

Date: January 11, 2024
To: Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
From: R.J. Cardin, Director
Re: Director's Summary of Current Events

Listed below are activities the department has been involved with during **November and December 2023**.

Office of the Director

Buckeye Hills Regional Park – General Joe Foss Shooting Complex.

As previously reported, the Arizona State Rifle and Pistol Association (ASRPA) terminated their agreement to manage the General Joe Foss Shooting Complex on December 31, 2023.

- November 17, 2023, an Expression for a Letter of Interest (LOI) for the management, operation, maintenance, and improvement of the Complex through a non-profit entity or government agency was published.
- December 14, 2023, received one qualified LOI response from the Arizona Citizens Defense League Foundation (AzCDLF).
- December 20, 2023, entered into a short-term six-month Special Use Permit (SUP) with AzCDLF to manage and operate the Complex without interruption, while we work on a longer-term agreement.



ASRPA completed operations through December 2023 and worked together with Parks and AzCDLF to ensure a smooth transition. AzCDLF took over operations on January 1, 2024. As stated in the SUP:

- The complex will be open to the public starting January 6 and will continue to be open on Saturdays and Sundays from 7:30 am to 1:30 pm (same as previous vendor).
- Existing ASRPA volunteers will stay on to keep the transition as smooth as possible as they integrate their own volunteers to create a larger volunteer base.
- Use fees will remain the same as the previous vendor while under the SUP.
- Will continue to work with local Police Departments and club organizations for their scheduling needs.



Board of Supervisors Agenda Items:

| Date/ Status | Tracking Number | Summary |
|-----------------------|------------------|---|
| 12/6/2023 Approved | C-30-24-009-X-00 | Approve and Adopt the Maricopa County Parks, Open Space & Trails System Plan (Parks Vision 2030 Plan): The Parks System Strategic Master Plan was last adopted by the Board of Supervisors in June 2009. The Parks Vision 2030 Plan, as Recommended by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, will supersede the previous plan and guide the County and the Department for the next ten years. Upon Board approval, this item will become effective December 7, 2023. |
| 12/6/2023 Approved | C-06-24-335-X-00 | Donations for Parks and Recreation: In accordance with County Policy A2508, accept the monthly donation report received from Parks and Recreation for October 2023, for a Cash Value of \$1,248.33. |

Administration/Finance Division

Parks Visitor Attendance Report (FY24 through December): Page 10

FY24 Budget Report (Period 6)

| Report ID: FIN-BA-MC010 | | Budget to Actual | | | | | | | | | | Page 1 of 1 | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Run Date: 01/10/2024 | | by Department, Fund and Appropriation Unit Group | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Run Time: 8:46:36 AM | | Fiscal Year: 2024 Period: 6 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Dept | Dept Name | Fund | Fund Name | Approp Group | Approp Group Name | Revised Revenue | Actual Revenue | Revenue Variance | Revised Expenditures | Actual Expenditures | Expenditure Variance | Actual Structural Balance | Structural Balance Variance |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 100 | General | OPER | Operating | | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$632,586 | \$520,141 | \$112,445 | (\$520,141) | \$112,445 |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 225 | Spr Cross Rani | NRNP | NonRecr NonPrjt | | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$79,998 | \$79,998 | \$0 | \$79,998 | \$79,998 |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 225 | Spr Cross Rani | OPER | Operating | | \$144,026 | \$152,999.53 | \$8,974 | \$172,791 | \$147,647 | \$25,144 | \$5,353 | \$34,118 |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 230 | Parks&Rec Grz | NRNP | NonRecr NonPrjt | | \$283,665 | | (\$283,665) | \$340,398 | \$159,229 | \$181,169 | (\$159,229) | (\$102,496) |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 239 | Parks Souvenir | OPER | Operating | | \$106,159 | \$130,538.30 | \$24,379 | \$138,101 | \$157,504 | (\$19,403) | (\$26,965) | \$4,977 |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 240 | Lk Plsnt Rc Svc | NRNP | NonRecr NonPrjt | | \$0 | \$5,371.79 | \$5,372 | \$417,498 | \$275,114 | \$142,384 | (\$269,742) | \$147,756 |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 240 | Lk Plsnt Rc Svc | OPER | Operating | | \$1,904,258 | \$1,927,923.65 | \$23,666 | \$2,175,943 | \$1,955,780 | \$220,163 | (\$27,856) | \$243,829 |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 241 | Parks Enhncm | NRNP | NonRecr NonPrjt | | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$689,934 | \$250,265 | \$439,669 | (\$250,265) | \$439,669 |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 241 | Parks Enhncm | OPER | Operating | | \$3,118,064 | \$3,360,241.45 | \$242,177 | \$3,724,862 | \$3,945,190 | (\$220,328) | (\$584,949) | \$21,849 |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 243 | Parks Donation | NRNP | NonRecr NonPrjt | | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$7,506 | \$9,331 | (\$1,825) | (\$9,331) | (\$1,825) |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 243 | Parks Donation | OPER | Operating | | \$19,080 | \$40,214.36 | \$21,134 | \$19,074 | \$4,054 | \$15,020 | \$36,161 | \$36,155 |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 243 | Parks Donation | WMD3 | DaisyMtnTrls | | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$12,498 | \$12,498 | \$0 | \$12,498 | \$12,498 |
| D300 | Parks and Rec 296 | Coronavirus FR | NRNP | NonRecr NonPrjt | | \$9,456,798 | \$1,350,512.18 | (\$8,106,286) | \$9,456,804 | \$1,350,512 | \$8,106,292 | \$0 | \$6 |
| Sum: | | | | | | \$15,032,050 | \$6,967,801 | (\$8,064,249) | \$17,867,993 | \$8,774,766 | \$9,093,227 | (\$1,806,965) | \$1,028,978 |

Human Resources

- Welcome/Promotions/Transfers
 - Ryan Best, Promotion, Accounting Specialist, HQ, 11/27/2023
 - Luke DaFatta, Parks Custodian, Utery, 12/4/2023
 - Amber Gribler, Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant, 12/13/2023
 - Crystal Jones, Park Office Assistant Specialized, McDowell, 12/18/2023
 - Edward McCarrick, Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant, 12/20/2023
 - Amanda Lumbre, Promotion, Procurement Specialist, Lake Pleasant, 12/25/2023
- Farewells
 - Laura Horton, Park Office Assistant Specialized, McDowell, 11/12/2023
 - Priscella Luera, Administrative Assistant, HQ, 12/7/2023
 - Thomas Habgood, Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant, 12/15/2023
- Vacancies
 - Interpretive Ranger, P33341, Lake Pleasant – Start date 1/8/24
 - Contact Station Assistant, Lake Pleasant, P79628

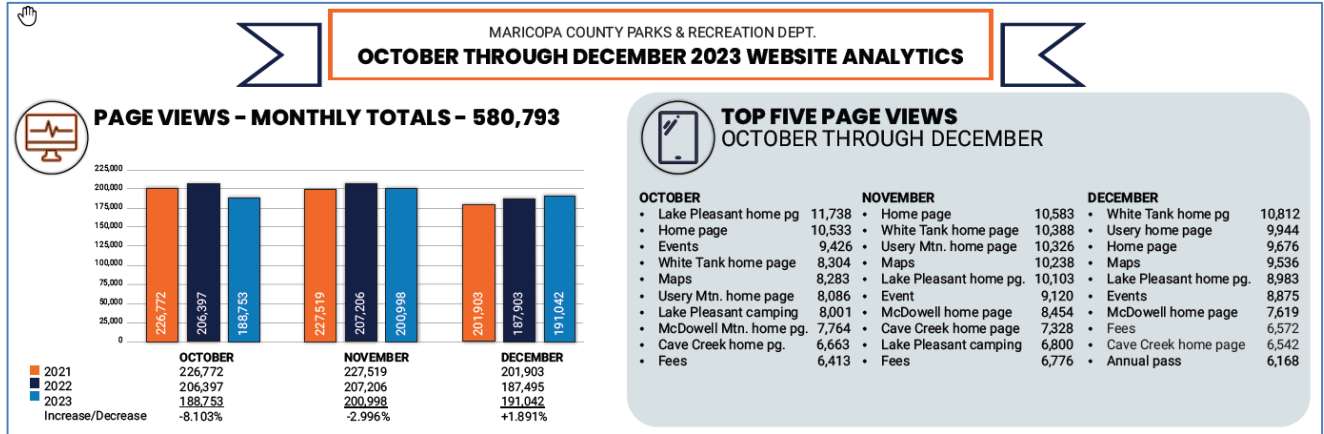


Parks & Recreation

41835 N. Castle Hot Springs Rd.
Morristown, AZ 85342

- Park Custodian, Lake Pleasant, P80302 – Conditional offer
- Administrative Assistant, HQ, P1433
- Park Supervisor, Usery, P17148
- Park Supervisor, McDowell, P1480
- Park Supervisor, Hassayampa, P76938
- Park Supervisor, White Tank, P1481

Web Analytics



Trades

- During November, Trades Crew
 - Completed 25 calls for park service.
 - Completed ten locator service calls.
- During December, the Trades Crew
 - Completed 34 calls for park service.
 - Completed 20 locator service calls.

Trails

- Maricopa Trail:
 - Inspected all segments between Spur Cross and Lake Pleasant.
 - Segment 22: East and west side crews completed equipment work/repairs on Maricopa Trail Segment 22.
 - East and west side crews began regular inspections of Maricopa Trail Trailheads.
 - Segments 78, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19: crews began inspection/maintenance/preparation work for the Prickly Pedal Race on Maricopa Trail from Spur Cross to Lake Pleasant.
 - ACE crews began work on Estrella Trails and MT Segment 22.
- Parks:
 - San Tan: Installed reroute signs on Goldmine Trail.
 - Lake Pleasant Beardsley Trail: general repairs, installed a new roll-over gate, and started fabrication on a replacement bridge.

Development Projects:

- Adobe Dam: The new host site canopy was completed.



- Buckeye Hills: The process for the drilling of the new water well began with the Arizona Department of Water Resources.



- Estrella:
 - Draft of conceptual plans for the Campground completed by EPS Group.
 - The irrigation pump skid replacement was completed.



- Hassayampa: Completed the viewing decks around Palm Lake.



- Lake Pleasant: Completed the headquarters well rehab and sewer rehab at Roadrunner.
- McDowell:
 - The public meeting for the Bike Park was held on November 2 in the Town of Fountain Hills Community Center. Approximately 25 people were in attendance. We received 79 comments on the conceptual plan via the website.



- The solar project for host sites at Ironwood Tent Camp is moving forward with construction slated for February/March.
- White Tank: A draft of conceptual plans for the Competitive Track and Trailhead was completed by Kimley Horn.
- System: Request for Proposal for Interactive Trail Signage closed with one (1) response. Currently working with County Procurement on contract negotiations.

Parks

○ **Adobe Regional Park**

- Maintenance:
 - On December 7, hosts and staff assisted the Flood Control Maintenance Department in removing a sizeable illegal encampment hidden in a wash area. Last year, efforts to deter unlawful uses included installing additional fencing and signage, which has helped.

○ **Cave Creek Regional Park**

- Maintenance:
 - The maintenance team continues working on the picnic loop enhancement project, which should be completed in the next few months.
- Events:
 - A wedding was held at the Amphitheater on November 4 with 50 participants.
 - The group, *Willing to Change*, had a gathering at the Ramadas on November 11 with 300 participants.
 - On November 11, the *Cave Creek Cactus Classic (C4)* took place, produced by the Desert Foothills Mountain Bike Association. It takes riders through 24 +/- miles of beautiful Sonoran Desert with 2,000 feet of elevation gain. The bike race starts in the Town of Cave Creek through Spur Cross and Cave Creek Park and finishes in the Town of Cave Creek. This year, 188 riders participated.
- Management Use Agreement:
 - Cave Creek Trail Rides were back in the swing on November 1.

○ **Desert Outdoor Center**

- Center Programming:
 - Nine schools visited in November, bringing 793 students and 163 adults who enjoyed 39 programs.
 - Eleven schools visited in December, bringing 821 people to 52 ranger-led programs.
- Events:
 - The *Women on the Water in AZ Sailing* event was held on November 3 and 4 which brought 46 people from across the country to learn about sailing and hone their skills in a safe and supportive environment.
 - Two weddings were held in December, attended by about 250 people.
- Park Programming:
 - In November, the Interpretive Rangers offered 52 programs that 415 visitors attended. Popular programs included *Full Moon Hike*, *Stargazing*, and a few *100 Mile Challenge* hikes.
 - A new program offered this month was "Silent Walking: A Beginner's Guide to Connecting with Nature." Ranger Kevin taught the participants how to make, or strengthen, their practice of Silent Walking and Sit Spots by learning how to relax, change of mindset, and allow their senses to unlock a closer and clearer experience of the Sonoran Desert.
 - Interpretive Rangers offered 67 park programs in December, which were attended by 474 park visitors. Popular programs this month were *Full Moon Hikes*, *Night Walks*, and *Stargazing*.
 - Interpretive Ranger Nikki held a 6-mile Maricopa Trail walk that started at San Tan Regional Park and ended at the Mansel Carter Oasis Park. This walk has always been attended well by 100 Mile Challenge participants, and this year was enjoyed by 24 participants. Interpretive Ranger Eric also held four other hikes in support of the Challenge.



- Natural Resources:
 - Christmas Bird Counts were held at many of the parks in December, with Interpretive Rangers assisting with the counts at McDowell, Hassayampa, Estrella, and Cave Creek/Spur Cross.
- Training:
 - The Interpretive Rangers completed their National Archery in Schools Basic Archery Instructor's training on November 17 at Arizona Game and Fish Department's Ben Avery Shooting Range. Now, they can offer introductory archery programs.
 - On November 9, the Interpretive Rangers participated in a *Venomous Handling* training course led by Rattlesnake Solutions, providing them with the hands-on experience to be confident to move nuisance snakes and train other staff to do so.



○ **Estrella Mountain Regional Park**

- Events:
 - On Saturday and Sunday, November 18 and 19, Aravaipa had the *Fat Ox Run* on one end of the Ramada area with about 150 people running the 1-mile sidewalk. On the other end of the 1-mile sidewalk, a couple of car clubs had their annual picnic with about 200 people and lots of classic cars.
 - In December, one horse endurance ride and two running events brought nearly 400 visitors to the park.
- Natural Resources:
 - November 3 was the Pollinator Garden Public Planting Day. Forty-seven volunteers, ten staff members, and hosts planted 468 plants: 270 forbs/subshrubs, 174 trees/shrubs, and 24 cacti, representing 49 species.
- Maintenance:
 - November's pollinator garden public planting session brought much follow-up work in December. Staff, hosts, and Desert Defenders have fine-tuned the drip lines and plant wells.

○ **Hassayampa River Preserve**

- Projects:
 - New viewing platforms around Palm Lake were completed and opened to the public.
 - The Visitor Center remodel construction continues.
- Maintenance:
 - Boy Scouts sanded and painted the Martin family cemetery fence.
 - Replaced the air conditioning unit for the Sanger building.
 - Termite treatment was performed on all the buildings.



○ **Lake Pleasant Regional Park**

- Events:
 - On November 4, a 100 Mile Challenge Kickoff Event was held at Lake Pleasant. Sixty participated in the event, interacting with Park partners and staff and signing up for the program. Fifteen participants joined Interpretive Rangers on a hike. Park partners *Just Serve*, Scorpion Bay Marina, and City of Peoria Mesquite District Council member Brad Shafer were among the participants.
 - On December 2, Pacific Market International WW Brands LLC conducted a photo shoot for Stanley Thermos
- Operations:
 - On November 16, Maricopa Water District, Central Arizona Project, and Pleasant Harbor joined staff to tour Lake Pleasant and discuss the effects of water elevation on recreation.
- Volunteers:
 - On December 9, 50 volunteers from American Express, facilitated by Ocean Conservancy, picked up nearly 500 pounds of trash from the shorelines.
- Training:
 - On December 20, all maintenance staff attended classroom boat certification facilitated by the Arizona Game and Fish Department.
- Maintenance:
 - On December 15, the Bald Eagle closure line was successfully deployed for the upcoming nesting season.

○ **San Tan Mountain Regional Park**

- Events:
 - On November 4, the *Xterra* running race took place with 243 participants.
 - On December 8, *Equine Trail Sports* held a horse agility competition in the park. Nineteen participated in the contest using four different areas along the trails.
- Maintenance:
 - On November 29, a trail volunteer and park maintenance staff narrowed a section of the San Tan trail down to approximately 20' wide from 30' wide, receiving positive feedback.
- Operations:
 - On November 30, park staff met with Rural Metro Fire Station #841 staff to thank them for the continued support the park receives from them and to invite them to participate in the park's Open House event on February 11, 2024, from 10 am to 2 pm.

○ **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**

- Volunteer:
 - An Eagle Scout installed new directional signage along the Spur Cross Trail and the installation and repair of wooden steps on the Boca Grande Wash section of the Elephant Mountain Trail.
 - Service volunteers rerouted a short section of the Dragonfly Trail at the Jewel of the Creek boundary and installed a drain.
- Events:
 - The annual *Cave Creek Cactus Classic Mountain Bike Race* occurred on November 11 in Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area and Cave Creek Regional Park with approximately 188 riders participating.
 - Desert Discovery Day occurred in the neighboring Jewel of the Creek Preserve on November 18 with assistance from Interpretive Ranger Eric.
- Maintenance:
 - Work continues to replace old trail signs and install new directional signs.



○ **Usery Mountain Regional Park**

• Events:

- The *Warrior's Outdoor Festival* (new) was held on November 3 and 4. The festival invited military veterans and the community to join and promote wellness by engaging in various outdoor activities throughout the park, including hiking, mountain biking, riding, and camping.
- Aravaipa's *Pass Mountain Trail Run*, *Punisher Night Run*, and *Tonto Mountain Bike Races* were held from November 10 through the 12. There were over 800 participants between the three races.

• Natural Resources:

- Al, Usery's Desert Tortoise, started hibernation on November 10. Al had a healthy year and hibernated at a good weight and size.

○ **White Tank Mountain Regional Park**

• Natural Resources:

- We are excited to announce a new critter. A white Speckled Rattlesnake whose name is Pepper!



• Projects:

- Construction is still moving along on area 4 Ramadas.



Maricopa County Parks Visitor Report
FY24, through December 2023

| FY24 | July | August | September | October | November | December | January | February | March | April | May | June |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| FY23 | July | August | September | October | November | December | January | February | March | April | May | June |
| FY22 | Jul 21 | Aug 21 | Sep 21 | Oct 21 | Nov 21 | Dec 21 | Jan 22 | Feb 22 | Mar 22 | Apr 22 | May 22 | Jun 22 |
| Cave Creek | 1,266 | 1,621 | 3,312 | 9,690 | 12,328 | 12,736 | | | | | | |
| FY23 | 1,373 | 2,028 | 2,551 | 8,499 | 13,383 | 13,384 | 14,534 | 15,537 | 19,650 | 14,181 | 6,299 | 2,727 |
| FY22 | 1,381 | 1,198 | 2,515 | 6,747 | 7,873 | 15,242 | 13,502 | 13,094 | 18,600 | 13,639 | 3,764 | 2,737 |
| Estrella Park | 1,864 | 2,003 | 5,174 | 6,395 | 10,104 | 9,024 | | | | | | |
| FY23 | 2,342 | 2,644 | 3,346 | 6,640 | 8,382 | 8,022 | 12,165 | 16,631 | 18,998 | 14,597 | 5,346 | 4,277 |
| FY22 | 1,184 | 1,278 | 2,605 | 5,891 | 7,398 | 12,222 | 14,310 | 12,180 | 15,092 | 13,180 | 4,560 | 3,519 |
| McDowell Mtn | 1,268 | 1,766 | 3,851 | 14,137 | 13,901 | 15,071 | | | | | | |
| FY23 | 1,685 | 1,845 | 3,792 | 13,861 | 18,134 | 17,277 | 17,201 | 16,816 | 22,719 | 15,714 | 5,747 | 2,418 |
| FY22 | 964 | 1,310 | 2,032 | 7,745 | 8,208 | 15,958 | 15,560 | 15,706 | 18,281 | 17,854 | 5,163 | 1,886 |
| San Tan Park | 3,680 | 4,209 | 8,094 | 13,823 | 22,089 | 23,452 | | | | | | |
| FY23 | 4,215 | 6,029 | 7,407 | 14,861 | 23,586 | 20,889 | 26,361 | 25,488 | 30,452 | 18,996 | 9,836 | 6,486 |
| FY22 | 3,753 | 4,506 | 4,105 | 9,045 | 18,584 | 21,434 | 30,452 | 26,402 | 29,732 | 13,033 | 7,574 | 4,506 |
| Spur Cross | 130 | 118 | 488 | 1,575 | 6,699 | 4,511 | | | | | | |
| FY23 | 180 | 316 | 488 | 1,976 | 4,789 | 3,578 | 6,430 | 6,477 | 8,221 | 4,900 | 1,139 | 586 |
| FY22 | 299 | 395 | 500 | 1,484 | 2,859 | 4,031 | 7,069 | 8,168 | 5,818 | 4,352 | 1,211 | 494 |
| Usery Mtn Park | 7,169 | 6,670 | 10,119 | 17,968 | 32,940 | 34,058 | | | | | | |
| FY23 | 6,500 | 6,544 | 7,043 | 16,879 | 26,760 | 24,845 | 29,889 | 29,695 | 44,722 | 29,472 | 13,158 | 8,231 |
| FY22 | 3,926 | 2,811 | 5,039 | 14,212 | 16,450 | 38,086 | 29,834 | 30,249 | 34,433 | 22,465 | 9,316 | 5,949 |
| White Tank | 4,393 | 6,164 | 9,396 | 17,812 | 26,356 | 28,524 | | | | | | |
| FY23 | 7,264 | 8,845 | 9,345 | 20,459 | 27,457 | 26,239 | 38,467 | 39,100 | 50,150 | 29,236 | 13,361 | 8,585 |
| FY22 | 4,923 | 4,068 | 5,201 | 17,768 | 20,775 | 42,163 | 36,298 | 35,679 | 40,771 | 24,697 | 11,293 | 6,807 |
| Hassayampa | 339 | 411 | 795 | 1,133 | 1,752 | 1,536 | | | | | | |
| FY23 | 463 | 546 | 671 | 1,202 | 1,500 | 912 | 1,535 | 1,610 | 2,573 | 2,366 | 1,398 | 840 |
| FY22 | 286 | 333 | 423 | 1,105 | 2,669 | 1,790 | 1,771 | 2,096 | 2,850 | 2,286 | 1,338 | 554 |
| Lake Pleasant | 146,522 | 76,963 | 81,319 | 73,010 | 47,229 | 37,638 | | | | | | |
| FY23 | 146,746 | 87,426 | 95,022 | 78,576 | 56,935 | 48,903 | 55,380 | 64,152 | 92,599 | 146,533 | 142,552 | 153,447 |
| FY22 | 88,853 | 62,651 | 64,323 | 50,169 | 38,347 | 45,239 | 35,415 | 44,353 | 90,764 | 152,545 | 147,980 | 137,694 |
| DOC | 50 | 80 | 97 | 796 | 496 | 856 | | | | | | |
| FY23 | 183 | 225 | 151 | 639 | 972 | 1,302 | 875 | 493 | 2,516 | 1,618 | 1,855 | 402 |
| FY22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 43 | 0 | 84 | 1,178 | 1,160 | 2,276 | 2,071 | 506 |
| Agua Fria | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 97 | | | | | | |
| FY23 | | 113 | 0 | 20 | 92 | 32 | 39 | 41 | 62 | 342 | 0 | 0 |
| System Total | 166,687 | 100,011 | 122,645 | 156,339 | 173,901 | 167,503 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| FY23 | 170,951 | 116,561 | 129,816 | 163,612 | 181,990 | 165,383 | 202,876 | 216,040 | 292,662 | 277,955 | 200,691 | 187,999 |
| FY22 | 105,569 | 78,550 | 86,743 | 114,166 | 123,206 | 196,165 | 184,295 | 189,105 | 257,501 | 266,327 | 194,270 | 164,652 |
| FY21 | 131,408 | 125,905 | 123,223 | 141,825 | 179,074 | 150,829 | 198,288 | 170,892 | 199,845 | 137,433 | 140,558 | 102,412 |