



FNQ Water Alliance Meeting No. 11 - Minutes

Date: Friday 20 May 2016

Time: 10:15am – 2:20pm

Attendees	Name	Org
	Steve Cosatto	FNQROC
	Arron Hieatt	LGAQ
	Geoffrey Smart	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
	Irvine Darlene	FNQROC
	Morris Hamill	Mareeba Shire Council
	Graham O'Byrne	Cairns Regional Council
	Ray Kirkman	Croydon
	Wouter Van der Merwe	Douglas Shire Council
	Wuth Mark	Cairns Regional Council
	Steven Porter	Cairns Regional Council
	Brad Bakker	Tablelands Regional Council
	Page Simon	Cairns Regional Council
Observers	Rob Lawrence	Dept of Environment and Heritage Protection
	Chris Hill	Dept of Environment and Heritage Protection
Apologies	Rob Fearon	Qld Water
	Dawn Lake	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council
	Michael Czarnecki	Cook Shire Council
	Peter Martin	Hinchinbrook Shire Council

Location: Cairns Regional Council - level three Committee meeting room.

1. **Welcome and Apologies.**

2. **Department of Environment and Heritage Protection.**

Presentation - Regulation and Compliance – Department of Environment and Heritage Protection

Rob Lawrence Executive Director Minerals & North Queensland Compliance and Chris Hill Director Industry and Development.

Focus on developing a business center model to improve consistency across the state

- Business center's - Cairns, Emerald, Toowoomba, Brisbane
- Compliance center's - on the ground resources dispersed across all regional offices to maintain responsiveness.
- EHP regulatory Strategy remains a priority – aware of many outdated permits which are overly prescriptive.
- Transitioning to more outcomes focused conditions – Monitoring performance and responding to performance issues

Compliance steering committee - consists of executive directors and a range of senior officers

- Recommendations in relation to serious compliance issues and to ensure consistency, PINs are reviewed by Compliance Steering Committee
- EHP are concerned with the systemic issues
- Attempting to achieve more consistent regulation and compliance.
- Amendments can be made to council permits by negotiation.
- EHP Comment that it has been a long standing process that Councils have the ability to amend permits, may not be well known.
- If there old permits with prescriptive conditions there are options to amend/to modernise.
- Due to the transition process EHP aware of teething issues regarding turnaround time for compliance issues.
- EHP - current KPI of 15 business days to respond to clients. EHP aware that at times they are not meeting those requirements.

Query:

- Councils only being provided with 5 business days to respond, public holiday's included.
- Comment that not all issues were not fully discussed at time of conversation ie on site visit or phone discussion.

EHP advised:

- perhaps some miscommunication as – EHP does not consider public holidays to be business days.
- Councils should do what they are able and provide correspondence to acknowledge there is an issue and that they are working on the issue articulating what is going to happen.

General discussion:

Councils don't mind more of a regulatory approach as it is more black and white ie assists in getting projects through councils.

Move with the green tape reduction very positive

EHP aware of resource constraints within EHP. Eg aware of councils desire to amend permit regarding landfills away from old EA to a green tape arrangement. EHP is currently unable to expedite process. However this response is being investigated and EHP will discuss with the relevant council.

Query:

- What happens if council is in between an amendment and an audit when councils know that they will be non compliant.

EHP advised:

- Council should highlight during a compliance inspection if there are relevant amendments in train. The compliance staff are in contact with the relevant assessment staff

Query:



- Some exceedence issues which are in reality minor is resulting in harsh correspondence from the department as if it is a serious issue. This results in a negative view and relationship between council staff and department staff.
- There are some notifications that aren't as critical – capturing more data than is needed. Ie items that aren't going to cause environmental harm.

EHP advised:

- EHP aware that there are standard warnings with direct terminology.
- Councils are encouraged to engage with department to review permits - assessment team lodgment team
- Calibration of the licenses which are important and which aren't

ACTION: A Compliance permits/license workshop to be facilitated.

Workshop to:

- Commence identification process of prescriptive or out of date permits with a view of engaging EHP staff for review and amendment.

ACTION: Draft letter for Dept EHP of the effect on councils resources in addressing PIN's within five working days.

Presentation ended at 11:15

3. Graham O'Byrne confirming his acceptance of his role as chair of the FNQ Water Alliance.

4. Review of Actions from previous meeting.

ACTION	Org Responsible	Complete
a) Mark Wuth (CRC) to provide feedback on behalf of councils at Performance Reporting KPI Steering group meeting 10 March. (Mark to send email request to members)	CRC	At meeting
b) Steve Cosatto to distribute DEWS presentation to group.	FNQROC	√
c) DEWS (Ted Aldred) to forward current link to register of pre-qualified certified auditors.	DEWS/FNQROC	√
d) Member councils to advise ROC, numbers they would be able to nominate for Certified Auditors course.	All Councils	
e) Darlene Irvine to contact Rob Lawrence (EHP) to attend group's next meeting.	FNQROC	√
f) Steve Cosatto to distribute CRC Replacement Rate for Water and Waste Water Assets presentation to group.	FNQROC	
g) Morris Hamill to provide contact details to Swiss Farms	MSC	√
h) Geoff Smart to provide contact details to Celtic Construction & Utility Services - CCUS.	CCRC	√
i) Amanda Hancock to provide Bio-solid and Pump research update at FNQ QWRAP meeting Friday 20 May.	FNQROC	
j) Steve Cosatto to finalise draft ToR and distribute to councils prior to next meeting.	FNQROC	√



ACTION	Org Responsible	Complete
k) As per FNQROC communication strategy each member council responsible to circulate Draft document to relevant internal council officers for comment.	All Councils	√
l) Each Council to review Action Statement and Plan to identify opportunities for collaboration.	All Councils	held over to next meeting due to meeting overrun.

Refer action item 4 a)

Mark Wuth to provide feedback on behalf of councils at Performance Reporting KPI Steering group meeting 10 March. (Mark to send email request to members)

Mark Wuth advised:

- The KPI steering committee meeting fortnightly
- DEWS is reviewing feedback of KPIs
- Attempting to marry KPIs between States ie attempting to align to National Performance Reporting (NPR)
- Clearer definitions
- Review of reporting process.
- If there issues regarding internal contacts within councils ie finance, councils can provide those details.
- Estimating forecasting of KPIs
- Timetable for reporting

Arron Hieatt advised

- Avoiding unnecessary or duplicate reporting is the goal - less burden on councils
- Funding may be tied to KPIs in future to ensure it's going where it needs to go.
- The group asked why DEWS has created its own benchmarking report for the KPIs, when qldwater has been doing a comparative report for several years. The duplication is temporary since the mandatory reporting of KPIs have just started. There will likely be a single report in the future. The qldwater report is designed to assist councils in benchmarking against other organisations of a similar size whereas the aim of the DEWS report is not yet decided. Qldwater will continue producing their report for as long as it is useful for members and this will depend on the structure of future DEWS reporting.
- Reporting definitions and response times have been an issue, but DEWS has a working group with council representatives working through them and improving the KPIs

Refer action item 4 d)

Member councils to advise ROC, numbers they would be able to nominate for Certified Auditors course.

- LGAQ advises to cost of auditor not applicable for LGAQ funding however costs of procurement would be.

ACTION: Carry action over to next meeting - Member councils to advise ROC, numbers they would be able to nominate for Certified Auditors course.

Refer action item 4 f)



Steve Cosatto to distribute CRC replacement rates for Water and Waste Water Assets presentation to group.

- S. Porter advised that a variety of assumptions that need to be made regarding rates - associated caveats, assumptions, substantiation of values and revaluations.
- Difficult to develop a centralised register due to these variances.
- Geoff Smart commented that rates would be handy when discuss rates with consultants and auditors.

Agreed that councils would contact Steven Porter (CRC) to discuss Asset Valuations where required.

5. Update from LGAQ – Arron Hieatt advised:

- DEWS views on QWRAP: qldwater tour included a visit to Palm Island. The tour included Paul Simshauser, Director General from DEWS. When the council asked for assistance in developing a strategy to dealing with water security issues the DG offered to include the council in the Regional Water Supply Security Assessment Program (RWSSA). In a conversation between Arron and the DG afterwards the DG stated that it is up to the councils to determine how they will deal with security issues, and that QWRAP was the best way for councils to do this.
- LGAQ State Budget letter: LGAQ has written to the Treasurer in advance of the coming State budget to seek funding support for several initiatives. One of the items proposed is a dedicated resource to support councils in demand management and security planning. The current RWSSA program will only evaluate large cities, and there is nothing for smaller towns. The funding will support “Snap shot assessments” that will provide information for councils to make decisions on water security issues.
- The LGAQ is also seeking funding support for a mandatory certification program for water operators. Certification will ensure that training is tailored for the Service provider, and is appropriate for the treatment systems operated.
- Advisory Group: LGAQ will seek EOIs for the Water and Sewerage Advisory group in August.
- SunWater Bulk Water Pricing: Work regarding bulk water pricing of SunWater is still being progressed. The Jacobs report has been reviewed by Synergies Consulting, as requested by DEWS. A meeting between LGAQ, qldwater, DEWS, and SunWater is being arranged to discuss both reports.

ACTION: Arron Hieatt to forward Synergies Economic Consulting review of LGAQ report re Asset Values for distribution.

- Next QWRAP regional coordinator funding becomes available July 1 2016, while bid pool funding for specific projects is available at any time.
- Advice on guidelines regarding the two categories of funding.
- Fund is underspent and the group should consider projects to submit for funding.
- Pumping station code of practice ERA 63
 - Qldwater is continuing to meet with DEHP regarding the Code. They met with the new DG of DEHP last week and discussed the Code, and the DG confirmed that he supported the adoption of the Code and removal of the current requirements. The recommendation is with the



Minister for a final decision. Unfortunately, there is still no timeframe for the decision about the removal of current requirements.

Terms of Reference FNQ QWRAP

Steve Cosatto advised that CRC had developed an alternative draft for consideration which was emailed to representatives 9.45am this morning. Mark Wuth provided a hard copy for committee review.

The group then reviewed the alternative draft provided by CRC at the meeting. Attached is a tracked changed copy of the draft alternative based on the discussions held.

General discussion:

- Group should adhere to FNQROC guidelines and policies and operate as a technical committee underneath the FNQROC /Board.
- Formalised document providing clarity to how the committee will operate.
- Development of an Annual work plan by March of each year as part of the FNQROC operational plan and report on the following August – it is anticipated this document would sit outside the ToR and would be reviewed quarterly.
- Darlene Irvine advised the Board would be conducting a strategic workshop towards the end of the year. The intent of the workshop is to develop a five year strategic plan. This would provide the Water alliance with an opportunity to provide strategic recommendations to the Board.

ACTION: Mark Wuth to amend draft Terms of Reference – Steve Cosatto to distribute.

6. Regional Procurement update – Amanda Hancock FNQROC

Item to be carried over to next meeting.

7. Member councils to advise group of three Water or Waste Water priorities – (Identification of synergies or opportunities for collaboration between councils or regionally).

Item to be carried over to next meeting.

8. Proposed FNQ Water Alliance Meetings, 2016.

Venue	Date
Cairns	Early July – date to be advised.
Cairns	4 November



9. Meeting closed at 2:20

10. Summary of Actions:

ACTION	Org Responsible
A Compliance permits/license workshop to be facilitated with EHP. Workshop to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss and commence identification process of prescriptive or out of date permits with a view of engaging EHP staff for review and amendment.	FNQROC
Draft letter for Dept EHP of the effect on council's resources in addressing PIN's within five working days.	
Carry action over to next meeting - Member councils to advise ROC, numbers they would be able to nominate for Certified Auditors course.	All members
Arron Hieatt to forward synergies report for distribution. (Arron please provide official title for this report)	LGAQ
Mark Wuth to amend draft Terms of Reference – Steve Cosatto to distribute with minutes.	CRC/FNQROC

NB: Although not an action it was agreed, that councils would contact Steven Porter (CRC) to discuss Asset Valuations where required.

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