



**BOARD MEETING  
OF  
FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC)  
No. 164**

**Thursday 1 February 2024  
10.30am to 1.30pm**

**Cairns Regional Council, Civic Reception Room**

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**Microsoft Teams meeting**

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## 1. WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

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## 2. APOLOGIES

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A list of apologies will be tabled at the meeting.

## 3. PRESENTATIONS

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### 3.1 Mike Wassing, Deputy Commissioner, Deputy State Recovery Coordinator, Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA)

**Timing: 10.35am**

Mr Wassing will provide a briefing on Disaster Recovery after the recent cyclone/flooding events, discussing where we are at regionally and the forecast – where to from here? Followed by a Q&A session.

**40 mins**

### 3.2 Rachel Cliffe, Regional General Manager, Northern Queensland and Josie Pickering, Regional Engagement Manager, Northern Queensland, Regional Australia, Telstra

**Timing: 11.15am**

Ms Cliffe and Ms Pickering will provide an update on Telstra 3G ceasing in some areas.

**20 mins**

### 3.2 Lucy Greene LGAQ, Lead Intergovernmental Relations (LGAQ)

**Timing: 11.35am**

LGAQ will provide an overview of LGAQ recent activities per the briefing note circulated prior to meeting. (Appendix 1)

**10 mins**

## 4. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

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- The Draft Minutes of the 163rd FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) Board meeting of 7 December 2023.

### **Recommendation: That the FNQROC Board**

1. **Move** that the minutes of the 163rd FNQROC Board meeting held on 7 December 2023 be confirmed and adopted.

**Pages 1-8**

## 5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

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- Action items from 7 December 2023 FNQROC Board Meeting.

**Nil actions from this meeting.**

Actions carried over from previous meetings.

**Action Item: 3128**

FNQROC to contact Tyre Stewardship Australia to invite them to present to the FNQROC Board on the results from the recent survey. **LGAQ - Once results have been analysed we will revisit early 2024.**

## 6. ADVOCACY

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- Advocacy update from FNQROC Council members

## 7. STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLAN

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- 7.1 Local Housing Action Plan Project – Update
- 7.2 Summary of Achievements for the Elected Officials Term.

**Pages 9 - 16**

## 8. DISCUSSION TOPICS

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**Nil**

## 9. INCOMING / OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE

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- Incoming  
**The Hon Pat Conroy MP – Response to FNQROC letter supporting PNG NRL.**
- Outgoing  
**The Hon Stephen Jones MP – Letter of Support CQ University CBD Campus Project**  
**Pages 17 - 18**

## 10. FNQROC POLICY REVIEW

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**Nil**

## 11. FNQROC REPORTS AND MOU'S

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**Nil**

## 12. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

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- Profit & Loss Statement: Current FY July 2023 to 22 January 2024
- Balance Sheet: Current FY July 2023 to 22 January 2024

**Recommendation:** That the FNQROC Board adopt the Profit and Loss and balance Sheet Reports for the period 1 July 2023 to 22 January 2024.

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## 13. MEETINGS ATTENDED BY FNQROC EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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## 14. LGAQ POLICY EXECUTIVE DISCUSSION – CR PETER SCOTT

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Verbal

## 15. MINUTES OF FNQROC ADVISORY COMMITTEES

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**FNQROC Regional Water Capacity Meeting #1 (Contract/Pre-start) – 10 January 2024**

**Minutes** – [available on website once finalised](#)

**Next Meeting** – To be advised

**FNQ RRTG TC Meeting – 12 January 2024**

**Minutes** – [available on website](#)

**Next Meeting** – 15 March 2024

## 16. CONFIDENTIAL MEETING MINUTES

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**FNQROC Regional Bio-solids Sub-Committee – 9 January 2024**

**Minutes** – [available on request](#)

**Next Meeting** – To be advised

## 17. GENERAL BUSINESS

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17.1 FNQROC 165<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting venue for 18 April 2024 meeting.

17.2 Any general business.

## 18. NEXT MEETING

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Date & Time **Thursday 18 April 2024**

Venue To be advised.

### Appendices

**Appendix 1 – LGAQ Executive Summary** *(to be provided prior to meeting)*

### FNQROC Board Meeting Dates for 2024

Date	Venue
Thursday 1 February 2024	Cairns
Thursday 18 April 2024	Cairns
Thursday 6 June 2024	Tully
Thursday 1 August 2024	Cairns *
Thursday 3 October 2024	Cairns *
Thursday 5 December 2024	Cairns

*\* 2<sup>nd</sup> Away Meeting to be determined.*

# Minutes of the 163<sup>rd</sup> FNQROC Board Meeting

<b>Meeting No</b>	163
<b>Meeting Name</b>	FNQROC Board Meeting
<b>Date</b>	7 December 2023
<b>Time</b>	10.30am to 2.00pm
<b>Venue</b>	Cairns Regional Council, Civic Reception, Cairns

## REPRESENTATIVES

### CHAIR

Cr Terry James  
 Cr Mark Nolan, Mayor  
 Cr Peter Scott, Mayor  
 Cr Trevor Pickering, Mayor  
 Cr Peter Garde, Councillor  
 Cr Michael Kerr, Mayor  
 Cr Barry Hughes, Mayor  
 Cr Angela Toppin, Mayor  
 Cr Rod Marti

Cairns Regional Council  
 Cassowary Coast Regional Council  
 Cook Shire Council  
 Croydon Shire Council  
 Croydon Shire Council  
 Douglas Shire Council  
 Etheridge Shire Council  
 Mareeba Shire Council  
 Tablelands Regional Council

### DEPUTY CHAIR

## CEOS

Ms Mica Martin, CEO  
 Mr Andrew Graffen, CEO  
 Ms Jacqui Cresswell, CEO  
 Ms Rachel Brophy, CEO  
 Mr Ken Timms, CEO  
 Mr Steve Linnane, CEO  
 Mr Peter Franks, CEO  
 Mr Gary Rinehart, CEO  
 Mr Richard Wright, CEO

Cairns Regional Council  
 Cassowary Coast Regional Council  
 Croydon Shire Council  
 Douglas Shire Council  
 Etheridge Shire Council  
 Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council (online)  
 Mareeba Shire Council  
 Tablelands Regional Council  
 Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

## OBSERVERS

Ms Rudi Pretzler

LGAQ

## INVITED GUESTS

Mr Ryan Longland  
 Ms Michelle Cottrell  
 Ms Tanjill Whitnell

DSDILGP  
 DSDILGP  
 Department of Justice

## FNQROC STAFF

Mr Anthony Archie	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Travis Sydes	Natural Asset Management & Sustainability Coordinator
Ms Amanda Hancock	Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator
Mr Elliott Meelen	Regional Procurement Coordinator
Ms Paula Power	Executive Support Officer
Ms Maria Anselmo	Climate Resilience Coordinator

## APOLOGIES

Mr Brian Joiner, CEO	Cook Shire Council
Cr Ramon Jayo, Mayor	Hinchinbrook Shire Council
Cr Mary Brown	Hinchinbrook Shire Council (online)
Cr Jason Woibo, Mayor	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
Ms Kiley Hanslow, CEO	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Cr Ross Andrews, Mayor	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

## 3144 WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we met and paid respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Mayor Kerr acknowledged Mayor Bob Manning's retirement and thanked him for all the work he has while on the FNQROC Board. Mayor Kerr welcomed and congratulated the incoming Mayor, Terry James.

## 3145 BOARD PRESENTATIONS

### 3.1 FNQ Regional Plan Update - Ms Michelle Cottrell, Executive Director and Mr Ryan Longland, Director, Regional and Spatial Planning, DSDILGP

Mr Longland introduced the new Executive Director Ms Michelle Cottrell to the FNQROC Board. Ms Cottrell spoke about her new role and her background.

Mr Longland provided an update on the FNQ Regional Plan journey to date. **A copy of the presentation has been provided with the minutes.**

Key information

- Local government engagement – group and one on one meetings (ongoing)
- Gaps and opportunities assessments
- Stakeholder engagement strategy
- Regional Economic Cluster, regional economy and housing needs
- Draft Mapping being sourced initially from all departments prior to draft plan being completed
- Vision Survey progress
- Confirmation with the board on the new deadlines of the Draft and Final Regional Plan.

### Discussion from the floor:

- Population growth – difference between what was and what could have been if had a plan that encouraged growth.
- Work to be done in area of water. It was identified that we need a long term plan for the future that is supported.
- Mossman Mill – private entities in discussions
- Cairns Port and Mourilyan Master Plan – it was identified that these ports may need different requirements.
- Agreement local government engagement has been good and instilled confidence that they are working in the right direction Looking at scale and scope of the issues councils are putting forward.

### 3.3 Tanjil Whittnell, Coordinator, Far North Queensland Dispute Resolution Centre, Department of Justice.

Ms Whittnell provided an insight into what the FNQ Dispute Resolution Centre does and how councils can access their services.

- Nationally accredited.
- Assess whether a dispute is suitable for mediation.
- Different disputes including workplace and commercial.
- Training offered to become a mediator.
- Free Confidential Service – except for Workplace mediation.
- Useful for many areas of compliance or general community interactions.
- For further information Ms Whittnell can be contacted via email [Tanjil.Whittnell@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:Tanjil.Whittnell@justice.qld.gov.au)

### 3.3 Rudi Pretzler, Lead Public Health and Works (LGAQ)

Mr Pretzler provided an overview of LGAQ recent activities per the briefing note circulated prior to meeting. (Appendix 3)

- The 2023 Annual Conference was held in Gladstone from 16-18 October 2023. 152 motions were listed for debate. In total, 140 resolutions were passed. The Final Outcomes Document can be accessed via Congruent.
- New legislation has passed to overhaul the functions of the Office of the Independent Assessor and councillor complaint system on 15 November 2023. The State Government accepted all 40 recommendations from the recent inquiry and progressed these changes through the Bill which has received royal assent from the Governor. Key reforms include the introduction of a new statutory preliminary assessment process for complaints, a process to declare someone a 'vexatious complainant' and the removal of the mandate to publish certain details on the LG conduct register.
- Local government participated in the Queensland's State Delegation to Canberra with Deputy Premier Miles to discuss the outcome of the Federal Infrastructure Investment Pipeline Review. Minister King indicated that councils impacted by the budget cuts should work with the state government to ensure they are ready and then put them forward for the upcoming budget and that there would be no budging on the the 50:50 split. However, local government specific programs would not be impacted by the new split rules.
- Following the collection of data in 2022 and 2023, the LGAQ has presented preliminary insights from the Cost-Shifting survey to councils at the Annual Conference. These show that there has



been a 378% increase in reported cost-shifting over the past 20 years. The LGAQ will launch the finalised report in early 2024 with a campaign preceding the launch.

- The State Government announced \$6.1M at Annual Conference to establish the Local Energy Partnerships framework, aiming to improve practice and engagement in the renewable energy sector. The LGAQ will arrange a briefing with the Department of Energy and Public Work ton the announcement with further details to come.
- Following advocacy by the LGAQ and the Local Government Animal Management Taskforce, the State Government has tabled the Agriculture and Fisheries and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023, which includes key changes to the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008. Key changes include stronger penalties for offenders, state-harmonised effective control measures, restrictions to QCAT appeals and the banning of restricted dogs across the state.

## 3146 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The draft minutes of the 162nd FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) Board meeting of 5 October 2023.

**MOVED: Cr Rod Marti**

**SECOND: Cr Mark Nolan**

### Motion

*That the FNQROC Board move that the minutes of the 161<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting held on 5 October 2023 be confirmed and adopted.*

**CARRIED**

## 3147 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

### Action items from 5 October 2023 FNQROC Board Meeting

Minute Number	Action	Responsible Person(s)	Status
3128	FNQROC to make contact with Tyre Stewardship Australia to invite them to present to the FNQROC Board on the results from the survey at the next meeting on 7 December 2023.	P Power FNQROC	On-going
3142a	FNQROC to draft a letter from the FNQROC Chair supporting the PNG NRL team established in Cairns.	A Archie Cr Michael Kerr FNQROC	Completed – sent to Minister Conroy's office 2 December 2023
3142b	A Archie to look at a strategy paper on Cyber Security for local government councils as a whole with the possibility of a shared Chief Security Officer.	A Archie FNQROC	On-going

**Action 3128** - No submissions received and results not to be published. An update will be provided through Lucy Greene LGAQ at next meeting.

**Action 3142a** – Letter was sent to Minister Pat Conroy on 5 December 2023; awaiting reply.

**Action 3142b** – Discussions with LGMS, no outcome. Looking at next year for possible strategies.

## 3148 ADVOCACY

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Nil

## 3149 STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLAN

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### Local Housing Action Plan Project

- Many Councils should be at draft plan by the end of the month and maybe able to have a briefing session with Councillors. If Council is unable to get to this stage they should contact LGAQ to inform them of any delay and proposed timeline.

## 3150 DISCUSSION TOPICS

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Nil

## 3151 CORRESPONDENCE

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### Incoming – noted

1. Letter from Mayor Terry James, Cairns Regional Council – 28 November 2023

### Outgoing – noted

1. Letter to the Hon Pat Conroy - 28 November 2023

## 3152 FNQROC POLICY REVIEW

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Nil

## 3153 FNQROC REPORTS AND MOUS

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- B95 – Water Capability Project – Stantec Submission (Appendix 1)

**MOVED: Cr Mark Nolan**

**SECOND: Cr Bradley Creek**

### Motion

*That the FNQROC Board endorse that Stantec Australia Pty Ltd are awarded a contract to develop the FNQ Regional Water Capability Plan.*

**CARRIED**

- B96B – TIDS Program Management Tool (Appendix 2)

**MOVED: Cr Barry Hughes**

**SECOND: Cr Terry James**

**Motion**

*That the FNQROC Board endorse that Shepherd Services Pty Ltd are awarded a contract to develop a new Program Prioritisation Tool to manage the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme program*

**CARRIED**

## **3137 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

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Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet – 1 July 2023 to 30 November 2023

**MOVED: Cr Angela Toppin**

**SECOND: Cr Trevor Pickering**

**Motion**

*That the profit and Loss and Balance Sheet Reports for the period FY 1 July 2023 to 30 November 2023 be adopted and accepted.*

**CARRIED**

**Note: QTC online savings account with higher interest rates has been set up awaiting activation.**

## **3138 ATTENDANCE & MINUTES OF MEETING**

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Noted.

## **3139 LGAQ POLICY EXECUTIVE DISCUSSION – CR PETER SCOTT**

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Nothing to report. If any issues, please raise with Cr Peter Scott to take to LGAQ Policy Executive.

## **3140 MINUTES OF ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

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### **FNQROC WHS & Wellbeing Committee Meeting – 10 October 2023**

Noted

### **FNQROC Regional Water Alliance Meeting - 19 October 2023**

Noted

### **FNQROC Local Housing Action Plan Working Group # 2 – 24 October 2023**

Noted

### **FNQROC Animal Management Technical Committee Management – 31 October 2023**

Noted

### **FNQ RRTG TC Meeting – 10 November 2023**

Noted

## NAMAC Disaster Management Workshop – 11 November 2023

Noted

## FNQROC Climate Resilience Technical Committee Meeting - 28 November 2023

Noted

## FNQROC Planners Meeting – FNQ Regional Plan – 1 December 2023

Noted

### 3141 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

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#### FNQROC Regional Biosolids Sub-Committee Meeting No.1 – 14 September 2023

Noted - Minutes – [available on request](#)

#### FNQROC Regional Supply & Delivery of Liquid Alum, ACH & Caustic Soda – Contract Meeting - 2 November 2023

Noted - Minutes – [available on request](#)

#### FNQROC Regional Waste Management & Resource Recovery – RRR Plan Implementation – 3 November 2023

Noted - Minutes – [available on request](#)

#### FNQROC Sewer Relining Contract Prestart - Contract Meeting # 1 - 2 November 2023

Noted - Minutes – [available on request](#)

#### FNQROC Regional Supply & Delivery of Citric Acid – Contract Meeting #2 - 27 November 2023

Noted - Minutes – [available on request](#)

#### FNQROC Regional Collection & Disposal of Ferrous Metal, Non-Ferrous Metal & ULABs, Contract Meeting #2 – 30 November 2023

Noted - Minutes – [available on request](#)

### 3142 GENERAL BUSINESS

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#### Presentation

##### Telstra Bin Sensors Project

Cassowary Coast Regional Council provided a presentation on the Telstra Bin Sensor Project being conducted. **A copy of the presentation has been provided with the minutes.**

#### General Business

FNQROC CEO Anthony Archie proposed a motion to support Mareeba Shire Council's submission to Minister Mark Bailey on their position on the Barron River Bridge.

**Motion**

*That the FNQROC Board support the decision to make a submission to support Mareeba Shire Council's position on the Barron River Bridge. Submission to be forwarded to Minister Mark Bailey.*

**MOVED: Cr Angela Toppin**

**SECOND: Cr Barry Hughes**

**CARRIED**

**3143      NEXT MEETING**

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The Chair advised that the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 1 February 2024.

The Chair thanked A Archie and the FNQROC team for their hard work this year and acknowledged the FNQROC Board members for their contribution.

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 2.00pm.

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**Cr Michael Kerr, FNQROC Chair**

**AGREED ACTION ITEMS**

**Thursday 7 December 2023**

Action items nil.

**FNQROC Board Meetings for 2024**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Thursday 1 February 2024	Cairns
Thursday 18 April 2024	Cairns
Thursday 6 June 2024	Tully
Thursday 1 August 2024	Cairns *
Thursday 3 October 2024	Cairns *
Thursday 5 December 2024	Cairns

*\*Away meeting to be determined*

## Introduction

This report presents a comprehensive overview of the significant efforts and achievements of the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) over the past four years. With a focus on operational advocacy, it details the FNQROC's proactive engagements, policy contributions, and strategic initiatives across various sectors. Furthermore, it is also to recognise the work of the board, working groups, and committees that have achieved all this.

### Key areas of the report include:

**Operational Successes in Diverse Areas:** The document details successful programs in procurement coordination, infrastructure coordination, natural asset management, sustainability efforts, and climate resilience. Each area showcases the FNQROC's ability to leverage collective resources and expertise for regional benefit.

**Collaborative and Strategic Approaches:** The report emphasises the collaborative nature of the FNQROC's work, highlighting how strategic partnerships and a shared vision have driven significant progress in areas like transport, waste management, water, and wastewater management.

**Regional Development and Future Outlook:** The FNQROC's role in regional development, economic growth, and future planning is discussed, showcasing how the organisation has positioned itself as a key player in driving sustainable growth and resilience in the Far North Queensland region.


In essence, this report serves as a testament to the FNQROC's dedication to the development and well-being of Far North Queensland, illustrating its role as a dynamic and influential regional body, and thank you to all that have participated.

## FNQROC Advocacy

During the current tenure of the FNQROC Mayors, we have actively engaged in seven delegations at the State and Federal levels. Our scheduling capacities were somewhat constrained due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these challenges, we successfully conducted meetings with a significant number of dignitaries. Just like Sir Donald Brandman's batting average, we finished just shy of 100; we met with 99 Federal Senators, Ministers, Shadow Ministers, and Members, in addition we met with 79 State Ministers, Shadow Ministers, and Members during our delegate trips.

In the same period, FNQROC has been prolific in contributing to policy development, having submitted 23 comprehensive responses to various State and Federal Policies, Strategies, Bills, and other consultative documents. A list of the submission is as per below:

- Qld Feral Deer Management Strategy
- Select Committee of Northern Australia – Inquiry into Northern Australia Workforce Development
- Draft PFAS NEMP 3.0
- E-products Action Plan

	<p align="center"><b>FNQROC OPERATIONAL ADVOCACY PAST 4 YEARS</b></p> <p align="center"><b>01 FEBRUARY 2024</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>B100</b></p>
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- Qld Waste Management & Resource Recovery Strategy
- Waste management and Resource Recovery Strategy and Waste Levy Efficacy
- Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022
- Qld Feral Deer Management Strategy
- Cyclone and Flood Management Reinsurance Pool Bill
- Regional Telecommunications Review
- National Water Reform 2020 Productivity Commission
- Infrastructure Australia – Kuranda Range Road
- National Feral Pig Action Plan 2021- 2031
- Roads of Strategic Importance priority project submission
- Proposed Mobile Black Spot Program round 5A Discussion Paper
- Standards Australia Discussion Paper re Distribution & Licensing Policy Framework
- Regional Connectivity Program Discussion Paper
- New Skilled Regional Visa's
- Effectiveness of the Australian Government Northern Australia Agenda
- End of Waste code for Biosolids
- 2020/21 Federal Pre-Budget
- Proposed Local Government regulatory reforms; and
- Regional Connectivity Program Grant

## Procurement Coordinator

The Procurement Coordinator role has continued to serve the FNQROC member Councils well, enabling them to achieve significant savings on pricing and eliminate risk for individual Councils competing against one another for limited supplier resources. The collective procurement arrangements have involved a commitment from suppliers to ensure works are completed to agreed timeframes.

The FNQROC Contract Process Guide - Regional Procurement Contracts continues to be accessible via the FNQROC website/Procurement, enabling member Councils to access the necessary information to participate in the collective procurement arrangements.

One of the key programs that have been successfully delivered through the collective procurement arrangements is the annual Bitumen Reseal Program, which involves sealing 2.6 million m<sup>2</sup> of road and requires approximately 5.6 million litres of bitumen.

The contracts for the supply and delivery of Sodium Hypochlorite and Liquid Alum have been made under a collective procurement arrangement since 2012. In 2022/23, the contracts have been extended to the supply of Citric Acid, Aluminium Chlorohydrate and Liquid Sodium Hydroxide. Eleven member Councils continue to participate in this arrangement. FNQROC also facilitates supplier and Council collaboration in areas including improving processes for the supply and use of particular water chemicals. Collectively councils used approximately 10 million litres of Sodium Hypochlorite and over 3.2 million litres of Liquid Alum.

Another successful program that has been delivered under the collective procurement arrangements is the Collection & Disposal of Ferrous Metal & Used Lead Acid Batteries (ULABs). This arrangement has been in place since 2015 and involves eleven member Councils. The contracts are based on a supplier-led collection schedule and pricing linked to metal markets. Just under 35,000 tonnes of ferrous metal and just under 750 tonnes of ULABs were collected throughout the region during the year, together with just over 520 tonnes of non-ferrous metal.

In 2022 FNQROCC facilitated the joint procurement and contract administration on behalf of council for Flood Warning Infrastructure funded under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). There were 7 councils involved in the arrangement across 41 locations involving over 50 assets. FNQROC engaged the services of a Program Coordinator to engage the contractor and oversee overall delivery of the assets with assistance from councils and liaising with the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA) and the Dept of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR).

During the period, there was a focus on the removal and beneficial reuse of biosolids, which are treated sewerage sludge and the major by-product of the wastewater treatment process. A collective arrangement has been established to ensure streamlined pricing and consistent contract terms are provided across the region to achieve efficiency benefits to suppliers and Councils alike. Six member Councils participated in this arrangement, which has seen 100% of biosolids diverted from landfills. Approximately 120,000 tonnes of biosolids were beneficially reused on farmland across the region. FNQROC are highly involved in the space forward as Council's navigate the ever-changing compliance of biosolids.

Here are some summarised key quantitative outcomes:

- **Bitumen Reseal Program:** over 2.6 million m<sup>2</sup> of road sealed and over 5.6 million litres of bitumen used.
- **Sodium Hypochlorite and Liquid Alum:** over 10 million litres of Sodium Hypochlorite and over 3.2 million litres of Liquid Alum used.
- **Collection & Disposal of Ferrous Metal & Used Lead Acid Batteries (ULABs):** over 35,000 tonnes of ferrous metal, over 750 tonnes of ULABs, and over 520 tonnes of non-ferrous metal collected.
- **Removal and Beneficial Reuse of Biosolids:** over 120,000 tonnes of biosolids were beneficially reused.

Overall, the collective procurement arrangements have been highly successful in enabling member Councils to achieve significant savings and eliminate risk for individual Councils competing against one another for limited supplier resources. FNQROC has facilitated the procurement of goods and services where member Councils would benefit from the sharing of knowledge and collaboration. The FNQROC has also strived for continuous improvement in all processes to add maximum value for participating Councils, with the ultimate goal of improving service delivery to the community.

## Strategic Infrastructure

The FNQROC Infrastructure working groups/committees have achieved significant progress in several areas, including regional transport, waste management, and water and wastewater management.



In terms of regional transport, the FNQ regional road investment strategy, developed in 2020, continues to inform our investment decisions across the region and has been utilised as a basis for mayoral delegations to both State and Federal Governments seeking funding to address the deficiencies identified. This important strategy considers the regional strategic needs and outcomes with current network performance and conditions to establish funding needs and guide an optimal investment program to meet FNQ's potential. It is also incorporated into the project prioritisation for delivery of the TIDS program, which was delivered successfully each year, with 100% of project funds expended. As part of building resource capacity and skills for the region, future FNQ RRTG priorities are underway, with an emphasis on lifting the focus from operational to a more strategic approach. Recently the project has begun to develop a new program management tool to better service the region. This tool aims to facilitate better management, create efficiencies, and provide a robust audit trail for the TIDS program.

In terms of waste management, the Department of Environment and Science granted the FNQ RRTG \$300,000 (with a commitment from FNQROC to allocate \$150,000 to future implementation) in April 2022 to undertake a Regional Resource Recovery Strategy. 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 the region. Once funding has been approved by the State, FNQROC will facilitate the engagement and employment of a Regional Resource Recovery Coordinator to oversee the delivery of the Plan.

Finally, in terms of water and wastewater management, the FNQ Water Capability Project commenced over the past four years, with a four-step approach agreed to understand the region's capability issues and enable councils to identify and implement agreed solutions. 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. In 2023 Stantec were appointed to develop a Regional Water Capability Plan. The intent of the Capability Plan is the development of a regional, long-term (up to 10 years) coordinated plan that identifies options and opportunities for member councils to work individually and collaboratively to improve capability in the focus areas of people, data and processes. This exciting project is supported by funding from both Jobs Queensland and Queensland Water and will be used to demonstrate required policy reform and any funding and assistance required from all levels of Government to reach the desired future state. This Plan is expected to be delivered by the end of 2024.

In summary the below list of the key outcomes for the period:

#### **Roads**

- Following the successful completion of regional aerodrome safety audits in 2021/22, annual safety audits continue to be undertaken regionally.

- 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. SCDF funding was granted, contributing 50% towards the cost of the Plan.
- Yarrabah Transport Network Plan 2021. SCDF funding was granted, contributing 50% towards the cost of the Plan.
- Bridge Inspection training 2022. SCDF funding was granted, contributing 50% towards the cost of the Training.

### **Waste & Waste**

- In April 2022, the Department of Environment and Science granted \$300,000 to undertake a Regional Resource Recovery Strategy, which was endorsed by the FNQROC Board in April 2023.
- In late 2022, the 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. In 2023, QLD Water granted \$200,000 in QWRAP funding to undertake the Regional Water Capability Plan, and Jobs Queensland granted \$30,000 towards the Workforce planning aspect of the Plan.
- Formation of a Regional Biosolids Sub-Committee to guide the review of current biosolids disposal methodology across the region and the development of a FNQ Biosolids Disposal strategy for 2024-2034 considering the rapidly changing regulatory framework.


Overall, the past four years have seen the FNQROC Infrastructure working groups/committees make significant progress in several key areas, including regional transport, waste management, and water and wastewater management. Through a strategic and collaborative approach, the FNQROC Infrastructure working groups/committees have been able to deliver successful programs and initiatives that benefit the entire region.

## **Natural Asset Management and Sustainability**

The past four years has seen significant progress towards its goals of natural asset management and sustainability. Efforts have been focused on a wide range of areas, including biosecurity, water quality, landscape restoration, biodiversity conservation, animal management, and nature-based tourism.

The achievements of the past four years have been due to the facilitation of the Natural Asset Management Advisory Committee (NAMAC) and the Animal Management Technical Committee (AMTC), and the efforts of participants. In addition to these committees, FNQROC has also been involved in a wide range of local, regional, state and national advisory groups and committees. This has allowed the organisation to represent the regional interests of FNQROC and to participate in a range of activities that support natural asset management and sustainability.

Another significant achievement of the past four years has been the development of several strategies and policies to guide the organisation's work. These include the FNQROC Regional Animal Management Strategy, the FNQROC Natural Assets Stewardship Accord, the FNQROC Regional Natural

	<p align="center"><b>FNQROC OPERATIONAL ADVOCACY PAST 4 YEARS</b></p> <p align="center"><b>01 FEBRUARY 2024</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>B100</b></p>
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Asset Strategy, and the Regional Taskforce (Resource Sharing) MOU. FNQROC also directly supports councils in the development and preparation of their statutory biosecurity plans. Developing and presenting these plans in a regionally consistent format enables regional collaboration and knowledge sharing across all councils.

One of the more recent additions to the organisation's portfolio of work is the 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 project will be reported in full in the 2023/24 annual report.

FNQROC has also been involved in responding to emerging issues in the region, such as the aquatic weed Amazon Frogbit in the Barron catchment. The organisation has worked closely with CAFNEC and other stakeholders to develop a response plan that identifies the roles of a wide group of stakeholders across the region in addressing the current impacts and future risks.

Some specific achievements in these areas include:

#### **Biosecurity**

- Working with local councils, state agencies and other stakeholders to develop and implement invasive species management plans and biosecurity plans
- Developing and rolling out a regional biosecurity awareness campaigns
- Maintaining a regional pest mapping and distribution spatial data set for high priority invasive species

#### **Water Quality and GBR**


- Developing and implementing a regional aquatic weed reporting system.
- Representing local governments interests on the Wet Tropics Waterways partnership and contributing to the development of the Reef 2050 Plan
- Contributing to a major review of the FNQ Regional Water Quality Improvement Plan

#### **Landscape Restoration**

- Contributing to the development and implementation of a regional landscape restoration program
- Supporting local councils navigate ecosystem service and landscape restoration credit markets including the development the Wet Tropics Cassowary Credits scheme.

#### **Natural Asset Management and Biodiversity Conservation**

- Developing a regional natural asset management plan methodology
- Supporting local councils in the development and implementation disaster response tools for the protection of natural and environmental assets
- Undertaking a major review of local government roles and responsibilities for threatened species conservation and preservation

	<p align="center"><b>FNQROC OPERATIONAL ADVOCACY PAST 4 YEARS</b></p> <p align="center"><b>01 FEBRUARY 2024</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>B100</b></p>
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### Animal Management

- Establishment of the FNQROC Animal Management Technical Committee
- Supporting local councils in the development and implementation of animal management plans
- Developing the FNQROC Regional Animal Management Strategy

## Climate Resilience Coordinator – Operational Report


FNQROC's newest area but far from an area of our involvement. FNQROC Councils during the period have actively worked towards creating a climate-resilient, low-carbon future. The recent establishment of the Climate Resilience Technical Committee (CRTC) has played a pivotal role in coordinating and driving initiatives towards climate mitigation, transition, and adaptation opportunities that deliver social, environmental, and economic benefits for Far North QLD.

In 2020/21, FNQROC focused on climate adaptation, transition, and mitigation, particularly in the state government's QCoast2100 program Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategies (CHAS). FNQROC, Cairns, Mareeba, and Tablelands secured pilot projects under the Queensland Climate Resilient Councils Program, which led to the development of a 5-year action plan. The plan will guide immediate and future investment within and across councils to tackle the challenges of climate change adaptation, mitigation, and transition.

In 2021/22, FNQROC Councils continued to work in the climate adaptation planning and response space, with a focus on the CHAS program. FNQROC also assisted Mareeba and Tablelands in undertaking Greenhouse Gas Inventories and piloting communication and engagement materials to support vulnerable members of the community in responding to heatwaves.

In 2022/23, the CRTC focused on drought and heatwave resilience, collaborating to inform a regional heatwave awareness project and the development of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan for Gulf Hinterland and Wet Tropics. The study involved facilitating interviews with key stakeholders from across the region, resulting in over thirty individuals contributing to the study and sharing their stories, knowledge, and experience of previous drought, bushfire, and heatwave events. Furthermore, during this period, we were involved in the National Climate Risk Assessment through participation in multiple workshops, in which we helped to identify climate risks and their impacts.

Overall, FNQ Councils have made significant strides towards creating a climate-resilient, low-carbon future over the past four years. The establishment of the CRTC has allowed for collaboration and sharing of knowledge, experiences, and updates on current initiatives. The development of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan and the Keeping Our Cool community heatwave awareness project demonstrate the commitment of FNQ councils to protect vulnerable members of the community and mitigate the effects of climate change.

	<p><b>FNQROC OPERATIONAL ADVOCACY PAST 4 YEARS</b></p> <p><b>01 FEBRUARY 2024</b></p>	<p><b>B100</b></p>
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## Regional Executive Support – Operational Report

Over the past four years, the FNQROC Planning Advisory and Economic Advisory Committees have held regular meetings attended by representatives from member councils, government departments, and industry bodies. The committees' primary purposes were to provide a forum for discussion of issues and opportunities and to share information and resources among the group.

In terms of planning, the committees focused on the development of a new FNQ Regional Plan, with meetings held to discuss expectations and strategies. There has been the recent completion and adoption of version 9 of the FNQROC Development Manual, which is a significant and well-utilised policy document within our region.

Regarding economic development, the committees discussed issues such as tourism, small business, and Indigenous tourism in Far North Queensland. Presentations were given by organisations such as Tourism Tropical North Queensland and Economy.id, providing a snapshot of regional statistics and updates on the tourism plan review. The committees also worked on cross-regional events.

Towards the middle of 2023 several Councils campaigned for a WHS & Wellbeing Committee to be established. These meetings provide a primary resource for FNQROC in relation to WHS & Wellbeing issues affecting local governments in FNQ; sharing knowledge and information on policies and practical implementation, LG industry best practice and regular updates from the Office of Industrial Relations. The committee held 4 meetings in 2023 and will continue into 2024.

Overall, the committees have made significant progress towards their goals of creating a comprehensive and contemporary FNQ Regional Plan, promoting economic development in the region, and ensuring timely awareness of emerging issues and opportunities. By fostering collaboration and information-sharing among a diverse group of stakeholders, the committees have played a vital role in driving regional development and ensuring a sustainable future for Far North Queensland.



**The Hon Pat Conroy MP**  
Minister for International Development and the Pacific  
Minister for Defence Industry

MC23-011402

Cr Michael Kerr  
Chair of the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils  
p.power@fnqroc.qld.gov.au.

Dear Mayor

Thank you for your letter on behalf of Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) of 5 December 2023, outlining FNQROC's support to temporarily host a PNG NRL franchise in Cairns.

The Australian Government shares your enthusiasm to use sport to connect Papua New Guineans and Australians. Prime Minister Albanese emphasized these sentiments when he addressed the PNG Parliament in January 2023 noting sport was such "a genuine and powerful way of building strong and lasting ties between our peoples."

At this stage, no decisions have been made on any potential Australian Government support to a PNG NRL franchise. Nonetheless, I am keen to stay in close contact given the important role of FNQROC in supporting our partnership with PNG, as well as your strong interest in this project.

I encourage you to contact Kirsty McNeil, Assistant Secretary, Polynesia Micronesia and Development Division at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (kirsty.mcneil@dfat.gov.au or 02 6261 9321) who leads our work on sport in the Pacific.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'Pat Conroy', written over a white background.

**PAT CONROY**



15 December 2023

The Hon Stephen Jones MP  
Assistant Treasurer  
Minister for Financial Services

Dear Minister Jones,

As leaders across the Cairns and Far North Queensland Region, we, the signatories below, write to urge the Federal Government to include an additional \$38 million in the 2024-25 Federal Budget for the CQUniversity Cairns CBD Campus Project.

The Albanese Labor Government has already demonstrated its strong commitment and support for this project with an initial \$50 million commitment in 2021 as part of the 2022 General Election Campaign.

As we have seen with infrastructure projects across the nation, the cost of delivering infrastructure has increased substantially since that commitment was made and CQUniversity now finds itself in need of an additional \$38 million to deliver the project at the original scope.

This is a nation building project which is vital not only to the future prosperity of Far North Queensland, but also to our country as a whole.

As has been highlighted through the Australian Universities Accord Interim Report, the future productivity of our economy relies on bringing more students, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, through university in order to deliver the skilled workforce required.

If fully funded to \$88 million, CQUniversity will be able to double its course offerings in the region and grow the student pipeline by more than 3,100 students annually to 4,500.

These thousands of extra students, many from underrepresented cohorts, are a key solution to the challenges facing our economy. If we can offer more opportunity for education locally, we will retain more of our young people in the region to grow our population and address the urgent staff needs of businesses.

By delivering a campus as originally proposed, it not only delivers on the intent of the original commitment but also creates an invaluable community education asset that will ensure we can multiply every dollar invested and every new job created in our region for generations to come.

We urge the Albanese Government to continue its support for this much-needed step-change in education and local workforce capacity by committing the additional \$38 million in funding to deliver this project in full.

Yours sincerely



Mayor Michael Kerr  
Chair - FNQROC

# Profit and Loss

## Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils 30241 For the period 1 July 2023 to 22 January 2024

1 JUL 2023-22 JAN  
2024

### Trading Income

#### FNQROC

FNQROC: Annual Contribution	599,642.00
FNQROC: Miscellaneous: Staff Christmas Party	349.10
<b>Total FNQROC</b>	<b>599,991.10</b>

#### Regional Procurement Group

Regional Procurement: Annual Procurement Contribution	25,000.00
<b>Total Regional Procurement Group</b>	<b>25,000.00</b>

Water: DESBT Water Services Agreement	30,000.00
Climate Resilience Program	27,000.00
<b>Total Trading Income</b>	<b>681,991.10</b>

**Gross Profit** 681,991.10

### Other Income

Interest Income	3,238.29
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>3,238.29</b>

### Operating Expenses

Bank Service Charges	108.00
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#### FNQROC

FNQROC: Subscription/membership	17,401.04
FNQROC: Chairs Honorarium	4,500.00
FNQROC: Mayoral delegations - accommodation, meals, travel expenses	3,430.29
FNQROC: External Meeting Expenses: Registration Fees	2,821.30
FNQROC: External Meeting Expenses: Travel, Accom & Meals	6,837.60
FNQROC: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	974.46
FNQROC Expenses: Miscellaneous: Staff Christmas Party	1,432.65
FNQROC: Mobile Phone Expenses	1,065.53
FNQROC: Salaries	122,304.48
FNQROC: Stationery & Office Expenses	2,551.36
FNQROC: Stationery & Office Expenses:Website	203.00
FNQROC: Training	3,890.91
FNQROC: Vehicle Expenses	6,845.17
FNQROC: Miscellaneous expenses	3,051.66
<b>Total FNQROC</b>	<b>177,309.45</b>

#### Infrastructure

Infrastructure: Salaries	80,939.51
Infrastructure: Mobile Phone Expenses	378.77
<b>Total Infrastructure</b>	<b>81,318.28</b>

#### Regional Roads & Transport



RRTG: External Meetings: Travel, Accom & Meals	12.84
RRTG: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	178.79
RRTG: Regional Road Trip	1,039.50
<b>Total Regional Roads &amp; Transport</b>	<b>1,231.13</b>
<b>Regional Urban Water</b>	
Water: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	296.18
Water: External Meeting Expenses: Registration Fees	435.00
<b>Total Regional Urban Water</b>	<b>731.18</b>
<b>Regional Waste &amp; Recycling</b>	
Waste: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	133.82
<b>Total Regional Waste &amp; Recycling</b>	<b>133.82</b>
<b>Regional Natural Asset Management</b>	
Nat Asset: Vehicle Expense	3,021.20
Nat Asset: External Meetings: Registration Fees	829.98
Nat Asset: External Meetings: Travel, Accom & Meals	515.71
Nat Asset: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	902.83
Nat Asset: Mobile Phone Expenses	378.77
Nat Asset: Salaries	69,370.78
Nat Asset: Stationery & Office Expenses	1,276.27
<b>Total Regional Natural Asset Management</b>	<b>76,295.54</b>
<b>Regional Planning &amp; Economic Development</b>	
Reg Planner/economic developmen: External Meetings: Travel, Accom & Meals	361.01
Reg Planner/economic development: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	407.27
Reg Planner/economic development: Mobile Phone Expenses	378.77
Reg Planner/economic development: Salaries	53,806.36
<b>Total Regional Planning &amp; Economic Development</b>	<b>54,953.41</b>
<b>Regional Procurement</b>	
Regional Procurement: Bitumen Reseal Project:Project Coordinator Fees	26,160.00
Regional Procurement: Mobile Phone Expenses	367.02
Regional Procurement: Salaries	63,981.20
<b>Total Regional Procurement</b>	<b>90,508.22</b>
<b>Regional Development Manual</b>	
Regional Development Manual: Legal Expenses	2,890.46
Regional Development Manual: Stationery & Office Expenses	431.00
<b>Total Regional Development Manual</b>	<b>3,321.46</b>
FNQROC: Uniforms	226.00
Nat Asset: Miscellaneous	1,295.45
Nat Asset: Subscription/membership fees	1,000.00
Regional Development Manual: External Meetings: Travel, Accom & Meals	188.19
Regional Procurement: Bitumen Reseal Project	15,460.00
Waste: External Meeting Expenses: Registration Fees	27.27
Waste: External Meeting Expenses: Travel, Accom & Meals	1,919.36

1 JUL 2023-22 JAN  
2024

Water: External Meeting Expenses: Travel, Accommodation & Meals	1,281.48
FNQROC: Mayoral delegations	3,549.54
Climate Resilient Councils Program	59,463.04
FNQ Regional Plan consultant	26,668.00
FNQROC: Recruitment Services	6,000.00
Keeping Our Cool Project	1,036.36
Regional Procurement: Sewer Relining - Consultant Fees	46,380.00
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>650,405.18</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>34,824.21</b>

# Balance Sheet

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils 30241

As at 22 January 2024

22 JAN 2024

## Assets

### Bank

Cheque Account	199,151.62
FNQROC Savings	1,503,258.29
<b>Total Bank</b>	<b>1,702,409.91</b>

### Current Assets

Accounts Receivable New	(851.00)
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>(851.00)</b>

<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>1,701,558.91</b>
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## Liabilities

### Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	1,180.95
ANZ Credit Card:FNQROC	2,370.79
GST	(11,809.57)
Payroll Liabilities:AL Payable Current	38,400.48
Payroll Liabilities:LSL Payable Current	21,216.00
Payroll Liabilities:LSL Payable Non-Current	124,584.00
Rounding	(0.23)
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>175,942.42</b>

<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>175,942.42</b>
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<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>1,525,616.49</b>
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## Equity

Current Year Earnings	34,824.21
Opening Bal Equity	293,928.07
Retained Earnings	1,196,864.21
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>1,525,616.49</b>

**Meetings attended by: Anthony Archie, FNQROC Executive Office**  
**For the period: 8 December 2023 to 24 January 2024**

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