for breakfast, lunch and dinner, freshly squeezed juice, fruit, BBQ chicken, pies, sausage rolls, sandwiches, snacks, tea and coffee.



Nutritious "heat and eat" ready meals are also being trialed. Wis Wei Cafe will be installed in stores in the future as part of our store refresh programme.



CEQ eMarket kiosks are being rolled out to provide our customers with a range of goods above the regular store offer via an online shopping portal, purchasing directly from the CEQ distribution centre.



This brings convenience to our customers, enabling them to shop online in our stores for household needs not available in their store location.

Customers can collect their purchases from within the store, and the freight is included in the purchase price, negating the need for customers to shop with online suppliers, arrange delivery themselves, or pay additional freight.

Products currently offered include furniture, whitegoods, household appliances, gardening equipment, camping gear, sporting needs, bulk products and more.



Chairperson's Message

As Chairperson of the CEQ Board of Management, I am proud to share how CEQ continues to grow, learn, and serve communities. The stores remain the heart of CEQ, reminding us that every initiative begins with people and relationships, and that our purpose is for community.

Our purpose

CEQ is a not-for-profit statutory body under Part 7A of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984. The Board oversees CEQ's delivery of reliable and affordable food, essential goods, and services to remote Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and provides strategic direction and accountability.

The 2024-25 year, the second of our Strategic Plan 2024-2027, was steady and productive. The Board maintained strong focus across the seven Pillars: People, Reputation, Nutrition & Health, Growth, Optimisation, Governance, and Strategic Integration.

People

We strengthened support for frontline teams and continued investing in wellbeing, training, and leadership. The Workforce and Leadership Development Strategy expanded cadetship and internship pathways, and we introduced improved safety measures, including the Psychosocial Hazards Policy. Team feedback shaped better workplace responses, helping create culturally capable, safe stores for team members and customers.

Reputation

CEQ's reputation as a trusted, community-focused organisation grew through strong engagement across communities. The Good Pasin (Give-back) program invested in local initiatives, and partnerships with Foodbank and others supported community resilience. The upcoming IBIS 120-year Anniversary Book honours CEQ's long history. Updated branding and vibrant photo storytelling continues to build trust and visibility.

Nutrition and Health

CEQ advanced food access and affordability through partnerships with Health and Wellbeing Queensland, the Torres Strait Regional Authority, and Foodbank. Research with the University of Queensland and Monash University is exploring commercial and climate factors shaping nutrition in remote areas, supported by CEQ's Data Sharing Policy

Growth

The Board approved major projects strengthening CEQ's network, including Operation Wheel, Operation Station, and community accommodation projects. The Store Network Expansion Strategy and land-tenure reviews support long-term planning and fair, evidence-based growth.

Optimisation

Efficiency and sustainability improved through online shopping, online training, and solar-system reviews. Freight and logistics planning was refined following wet-season lessons, supporting reliable service delivery and cost control.

Governance

Governance maturity strengthened with the Strategic Risk Register, Risk Appetite Statement, and new cybersecurity systems. The Queensland Audit Office issued an unmodified audit opinion, confirming strong financial practice. CEQ's surplus and reserves enable reinvestment in community services.

Strategic Integration

This Pillar ensures all CEQ work aligns with purpose and values. The year included defining CEQ's values, aligning communications, and embedding ethical, sustainable principles. Through PeopleHQ's Thrive Program, organisational maturity and leadership capability continue to grow across stores and the Gimuy Support Office.

Performance and priorities

The Board confirmed progress in financial stability, workforce strength, and operational resilience. CEQ's aggregate model - balancing stores under financial pressure with stronger sites - remains a recognised strength. The Board monitored cost-of-living impacts and supported targeted price measures on essential items. Looking ahead, CEQ remains committed to strong governance and reliable, affordable services.

CEQ's long-term strength lies in community investment, sustainability, and innovation. We continue to develop cadetships, internships, and Elder mentor roles to support youth and local workforce pathways. With refreshed Board leadership and a clear vision, CEQ remains focused on delivering outcomes that matter.

Priorities for 2025–26

- Strengthen workforce capability and community-centred service
- Build stronger community partnerships
- Deliver Growth and Optimisation strategies
- Deepen governance maturity and policy alignment
- Embed cultural wisdom and ethical leadership

Closing and acknowledgements

I thank the Minister for her support, CEQ team members for their daily commitment, and the CEO and Executive Team for progressing CEQ's vision. We also acknowledge outgoing Board Members Claire Alexander and Fraser Nai, and welcome Dushy Thangiah OAM. Thanks to all Pillar Subcommittee Chairpersons for guiding CEQ's work.

At the heart of CEQ are people and the relationships that sustain communities. Together, we reaffirm our purpose to deliver reliable service, healthy living, and lasting partnerships across Queensland's remote regions.

With respect

Joann Schmider

Board of Management Chairperson

The CEQ Board of Management



Our Commitment

Strategic Plan 2023-2027



Our Vision

Caring, every day, always



Our Values

**Honest, Inclusive, Respectful,
Progressive, Collaborative**



Our Intent

**Be Australia's specialist
Indigenous product
retailer, expanding across
Australia and beyond.**



Our Purpose

(A) to act as a commercial enterprise for the general convenience or benefit of the residents of the communities in which CEQ performs its functions; and

(B) to provide the communities with access to a range of food, drinks and household items essential for a healthy life at a fair price; and

(C) to apply its operating surplus or assets to promote, support and improve its services and the general welfare, including the knowledge and skills, of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents.

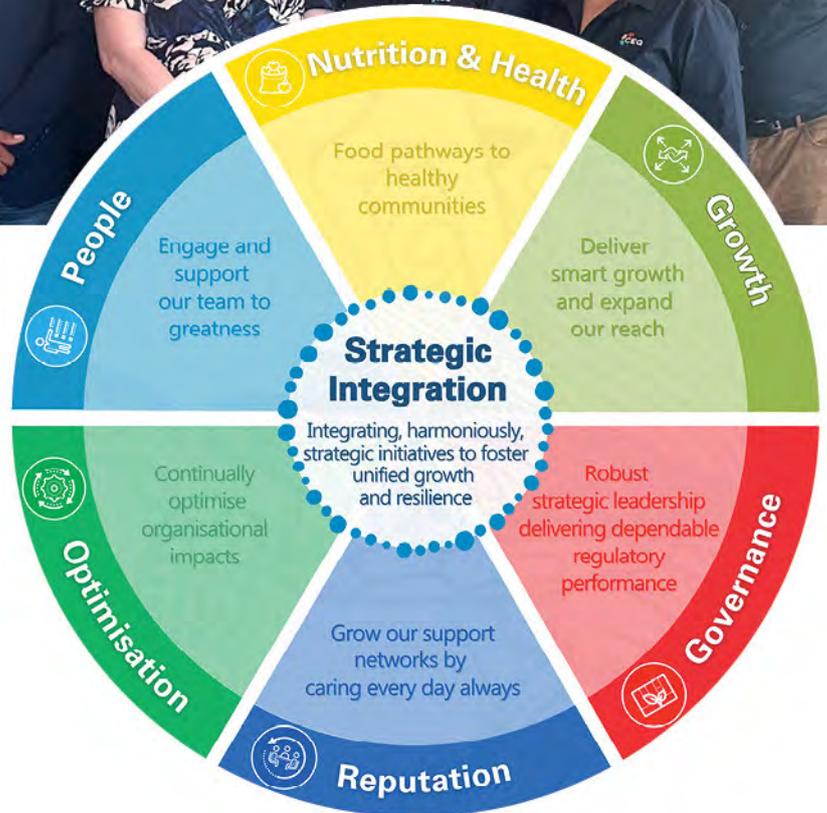


Our Mission

**To provide essential goods
and services that support
communities to be healthy
and sustainable.**

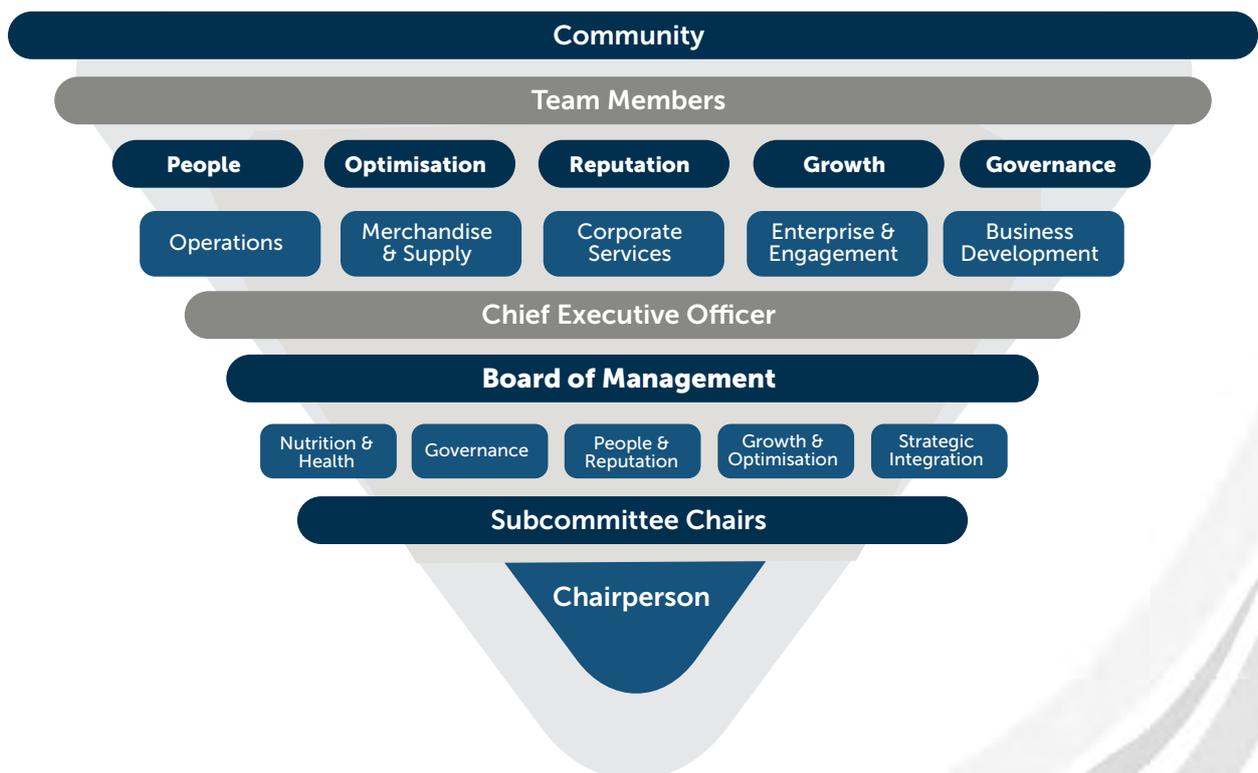
Examples of supporting residents:

- Encouraging and supporting the development of trade, commerce and business in the communities.
- Providing support for educational or health initiatives, local organisations and community programs or activities.



Community-centric model

The communities that we serve are our priority. CEQ's leadership team exist to support and empower our team members to deliver impact on the ground to communities.





CEQ's Strategy

Throughout 2024–25, CEQ advanced its strategic plan with a strong focus on community, operational resilience, and organisational maturation.

As the second year of CEQ's four-year roadmap, this period was marked by significant progress across all seven strategic pillars, with a growing emphasis on collaboration, innovation, and community-led outcomes.

Representation of strategic pillars

CEQ's strategy remained anchored in its commitment to being a culturally responsive, community-first organisation.

The Board of Management (BoM) and Management Team worked collaboratively to refine strategic priorities, streamline operational matters, and ensure alignment with government expectations and community needs.

The January 2025 Annual Strategic Review and subsequent BoM meetings confirmed CEQ's evolving role as a trusted enabler of local development, health, and economic opportunity.

CEQ's governance model reinforces its commitment to inclusive leadership and continuous improvement and its legislated purpose under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984—to act as a commercial enterprise that benefits residents and promotes wellbeing in remote Indigenous communities.

In the second half of the year, CEQ aligned its efforts with the new Queensland Government's priorities, including initiatives to address cost-of-living pressures, improve health and wellbeing outcomes, and enhance employment pathways in remote communities.

The impact of CEQ's strategic delivery was most visible in the communities it serves. Families benefited from more affordable and nutritious food options, students accessed healthy breakfasts to support learning, and local businesses gained access to credit and supply chains. CEQ's investment in infrastructure—such as solar installations, store refurbishments, and freight logistics—enhanced food security and economic resilience in some of Queensland's most geographically isolated communities. Store teams were supported through training, cultural education, and workplace safety initiatives, reinforcing CEQ's commitment to creating safe, respectful, and empowering environments.

\$597,796

Good Pasin (Give-back) investments

\$500,000

Other cost-of-living investments

\$50,000

Healthy food participation: Free Fruit for Kids

\$450,000

invested to keep water at \$1

\$3.3M

spend on capital improvements

86%

Indigenous employment participation at stores in remote communities

CEQ's strategic delivery also reflects its alignment with the Queensland Human Rights Strategy and the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, particularly the four Priority Reforms:

1 Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making

CEQ continues to strengthen partnerships with Indigenous Councils, community leaders, and regional stakeholders, ensuring local voices shape strategic direction. Formal agreements such as Heads of Agreement and Statements of Intent further strengthen these partnerships.

2 Building the Community-Controlled Sector

CEQ's investment in local employment, training, and enterprise development supports the growth of Indigenous-led economic models. For example, our stores are locally operated with 86% of store team members Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Our program of community engagements and approximately \$600,000 in Good Pasin (Give-back) community reinvestment initiatives reinforces our commitment to stronger communities.

3 Transforming Government Organisations

CEQ's governance and operational models are increasingly shaped by cultural knowledge and community authority. For example, the launch of the Cultural Wisdom Resource and the development of CEQ's cross-cultural capability matrix further embed cultural responsiveness into CEQ's practices. These initiatives strengthen CEQ's alignment with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and reinforce its role as a values-led organisation.

4 Shared Access to Data and Information at a Regional Level

CEQ is developing frameworks for ethical data use and Indigenous data sovereignty, ensuring communities benefit from insights and evidence. For example, our Data Policy will assist in ensuring improved data transparency and access. As CEQ enters the third year of its strategic plan, the organisation is well-positioned to consolidate gains, respond to emerging challenges, and continue building a future where remote communities thrive.





Governance Pillar-Related Subcommittee Chairperson's Report

The Governance Pillar-Related Subcommittee (GPS) had a strategically focused and high-performing year, supporting CEQ's commitment to strong governance, financial oversight, risk management, and compliance.

The GPS was established by the CEQ Board of Management in April 2024 as part of a broader governance restructure to align with CEQ's strategic pillars. Its purpose is to provide strategic oversight and assurance across key areas, including risk, audit, compliance, legal and regulatory review, finance, asset management, and cyber risk.

Across the 2024-25 financial year, the GPS met quarterly to review and recommend key governance matters to the Board of Management, ensuring CEQ remains a resilient, sustainable, transparent, and accountable organisation.

In 2024-25, the GPS delivered several important outcomes:

- **Risk and Compliance:** Oversaw the implementation of a new Strategic Risk Register and Board Risk Appetite Statement, with quarterly monitoring of high-priority risks such as cybersecurity and climate change.
- **Audit and Assurance:** Reviewed internal audits on payroll, inventory, and the Good Pasin (Give-back) program. Supported the QAO Audit Closing Report, which confirmed an unmodified opinion on CEQ's financial statements.
- **Strategic Oversight:** Supported the development of CEQ's Climate Change Action Strategy, Long-Term Financial Plan, Cash Management Policy, Related Parties Policy and Procurement Policy review. Provided governance input into strategic projects, including data sovereignty and ESG performance.
- **Cyber and Digital Governance:** Monitored CEQ's cybersecurity dashboard, supported phishing training, and endorsed the rollout of EFTSure and the Prism portal to strengthen digital resilience.



Financial performance

CEQ closed the financial year with strong performance across all key indicators:

Net Operating Surplus: \$6.5 million (up from \$5.8 million in FY2023-24).

Total Income: \$160.5 million (up from \$138.5 million), driven by trade growth and increased freight subsidy revenue.

Total Expenditure: \$154 million, reflecting higher trade volumes, freight costs, and proactive maintenance.

Cash and cash equivalents: \$55.1 million in cash and cash equivalents, supporting CEQ's strong liquidity position.

Asset Growth: Total assets increased to \$141 million, with inventory and property investments contributing to the uplift.

Liabilities and Equity: Total liabilities rose to \$21.1 million, largely due to accrued payroll remediation. Total equity reached \$120 million, supported by the operating surplus and a \$2.3 million asset revaluation increase in FY2024-25.

These results reflect CEQ's financial strength, prudent management, capacity to reinvest in community outcomes while maintaining compliance with its statutory obligations and collaboration with key business partners and government departments.

On behalf of the GPS, I thank my fellow subcommittee members and CEQ's Executive Team for their diligence, transparency, and commitment to continuous improvement throughout the year.



Claire Alexander
Chairperson, Governance
Pillar-Related Subcommittee
July 2024 - April 2025

INCOME

\$160.5 million

16% increase

EXPENDITURE

\$154 million

16% increase

CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

\$55.1M

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

\$3.3M

TOTAL ASSETS

\$141M



Growth and Optimisation Pillars– Related Subcommittee Chairperson’s Report



It is my privilege to present this report on behalf of the Growth and Optimisation Pillars–Related Subcommittee, reflecting on a year of strategic advancement, operational refinement, and collaborative leadership.

The subcommittee supports the CEQ Board of Management (BoM) to deliver on two headline goals:

- **Growth:** Deliver smart growth and extend our reach.
- **Optimisation:** Continually optimise organisational impacts.

Our mandate includes strategic oversight across supply chains, retail expansion, digital growth, infrastructure, and operational efficiency. We operate as a review body, providing recommendations to the BoM while respecting management’s operational responsibilities.





Key Achievements

Operation Wheel – store refresh program

We reviewed and recommended a five-year plan to refresh and modernise store environments. The BoM approved the program to enhance safety, presentation, and customer experience across CEQ's store network.

Operation Station – fuel outlet safety and compliance

We recommended a comprehensive safety and compliance assessment of CEQ fuel outlets. The BoM approved the initiative to ensure infrastructure meets regulatory standards and supports future maintenance planning.

Store Network Expansion Strategy

We reviewed and endorsed a strategy to guide future growth using a multi-criteria scorecard that considers many factors, including population density, logistics access, community need, economic viability, and social impact. The BoM approved the strategy, and several opportunities have since undergone due diligence, while others were declined based on strategic fit.



CEQ Good Pasin (Give-back)

Supporting students to celebrate NAIDOC Week and promoting greater awareness of cultural heritage.



Accommodation projects

We reviewed and recommended business cases for Bamaga, Waibene, and Napranum team member housing. The BoM approved these to support team member retention and in remote communities.

Digital access and capability projects

We supported the rollout of eMarket kiosks (for customer online ordering) and eLearning kiosks (for team member training and development). The BoM approved both initiatives, which are now underway to enhance digital inclusion and workforce capability.

Driving sustainability through recycling and waste management

Funded under the Queensland Government Regional and Remote Recycling Modernisation Fund, we purchased 20 purpose-built recycling storage containers to support better waste separation and recycling of cardboard and plastic wrap, with 14 already delivered to store locations.



Solar infrastructure condition and renewal

We recommended a comprehensive condition report and renewal plan for CEQ's solar infrastructure across +10 locations, which the BoM approved to support long-term sustainability.

The IBIS Bamaga store solar system is indicative of the energy efficiencies that stand to be achieved across our footprint, while contributing to preservation of the local environment in the communities that we serve.

Land tenure review

We reviewed and recommended a comprehensive report clarifying CEQ's complex property arrangements. The BoM approved the report to inform future decisions and strategic planning.



Looking ahead

In FY2025–2026, the subcommittee will focus on:

- Continued implementation of the Growth and Optimisation Strategy.
- Advancing infrastructure and accommodation projects.
- Supporting innovative business models and community partnerships.
- Enhancing KPI tracking and performance dashboards.
- Continuing to refine strategic priorities across FY26 and FY27.

I thank all subcommittee members, CEQ management, and contributors for their commitment and insight. Together, we are building a stronger, more resilient CEQ that delivers value to our communities.

Mislam Sam

Chairperson, Growth and Optimisation Pillars-Related Subcommittee



CASE STUDY

IBIS Bamaga solar system performance and impact 2024-25

- 130 panels and a 151 kWp PV array
- Total energy generated: 49.6 MWh
- Carbon emissions avoided = 40.7 tonnes
- Offset the equivalent of 1,870 trees planted
- Peak daily output = 680.5 kWh – enough to power a small supermarket’s lighting and refrigeration for an entire day
- Solar covered 21.5% of store’s total electricity needs
- Store used 99.2% of its solar energy on-site—maximising savings and minimising waste.



Environmental sustainability

14

waste containers in communities



3 tonnes in carbon emissions avoided due to ewaste recycling



\$1M in savings for customers on energy-efficient appliances under the Power Savvy rebate program



Operation Wheel Store Refresh Program status

2

refresh projects complete

1 new CHH (Bamaga),
Mona's Bazaar upgrade

6

store refreshes

planned for 2025-26

5

upgrade projects in progress

(ABIS Doomadgee, IBIS Waibene,
IBIS Arkai, IBIS Wug, IBIS lama)

NEW

eKiosks and Wei Wis Cafes
to be rolled out across
store network





People and Reputation Pillars-Related Subcommittee Chairperson's Report

In 2024-25, the People and Reputation Pillars-Related Subcommittee oversaw a transformative period of strategic progress, cultural investment, and community engagement. Our focus remained firmly on fostering a thriving workplace culture, strengthening organisational capability, and deepening trust with the communities we serve.

We laid strong foundations for the subcommittee's future work. In July 2024, we conducted a workshop to clarify responsibilities, align strategic matters, and confirm primary focus areas.

People and Culture

Significant strides were made in workforce development and leadership capability. Notably, we partnered with People HQ to launch the THRIVE Program within CEQ. This initiative is already enriching team member development through a neuroscience-informed learning journey.

Our engagement survey program matured further, combining annual 'Your Say' surveys with quarterly 'Engage Check-Ins' to capture timely insights. These tools are instrumental in shaping a responsive and inclusive workplace.

Other highlights throughout the year included:

- Workplace culture and compliance, including the development of a psychosocial hazards policy and improved workplace health and safety reporting, leading to better mitigation strategies.
- Team and leadership development, with the Workforce and Leadership Development Strategy advancing and cadetship programs expanding.
- Cross-cultural capability, supported by the rollout of cultural awareness resources.
- Team wellbeing, with initiatives like accommodation support and psychosocial safety measures.



TOTAL HEADCOUNT



EQUITABLE WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITIES

86%

of store team members Indigenous

COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUITY



54%

women in workforce

47%

women in management

66%

women in leadership

Reputation

CEQ's Engagement Team continued to play a pivotal role in connecting with community voices, ensuring that customer insights directly inform service delivery and product innovation. Our commitment to cultural responsiveness and community-led decision-making remains central.

Key achievements throughout the year included:

- Finalising the IBIS History Book, set to launch in September 2025 as part of CEQ's 120-year anniversary celebrations.
- Strengthening strategic partnerships, including disaster relief collaboration with Foodbank and stakeholder mapping for resilience planning.
- Supporting community development, with the Good Pasin (Give-back) program funding almost \$600,000 in community initiatives aligned to Closing the Gap and other key reform initiatives.

Looking ahead

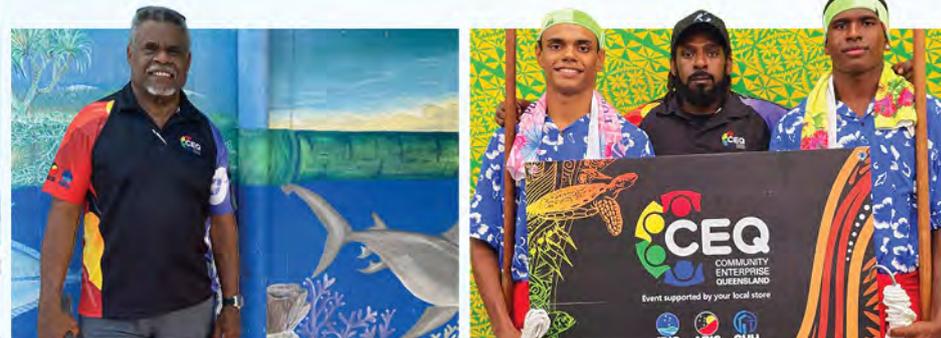
As we move into FY26, our focus will remain on:

- Strengthening our reconciliation and human rights frameworks.
- Enhancing community partnerships and stakeholder engagement.
- Continuing to support our team through psychosocial safety, leadership development, and recognition.

I'd like to thank all subcommittee members, CEQ Management, and our community partners for their dedication and contributions throughout the year. It's been a privilege to chair this subcommittee and witness the meaningful progress we've made together.

Leah Cameron

Chairperson, People and Reputation Pillars-Related Subcommittee



CEQ Good Pasin (Give-back)

Supporting the Doomadgee Rodeo to bring the community together.



Nutrition and Health Pillars-Related Subcommittee Chairperson's Report

As Chairperson of the Nutrition and Health Pillars-Related Subcommittee, it's been a genuine privilege to work alongside such passionate and committed colleagues throughout the year.

Together, we've made meaningful strides in improving health outcomes for the communities CEQ serves—through thoughtful collaboration in preventative health, strategic innovation, and a shared belief in the power of creating healthy food environments that support healthy choices which can transform lives. This report reflects the collective efforts, insights, and care that shaped our journey in 2024-2025.

Early in the year, we refined our Terms of Reference and confirmed five primary focus areas for the Nutrition and Health Pillars:

- 1 Health-related data
- 2 Nutrition and health behavioural education & promotion
- 3 Availability and affordability
- 4 Healthy store environments
- 5 Health partnerships and innovation

These focus areas are reflected in the Nutrition & Health Strategy 2023-2027 and align CEQ's efforts with broader government health priorities. We also took steps to ensure CEQ's actions are consistent with government policies and health targets.



Gather + Grow Program

The Gather + Grow Healthy Stores project partnership with Health and Wellbeing Queensland has been key in establishing a strong foundation for the nutrition & health strategy, enabling CEQ to deliver strong outcomes in store nutrition policy, socialising the importance of nutrition across the organisation and creating healthier store environments for our customers. Funding has been extended through to June 2027 for Gather + Grow 2.0, which will support increased health promotion and customer engagement and extension of a store nutritionist and one (1) year of funding for a First Nations nutrition cadet, along with addressing key priorities in the Gather + Grow 2023-2032 Queensland Remote Food Security Strategy.



CEQ Good Pasin (Give-back)

Supporting the Pormpuraaw Youth Summit to empower the next generation.



Health Promotion and Monitoring

CEQ partnered with Saltwater People to develop a health promotion campaign, including social media, in-store promotions, and community engagement. A Nutrition and Health Sales Data Dashboard is in development to give us a clear picture of what our customers are buying to identify patterns and shifts in behaviour and inform targeted health campaigns and store promotions.

Healthy KaiKai, Healthy Lifestyles in the Torres Strait

CEQ partnered with Torres Strait Regional Authority under our new Heads of Agreement to work together on addressing a gap in community nutrition support at a community level that was identified by community members at CEQ engagement sessions. This is an example of how we are actively listening to and responding to community and health aspirations expressed at engagement sessions.

Foodbank Partnership

Our partnership with Foodbank delivered 40 pallets of breakfast items to 14 schools in CEQ's footprint, contributing to increased student access to a healthy start to the school day. Additional schools are keen to join, and we're exploring funding options to expand the program.

Research and Innovation

CEQ commenced some key research collaborations this year, which aimed to discover new ways in which remote retail can improve the health of people and planet, including:

- Commercial Determinants of Health Research Project (University of Queensland)
- Climate Change Food Security Research Project (Monash University)

The nutrition and health team worked hard to streamline partnerships and ensure alignment with CEQ's strategic goals. A Data Sharing Policy was developed, guided by Indigenous data sovereignty experts. We're committed to ensuring CEQ's involvement in research is sustainable, beneficial, and respectful of community data ownership.

Cost of Living and Healthy Access

The subcommittee strongly advocated for CEQ's role in addressing cost-of-living pressures. CEQ's initiatives include a \$500k investment commitment to reduce prices on 10 key items, matching city supermarket prices. This was in addition to the Queensland Government's Remote Communities Freight Assistance Scheme.

These efforts reflect our commitment to making healthy choices more accessible and affordable.

Looking Ahead

As we move into FY26, our priorities include:

- Strengthening CEQ's role in national food security and health equity strategies
- Delivering a multi-strategy health campaign across our store network that will promote healthy choices to our customers while also honouring traditional ways practiced by First Nations Peoples, which have supported health and wellbeing for generations
- Continuing to align CEQ's work with government health targets and community needs, including establishing building enhanced reporting capabilities to enhance the monitoring of health-related data for nutrition outcomes.

I'd like to thank the subcommittee members, CEQ Management, and our community partners for their dedication and collaboration. Together, we're building food pathways to healthy communities—and that's something we can all be proud of.

Warm regards,

Dr Mark Wenitong

Chairperson, Nutrition and Health Pillars-Related Subcommittee



Strategic Integration Pillar-Related Subcommittee Chairperson's Report

This year has been one of reflecting, strategic recalibrating, and forward momentum for the Strategic Integration Pillar-Related Subcommittee (SIPS). The SIPS played a unique and critical role in CEQ's governance structure as a cross-cutting integrator.

As Chairperson, I am pleased to report on the subcommittee's role in strengthening CEQ's governance, planning, and connection across our strategic priorities during the 2024-25 financial year.

During 2024-25, the subcommittee fulfilled its mandate under the Terms of Reference (December 2024). Its oversight extended across the CEO relationship, Board capability, CEQ's Strategic Plan, and government relations, as well as other strategic matters delegated by the Board. These functions ensured the subcommittee remained consistent with its purpose: to integrate strategic initiatives that advance CEQ's long-term goals, strengthen alignment across the organisation, and uphold legislative and policy obligations.



This work reflects CEQ's continuing commitment to sound governance under the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984* (JLOM Act), and to the principles of community benefit, transparency, and accountability.

Throughout the year, SIPS provided strategic guidance and oversight across responsibilities set out in the subcommittee's Terms of Reference.

Highlights include:

- **CEO relationship:** Encouraged the embedding of CEQ's human performance and organisational maturation framework to improve leadership culture and collaboration across the organisation.
- **Board capability and maturity:** Strengthened the decision-making environment and professional development of the Board through systematising the subcommittee and board processes.
- **CEQ's Strategic Plan:** Oversaw progress of the Board's top five priorities (training and development, efficiency enhancements, store expansion strategy, online shopping capability, and cost-of-living support). Reviewed CEQ's organisational positioning within the northern Australia development narrative and broader industry context of retail stores in remote Australia, including alignment with regional partnerships and advocacy networks.
- **Government relations and compliance:** Oversaw quarterly and annual Ministerial reporting and engagement with Reframing the Relationship, Closing the Gap, and Local Thriving Communities initiatives, ensuring CEQ's voice and accountability remain strong. Ensured compliance with the JLOM Act and other key legislation, progressed surplus-related community benefit through the Good Pasin (Give-back) program and other cost-of-living support initiatives.

- **The Subcommittee's policy, risk, legislation and budget-related matters:** Reviewed relevant policies (Conflict of Interest, Related Parties, and Board Travel) and risks identified in its Terms of Reference to maintain compliance and best-practice governance standards.
- **Delegated matter - Stakeholder relationships:** Established the Heads of Agreement initiative, commenced work to clarify CEQ's stakeholder messaging.
- **Delegated matter - Cross-cultural capability:** Supported cross-cultural capability initiatives across the organisation, laying the foundation for the broader cultural wisdom focus now progressing in 2025-26.

The SIPS objectives cemented CEQ's First Nations-led and values-driven identity. I extend my appreciation to all members of the subcommittee, the Management Team, and fellow Board colleagues for their insight and collaboration throughout 2024-25. The Strategic Integration Pillar headline goal "*Integrating, harmoniously, strategic initiatives to foster unified growth and resilience*" continues to serve as CEQ's Strategic Integration Pillar governance mechanism. Our collective focus remains on ensuring that governance integrity, cultural strength, and community outcomes are progressed in a coherent and forward-looking way. In the year ahead, SIPS will continue refining governance linkages between CEQ's strategic direction, cultural capability, and external partnerships.

Joann Schmider
Chairperson, Strategic Integration Pillar-Related Subcommittee





Chief Executive Officer's Message

Our Team

We continued to invest significantly in our people to enhance their ability to support the communities we serve. This included the introduction of cultural wisdom resources aimed at strengthening team members' cultural capability and embedding cultural understanding throughout our organisation. We also enriched human performance and team development through a neuroscience-informed framework (RELISH, delivered through the THRIVE program) and learning journey, which will extend into the new financial year. Additional initiatives included the introduction of new team member uniforms and the refresh of our remote vehicle fleet, ensuring our teams can operate safely and efficiently in the communities they support.

Our Performance

Financial performance for the year was strong. Sales closed at \$157.2M, a 15.6% increase on the previous year. We finished the year with a \$6.5M surplus, a 13% increase on the previous year. \$3.3M was capitalised throughout the year, and \$25M was invested in local wages, demonstrating the contribution CEQ makes to local economies.

Within these results, we have made a significant provision of \$2M, which will be utilised to remediate our team members who may have been impacted as a result of rostering and payment rounding over the last seven years. I'm pleased to report that we expect stage 1 of this project to be fully resolved early in the new financial year. I thank the BoM for their resolute focus on accuracy and ensuring CEQ put team members first. I thank our wider teams for their patience and dedication as we worked through award interpretations that were and remain, extremely complex.

Operational highlights

With cost-of-living pressures continuing across remote regions, CEQ remained focused on ensuring affordability and fairness throughout 2024-25. Some highlights are:

- up to \$500,000 invested to bring down the price of staple items;
- \$1.8M invested in wet season flights over 27 weeks without raising prices;
- \$450,000 invested to keep water at \$1;
- \$750,000 in freight efficiencies, keeping costs down as our volumes increase; and
- Free Fruit for Kids totalling \$50,000.

More than 202,000 kilograms of goods were flown in during road closures, with additional cold storage and locally sourced warehousing helping CEQ stay one step ahead for future wet seasons.

Through CEQ's community reinvestment initiative, Good Pasin (Give-back), we approved over 400 applications with a total value of nearly \$600,000. We continued our store reinvestment program, which saw cyclical store refreshes and major upgrades across four stores in the network and the official opening of Bamaga Home Hardware and the Waibene Elders Lounge.



FY2024-25 Snapshot

140+

community
engagements

\$157.2M
sales

14%

increase
on
budget

\$6.5M surplus

ASSET GROWTH



9% to \$141.2M

86%

remote store
Indigenous
employment

1,969

training modules
delivered to
team members

\$25M

team member wages and
expenses, supporting local
economies

\$597,796

Good Pasin (Give-back) donations
and sponsorship to communities

Looking ahead

CEQ continually evaluates and improves by building capacity, reliability and resilience to meet evolving needs and expectations of the communities we serve through putting the following ideas into action:

- increased fuel capacity in remote communities, with more upgrades planned;
- secured \$640,000 to increase cold storage for food security in Kowanyama and Pormpuraaw;
- systems upgrades and improvements to support future scalability;
- expansion of our eMarket facility to all stores so communities can access a much larger range of products.

As CEQ looks to the 2025-26 financial year, we remain focused on delivering value beyond the checkout and unleashing potential through genuine relationships, local employment, cultural respect and food security.

I would like to express my gratitude to our dedicated store, distribution centre and support office team members, my Senior Leadership Team, our BoM, community partners, service providers, suppliers and stakeholders for their support. Without our combined commitment, courage and belief in our vision, none of our achievements would have been possible.

Thank you once again
for your support.

Caring, every day, always

Michael Dykes

Chief Executive Officer





Enterprise and Engagement

The Engagement Team functions as a critical conduit for collecting consumer feedback, generating insights that guide enhancements to product offerings, digital platforms, and service delivery strategies.

This allows our team to remain agile and responsive to the evolving expectations of our customer base in remote communities. In collaboration with our marketing specialist and public relations journalist, the Engagement Team also plays a pivotal role in cultivating online communities and promoting participatory engagement.

Connecting with Community

The Engagement Team remains committed to embedding culturally responsive practices within our organisational models. We uphold the principle that decision-making must be informed by cultural knowledge and community authority. Furthermore, we actively promote accountability among our government and non-government partners, ensuring that all initiatives are delivered with transparency, integrity, and cultural respect, in alignment with the needs and expectations of regional Indigenous communities.

The Engagement Team's activities for the Financial Year included attendance at the Indigenous Human Rights Conference, participating in a 25-year blueprint workshop to scope priorities with the Department of Primary Industries, a program of engagement with Outback Stores and ALPA in the Northern Territory, and numerous community consultations, and meetings with Indigenous local government leaders.





Customer satisfaction remains a central priority, and we are committed to ensuring that the voices of the communities we serve are meaningfully integrated into organisational practice and decision-making processes. The ongoing review of our HappyOrNot customer feedback assists with this.

Many remote Indigenous communities experience high levels of socio-economic disadvantage and food insecurity, which impacts workforce and educational participation, economic opportunities, and overall health and well-being. Acknowledging these challenges, the Engagement Team continues to strengthen partnerships with both internal and external stakeholders to ensure that the perspectives of regional communities are meaningfully represented and to achieve improved outcomes.

The foundational principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) underpin all aspects of our service delivery, and our strategies are further informed by the Priority Reforms outlined in the Closing the Gap framework.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



meetings, visits and events with communities

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY



visits and meetings with Government and stakeholders



CEQ Good Pasin (Give-back)

Supporting AFL Cape York to structure sporting opportunities for young people in the Torres Strait and NPA.





The impact of our Good Pasin (Give-back) Program

CEQ's Good Pasin (Give-back) program evolved into a formalised community reinvestment initiative, aligned with 17 of the 19 socio-economic targets of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

Nourishing Young Minds and Supporting Cultural Learning

CEQ is proud to continue our commitment to student wellbeing through our School Fruit donations and *Free Fruit for Kids* in Stores initiative.

In partnership with Foodbank we've also delivered pallets of essential goods for their *School Breakfast Program*.

This year, we've proudly supported a range of school activities, including: Kowanyama School's language class, graduations and senior formals, Transition to High School sessions, athletics carnivals and cultural camps.

Empowering Local Enterprise and Enhancing Community Food Security

CEQ is proud to support the growth of local businesses, for example, a small catering business in Bamaga. In partnership with the Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council, we also contributed to the refurbishment of the Injinoo Store.

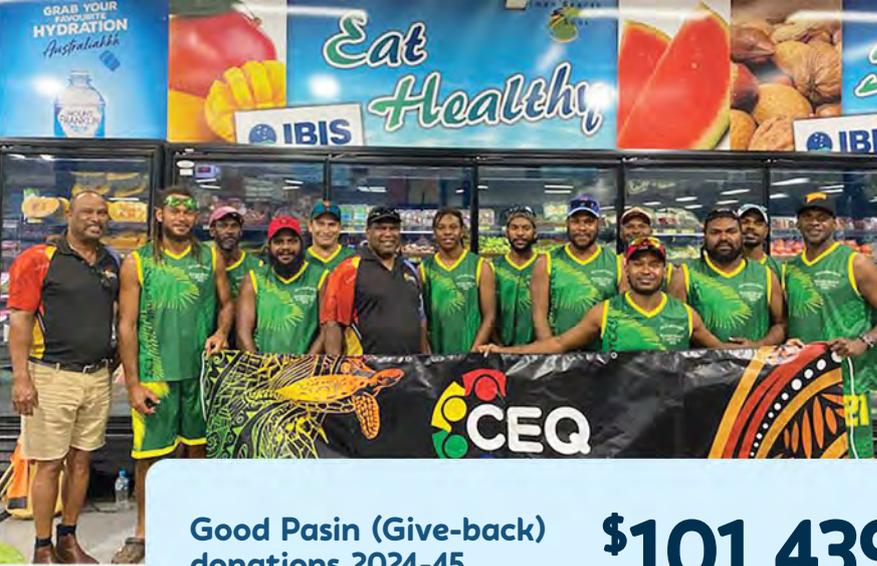
Caring for Country

Good Pasin (Give-back) program supports CEQ's ongoing *Resource Recovery Project*, aimed at reducing landfill waste and safeguarding the delicate ecosystems surrounding our island stores. We also had the opportunity to contribute to community-led cleanup days on Mer, Friday, and Warraber Islands.

Supporting Cultural Development in Our Community

We are proud to support cultural development initiatives that celebrate and preserve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage. We've supported a range of vibrant cultural festivals, including Winds of Zenadth, Palm Island Spring Fair, Napranum Ruchook Cultural Festival, the Lockhart River Paytham Malkari Dance Festival and the Doomadgee Rodeo.

We continue to proudly support commemorations of significant anniversaries such as *Mabo Day*, *Coming of the Light*, and *NAIDOC Week*.



Good Pasin (Give-back) donations 2024-25

\$101,439

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

\$68,277

CULTURAL GOVERNANCE

\$597,796
total donated

\$3,584

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

\$85,800

SPIRITUAL/PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

\$1,895

ENVIRONMENT

\$130,423

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

\$206,378

CIVIC/POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

Honouring Traditional Custom and Community Through Support

CEQ's continued support for *Sorry Business* in communities has brought comfort to families as they gather to honour and remember their loved ones during times of loss.

Empowering Support Groups and Celebrating Women

We've provided support to men's and women's groups in Lockhart River, Wujal Wujal, and Kowanyama, creating safe spaces for connection and healing. This year's International Women's Day events were especially powerful, celebrating the essential contributions of women in our communities.

Youth and Elder Engagement

Our presence at the Pormpuraaw Youth Summit was met with great enthusiasm, highlighting the importance of empowering youth in shaping the future. Meanwhile, the newly established Elders Lounge in Waibene offers a peaceful and welcoming space for Elders to relax, connect, and enjoy community life.

Championing Sports and Healthy Lifestyles

We've backed major events such as the Battle of the Islands Touch Competition, Doomadgee United Football Team, the Indigenous Rugby League Carnival, and local volleyball competitions. We're thrilled to be supporting junior sports teams for the 2025 season, including the Palm Island Junior Barracudas, Doomadgee Junior Dragons, and AFL Cape York.

Bringing Communities Together Through Events

CEQ is proud to sponsor a wide range of Council-organised community events that foster connection and celebration. These include Christmas parties, New Year's festivities, the Mapoon Barra Bash, the Pormpuraaw Community Fishing Competition, NAIDOC Week celebrations and awards.

Cost-of-Living Support

In addition to event sponsorship, CEQ continues to support everyday wellbeing through price support initiatives—such as subsidising \$1 water bottles and Savvy Senior discounts—to help ease the cost-of-living and ensure essential items remain accessible to everyone.

Nutrition and Health

This year, the Nutrition and Health team has continued to progress the implementation of CEQ's Nutrition & Health Strategy 2023-2027, focusing on aligning our store environments and CEQ actions with community aspirations for better health.

The team's efforts to create healthier store environments have been supported by collaboration across CEQ departments, along with regular store visits and engagement with store teams.



Gather + Grow Healthy Stores Project Completion

In December 2025, CEQ finished the Gather + Grow Healthy Stores Project in partnership with Health and Wellbeing Queensland (HWQld). During the project, 25 CEQ stores participated in the study, with a total of 91 store assessments and action plans completed, along with 211 in-store and community awareness activities carried out.

CEQ considers this project as a highly successful collaboration with HWQld and has responded by entering into a new partnership for another 2.5 years to further develop and embed healthy store environment changes in CEQ stores and beyond.

Nutrition & Health Cadet supported through Good Pasin and Health & Wellbeing Queensland

CEQ is proud of this collaborative initiative with Health & Wellbeing Queensland to enable opportunities for young people to lead First Nations preventive health and nutrition promotion efforts in the future.

As the first Nutrition & Health Cadet with CEQ, La'Shauna Nathaniel had the opportunity to be immersed in a health team environment. This enabled her to begin building nutrition knowledge, further develop her communications skills, practice delivering health promotion activities and gain overall confidence to go forward in a career in health.

Throughout her time with the CEQ Nutrition and Health Team, La'Shauna demonstrated her willingness to develop new skills and showed great initiative in all areas of responsibility and in a range of settings. She showed high expertise in engaging store teams and community members. La'Shauna's motivation to keep learning to progress her nutrition career for the benefit of her community has been inspiring.

La'Shauna completed her cadetship with CEQ in January and is continuing her journey towards becoming a qualified Dietitian through studies at the Queensland University of Technology.

The Nutrition & Health Team are looking forward to having La'Shauna back with CEQ during university breaks, in a CEQ "Vacationer" position, to work on short projects.





Impact of CEQ stores towards healthy communities

CEQ champions healthy start for First Nations infants with baby food range review

This year the Nutrition Team worked closely with the Buying Team to conduct a comprehensive review of our infant food range to ensure babies and young children have better access to healthier food options from their very first bites.

The updated range focuses on nutritious, iron-rich, and lower-sugar options that support early development – such as meat-based meals, iron-fortified cereals, and vegetable-based meals – while reducing the shelf presence of products high in added sugars, such as sweetened custards and fruit-based purees.

These changes to our baby food range are about giving parents better options and cutting through the confusion on the shelves. This is just the beginning of our in-store health promotion efforts with the Nutrition and Health team currently working on a comprehensive health campaign with changing themes that help guide our customers towards healthier choices.

Partnership with TSRA to increase community nutrition and healthy lifestyle activities in Torres Strait

In early 2025, CEQ commenced a joint project with TSRA called, Healthy Kaikai, Healthy Living, with the recruitment of a Community Nutritionist. The project aims to work closely with community, health services, councils and other key stakeholders across the Torres Strait to develop a suite of nutrition and health lifestyle programs and activities to mobilise preventative health action across the Torres Strait.

The project was initiated in response to CEQ listening to community feedback during engagement sessions, where community members repeatedly called for more local activities such as healthy cooking classes and lifestyle programs to be available on their islands. The Team's work throughout the year illustrates CEQ's active role in the health ecosystem, embodying the spirit of caring, every day, always.



Fred Gela
Nutrition & Health and
Engagement General Manager

1,204 tonnes
fresh produce sold



8%

annual increase
in fresh fruit and
vegetable sales

21%

of transactions
included fresh
produce

9%

of food and
drink sales were
fresh produce

122.8 tonnes

of bananas sold
(highest selling fruit item)



189.7 tonnes

of potatoes/onions sold
(highest selling vegetable items)



48%

of drink volumes sold
were healthy options
(water & milk)

1.08 megalitres
water sold





Operations

This year, CEQ achieved a record-breaking milestone in financial sales—a reflection of our team’s dedication and the trust placed in us by the communities we proudly serve. It’s a powerful endorsement of our ongoing commitment to our vision of caring, every day, always.

A key driver of our progress has been our focus on Indigenous employment. We’ve expanded full-time opportunities for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, reinforcing community connections and creating pathways for long-term success. Notably, this growth is reflected in new management appointments, where local leadership and cultural insight are helping shape CEQ’s future.

Our Cairns Support Office and store teams continue to demonstrate exceptional passion and purpose. Their resilience and teamwork have enabled us to support remote communities through challenging conditions, including the wet season.

From essential flights into Doomadgee, Kowanyama, and Pormpuraaw to helicopter gas deliveries between Kowanyama and Pormpuraaw, our commitment to service has remained steadfast. The recycling initiative with Sea Swift is also gaining momentum, actively reducing landfill waste through the removal of cardboard and plastics.

Behind the scenes, our maintenance team has shown remarkable dedication, responding to over 160 service requests each month. Their work ensures the safety and reliability of our sites, reinforcing our promise to community wellbeing.

The installation of new 14,000-litre fuel tanks at lama and Masig—and upcoming installations at Warraber, Wug, and Arkai—further demonstrate our investment in infrastructure that supports local needs.

A standout moment this year was the inaugural Managers Gathering on Nurupai. This landmark event brought store teams together with our key sponsors to share insights, strengthen relationships, and reaffirm our shared purpose.





Looking ahead, we're excited to continue rolling out Operation Wheel, our five-year cyclical refresh initiative delivering critical store upgrades across the network. The program has already made significant progress, with extensive refurbishments completed at several locations including Doomadgee Supermarket, Waibene Supermarket, and Mona's Bazaar. These upgrades have introduced new signage, flooring, store layouts, and tested innovations such as the Wis Wei Café, Deadly Deals, and eMarket kiosks—all designed to enhance the customer experience and ensure stores remain vibrant and responsive to community needs. As part of this momentum, we're also launching new E-Market and E-Learning kiosks in all stores, expanding access to retail opportunities and digital learning tools for our remote teams. Our journey is powered by the heart and strength of our people. Together, we're building more than just stores—we're building community.

Tony Flint
General Manager
Operations



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION



91,500+ HappyOrNot customer feedback engagements

80.5/100 Average Happy Index across our stores



CEQ Good Pasin (Give-back)

Supporting the Doomadgee United Rugby League Team to promote teamwork and improve fitness.



Merchandise and Supply

This year has been marked by resilience, innovation, and a continued commitment to delivering value to the communities we serve. Despite significant challenges, including the QLD Flooding Event and an extended wet season that disrupted stock deliveries, our team has demonstrated agility and determination in maintaining supply continuity and operational excellence.

This year marked the longest wet season in CEQ history, with Kowanyama experiencing road access cut earlier than ever and remaining isolated for an unprecedented 27 weeks. Despite these extreme conditions, our team rose to the occasion to ensure supply continuity across our three most affected stores, Kowanyama, Pormpuraaw, and Doomadgee. We maintained fresh food and essential supplies through weekly plane freight deliveries. We successfully managed over 130 flights throughout the season, transporting 202,825 kilograms of critical goods. This extraordinary effort highlights our team's dedication and operational strength in overcoming logistical challenges to support our communities.

A significant milestone of the year was the comprehensive supply chain review, which identified key areas for efficiency improvements. Through strategic contract renegotiation of our sea and road freight contracts, stock facilitation, and consolidation modelling, we achieved substantial cost savings while enhancing delivery reliability. These savings have been reinvested into our operations and passed on to our customers, reinforcing our commitment to affordability.

Our Cairns Distribution Centre (DC) underwent a significant transformation by installing new racking infrastructure. This overhaul has streamlined operations, improved stock handling, and increased storage capacity, positioning us for future growth and responsiveness.

From March to June 2025, we launched a Price Support Initiative, directly reinvesting to deliver lower prices to our customers. This initiative was complemented by our continued participation in the Queensland Remote Communities Freight Assistance Scheme, which has provided critical cost-of-living relief by reducing freight-related expenses on essential goods. The positive feedback from remote communities underscores the importance of this program.



SUPPLY CONTINUITY THROUGH DISRUPTIONS

\$1,861,776 total

wet season freight costs to Cape communities



130
flights



202,825 kg
delivered



WEEKS CUT OFF

Kowanyama: 27

Doomadgee: 13

Pormpurraw: 19

Palm Island: 2

In partnership with Ergon Energy, we proudly administered the PowerSavvy, an initiative through our Col Jones Store that promotes energy-efficient whitegoods to the residents of Waibene, Torres Strait Outer Islands, Nurupai and the Northern Peninsula Area (NPA). This program supports sustainability and helps customers reduce household energy costs, delivering long-term value and environmental benefits.

Our achievements this year would not have been possible without the fantastic support of our trade partners, whose collaboration and shared commitment to community outcomes have been instrumental in navigating challenges and delivering results.

These accomplishments reflect the dedication and hard work of our entire team. We thank all involved and look forward to building on this year's momentum as we continue to support the communities we serve.

Caring, every day, always

Casey Kelly

General Manager
Merchandise & Supply



CEQ Good Pasin (Give-back)

Supporting the Erub TAGAI Campus students with healthy food options, ensuring they stayed energised and engaged.





Business Development

Throughout 2024–2025, the Business Development Team has continued to drive CEQ’s strategic priorities of growth and optimisation through a diverse range of projects that have enhanced retail access, improved operational efficiency, and strengthened community engagement across the regions we serve.

A major focus this year has been implementing standardised store formats to better utilise space and streamline operations. The introduction of Express, Local, and Supermarket formats has allowed the team to tailor store offerings to community needs while enabling consistent planning, equipment use, and layout design across the CEQ network. This initiative supports the broader goal of creating more efficient and customer-friendly retail environments.

The team also completed the transformation of the old IBIS Bamaga store into the new Community Home and Hardware store. This project has created a welcoming retail space that caters to both local residents and tourists, offering a wide range of home and outdoor goods. In addition, the old store on Nurupai (Horn Island) was successfully converted into two modern accommodation units—one for visiting CEQ team members and one for the local rental market—demonstrating an effective repurposing of existing assets.

Sustainability has been a key theme this year, highlighted by the successful installation of CEQ’s first large-scale solar system at the Bamaga Supermarket. Featuring 130 panels and a 151kWp PV array, the system became operational in March 2025.

Throughout the year the Business Development Team supported community-led initiatives, such as expanding grocery access in Injinoo. In collaboration with NPARC, the team upgraded the local service station to include a broader grocery range tailored to community needs. This project, funded through the Good Pasin program, is a strong example of how CEQ works in partnership with local councils to improve food security in remote areas.





Innovation has remained central to the team's work. The Innovation Hub at the Cairns Support Office has been instrumental in testing and refining new ideas before rolling them out across the network. Initiatives such as Free Fruit for Kids, clear plastic fruit bins, and new stock trolleys have been well received and are now in place at multiple stores. The team also managed upgrades to the Cairns Support Office itself, including internal renovations and the addition of outdoor seating to support team member wellbeing.

Mona's Bazaar, a beloved retail destination on Waibene, underwent a full refresh this year. The project preserved the store's cultural identity while introducing a new logo, signage, and modern fixtures. The result is a vibrant and welcoming space that continues to serve both locals and tourists with a unique mix of gifts, Islander clothing, souvenirs, and crafts.

Looking ahead, the Business Development Team is preparing for another ambitious year. Plans are underway for further store refurbishments, new retail concepts, and continued exploration of acquisition opportunities. These efforts reflect CEQ's unwavering commitment to delivering value, supporting communities, and building a sustainable future.

Randal Crabbe

General Manager Business Development



Corporate Services



Finance

CEQ recorded a net operating surplus of \$6.5 million for the 2024-25 financial year, supported by revenue of \$160.5 million. This performance reflects the team's resilience and commitment, especially through a challenging and prolonged wet season that brought additional freight costs and logistical complexities.

CEQ's balance sheet remains solid, with \$74.6M in current assets and low debt levels. Capital investment totalled \$3.3M, focused on buildings and equipment. Financial ratios show consistent performance, with a 4.2% operating margin and 5.5% return on assets.

CEQ continues to balance commercial sustainability with its community-focused service delivery.

\$6.5 M net result
13% increase

\$157.2 M sales

\$160.5 M income
15.8% increase

\$3.3 M capital expenditure

\$25M team member expenses. 17% of total expenses



Workplace health and food safety

CEQ maintained its strong commitment to workplace health and food safety (WHFS) in 2024–25. Our WHFS and Training teams collaborated to deliver food safety training and conduct store audits, reinforcing our zero-tolerance approach to WHFS incidents. Incident and hazard reporting continues to improve, with timely closeout of all matters.

Key initiatives included fuel outlet safety upgrades, expanded preventative maintenance programs, increased general repairs and store refresh visits and fleet replacement across five communities.

Maintaining infrastructure in remote, high-corrosion environments remains a challenge due to limited tradespeople and transport options. CEQ continues to invest in proactive maintenance to reduce reactive costs and extend asset life.

Training remains a core focus, with structured programs covering food safety and workplace health and safety compliance, risk and employment compliance and certified training (e.g. retail, first aid, forklift licences). All CEQ stores operate under consistent compliance frameworks aligned with WHS and food safety legislation.

28 WHFS audits
77.7% avg. score

2,263 

WHFS inspections conducted (average score of inspections: 81.7%)



People and Workplace Culture

Over the past 12 months, the People and Workplace Culture team has progressed significant work across key areas, including human resources efficiency, workplace relations compliance, and strategic project execution.

These initiatives not only align with the Board of Management’s strategic objectives but have also deepened our understanding of team member wellbeing and engagement, our most valued stakeholders.

TOTAL WORKFORCE

 **617**
team members

INDIGENOUS REPRESENTATION

 **76%** of team members Indigenous

GENDER EQUITY FOCUS

 **54:46** 
(total workforce)



Workforce & Leadership Development

Following a comprehensive review of CEQ's workforce development strategies and data, external HR specialists John Hartigan and Associates provided a strategic framework to enhance our ability to attract and retain talent. This included recommendations for assessing current systems and remuneration frameworks, offering competitive career pathways and industry-leading development opportunities. Key milestones achieved since receiving the recommendations include the identification of a suitable Human Resources Information System (HRIS) and the onboarding of strategic partner People HQ, positioning CEQ to advance organisational maturity and human performance through elevated systems and impactful learning and development programs, including their THRIVE Program. Starting with RELISH, our first group of learners has embarked on a rich learning journey. Growing and sharing among the wider team, their knowledge on the six social cognitive needs of the brain, harnessing both personal and professional development on our collective passage towards nurturing and increasing healthy teams.

THRIVE Program



TEAM MEMBER DEVELOPMENT UNDERTAKEN



Role & Reward Synergy

Navigating Australia's complex industrial relations landscape requires both compliance and innovation. This year, we initiated a thorough review of our industrial documentation and frameworks to ensure CEQ remains compliant, competitive, and progressive. Our focus is on modernising systems and processes to support strategic attraction, recruitment, and retention practices, ensuring a seamless and rewarding employment journey for all team members.

Engagement Survey

Now in its third year, our engagement survey program has evolved to include both a comprehensive 'Your Say' survey and a shorter 'Engage Check-In' pulse survey. This dual approach allows us to capture timely insights while maintaining a strategic lens on long-term engagement. In the coming year, we will refine our survey questions to better align with organisational priorities and empower team members to share their voices meaningfully.



Team Member Wellbeing

In line with our obligations to manage psychosocial risks and prevent sexual harassment in the workplace, we have conducted robust assessments of our risks. We work closely with team members from across the business to discuss the risks and implement control measures, with a strong focus on strengthening our wellbeing initiatives at the same time. These efforts reflect our commitment to fostering a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all team members.



Information technology

Humanforce Cloud Migration

CEQ successfully migrated its 'Time & Attendance' system to the cloud—unlocking real-time access, enhanced data security, and streamlined scheduling across all locations. This transformation empowers our teams with greater flexibility, accuracy, and efficiency in managing work hours, while laying the foundation for future-ready workforce solutions.

Launch of the Phriendly Phishing Platform

The implementation of the Phriendly Phishing platform marks a strategic leap in CEQ's cybersecurity culture—delivering engaging, tailored security awareness training that equips team members to recognise and respond to phishing threats with confidence. By combining real-time simulations with bite-sized learning, CEQ is fostering a proactive, security-conscious workforce and significantly reducing organisational risk.

Palo Alto Cortex XDR Deployment

The deployment of the Cortex XDR platform across CEQ represents a major advancement in cybersecurity resilience. By integrating endpoint, network, and cloud data into a single intelligent system, CEQ have enhanced its ability to detect, investigate, and respond to threats with speed and precision. This proactive approach reduces dwell time, minimises risk, and empowers CEQ's security team with deeper visibility and smarter automation—keeping CEQ's digital environment secure and agile.

Core Printer Upgrade

The rollout of new store-based A4 printers enhances operational efficiency by delivering faster, higher-quality printing directly at the point of need. With improved reliability, reduced maintenance, and lower total cost of ownership, stores can streamline documentation, support customer service, and reduce downtime—empowering teams to work smarter and respond quicker in day-to-day operations.

Chileya Luangala
General Manager
Corporate Services



Thank you and acknowledgements

We thank and acknowledge the following people who have helped make a difference to CEQ and our communities over the last year and prior. Without the collaboration, guidance, support and contributions so generously given to CEQ by so many, we would not be the organisation we are today.

CEQ Team Members. On behalf of the Board of Management and the Executive Management Team, we would like to thank each and every member of the CEQ team for the unwavering commitment and hard work you give to our organisation. Our people are our greatest asset and demonstrate our commitment of caring, every day, always.

To our Store Teams working tirelessly on the ground every day. Despite operating our stores in challenging environments, you provide exceptional customer service, ensure our communities have access to the goods and services they need and take pride in your stores and your role in serving your communities.

To our Store Support Office and Freight Teams. You are the engine room of our organisation. Every role in these teams plays a crucial part in supporting our stores and our communities. Thank you for your dedication, your innovation whilst continuously striving for better outcomes and your willingness to go the extra mile to ensure the success of our organisation.

CEQ is proud to have many team members with long terms of service with our organisation. In 2024-25 the following team members reached significant tenure milestones:

10 years

Scott Trenerry, Cairns Distribution Centre
Amos Baragud, Iama (Yam) Island
Nazareth Naawi, Bamaga
Vikki Anderson, Thursday Island-Col Jones
Gary Lynch, Bamaga
Sharon Osborne, Cairns Support Office
Teafo Salee, Murray Island
Arthur Wright, Thursday Island
Kevin Tomlinson, Cairns Support Office
Debbie Robb, Cairns Support Office

15 years

Randall Crabbe, Cairns Support Office
Jo Oliver, Cairns Support Office

20 years

Tony Flint, Cairns Support Office



CEQ communities, Indigenous councils, Registered Native Title Body Corporations and community organisations.

CEQ would like to express our gratitude to our community members, councils, and organisations for their willingness to collaborate on our goal of supporting and helping improve our communities. With your support, we can continue to deliver social and economic opportunities in the locations we serve.

Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), Queensland Health, and Foodbank Queensland partnerships.

We acknowledge and thank TSRA, Queensland Health and Foodbank Queensland for partnering with CEQ to deliver cost-of-living and health and wellbeing outcomes for our communities. Our partnerships evidence the real difference organisations can make by working together.

Health and Wellbeing Queensland (HWQ).

We thank the team at HWQ for their continued support of CEQ's nutrition and health strategy, including ongoing funding for Gather + Grow 2.0. This partnership has laid a strong foundation for healthier store environments, community wellbeing, and First Nations nutrition leadership.

Outgoing Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Hon Leeanne Enoch MP, and Mr Robert Willmet, Deputy Director-General.

CEQ thanks Minister Enoch and Mr Willmet of the Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts for their support until October 2024, assisting CEQ to strengthen our governance practices, expand our footprint and make our voice heard on matters affecting our communities.

Incoming Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Hon Fiona Simpson MP, Ms Natalie Wilde, Director-General, and Mr Greg Anderson, Executive Director.

CEQ acknowledges Minister Simpson, Ms Wilde and Mr Anderson for their valued collaboration with CEQ since November 2024, and looks forward to continuing this strong partnership as we work together to support communities and deliver meaningful outcomes.

Ms Cynthia Lui MP. Ms Lui was instrumental in securing the freight assistance subsidy for remote locations and continuing to push for increases to a more meaningful discount.



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