



FNQROC Annual Report

2022/2023

Table of Contents

Chairs Foreword	3
Executive Officer	4
FNQROC Organisation Chart 2023	5
FNQROC Strategic Economic Priorities	6
FNQROC Operational Advocacy	7
Federal and State Delegations	7
Submissions	7
External Boards and Working Groups	7
Presentations	8
Procurement Coordinator - Operational Report	8
Regional Bitumen Reseal	8
Regional Water Chemicals – Supply & Delivery	9
Collection & Disposal of Ferrous Metal & Used Lead Acid Batteries (ULABs)	9
Removal and Beneficial Reuse of Biosolids	9
Regional Sewer Relining	10
Regional Contract & Procurement Documentation	10
Regional Procurement Advisory Committee	10
Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator - Operational Report	11
FNQ Regional Roads and Transport Group (FNQ RRTG)	11
Regional Waste Management and Materials Recovery	12
Regional Water Alliance	13
Natural Asset Management and Sustainability Coordinator	14
Natural Asset Management Technical Committee	14
Amazon Frogbit biosecurity response plan	15
Animal Management Technical Committee	15
Regional Animal Management Strategy	15
Regional Mountain Bike Strategy Steering Committee	15
Land Protection Fund and State Oversight Group	16
Sustainability Overview	17
GBR and Water Quality Improvement	17
Climate Resilience Coordinator – Operational Report	17
Climate Resilience Technical Committee	18
Regional Drought Resilience Plan	18
Heatwave Resilience Community Awareness Project	18

Regional Executive Support – Operational Report 19

Audited Financial Statements 2022/23 20

ASnapshot of Federal and State Mayoral Delegation 31

FNQROC Team Contact Information 38

Acronyms Defined 39



VISION

Sustainable Economic Growth and
Development for Far North Queensland

MISSION

Advocate on behalf of, and foster
cooperation and resource sharing between
FNQROC member Council



STRATEGIC ECONOMIC GOALS

1. Develop resilient transport infrastructure and connectivity
2. Provide reliable and affordable water
3. Provide reliable and affordable energy
4. Respect and manage our natural assets and environment
5. Develop equitable social infrastructure
6. Provide equitable communication networks

Chairs Foreword

In 2022/2023, the organisation has achieved a significant amount:

- In July, we celebrated 30 years of working collaboratively under the FNQROC Banner
- We endorsed the FNQROC Regional Resource Recovery Strategy
- Commenced reviewing the FNQ Regional Mountain Bike Strategy
- The Regional Climate Resilience Portfolio commenced, and
- Commenced the FNQ Regional Plan Review in partnership with the State.



Figure 1 Celebrating 30 years of FNQROC

The FNQ Regional Plan is crucial for the region, it needs to articulate our economic vision and put in place the actions from all three levels of government and private industries to achieve this. This Plan provides us with an opportunity to set our direction and work towards achieving it.

We are councils in a region reliant on each other; agriculture is reliant on tourism, service centres are reliant on agriculture, mining, tourism etc. We each have our role to play in supporting liveability and economic development in our region.



Figure 2 Dinner with local members during the Brisbane delegation

When you read through the rest of the report, it is quite amazing what a small team can achieve with the support of Council's technical officers so we can all benefit.

Lastly, I would like to welcome Elliott Meelen (Procurement Coordinator) Maria Anselmo (Climate Resilience Coordinator) and Anthony Archie to the team. Anthony is taking on the Interim CEO role while Darlene takes a well-earned break for a year. She has promised to come back!

Best wishes for this exciting next term.

Cr Michael Kerr
CHAIR



Executive Officer

I am still honoured to continue in my role at FNQROC. I've never been prouder of the FNQROC Board and how they have come together and actively supported the regional decisions they have made.

We've had two (2) delegations over the last year, with another fast approaching in August 2023.

The year has seen some changes, with Amanda Hancock moving from Procurement to Infrastructure, Elliott Meelen joining the team in October 2022 as Procurement Coordinator and Maria Anselmo joining us as Climate Resilience Coordinator.

I'm proud of the team and their passion for the region and the roles they perform. However, they could not do this without the support of council staff contributing to the technical committees. Your knowledge and expertise enable us to do great things in and for the region. Thank you!

We have continued to focus on the long term and building clear strategies forward. The largest of these was advocating for a new FNQ Regional Plan, which has now commenced. It is up to us collectively to ensure it achieves our endorsed expectations.

Operationally

For half of this year, the FNQROC team was down one (1) FTE and the team has done well to continue to deliver. We're all in the same boat, with many councils seeing staff turnover and limited suitable applicants to replace them.

As you read through the report, you'll see how much such a small team is doing with the support of technical officers from member

councils and critical stakeholders. There are some significant collaborations occurring.

Finally, some figures this year from our regional procurement contracts:

- Bitumen Program – 650,000m² sealed using 1.4million litres of bitumen;
- 2.5 million litres of sodium Hypochlorite;
- Over 800,000 litres of Liquid Alum;
- 10,000 tonnes of ferrous metal;
- 200 tonnes of ULABs;
- 130 tonnes of non-ferrous metal;
- Approximately 30,000 tonnes of biosolids with 100% beneficially reused;
- 15,000 linear metres of sewers were relined
- Condition assessments were carried out on over 500 Manholes

The team and I are very focused on what is in front of us and how we can support councils and prepare for this.

Lastly, I write this on my last day in the office for 1 year. After 22 years, it is time to spend a year focusing on my health and gaining new ideas and perspectives. Anthony Archie will be replacing me during this time and I have no doubt he will love the role as much as I do.

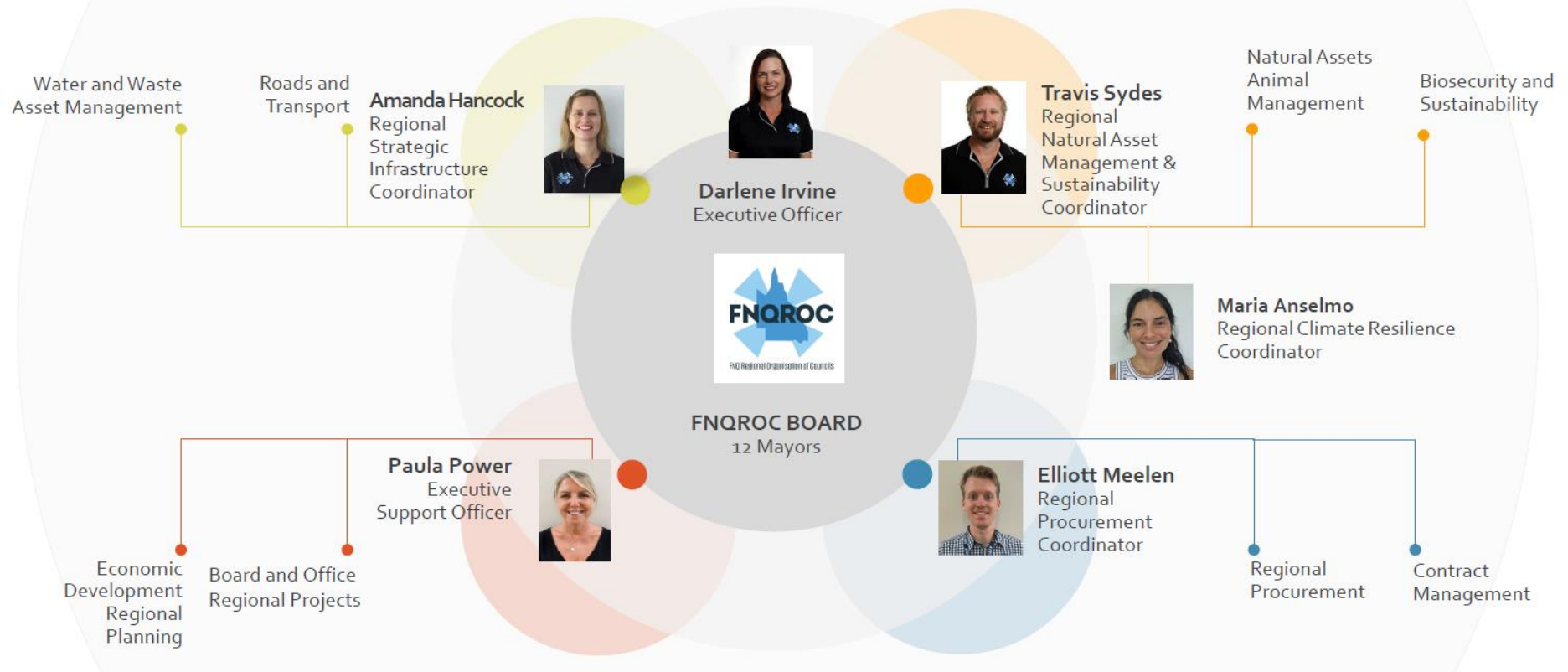
See you in 1 year!



Darlene Irvine
Executive Officer



FNQROC Organisation Chart -2023



FNQROC Strategic Economic Priorities

The twelve Councils in Far North Queensland reviewed our Strategic economic priorities, focusing on understanding our opportunities, identifying our gaps and working collaboratively to support sustainable economic growth and development for Far North Queensland. Our advocacy efforts will be based on evidence.

The full transcript of the **FNQROC 6 Strategic Goals** can be located on the [FNQROC website](#).

Develop Resilient Transport Infrastructure & Connectivity

Resilient transport infrastructure to ensure connectivity across the region is essential for FNQ to have sustainable economic growth and development. To realise the social and economic potential, we need to enhance the existing road and port infrastructure across the region.

ROADS

Over 80% of Far North Queensland's population lives in rural and remote areas. The region's infrastructure is largely dependent on roads. The region's roads are in poor condition, with many roads being unsealed and in need of repair. This is a significant barrier to economic growth and development. The region's roads are also vulnerable to natural disasters, such as cyclones and flooding. This is a significant risk to the region's infrastructure and economic stability.

Ports

The region's ports are also in need of investment. The region's ports are largely dependent on infrastructure that is in poor condition. This is a significant barrier to economic growth and development. The region's ports are also vulnerable to natural disasters, such as cyclones and flooding. This is a significant risk to the region's infrastructure and economic stability.

Key actions:

- Invest in road infrastructure to improve connectivity and resilience.
- Invest in port infrastructure to improve connectivity and resilience.
- Enhance the resilience of existing infrastructure to natural disasters.

Priority outcomes: All weather, north-south and east-west road infrastructure to support the economic potential of FNQ.

Water Security

Reliable and affordable water and energy is essential for the FNQ region if it is to have sustainable economic growth and development. COAG policies indicate Northern Australia Water Supply Regulation, International Market Access and Indigenous Advancement have identified the strategic importance of FNQ's economic and social development.

Water Security

The region's water infrastructure is in poor condition, with many dams and treatment plants in need of repair. This is a significant barrier to economic growth and development. The region's water infrastructure is also vulnerable to natural disasters, such as cyclones and flooding. This is a significant risk to the region's infrastructure and economic stability.

Key actions:

- Invest in water infrastructure to improve connectivity and resilience.
- Enhance the resilience of existing infrastructure to natural disasters.

Priority outcomes: Reliable and affordable water and energy for the FNQ region.

Energy

Energy needs are essential for sustainable economic growth and development. The region's energy infrastructure is in poor condition, with many power lines and substations in need of repair. This is a significant barrier to economic growth and development. The region's energy infrastructure is also vulnerable to natural disasters, such as cyclones and flooding. This is a significant risk to the region's infrastructure and economic stability.

Key actions:

- Invest in energy infrastructure to improve connectivity and resilience.
- Enhance the resilience of existing infrastructure to natural disasters.

Priority outcomes: Reliable and affordable energy for the FNQ region.

Respect and manage our natural assets

The region's natural assets are a significant part of its identity and economic potential. The region's natural assets are in poor condition, with many areas in need of protection. This is a significant barrier to economic growth and development. The region's natural assets are also vulnerable to natural disasters, such as cyclones and flooding. This is a significant risk to the region's infrastructure and economic stability.

Key actions:

- Invest in natural asset management to improve connectivity and resilience.
- Enhance the resilience of existing infrastructure to natural disasters.

Priority outcomes: Protected and managed natural assets for the FNQ region.

Provide equitable communication network

An equitable communication network for the region is essential for FNQ to have sustainable economic growth and development. The region's communication infrastructure is in poor condition, with many areas in need of service. This is a significant barrier to economic growth and development. The region's communication infrastructure is also vulnerable to natural disasters, such as cyclones and flooding. This is a significant risk to the region's infrastructure and economic stability.

Key actions:

- Invest in communication infrastructure to improve connectivity and resilience.
- Enhance the resilience of existing infrastructure to natural disasters.

Priority outcomes: Equitable communication network for the FNQ region.

Develop equitable social infrastructure

The region's social infrastructure is in poor condition, with many schools, hospitals, and community centers in need of repair. This is a significant barrier to economic growth and development. The region's social infrastructure is also vulnerable to natural disasters, such as cyclones and flooding. This is a significant risk to the region's infrastructure and economic stability.

Key actions:

- Invest in social infrastructure to improve connectivity and resilience.
- Enhance the resilience of existing infrastructure to natural disasters.

Priority outcomes: Equitable social infrastructure for the FNQ region.

Presentations

- What would a resilient transport network in FNQ do for Qld – Qld Transport Infrastructure Conference
- Transformer weed impacts on threatened species and ecological communities – NQ Threatened Species Symposium, 2023
- Rivers to Reef Climate Resilient Councils Alliance – Queensland Climate Resilient Councils Symposium, 2023
- Role of local government; threatened species and ecological communities - Spectacled Flying Fox Recovery Team, 2022
- Role of local government; threatened species and ecological communities - CAFNEC Round Table, 2022
- Role of local government; threatened species and ecological communities - Cassowary Recovery Team, 2022
- Role of local government; threatened species and ecological communities - Littoral Rainforest Working Group, 2022
- Natural Assets – roles and risk in heatwaves – Cairns Urban Heat Seminar, Planning Institute of Australia, 2022

Procurement Coordinator - Operational Report

Program Introduction

The Procurement Coordinator role has been in place since 2012 and is funded by the contributions of member Councils made on the following basis:

Cairns, Cassowary, Cook, Douglas, Mareeba and Tablelands contribute \$25,000 annually; this amount is less than previously identified savings per Council.

The remaining Councils contribute 20% of savings made through their involvement in FNQROC procurement activities.

The FNQROC mandate for procurement is:

- Where there exists a limited supply for a product and/or service;
- Where member Councils are competing against each other for the same goods and/or services
- Where products or services could be scheduled to provide an improved service delivery
- Where member Councils would benefit from the sharing of knowledge and collaboration.

2022/23 Review

Collective procurement arrangements enable participating member Councils to achieve economies of scale on pricing and eliminate risk for individual Councils competing against one another for limited supplier resources. They often also involve a commitment from the supplier to ensure works are completed to agreed timeframes. Whilst there are several Councils involved in the collective procurement arrangements, each Council forms a contract with the supplier and the delivery of the contract is administered by FNQROC.

The FNQROC Contract Process Guide – Regional Procurement Contracts can be accessed via the [FNQROC website/Procurement](#).

Regional Procurement Arrangements

Regional Bitumen Reseal

Councils undertake an annual bitumen reseal program to maintain their road network to a suitable standard. This process is required to prevent moisture from penetrating through deteriorated bitumen seals into the underlying pavement, which causes damage such as rutting and potholes.

The annual Bitumen Reseal Program was successfully delivered again this year with 6 member councils participating. The program involved sealing over 650,000 m² of road, which required approximately 1.4m litres of bitumen.

Councils involved in this arrangement benefit from appointing a qualified and experienced Program Coordinator to oversee program delivery.



Figure 3 - Bitumen Resealing at Cassowary Coast Regional Council

Regional Water Chemicals – Supply & Delivery

The contracts for the supply and delivery of Sodium Hypochlorite and Liquid Aluminum, the most used chemicals by both Water and Wastewater areas of councils, have been made under a collective procurement arrangement since 2012. The contracts for 2022/23 and beyond see arrangements that extend to the supply of Citric Acid, Aluminum Chloralhydrate and Liquid Sodium Hydroxide.

Eleven member councils continue to participate in this arrangement, which not only continues to offer good value for money but also the added benefit of centralised contracts management provided by FNQROC. In addition to this, FNQROC facilitates supplier and Council collaboration in areas including improving processes for the supply and use of particular water chemicals.

Collectively councils used approximately 2.5 million litres of Sodium Hypochlorite and over 800 thousand litres of Liquid Alum this year.

Collection & Disposal of Ferrous Metal & Used Lead Acid Batteries (ULABs)

This arrangement has been in place since 2015, involving eleven member councils. The arrangement intends that ferrous metal and ULAB (predominantly car battery) stockpiles are managed at acceptable levels and that Councils receive a fair and certain value for the materials.

The contracts are based on a supplier-led collection schedule and pricing linked to metal markets. Just under 10,000 tonnes of ferrous metal and just under 200 tonnes of ULABs were collected throughout the region during the year, together with just over 130 tonnes of non-ferrous metal.

By working with all stakeholders, FNQROC strives for continuous improvement in all processes to add maximum value for participating Councils.

Removal and Beneficial Reuse of Biosolids

Biosolids are treated sewerage sludge and the major by-product of the wastewater treatment process. They can be beneficially used for several purposes when treated and managed appropriately.

Many Council member Wastewater treatment plants produce biosolids that currently meet the stabilisation criteria required for beneficial reuse.

The collective arrangement focuses on streamlined pricing and ensuring consistent contract terms are provided across the region to achieve efficiency benefits to suppliers and Councils alike. Six (6) member councils participated in this arrangement, which has seen 100% of biosolids diverted from landfills this year.

This year approximately 30,000 tonnes of biosolids were beneficially reused on farmland across our region.



Figure 4 - Arkwood is busy spreading nutrient rich biosolids onto farmland

Regional Sewer Relining

Councils undertake annual in-situ sewer relining works to maintain their sewer reticulation network. For the 3rd year running, participating councils came together to deliver their programs under a collective procurement arrangement established by FNQROC.

Over 15,000 linear metres of sewers were successfully relined across the region. In addition, condition assessments were carried out on over 500 Manholes. Cost benefit analysis again revealed savings both in terms of the actual cost of relining and further intangible benefits, including significant time savings for council officers.

The regional collaboration also means that we now have a much better understanding of our relining activities and the challenges faced in maintaining the sewer network. In addition, as a region, we now have some consistent data and are better placed to leverage emerging technologies and investment.



Figure 5- Works on sewers at night are sometimes required for high-flow sewers to minimise disruption to residents.

Regional Contract & Procurement Documentation

All FNQROC member councils continue to have access to a comprehensive suite of regionally consistent procurement and contract documents. The suites provide council officers with easy access to a range of documents that balance protection with the need for commerciality and practicality. The documents are intended to be fair and reasonable, in simple plain English and easy to understand. The documents can be located via password on the FNQROC website via the Procurement Portal.

Regional Procurement Advisory Committee

The Regional Procurement Advisory Committee operate under the consistent objective of all FNQ Advisory Committees:

- Building & Maintaining Partnerships
- Sharing Information
- Identifying and/or facilitating training and skill development
- Identifying emerging and future issues and opportunities
- Advising FNQROC Board on policy and procedures
- Engaging external parties such as LGAQ, Local Buy, State & Federal Government, Suppliers etc.

audits continue to be undertaken regionally. Aerodrome Design was engaged to complete audits for 2022/23 on behalf of participating councils.

Aerodrome Operational Plans

In 2022/23, Leading Edge Aviation was engaged to undertake a Regional Aerodrome Operations Business Plan on behalf of participating councils with the intent of providing them with a baseline plan that ensures a consistent approach is applied to the management, maintenance and renewal of aerodromes across the Far North region over the next 10-20 years. This project will be completed in 2023/24 and is partially funded by the Statewide Capability Development Fund. (SCDF)



Figure 6 - Regional Road and Transport Group meeting, Cairns, June 2022

Regional Waste Management and Materials Recovery

Summary

In April 2022, the Department of Environment and Science granted us \$300,000 (with a commitment from FNQROC to allocate \$150,000 to future implementation) to undertake a Regional Resource Recovery Strategy and ARUP Australia was awarded the tender. A Regional Waste Management and

Resource Recovery Advisory Committee made up of both elected members and council technical officers worked alongside ARUP to progress the Plan.

The Plan, which the FNQROC Board endorsed in April 2023, provides councils with a blueprint to help guide council investment decisions in infrastructure and non-infrastructure needs in our region. It outlines immediate, short, medium and long-term actions for councils to achieve beneficial outcomes. The eight (8) key actions identified in the Regional Resource Recovery Plan include:

1. Step-change in customer engagement through education and awareness
2. Optimising regional service arrangements by providing better servicing for rural and remote communities
3. New transfer station facilities, consolidation or transfer facilities and closure of existing rural landfills
4. Enhancing kerbside collection approaches to increase capture of co-mingled recyclables
5. Maximising the diversion of organics from landfill
6. Optimising the regional network of resource recovery facilities through 'hub and spoke' arrangements
7. Developing a centralised resource recovery precinct
8. Developing alternatives to landfill for residual waste

These eight (8) key actions work together to provide improved regional resource recovery and economic development outcomes for the region. To deliver on the project and ensure there are genuine opportunities for regional alignment.



Figure 7 - Mayor Angela Toppin, Chair FNQROC Regional Resource Recovery

Operational

The Regional Waste Management and Resource Recovery Committee and/or Technical Committee (comprised of council technical officers) met ten (10) times in 2022-23, with all meetings held online and in Cairns.



Figure 8 - Melanie Kempton, ARUP, presenting the FNQROC RRR Plan to the FNQROC Board - Mission Beach, April 2023

Regional Water Alliance

Summary

The water and wastewater sector faces complex challenges including ageing, issues attracting and retaining staff, competition from other industries (particularly resource industries), transitioning to new technologies such as AI and drones, and general skills and labour shortages. In late 2022 Queensland Treasury Corporation facilitated a workshop with the FNQROC Water Alliance, during which

there was unanimous support to address the capability concerns as a collective.

The FNQ Water and Wastewater project commenced, and a four-step approach was agreed to understand the region's capability issues and enable councils to identify and implement agreed solutions.

- Step One Understanding 'on-the-ground' capability issues.
- Step Two Workshop to socialise findings and key themes.
- Step Three Options analysis
- Step Four Implementation of agreed solutions

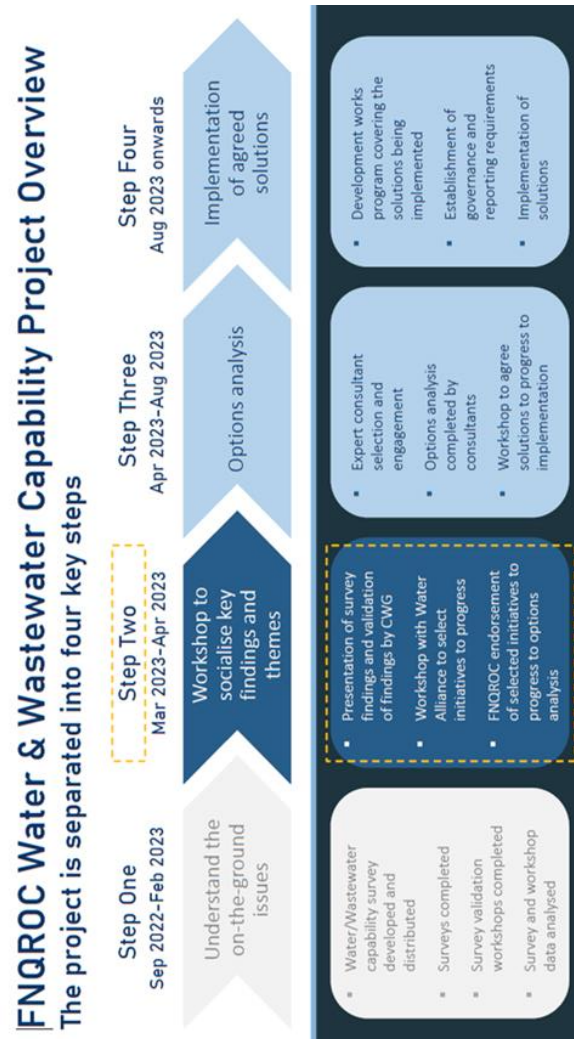


Figure 9 - FNQROC Water and Wastewater Capability Project Overview

To understand 'on-the-ground' capability, each member council completed two capability surveys. A single response to each survey was required from each Council.

Once the surveys had been completed, each Council attended a post-survey workshop facilitated by QTC to validate the survey results and gather further insights.

A summary of the key findings was then provided, and the Water Alliance selected three (3) initiatives to progress to options analysis which the FNQROC Board subsequently endorsed; People, Systems & Data, and Processes.

A Request for Quote will shortly be released to undertake an Options Analysis. This analysis is expected to provide councils with targeted opportunities and solutions for each of the initiatives identified, enabling them to make informed decisions to respond to the current challenges faced by the water and wastewater sector.

Operational

The FNQ Water Alliance met four (4) times in 2022/23, both online and in Cairns and Mossman. These meetings are attended by councils, QLD Water, QLD Health, Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water and LGAQ.

Natural Asset Management and Sustainability Coordinator

Program Overview

The natural asset management and sustainability role represents the interests of the FNQROC across the environmental and natural resources space including biosecurity (pests and weeds); water quality and GBR; landscape repair & restoration; biodiversity conservation/planning and climate change.

The role facilitates the Natural Asset Management Advisory Committee (NAMAC) and Animal Management Technical Committee (AMTC), which bring officers of member councils together with state agencies and external partners to progress shared regional goals and initiatives. Over the course of 2022/23, the Climate Resilient Councils Alliance pilot project has morphed into the FNQROC Regional Climate Resilience Coordinator role and is now reported separately under that section of this report. New to the role in 2022/23 is the addition of the Board directed FNQ Regional Mountain Bike Strategy review project. A steering committee comprised of Councils, mountain bike clubs, agencies and organisations has been established to guide the delivery of the review. The 2023/24 annual report will report the project in full.

The regional interests of the FNQROC are also represented through participation and support for councils in a wide range of local, regional, State and national advisory groups and committees. The role also incorporates spatial planning program communications using GIS across the other technical portfolios of FNQROC.

Alongside the NAMAC and the AMTC, the role works to deliver the [FNQROC Animal Management & Wildlife Stewardship Policy](#), the [FNQROC Natural Assets Stewardship Accord](#), [FNQROC Regional Natural Asset Strategy](#), [Regional Taskforce \(Resource Sharing\) MOU](#), and the [Climate Resilient Alliance Action Plan](#) and the [NQ Regional Mountain Bike Strategy](#).

Natural Asset Management Technical Committee

The Natural Asset Management Advisory Committee (NAMAC) meets on a quarterly basis. The primary legislative driver of the committee is the Queensland *Biosecurity Act 2014*, but elements of the Queensland *Nature Conservation Act*, *Vegetation Management Act* Commonwealth *Environmental Protection*

Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act and others also define the roles and responsibilities of councils the role supports. The NAMAC comprises representatives from member Councils, Terrain NRM, Cape York NRM, Wet Tropics Healthy Waterways and Biosecurity Queensland (QDAF).

Amazon Frogbit biosecurity response plan

FNQROC has had the pleasure of working with CAFNEC and other regional stakeholders to develop a response plan for the rapidly evolving issue posed by the aquatic weed Amazon Frogbit in the Barron catchment. As a fast-growing aquatic weed, Amazon Frogbit has significant triple-line impacts on everything from cultural values to hydroelectric generation. The response plan is a closely consulted action plan which identifies the roles of a wide group of stakeholders across the region in addressing the current impacts and future risks.



Figure 10 - Amazon Frogbit infestation in Granite Creek (Mareeba).

Animal Management Technical Committee

The Animal Management Technical Committee (AMTC) meets quarterly. It brings together local laws officers and managers from across the region with Queensland Health (Tropical Health Unit), Biosecurity Queensland Animal Health, RSPCA and Queensland Police Service to partner on regional shared issues and programs. The committee's work supports councils in executing their responsibilities and

services under the Animal Management (Dogs & Cats) Act 2008, Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, Biosecurity Act 2014 and the Local Government Act 2009.

Regional Animal Management Strategy

Following on from a series of workshops, the AMTC has progressed in the development of the FNQROC's first Regional Animal Management Strategy. The implementation of the strategy will be guided by the technical committee over the next 10 years to deliver a regionally focused transformation of the business of animal management. The strategy has a central focus on the community as a stakeholder and will be delivered across the themes of; people and communities, partnerships and collaboration, service delivery and systems and processes.

Regional Mountain Bike Strategy Steering Committee

In the lead-up to the establishment of the Regional Mountain Bike Strategy Steering Committee, FNQROC has been undertaking initial consultation and engagement with a broad range of stakeholders across the region. The steering committee will begin its work with a planned workshop in early July 2023. In addition to the steering committee, FNQROC will facilitate a series of focus groups and undertake desktop research and data collation to support the review.



Figure 11 - Crankworx Cairns 23 is one of a series of significant mountain biking events in the region which attract national and international attention to our vibrant local mountain biking scene.

Land Protection Fund and State Oversight Group

The NAMAC is one of Queensland's 12 regional subcommittees that develop priorities and guide the delivery of the Land Protection Fund Co-investment model (formerly referred to as precept payments). FNQROC represents our regional sub-committee at the State Oversight Group (SOG). The primary role of the SOG is to assist in developing and determining investment of the Land Protection Fund in biosecurity research state-wide. Local governments contribute around \$2.2m annually into the fund, which compliments the direct State investment of approx. \$4m. Overall, the FNQROC sub-committee councils (excluding Croydon and Etheridge, which lie in the NWROC grouping) contribute just over \$250,000 to the fund annually, so it is of crucial importance that we collaborate to ensure councils and communities are receiving value for money via targeted and required R&D.

The primary work of the State Oversight Group FNQROC has continued the collaboration with Terrain NRM and others in creating pathways and opportunities for local government participation in protecting habitat and preserving threatened species across the region. The keystone event for this reporting period was the 2nd NQ Threatened Species

Symposium held in Cairns in March. The event provided the opportunity to follow up our regional planning pieces in this space with specialist sessions focusing on opportunities to engage better and inform local governments and other stakeholders in everything from developing regional plans to improving connections with recovery teams. The 'The role of local government in the preservation and recovery of threatened species and ecological communities' report provides a range of appropriately scaled recommendations and options for opportunities and initiatives to protect some of the region's unique natural assets (and bona fide money spinners) into the future.

Is the implementation of the [Invasive Plants and Animals Research Prospectus](#). The prospectus provides a 5-year outlook of current research and projects that are shovel-ready when resources become available. The prospectus replaces an annual EOI process.

In this reporting period, we have seen some promising results for dry season application of pre-emergent herbicides for sicklepod, with Cook Shire Council working with BQ Invasive Plants and Animals researchers to deliver. Also, using resources from the fund Hinchinbrook Shire hosted a regional feral deer management workshop which was well attended and highly informative of the current and future risk feral deer may have on the region.



Figure 12 - Participants in the 2023 Cooktown Gamba grass taskforce getting some identification tips before work gets underway.

Sustainability Overview

Habitat protection and ecosystem services

FNQROC has continued the collaboration with Terrain NRM and others in creating pathways and opportunities for local government participation in protecting habitat and preserving threatened species across the region. The keystone event for this reporting period was the 2nd NQ Threatened Species Symposium held in Cairns in March.

The event provided the opportunity to follow up our regional planning pieces in this space with specialist sessions focusing on opportunities to better engage and inform local governments and other stakeholders in everything from developing regional plans to improving connections with recovery teams. The 'The role of local government in the preservation and recovery of threatened species and ecological communities' report provides a range of appropriately scaled recommendations and options for opportunities and initiatives to protect some of the region's unique natural assets (and bona fide money spinners) into the future.

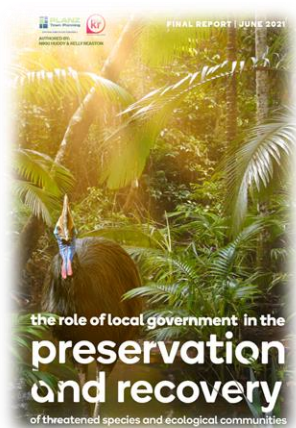


Figure 13 - The role of local government in the preservation and recovery of threatened species and ecological communities

GBR and Water Quality Improvement

FNQROC and member councils continue to support the delivery of the Wet Tropics Waterways Partnership and [Report Card](#). FNQROC is a member of the Technical Working Group, which provides advice on the interpretation and messaging behind the report card as managing and developing the indicators and metrics the annual report is based on. We are gearing up for the third review of the invasive (aquatic) weeds indicator, which is populated by local government data in the report card.



Figure 12 - Wet Tropics Waterways Report Card

Climate Resilience Coordinator – Operational Report

Summary

During 2022/23, FNQ Councils have continued making steps towards a climate-resilient, low-carbon future with the formation of the Climate Resilience Technical Committee. Focusing on drought and heatwave resilience, members of the CRTC have collaborated to inform a regional heatwave awareness project and the development of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan for Gulf Hinterland and Wet Tropics.

Measuring the success of climate mitigation actions, seven (7) members of the Climate

Resilience Technical Committee will be exploring options for a Greenhouse Gas Inventory.

Climate Resilience Technical Committee

In 2022/23, the FNQROC Climate Resilience Technical Committee (CRTC) was established with the inaugural meeting held on June 9, 2023. Continuing the fantastic work from Michelle O'Loughlin and members of the Climate Resilient Alliance, the CRTC focus on climate mitigation, transition and adaption opportunities that deliver social, environmental, and economic benefits for Far North QLD. A collaboration of FNQROC Council members and regional organisations, the CRTC provides a space for sharing knowledge, experiences and updates on current initiatives that will guide us towards a climate-resilient region.

For information on upcoming meetings, agendas and previous meeting minutes, visit the [FNQROC Climate Resilience webpage](#).

Regional Drought Resilience Plan

Throughout the second half of 2022/23, FNQROC collaborated with James Cook University, Terrain and Gulf Savannah NRM to drive a regional drought study for the development Regional Drought Resilience Plan for Gulf Hinterland and Wet Tropics. The study involved a literature review and facilitating interviews with key stakeholders from across the region.

FNQROC held nineteen interviews with stakeholders from Local, State, and Federal government organisations, research institutions and non-government organisations, including members from five (5) FNQROC technical committees. Over thirty individuals contributed to the study sharing

their stories, knowledge, and experience of previous drought, bushfire, and heatwave events, along with recommended objectives and actions for developing drought resilience plans.

The Climate Resilience Technical Committee will receive updates on the next steps in the development of the Regional Drought Resilience Plans.

Heatwave Resilience Community Awareness Project

Following on from previous work in the heatwave space, FNQROC received grant funding to develop Keeping Our Cool - a community heatwave awareness project. Guided by the Climate Resilience Technical Committee, key stakeholders in Disaster Management and Qld Health, Keeping Our Cool provides communication and engagement materials to assist councils in supporting vulnerable members of the community in responding to heat waves. These materials include a series of personas and a media kit.

Based on coronial data in Far North Queensland, the personas represent six (6) vulnerable cohorts to heatwave events and include an introduction to each persona and a list of information to help inform the development of impactful action plans that reduce heatwave-related harm. The personas were presented to the CRTC and members piloted the personas in a short workshop. A Personas Workshop guide will be included as part of the kit.

The Keeping Our Cool media kit includes artwork for a marketing campaign that Council's communications and disaster management team can embed in their communications strategy before and during heatwave events.

Regional Executive Support – Operational Report

Planning

The FNQROC Planning Advisory Committee met three (3) times throughout the 2022/23 financial year. The meetings held were very well attended by representatives from Councils, the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning (DSDILGP) and the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ).

The group's primary purpose is to provide a forum where the officers can discuss issues around planning legislation and state government policies, share information and resources amongst the group and ensure timely awareness of emerging issues and opportunities.

The key focus of discussion at these meetings was the FNQ Regional plan and our expectations. The planners will be meeting fortnightly throughout 2023/24 as the new FNQ Regional Plan is drafted.

A draft plan is due December 2023, with a final plan in mid-2024.

Economic Development

The FNQROC Economic Advisory Committee met twice (2) throughout the 2022/23 financial year. The meetings held were well attended by representatives from member Councils,

DSDILGP, Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) and Regional Development Australia Tropical North (RDATN).

The group's primary purpose is to provide a forum where the officers can discuss issues, share information about programs and projects in participating councils, and ensure timely awareness of emerging issues and opportunities.

Presentations by:

- **Economy.id** (2023) – provided a snapshot of the State of the Region Report (SOR) from the 2021 Census data looking at State and Regional statistics and provided training on the Economic Impact Model and Event Impact Calculator.
- **TTNQ** (2023) – provided a presentation on Indigenous Tourism in Far North Queensland. TTNQ provided an update on the Review of the Tourism Plan and the support it is giving to Local Tourism Organisations.

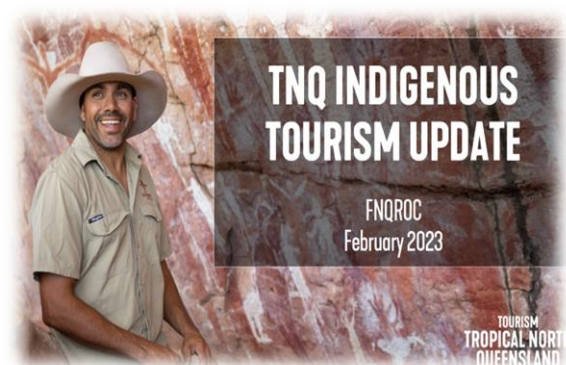


Figure 15: TTNQ Presentation – TNQ Indigenous Tourism Update.

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

ABN 52 034 736 962

Contents

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Page
Financial Statements	
Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income	1
Balance Sheet	2
Statement of Changes in Equity	3
Notes to the Financial Statements	4
Statement by Members of the Committee	10
Independent Audit Report	11

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

ABN 52 034 736 962

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue	4	1,161,591	1,312,445
Finance income		68	584
Annual administration expenses		(348,474)	(379,097)
Regional Infrastructure		(101,211)	(75,393)
Regional Natural Asset Management		(134,671)	(131,814)
Minor projects		(181,562)	(241,793)
Regional planning/economic development		(88,523)	(86,330)
Regional Procurement		(236,383)	(262,175)
Profit before income tax		70,834	136,426
Income tax expense		-	-
Profit for the year		70,834	136,426
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		70,834	136,426

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

ABN 52 034 736 962

Balance Sheet As At 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	1,549,137	1,514,130
Trade and other receivables	6	154,748	151,775
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		1,703,885	1,665,905
TOTAL ASSETS		1,703,885	1,665,905
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	7	64,376	110,617
Employee benefits	8	21,216	15,690
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		85,592	126,307
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Employee benefits	8	124,584	116,723
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		124,584	116,723
TOTAL LIABILITIES		210,176	243,030
NET ASSETS		1,493,709	1,422,875
EQUITY			
Retained earnings		1,493,709	1,422,875
TOTAL EQUITY		1,493,709	1,422,875

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

ABN 52 034 736 962

Statement of Changes in Equity For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

	Retained Earnings	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2022	1,422,875	1,422,875
Surplus (deficit) for the year	70,834	70,834
Total other comprehensive income for the period	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2023	1,493,709	1,493,709

	Retained Earnings	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2021	1,286,449	1,286,449
Surplus (deficit) for the year	136,426	136,426
Total other comprehensive income for the period	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2022	1,422,875	1,422,875

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

ABN 52 034 736 962

Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

The financial statements cover Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils ("the Association") as an individual entity. Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils is a not-for-profit unincorporated body domiciled in Queensland.

The principal activities of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2023 were the facilitation and co-ordination of the member council's development for the benefit of Far North Queensland communities and businesses.

Members of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2023 were as follows:

- Cairns Regional Council
- Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- Carpentaria Shire Council
- Cook Shire Council
- Croydon Shire Council
- Tablelands Regional Council
- Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
- Hinchinbrook Shire Council
- Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council
- Etheridge Shire Council
- Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
- Mareeba Shire Council
- Douglas Shire Council

Under the Association's Charter, each member shall nominate a representative to attend meetings of the Association. These representatives are referred to in this financial report as "the Board".

The functional and presentation currency of Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils is Australian dollars.

Comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

1 Basis of Preparation

In the opinion of the Board the Association is not a reporting entity since there are unlikely to exist users of the financial statements who are not able to command the preparation of reports tailored so as to satisfy specifically all of their information needs. These special purpose financial statements have been prepared to meet the reporting requirements of the Act.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards and Accounting Interpretations, and the disclosure requirements of AASB 101 *Presentation of Financial Statements*, AASB 108 *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors* and AASB 1054 *Australian Additional Disclosures*.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities.

Significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and are consistent with prior reporting periods unless otherwise stated.

Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Revenue and other income

Revenue from contracts with customers

The core principle of AASB 15 is that revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the Association expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services.

Generally the timing of the payment for sale of goods and rendering of services corresponds closely to the timing of satisfaction of the performance obligations, however where there is a difference, it will result in the recognition of a receivable, contract asset or contract liability.

None of the revenue streams of the Association have any significant financing terms as there is less than 12 months between receipt of funds and satisfaction of performance obligations.

Other income

Other income is recognised on an accruals basis when the Association is entitled to it.

(b) Income tax

The Board are of the opinion that the Association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

(c) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of GST.

(d) Volunteer services

No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

(e) Financial instruments

Financial instruments are recognised initially on the date that the Association becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

On initial recognition, all financial instruments are measured at fair value plus transaction costs (except for instruments measured at fair value through profit or loss where transaction costs are expensed as incurred).

Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(e) Financial instruments

Financial assets

All recognised financial assets are subsequently measured in their entirety at either amortised cost or fair value, depending on the classification of the financial assets.

Classification

On initial recognition, the Association classifies its financial assets into the following categories, those measured at:

- amortised cost
- fair value through profit or loss - FVTPL (NIL)

Financial assets are not reclassified subsequent to their initial recognition unless the Association changes its business model for managing financial assets.

Amortised cost

The Association's financial assets measured at amortised cost comprise trade and other receivables and cash and cash equivalents in the balance sheet.

Subsequent to initial recognition, these assets are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method less provision for impairment.

Interest income, foreign exchange gains or losses and impairment are recognised in profit or loss. Gain or loss on derecognition is recognised in profit or loss.

Trade receivables

Impairment of trade receivables have been determined using the simplified approach in AASB 9 which uses an estimation of lifetime expected credit losses. The Association has determined the probability of non-payment of the receivable and multiplied this by the amount of the expected loss arising from default.

The amount of the impairment is recorded in a separate allowance account with the loss being recognised in finance expense. Once the receivable is determined to be uncollectable then the gross carrying amount is written off against the associated allowance.

Where the Association renegotiates the terms of trade receivables due from certain customers, the new expected cash flows are discounted at the original effective interest rate and any resulting difference to the carrying value is recognised in profit or loss.

Financial liabilities

The Association measures all financial liabilities initially at fair value less transaction costs, subsequently financial liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

The financial liabilities of the Association comprise trade payables.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

2 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(f) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

(g) Employee benefits

The Association's employees are employed by the Cairns Regional Council, a member Council. These services are on-charged to the Association at cost. In addition, the Association makes allowance for any annual leave and long service leave accruing in respect of these employees. The Cairns Regional Council provides estimates of the liability amounts on a monthly basis to the Association.

Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits, those benefits that are expected to be wholly settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Employee benefits expected to be settled more than one year after the end of the reporting period have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may satisfy vesting requirements. Changes in the measurement of the liability are recognised in profit or loss.

(h) Adoption of new and revised accounting standards

The Association has adopted all standards which became effective for the first time at 30 June 2023, the adoption of these standards has not caused any material adjustments to the reported financial position, performance or cash flow of the Association.

3 Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments

The directors make estimates and judgements during the preparation of these financial statements regarding assumptions about current and future events affecting transactions and balances.

These estimates and judgements are based on the best information available at the time of preparing the financial statements, however as additional information is known then the actual results may differ from the estimates.

The significant estimates and judgements made have been described below.

Key estimates - receivables

The receivables at reporting date have been reviewed to determine whether there is any objective evidence that any of the receivables are impaired. An impairment provision is included for any receivable where the entire balance is not considered collectible. The impairment provision is based on the best information at the reporting date.

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

ABN 52 034 736 962

Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

4 Revenue and Other Income

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Revenue recognised on receipt (AASB 1058)		
- Annual administration contributions	514,343	472,743
- Projects - Regional procurement group	154,982	186,235
- Projects - Regional Infrastructure	305,265	322,124
- Projects - Short term	187,001	331,343
Total Revenue	1,161,591	1,312,445

5 Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Cash at bank and in hand	1,549,137	1,514,130
	1,549,137	1,514,130

6 Trade and Other Receivables

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Trade receivables	123,265	143,268
GST receivable	31,483	8,507
	154,748	151,775

The carrying value of trade receivables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short-term nature of the balances. The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date is the fair value of each class of receivable in the financial statements.

7 Trade and Other Payables

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Trade payables	222	48,757
Accrued expenses	5,800	6,000
Credit Card liability	9,992	9,558
Annual leave payable	38,400	40,835
Payroll liabilities	9,961	5,468
	64,375	110,618

Trade and other payables are unsecured, non-interest bearing and are normally settled within 30 days. The carrying value of trade and other payables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short-term nature of the balances.

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

ABN 52 034 736 962

Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

8 Employee Benefits

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Long service leave	<u>21,216</u>	15,690
	<u>21,216</u>	<u>15,690</u>
NON-CURRENT		
Long service leave	<u>124,584</u>	116,723
	<u>124,584</u>	<u>116,723</u>

The Association has no employees but it utilises the services of employees through the Cairns Regional Council, a member council. The Association reimburses Cairns Regional Council for all costs incurred for salary and wages expenses relating to these employees. Furthermore, the Association makes allowances for any annual leave and long service leave accruing in respect of these employees.

The amounts paid to Cairns Regional Council in respect of salaries and wages for the year ended 30 June 2023 is \$632,449 (2022: \$561,119)

9 Contingencies

In the opinion of the Committee of Management, the Association did not have any contingencies at 30 June 2023 (30 June 2022:None).

10 Events After the End of the Reporting Period

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Association, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Association in future financial years.

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils

ABN 52 034 736 962

Statement by Members of the Committee

The committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 2 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 9:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils as at 30 June 2023 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the committee and is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:



Chair



Chief Executive Officer

Dated this twenty ninth day of September 2023



Figure 42: **Assistant Minister Nikki Boyd MP**, Assistant Minister for Local Government



Figure 43: **Ms Rosslyn Bates** Shadow Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, Shadow Minister for Medical Research, Shadow Minister for Women **Mr Sam O'Connor** Shadow Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Shadow Minister for Science and Innovation and Shadow Minister for Youth



Figure 44: **Hon Meaghan Scanlon MP**, Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs



Figure 45: **Mr Tim Mander MP** Shadow Minister for Housing and Public Works, Shadow Minister for Sports and Racing, Shadow Minister for Olympic and Paralympic Sport and Regional Engagement. **Mr Steve Minnikin MP** Shadow Minister for Customer Service, Shadow Minister for Transport and Main Roads **Mr Jarrod Bleijie** Shadow Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, Shadow Minister for Olympic and Paralympic Infrastructure and Jobs, Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations **Mr David Crisafulli** Leader of the Opposition, Shadow Minister for Tourism, Shadow Minister for Olympics and Paralympics



Figure 46: **Hon Stirling Hinchcliffe**, Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement **and Mr Michael Healy**, Assistant Minister for Tourism Industry Development



Figure 47: **Hon Mark Bailey MP**, Minister for Transport and Main Roads



Figure 48: **Hon Steven Miles MP**, Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure



Figure 49: **Hon Cameron Dick MP**, Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment



Figure 50: **Meeting on behalf of Hon Glenn Butcher MP**, Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water Linda Dobe, Acting Director-General Bernadette Zerba, Deputy Director-General Ben Driscoll, Chief of Staff Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water

FNQROC Team Contact Information



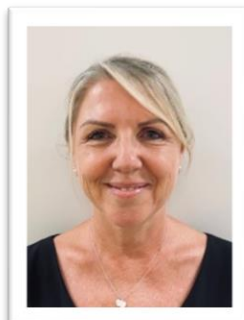
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Acronyms Defined

AASB	Australian Accounting Standards Board
AER	Australian Energy Regulator
AMTC	Animal Management Technical Committee
BQ	Biosecurity Queensland
CAAP	Capability Agreement and Action Plan
CAFNEC	Cairns and Far North Environment Centre
CCRC	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
CEO's	Chief Executive Officer (member Councils)
CHAS	Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRC	Cairns Regional Council
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DAF	Dept. of Agriculture and Fisheries
DATSIP	Dept. of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
DDG	Deputy Director General
DES	Dept. Environment and Science
DNRME	Dept. Natural resources, Mines and Energy
DSDMIP	Dept. of State Development, Tourism and Innovation
ED	Executive Director
EMQ	Emergency Management Queensland
EMS	Emergency Management Strategy
FNQROC	Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils
FNQ RRTG	Far North Queensland Regional Road and Transport Group
FNQ RRTG TC	Far North Queensland Regional Road and Transport Group Technical Committee
FNQWA	Far North Queensland Water Alliance
FY	Financial Year
GBR	Great Barrier Reef
GIS	Geographic Information System
HSC	Hinchinbrook Shire Council
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPWEA	Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia

IPWEAQ	Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia Qld
IQRAP	Inland Queensland Road Action Plan
JCU	James Cook University
JPRS	Joint Purchasing and Resource Sharing
LAWMAC	Local Authority Waste Management Advisory Committee
LG	Local Government
LGAQ	Local Government Association of Queensland
LRRS	Local Roads of Regional Significance
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
NAMAC	Natural Asset Management Advisory Committee
NAQS	Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy
NCCARF	National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NWROC	North West Regional Organisation of Councils
QAO	Qld Audit Office
QPWS	Qld Parks and Wildlife Service
QTRIP	Qld Transport and Roads Investment Program
QWRAP	Qld Water Regional Alliance Program
RAMG	Regional Asset Management Group
RAV	Restricted Access Vehicle
RDA TN	Regional Development Australia – Tropical North
RECoE	Rural Economies Centre of Excellence
RILIPO	Remote Indigenous Land Infrastructure Project Officer
RTAPT	Road and Transport Alliance Project Team
RWMG	Regional Waste Management Group
SARA	State Assessment and Referral Agency
SCDF	State-wide Capability Development Fund
SOG	State Oversight Group
TIDS	Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme
TMR	Transport and Main Roads
TNQ	Tropic North Queensland
TSS	Tariff Structure Statement
TTNQ	Tourism Tropical North Queensland

ULAB	Used Lead Acid Batteries
WTMA	Wet Tropics Management Authority
YCAEP	Yellow Crazy Ant Eradication Project
YEP	Your Entrepreneur Project