



Image: FNQROC Mayoral Delegation (Feb '19)

ADVOCACY REPORT

**FNQROC
MAYORAL DELEGATION
26-28 NOVEMBER 2019**



Effectively advocating regional priorities to develop the economies of Far North Queensland





DELEGATION MEMBERS

- Cr Tom Gilmore, FNQROC Chair
Mayor, Mareeba Shire Council
- Cr Bob Manning, Mayor
Cairns Regional Council
- Cr Bradley Hawkins, Councilor
Carpentaria Shire Council
- Cr John Kremastos, Mayor
Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- Cr Peter Scott, Mayor
Cook Shire Council
- Cr Trevor Pickering, Mayor
Croydon Shire Council
- Cr Julia Leu, Mayor
Douglas Shire Council
- Cr Warren Devlin, Mayor
Etheridge Shire Council
- Mr Steve Linnane, CEO
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
- Mr Peter Franks, CEO
Mareeba Shire Council
- Cr Joe Paronella, Mayor
Tablelands Regional Council
- Cr Ross Andrews, Mayor
Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire
- Mr Leon Yeatman, CEO
Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire
- Ms Darlene Irvine
FNQROC Executive Officer

PRIORITY PILLARS

Key priority projects as identified by the Board and advocated for during this Mayoral Delegation, align with the FNQROC Strategic Economic Priorities of:

- TRANSPORT
- WATER & ENERGY
- ENVIRONMENT
- SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE
- COMMUNICATION

Key Briefing Notes can be accessed via:

- [FNQROC Federal Priorities](#)
- [Kuranda Range Road](#)
- [Capital Investment in Dams](#)
- [FNQROC Mobile Coverage Audit](#)

*Total regional 'steps' walked inside
Parliament House = **14.7km**
(Day 1 = 8km / Day 2 = 6.7km)*



FNQROC PRIORITY PROJECTS

Critical Infrastructure:

Kuranda Range Road (Kennedy Highway)

Road Investment:

Regional Road Stimulus Package
Gulf Developmental & Burke Developmental Roads

Water:

Capital Investment in Dams / Nullinga Dam
Gilbert River & Tablelands Irrigation Projects

Environment:

Doppler Weather Radar
Reef & Rainforest Management

Indigenous Liveability:

National Partnerships for Remote Housing

Digital Connectivity:

FNQROC Mobile Coverage Audit

Tourism Infrastructure:

Croydon Mountain Bike Trails
Priors Creek Master Plan

Arts & Culture:

Cairns Gallery Precinct
National Indigenous Heritage Centre

Industry/Infrastructure:

Cairns Seaport/HMAS
Renewable Energy Zone

Agriculture:

Impacts of the drought on the Dairy Industry



OUR REGION

13 Local Governments
representing
17% of QLD Councils

The largest and fastest
growing region in
Northern Australia



OUR COMMUNITY

275,637 People
(June 2017)

316,663km² of land area,
including 1235km of
Eastern seaboard



OUR ECONOMY

\$15.15B GRP

Tourism \$3.15b
Primary Industries \$3.2b
Mining \$0.8b
Construction \$2.9b
Manufacturing \$2.4b



FNQROC Full Delegation

Cr's Pickering, Devlin, Andrews
Mr Linnane, Yeatman and Franks

Hon David Littleproud MP, Minister for Water Resources, Drought, Rural Finances, Natural Disaster & Emergency Mgmt

Key Topics and Discussions

- Capital Investment in Dams
- Impact of the drought on the Dairy Industry
- Doppler Weather Radar
- Mobile Coverage Audit

Department Secretary in place to look at infrastructure. Minister is asking some questions re economic live vs useful life re dam pricing.

Gilbert River (27,000 hectares under crops) - issues with water resource plan:

- WIC – Water Infrastructure lending, interest only for 5 years then paid back over 30 years.
- Next stage for Gilbert River project is the Environmental Impact Studies (EIS)

Doppler Weather Radar – Flinders covered by Longreach.

Dairy Industry - NQ in crisis mode; only tropical dairy in Southern Hemisphere. Minister's thoughts are it is nearly time for a royal commission into supermarkets.

Outcome Outcomes / Follow Up:

Minister to talk to CEO of BOM, he will see what can be done and will make representations,

Cr Pickering to send information to the Minister (he needs this).

Mr Nikhiliesh Acharya and Mr Jackson Whiteley, Senior Advisors to Minister Sukkar MP, Minister for Housing

Key Topics and Discussions

- Social Housing
- Indigenous Liveability – National Partnerships for Remote Housing

Advisors could not assist with specific FNQROC raised housing issues, however advised that they are working on the current disconnect between regional social housing, remote social housing, urban social housing and indigenous social housing.

Outcomes / Follow Up

Cr Pickering to send the addresses of the vacant properties located in Croydon to the advisors (completed).



Cr's Manning, Scott, Leu, Kremastos, Paronella and Hawkins



Cr's Scott, Devlin, Leu and Mr Linnane
FNQROC Executive Officer

Ms Jacqueline Lange, Senior Advisor to Minister Birmingham MP, Minister for Tourism & Trade

Key Topics and Discussions

- National Indigenous Heritage Centre (NIHC)
- Cairns Gallery Precinct
- Croydon Mountain Bike Trail

Discussions raised by the following councils:-

CRC – \$40m Indigenous Business Tourism Fund (Hon Ken Wyatt MP) available re NIHC Project; Tourism Levy

CSC – Indigenous Business Survey (TCICA) and DATSIP Community Master Planning; Issues re rubbish in National Parks and State Roads; Cooktown 2020 Sentiment.

ESC/TRC/CCRC/DSC: Regional Tourism Plan

Questioned asked of the group re what the drought position is in FNQ - Concerning? Noted tourism funding available via BBR.

Outcomes / Follow Up

Cr Pickering to contact Jacqueline Lange, Senior Advisor to the Minister re Mountain Bike Trail.

Senator Pauline Hanson and Senator Malcolm Roberts, Senators for Queensland

Advisors

Robyn Cross and Pat Hancock

Key Topics and Discussions

- Capital Investment in Dams
- Impact of the drought on the Dairy Industry
- Road Investment, including Kuranda Range Road and linkages to Cape and Gulf
- Gilbert River Project
- Proposed Douglas lagoon project

Senator Hanson has put up a bill for farm gate price per region – determined by ACCC. Included mandatory code of conduct and dealing with processors – cannot force them to keep the milk in Australia. Everywhere else has a farm gate price. Nationals have put out for consultation but the government made them sign a confidentiality agreement first. Needs one more vote to get it through parliament.

Opportunities to diversify Etheridge Shire through tourism and agriculture.

Outcomes / Follow Up

Cr Devlin to follow up verbal invitation to visit Etheridge Shire.



FNQROC Delegation with the exception of Cr Scott



FNQROC Delegation with the exception of Cr Scott

LNP Qld Senators McGrath, Stoker, McDonald, Rennick & Scarr

Key Topics and Discussions

- FNQROC Federal Priorities
- Capital Investment in Dams
- FNQROC Mobile Coverage Audit
- Doppler Weather Radar
- Impact of the drought on the Dairy Industry
- Yarrabah & Social Housing
- Port Douglas Lagoon Project

Noted that Cairns and the surrounding areas are reliant on each other. Port lands and masterplan with location linkages to Defence and Asia Pacific.

Senators had to leave throughout the meeting for divisions.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

Send all Senators the FNQROC Mobile Coverage Audit Report and Data files.

Labor Qld Senators Watt, Chisholm and Green

Key Topics and Discussions

- FNQROC Federal Priorities
- Capital Investment in Dams
- FNQROC Mobile Coverage Report
- Doppler Weather Radar
- Impacts of the drought on the Dairy Industry
- Gilbert River Project
-

Noted Gilbert River project DRAFT Business Case due early December and potential Cotton Gin industry for Etheridge Shire.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

Send all Senators the FNQROC Mobile Coverage Audit Report and Data files.



Cr's Pickering, Hawkins and Mr Linnane
FNQROC Executive Officer

Ms Michelle Rowland MP, Shadow Minister for Communications

Key Topics and Discussions

- Mobile Coverage Audit
- Doppler Station

Shadow Minister asked how the ABC was performing.

Noted when it comes to weather the Mayors rely on it and when communications go down the communities use it/rely on it.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

Shadow Minister happy to support the Doppler Weather Station.

FNQROC to provide information re how many stations/farms that currently do not have mobile coverage.



Cr's Gilmore, Kremastos, Paronella, Leu, Devlin,
Andrews and Mr Yeatman and Franks

Mr Chris Daffey (Roads) and Mr Ryan Black (Communication), Senior Advisors to the Prime Minister, Hon Scott Morrison MP

Key Topics and Discussions

- Capital Investment in Dams
- Road Investment
- Mobile Coverage Audit
- Dairy Industry

Briefing provided on critical roads, including Kuranda Range Road and ROSI. Noted that these priorities do not necessarily fall within the Prime Minister's office, and should be addressed directly with the relevant portfolio/Minister.

Briefed on the FNQROC Mobile Coverage Audit report outcomes and their office requested a full copy of the report (including data files) be resent.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

Send FNQROC Mobile Coverage Report and Data files to Ryan Black (completed).



FNQROC Delegation with the exception of Crs Manning and Scott

Hon Catherine King MP, Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Transport & Regional Dev.

Key Topics and Discussions

- Capital Investment in Dams
- Road Investment, including Kuranda Range Road
- IQRAP
- Gulf Developmental Road
- Mobile Coverage Audit

Advised that it was good that FNQROC were meeting with the Shadow Ministry early on these issues/projects, as the next election will be called between November 2021 and March 2022.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

Send the FNQROC Mobile Coverage Audit Report and Data files.



FNQROC Delegation with the exception of Cr's Scott, Andrews, Manning and Mr Linnane and Mr Yeatman

Senator the Hon Matthew Canavan MP, Minister for Northern Australia & Resources (+ Anne Stunzner)

Key Topics and Discussions

- Capital Investment in Dams
- Kuranda Range Road
- Dairy Industry
- Mobile Coverage Audit

Dams: Advised Rookwood was not permitted to capitalise on the Federal grant. State can still make application, Feds not seeking full cost recovery. Minister will be refreshing the agenda next year.

Kuranda Range Road: Major Business Study - \$21.5mil available, need to get the State to apply.

Dairy Industry: We were advised:

- Dairy Code of Conduct being developed
- Will ramp up pressure with supermarkets to lift their price again
- Need supply chain working better

Gilbert River Project: Draft detailed design due mid Dec 2019; 27,000 hectares under crops; Charleston dam (13,000 ML) will support cotton gin, providing water supply to Forsyth/ Georgetown.

Croydon has 4 businesses starting up, mostly gold mining which will travel through Georgetown, they need the Gilbert River Bridge upgraded.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

1. Letter to State Government asking them to apply for the \$21.5mil from the [Major Project Business Case Fund](#) (MPSCF)
2. Feed Mobile Blackspot audit into blackspot program.



FNQROC Delegation with the exception of Cr Manning



Cr's Gilmore, Paronella, Kremastos, Pickering, Devlin, Leu, Hawkins + Mr Franks and Ms Irvine

Hon Jason Clare MP, Shadow Minister for Resources & Northern Australia

Key Topics and Discussions

- Capital Investment in Dams
- Road Investment, including KRR
- Mobile Coverage Audit
- Remote Housing
- Indigenous Liveability (NPRH)
- Dairy Industry
- Gilbert River Irrigation & Bridge
- Charleston Dam
- Savannah Way / Gulf Development Rd

Gilbert River Project: Draft detailed design due mid Dec 2019; 27,000 hectares under crops; Charleston dam (13,000 ML) will support cotton gin, providing water supply to Forsyth/ Georgetown.

Croydon has 4 businesses starting up, mostly gold mining which will travel through Georgetown, they need the Gilbert River Bridge upgraded.

Croydon housing and Cairns & District Housing – Croydon Shire wants houses released and held in trust.

NPRH will not be renewed, will move \$5mil this year and \$100 mil next year. The State has committed \$1bil over 10 years. Minister Wyatt advised \$105mil exit strategy over one (1) year.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

Hon Mark Coulton MP, Minister for Regional Services, Decentralisation & Local Government and Ms Rachael Power, Senior Advisor to Deputy Prime Minister, Hon Michael McCormack MP

Key Topics and Discussions

- Introduction to FNQROC
- Capital Investment in Dams
- Road Investment
- Mobile Coverage Audit
- Indigenous Liveability
- Impact of the drought on the Dairy Industry

Minister advised the positive aspect with the drought is the dynamic turnaround re Dam Infrastructure.

Regional Communications Program due to open, once available the Ministers office will send to FNQROC in relation to the Mobile Coverage Report. Also noted that they have the money to communicate clearly, what is available as a solution.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

Minister's office to send FNQROC notice once Regional Communications Program opens.



FNQROC Delegation with the exception of
Cr Manning

**Ms Paula Svarcas, Senior
Advisor to the Prime Minister,
Hon Scott Morrison MP re Water
and Agriculture**

Key Topics and Discussions

- Capital Investment in Dams
- Dairy Industry
- Gilbert River Business Case
- Charleston Dam

Dairy Industry

- Have we looked at a co-operative? Fed Govt have put money for farmers to go a cooperative approach – this money is about to flow out.
- Draft Dairy Code – agree very lacking when looking at it from a farmers perspective.
- Dairy package re drought has gone out

Dams

- They agree, have built 16 in TAS, the state is working with them
- Constitutionally they can't build a dam on their own
- National Water Grid (Authority) (new) is looking strategically and mapping where water needs to go. They have no regret dams, this includes Lakeland

Community Gardens

- PM will work with local councils to look at opportunities for community gardens. Open to any proposals to start working on, (ie a few acres focussed on health and healthy eating for communities and not for selling). Yarrabah interested in this

Key Outcomes/Follow up

Councils interested in Community Gardens to send proposals to Paula Svarcas.



Cr Leu and Cr Hawkins
FNQROC Executive Officer

**Hon Warren Entsch MP, Member
for Leichhardt**

Key Topics and Discussions

- Impacts of the drought on the Dairy Industry
- FNQROC Mobile Coverage Audit
- Electorate specific issues

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

- Thank you for assistance in supporting the FNQROC Federal Delegation visit.



Cr's Kremastos, Paronella, Leu, Andrews, Devlin

Senator Larissa Waters, Senator for Qld

Key Topics and Discussions

- Intro to FNQROC role
- Capital Investment in Dams
- Road Investment

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

Full discussion notes to follow



Cr's Gilmore, Manning and Mr Franks

Hon Richard Marles MP, Deputy Leader and Shadow Minister for Defence

Key Topics and Discussions

- Capital Investment in Dams
- Cairns Sea Port / HMAS

Cr Manning briefed the Shadow Minister on the importance of a Navy presence and expansion within the Cairns region.

Discussions were held regarding the establishment of a PNG NRL team, partially based in Cairns and the possibility of linking a Netball team to this opportunity.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

The Shadow Minister was supportive of all issues/opportunities raised.

The FNQROC Chair presented the Deputy Leader with a FNQROC branded Snow Globe to add to his collection.



FNQROC Executive Officer and Cr Hawkins

Hon Paul Fletcher MP, Minister for Communications

Key Topics and Discussions

- Mobile Coverage Audit
- Digital Connectivity

Minister advised that in relation to Digital Connectivity, we have NBN Satellite, which we are not utilising.

Questions raised include:

- Awareness of satellites
- What is the accessibility
- What are the upload/download speeds?
- What are the costs?
- How do they compare to those on fixed WiFi and fibre optic cable

Cr Hawkins advised that the interim was not providing a satisfactory solution and communities were 'gun shy'.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up



FNQROC Delegation with the exception of Crs Manning and Mr Franks

Senator Nita Green, Deputy Senator for Leichhardt

Key Topics and Discussions

- Community Projects
- FAG's

Senator is keen to learn about smaller projects (such as water parks, etc) that would influence community liveability.

Mayors reiterated the reality of ongoing maintenance and impact on budgets of things such as parks, etc. Infrastructure is generally ¼ of the life cost and councils bear the other ¾.

They also expressed that things such as water parks (particularly located in the Western regions) would be seen as inappropriate use of water.

Discussion re FAG's.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

FNQROC to send the FAG's Methodology to regional Mayors.



Cr's Gilmore, Paronella, Kremastos, Scott, Devlin
FNQROC Executive Officer

Hon Bridget McKenzie MP, Minister for Agriculture

Key Topics and Discussions

- Capital Investment in Dams
- Dairy Industry

The Minister advised that they have made progress in relation to Dam Infrastructure with TAS and NSW State Governments, but struggling with QLD.

The Minister advised:

- Very close to code – provisions to help
- Very conscious of NQ
- Have met with supermarkets re dairy and was clear with them the Government wants some movement

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

FNQROC to ask Minister McCormack's office to get IA to do a review of Nullinga Dam Business Case.



FNQROC Delegation with the exception of
Cr's Scott, Manning and Leu

Hon Joel Fitzgibbon MP, Shadow Minister for Agriculture & Resources

Key Topics and Discussions

- Capital Investment in Dams
- Dairy Industry
- Mobile Coverage Audit
- Kuranda Range Road
- Gulf Developmental Road

The Shadow Minister noted the Dairy Industry as a matter of public importance yesterday (26 Nov).

Cr Devlin noted that the detailed Business Case for the Gilbert River project is due mid Dec 2019 and the Detailed Business Case for the Lakeland project is currently underway.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

Cr Devlin to send electronic copies of documents to the Shadow Minister



FNQROC Delegation with the exception of Cr Manning



FNQROC Delegation with the exception of Cr Manning

Hon Scott Buchholz MP, Assistant Minister for Road Safety & Freight Transport

Advisors:

Matt Dunston (Freight), Josh Christian (Safety)

Key Topics and Discussions

- Road Investment
- Kuranda Range Road
- Savannah Way
- IQRAP
- Mobile Coverage Audit
- RRIS Update

ROSI

- Governments keen to deliver ROSI
- Qld Govt has committed 20% in our region
- Next stage of consultation through RRTG but the Qld Govt did not support
- Discussed the capacity for LG to fund 20% on LG roads (in ROSI and Beef)
- While a 10 year program, ROSI is designed to focus on ongoing investment in the North

DFRA

- Include betterment during restoration. A. Minister believes he does but gives the money as a whole to the State.

BLACKSPOT

- Blackspot criteria around fatalities – does not have to have fatalities, can have incidents.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

FNQROC to design a 4-day itinerary for the Assistant Minister.

Hon Nola Marino MP, Assistant Minister for Regional Development & Territories

Key Topics and Discussions

- Intro to FNQROC role
- Capital Investment in Dams
- Kuranda Range Road
- Mobile Coverage Audit
- Croydon Mountain Bike Trail
- Gilbert River Bridge
- Savannah Way
- Regional Tourism
- Impacts of the drought on the Dairy Industry

Advised the Assistant Minister that all 13 councils support the region, noting what benefits one, part benefits all, and their turn will come.

All council members focused on Kuranda Range Road as the critical project for FNQROC.

Key Outcomes / Follow Up



Cr's Gilmore, Manning, Devlin, Paronella, Andrews, Hawkins and Mr Yeatman

Ms Terri Butler MP, Shadow Minister for the Environment & Water

Key Topics and Discussions

- Capital Investment in Dams
- Reef & Rainforest Mgmt
- Doppler Weather Radar

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

Full discussion notes to follow



C's Gilmore, Paronella, Kremastos, Pickering, Devlin and Mr Franks

Mr Nathan Wonder, Senior Advisor to Treasurer, Hon Josh Frydenberg MP

Key Topics and Discussions

- Capital Investment in Dams
- Kuranda Range Road

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

Full discussion notes to follow



Cr's Paronella, Hawkins and Mr Yeatman



FNQROC Delegation

Hon Bob Katter MP, Member for Kennedy

Key Topics and Discussions

- Impacts of the drought on the Dairy Industry
- Electorate specific issues/projects

Key Outcomes / Follow Up

Full discussion notes to follow

Mr Stephan Bohnen and Ms Georgia Stafford, LGAQ Leads - Intergovernmental Relations

Key Topics and Discussions

- Introduction to the FNQROC Regional Mayors and incoming LGAQ Lead, Ms Georgia Stafford
- Discussion in how this department of LGAQ can assist regional councils with Federal appointment support or advocacy issues.
- Members of TCICA joined meeting