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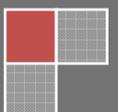
FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils

Review of operations and benchmarking

At the request of member Councils, a review of FNQROC has been undertaken to examine the performance and operations of the organisation. Extensive stakeholder consultation has been undertaken as part of that process, both internally and externally. We have also examined other Regional Organisation of Councils to identify how they operate and whether FNQROC needs to change its operating focus.



DE & CHASTEL
ASSOCIATES



Executive Summary

An independent review of FNQROC has been undertaken by de Chastel and Associates. The review focused on answering the following key questions:-

- How is FNQROC performing as an organisation? What can we improve?
- What can we learn from other ROCs?
- What do our stakeholders think of us?
- How is FNQROC providing benefits to its members compared to their contribution?

This review entailed extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders, a detailed analysis of some other ROCs and an assessment of current FNQROC activities. The findings were as follows:-

- ✓ FNQROC is a high performing ROC with a good reputation.
- ✓ It has a strong track record in delivering projects and benefits to member Councils.
- ✓ Most of the success can be attributed to continuity of staff, strong support from Mayors and member Councils, a collegiate approach by member councils and a good capacity to build networks with other agencies.
- ✓ FNQROC should continue to expand its role with a particular emphasis on developing a greater role in advocacy and lobbying on behalf of the region. In particular, it should establish its top three or four strategic priorities which will make a significant difference to the future of the region and put more time and effort into those strategic priorities. It is these type of issues (e.g. NBN project) that are 'region making' and should be the primary focus of FNQROC.
- ✓ In doing so, FNQROC should not lose sight of the great work undertaken at the operational project level and should continue to operate its existing projects.
- ✓ FNQROC is exceptionally well regarded by external agencies for its professionalism and role in FNQ. The ROC should ensure that the roles and responsibilities between different agencies (e.g. Terrain, Advance Cairns, RDA etc) remain clear.
- ✓ Over time, FNQROC should (i) encourage associate members to become full members (ii) incorporate as its own legal entity and (iii) continue to establish its own separate identity.
- ✓ FNQROC provides excellent value for money for Councils as members. For every \$1.00 of membership fees paid, councils collectively receive \$13.30 in direct benefits as well a significant indirect benefits (e.g. networking opportunities). This is an excellent return for Councils' investment.
- ✓ The environmental programs managed by Travis Sydes were particularly well regarded as was the Regional Roads Group. The procurement project, although recognised as having great potential, was identified as a work in progress which needs to be monitored closely.
- ✓ We have identified a series of potential performance indicators for future use by FNQROC.

We have made a series of recommendations (see section 8) which are designed to (i) enhance the role of FNQROC with more emphasis on strategic issues and (ii) fine tune the operations of FNQROC. We would also like to acknowledge the high level of co-operation and assistance received from FNQROC staff (particularly the CEO), Council Mayors, CEOs and staff and external stakeholders.

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Section 1 - Introduction

de Chastel and Associates has been retained by the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) to undertake a review of the organisation. That review is intended to:-

- ✓ Review of FNQROC's current operations and make any recommendations regarding improvement.
- ✓ Undertake a benchmarking operation comparing FNQROC to other regional organisations of councils and in particular, identify if any other ROCs use performance indicators to measure their performance.
- ✓ Undertake a cost benefit analysis (both qualitative and quantitative) of FNQROC's operations for each member Council and to the Councils as a group.

It should be noted that this review has been undertaken by member Councils not due to any major perceived problems with the organisation but rather an opportunity to have an independent assessment undertaken to identify what is going well, what can be improved and to take the opportunity to learn from other ROCs. This review has also highlighted the opportunity to reconsider the future role and focus of the organisation.

Section 2 - About FNQROC

Established in 1992, FNQROC is a Regional Organisation of Councils representing local governments in the Far North Queensland area. There are six member Councils and three affiliate member Councils as follows:-

Member councils

- Cairns Regional Council
- Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- Cook Shire Council
- Croydon Shire Council (from 1 July 2011)
- Tablelands Regional Council
- Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council

Affiliate member councils

- Etheridge Shire Council
- Hinchinbrook Shire Council (although HSC participates in the Regional Natural Asset Management and Sustainability Projects)
- Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

With its current membership, FNQROC is a powerful organisation representing Councils who have over 240,000 residents in FNQ and covering an area over 250,000 km². As such, the FNQROC represents approximately 15% of Queensland by area and 6% of Queensland by population.

Name of Council	Area ¹	2006 Census Population	2026 Population forecast ²
Cairns Regional Council	4,135 km ²	147,538	224,426
Cassowary Coast Regional Council	4,701 km ²	29,642	34,046
Cook Shire Council	106,121 km ²	3,695	4,831
Croydon Shire Council	39,324 km ²	274	292
Etheridge Shire Council	29,581 km ²	900	1,010
Hinchinbrook Shire Council	2,811 km ²	12,239	13,028
Tablelands Regional Council	64,999 km ²	43,507	56,500
Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council	11 km ²	348	421
Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council	158 km ²	2,558	3,480
TOTAL FOR FNQROC	251,841 km²	240,701	338,034

FNQROC has adopted a vision, namely – *“Regional prosperity through interactive and collaborative planning and advocacy.”*

It also has a mission for the organisation – *“Our Mission is to foster cooperation and resource sharing between Councils and effectively advocate on agreed regional positions and priorities.”*

FNQROC has identified a number of objectives for the organisation. These objectives are set out in the FNQROC Charter which was reviewed and readopted in September 2008. The ROCs objectives are:-

- “a) To support and advance the local interest of its members and their constituencies in a regional context.*
- b) To formulate policies and strategies from which all member Councils may act collaboratively in determining complementary plans for the co-ordination of regional growth and management of change.*
- c) To foster co-operation amongst members on issues of mutual concern or to further joint interests.*
- d) To act as an advocate to State and Commonwealth Governments or public bodies on issues of concern to members.*

¹ Source for table – Report of the Local Government Reform Commission Volume 2 -2007, individual Council Annual Reports and the Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury.

² Source – Median population forecasts by local government area, Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury.

- e) *Address cross boundary issues.*
- f) *Take forward the collective interest of Councils in the region and influence senior decision makers within government and agencies.*
- g) *Communication and information sharing.*
- h) *Facilitate regional economic development and co-operation of mutual benefit to member Councils, communities and businesses.*
- i) *Strategies for doing more with less.*
- j) *Build effective partnerships with State and Federal agencies which make decisions that affect our region.*
- k) *Facilitate co-operation with community, business and academic organisations for the benefit of the region.*
- l) *Member Councils to work together to proactively promote sustainable growth so as to retain the region's natural assets and the cultural diversity of its people.³*

This is a broad statement of goals that gives the organisation considerable flexibility but does not necessarily limit its scope of operation. As such, FNQROC's current goals can be seen as enabling rather than specifically descriptive of projects and a lobbying focus.

In reviewing other ROCs, two initial elements became apparent:-

1. Almost all had similar goals to FNQROC in their constitution or charter with the exception of the Council of Mayors (SEQ). In practice they may put more emphasis on certain projects or issues but almost all had a similar broad range of goals.
2. No other ROCs had 30% of their members being associate member Councils. Councils were either members or they were not with most ROCs not making provision for associate

Operating Budget

FNQROC has an annual turnover of approximately \$945,000. Operating expenses are as follows:

Item	Amount
Salaries (including on costs)	\$445,500
Travel	\$10,000
Motor Vehicle	\$20,500
Meeting Expenses	\$10,000
Administration	\$16,000
Staff Training	\$3,000
Project Costs	\$440,000
Total Direct Costs	\$945,000

³ FNQROC Charter adopted in September 2008 – refer to paragraph 3.

In addition, there are some indirect costs incurred by FNQROC which are absorbed by Cairns Regional Council and Tablelands Regional Council. These costs are:-

Cairns Regional Council – office space provided in Council owned building in Grafton Street, Cairns (16 square metres), 4 phone lines, internet and email access, payroll services and access to HR/IT services (if required). These indirect costs incurred by Cairns Regional Council amount to approximately \$19,660.⁴

Tablelands Regional Council – office space at Malanda, one phone line, internet and email access, office equipment and provision of auspicing services for TIDs funding. These indirect costs incurred by Tablelands Regional Council amount to approximately \$7,360.

FNQROC sources its revenue from membership contributions, LRRS subsidy (3.75%) and procurement savings contributed by participating Councils (15% although this is yet to be realised). Contributions are also received from Terrain, through the Regional Road Group and additional project funding.

FNQROCs operating revenue is as follows:-

Item	Amount
Member Contributions	\$262,000
RRG contribution	\$57,400
Procurement ⁵	\$0
Terrain	\$80,000
LRRS	\$106,000
Interest	\$11,000
Project funding	\$440,000
Total Direct Revenue⁶	\$956,400

Member fees range from \$1,000 for associate members to \$70K for Cairns and \$67K for Tablelands. In the context of member Council operating budgets, the membership fees by Councils towards FNQROC would generally represent less than 0.01% of a Council's operating expenditure.

Cairns Regional Council and Tablelands Regional Council should be commended for providing in kind support to FNQROC. Some consideration was given to recommending that FNQROC reimburse those Councils and that the full cost of running the organisation was incorporated into the FNQROC budget and recovered via membership contributions. However, Cairns and Tablelands have not requested that during this review and no doubt see their indirect support as part of their regional role. If FNQROC ever wishes to consider reimbursing those Councils, this report provides the calculation for that indirect support and FNQROC could consider phasing in that reimbursement over time.

⁴ Note that indirect costs for Cairns Regional Council and Tablelands Regional Council are an estimate only for the purpose of identifying the additional contribution of those two Councils. The costs have been ascertained by reference to the cost of rental for commercial office space, cost of internet/email, commercial payroll services etc. Full details of cost calculations are contained in Appendix 3.

⁵ Procurement is a new project that has not yet realised savings but once it is operating, it is expected to save Councils considerable amounts and 15% of those savings will be contributed to the FNQROC revenue.

⁶ Note that there are also a number of other receipts/payments that are in/out. For example, Tablelands, Cassowary Coast and Cook pay FNQROC \$110,000 which is then paid to Advance Cairns to facilitate regional economic development programs.

Section 3 – Review Methodology

In accordance with the brief, de Chastel and Associates undertook a three phase approach to this review. Those phases were as follows:-

1. Review of background material provided by FNQROC. This included the review of :-
 - ✓ Organisation Charter, outcome of previous strategic workshops etc including communication strategy
 - ✓ Annual reports from the last five years
 - ✓ Minutes of FNQROC meetings for the last 12 months
 - ✓ Reports and outcomes of key projects including NBN, development manual, weed strategy, regional asset management strategy etc.
 - ✓ FNQROC Operational Guidelines
 - ✓ FNQROC newsletters

2. Consultation with both internal and external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders consulted included:-
 - ✓ Mayor and CEO of Cairns Regional Council
 - ✓ Executive Team of Cairns Regional Council
 - ✓ Fiona Wilson and Geoff Burdon of Cairns Regional Council
 - ✓ Mayor and CEO of Tablelands Regional Council
 - ✓ Executive Team from Tablelands Regional Council
 - ✓ Bill Cuthbertson and Kirsty Lamberd of Tablelands Regional Council
 - ✓ Mayor and CEO of Cassowary Coast Regional Council
 - ✓ Peter Cochrane and Gary Everson of Cassowary Coast Regional Council
 - ✓ Mayor and CEO Cook Shire Council
 - ✓ Tony Lickiss of Cook Shire Council
 - ✓ Mayor and CEO of Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
 - ✓ Mayor and CEO of Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council
 - ✓ CEO of Hinchinbrook Shire Council
 - ✓ Councillor Andrew Lancini and Tudor Tanase of Hinchinbrook Shire Council
 - ✓ Mayor and CEO of Etheridge Shire Council
 - ✓ CEO and Deputy CEO of Croydon Shire Council.

External stakeholders consulted included:-

- ✓ Dr Alan Dale from Terrain and RDA
- ✓ John O’Halloran, Angela Foster and Tony Crock from Department of Local Government and Planning
- ✓ Andrew McLean from Wet Tropics Management Authority
- ✓ Rob Cobin from BioSecurity
- ✓ Andrew Millerd from Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
- ✓ Colin Moore from Department of Transport and Main Roads
- ✓ Stewart Christie and Margaret Darveneza from Advance Cairns.

Details of stakeholder feedback can be found in section 5. There was a high level of co-operation and engagement during the stakeholder consultation.

3. Benchmarking with other ROCs. Detailed reviews were undertaken of six other ROCs from across Australia. In practice, more than six were reviewed including ROCs from interstate but the six below were analysed in detail. The level of co-operation received from other ROCs was high. We also gathered salary comparison information which has been passed on to the CEO of FNQROC for information. The six ROCs that were analysed in detail were:-
 - Regional Organisation of Councils of Cape York (chosen because of its adjoining locality and some common members)
 - Central Queensland Local Government Association (chosen because of its similar size and its approach of operating as a local government association)
 - Council of Mayors South East Queensland (chosen because it is a specialised political lobby organisation with a slightly different charter to most ROCs)
 - Wide Bay Burnett Regional Organisation of Councils (chosen because of its similar size and some similarity to FNQROC in terms of its focus)
 - Northern Rivers Regional Organisation of Councils Incorporated (chosen because it is a mix of large and small Councils based interstate - northern New South Wales)
 - Hunter Councils Inc (chosen because it is significantly advanced in shared services type projects).

A summary of those ROCs is contained in appendix 1 and will be discussed further in section 4. Other ROCs that have been examined include:-

- MACROC – Camden, Campbelltown, Wollondilly Shire Councils which are south west of Sydney
- The New England Local Government Group – Councils in and around Armidale that have undertaken a shared services model based on IT systems
- RAPAD – based in Longreach and servicing the Western Queensland Councils focused primarily on economic development
- TOPROC – based in Darwin and operating as a forum for Councils in and around the Darwin area
- Orana Roc – consisting of eleven Councils from Dubbo to Burke in northwest NSW
- South West Group – based in Freemantle in WA and consisting of six local governments focusing on economic development of the area.

Did you know? The first Regional Organisation of Councils in Australia was established in 1922 in northwest Tasmania. There are now approximately 59 ROCs across Australia with New South Wales having the most ROCs of any State.

Section 4 – Learnings from other ROCs

A number of themes and lessons have emerged from our review of other ROCs that will be of interest to FNQROC members. These are:-

1. As we made contact with other ROCs to gather information, it became apparent that FNQROC was held in high regard by other ROCs in Queensland. It did not have the same level recognition from interstate ROCs. It is perceived as a high performing ROC within Queensland with a strong record of delivering successful outcomes.

The Council of Mayors (SEQ) has been very successful in positioning itself as the peak lobbying group for south-east Queensland. It has particularly worked at establishing better access to key decision makers in Canberra and uses slogans such as “representing one in seven Australians” to ensure that its voice is heard on key issues that are important to SEQ local governments.

2. Very few ROCs had defined performance indicators to enable their member Councils to assess whether or not they are meeting member expectations. An exception to this was the Central Queensland Local Government Association. It has developed six sets of key performance indicators which aligned to its six different programs i.e. regional planning, advocacy, strategic communications and promotion, relationships and partnerships and finally, research/support for regional policy. Each of these programs has a number of key performance indicators (e.g. revenue obtained for the region from advocacy). A full list of these KPIs is included in appendix 1.

Most ROCs had other types of mechanisms in place to allow Councils to assess performance but these were more informal than traditional performance indicators. Examples included:-

- ✓ Feedback from member Councils on satisfaction or otherwise at the ROC annual general meeting.
 - ✓ Undertaking periodic independent reviews (e.g. The University of Technology Sydney (UTS) facilitated a two yearly review of performance and direction at the Northern Rivers ROC).
 - ✓ The Chief Executive Officer of the ROC provides regular reports on the organisation's activities and achievements. As an example, at the Council of Mayors (SEQ) the Executive Director provides a six monthly report on progress in achieving the objectives listed in the organisation strategy map.
3. There are various legal structures used to facilitate the ROC process. There does not appear to be any correlation between the type of legal structure and whether or not a ROC is successful. The types of legal structures used include (i) a local government association (ii) a company limited by guarantee (iii) an incorporated association (iv) operating under the auspices of one of the member Councils. There are also different approaches to governance

models in terms of boards/advisory committees. In some instances (for example, the MacArthur Region of Councils) the board consists of both Mayors and CEOs with equal voting rights although a consensus approach is generally taken to decision-making rather than formal voting. In most ROCs however, there is a management/CEO working group reporting to a board consisting solely of elected representatives (e.g. Hunter Councils Inc.). The review of the different ROCs shows that both approaches can be successful and ultimately, it is a question of style and preference for the member Councils rather than necessarily a differentiator between success and failure.

4. What are some of the common features that characterise the more successful ROCs? We were able to pinpoint some consistent themes that were apparent in the more successful ROCs. These were :-

- ✓ Consistent leadership and direction - the better performing ROCs tended to have more consistent leadership at both the administrative and political level. This created a consistent message and sense of purpose that allowed the ROC to focus on what they perceived to be their core business. It also allowed for the establishment of working relationships between the ROC and external agencies as personal working relationships are created over time.
- ✓ Regular review of priorities - the successful ROCs regularly review their purpose, projects and goals and assess themselves against those goals. ROCs such as the Northern Rivers ROC have used UTS to assist in redefining its goals and ensuring that it maintains relevance to member Councils. Perhaps the starkest example was the transition of the South-East Queensland ROC into the Council of Mayors (SEQ). SEQROC was previously focused on staff level projects. The Mayors determined that while those projects were operating successfully, the big picture issues in South-East

The Hunter Councils Inc is an interesting model. With over 50 years of operating history, this ROC has developed a business model that is focused on service delivery to member Councils but also provides services to other agencies and the private sector. This ROC has developed four separate business arms namely:-

1. *Hunter Records Storage - provides state-of-the-art compliant records storage for Councils and the commercial sector creating a revenue stream which assists the ROC.*
2. *Regional procurement - facilitates purchasing of over \$10M per year on behalf of Councils with annual savings over \$1M per year.*
3. *Learning and development - a registered training provider that undertakes over 300 courses per year for Council and non Council staff as a profitable business. Also facilitates traineeships for Council members.*
4. *Environmental management - attracts regional funding of over \$3M per year to implement region wide environmental strategies.*

Queensland were not being addressed. This resulted in SEQROC being transformed into the Council of Mayors (SEQ) which has a primary focus on lobbying and advocacy for major issues in south-east Queensland e.g. water, transport infrastructure etc.

- ✓ A strong level of commitment by member Councils – several ROCs identified that their success comes from members recognising that they will only get out of it what they put into it. In other words, the ROC will not work unless all members are equally committed. In some ROCs, there is a significant disparity in size between member Councils (and hence different levels of resourcing) and some of those ROCs struggle as a result. Examples include ROCCY and NQROC. Ultimately, the level of commitment from member Councils normally comes back to the personal level of commitment by the Mayor and CEO.

5. The role and focus of ROCs is continually evolving. Almost all ROCs have had an initial focus on projects that spanned Council boundaries and are aimed at increasing efficiencies. Many of these projects are based on resource sharing or addressing cross-border issues. Some ROCs have taken this to quite sophisticated levels (e.g. Hunter Councils Inc and the Central Queensland waste management approach). However, an interesting trend is that most ROCs that were contacted as part of this review have identified that they are considering how they can improve their lobbying and advocacy on behalf of their region. Some ROCs have already advanced this to a large extent (e.g. Council of Mayors (SEQ)) and made that their sole or primary focus. It seems that while there is a trend to focus on strategy level issues, it is also easy to regress to a project focus as the Council of Mayors is now undertaking a project associated with the use of trail bikes in the region. Other ROCs such as the Macquarie ROC, are continuing to undertake projects but also trying to focus on more effective lobbying.

Interestingly, those ROCs which are focusing on improving their lobbying are tending to focus on the Commonwealth as the target of their lobbying rather than just the State government. This no doubt reflects the funding dominance of the Commonwealth and the desire to source more major financial support for infrastructure into their region. The table below illustrates the vertical fiscal imbalance in terms of funding sources between the three levels of government and highlights the need for local governments to source funding for a region directly from the Commonwealth as the States come under more financial pressure.

	Revenue Share	Expenditure Share	Value of Asset Base
Commonwealth ⁷	82%	35%	13%
State	15%	54%	51%
Local Government	3%	11%	36%

⁷ Source – Australian Local Government Association Research based on ABS data – see ABS data released on 5 July 2011 - <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/5512.02009-10?OpenDocument>.

6. Successful ROCs tend to concentrate on a couple of signature projects rather than trying to be everything to all members. The successful ROCs bed down those projects before moving on to the next. In other words, they tend to do less but do it better.

Examples

A. Council of Mayors (SEQ) - this organisation has stripped down to only three or four key projects. During the major water reforms in south-east Queensland over the last few years, it focused on supporting member Councils, providing forums for resolving common problems and lobbying the State Government in terms of the water reform agenda. Given the significance of the issue, it was almost the sole focus of the organisation for 18 months. It provided excellent support for member Councils and a single voice for local government on the water reform issue.

B. South Sydney ROC – This ROC has focused on waste management. It has identified a series of common contracts to increase purchasing power and apply consistent approaches to waste management in the region. Eight Councils participate in the dry waste contract, nine Councils participate in the putrescible waste contract and three Councils participate in a recyclables contract. Cumulative savings have been estimated at over \$10M over a five-year period. Further, consistent marketing is provided to the community regarding recycling and reuse across the region.

C. Hunter Councils Inc – This ROC built and operates a state-of-the-art records management facility that is used by member Councils and also operates on a commercial basis for any other agencies or private sector businesses that wish to archive records. This activity was commenced due to a perceived need by member Councils for a facility but now operates on a profitable basis with returns able to assist the ROC in being self-sustaining.

D. Northern Rivers ROC (based around Ballina and Lismore) – This ROC has developed an innovative program called “Northern Rivers Food Links” which aims to reduce the region's carbon footprint by creating local networks that reduce the length of the supply chain from grower to consumer. Attracting over \$2M in funding, this project has been used as a national trial to develop more sustainable food management practices and to develop local markets for local foods thus reducing “food miles” between the producer and consumer.



Hunter Councils Inc joint archives records storage facility.

7. The level of resources varies considerably between ROCs. The minimum budget for ROCs appears to be approximately \$100,000 per year plus funding for projects from grants. ROCs with this level of funding are not amongst the high performing ROCs. Other ROCs (for example Council of Mayors and Hunter Councils Inc) are multi-million dollar enterprises that are well funded by member Councils and attract considerable grant funding. Hunter Councils Inc delivers an annual operating surplus based on business income received from Councils and the private sector.
8. Many ROCs play an important role as an information portal into their regions. Some ROCs use their websites primarily for member based information e.g. about projects and resource sharing. Other ROCs who have regional economic development as one of their functions have well-developed websites. The audience for those websites is potential investors or anyone seeking information about the region (including government agencies).

Perhaps the best example of a ROC being an information portal into a region is the North Sydney ROC. (See www.nsroc.com.au) This contains detailed regional profiles of the community, economy and state of the environment. It is a useful resource for individual Councils as well as any agencies and businesses who wish to gather information about the region. This regional information also provides useful data to support lobbying efforts. Many of the ROCs are using the same private sector information provider (Informed Decisions) to present their regional economic and demographic data.

9. Projects undertaken by ROCs tend to fall into four categories. These categories are:-
 - A. **Sourcing funding:** - in many instances, Councils are more likely to be successful in attracting funding to a region if they collectively apply or lobby. An example of this type of activity is a Regional Road Group which attracts infrastructure funding to a region and agrees on the regional priorities for the expenditure of that funding. These types of projects are often easily measured in terms of their outcomes (e.g. dollars attracted).
 - B. **Direct savings through efficiencies:** - Councils are able to save money by working together to achieve operational efficiencies. Examples of this type of activity include joint contracts for waste removal, procurement models etc. These types of projects are also relatively easily measured in terms of their outcomes (e.g. dollars saved).
 - C. **Indirect savings through cost avoidance:** - these projects are where Councils are able to avoid having to spend money themselves because an activity was undertaken via the ROC. An example would be a development manual prepared by a ROC that means that individual Councils don't have to prepare the manual themselves. These types of projects are less easily measured in terms of their outcomes but estimates can be made (e.g. dollars that would have otherwise been spent).
 - D. **Information sharing:** - these projects are focused on establishing networks to share information between Councils and often, to assist in professional development. These networks become a useful tool for problem-solving and to interact with government agencies. These types of projects are not easily measured in terms of their outcomes (e.g. number of meetings attended / working relationships formed).

Not all regional resource sharing is successful. When one looks behind the public relations, it is clear that not all projects undertaken by ROCs are successful. Projects sometimes depend on individual Councils changing their operating practices to meet a regional standard. There is sometimes internal resistance (particularly at middle management level) resulting in projects being unsuccessful or facing challenges. As an example, the New England Alliance was developing a regional approach for the use of IT software with member Councils agreeing to use the same software and apply the same business practices across the region. The number of participating Councils is slowly reducing as member Councils withdraw from the project due to differences of opinion as to how operating processes should apply. Getting all member Councils to agree on how to do business has been described as being akin to “herding cats”.

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Section 5 - Stakeholder Feedback

As previously identified, an extensive stakeholder consultation process was undertaken. This consultation included both internal stakeholders (primarily member Councils and FNQROC staff) and external stakeholders (primarily government agencies). This section outlines the outcomes of that consultation process.

General observations

- ✓ Overall, the level of satisfaction with FNQROC is very high. It is perceived as a high performing ROC which provides excellent results for member Councils.
- ✓ The CEO and staff of FNQROC were very well regarded as being professional, providing leadership and keeping Councils informed about FNQROC operations. They were recognised for having passion, drive, being accessible and responding quickly to enquiries.
- ✓ This positive feedback was consistent both from within member Councils and also from external stakeholders.

Specific feedback from external stakeholders

- Many external stakeholders made reference to the fact that they have worked with other ROCs in Queensland and that FNQROC is clearly performing well compared to those other organisations. This was especially highlighted in relation to the Regional Roads Group and FNQROC environmental projects.
- There was consistent reference to the professionalism of the CEO and FNQROC staff with particular appreciation for their accessibility and ability to keep everyone informed.
- The success of FNQROC was largely attributed to steady and continued growth as well as consistency in leadership. It was noted that the Mayors get on well on a personal level which created a sense of unity and trust. Feedback from government agencies in particular was that it was important for FNQROC to complete and consolidate existing projects before expanding into other areas.
- FNQROC was recognised as a ready-made network for consultation by the state government within the region. It was seen as a conduit to local government and local communities by many state government agencies. Examples given included the networking opportunities afforded by the planners group and the ability of the Department of Local Government and Planning to distribute information via that group. The planners group was considered extremely important during the creation of the regional plan as an engagement mechanism by the State. Other examples given were the FNQROC regional road group and various environmental networks.
- The work undertaken by Travis Sydes on behalf of FNQROC was universally well regarded by external stakeholders. The approach to environmental issues at a regional level was especially lauded by external stakeholders and the leadership and enthusiasm shown by Travis Sydes was recognised as being critical to that success. There was a high level of trust and confidence exhibited by external stakeholders in relation to FNQROC's environmental programs.

- There is a belief that FNQROC helps build local government capacity in the smaller Councils. The role of the larger Councils in providing regional leadership was positively recognised as was their support for the smaller local governments who are able to access information and networks that assisted them in dealing with their local issues. While it was recognised that this sometimes challenged the larger Councils who were keen to focus on big picture strategic issues, the Department of Local Government and Planning in particular was appreciative that the smaller Councils were able to access information and expertise via FNQROC that was not otherwise available internally to those smaller Councils.
- Looking ahead, external stakeholders identified that it was important for FNQROC to retain clarity of purpose. There is a potential danger that work in FNQ can be duplicated or that the message becomes confused with many different agencies working in the area. These groups need to work in cooperation towards a common vision, not be in competition. Advance Cairns, Terrain, RDA, TTNQ and WTMA for example, all have separate roles to play in the advancement of the FNQ region. LGMA, LGAQ and Local Buy also all have roles to play in relation to local government business. There is a perceived risk if FNQROC impinges upon other agencies roles or if there is an inconsistent approach or different visions for the FNQ region by these different agencies. FNQROC was seen as having an important role in coordinating and aligning these different groups.

Specific feedback from internal stakeholders

- There was a clear perception by almost all member Councils that they obtained value for money through either direct or indirect benefits of membership and participation. There was a direct correlation of this perception with the size of the Council i.e. the smaller Councils more readily identified greater benefits for their level of contribution due to specific projects undertaken by FNQROC. This contrasted to the larger Councils who, while recognising that FNQROC provided them with value and an effective return as a result of operational projects, also believed that there may be opportunities to expand the strategic focus of the organisation.
- The role of leadership of the organisation, both at the political and administrative level received positive feedback. The chairperson was recognised for having a stable leadership style, the capacity to build good working relationships at the political level and a good working relationship with the CEO. It was also noted as critical that the Mayors get on well personally and that this was presently the case (but was recognised as not always being the case in the past).
- The special role of Cairns Regional Council was recognised and appreciated by the smaller Councils. It was recognised as exercising its regional leadership role in a proactive and positive way.
- There was recognition that this review is happening at an ideal time. Many of the member Councils (particularly Cairns, Tablelands and Cassowary Coast) have been focused on internal issues over the last three years as they have dealt with amalgamations. This review was seen by most Councils, not as a review of an organisation that is not working but rather, an opportunity to identify the future direction of the organisation as councils will be commencing a new term of office from March 2012. With amalgamation issues now

substantially completed at the three largest Councils, there was optimism that FNQROC will be able to go to a new level after March 2012.

- FNQROC is seen as most effective when working on major “region defining” projects. Working together on these projects on a regional level increases the chance of success compared to the project being undertaken by just one Council. The recent NBN funding submission was often cited as an example of what FNQROC should be doing more of in the future.
- Not every Council sees benefit in every single FNQROC project but every Council saw benefit in FNQROC projects that were of interest to them. The Regional Roads Group, development manual and environmental projects were the most often cited projects that provided tangible benefits to member Councils.
- If FNQROC did nothing else, the Regional Roads Group was identified as providing great value to members. It was often cited as an excellent example of attracting regional funding and getting agreement on regional priorities. While Councils did not always agree with every single decision in relation to road funding priorities, every Council did agree with the process and overall fairness of the outcomes.
- The development manual was often highlighted as a successful outcome. The benefit of that manual was seen as more than just saving each Council between \$10,000 and \$20,000 per year to maintain their own manual. It also provided a uniform approach to development across the region and reduced the number of disputes with developers regarding development standards and systems. It is understood that the development manual is now used in some other parts of the State.
- The smaller Councils identified that they relied on FNQROC to assist with resource shortages and access to expertise that they would not otherwise be able to source. As an example, Wujal Wujal identified the benefit of the pest management plan which enabled them to comply with relevant legislation. The smaller Councils also identified that it was beneficial for them to bring issues to the table so that FNQROC could advocate on their behalf and provide a louder voice than they would have on their own. The smaller Councils appreciated the support (and sometimes patience) of the larger Councils in addressing these relatively minor issues.
- The larger Councils identified the need to focus on more region making strategic issues. While defining what those priorities should be is outside the scope of this review, examples given were (i) implementing FNQROC’s component of the regional economic plan (ii) NBN project (iii) lobbying for funding for major regional infrastructure e.g. Bruce Highway upgrades (iv) establishing a regional brand (v) broadening the region’s economic base).
- When considering the benefits of FNQROC, all Councils spoke of the benefits of networking. Clearly, there are positive regional relationships between all Councils with very little evidence of cross-border animosity. At an officer level, this networking also provided professional relationships that were recognised as assisting in problem-solving at a local level.

Future risks

In undertaking the stakeholder consultation, we asked stakeholders to identify any potential future risks to the organisation. Six common themes emerged:-

1. Unified voice - many stakeholders identified how important it was that the organisation retain a sense of unity and common purpose. That was identified as currently existing but stakeholders recognise that with elections due in March 2012, the political landscape could change. If the Mayors do not get on well or do not engage with FNQROC after March 2012, there is a danger that the organisation will not be effective particularly if it wishes to increase its lobbying and advocacy role.
2. Blurred roles - again, many stakeholders identified that one of the future risks is that the various agencies working in FNQ are not coordinated and are pulling in different directions. It is important that these groups do not compete but work together and each has a clear role. There also needs to be consistent message to Brisbane and Canberra from Far North Queensland on issues that affect the region. As such, it is important that groups such as Advance Cairns, Terrain, RDA, WTMA etc continue to liaise together to ensure that a coordinated message and consistency of purpose is achieved. To manage this risk, it has been suggested that FNQROC periodically coordinate a workshop of relevant agencies to share information, agree on priorities and individual agency roles.
3. Succession planning - many stakeholders identified that one of the future risks to the organisation is the potential departure of the CEO. There is considerable corporate history linked to the current CEO and much of the success of the organisation has been attributed to her leadership. Nevertheless, with possible departure of the CEO in 2013 at the conclusion of her contract, there may be an opportunity to shift the role from one primarily focusing on project coordination to a role focusing on lobbying and oversight of strategic projects.
4. Disconnect between strategy and operations – The Mayors (with advice from their CEOs and FNQROC staff) set the strategy and priorities for the organisation. Some ROCs set this in a formal way with a strategy map (e.g. Council of Mayors). Some concern was raised during the stakeholder engagement that there is a risk that individual FNQROC working groups could operate for the sake of meeting without understanding where they fit into the strategy and priorities for the region. Further, there was a risk that as the message cascaded down from the top, there may not be support from operational level managers if it impacted on their individual Council operations. This was not identified as a major problem at the moment but several stakeholders suggested that it may be wise for individual FNQROC working groups to be provided with a brief identifying their roles and responsibilities, reporting and accountability etc. This should ensure that the risk of disconnection between what the organisation is trying to achieve and what the working groups are doing is minimised. We have prepared a sample one page brief for FNQROC working groups in appendix 2. Some groups already have a charter (or equivalent) but not all.
5. Procurement project - several stakeholders (primarily internal stakeholders) identified the current procurement project as a potential risk. This was not due to any concerns about the competence of FNQROC staff or current progress of the project. Rather, this was focused on the fact that this is as yet an unproven project given that it has only been proceeding for a number of months. It was also noted that there were other players in this space – namely Local Buy and individual Council procurement managers. It was suggested that on a regular basis (at least yearly) the member Councils meet and agree on procurement priorities for the next year taking into account individual Council needs, Local Buy contracts etc.
6. Ongoing regional leadership - for FNQROC to continue to be successful, it depends upon significant support from the three largest Councils i.e. Cairns, Cassowary Coast and

Tablelands Regional Councils. This support needs to be not just at Mayor and CEO level but also at middle management level in those larger Councils. One or two very minor examples of a lack of support at this level were provided but these were clearly the exception rather than the rule. In the larger Councils, there may be an opportunity to include information about the role of FNQROC in the induction process.

How would we know if FNQROC is successful?

During the stakeholder engagement process, we sought feedback on how people judge whether or not FNQROC is successful in its role. A number of common themes emerged, namely:-

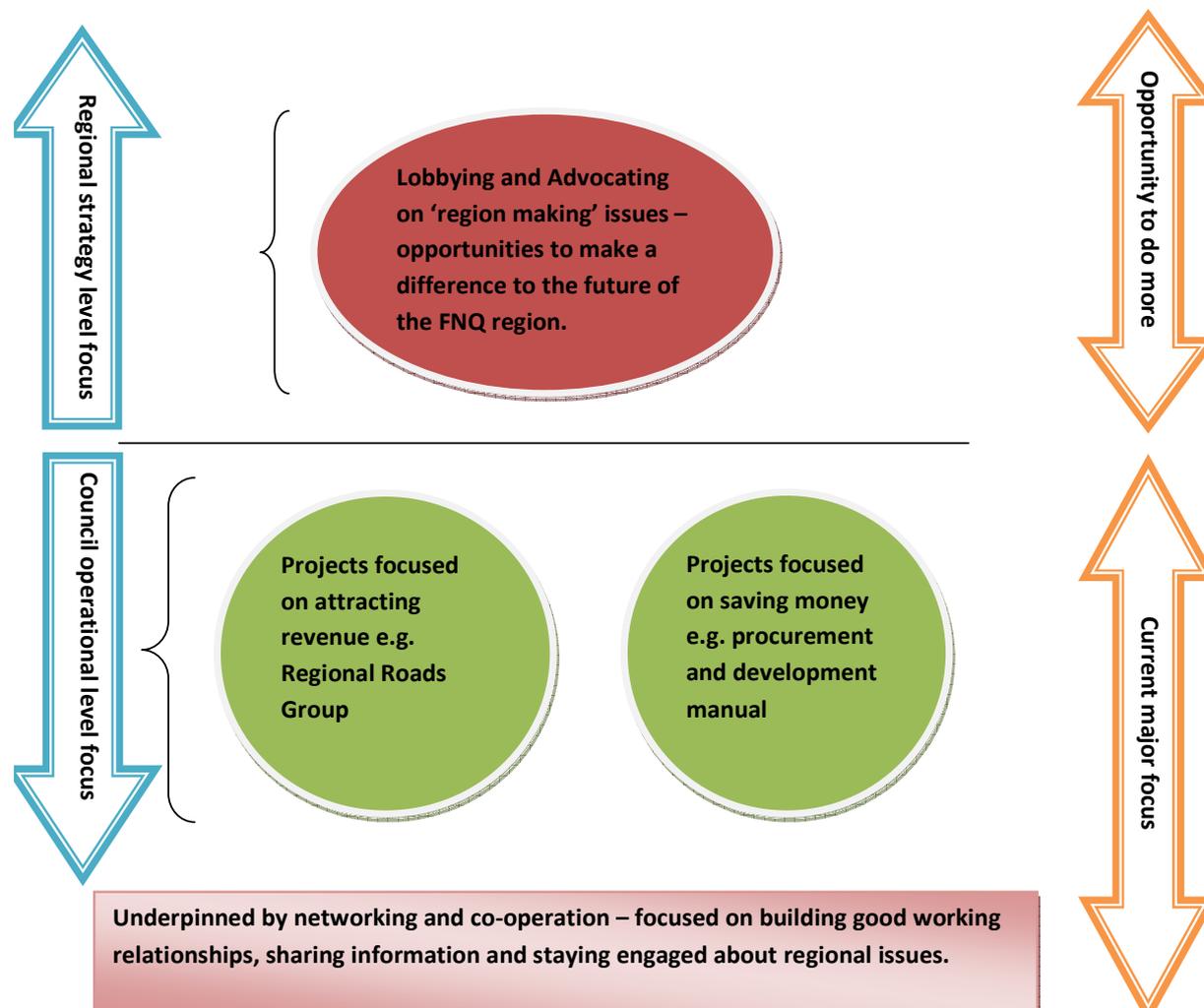
- Member Councils continued to engage and support FNQROC i.e. they saw value in being members.
- FNQROC delivers its component of the Regional Economic Plan.
- FNQROC was able to exploit opportunities that exist for our region. It was able to achieve three or four region defining outcomes (NBN project was often used as an example). Other potential region defining issues identified included potential water reform and regional infrastructure funding.
- FNQROC was able to lobby effectively on behalf of the region to other levels of government. The recent approach on NDRAA funding guidelines was provided as a good example.
- FNQROC continues to deliver efficiencies at an operational project level.
- FNQROC retains a collegiate approach i.e. we don't compete with each other and work together to achieve more than we could individually.

Section 6 - FNQROC Organisation Review and Recommendations

This section of the report brings together (i) the review of other ROCs (ii) the review of FNQROCs existing approach and (iii) feedback from stakeholders. This section will make a number of recommendations for change and raise some other issues for consideration by the FNQROC. However, these recommendations should be seen in context i.e. FNQROC is a high performing ROC with nothing fundamentally wrong with its operations. As such, recommendations should be seen as either fine tuning existing operations or exploring opportunities to expand its role.

Theme 1 – Role and Focus

The best way to explain this theme is by reference to the diagram below.



A large part of FNQROC's current time and effort is taken up with the operational project level. It is doing this very well. These projects are well managed and generally successful with their outcomes. Projects may have a focus on attracting revenue to the region (e.g. Regional Roads Group) or in

saving member Councils money either directly (e.g. procurement project) or indirectly (e.g. development manual and pest management plan). There is very little wrong with how FNQROC is addressing these projects and indeed, it can be used as a best practices example for other ROCs. Indeed, it is noted that the various FNQROC committees have been established with both an operational and strategic focus in mind i.e. to achieve a specific outcome and to gather information which can assist FNQROC in identifying major issues to address.

Work at this project level is underpinned by the networking activities of the organisation. FNQROC (or indeed any ROC) would not be successful if it didn't have a strong networking component. FNQROC has been successful at this because (i) there is a high level of commitment from member Councils (ii) the Mayors and CEOs get on well (iii) the organisation is well respected by government and other external agencies (iv) FNQROC staff play an important role in building positive relationships with stakeholders. This networking is important in building influence, acting as a conduit to gather information and to share experiences across Council boundaries.

While FNQROC has been highly successful at the project and network level, there are opportunities to do more at the strategic lobbying level. This is where FNQROC can make the most significant difference to the region. It is an additional focus on 'region making' projects or issues that will make the biggest difference to this region in the longer term. This lobbying should mainly focus on the Commonwealth (due to taxation trends resulting in the Commonwealth having more funding available) and the State Government remains an important lobby focus as well.

However, there should not be lobbying for lobbying's sake. FNQROC needs to be targeting three or four key projects or issues at any one time. FNQROC can take a lesson from the Council of Mayors (SEQ) which endeavours to focus on only a few key issues at any one time and these issues are identified in their strategy map.

From FNQROC's perspective, a shift of focus to expand its lobbying/advocacy role is timely. It should hold a workshop within three months of the new Councils being sworn in after the March 2012 elections and identify its top three or four strategic priorities for the next few years. The types of projects that may be considered include: –

- NBN project (already under way but a good example of a region making big picture issue)
- funding for major regional infrastructure (e.g. Bruce Highway upgrade)
- potential water reform in the region
- development of a regional community plan
- implementation of the regional economic development strategy
- influencing key state or commonwealth policy directions e.g. state infrastructure plan, location of defence facilities etc.
- Integrated regional transport planning.

We have refrained from recommending that FNQROC change to a purely lobbying/advocacy model (akin to Council of Mayors (SEQ)) as we believe that there is a natural synergy between operational level projects and future issues that will be the focus of the organisation's lobbying/advocacy. The various FNQROC committees can assist FNQROC in identifying major issues to address. We also

believe that this change of focus will require the CEO to shift their leadership focus. We estimate that presently, the CEO allocates her time on an 80/20 basis with 80% focused on project management and 20% on big picture issues for the region (although a lot of the project work also assists in gathering information at a grass roots level which assists in identifying the next strategic focus.) The work of the CEO reflects the current focus of the organisation but needs to be reversed. Much of the focus of the CEO and FNQROC chairperson should be on building effective networks in Canberra and ensuring that the organisation's message is delivered positively through the media.

Recommendation 1 - *That FNQROC put more emphasis on the future strategic lobbying and advocacy for region making issues and in that regard:-*

- A. *FNQROC hold a workshop within three months of the new Councils commencing after the March 2012 elections to identify its top three or four region making priorities;*
- B. *FNQROC request the CEO to focus more on these issues rather than operational level projects.*

There is some risk that as FNQROC moved to a more strategic focus, the great work undertaken at the operational project level may suffer or alternatively, not be aligned with the overall goals of the organisation. To reduce this risk, it is recommended that each of the FNQROC working groups have clear and proper roles and responsibilities that align with the overall direction of the organisation. It would assist if a one-page charter could apply to each working group and a sample document has been provided in appendix 2.

Recommendation 2 - *That each FNQROC working group have a short written charter that sets out its membership, goals and link to FNQROC's priorities.*

One of the reasons that FNQROC has been so successful is that it has had a steady and consistent approach to growth in the past. It is important that the organisation does not grow too quickly or take on too much. As such, it is important that as it moves to a stronger lobbying and advocacy focus, it only addresses three or four key issues rather than trying to be everything to everyone. The organisation should also recognise that as it develops a more strategic focus on key issues, it may need additional resourcing from members. Effective lobbying and advocacy comes at a cost - from additional airfares to Canberra to occasional media campaigns.

It is also important for the organisation to recognise its place in the FNQROC region. As identified elsewhere in this report, there are a range of other organisations that have a role in FNQ (e.g. RDA, Advance Cairns and Terrain to name a few). While currently not a significant issue, it may be beneficial for all organisations if memorandum of understandings (MOUs) were put in place outlining the various roles, responsibilities and reporting relationships between these organisations. This is designed primarily to avoid future problems rather than suggesting that there are any major issues at present.

Recommendation 3 - *That FNQROC develop over time, a series of MOUs with other key agencies to crystallise roles and responsibilities and to ensure that there is no duplication and that there is a consistent approach to addressing issues in FNQ.*

Theme 2 – Governance

Legal Structure - FNQROC is not currently incorporated although it is registered for GST etc. There have been quite a number of different models identified in the benchmarking process e.g. (i) local government associations (ii) incorporated associations (iii) operating under the auspices of one Council (iv) a company limited by guarantee.

Our research shows that there is no direct correlation between a particular legal structure and the success of a ROC. Other issues impact on the likelihood of success more such as common purpose, commitment by Councils, level of co-operation between mayors etc. We believe it would be in the best interests of FNQROC to incorporate as it will help build its own sense of identity. Although beyond the scope of this brief, we believe that the best model may be a company limited by guarantee. It is also important to note that we are not suggesting that FNQROC build an identity that impinges upon the individual profiles of the member Councils.

Recommendation 4 – *That FNQROC incorporate as its own legal entity and in doing so review the legal structures available and select the best structure for its future governance arrangements.*

Membership – FNQROC has six full member Councils and three associate member Councils. Associate membership is only \$1000 per year and although they do not receive the full benefit of membership (e.g. membership of the RRG) they are able to access a wide range of benefits from FNQROC. It should be noted that Hinchinbrook Shire Council participates in the Regional Natural Asset Management and Sustainability Projects and pays additional contributions accordingly. Although not raised as concern by existing member Councils during this review, it is our observation that associate members are potentially getting a greater return for every dollar contributed than full members. This is not really fair to full members and we also noted that associate membership is not usual in other ROCs.

Of the existing three associate members:-

- Etheridge is a full member of Gulf Savannah Development and has a high level of satisfaction with FNQROC compared to that other organisation
- Hinchinbrook is a full member of North Queensland ROC and also has a high level of satisfaction with FNQROC compared to NQROC
- Yarrabah is not a member of any other ROC.

All of the existing associate members regard FNQROC very highly.

Although not critical to the future of the organisation, it is recommended that over time, existing associate members be encouraged to become full-time members of FNQROC. The concept of associate membership could then be phased out when FNQROC incorporates.

Recommendation 5 – *That FNQROC:-*

- A. *request its associate members to consider joining FNQROC as full members;*
- B. *offer a phase in period of three years for transition to full membership including phasing in fee increases; and*
- C. *consider phasing out associate membership as a class of membership when it incorporates.*

Meeting protocols and format - this review has examined FNQROC's meeting protocols and formats including the operational guidelines (adopted in September 2008). We also noted a variety of approaches at other ROCs to how meetings and decision-making is managed. For example, in some ROCs, the Mayors and CEOs together form the board and decisions are made on a consensus basis. In many others, Council staff meet to formulate recommendations to the ROC board which is constituted by the mayors and makes the final decision. On balance, we are not recommending any changes to the current meeting protocols or format at FNQROC. In practical terms based on our research, the success of the existing structure depended upon how the group of mayors can work together more so than the particular meeting structure.

The FNQROC meetings in the future should be primarily focused on progress associated with the three or four region making priorities that it has identified and developing consistent lobbying messages. They should also receive regular update reports on operational projects as the working groups report against the goals set out in their working group charters.

It is noted that the successor otherwise of the board process depends upon an effective meeting chairperson. While this is occurring now according to stakeholder feedback, FNQROC will need to elect a chairperson after March 2012. This is a critical decision, not just because of that role in chairing meetings but also because the chairperson will have a prominent role in building and developing political networks to achieve FNQROC's lobbying strategy.

Theme 3 – FNQROC Projects

A review of FNQROC projects has been undertaken. This was a particular focus during the stakeholder engagement. Clearly, the projects undertaken by FNQROC are one of its strengths. This needs to continue as it gives member Councils good value. The projects are perceived as being especially good value for the smaller Councils who often don't have the resources or expertise to undertake those projects. Many of these projects have been recognised by external stakeholders (particularly those who have been exposed to other ROCs) as being leading practice.

There is clearly nothing fundamentally wrong with the current projects and focus. Elsewhere in this report, we have made recommendations to ensure that the various project groups remain focused and aligned by the introduction of a working group charter. That recommendation is effectively preventative maintenance rather than addressing any major existing problem.

There is, however, one project that needs to be specifically addressed i.e. the regional procurement project. This is a new project for FNQROC and as yet, is not yet proven. There are some additional risks associated with that project namely (i) other service providers such as Local Buy (ii) larger Councils having existing procurement models in place (iii) a diverse geographic spread of Councils across the region which can cause difficulty from a logistic perspective when undertaking joint procurement.

The key to success for the procurement project is to find the right types of goods and services to target in a regional procurement model. There certainly appears to be a logical process being followed in the current project and again, it must be emphasised that this project is being highlighted not because it is currently off-track but rather that it is a new project that has some

particular challenges. It is suggested that there are two critical elements for this project to succeed (i) annual agreement amongst FNQROC members regarding the priorities for procurement and the development of an annual list of joint purchasing priorities (currently occurring) and (ii) FNQROC closely monitors progress of this project for at least the next two years. A regional procurement model has been successful in other places (e.g. Hunter Councils Inc and South Sydney ROC.) There is no reason why it will not be successful at FNQROC but it needs to be monitored.

Recommendation 6 - *That in relation to the regional procurement project, FNQROC:-*

- A. *ensure that member Councils continue to annually set agreed goods and services to be included in the regional procurement project; and*
- B. *monitor closely the procurement outcomes including savings, supply guarantees and the capacity of suppliers to deliver goods and services across the entire FNQ region.*

Theme 4 – FNQROC Administration

Succession planning – The FNQROC CEO has indicated that she may not seek an extension of her contract when it expires in March 2013. The CEO has been central to the success of the organisation to date. She holds an enormous amount of corporate knowledge and has built up strong working relationships with both internal and external stakeholders. While we have no doubt that the current CEO could assist the organisation in shifting its focus to a more strategic lobbying approach, the skill mix required by the FNQROC CEO will change as the organisation expands to a more strategic focus. As the CEO focuses on more strategic issues, other FNQROC staff will need to work more independently on their projects.

At present, it is likely that the CEO spends 80% of her time on project management and 20% of her time on strategic big picture issues. This needs to be reversed if the organisation is to be successful in expanding its focus on some big picture region making issues. As mentioned, we are comfortable that a lot of the work at the project level helps inform the identification of strategic issues and that the existing CEO can make this transition but it would require other FNQROC staff to work more independently. Regardless, it would be appropriate to update the CEO's position description to reflect greater emphasis on supporting the Mayors with lobbying and advocacy. If the CEO does depart in March 2013, the organisation has an up to date position description ready.

Recommendation 7 – *That the FNQROC's CEO position description be amended to place more emphasis on the development of lobbying and advocacy strategies.*

Separate identity - FNQROC staff were previously located in Cairns Regional Council administration building. They have recently moved into separate office accommodation in Grafton Street (owned by Cairns Regional Council). It has been a positive move as it supports the perception of an independent organisation separate from any one Council. FNQROC should continue to establish its own identity including (i) establishing its own e-mail address (@fnqroc.com.au) rather than using @cairns.qld.gov.au (ii) hosting its own website etc. This will assist FNQROC establishing its own sense of identity.

Recommendation 8 - *That FNQROC continue to establish its own separate identity by finalising outstanding administrative elements such as website hosting and e-mail addresses.*

Indirect support by Cairns and Tablelands - in addition to their membership fees, Cairns Regional Council and Tablelands Regional Council provide in-kind support which is detailed in Appendix 3. This has been valuable in assisting FNQROC operate efficiently and has demonstrated the strong support for the ROC by those two Councils. This indirect support has been recognised in the cost benefit analysis undertaken as part of this review.

Cairns Regional Council and Tablelands Regional Council have not requested during this review that they be reimbursed for those costs. The practicality of the current arrangements suggests they should continue. Nevertheless, it is important that other members of FNQROC recognise the additional contribution made by Cairns Regional Council and Tablelands Regional Council to the organisation. It should be noted that if the organisation ever decides to reimburse those Councils for their additional contribution, Appendix 3 contains details for future reference.

Recommendation 9 - *That FNQROC members note the additional contribution made by Cairns Regional Council and Tablelands Regional Council to the organisation by way of indirect support.*

Performance indicators - as part of our benchmarking review, we were requested to identify if any other ROCs had developed practical performance indicators. Details of our review can be found on page 10 of this report. While CQLGA has developed some performance indicators, the majority are not practically related to the goals of that organisation.

Although not part of our brief, we have sought to add value to this review by preparing 10 sample performance indicators that might assist FNQROC in assessing its own progress and performance. The performance indicators set out in Appendix 4 are in three parts – (i) assessing progress on the strategic region making issues (ii) identifying funding attracted to the region and savings for the Councils via projects undertaken (iii) assessing information sharing and networking by the organisation.

Recommendation 10 - *That FNQROC adopt performance indicators to assist with the future assessment of its operations and specifically adopt the performance indicators set out in Appendix 4 of the report by de Chastel and Associates.*

Sharing information - One of FNQROC's strengths, as identified in the stakeholder feedback, was keeping stakeholders informed about FNQROC projects and issues. The use of regular newsletters was particularly identified as being beneficial. However, feedback from stakeholders and an assessment of other ROCs identified additional opportunities that FNQROC can undertake to improve its website. In particular, FNQROC could:-

- ✓ Use its website to share more information between member Councils. The current FNQROC website is underutilised by members. FNQROC should establish a 'members only' section that allows Councils to share and access information which will build on existing networks. The types of things that can be shared on the 'members only' part of the website include (i) internal Council phone books (to facilitate contact between Council officers) (ii) Council precedents (an opportunity to share internal precedent documents such as report templates etc).

- ✓ Use its website to provide more information about the region. As such, it could become a resource tool providing information on issues such as (i) economic profile of the region (ii) collection of community plans covering the region (iii) regional state of the environment reports. We are not suggesting the FNQROC necessarily undertake all that profiling work. For example, Advance Cairns already has a regional economic profile and several Councils have their own individual economic profiles. We are suggesting that FNQROC could consider filling any gaps in the regional profile and also seek approval of other agencies (e.g. Advance Cairns) to include the regional economic profile on the FNQROC website as well.

Recommendation 11 – *That FNQROC revamp its website to provide more information for both member Councils and third parties so as to enhance the level of information sharing within the region.*

Theme 5 – General Issues

There are two other issues that need to be addressed as part of this review.

State of the region reporting - Some ROCs play a role in undertaking or coordinating state of the region reporting. This covers detailed regional profiles of the economy, community demographics and environment. This is not cheap and would cost over \$100,000 to undertake. Among other ROCs researched, the best example being North Sydney ROC (see www.nsroc.com.au). Given the costs, we are not recommending that FNQROC undertake and publish these reports. However, it is certainly something that FNQROC could pursue in the future, especially if it was able to attract grant funding.

Current performance - Many reviews of this nature are undertaken because the organisation is struggling or member Councils are not happy. That is not the case in this review although there are opportunities to improve. It would be remiss of us if we did not formally acknowledge in our recommendations that we have found FNQROC to be a high performing organisation with opportunities to improve.

Recommendation 12 – *That FNQROC note that the independent review by de Chastel and Associates has found that FNQROC is a high performing ROC with the capacity to grow further and focus more on strategic level issues.*

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Section 7 - Cost benefit analysis

This part of the report deals with the cost / benefit of this review. In many respects, this has been the most difficult part of this review, not because a cost / benefit cannot be proven but because so many of the benefits are indirect (e.g. how do you measure the financial benefit of regional networking and cooperation?).

We have examined FNQROC budgets, annual reports and reports of the various working groups. We have also captured benefits identified during the stakeholder engagement. We have prepared an overall cost / benefit analysis on behalf of all member Councils (see below) and also prepared an individual cost / benefit analysis for each member Council (see Appendix 5).

We believe that some costs are direct (e.g. membership fees) and other costs are indirect (e.g. staff time and travel). Similarly, some benefits are direct (e.g. RRG funding) and other benefits are indirect (e.g. access to regional networks). Our cost / benefit framework for FNQROC reflects that approach.

FNQROC Cost Benefit Analysis

Direct Costs to Member Councils	Direct Benefits to Member Councils
Councils contribute approximately \$262,000 in membership fees ⁸	<p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - estimate one off savings for each Council of \$80,000 to prepare and \$15,000 pa to review. Direct benefits include: - application procedures, construction procedures, development principles, design guidelines, specifications, 'as constructed' guidelines, operational checklists etc. Each Council would have been required to prepare these documents. Cost estimates are based on consultancy fees to prepare and annually review a Council development manual.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - documentation able to be used by Councils including regional pest management strategy, regional pest management plan, regional weed spread prevention strategy and code of practice for disaster management weed spread prevention. Estimated pa saving to Councils for documentation - \$25,000.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - development of regional weed and pest animal distribution mapping which outlines location of major weed and pest infestations across Council boundaries - estimated savings Council for mapping information - \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> - Design guidelines for natural area restoration. Estimated saving for Councils - \$5,000.</p> <p>Development of biodiversity code for use by members - Estimated saving for Councils - \$10,000. Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Framework (mapping tool) – estimated one off saving of \$100,000 for mapping framework and \$20,000pa maintenance.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - total cost savings of over</p>

⁸ Source – 2011/12 FNQROC budget

	<p>\$400,000 made by identifying incorrect electricity tariffs of buildings, street lighting and water and sewerage treatment plants, and ensuring councils pay only for the infrastructure which falls under its control (including over \$15,000 of incorrect ambulance levies). Local Climate Change Action Plans prepared saving each Council approximately \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - direct funding of \$2,727,100 provided by DTMR in 2010/11 on a dollar for dollar basis. Similar amounts proposed for future years.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> - savings of approximately \$20,000 per Council for the development and sharing of documentation associated with levels of service for parks, buildings, roads and footpaths.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - direct savings not yet realised due to embryonic nature of project but potentially significant.</p> <p><u>Third party contributions</u> – FNQROC attracts additional funding from other organisations or working groups – Terrain \$80,000 – RRG \$57,000 and Local Roads of Regional Significance \$106,000.</p>
Total annual Council cost \$262,000	Total estimated annual Council benefit - \$3,485,100⁹

Indirect Costs to Member Councils	Indirect Benefits to Member Councils
<p>Cairns Regional Council contributes \$19, 660 in indirect costs e.g. office space, payroll services etc.</p> <p>Tablelands Regional Council contributes \$7,360 in indirect costs e.g. office space, office supplies etc¹⁰</p> <p>Staff time and effort – travel time.</p>	<p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - there have been a number of indirect benefits from the regional development manual including (i) reduction in disputes with developers over standards as one regional rule applies which cannot be argued (i) standardisation of ‘as constructed’ plans lodged with Councils (iii) consultants and developers understand that one set of rules applies which makes operating across the region easier (note that this last indirect benefit is industry-based not Council based).</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> (i) access to equipment such as dosage pumps, portable clean down facilities, splatter guns and PDA units (ii) training available to Council staff and training resources for use in the community (iii) networking between pest management operators at different Councils to share information (iv) regional working days to remove pests.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> – (i) sharing technical expertise between operational staff Councils (ii) improving early detection in response to new and emerging threats to the environment (iii) undertaking education and awareness campaigns of district specific issues (iv) ability to undertake larger taskforce type regional activities if required (v) trial new plant and equipment</p>

⁹ Note that this amount could have been increased by an extra \$2,900,000 as additional one off road funding was provided under the Regional Safety and Development Program in 2010/11. Given that it was one off funding, it was not included although there are sometimes different programs that provide one off funding from year to year. Including this amount would have seen the cost benefit result in a \$24.38 direct return for every \$1 of membership.

¹⁰ Details of indirect costs can be found in Appendix 3.

	<p>and share technical expertise.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - information available through the regional greenhouse inventory and greenhouse mitigation action plan.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - technical committee staff able to network and share information about practical engineering problems. A regional approach is taken to prioritising DTMR funding to ensure that it is based on engineering need rather than non-technical criteria.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> – (i) network opportunity for asset managers from different Councils to share information about asset management planning (ii) development of a regional asset management strategy.</p> <p><u>Regional planning</u> - input into the development of the FNQ 2031 statutory regional plan.</p> <p><u>Regional relationships</u> – development of strong working relationships with key agencies in the region such as Terrain, Advance Cairns and RDA.</p> <p><u>Regional Economic Development</u> - input into the development of the Regional Economic Plan.</p> <p><u>Broadband</u> - participation in the joint submission to NBN for high-speed broadband rollout across the region. If successful, this will be a direct benefit.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - indirect benefits include guarantee of supply, access for smaller Councils to greater purchasing power etc. Also access to standard professional procurement contracts.</p> <p><u>Local laws</u> - sharing information and precedents regarding development of local laws and jointly solving technical problems.</p> <p><u>Community plans</u> – sharing information regarding the development of individual community plans and presenting information to Regional Managers Co-ordination network.</p>
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From an overall perspective, the cost benefit to the member Councils is as follows:-

For every \$1 of membership contributed, the organisation delivers \$13.30 of direct benefits plus the indirect benefits listed above.

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Section 8 - Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1 - *That FNQROC put more emphasis on the future strategic lobbying and advocacy for region making issues and in that regard:-*

- A. *FNQROC hold a workshop within three months of the new councils commencing after the March 2012 elections to identify its top three or four region making priorities;*
- B. *FNQROC request the CEO to focus more on these issues rather than operational level projects.*

Recommendation 2 - *That each FNQROC working group have a short written charter that sets out its membership, goals and link to FNQROC's priorities.*

Recommendation 3 - *That FNQROC develop over time, a series of MOUs with other key agencies to crystallise roles and responsibilities and to ensure that there is no duplication and that there is a consistent approach to addressing issues in FNQ.*

Recommendation 4 – *That FNQROC incorporate as its own legal entity and in doing so review the legal structures available and select the best structure for its future governance arrangements.*

Recommendation 5 – *That FNQROC:-*

- A. *request its associate members to consider joining FNQROC as full members*
- B. *offer a phase in period of three years for transition to full membership including phasing in fee increases*
- C. *consider phasing out associate membership as a class of membership when it incorporates.*

Recommendation 6 - *That in relation to the regional procurement project, FNQROC:-*

- A. *ensure that member Councils continue to annually set agreed goods and services to be included in the regional procurement project; and*
- B. *monitor closely the procurement outcomes including savings, supply guarantees and the capacity of suppliers to deliver services across the entire FNQ region.*

Recommendation 7 – *That the FNQROC's CEO position description be amended to place more emphasis on the development of lobbying and advocacy strategies.*

Recommendation 8 - *That FNQROC continue to establish its own separate identity by finalising outstanding administrative elements such as website hosting and e-mail addresses.*

Recommendation 9 - *That FNQROC members note the additional contribution made by Cairns Regional Council and Tablelands Regional Council to the organisation by way of indirect support.*

Recommendation 10 - *That FNQROC adopt performance indicators to assist with the future assessment of its operations and specifically adopt the performance indicators set out in appendix 4 of the report by de Chastel and Associates.*

Recommendation 11 – *That FNQROC revamp its website to provide more information for both member Councils and third parties so as to enhance the level of information sharing within the region.*

Recommendation 12 – *That FNQROC note that the independent review by de Chastel and Associates has found that FNQROC is a high performing ROC with the capacity to grow further and focus more on strategic level issues.*

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Appendix 1 - Summary of other Regional Organisation of Councils

A survey was undertaken of other Regional Organisations of Councils both in Queensland and interstate. Where possible, the ROCs selected were either adjoining FNQROC or were a similar size. In some instances (e.g. Hunter Councils Inc and Council of Mayors (SEQ)) ROCs were selected because they were different or recognised nationally for best practice.

Regional Organisation of Councils of Cape York	
Role	Advocacy and collaboration
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cook Shire Council • Hopevale Aboriginal Shire Council • Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council • Aurukun Aboriginal Shire Council • Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council • Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council • Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council (not a current member) • Weipa Town Authority
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disaster management (on -going) • Various one off type projects which directly assist members • Provides direct on-going assistance to member local governments e.g. road funding applications
Technical committees	CEO's group
External working groups	Executive officer has a co-ordinating role on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRM • Regional Community Area Network for Health (under Queensland Health)
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$120,000 + any funding received for projects • Funds are raised by levying each member Council \$10,000 p.a. • Increased funding would allow more time to be given to training for indigenous communities
Monitoring of performance	No performance indicators used Performance assessed by direct feedback from members at annual general meeting (the following year's priorities are set at this meeting)
Staff	CEO is only employee
Example/s of best practice	Advocacy role particularly in relation to achieving positive outcomes for indigenous Councils.
Future direction	Probably a continuation of present direction unless significant changes in delegates as a result of local government elections in 2012

Central Queensland Local Government Association

Role	Advocacy, collaboration and research Key strategy areas identified are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Planning • Advocacy • Strategic Communications and Promotion • Strategic Project Coordination • Relationships and Partnerships • Research/Support in Regional Policy 	
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banana Shire Council • Central Highlands Regional Council • Gladstone Regional Council • Isaac Regional Council • Rockhampton Regional Council 	
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste management program (this is a significant program covering the calling of tenders for regional waste management on behalf of member Councils to public education) • Development of regional plan 	
Technical committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO's Group • Waste Officers Group (includes officers and councillors) • EHO's Group • Sustainability Group • Other temporary groups as may be needed from time to time (e.g. water officers group) 	
External working groups	CQLGA does not facilitate any external working groups but CEO represents the organisation on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RDA • Regional Managers Co-ordination Network • Centre for Environmental Management Central Queensland University • Fitzroy Basin NRM 	
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx \$1m (consisting of membership levies and interest earned) + any funding received for projects (currently approx \$200,000) • Currently there are 2 levies – one for operations (based on the formula used by LGAQ) and the other for waste management (based on population). Two member local governments also pay a special waste levy • The 2 levies are to be combined however CQLGA is yet to devise a formula. • The total amount raised from the levies is \$951,800 • Additional funding would allow an increased focus on delivering services to member local governments that lend themselves to be provided at a regional level e.g. graphic arts service 	
Monitoring of performance	Regional Planning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion of regional plans which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of priorities for infrastructure • Net population gain • Net increase Gross Regional Product • Quality and quantity of development 2. Stakeholder's consultation

	Advocacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Positive media reporting 2 \$ returned from advocacy 3 Support/recognition from advocacy 4 Participation in projects/strategies 5 Member satisfaction
	Strategic Communications and Promotion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of hits on the website 2. Feedback on promotional initiatives 3. Providing proactive community forums 4. Number of responses to community based questions 5. Number of media releases published/aired 6. Increase in CQLGA being sought by media as spokesperson on regional issues
	Strategic Project Coordination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Project is on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Budget • Meets specs/brief 2. Stakeholder satisfaction
	Relationships and Partnerships	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Minimum 80% attendance from member Councils at CQLGA coordinated events 2 Membership and involvement in external groups by CQLGA representatives and staff i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Managers group membership • Advisory Committee for State Waste Strategy • CQ University Advisory Committee (become key stakeholders in our areas of interest/strategy) 3 Number of subscriptions to CQLGA e-news 4 Increased use of CQLGA intranet by member Councils 5 Measure of website statistics 6 Involvement and implementation from CQLGA coordinated groups i.e. groups actively feedback to board of directors
	Research/Support in Regional Policy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Number of hits on the website 2 Feedback on promotional initiatives 3 Providing proactive community forums 4 Number of responses to community based questions 5 Number of media releases published/aired and increase in CQLGA being sought by media as spokesperson on regional issues
Example/s of best practice	Waste management program (organisation recognised for its achievements by the State Government)	
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO • Operations manager • Officer co-ordinator • Contracts officer (waste management contracts co-ordination) • Admin and HR officer • Graduate communications officer (deliver Earth Smart schools program) • Accountant - part-time position - 22 hrs per week 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project officer (developing and implementing projects) • Workplace mentor – casual position (implements toward zero workplace program) • Community awareness and education officer – casual position (delivery of the recycling awareness program) • Graphic artist – casual position
Future direction	Would like to see the organisation becoming more responsive and relevant to its member local governments – to be more proactive and providing value to them.

Council of Mayors South East Queensland	
Role	<p>Primarily advocacy and lobbying focus</p> <p>Key strategic goals identified are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advocate the implementation of the SEQ Regional Plan as a partnership with other levels of government ▪ Improve wellbeing and liveability of SEQ communities ▪ Promote sustainability ▪ Demonstrate strong leadership
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brisbane City Council • Gold Coast City Council • Ipswich City Council • Lockyer Valley Regional Council • Logan City Council • Moreton Bay Regional Council • Redland City Council • Scenic Rim Regional Council • Somerset Regional Council • Sunshine Coast Regional Council • Toowoomba Regional Council
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DA reform project • Liveable compact cities project • Trail bike project (development of a regional facility) • Water reform project (recently concluded)
Technical committees and standing committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As from 2005 technical committees no longer came under the umbrella of Council of Mayors to allow it to focus on advocacy • However Council of Mayors does sponsor 3 technical committees namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Senior planners group ○ Senior environmental group ○ Waste managers group • The organisation has established 3 standing committees - in addition to the executive committee - comprising councillors and senior officers for the priority areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regional planning and growth management ○ Infrastructure ○ Environment and sustainability

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task forces established to manage priority projects include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rural communities task force ○ Trail bike task force ○ Regional carbon sink task force
External working groups	Council of Mayors co-ordinates local government representatives on advisory committees and working groups established by state government agencies – the representatives are staff members of the Council of Mayors or member local governments.
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2m for core activities + project funding • Each member local government pays a flat fee of \$10,000 with the balance of funding being raised on a population basis • Additional funding would allow an increased focus on working as a think tank for member local governments
Monitoring of performance	<p>No formal performance indicators have been developed however:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organisation’s budget is approved by each member Council each year • Executive Director provides, twice annually, a report on progress with the objectives detailed in the <u>Strategy Map</u> – a strategy map is approved by the Mayors each year • A fortnightly update on the activities of the organisation is provided to each member Council
Example/s of best practice	The high level of co-operation achieved between the members – this has enabled the organisation to achieve a high profile with both the state and federal governments and significant success in its advocacy.
Staff	<p>Secretariat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director (contract position) • Manager, Regional Planning, Policy & Projects (contract position) • Projects Manager (part/time) • Senior Policy Officer (Infrastructure) • Senior Policy Officer (Environment) • Media & Communications Officer • Finance Officer • Officer Manager • Administration Officer, Committee • Administrative Assistant <p>Project Staff, funded for the term of the projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Planner (Liveable Compact Cities) • Senior Planner (Liveable Compact Cities) • Administration Officer (part time) Liveable Compact Cities • Communications Manager • Various planning experts (7) (contracted consultants) <p>(Up until 1/7/2011, Council of Mayors (SEQ) staff were employed by Brisbane City Council as agent for the Council of Mayors (SEQ). Since then, all staff have moved to Council of Mayors payroll; a number of secondments of staff from BCC and other Councils also work in the office.</p>
Future direction	Will depend on the outcome of the next state government election.

Wide Bay Burnett Regional Organisation of Councils	
Role	Advocacy, collaboration and research
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bundaberg Regional Council • Fraser Coast Regional Council • Gympie Regional Council • North Burnett Regional Council • South Burnett Regional Council • Cherbourg Shire Council
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional plan • Digital switchover (liaison role – to be completed January 2012) • Working with DEEDI to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Agreed priority economic development projects for the region and ○ Future structure for any expanded economic development effort • RRG • Wide Bay Burnett Recreation and Sport Strategy (completed in 2010)
Technical committees	No technical committees are in place however a Regional Economic Development Advisory Committee has been established
External working groups	Executive Officer represents the ROC on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Managers Forum • Economic Development Working Group • Regional Planning Advisory Group • Regional Development Australia
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100,000 for administration + funding from external bodies and from member local governments for projects if required • Core funding is provided by member local governments on a population basis and if project funding is required from members then this may change e.g. member contributions for the Regional Economic Development Advisory Committee are equal (\$15,000 per member) • Additional funding would allow a regional marketing effort to be undertaken as well as expanding joint purchasing (currently joint purchasing efforts are limited to bitumen tenders and termite treatment of timber bridges).
Monitoring of performance	No formal review process is undertaken
Example/s of best practice	RRG – the work of the group has been acknowledged by MRD
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Executive Officer works part time (approx 2.5 – 3 days per week) • A part time bookkeeper • Proposals have been invited for the position of Regional Economic Development Consultant to work with the Regional Economic Development Advisory Committee to pursue identified regional priority projects/opportunities and develop means to implement those priorities as established in the project being undertaken with DEEDI
Future direction	Because of the challenges the region faces, an expanding role in economic development

Northern Rivers Regional Organisation of Councils Incorporated	
Role	Advocacy, collaboration and research Key strategy areas identified are:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing regional profile and communication • Facilitating joint activities • Support research and advocacy • Strengthening the structure and capacity (of the ROC)
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballina Shire Council • Byron Shire Council • Clarence Valley Council • Kyogle Shire Council • Lismore City Council • Richmond Valley Shire Council • Tweed Shire Council • Richmond River County Council (flood plain management) • Rous Water
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Rivers Food Links • North - East Weight of Loads (objective is to reduce damage road network) • My Roads Info (a single website for the distribution of information regarding road conditions) • Regional waste management • Regional integrated transport plan • Regional water supply strategy • Regional visitors services strategy
Technical committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Managers Group • Human Resources Group • North East Waste Forum • Engineering Directors Group • Tourism Management Group • Planning Directors Group
External working groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member local governments represented by members of technical committees
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100,000 as well as any grants received • Funds are raised on the basis of 50% from an equal levy on members and 50% based on population • Additional funding would allow an increased focus on the significant issue of affordable housing
Monitoring of performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formal performance indicators have been developed. • Reporting to members is via <i>Proposed Strategic Plan Actions for Implementation</i> and in the organisation's annual report • The technical groups also report on their activities in the annual report
Example/s of best practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern Rivers Food Links – for details see http://www.northernriversfoodlinks.com.au/downloads/Business-Plan-Executive-Summary.pdf
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The executive officer's role is on a contract basis – expressions of interest have been called for a replacement person. The contract will provide for a maximum period of 2 years and a minimum of 60 hours per month.
Future direction	<p>The Acting Executive Officer could not foresee any significant change of focus but this will depend on: the new executive officer; if a new president is elected and possibly the outcomes of <i>Destinations 2036 Conference</i> organised by NSW Department of Local Government (the role of ROC's was debated).</p>

Hunter Councils Inc.	
Role	Primary focus is on joint service delivery and establishment of regional shared services.
Membership	Cessnock City Council Dungog Shire Council Gloucester Shire Council Great Lakes Council Lake Macquarie City Council Maitland City Council Muswellbrook Shire Council Newcastle City Council Port Stephens Council Singleton Council Upper Hunter Shire Council
Programs	Local Government Training Institute (accredited training provider for Council staff – can also be used by other employers) Hunter Councils Regional Procurement Hunter Central Coast Regional Environmental Strategy Hunter Records Storage - a major physical undertaking with archive records storage for Councils in the region.
Technical committees	Operates a General Managers Advisory Committee (chaired by a CEO). This committee reports to the Hunter Councils Inc Board which comprises the Mayor and CEOs of the member Councils.
External working groups	External agencies request Hunter Councils Inc to provide representatives to various external organisations.
Budget	Commercial in confidence but income derived from fee-for-service activities such as the training institute and records storage result in annual operating surpluses. For 2010/11, a cash surplus of \$315,000 was achieved. Several years ago, the annual turnover was in excess of \$4M per year.
Monitoring of performance	Financial performance of each of the business activities undertaken.
Example/s of best practice	Records Management solution for the region is recognised as best practice. Overcame a lack of available Records Management facilities for Councils in the region and now provides best practice local government records management solution for the region.
Staff	Significant number of staff managed by CEO. Each business activity employs its own staff. Approximately 40 staff. The ROC has purchased its own administration building.
Future direction	More of the same. Will be looking at other opportunities for shared services. Currently establishing Hunter Council's legal service – a shared legal service for all member Councils with lawyers employed by Hunter Councils Inc.

Appendix 2 – Sample Working Group Charter

Name of FNQROC Working Group: -

Membership: - *(list members, name of Council and identify chairperson. Include details of non Council members)*

FNQ staff liaison: - *(identify FNQROC staff contact)*

Meeting frequency: - *(e.g. meets monthly on first Tuesday of month at 9am)*

Goals of Working Group: - *(set out the specific goals of the working group. These are to be set by FNQROC when it establishes a working group).*

Link to FNQROC Priority: - *(e.g. improve availability of high speed broadband in the region)*

Reporting obligations: - *(e.g. required to report on a quarterly basis to FNQROC on progress against goals)*

Appendix 3 – Calculation of Indirect Costs

Indirect support from Cairns Regional Council

Item	Cost Estimate
16 m ² office space in Grafton St Cairns (Council owned building)	\$7,500 ¹¹ (based on current commercial rental for vacant office property)
Internet access	\$960 (based on equivalent of \$80 per month for high speed plan)
Printer	\$500 pa (estimate)
4 x office landlines	\$3,600 (based on \$75 per phone per month)
Payroll service for FNQROC Staff	\$2,100 (based on \$25 per employee for payroll service per month – equivalent bookkeeper rate)
Ability to access IT help desk and HR advice if required	\$5,000 (difficult to estimate given the ad hoc nature of such services. A nominal estimate has been applied).
TOTAL	\$19,660

Indirect support from Tablelands Regional Council

Item	Cost Estimate
Office space in Malanda (Council owned building)	\$2,500 ¹² (based on current commercial rental for vacant office property)
1 x Internet access	\$960 (based on equivalent of \$80 per month for high speed plan)
Use of office Printer	\$500 pa (estimate)
1 x office landlines	\$900 (based on \$75 for phone per month)
Office equipment	\$500 pa (covers office supplies etc)
Auspicing services for TIDS funding	\$2000 (covers approximate cost of managing budget line item)
TOTAL	\$7,360

¹¹ Vacant commercial office in Sheridan Street, Cairns currently advertised for lease at \$250 per m² plus outgoings of \$3500 pa.

¹² Vacant commercial office in Malanda currently advertised for weekly rent of \$450 per week for large office (size suitable for 10 staff). Allow \$50 per week for one small office suitable for one person).

Appendix 4 – Suggested Performance Indicators

Performance indicators are suggested at three levels.

Strategy level issues

At this level, the focus is on whether or not FNQROC is making progress with its region making strategic issues. It is intended that for each of the issues, milestones would be developed (e.g. for the NBN project milestones might be (i) NBN submission lodged 10% (ii) submission successful 30% (iii) implementation commences 50% (iv) implementation complete 80% (v) percentage take up goal reached 100%). The indicators are designed to help FNQROC identify how the project is progressing and whether the region is getting value for money.

For each of the 3 or 4 strategic issues identified by FNQROC:-

- Percentage of each strategic objective achieved
- Details of completed milestones
- Actual expenditure on each strategic objective
- Benefit to region

Operational projects

As the majority of operational projects are focused on gaining revenue, efficiency or savings, these performance indicators focus on identifying financial benefits to the member Councils as a whole.

- Total grant funding attracted to the region annually (expressed in \$)
- Total annual savings directly achieved by member Councils (expressed in \$)
- Estimated indirect annual savings to member Councils from projects (expressed in \$)

Networking and regional relationships

These indicators are focused on information sharing by FNQROC and the level of interaction by member Councils.

- Percentage attendance from member Councils at FNQROC coordinated events
- Number of media articles generated by FNQROC
- Number of FNQROC website hits.

Imagine if the FNQROC NBN project was one of the strategic issues identified and that we are reporting on this in one year's time. The performance indicators might be as follows:-

- A. 50% complete*
- B. Implementation of NBN infrastructure commenced*
- C. FNQROC has spent \$35 000 on this project to date*
- D. Once live, will provide \$XYZ benefit to region according to economic study.*

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Appendix 5 Cost / Benefit Analysis for Individual Councils

Important note in relation to the individual cost / benefit analysis for each Council.

The cost / benefit for each Council does vary. The main determinant of that variation is the amount of funding accruing to individual Councils via RRG projects. The following assessments are based on 2010/11 RRG actual amounts for each Council. Depending upon the year, Councils receive different amounts under that program based on regional priorities.

Name of Council: - Cook Shire Council

Direct cost to Council	Direct benefit to Council
<p>Membership fees:- \$20,789 plus 3.75% of LRRS subsidy plus 15% of any procurement project savings</p>	<p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - estimate one off savings for Council of \$80,000 to prepare and \$15,000 pa to review. Direct benefits include: - application procedures, construction procedures, development principles, design guidelines, specifications, 'as constructed' guidelines, operational checklists etc. Council would have been required to prepare these documents. Cost estimates are based on consultancy fees to prepare and annually review a Council development manual.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - documentation able to be used by Council including regional pest management strategy, regional pest management plan, regional weed spread prevention strategy and code of practice for disaster management weed spread prevention. Estimated pa saving to Council for documentation - \$25,000.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - development of regional weed and pest animal distribution mapping which outlines location of major weed and pest infestations across Council boundaries - estimated savings Council for mapping information - \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> - Design guidelines for natural area restoration. Estimated saving for Council - \$5,000. Development of biodiversity code for use by members - Estimated saving for Council - \$10,000. Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Framework (mapping tool) – estimated one off saving of \$100,000 for mapping framework and \$20,000pa maintenance.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - total cost savings of over \$20,000 made by identifying incorrect electricity tariffs of buildings, street lighting and water and sewerage treatment plants, and ensuring councils pay only for the infrastructure which falls under its control. Local Climate Change Action Plans prepared saving each Council approximately \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - direct funding of \$301,000 made to Cook via DTMR¹³</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> - savings of approximately \$20,000 for Council for the development of documentation associated with levels of service for parks, buildings, roads and footpaths.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - direct savings not yet realised due to embryonic nature of project but potentially significant.</p>

¹³ Source – RRG road program for 2010/11

	<p><u>Third party contributions</u>¹⁴ – FNQROC attracts additional funding from other organisations – Terrain \$80,000 –, RRG \$57,000 and Local Roads of Regional Significance \$106,000 – Cook Shire Council proportional benefit is \$40,500.</p> <hr/> <p>Total Direct benefit to Cook Shire Council:- \$465,000</p>
<p>Indirect cost to Council</p> <p>Mayor, CEO and officer time for meetings and travel. This is significant for Cook.</p>	<p>Indirect benefit to Council</p> <p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - there have been a number of indirect benefits from the regional development manual including (i) reduction in disputes with developers over standards as one regional rule applies which cannot be argued (i) standardisation of ‘as constructed’ plans lodged with Councils (iii) consultants and developers understand that one set of rules applies which makes operating across the region easier (note that this last indirect benefit is industry-based not Council based).</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> (i) access to equipment such as dosage pumps, portable clean down facilities, splatter guns and PDA units (ii) training available to Council staff and training resources for use in the community (iii) networking between pest management operators at different councils to share information (iv) regional working days to remove pests.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> – (i) sharing technical expertise between operational staff councils (ii) improving early detection in response to new and emerging threats to the environment (iii) undertaking education and awareness campaigns of district specific issues (iv) ability to undertake larger taskforce type regional activities if required (v) trial new plant and equipment and share technical expertise.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - information available through the regional greenhouse inventory and greenhouse mitigation action plan.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - technical committee staff able to network and share information about practical engineering problems. A regional approach is taken to prioritising DTMR funding to ensure that it is based on engineering need rather than non-technical criteria.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> – (i) network opportunity for asset managers from different councils to share information about asset management planning (ii) development of a regional asset management strategy.</p> <p><u>Regional planning</u> - input into the development of the FNQ 2031 statutory regional plan.</p> <p><u>Regional relationships</u> – Development of strong working relationships with key agencies in the region such as Terrain, Advance Cairns and RDA.</p> <p><u>Regional Economic Development</u> - input into the development of the Regional Economic Plan.</p> <p><u>Broadband</u> - participation in the joint submission to NBN for high-speed broadband rollout across the region. If successful, this will be a direct benefit.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - indirect benefits include guarantee of supply, access for smaller councils to greater purchasing power etc. Also access to standard professional procurement contracts.</p>

¹⁴ Calculated by dividing the total amount contributed by other sources divided by the number of full member Councils.

	<p><u>Local laws</u> - sharing information and precedents regarding development of local laws and jointly solving technical problems.</p> <p><u>Community plans</u> – sharing information regarding the development of individual community plans and presenting information to Regional Managers Co-ordination network.</p>
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Summary: - For every \$1 contributed by Cook Shire Council, they receive \$21.96 in direct benefits plus the indirect benefits listed above.

Name of Council: - Cassowary Coast Regional Council

Direct cost to Council	Direct benefit to Council
<p>Membership fees:- \$50,591 plus 3.75% of LRRS subsidy plus 15% of any procurement project savings</p>	<p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - estimate one off savings for Council of \$80,000 to prepare and \$15,000 pa to review. Direct benefits include: - application procedures, construction procedures, development principles, design guidelines, specifications, 'as constructed' guidelines, operational checklists etc. Council would have been required to prepare these documents. Cost estimates are based on consultancy fees to prepare and annually review a Council development manual.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - documentation able to be used by Council including regional pest management strategy, regional pest management plan, regional weed spread prevention strategy and code of practice for disaster management weed spread prevention. Estimated pa saving to Council for documentation - \$25,000.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - development of regional weed and pest animal distribution mapping which outlines location of major weed and pest infestations across Council boundaries - estimated savings Council for mapping information - \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> - Design guidelines for natural area restoration. Estimated saving for Council - \$5,000. Development of biodiversity code for use by members - Estimated saving for Council - \$10,000. Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Framework (mapping tool) – estimated one off saving of \$100,000 for mapping framework and \$20,000pa maintenance.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - total cost savings of over \$50,000 made by identifying incorrect electricity tariffs of buildings, street lighting and water and sewerage treatment plants, and ensuring councils pay only for the infrastructure which falls under its control. Local Climate Change Action Plans prepared saving each Council approximately \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - direct funding of \$946,500 made to Cassowary Coast via DTMR¹⁵</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> - savings of approximately \$20,000 for Council for the development of documentation associated with levels of service for parks, buildings, roads and footpaths.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - direct savings not yet realised due to embryonic nature of project but potentially significant.</p> <p><u>Third party contributions</u> – FNQROC attracts additional funding from other organisations – Terrain \$80,000 –, RRG \$57,000 and Local Roads of Regional Significance \$106,000 – Cassowary Coast Regional Council proportional benefit is \$40,500.</p> <hr/> <p>Total Direct benefit to Cassowary Coast Regional Council:- \$1,137,000</p>
<p>Indirect cost to Council</p> <p>Mayor, CEO and officer</p>	<p>Indirect benefit to Council</p> <p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - there have been a number of indirect</p>

¹⁵ Source – RRG road program for 2010/11. This was a significant year for Cassowary Coast Regional Council with RRG funding.

<p>time for meetings and travel</p>	<p>benefits from the regional development manual including (i) reduction in disputes with developers over standards as one regional rule applies which cannot be argued (i) standardisation of 'as constructed' plans lodged with Councils (iii) consultants and developers understand that one set of rules applies which makes operating across the region easier (note that this last indirect benefit is industry-based not Council based).</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> (i) access to equipment such as dosage pumps, portable clean down facilities, splatter guns and PDA units (ii) training available to Council staff and training resources for use in the community (iii) networking between pest management operators at different councils to share information (iv) regional working days to remove pests.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> – (i) sharing technical expertise between operational staff councils (ii) improving early detection in response to new and emerging threats to the environment (iii) undertaking education and awareness campaigns of district specific issues (iv) ability to undertake larger taskforce type regional activities if required (v) trial new plant and equipment and share technical expertise.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - information available through the regional greenhouse inventory and greenhouse mitigation action plan.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - technical committee staff able to network and share information about practical engineering problems. A regional approach is taken to prioritising DTMR funding to ensure that it is based on engineering need rather than non-technical criteria.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> – (i) network opportunity for asset managers from different councils to share information about asset management planning (ii) development of a regional asset management strategy.</p> <p><u>Regional planning</u> - input into the development of the FNQ 2031 statutory regional plan.</p> <p><u>Regional relationships</u> – Development of strong working relationships with key agencies in the region such as Terrain, Advance Cairns and RDA.</p> <p><u>Regional Economic Development</u> - input into the development of the Regional Economic Plan.</p> <p><u>Broadband</u> - participation in the joint submission to NBN for high-speed broadband rollout across the region. If successful, this will be a direct benefit.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - indirect benefits include guarantee of supply, access for smaller councils to greater purchasing power etc. Also access to standard professional procurement contracts.</p> <p><u>Local laws</u> - sharing information and precedents regarding development of local laws and jointly solving technical problems.</p> <p><u>Community plans</u> – sharing information regarding the development of individual community plans and presenting information to Regional Managers Co-ordination network.</p>
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Summary: - For every \$1 contributed by Cassowary Coast Regional Council, they receive \$22.47 in direct benefits plus the indirect benefits listed above.

Name of Council: - Tablelands Regional Council

<p>Direct cost to Council</p> <p>Membership fees:- \$67,503 plus 3.75% of LRRS subsidy plus 15% of any procurement project savings</p>	<p>Direct benefit to Council</p> <p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - estimate one off savings for Council of \$80,000 to prepare and \$15,000 pa to review. Direct benefits include: - application procedures, construction procedures, development principles, design guidelines, specifications, ‘as constructed’ guidelines, operational checklists etc. Council would have been required to prepare these documents. Cost estimates are based on consultancy fees to prepare and annually review a Council development manual.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - documentation able to be used by Council including regional pest management strategy, regional pest management plan, regional weed spread prevention strategy and code of practice for disaster management weed spread prevention. Estimated pa saving to Council for documentation - \$25,000.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - development of regional weed and pest animal distribution mapping which outlines location of major weed and pest infestations across Council boundaries - estimated savings Council for mapping information - \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> - Design guidelines for natural area restoration. Estimated saving for Council - \$5,000. Development of biodiversity code for use by members - Estimated saving for Council - \$10,000. Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Framework (mapping tool) – estimated one off saving of \$100,000 for mapping framework and \$20,000pa maintenance.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - total cost savings of over \$50,000 made by identifying incorrect electricity tariffs of buildings, street lighting and water and sewerage treatment plants, and ensuring councils pay only for the infrastructure which falls under its control. Local Climate Change Action Plans prepared saving each Council approximately \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - direct funding of \$289,600 made to Tablelands via DTMR¹⁶</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> - savings of approximately \$20,000 for Council for the development of documentation associated with levels of service for parks, buildings, roads and footpaths.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - direct savings not yet realised due to embryonic nature of project but potentially significant.</p> <p><u>Third party contributions</u> – FNQROC attracts additional funding from other organisations – Terrain \$80,000 –, RRG \$57,000 and Local Roads of Regional Significance \$106,000 – Tablelands Regional Council proportional benefit is \$40,500.</p> <hr/> <p>Total Direct benefit to Tablelands Regional Council:- \$774,700</p>
<p>Indirect cost to Council</p> <p>Indirect support for FNQROC by provision of</p>	<p>Indirect benefit to Council</p> <p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - there have been a number of indirect benefits from the regional development manual including (i) reduction in disputes with developers over standards as one regional rule applies</p>

¹⁶ Source – RRG road program for 2010/11

<p>office space, office equipment etc. Calculated as \$7,360 as per Appendix 3.</p> <p>Mayor, CEO and officer time for meetings and travel</p>	<p>which cannot be argued (i) standardisation of 'as constructed' plans lodged with Councils (iii) consultants and developers understand that one set of rules applies which makes operating across the region easier (note that this last indirect benefit is industry-based not Council based).</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> (i) access to equipment such as dosage pumps, portable clean down facilities, splatter guns and PDA units (ii) training available to Council staff and training resources for use in the community (iii) networking between pest management operators at different councils to share information (iv) regional working days to remove pests.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> – (i) sharing technical expertise between operational staff councils (ii) improving early detection in response to new and emerging threats to the environment (iii) undertaking education and awareness campaigns of district specific issues (iv) ability to undertake larger taskforce type regional activities if required (v) trial new plant and equipment and share technical expertise.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - information available through the regional greenhouse inventory and greenhouse mitigation action plan.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - technical committee staff able to network and share information about practical engineering problems. A regional approach is taken to prioritising DTMR funding to ensure that it is based on engineering need rather than non-technical criteria.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> – (i) network opportunity for asset managers from different councils to share information about asset management planning (ii) development of a regional asset management strategy.</p> <p><u>Regional planning</u> - input into the development of the FNQ 2031 statutory regional plan.</p> <p><u>Regional relationships</u> – Development of strong working relationships with key agencies in the region such as Terrain, Advance Cairns and RDA.</p> <p><u>Regional Economic Development</u> - input into the development of the Regional Economic Plan.</p> <p><u>Broadband</u> - participation in the joint submission to NBN for high-speed broadband rollout across the region. If successful, this will be a direct benefit.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - indirect benefits include guarantee of supply, access for smaller councils to greater purchasing power etc. Also access to standard professional procurement contracts.</p> <p><u>Local laws</u> - sharing information and precedents regarding development of local laws and jointly solving technical problems.</p> <p><u>Community plans</u> – sharing information regarding the development of individual community plans and presenting information to Regional Managers Co-ordination network.</p>
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Summary: - For every \$1 contributed by Tablelands Regional Council, they receive \$11.48 in direct benefits plus the indirect benefits (and costs) listed above.

Name of Council: - Cairns Regional Council

<p>Direct cost to Council</p> <p>Membership fees:- \$70,000 plus 3.75% of LRRS subsidy plus 15% of any procurement project savings</p>	<p>Direct benefit to Council</p> <p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - estimate one off savings for Council of \$80,000 to prepare and \$15,000 pa to review. Direct benefits include: - application procedures, construction procedures, development principles, design guidelines, specifications, ‘as constructed’ guidelines, operational checklists etc. Council would have been required to prepare these documents. Cost estimates are based on consultancy fees to prepare and annually review a Council development manual.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - documentation able to be used by Council including regional pest management strategy, regional pest management plan, regional weed spread prevention strategy and code of practice for disaster management weed spread prevention. Estimated pa saving to Council for documentation - \$25,000.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - development of regional weed and pest animal distribution mapping which outlines location of major weed and pest infestations across Council boundaries - estimated savings Council for mapping information - \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> - Design guidelines for natural area restoration. Estimated saving for Council - \$5,000. Development of biodiversity code for use by members - Estimated saving for Council - \$10,000. Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Framework (mapping tool) – estimated one off saving of \$100,000 for mapping framework and \$20,000 pa maintenance.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - total cost savings of over \$90,000 made by identifying incorrect electricity tariffs of buildings, street lighting and water and sewerage treatment plants, and ensuring councils pay only for the infrastructure which falls under its control. Local Climate Change Action Plans prepared saving each Council approximately \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - direct funding of \$1,190,000 made to Cairns via DTMR¹⁷</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> - savings of approximately \$20,000 for Council for the development of documentation associated with levels of service for parks, buildings, roads and footpaths.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - direct savings not yet realised due to embryonic nature of project but potentially significant.</p> <p><u>Third party contributions</u> – FNQROC attracts additional funding from other organisations – Terrain \$80,000 –, RRG \$57,000 and Local Roads of Regional Significance \$106,000 – Cairns Regional Council proportional benefit is \$40,500.</p> <hr/> <p>Total Direct benefit to Cairns Regional Council:- \$1,425,500</p>
<p>Indirect cost to Council</p> <p>Indirect support for FNQROC by provision of</p>	<p>Indirect benefit to Council</p> <p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - there have been a number of indirect benefits from the regional development manual including (i) reduction in disputes with developers over standards as one regional rule applies</p>

¹⁷ Source – RRG road program for 2010/11

<p>office space, office equipment etc. Calculated as \$19,660 as per Appendix 3.</p> <p>Mayor, CEO and officer time for meetings and travel</p>	<p>which cannot be argued (i) standardisation of 'as constructed' plans lodged with Councils (iii) consultants and developers understand that one set of rules applies which makes operating across the region easier (note that this last indirect benefit is industry-based not Council based).</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> (i) access to equipment such as dosage pumps, portable clean down facilities, splatter guns and PDA units (ii) training available to Council staff and training resources for use in the community (iii) networking between pest management operators at different councils to share information (iv) regional working days to remove pests.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> – (i) sharing technical expertise between operational staff councils (ii) improving early detection in response to new and emerging threats to the environment (iii) undertaking education and awareness campaigns of district specific issues (iv) ability to undertake larger taskforce type regional activities if required (v) trial new plant and equipment and share technical expertise.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - information available through the regional greenhouse inventory and greenhouse mitigation action plan.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - technical committee staff able to network and share information about practical engineering problems. A regional approach is taken to prioritising DTMR funding to ensure that it is based on engineering need rather than non-technical criteria.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> – (i) network opportunity for asset managers from different councils to share information about asset management planning (ii) development of a regional asset management strategy.</p> <p><u>Regional planning</u> - input into the development of the FNQ 2031 statutory regional plan.</p> <p><u>Regional relationships</u> – Development of strong working relationships with key agencies in the region such as Terrain, Advance Cairns and RDA.</p> <p><u>Regional Economic Development</u> - input into the development of the Regional Economic Plan.</p> <p><u>Broadband</u> - participation in the joint submission to NBN for high-speed broadband rollout across the region. If successful, this will be a direct benefit.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - indirect benefits include guarantee of supply, access for smaller councils to greater purchasing power etc. Also access to standard professional procurement contracts.</p> <p><u>Local laws</u> - sharing information and precedents regarding development of local laws and jointly solving technical problems.</p> <p><u>Community plans</u> – sharing information regarding the development of individual community plans and presenting information to Regional Managers Co-ordination network.</p>
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Summary: - For every \$1 contributed by Cairns Regional Council, they receive \$20.36 in direct benefits plus the indirect benefits (and costs) listed above.

Name of Council: - Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council

Direct cost to Council	Direct benefit to Council
<p>Membership fees:- \$15,847 plus 3.75% of LRRS subsidy plus 15% of any procurement project savings</p>	<p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - estimate one off savings for Council of \$80,000 to prepare and \$15,000 pa to review. Direct benefits include: - application procedures, construction procedures, development principles, design guidelines, specifications, ‘as constructed’ guidelines, operational checklists etc. Council would have been required to prepare these documents. Cost estimates are based on consultancy fees to prepare and annually review a Council development manual. This will align with Wujal Wujal’s town planning scheme preparation.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - documentation able to be used by Council including regional pest management strategy, regional pest management plan, regional weed spread prevention strategy and code of practice for disaster management weed spread prevention. Estimated pa saving to Council for documentation - \$25,000.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - development of regional weed and pest animal distribution mapping which outlines location of major weed and pest infestations across Council boundaries - estimated savings Council for mapping information - \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> - Design guidelines for natural area restoration. Estimated saving for Council - \$5,000. Development of biodiversity code for use by members - Estimated saving for Council - \$10,000. Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Framework (mapping tool) – estimated one off saving of \$100,000 for mapping framework and \$20,000pa maintenance.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - Local Climate Change Action Plans prepared saving each Council approximately \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> – potential to access direct funding via DTMR¹⁸ which will assist in upgrade of access roads to Wujal Wujal.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> - savings of approximately \$20,000 for Council for the development of documentation associated with levels of service for parks, buildings, roads and footpaths.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - direct savings not yet realised due to embryonic nature of project but potentially significant.</p> <p><u>Third party contributions</u> – FNQROC attracts additional funding from other organisations – Terrain \$80,000 –, RRG \$57,000 and Local Roads of Regional Significance \$106,000 – Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council proportional benefit is \$40,500.</p> <hr/> <p>Total Direct benefit to Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council:- \$145,500</p>
<p>Indirect cost to Council</p> <p>Mayor, CEO and officer time for meetings and travel. This is significant for Wujal Wujal.</p>	<p>Indirect benefit to Council</p> <p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - there have been a number of indirect benefits from the regional development manual including (i) reduction in disputes with developers over standards as one regional rule applies which cannot be argued (i) standardisation of ‘as constructed’ plans lodged with Councils (iii) consultants and developers understand that</p>

¹⁸ Although no projects were identified for Wujal Wujal in the RRG program, regional road upgrades do improve overall access for Wujal Wujal to the region.

	<p>one set of rules applies which makes operating across the region easier (note that this last indirect benefit is industry-based not Council based).</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> (i) access to equipment such as dosage pumps, portable clean down facilities, splatter guns and PDA units (ii) training available to Council staff and training resources for use in the community (iii) networking between pest management operators at different councils to share information (iv) regional working days to remove pests.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> – (i) sharing technical expertise between operational staff councils (ii) improving early detection in response to new and emerging threats to the environment (iii) undertaking education and awareness campaigns of district specific issues (iv) ability to undertake larger taskforce type regional activities if required (v) trial new plant and equipment and share technical expertise.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - information available through the regional greenhouse inventory and greenhouse mitigation action plan.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - technical committee staff able to network and share information about practical engineering problems. A regional approach is taken to prioritising DTMR funding to ensure that it is based on engineering need rather than non-technical criteria.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> – (i) network opportunity for asset managers from different councils to share information about asset management planning (ii) development of a regional asset management strategy.</p> <p><u>Regional planning</u> - input into the development of the FNQ 2031 statutory regional plan.</p> <p><u>Regional relationships</u> – Development of strong working relationships with key agencies in the region such as Terrain, Advance Cairns and RDA.</p> <p><u>Regional Economic Development</u> - input into the development of the Regional Economic Plan.</p> <p><u>Broadband</u> - participation in the joint submission to NBN for high-speed broadband rollout across the region. If successful, this will be a direct benefit.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - indirect benefits include guarantee of supply, access for smaller councils to greater purchasing power etc. Also access to standard professional procurement contracts.</p> <p><u>Local laws</u> - sharing information and precedents regarding development of local laws and jointly solving technical problems.</p> <p><u>Community plans</u> – sharing information regarding the development of individual community plans and presenting information to Regional Managers Co-ordination network.</p>
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Summary: - For every \$1 contributed by Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council, they receive \$9.18 in direct benefits plus the indirect benefits listed above.

Name of Council: - Croydon Shire Council

<p>Direct cost to Council</p> <p>Membership fees:- \$16,800 plus 15% of any procurement project savings</p>	<p>Direct benefit to Council</p> <p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - estimate one off savings for Council of \$80,000 to prepare and \$15,000 pa to review. Direct benefits include: - application procedures, construction procedures, development principles, design guidelines, specifications, ‘as constructed’ guidelines, operational checklists etc. Council would have been required to prepare these documents. Cost estimates are based on consultancy fees to prepare and annually review a Council development manual.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - documentation able to be used by Council including regional pest management strategy, regional pest management plan, regional weed spread prevention strategy and code of practice for disaster management weed spread prevention. Estimated pa saving to Council for documentation - \$25,000.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - development of regional weed and pest animal distribution mapping which outlines location of major weed and pest infestations across Council boundaries - estimated savings Council for mapping information - \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> – Croydon is not part of this project.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - Local Climate Change Action Plans prepared saving each Council approximately \$10,000 although this was prepared prior to Croydon becoming a full member of FNQROC.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> – Croydon are in the Gulf RRG.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> - savings of approximately \$20,000 for Council for the development of documentation associated with levels of service for parks, buildings, roads and footpaths.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - direct savings not yet realised due to embryonic nature of project but potentially significant.</p> <p><u>Third party contributions</u> – FNQROC attracts additional funding from other organisations – Terrain \$80,000 –, RRG \$57,000 and Local Roads of Regional Significance \$106,000 – Croydon Shire Council proportional benefit is \$40,500.</p> <hr/> <p>Total Direct benefit to Croydon Shire Council:- \$120,500</p>
<p>Indirect cost to Council</p> <p>Mayor, CEO and officer time for meetings and travel. This is significant for Croydon.</p>	<p>Indirect benefit to Council</p> <p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - there have been a number of indirect benefits from the regional development manual including (i) reduction in disputes with developers over standards as one regional rule applies which cannot be argued (i) standardisation of ‘as constructed’ plans lodged with Councils (iii) consultants and developers understand that one set of rules applies which makes operating across the region easier (note that this last indirect benefit is industry-based not Council based).</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> (i) access to equipment such as dosage pumps, portable clean down facilities, splatter guns and PDA units (ii) training available to Council staff and training resources for use in the community (iii) networking between pest management operators at different councils to share information (iv) regional working days to remove pests.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> – (Croydon is not part of this project).</p>

	<p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - information available through the regional greenhouse inventory and greenhouse mitigation action plan.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> – (i) network opportunity for asset managers from different councils to share information about asset management planning (ii) development of a regional asset management strategy.</p> <p><u>Regional planning</u> - input into the development of the FNQ 2031 statutory regional plan.</p> <p><u>Regional relationships</u> – Development of strong working relationships with key agencies in the region such as Terrain, Advance Cairns and RDA.</p> <p><u>Regional Economic Development</u> - input into the development of the Regional Economic Plan.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - indirect benefits include guarantee of supply, access for smaller councils to greater purchasing power etc. Also access to standard professional procurement contracts.</p> <p><u>Local laws</u> - sharing information and precedents regarding development of local laws and jointly solving technical problems.</p> <p><u>Community plans</u> – sharing information regarding the development of individual community plans and presenting information to Regional Managers Co-ordination network.</p>
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Summary: - For every \$1 contributed by Croydon Shire Council, they receive \$7.17 in direct benefits plus the indirect benefits listed above.

Name of Council: - Hinchinbrook Shire Council

<p>Direct cost to Council</p> <p>Membership fees:- \$18,500 plus 15% of any procurement project savings</p>	<p>Direct benefit to Council (note that Hinchinbrook is an associate member plus paying fees to be part of the Natural Asset Management and Sustainability projects).</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - documentation able to be used by Council including regional pest management strategy, regional pest management plan, regional weed spread prevention strategy and code of practice for disaster management weed spread prevention. Estimated pa saving to Council for documentation - \$25,000.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - development of regional weed and pest animal distribution mapping which outlines location of major weed and pest infestations across Council boundaries - estimated savings Council for mapping information - \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> - Design guidelines for natural area restoration. Estimated saving for Council - \$5,000. Development of biodiversity code for use by members - Estimated saving for Council - \$10,000. Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Framework (mapping tool) – estimated one off saving of \$100,000 for mapping framework and \$20,000pa maintenance.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - Local Climate Change Action Plans prepared saving each Council approximately \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - direct savings not yet realised due to embryonic nature of project but potentially significant.</p> <p>Total Direct benefit to Hinchinbrook Shire Council:- \$70,000</p>
<p>Indirect cost to Council</p> <p>Councillor, CEO and officer time for meetings and travel. This is significant for Hinchinbrook.</p>	<p>Indirect benefit to Council</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> (i) access to equipment such as dosage pumps, portable clean down facilities, splatter guns and PDA units (ii) training available to Council staff and training resources for use in the community (iii) networking between pest management operators at different councils to share information (iv) regional working days to remove pests.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> – (i) sharing technical expertise between operational staff councils (ii) improving early detection in response to new and emerging threats to the environment (iii) undertaking education and awareness campaigns of district specific issues (iv) ability to undertake larger taskforce type regional activities if required (v) trial new plant and equipment and share technical expertise.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - information available through the regional greenhouse inventory and greenhouse mitigation action plan.</p> <p><u>Regional relationships</u> – Development of strong working relationships with key agencies in the region such as Terrain, Advance Cairns and RDA.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - indirect benefits include guarantee of supply, access for smaller councils to greater purchasing power etc. Also access to standard professional procurement contracts.</p>

Summary: - For every \$1 contributed by Hinchinbrook Shire Council, they receive \$3.78 in direct benefits plus the indirect benefits listed above.

Name of Council: - Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

<p>Direct cost to Council</p> <p>Membership fees:- \$1,000 plus 15% of any procurement project savings</p>	<p>Direct benefit to Council – although an associate member Council, Yarrabah can access any reports and information from FNQROC.</p> <p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - estimate one off savings for Council of \$80,000 to prepare and \$15,000 pa to review if it desires to use this manual. Direct benefits would include: - application procedures, construction procedures, development principles, design guidelines, specifications, ‘as constructed’ guidelines, operational checklists etc. Council would have been required to prepare these documents. Cost estimates are based on consultancy fees to prepare and annually review a Council development manual.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - documentation able to be used by Council including regional pest management strategy, regional pest management plan, regional weed spread prevention strategy and code of practice for disaster management weed spread prevention. Estimated pa saving to Council for documentation - \$25,000.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - development of regional weed and pest animal distribution mapping which outlines location of major weed and pest infestations across Council boundaries - estimated savings Council for mapping information - \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> - Design guidelines for natural area restoration. Estimated saving for Council - \$5,000. Development of biodiversity code for use by members - Estimated saving for Council - \$10,000. Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Framework (mapping tool) – estimated one off saving of \$100,000 for mapping framework and \$20,000pa maintenance.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - Local Climate Change Action Plans prepared saving each Council approximately \$10,000.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - potential to access direct funding via DTMR¹⁹ which will assist in upgrade of access roads to Yarrabah.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> - savings of approximately \$20,000 for Council for the development of documentation associated with levels of service for parks, buildings, roads and footpaths.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - direct savings not yet realised due to embryonic nature of project but potentially significant.</p> <hr/> <p>Total Direct benefit to Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council:- \$105.00 (<i>Note that this is a potential direct benefit for Yarrabah because in practice, that Council does not avail itself of the various documentation and plans. If it did so, this is an estimate of the benefit that would accrue.</i>)</p>
<p>Indirect cost to Council</p> <p>Mayor, CEO and officer time for meetings and travel</p>	<p>Indirect benefit to Council</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> (i) access to equipment such as dosage pumps, portable clean down facilities, splatter guns and PDA units (ii) training available to Council staff and training resources for use in the community (iii) networking between pest management operators at different councils to share information (iv) regional working days to remove pests.</p>

¹⁹ Source – RRG road program for 2011/12

	<p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> – (i) sharing technical expertise between operational staff councils (ii) improving early detection in response to new and emerging threats to the environment (iii) undertaking education and awareness campaigns of district specific issues (iv) ability to undertake larger taskforce type regional activities if required (v) trial new plant and equipment and share technical expertise.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - information available through the regional greenhouse inventory and greenhouse mitigation action plan.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> - technical committee staff able to network and share information about practical engineering problems. A regional approach is taken to prioritising DTMR funding to ensure that it is based on engineering need rather than non-technical criteria.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> – (i) network opportunity for asset managers from different councils to share information about asset management planning (ii) development of a regional asset management strategy.</p> <p><u>Regional planning</u> - input into the development of the FNQ 2031 statutory regional plan.</p> <p><u>Regional relationships</u> – Development of strong working relationships with key agencies in the region such as Terrain, Advance Cairns and RDA.</p> <p><u>Regional Economic Development</u> - input into the development of the Regional Economic Plan.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - indirect benefits include guarantee of supply, access for smaller councils to greater purchasing power etc. Also access to standard professional procurement contracts.</p> <p><u>Local laws</u> - sharing information and precedents regarding development of local laws and jointly solving technical problems.</p> <p><u>Community plans</u> – sharing information regarding the development of individual community plans and presenting information to Regional Managers Co-ordination network.</p>
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Summary: - For every \$1 contributed by Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council, they receive \$105 in direct benefits plus the indirect benefits listed above.

(Note that this is a potential cost/benefit for Yarrabah because in practice, that Council does not avail itself of the various documentation and plans. If it did so, this is an estimate of the cost / benefit that would accrue.)

Name of Council: - Etheridge Shire Council

<p>Direct cost to Council</p> <p>Membership fees:- \$1,000 plus 15% of any procurement project savings</p>	<p>Direct benefit to Council - although an associate member Council, Etheridge can access any reports and information from FNQROC.</p> <p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - estimate one off savings for Council of \$80,000 to prepare and \$15,000 pa to review. Direct benefits include: - application procedures, construction procedures, development principles, design guidelines, specifications, 'as constructed' guidelines, operational checklists etc. Council would have been required to prepare these documents. Cost estimates are based on consultancy fees to prepare and annually review a Council development manual.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - documentation able to be used by Council including regional pest management strategy, regional pest management plan, regional weed spread prevention strategy and code of practice for disaster management weed spread prevention. Estimated pa saving to Council for documentation - \$25,000.</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - Etheridge is not part of this project.</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> – Etheridge is not part of this project.</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - Etheridge is not part of this project.</p> <p><u>Regional Roads Group</u> – Etheridge are in the Gulf RRG.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> - savings of approximately \$20,000 for Council for the development of documentation associated with levels of service for parks, buildings, roads and footpaths.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - direct savings not yet realised due to embryonic nature of project but potentially significant.</p> <hr/> <p>Total Direct benefit to Etheridge Shire Council:- \$60,000 <i>(Note that this is a maximum potential direct benefit for Etheridge if that Council avails itself of the various documentation and plans.)</i></p>
<p>Indirect cost to Council</p> <p>Mayor, CEO and officer time for meetings and travel. This is significant for Etheridge.</p>	<p>Indirect benefit to Council</p> <p><u>Regional Development Manual</u> - there have been a number of indirect benefits from the regional development manual including (i) reduction in disputes with developers over standards as one regional rule applies which cannot be argued (i) standardisation of 'as constructed' plans lodged with Councils (iii) consultants and developers understand that one set of rules applies which makes operating across the region easier (note that this last indirect benefit is industry-based not Council based).</p> <p><u>Pest Management</u> - (Etheridge is not part of this project).</p> <p><u>Natural Area Asset Management</u> – (Etheridge is not part of this project).</p> <p><u>Regional Sustainability Group</u> - information available through the regional greenhouse inventory and greenhouse mitigation action plan.</p> <p><u>Regional Asset Management</u> – (i) network opportunity for asset managers from different councils to share information about asset management planning (ii) development of a regional asset management strategy.</p> <p><u>Regional planning</u> - input into the development of the FNQ 2031 statutory regional plan.</p> <p><u>Regional relationships</u> – Development of strong working relationships with key agencies in the region such as Terrain, Advance Cairns and RDA.</p>

	<p><u>Regional Economic Development</u> - input into the development of the Regional Economic Plan.</p> <p><u>Regional procurement</u> - indirect benefits include guarantee of supply, access for smaller councils to greater purchasing power etc. Also access to standard professional procurement contracts.</p> <p><u>Local laws</u> - sharing information and precedents regarding development of local laws and jointly solving technical problems.</p> <p><u>Community plans</u> – sharing information regarding the development of individual community plans and presenting information to Regional Managers Co-ordination network.</p>
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Summary: - For every \$1 contributed by Etheridge Shire Council, they receive \$60.00 in direct benefits plus the indirect benefits listed above.

(Note that this is a potential cost/benefit for Etheridge if that Council avails itself of the various documentation and plans. If it did so, this is an estimate of the cost / benefit that would accrue.)

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