

DATE: Thursday, 28 September 2023

TO: Cr Peter Scott, Mayor – Cook Shire Council

SUBJECT: LGAQ Policy Executive Update for Far North Queensland Regional
Organisation of Councils Meeting (FNQROC), Thursday 05 October 2023

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1. Policy Executive Meeting Update

- The Policy Executive Meeting was held in Mount Isa on 17 August 2023. PE representatives enjoyed the opportunity to also travel to Cloncurry and meet with representatives of the North-West Queensland ROC.
- The meeting discussions included:
 - The latest on the OIA and next steps: The PE discussed the latest proposals included in the draft Bill, such as a proposal that complaints about former councillors and allegations about private conduct cannot progress. Legislative amendments and amendments to the code of conduct will also clarify that the complaints framework only applies to councillors undertaking their official duties – not personal conduct and not to sitting councillors conducting their campaigns.
 - An update on our advocacy around the quarry permit renewals impacting members across the state, which includes a meeting between the Rural and Remote Compact Guardians, LGAQ staff and key ministers and DGs at the end of August.
 - An overview of a new 'Trunk Infrastructure Funding and Charging' research project the LGAQ has commenced on behalf of member councils.
 - The latest on the development of Regional Waste Management Plans and continuing advocacy in this space.
 - Information on a biosecurity campaign the LGAQ has begun with other key peak bodies and our request for a collaborative review of Queensland's Biosecurity System between partners and the Queensland Government.
- The agenda and business papers can be accessed on Congruent via this [link](#). The meeting minutes can be accessed via this [link](#). To log into the LGAQ's online member platform 'Congruent' you need to use your usual council email address.
- The next meeting of the Policy Executive will be held on Sunday, 15 October. Please contact your Policy Executive representative to raise any items for discussion.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Sarah Vogler – Head of Advocacy

2. 2023 LGAQ Annual Conference Motions

- The 2023 Annual Conference will be held in **Gladstone from 16-18 October 2023**.
- The Motions Agenda Committee met on Wednesday, 06 September 2023 and a Preliminary Agenda of 152 motions was published via the LGAQ Member Update on 20 September. We look forward to sharing the final agenda and the debate in Gladstone.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Michelle Hancock – Projects & Planning Coordinator

3. OIA overhaul on the way with new legislation

- Legislation has been introduced to overhaul the functions of the Office of the Independent Assessor (OIA) and councillor complaint system.
- As the LGAQ and members have repeatedly argued, the council complaints process established under the OIA has not been functioning as it should and the current system has been more focused on generating complaints, rather than regulating conduct.
- Mayors and councillors should be able to speak out on issues of importance to their local communities without the fear of being reprimanded, penalised or having their reputations irreparably damaged.
- Some of the investigations have been nothing short of – to use the Premier's description from all the way back in 2021 – ridiculous.

- Councillors should never have been investigated simply for moderating their social media sites to protect themselves from racial abuse, or helping the local pastor access a spare set of keys to conduct a Sunday church service.
- Unfortunately, it has taken a terrible toll on members but even that was not enough to stop you coming forward, standing up and telling your stories of a deeply flawed system.
- The LGAQ has always said a robust, independent and efficient councillor conduct regime is critical to the functioning of the sector. But for this regime to work it must strengthen the ability of councils to represent their local communities, not hamper the ability of mayors and councillors to do the job their communities elected them to do.
- We thank the State Government for listening to the concerns of the local government sector, agreeing to establish a Parliamentary Inquiry into the concerns raised last year, accepting all 40 recommendations from the inquiry, and now progressing these changes with reforms introduced to Parliament on Wednesday.
- Critically, Deputy Premier Steven Miles has committed to introducing these changes before the end of the current council term.
- Reforms in the legislation include:
 - introducing a new statutory preliminary assessment process, including a time limitation for the receipt of complaints, notices and information about councillor conduct.
 - introducing an administrative process to declare a person a vexatious 'complainant'.
 - removing requirements for certain details to be published in a local government's councillor conduct register.
 - removing the provision of 'training' from the functions of the OIA.
 - introducing a preliminary assessment process that the IA must undertake to determine how best to deal with a complaint, notice or information about councillor conduct, including a time limitation for accepting the complaint, notice or information.
 - updating natural justice requirements in relation to suspected conduct breaches.
 - redefining a breach of a local government's acceptable requests guidelines as a 'conduct breach' and makes other changes to the conduct definitions.
 - recognising the provision of official departmental advice to councillors.
- The next steps – the LGAQ will be preparing a submission to the Parliamentary Committee examining the legislation. Any council that would like to be included in our submission can email Nathan_ruhle@lgaq.asn.au. Members are also encouraged to make their own submissions too. The deadline for submissions was **midday Tuesday 3 October 2023**, but you can still lodge submissions after this date.
- The Parliamentary Committee reviewing the legislation will report on **27 October 2023**, with the legislation set to pass Parliament in November this year.
- This update follows the announcement that the current Independent Assessor will finish in the role in October this year.

LGAQ Contacts for this matter: Sarah Vogler, Head of Advocacy or Nathan Ruhle, Manager - Intergovernmental Relations

4. 2024 local government election information

- The Deputy Premier has announced a change to the election date for quadrennial elections next year, with the new date being **Saturday, 16 March 2024**.
- The ECQ has information available for election participants on their website. You can also sign-up for their self service portal – which ensure you receive all the information you need.

- Information on the specific electoral expenditure caps for each LGA has also now been published [here](#).

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Nathan Ruhle – Manager, Intergovernmental Relations

5. Workforce and Industrial Relations

Workforce Census 2023

- This year the Workforce Strategy team is rolling out a new invigorated digital census to councils and includes targeted new questions, the final report will be delivered in a digital format. Look out for the census questionnaire which is set to hit inboxes in October.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Elle Ackland, Manager, Workforce and Industrial Relations

State Wage Case 2023-34

- As advised in a previous LGAQ CEO WRAP, the 2023 annual wage case Decision from the Fair Work Commission increased the National Minimum Wage by 5.75% effective from 1 July 2023. The 5.75% increase also applied to awards, however, due to an adjustment to the way the increase was calculated, there was a one-off increase which delivered an effective rate of 8.6% for the lowest paid.
- In recent years, the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission (QIRC) has generally followed the Federal determination. While only a small number of council employees may be captured by these decisions, they are still important to note. The LGAQ's Manager Workforce and Industrial Relations (Elle Ackland) is presently engaged with the Office of Industrial Relations and union stakeholders as part of the preparations for the 2023 State Wage Case, in previous years the QIRC Decision has typically been handed down late August with an operative from 1 September 2023.
- This year due to a change in process by the QIRC, the Full Bench Hearing has been set down for a 5-day hearing commencing on 20 November 2023, meaning that a decision may be delivered in late November or potentially early December, continuing with the existing annual operative date of 1 September 2023. The operative date will apply across all Queensland Public Sector entities and the LGAQ.
- On a practical level, the impact on Council Payroll teams in early December 2023, will be payroll adjustments and back-payments for employees that are covered by one of the Local Government Industry Awards as well as the usual payroll planning for the Christmas closure and holiday period.
- For reference last year, the QIRC's Decision was a 5.2% increase to the Queensland Minimum Wage which was supported by both LGAQ and the State of Queensland.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Elle Ackland, Manager, Workforce and Industrial Relations

Queensland Councils, LGAQ Workforce Strategy 2024-2028

- The LGAQ is pleased to announce a significant new piece of work that will focus on Workforce, which is Councils' second highest priority based on the LGAQ's Member Loyalty Survey. To support an engaged and active Council workforce and remain competitive, it is imperative Councils look for new ways to capitalise on opportunities. As Councils' peak representative body, our objective is to find innovative, credible and targeted solutions so as to attract and retain a high-performing workplace across all the 77 diverse local Councils.
- The Workforce Strategy team is committed to maximising workforce capability across each Council. Councils' most valuable asset are its people, and Councils must be equipped to respond to emerging workforce trends to attract and retain a high performing workforce.

- The Workforce Strategy team has commenced a Council informed review to present workforce solutions in response to identified workforce themes, including those that are influenced indirectly by broader Council and/or statewide issues. The Strategy will propose solutions and policies in response to identified workforce issues, challenges and opportunities for Councils to adopt at their discretion.
- The project will be led by Elle Ackland, Workplace and Industrial Relations, Manager and Danika Jackson, Workforce Strategy, Senior Project Officer. The project consultation and engagement is being rolled out, seeking input from CEOs and Heads of Corporate/People/HR roles on challenges and solutions that will support Councils as they navigate an emerging 'new normal' in attracting and retaining their workforce.
- The Report will be delivered in May 2024 including a Strategy release event.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Elle Ackland, Manager, Workforce and Industrial Relations

6. Disaster Management

- On 20 September, the LGAQ provided a response to the Alternative Commonwealth Capabilities for Crisis Response Discussion Paper based on member experience, advice and recommendations received during the preparation of the submission to the Senate Select Committee – Australia's Disaster Resilience, the LGAQ submission to the IGEM Review SEQ Rainfall and Flooding Feb-Mar 2022, and the submission to the Independent Review of Commonwealth Disaster Funding.
- On 29 August 2023 Commissioner Greg Leach, QFES issued an update confirming that the AWS model would be locally lead, supported by State.
 - LGs and Local Disaster Management Groups are encouraged to find the best way for local AWS warnings to be delivered through their existing annual/regular planning and assessments.
 - There will be provision for the state to create, approve and issue warnings in critical situations. The state will also be able to issue broad warnings in consultation with LGs (for example, where broad AWS cyclone warnings are required).
 - QFES is committed to providing training and support to all stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of the AWS. This is being offered through customisable templates, resources, training, and community engagement.
 - The LGAQ will continue to work with the AWS working group to support councils to implement the adopted model.
- As a key stakeholder, the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services invited LGAQ to provide feedback on the consultation draft of the following Bills:
 - Emergency Services Reform Amendment Bill 2023;
 - Marine Rescue Queensland Bill 2023; and
 - State Emergency Service Bill 2023

LGAQ works to prepare a response, in consultation with Councils by Monday 09 October 2023.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Liz Drumm – Disaster Management Lead

7. Quarries Sales Permits Update

- The Quarry Sales Permit renewal issue remains a high priority for the LGAQ and the Policy Executive, including the five PE members that make up the Rural and Remote Compact Guardians.

- At the request of the Guardians and the LGAQ, Deputy Premier Steven Miles chaired a meeting between the Guardians and key Ministers and Directors-General on August 24 to discuss ongoing concerns.
- Based on feedback from this meeting – DAF are putting together a request for increased personnel for this project.
- The LGAQ continues to be part of a working group that includes DAF and TMR to work through short term solutions to help enable access to continue activities and longer term solutions.
- The working group ensures there is an ongoing dialogue with DAF as we continue to push for the situation to be resolved as soon as possible with the minimum of disruption to councils as possible.
- DAF is currently dealing with 6 LGAs in 2023, with a further 9 LGA permits expiring in 2024. DAF are currently in the process of contacting councils who have permits expiring in 2024.
- The LGAQ continues to push for more resources to be allocated by the State to tackle this issue, as well as a more multi-faceted approach to the efforts they are making.
- We continue to pursue a solution where:
 - There is a continued supply to councils
 - Councils are not involved in the creation of ILUAs or the costs associated with them
 - The costs associated with the State response are not pushed on to LGAs in the future.
- Further meetings with appropriate Ministers are currently being arranged to discuss ongoing developments.
- DAF have formed a Project team to undertake the activity if you have any questions, please email: ForestryQuarry@daf.qld.gov.au or contact Graeme Bolton - Deputy Director-General, Fisheries and Forestry, on 0438055786 or Graeme.Bolton@daf.qld.gov.au
- For information on the timing of the renewal of sales permits, see the [Congruent page](#) or contact Simon Booth or Sarah Vogler.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Simon Booth – Lead, Infrastructure, Policy and Regional Communities

8. Renewable energy zones

- The Department of Energy and Public Works have released the draft REZ Roadmap for feedback.
- According to the State Government, Queensland's Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) help to coordinate development of clean energy infrastructure in areas of high renewable potential, maximising benefits for regional communities.
- The [draft Roadmap](#) outlines a pathway for connecting 22 gigawatts of new wind and solar generation – eight times more renewable energy than Queensland has now. This REZ development represents a steady pipeline of ongoing construction jobs and other community benefits over the coming years.
- When the draft roadmap was released, LGAQ CEO Alison Smith noted that if communities were hosting major renewable energy generation, "it's only right that they benefit from their fair share of the economic and social benefits that will come from these large-scale projects. But that means locking in social licence with upfront, detailed guarantees of improved liveability in these areas, not to their detriment, damage or destruction for the benefit of proponents."
- If you weren't able to attend, the LGAQ held a webinar briefing with the Department of Energy and Public Works on 25 August. A recording is [available](#).
- The Department of State Development, Local Government, Infrastructure and Planning also joined the webinar to brief members on proposed changes to the State Development Assessment Provisions State Code 23: Wind farm development, which is part of the State Government's review of the planning framework for renewable energy committed to under the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan. The LGAQ made a submission on these changes on 4 September 2023.

- Feedback closed on **22 September 2023**. If you are interested in engaging with the State Government on this issue, please contact Nathan Ruhle.

LGAQ Contact: Nathan Ruhle, Manager – Intergovernmental Relations

9. Regional University Centres/Study Hubs

- The LGAQ has strongly welcomed an announcement from the Federal Government of 20 new regional university study hubs across the nation.
- This has been an LGAQ Annual Conference resolution at the 2021 and 2022 events and has been a key part of our advocacy to improve liveability and address workforce challenges in rural and remote communities.
- Locations will be determined through an independent process run by the Federal Department of Education.
- Once the application process is finalised, we will conduct a webinar with the Department to give Queensland councils the best opportunity to secure a centre.
- Link to LGAQ media release – [here](#).

LGAQ Contact: Nathan Ruhle, Manager – Intergovernmental Relations

10. Juvenile Crime in Queensland: Local Government Action Plan

- Queensland communities are dealing with an escalating juvenile crime problem – and councils are calling for immediate, evidence-based action to address these pressing law and order issues.
- The LGAQ has been seeking member feedback on a draft [Local Government Action Plan](#) aiming to represent the concerns of communities and offer the State Government constructive ideas to address these concerns.
- Member councils have proposed these solutions following a number of resolutions passed at the 2022 LGAQ Annual Conference to curb crime.
- Yet more motions have been submitted for debate at the 2023 Annual Conference, occurring 16th – 18th October.
- Feedback on the draft Plan closed September 20th, however, the LGAQ is seeking stories, case studies or quotes from interested councils to use as part of the campaign following the Plan's launch – which help show the impact of the issue on communities, as well as the importance of local, place-based solutions.
- The LGAQ is intending to launch the Plan following 2023 Annual Conference debate, to allow for relevant 2023 resolutions to be incorporated into the plan, which will in turn give it a longer lifespan as an effective advocacy tool in a 2024 State Election year.

LGAQ Contacts for this matter: Samantha Dean, Campaign Planner and Ellen Ross, Project Officer – Domestic and Family Violence

11. Natural Resources and Environment Update

Management of invasive species in waterways

- Biosecurity Queensland, through the State Land Pest Management Group, has agreed to action the development of a set of principles to guide the management of invasive species in waterways.
- These principles will bring clarity for local governments when undertaking compliance actions under the *Biosecurity Act 2014* (Qld), as it will determine who has management responsibility for invasive species within waterways.

National Feral Deer Action Plan

- The National Feral Deer Action Plan is now completed and available [HERE](#).

Updated stock route network maps

- The Department of Resources has now finalised a review of the stock route network, with a new map now being certified under the *Stock Route Management Act 2002* (Qld) and available [HERE](#).
- Under the reviewed Act, local governments can request amendments to the stock route map through the Stock Route Management System (SRMS). This process is currently being finalised by the Department of Resources and will be communicated in the coming months.

Permit to Occupy – Main Roads

- The Department of Transport and Main Roads has advised that the Department no longer supports the issuing of Permit to Occupy leases on state-controlled road reserves, and instead will issue a road corridor permit under the *Transport Infrastructure Act 1994* (Qld).
- This decision is currently being

Lumpy Skin Disease

- In July 2023, the Indonesian Agriculture and Quarantine Agency (IAQA) notified DAFF that LSD had been detected in a small number of Australian cattle exported to Indonesia—after those cattle had arrived and spent some time in Indonesia
- Resulting DAFF investigation have now confirmed that LSD was not and is not present in Australia. The report can be found [HERE](#).

Processes to Facilitate Rapid Approval for Restoration Works in Waterways following Natural Disasters

- With the passing of the *Environmental policy and legislation changes Act 2020* (Qld) in 2023, individuals, including local governments, now have the ability to obtain fast tracked temporary environmental authorities during an emergency situation (approval in less than 24 hours), removing the requirement for a local government to obtain an Environmental Authority through the normal application process (28-day approval).
- This includes obtaining a temporary authority for removing more than 1,000 tonnes of sediment from the bed of a naturally occurring water course following a flooding event.
- The Department of Environment and Science is currently finalising a factsheet on these changes and will engage with members through the LGAQ in the coming months.

Queensland Jellyfish Management Plan

- Recent engagement with the Queensland Government has received in a level of interest to support the development of a Queensland Jellyfish Management Plan, however, require requested further information to advance, including:
 - Mapping of current stakeholder service delivery
 - Formalising a broad management intent.
- The LGAQ will engage with members in the coming months to progress data collection.

LGAQ Contact for these matters: Joshua Dyke, Lead – Environment and Natural Resources

Cleaner Road Runoff Project

- The Cleaner Road Runoff project continues progressing with the delivery of Stage 2b – Pilot Projects (Wet Season 2) being finalised. The 5 participating councils have collected runoff samples for fine sediment concentrations (under 20µm).

- Based on the collected data, the Technical Advisory Committee has completed a review process to identify refinements for the study. A finalised work plan capturing the revised methodology for Wet Season #3 (NOV23 – APR24) is expected to be completed by 30 September 2023.
- The LGAQ would like to thank Cassowary Coast Regional Council for their continued support.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Megan Forrest, Manager Funded Projects

12. Rural and Remote Councils Compact

- The most recent meeting of the Policy and Legislation Committee, which underpins the work of the Rural and Remote Councils Compact, occurred on **Friday 22 September**.
- Attendees were provided an update on Regional Community Forums from the Office of Rural and Regional Queensland.
- LGAQ and the Guardians provided an update on the LGAQ Bush Councils Convention held in Goondiwindi between 25 and 27 July 2023.
- An update was provided to attendees on the strategic priority of roads, where it was noted that good progress had been made on the roads off alignment topic in developing low-cost solutions and opportunities to use existing council data. A webinar with the Department of Resources is being held on this issue on Thursday 12 October.
- Attendees were also provided an update on the strategic priority of housing and, in particular, on the outcome of the audit on vacant sites of Government employee accommodation.
- An update was also provided on the Modern Manufacturing Program and the Regional Transformation Strategy.
- Members received detailed information on the topic of Quarries and Native Title, and the steps being taken to address the key issue of expiring local government permits.
- Information from the meeting and a meeting communique will be provided soon, via Congruent.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Nathan Ruhle, Manager - Intergovernmental Relations

13. On the road to 2032

Olympics

- In response to a motion endorsed by members at the 2021 LGAQ Annual Conference resolving to ensure all Queenslanders benefit from the Games, the LGAQ surveyed councils in late 2022 seeking members' views on the Brisbane Olympics and Paralympics in 2032.
- The survey was [released to members](#) March 17 and revealed what councils believed were the major challenges and opportunities for their communities.
- The [On Your Marks: Queensland local government and the road to 2032 report](#) found that 91 percent of members surveyed believe hosting the event will bring the potential for new trade and investment opportunities, 57 percent believe it can achieve a legacy in their communities and 26 percent are hopeful of infrastructure and tourism promotion.
- It made seven recommendations to help drive state-wide benefits, including developing Regional Olympic Plans to support tourism, investment attraction and local business opportunities, that are tailored to local communities right across the state.
- The LGAQ has formally sent the report to key government stakeholders (including the Premier, Deputy Premier, Tourism Minister and Director General and Deputy Director General) and has a State and Federal engagement program planned in support of its recommendations.
- SUBMISSION - The Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee is holding an inquiry into the adequacy of Australia's preparedness to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Victoria and the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Brisbane, and to leave a legacy

of sporting infrastructure to encourage more Australians to participate in elite and community sports and live active lifestyles.

- The LGAQ issued a submission, informed by member feedback to the survey of members conducted by the Association last year.

DTIS State-Wide Sports Facilities Inventory

- On Monday 29 May 2023 members were invited to attend an online webinar to hear from the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport about the development of a State-Wide Sports Facilities Inventory.
- The webinar saw 66 attendees at the session representing 30 Councils across Queensland and were a mix of Elected Members, Senior Executive and Professional Staff.
- The purpose of the inventory is to identify any venues that may be suitable for potential activities and training opportunities in the lead up to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- All councils will receive the inventory templates to complete. Where possible DTIS has prefilled, information based on their data sources. LGAQ will also assist Councils to complete the file.
- Once complete, the inventory will be shared with the Olympic Infrastructure and Precincts Office within the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Tourism and Events Queensland. The goal of this inventory is to create a central place which can be used to promote Queensland sporting facilities to national and international sporting bodies.
- The recording of the webinar and presentation slides will be made available to members through Congruent.

LGAQ Contacts for this matter: Jessica Shannon, Project Manager Member Projects and Samantha Dean, Campaign Planner

14. Water and Wastewater Update

QWRAP Project Update

- The QWRAP Partner Steering Committee has approved the project scope for State-Wide identified workforce issues and has committed \$127,000 for this purpose. Further steps will be discussed with local QWRAP groups in the coming months.
- Most notably, the Water Industry Worker (WIW) Program has been extended for a further three years and Simmonds and Bristow have been successful with this tender. The program is open to trade and non-trade employees in the council water sector. EOs, factsheets and FAQs have been sent to local councils.
- FNQ is progressing their work on collaborative solutions across the region and staying abreast of current QWRAP opportunities.
- The current focus of FNQ QWRAP remains on a project with QTC looking at skills gaps, service delivery issues, aging workforce and aim to become more proactive in the planning process and harness the collaborative intent of the group. This project has progressed to the next stage - for FNQROC endorsement of selected initiatives.
- The FNQ QWRAP group will meet on 06 October 2023 in Carins to discuss future priorities.

LGAQ Contact: Jennifer Hartwig, Program Manager – Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program

State releases Queensland Water Strategy draft for public consultation

- On 7th August, the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (DRDWM) released a draft Queensland Water Strategy for public consultation.

- The Queensland Water Strategy proposes to replace the former Queensland Bulk Water Opportunities Statement (QBWOS) with a broader scope of consideration for how water supports our lives, our lifestyles, and livelihoods now and in the future.
- The project has been developed with input from the Water Engagement Forum stakeholder group of which LGAQ are member.
- Public consultation on the draft ran from 7th August for 4 weeks to the 3rd of September.
- LGAQ lodged a submission on behalf of local government with input from Councils across the state.

Drinking Water Quality Management Plan Guidelines and timely reporting of incidents

- Over the 2022-23 financial year, the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (the regulator) identified instances of delayed reporting of drinking water incidents and events, which were non-compliant with the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*.
- Several fines have been issued recently due to non-compliance with timely reporting requirements.
- Immediate reporting significantly reduces the risk of an adverse public health outcome and allows the regulator and Queensland Health to support and assist you from the outset. The regulator takes any delay in reporting seriously and will continue to exercise regulatory tools as appropriate should service providers fail to comply.
- Reporting requirements, including definitions for “immediately” and “as soon as practicable” and associated timeframes, are provided in the information notice for the decision issued for your currently approved Drinking Water Quality Management Plan (DWQMP) - as timely reporting is required to comply with your DWQMP.
- The water Supply Regulation team from Department of Regional Development Manufacturing and Water (DRDMW), are holding a workshop in Emerald on 11 October.
- The agenda includes an update from Water Supply Regulation team, including information on their regulatory approach and guidance on achieving voluntary compliance.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Josephine Raftery, Lead - Water and Wastewater Infrastructure

15. Waste Update

Environmental Protection Act 1994 – Powers and Penalties Independent Review

- Following the finalisation of the independent review of powers and penalties under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 the Department of Environment and Science is now seeking feedback regarding their proposed response.
- The independent review came up with 18 recommendations for change – to which the department has responded and supported 17 of them, and 1 in principle.
- The LGAQ has organised an information session with the department for councils on the 12th October and will provide a whole-of-sector response. Please review our Congruent article [here](#) to respond and register for the information session.

Regional Waste Management Plans

- Work is continuing across Queensland to progress regional plans at a regional/ROC level.
- The LGAQ wants to congratulate FNQROC for being the front runner in publishing and getting implementation started on their plan. The plan will provide a key advocacy piece for the region and the LGAQ in arguing for improved waste management and better investment from the state government through the Recycling and Jobs Fund and other funding arrangements.

Product stewardship – E-waste

- The proposed expansion of the National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme to include all small electric and electronic devices (SEEE), as well as introduce a stand-alone stewardship scheme for solar panels is continuing, with further consultation expected by the end of the year.
- The Queensland solar panel disposal pilot has started into the second phase. On Wednesday 27th September, the Smart Energy Council held an initial consultation session with the advisory board. In collaboration with the Department of Environment and Science, the council is developing location standards for potential pilot locations.
- All interested councils are encouraged to reach out to Wayne Smith, CEO under wayne@smartenergy.org.au to start the process to become a pilot location. Currently, the department has agreed to fund 5 pilot locations across Queensland, at least one of which will be in remote Queensland.

Product stewardship – Tyres

- Following the announcement at the last Environment Minister's Meeting in June, Western Australia has started the process to evaluate the current tyre stewardship situation in Australia.
- Through ALGA, the LGAQ was able to provide preliminary comments highlighting the specific situation of tyres in regional and remote Queensland.
- At the same time, Tyre Stewardship Australia has started a research project into the costs of illegally dumped tyres in Australia. The LGAQ has offered to provide data and assistance in collecting case studies for this pivotal work. FNQROC is encouraged to look out for an invite to participate in a survey from the LGAQ and provide any relevant data either through this mechanism or directly to Rudi Pretzler under rudolf_pretzler@lgaq.asn.au.

Asbestos

- The Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency (ASEA), an agency of the Australian Government, is responsible for the update, management and national coordination of the Asbestos National Strategic Plan. ASEA is currently consulting on the next phase of the plan up to 2030.
- The draft plan is proposing a simplification of the language and update of the current targets to better reflect the target of the agency to remove asbestos from all Australian premises. The aim of the updated plan is to better align individual state actions and allow for the safe and proactive removal of asbestos.
- ASEA held a consultation session for local government on the 27th September 2023, and a consultation session with the Queensland Interagency Asbestos Group on the 21st September 2023. The LGAQ was represented at both sessions.
- From a Queensland local government perspective, the main concerns lie in the lack of acknowledgement in the current draft that the additional goals for 'proactive' removal will require significant, often unavailable, resourcing, both financial and in workforce. Additionally, the significant difference in ability to react by regional and remote councils is not appropriately noted. This position is aligned with the Queensland Government's position and the Australian Local Government Association position, which have provided this feedback in consultation with the LGAQ.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Rudi Pretzler, Lead – Public Health and Waste

16. Local Housing Action Plans

- In March 2023, the State Government, through the Department of Housing has engaged the LGAQ to further support the preparation of LHAPs across 38 Queensland Councils.
- This work delivers on part of the LGAQ 2022 Annual Conference Resolution #32: Funding support for regional and local housing plans.

- The project follows the success of Gympie Regional Council in delivering the first LHAP in 2022, the work being undertaken by the 22 councils through the Western Queensland Alliance of Councils to prepare LHAPs and the development of local housing plans with First Nations councils and communities.
- The LGAQ has been working in partnership with the FNQROC to support the delivery of the LHAPs for Cairns Regional Council, Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Cook Shire Council, Douglas Shire Council, Hinchinbrook Shire Council and Mareeba Shire Council.
- It is expected that the LGAQ team and Department of Housing will travel to meet with councils on the week commencing 23rd October 2023. LGAQ's Project Manager will reach out to confirm dates with the appropriate contacts.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: John Zheng, Project Manager Local Housing Action Plans

17. First Nations Voice Project

- On Wednesday 30 August 2023, the Prime Minister announced that the referendum will be held on Saturday 14 October 2023.
- A suite of resources on the Referendum and Voice to Parliament are available to members via the LGAQ Congruent page which can be found [here](#).
- The Federal Government has released updated resources on the Voice to Parliament which can be found [here](#).

LGAQ Contacts for this matter: Jessica Shannon, Project Manager, Member Projects

18. Animal Management – Targeted review of the *Animal Management (Cats & Dogs) Act 2008*

- Following consultation on the discussion paper 'Strong Dog Laws: Safer Communities', the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is preparing to introduce the necessary changes to the *Animal Management (Cats & Dogs) Act 2008* into parliament.
- Simultaneously, the department has organised for a stakeholder advisory group for the development of community education programmes as outlined in the original discussion paper. The LGAQ is a key member of the advisory group, as are members of the active technical working group which provided input into the current legislative change process.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Rudi Pretzler, Lead – Public Health and Waste

19. Time to Shine Competition

- WIN \$10,000* marketing package from Tourism & Events Queensland's Industry Media Agency, IMATE.
- Share your One Big Tourism Campaign Idea with us – and the industry leaders from TEQ – to be in the running to have the best in the business help turn your award-winning idea into a tourism campaign your council can roll out immediately.
- Entries open Monday 31 July, and will close **Friday 29 September 2023**.
- If you have any questions about the entry process, or the terms and conditions, please email timetoshine@lgaq.asn.au.
- [Visit here](#) for Terms and Conditions and entry form.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Jessica Shannon, Project Manager – Member Project

20. LGAQ Submissions Update

Recent Submissions

- *Federal Independent Infrastructure Pipeline Review (18 July)*
- *Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (21 July)*
- *Regulation for small electrical products and solar photovoltaic systems waste (23 July)*
- *Local Government Remuneration Commission – category review (28 July)*
- *Our Place: A First Nations Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2024-2027 Consultation Paper (31 July)*
- *DIY asbestos removal by homeowners in Queensland (3 August)*
- *Sunset review of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2011 (2 August)*
- *Update to Queensland waterways for waterway barrier works mapping (16 August)*
- *Review of Queensland's Local Drought Declaration Process (21 August)*
- *Lake Eyre Basin Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement (25 August)*
- *Strong Dog Laws – Safer Communities discussion paper (24 August)*
- *Body Corporate and Community Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 (2 September)*
- *Wind Farm Code and Guideline Review (4 September)*
- *Draft REZ Roadmap (22 September)*
- *Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Perpetrator Strategy (22 September)*
- *Land Valuation Amendment Bill 2023 (22 September)*
- *Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioner – Review of community engagement practices (1 October)*
- *Local Government (Councillor Conduct) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023 (3 October)*

Upcoming Submissions

- *Queensland Plan Review (6 October)*
- *Draft ShapingSEQ 2023 Update (9 October)*
- *National Housing and Homelessness Plan Issues Paper (20 October)*
- *Draft updated threat abatement plan for predation by feral cats (11 December)*