



**BOARD MEETING  
OF  
FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC)  
No. 165**

**Thursday 18 April 2024  
2.15pm to 5.00pm**

**Barlow Park, Corporate Room, Cairns**

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## 1. WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

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## 2. APOLOGIES & CONDOLENCES

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A list of apologies will be tabled at the meeting.

One (1) minute silence for Tom Gilmore.

## 3. PRESENTATIONS

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### 3.1 Peter Nelson, Director, MMC Strategy and Design, Rick Parmenter, Regional Director, FNQ, and Luke Benstead, QBuild, Department of Housing, Local Government Planning and Public Works.

**Timing: 2.15pm**

QBuild will provide an update on prefabricated home factory launch in Carins.

**20 mins**

### 3.2 Tom Gole, Executive Director, Local Government and Strategic Operations, Advisory Division, Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC)

**Timing: 2.35pm**

Mr Gole will provide an introduction and an economic update.

**20 mins**

### 3.3 Luke Shelley, Flood Warning Infrastructure Network Program, BOM (online)

**Timing: 2.55pm**

Mr Shelley will provide an update on the Flood Warning Infrastructure Network Program.

**20 mins**

### 3.4 Ian Leckenby and Nathan Turner, LGM Assets Scheme, LGAQ

**Timing: 3.15pm**

Mr Leckenby and Mr Turner will provide an overview of the LG Mutual Schemes.

**20 mins**

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

**Timing: 3.35pm**

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 164th FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) Board meeting of 1 February 2024.

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

- Move** that the minutes of the 164th FNQROC Board meeting held on 1 February 2024 be confirmed and adopted.

**Pages 1-8**

## 5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

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- Action items from 1 February 2024 FNQROC Board Meeting.

Minute #	Action	Responsible person	Status
3159a	Disaster Exemptions - FNQROC to investigate post disaster exemptions for environmental related regulation – This should include Wet Tropics and Marine Infrastructure, is 1 year enough time. and consider what was allowed post Yasi.	A Archie FNQROC	Complete
3159b	Kuranda and the Ranges - FNQROC to send letter to the new minister and DG TMR. Correspondence should remind of previous requests and the recent event highlighting extreme need for a robust resilient route.	A Archie FNQROC	Complete
3159c	Reseal Types - FNQROC to investigate and seek pricing on a study to understand the whole of life cost pricing for different seal types across our region to better inform decision when procuring.	A Archie FNQROC	Complete

### **3159a - Disaster Exemptions – Post TC Jasper**

Councils will be granted a one-year grace period following the disaster to relax legislation concerning the Wet Tropics. The CEO suggests deferring this matter until three months prior to December, at which point it should be revisited to determine if it remains a concern.

Investigation into Marine infrastructure is still ongoing.

### **3159b - Range Roads**

Following the previous FNQROC board meeting, the CEO has engaged in one-on-one discussions with the Hon. Bart Mellish, Minister for Transport and Main Roads and Minister for Digital Services, along with his support team. These discussions centred on the range roads study completed in 2021, focusing on its maintenance and enhancement, with a proposal to re-evaluate the study in the aftermath of TC Jasper. The belief is that the strategy document might benefit from revisions, with concerns highlighted regarding the non-implementation of outlined projects. Additionally, the possibility of allocating \$20 million in the forthcoming budget was explored, aiming to complement the Commonwealth's \$200 million for a fresh study into the long-term feasibility of enhancing access to the Tablelands, either through a new range road or significant upgrades to an existing one.

### 3159c - Reseal Types

Refer to Minutes of the RRTC. In brief, project development is underway.

## 6. ADVOCACY

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- 6.1 Transparency of Ageing State Infrastructure
- 6.2 Risk of Temporary Fixes on Arterial routes in the region
- 6.3 Advocacy update from FNQROC Council members

## 7. STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLAN

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- 7.1 Summary de-brief of current strategies per area of FNQROC. (June Meeting)

## 8. DISCUSSION TOPICS

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Nil

## 9. INCOMING / OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE

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- **Incoming**

Nil

- **Outgoing**

Minister Meaghan Scanlon, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and  
Minister for Public Works - 6 March 2024

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## 10. FNQROC POLICY REVIEW

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Nil

## 11. FNQROC REPORTS AND MOU'S

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- 11.1 **B101** – Regional Digital Development Officer (RDDO)
- 11.2 **B102** – Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP) – Gulf Hinterland and Wet Tropics.
  - B102a** – Drought Pathways and Actions Gulf Hinterland (Mareeba, Etheridge, Croydon)
  - B102b** – Drought Pathways and Actions Wet Tropics (Douglas, Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Tablelands and Hinchinbrook)
- 11.2 **B103** - Climate Resilience Coordinator position. **(confidential)**

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## 12. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

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- Profit & Loss Statement: Current FY July 2023 to 31 March 2024
- Balance Sheet: Current FY July 2023 to 31 March 2024

**Recommendation:** That the FNQROC Board adopt the Profit and Loss and balance Sheet Reports for the period 1 July 2023 to 31 March 2024.

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## 13. MEETINGS ATTENDED BY FNQROC EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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## 14. LGAQ POLICY EXECUTIVE DISCUSSION

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Verbal

## 15. MINUTES OF FNQROC ADVISORY COMMITTEES

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**FNQROC Regional Water Alliance – 9 February 2024**

Minutes – [available on website](#)

Next Meeting – 10 May 2024

**FNQROC WMRR RRR Plan Implementation Technical Committee Meeting #2 – 9 February 2024**

Minutes – [available on website](#)

Next Meeting – 21 May 2024

**FNQROC WHS & Wellbeing Committee – 14 February 2024**

Minutes – [available on website](#)

Next Meeting – 21 May 2024

**FNQROC Regional Mountain Bike Strategy Meeting – 14 February 2024**

Minutes – [available on website](#)

Next Meeting – tba

**FNQROC Animal Technical Committee – 20 February 2024**

Minutes – [available on website](#)

Next Meeting – 11 June 2024

**RRTG Technical Committee – 23 February 2024**

(Program Management Tool – Shepherds)

Minutes – *no minutes for this meeting*

**FNQROC Natural Assets Management Advisory Committee #7 – 1 March 2024**

Minutes – [available on website](#)

Next Meeting – 28 May 2024

**FNQROC LG Planners Advisory Group – 8 March 2024**

Minutes – [available on website](#)

Next Meeting – 19 April 2024

**Climate Resilience Technical Committee Meeting #4 – 8 March 2024**

Minutes – [available on website](#)

Next Meeting – 7 June 2024

**RRTG Technical Committee – 15 March 2024**

Minutes – [available on website](#)

Next Meeting – 24 May 2024

## **16. CONFIDENTIAL MEETING MINUTES**

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**Regional Procurement Advisory Committee – 6 February 2024**

Minutes *confidential* (available on request)

**RRTG Regional Water Capability Project Stantec Workshop #1 – 19 March 2024**

Minutes – *confidential* (available on request)

**FNQROC Sewer Relining Contract 23/24 – 27 March 2024**

Minutes – *confidential* (available on request)

**FNQROC Reseal and Line Markings 23/24 – 28 March 2024**

Minutes – *confidential* (available on request)

## **17. GENERAL BUSINESS**

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- 17.1 Copyright Risk and Compliance Guide for Local Government.
- 17.2 [Inquiry into local government sustainability – Parliament of Australia](#) – FNQROC Submission.
- 17.3 FNQROC Information Guide April 2024
- 17.4 Any general business.

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## 18. NEXT MEETING

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Date & Time **Thursday 6 June 2024 – Tully (Away Meeting)**

### Appendices

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

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**Cr Angela Toppin**  
**Deputy Chair - FNQROC**

### Remaining FNQROC Board Meeting Dates for 2024

Date	Venue
Thursday 6 June 2024	Tully
Thursday 1 August 2024	Cairns
Thursday 3 October 2024	Tablelands
Thursday 5 December 2024	Cairns

# Minutes of the 164<sup>th</sup> FNQROC Board Meeting

<b>Meeting No</b>	164
<b>Meeting Name</b>	FNQROC Board Meeting
<b>Date</b>	1 February 2024
<b>Time</b>	10.30am to 1.30pm
<b>Venue</b>	Cairns Regional Council, Civic Reception, Cairns

## REPRESENTATIVES

<b>CHAIR</b>	Cr Brett Moller, Dep Mayor Cr Mark Nolan, Mayor Cr Peter Scott, Mayor Cr Trevor Pickering, Mayor Cr Michael Kerr, Mayor Cr Barry Hughes, Mayor Cr Ramon Jayo, Mayor	Cairns Regional Council Cassowary Coast Regional Council Cook Shire Council Croydon Shire Council (online) Douglas Shire Council Etheridge Shire Council Hinchinbrook Shire Council (online)
<b>DEPUTY CHAIR</b>	Cr Angela Toppin, Mayor Cr Rod Marti	Mareeba Shire Council Tablelands Regional Council

## CEOS

Mr Andrew Graffen, CEO Mr Brian Joiner, 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	Cassowary Coast Regional Council Cook Shire Council (online) Croydon Shire Council (online) Douglas Shire Council Etheridge Shire Council Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council (online) Mareeba Shire Council Tablelands Regional Council Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council
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## OBSERVERS

Ms Lucy Greene	LGAQ
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## INVITED GUESTS

Mr Mike Wassing Mr Jimmy Scott Ms Rachel Cliffe Ms Josie Pickering Ms Darlene Irvine	QRA QRA Telstra Telstra FNQROC
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Ms Michelle Lees	Commonwealth Recovery Liaison Officer Taskforce
Mr Brett Carlsson	Commonwealth Recovery Liaison Officer Taskforce
Ms Elizabeth Stavreski	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Ms Kerry Bull	Cassowary Coast Regional Council

## FNQROC STAFF

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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

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Cr Terry James, Mayor	Cairns Regional Council
Ms Mica Martin, CEO	Cairns Regional Council
Cr Mary Brown	Hinchinbrook Shire Council
Cr Jason Woibo, Mayor	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
Cr Bradley Creek, Mayor	Wujal Wujal 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

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The meeting commenced at 10.55am.

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.

## 3145 BOARD PRESENTATIONS

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

Mr Wassing provided 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. A copy of the presentation will be provided with the minutes.

Mr Wassing acknowledged the efforts of councils and communities.

Betterment Fund \$100 million – working through those with Councils and Commonwealth. Letters have been sent.

Disaster Ready funding - \$200 million Nationally available - applications close 20 March 2024.

#### Discussion from the floor:

- Bushfires and larger events. Need process to move more quickly, waiting for approvals takes too long.

- Mayor Scott thanked Nicky Boyd and the QRA team for their support during the recent events.
- Social responsibility for personal hardship payments. The need to have a more robust system rather than handing out money as this affects the community sometimes in a negative way. State needs to seek local knowledge on the ground.
- More clarity needed around authorisations and approvals of hardship payments.
- Compounding events – communities 2021/22/23/24 if processes could move more quickly for approval to do works. Committed to fixing.
- Discussed wages for businesses to make sure they can keep staff and assistance for those who cannot travel to work due to roads being in disrepair.
- A concerning trend was discussed regarding insurance premiums. Many residents have been compelled to increase their insurance excess in an effort to manage rising premiums. This adjustment, however, has led to a predicament where they are unable to lodge claims for goods damaged due to the prohibitive cost of the excess. Furthermore, there have been instances where insurance companies have denied payouts, attributing certain coverages to the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA), leading to confusion among policyholders. This situation is exacerbated by inconsistent communication from insurers following these events, underscoring the need for uniform messaging. The QRA is aware of these issues and plans to address them with the Insurance Council of Australia to seek a resolution that better supports our community's needs.
- Business impacted by natural disasters need cash flow to keep them going.
- The recent events have caused damage to our marine infrastructure. In response to this necessity, a proposal has been made seeking dispensation for marine construction activities. This would permit the release of smaller quantities of marine sediment during the repair process, facilitating timely and efficient restoration efforts. Such measures are crucial to ensure that our marine infrastructure is quickly returned to operational status, supporting both the local economy and ecosystem.
- Concerns raised and asked that temporary works locations on our arterial road network are given priority for approval to be appropriately fixed to ensure future weather does not result in further closure of our arterial road networks.
- Concerns have been voiced regarding the one-year timeframe allocated for clearing activities post event that allows for exemption under the Vegetation Management Act 1999. Members have highlighted that this period may be insufficient in certain regions, notably Cape Tribulation and the Bloomfield Track, where the scope and scale of the required clearing exceed what can feasibly be accomplished within such a limited timeframe.
- Chief Superintendent, John Bosnjak has been appointed as the Business Reform Coordinator for Disaster Management. He is meeting with Councils to get feedback following Cyclone Jasper. Collecting data on early recovery and key learnings. A debrief so Councils are better informed in the future.

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

Ms Cliffe provided an update on Telstra ceasing 3G. A copy of the presentation will be provided with the minutes.

- 3G ceasing was announced in 2019 and will be closing June 2024.
- New satellite technology – Starlink, OneWeb
- 30 percent increase in data per year in Australia
- 5G 100 times more services can run on 5G
- Etheridge and Yarrabah haven't got a date for 4G as yet but will be before 30 June 2024.

- Possibility of 000 handset text by end of next year. Always looking at new ways to benefit customers.
- Dates of rollout to be confirmed for Mareeba and Cassowary.
- Highlighted the need to have Telstra representation at LDMG meetings.
- Blackouts and Battery power/generators. No mobile coverage to some areas during disasters.
- Blackspot program was discussed.

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

Ms Greene provided an overview of LGAQ recent activities per the briefing note circulated prior to meeting.

- The LGAQ stands with FNQROC Councils and are always there to help, particularly across the natural disasters recently experienced throughout the region.
- On behalf of Wujal Wujal donations appreciated for parks and garden equipment etc.
- Caretaker period – advice has been circulated. Changes to Department processes to allow consideration and approval for major approval decisions.
- Cabinet reshuffle – new Minister for Local Government is the Hon Meaghan Scanlon.
- Launched cost shifting report after 18 months survey and analysis period. Over the past two decades, cost shifting onto councils has increased from \$47 million to \$360 million annually.
- Federal pre-budget submission – LGAQ travelling to Canberra on Sunday and promoting local government sector's budget asks and cost shifting work.
- USO review has been announced by Minister Michelle Rowland's. LGAQ can help with council submissions. Due 1 March 2024.
- Youth Crime – Action plan launched at October 2023 Annual Conference. Committee on Youth Justice Reform formed last year and called for submissions which the LGAQ provided. Hearing dates in Cairns on 7 February. Submissions were also provided by Mareeba and Townsville councils.
- Wished all Mayors best of luck for upcoming election – acknowledged Policy Executive Mayor Peter Scott in his retirement and wished Mayor Michael Kerr all the best with his new endeavours.
- Mayor Peter Scott asked LGAQ what the gap in FA Grants to cost shifting was. Council by council FA Grants allocations for 2023/24 can be found here.
- LGAQ to seek state wages case update for Yarrabah CEO Richard Wright.

### 3.4 Darlene Irvine, FNQROC

Darlene thanked the FNQROC Board for their contribution over the last 4 years and wished good luck to those running again. Darlene also thanked outgoing Mayors' Cr Peter Scott and Cr Michael Kerr for their support, guidance, and dedication to FNQROC during their time in office.

## 3146 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The draft minutes of the 163rd FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) Board meeting of 7 December 2023.

**MOVED: Cr Barry Hughes**

**SECOND: Cr Rod Marti**

#### Motion

*That the FNQROC Board move that the minutes of the 163rd Board Meeting held on 7 December 2023 be confirmed and adopted.*

**CARRIED**

## 3147 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

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### Action items from 7 December 2023 FNQROC Board Meeting

Nil Actions from meeting of 7 December 2023.

### Actions carried over from previous meetings.

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

Action 3128 – to be revisited in 2024.

## 3148 ADVOCACY

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Nil

## 3149 STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLAN

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### Local Housing Action Plan Project

- Most councils at draft stage.
- Couple of councils – caretaker mode so can't be adopted.
- Another meeting prior to election. Share knowledge between councils, then can proceed with action plans for State sign off.

### FNQROC Achievements over last 4 years

- Summary of FNQROC achievements 2020 - 2024. A good summary to look at what has been achieved over the last 4-year period. A copy was circulated with the agenda.

## 3150 DISCUSSION TOPICS

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Nil

## 3151 CORRESPONDENCE

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**Incoming** – The Hon Pat Conroy MP – Response to FNQROC letter supporting PNG NRL.

Noted.

**Outgoing** – The Hon Stephen Jones MP – Letter of Support for CQ University CBD Campus Project.

Noted

## 3152 FNQROC POLICY REVIEW

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Nil

## 3153 FNQROC REPORTS AND MOUS

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Nil

## 3154 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet – 1 July 2023 to 24 January 2024

**MOVED: Cr Peter Scott**  
**SECOND: Cr Rod Marti**

### Motion

*That the profit and Loss and Balance Sheet Reports for the period FY 1 July 2023 to 24 January 2024 be adopted and accepted.*

**CARRIED**

## 3155 ATTENDANCE & MINUTES OF MEETING

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Noted.

## 3156 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.

Cr Peter Scott encouraged the group to become involved and put hand up for the position with LGAQ.

## 3157 MINUTES OF ADVISORY COMMITTEES

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

**Noted**

FNQROC RRTG TIDS Program Management Tool Meeting #1 (Contract/Pre-start) – 11 January 2024

**Noted**

FNQ RRTG TC Meeting – 12 January 2024

**Noted**

## 3158 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

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

**Noted**

### **Regional Coordinator, Disaster Management**

The position would establish a Climate Resilience Technical Committee to design and develop scope and terms of reference for Disaster Management Response review and then make recommendations on delivery back to the board.

**MOVED: Cr Michael Kerr**  
**SECOND: Cr Barry Hughes**

#### **Motion**

*Apply for grants for a Regional Coordinator of Disaster Management and Resilience.*

**CARRIED**

### **Transparency of ageing State/Federal Infrastructure**

**MOVED: Cr Barry Hughes**  
**SECOND: Cr Mark Nolan**

#### **Motion**

*Transparency of ageing State/Federal infrastructure – send a letter to both ministers requesting regular periodic transparency with local government on aging infrastructure, including asset management.*

**CARRIED**

### **Disaster Exemptions**

**Action:** FNQROC to investigate post disaster exemptions for environmental related regulation – This should include Wet Tropics and Marine Infrastructure, is 1 year enough time. and consider what was allowed post Yasi.

### **Risk of temporary fixes on arterial routes in the region**

**MOVED: Cr Angela Toppin**  
**SECOND: Cr Rod Marti**

#### **Motion**

*FNQROC to investigate and write a letter to LGAQ in regards to the risk of temporary fixes on arterial routes in the region. The aim is to seek transparency and assurance of priority for these sites.*

**CARRIED**

### **Kuranda and the Ranges**

**Action:** FNQROC to send letter to the new minister and DG TMR. Correspondence should remind of previous requests and the recent event highlighting extreme need for a robust resilient route.

## Reseal Types

**Action:** FNQROC to investigate and seek pricing on a study to understand the whole of life cost pricing for different seal types across our region to better inform decision when procuring.

## Feral Pigs

- FNQROC contributing to collaborative bid made by regional NRM Groups and essentially consulting with NAMAC on what is agreed.

## FNQROC Away Board Meeting (June 2024)

- Reminder that the next Away FNQROC Board meeting will be held on Thursday 6 June 2024 in Tully to mark the Centenary. Reminder to book accommodation early.

## FNQROC Away Board Meeting (October 2024)

- Tablelands Regional Council has requested to hold the October Away Board meeting in their region.

## 3160 NEXT MEETING

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The next meeting will be held at **Barlow Park in Cairns at 2pm on Thursday 18 April 2023**. This date may be rescheduled if new Mayors haven't been sworn in by that date.

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 1.04pm.



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**Cr Michael Kerr, FNQROC Chair**

## AGREED ACTION ITEMS

Thursday 01 February 2024

Minute #	Action	Responsible person
3159a	<b>Disaster Exemptions</b> - FNQROC to investigate post disaster exemptions for environmental related regulation – This should include Wet Tropics and Marine Infrastructure, is 1 year enough time. and consider what was allowed post Yasi.	A Archie FNQROC
3159b	<b>Kuranda and the Ranges</b> - FNQROC to send letter to the new minister and DG TMR. Correspondence should remind of previous requests and the recent event highlighting extreme need for a robust resilient route.	A Archie FNQROC
3159c	<b>Reseal Types</b> - FNQROC to investigate and seek pricing on a study to understand the whole of life cost pricing for different seal types across our region to better inform decision when procuring.	A Archie FNQROC

## FNQROC Board Meetings 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	Tablelands Regional Council
Thursday 5 December 2024	Cairns

6 March 2024

Minister Meaghan Scanlon  
Minister for Housing, Local Government and  
Planning and Minister for Public Works  
GPO Box 5078  
Brisbane QLD 4001

via email: [housing@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:housing@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

Dear Minister Scanlon,

**FNQ Regional Plan – Confirmation of Strategic Rehabilitation Areas as a Regional Priority  
And Request for Additional Support to Achieve Regional Outcomes**

FNQROC in conjunction with Terrain NRM, Wet Tropics Management Authority and DHLGP conducted a Strategic Rehabilitation Areas (SRAs) Workshop to facilitate the effective inclusion of SRAs in the Regional Plan. At the workshop, concern was raised that if the mapping, definitions, and regional significance of SRAs are not adequately addressed now, it may well be another Regional Plan cycle (10- 15 years) before another opportunity arises.

There is a collective recognition of SRAs as a Regional priority and a collective desire to ensure that the Regional Plan builds on and improves the SRA mapping and policy from the current Regional Plan. In the time between the current plan and now there has been significant progress in the development of ecosystem service and carbon markets which provide new opportunities for rehabilitation, but may add complexity to the application of SRA. As you are aware the region has played host to the development of the Cassowary Credits Scheme and more recently the formation of the Wet Tropics Restoration Alliance which both provide a unique platform to support the delivery of SRA. Far North Queensland is defined by its natural environment and the proposed Regional Plan represents a unique opportunity to use the best available scientific data and cultural knowledge to effectively define and map SRAs.

The workshop was attended by the full breadth of people and agencies who work with the SRAs including:

- Wet Tropics Management Authority
- Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
- FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils
- 7 Local governments
- Traditional Owners
- Development industry
- Recovery Teams
- Restoration Alliance
- Scientific Advisory Committee
- Cairns and Far north Environment Centre
- Landholders
- Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

It is rare to have this mix of representation in one room, and all advocating for the urgent need for transformative action towards SRAs to ensure they can be implemented to meet local, state and national goals.

I am requesting your support for additional local resources to be dedicated to identifying and mapping the SRAs in the FNQ Regional Plan, to ensure that they are well defined and supported by appropriate policy. The attendees of the workshop provide the basis for a working group to inform and guide the process, but at this stage no individual organisation has the resources available to lead and SRA project within the timeframes required by the regional planning process . SRAs are crucial not only for managing and rehabilitating our unique biodiversity and cultural heritage but also for sustaining the economic benefits it provides through tourism, agriculture, and research.

It is our expectation that the FNQ Regional Plan will have a strong vision for our Region based on Environmental values and the associated tourism and economic opportunities, and the SRAs are a significant component in this regard.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Kerr', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Kerr  
FNQROC Chair  
Mayor, Douglas Shire Council

Copy to: FNQ Regional Plan Team  
Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works  
PO Box 15009  
City East QLD 4002  
via email: [FNQRP@dsdilgp.qld.gov.au](mailto:FNQRP@dsdilgp.qld.gov.au)



**FNQROC MEETING NOTE**

**DATE 18 APRIL 2024**

**B101**

**REGIONAL DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (RDDO)**

**Staff name: Anthony Archie (DM7379226)**

**Recommendation:**

For the board to note.

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The State Library of Queensland (SLQ) is leading an initiative to enhance digital inclusivity across regional Queensland, with a particular focus on the Far North Region and Cape York for this phase. The Digital Division within SLQ is set to collaborate with local Councils, aiming to strengthen digital capabilities within the community.

SLQ is requesting the support of the FNQROC and its member Councils throughout the development and execution of this program.

FNQROC's role will be to foster connections between Councils and regional stakeholders, as well as potentially endorse the regional digital strategy once it is completed.

**BACKGROUND:**

Please refer to the attached report provided by Michelle Carter, Director Digital Inclusion, State Library of Queensland.

**Attachments**

State Library of Queensland – Regional Digital Development Officer (RDDO)

Anthony Archie  
**FNQROC Chief Executive Officer**

## Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) Board Meeting

### Agenda Item: General Business

#### Topic: Regional Digital Development Officer (RDDO)

**Purpose:** FNQROC Board's future involvement with Regional Digital Development Officer (RDDO)

#### Background

A region's *digital economy* (economic activity that occurs online - within the digital marketplace) is considered critical to its future prosperity. A flourishing digital economy requires adequate connectivity; industry and businesses embracing digital transformation and utilising e-commerce and digitally skilled populations, with access to technology and ICT jobs.

*Digital inclusion* means ensuring people can use the internet and digital technology to improve their daily lives – to access online education and health services; participate in cultural activities and stay connected with families, friends and the wider world. *Ensuring no-one is left behind.*

In September 2023, State Library signed a formal agreement with the Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) to lead/deliver key initiatives in the Queensland Government's *Our Thriving Digital Future: Queensland's Digital Economy Strategy 2023-2026* Action Plan.

One of these priority projects was to employ Regional Digital Development Officers (RDDOs), operating from local libraries, to help identify opportunities for regional communities to realise their digital potential. These RDDOs to be a valued resource, utilised by local governments to assist in regional digital development and their roles may include:

- Digital infrastructure – mapping, measuring and reporting on the region's connectivity and identifying ways to improve it (eg. assisting with suitable grant applications)
- Digital Inclusion – improving digital inclusion (eg. developing a regional digital inclusion plan)
- Digital Business and Industry Planning – supporting regional businesses and industry sectors, if required.
- Regional Engagement Planning (and reporting) - engaging with relevant key stakeholders in regional areas and RDDO may host/coordinate VIP visits and opportunities for regional areas.

These RDDOs will work closely and in partnership with local governments, their local libraries and with their Regional Organisation of Councils (ROC) to develop products for approval by their ROC Board, and potentially through RDDO working groups. They will be supported by the State Library of Queensland.

Preliminary discussions were held with State Library's Digital Inclusion branch (Michelle Carter, Director) proposing an RDDO will (most likely) sit within the Cairns State Library Office and that State Library would assume full responsibility for the Human Resource and employment costs (wages) associated with this RDDO position (until, at least, 30 June 2026).

**To Note:** Recruitment for the RDDO role will be underway shortly. State Library's Digital Inclusion branch is seeking support to promote the position through FNQROC networks and confirmation FNQROC Board will consider future RDDO digital development planning with a view to providing endorsement.

For further information – [Michelle.carter@slq.qld.gov.au](mailto:Michelle.carter@slq.qld.gov.au) (0477 332 730).

Kind Regards, Michelle Carter  
Director, Digital Inclusion branch  
State Library of Queensland



## FNQROC MEETING NOTE

DATE 18 APRIL 2024

**B102**

### **REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLANNING UPDATE**

Staff name: Anthony Archie (DM7379175)

#### **Recommendation:**

*The board:*

1. *Supports the Regional Drought Resilience Plans and delegates the CEO to make minor alterations post the CSIRO review for:*

- a) Wet Tropics Regional Plan*
- b) Gulf Savannah Region Plan*

*or*

2. *Notes the progress of Regional Drought Resilience Plans and will endorse the plans at a future date via a flying minute.*

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The board is presented with two options regarding the Regional Drought Resilience Plans, developed for the Wet Tropics and Gulf Savannah Regions. These plans, spearheaded by the Rural Economies Centre of Excellence with FNQROC as a key developer and host, are in their final stages, pending the final engagement session and a review by CSIRO. The plans aim to bolster drought resilience across four pivotal areas: people, culture, and community; infrastructure and the built environment; landscape and the natural environment; and the economy.

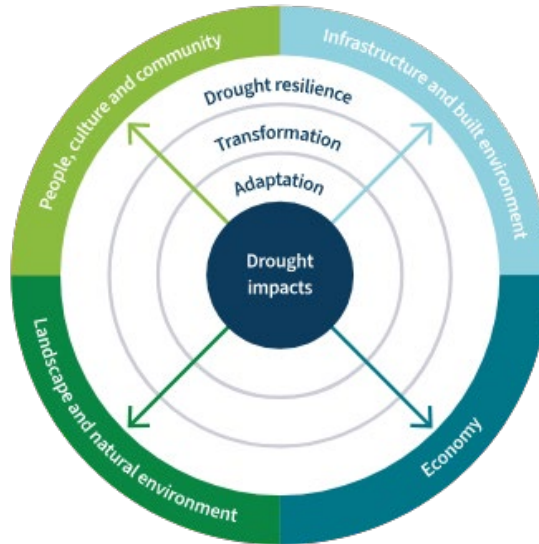
Option one suggests the board supports the plans and authorises the CEO to make minor adjustments following CSIRO's review. Option two proposes the board acknowledge the progress of these plans, with a view to formally endorsing them at a later date through a flying minute.

The decision is essential for ensuring the region's preparedness for one of many natural hazards, underscoring this region's commitment to a sustainable and resilient community.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

What is the purpose of drought resilience planning? Regional drought resilience planning enables stakeholders to identify vulnerabilities and develop strategies to reduce risks and potential impacts – building resilience across four key areas:

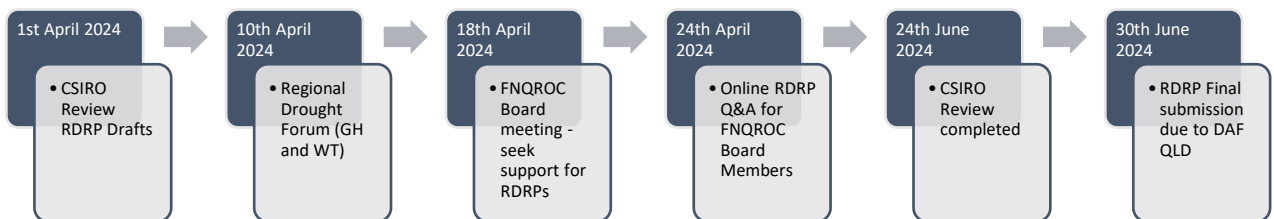
- People, culture and community
- Infrastructure and built environment
- Landscape and natural environment
- Economy




The visions for drought resilient regions, focus on three pillars:

- Plan – Plan for drought responses, and implement drought monitoring and early warning systems;
- Respond – Manage responses during drought by dealing with impacts, vulnerability and risk: and
- Build - Implement resilience measures to limit the future of droughts and better respond to droughts.

The Regional Drought Resilience Planning program is jointly funded through the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund (FDF) and the Queensland Government. The Plans are developed as a partnership between the Rural Economies Centre of Excellence and FNQROC, James Cook University and Natural Resource Management organisations. Development of Regional Drought Resilience Plans covers; Wet Tropics Regions (Douglas, Cairns, Tablelands, Cassowary Coast, and Hinchinbrook) and Gulf Hinterland (Mareeba, Ethridge, and Croydon). The funds were used to secure the Regional Climate Resilience Coordinator, and FNQROC has been a key developer of the plans. FNQROC will also act as ‘hosts’ of both the Gulf Hinterland and Wet Tropics Regional Drought Resilience Plans. The plans are currently in the final stages, per the flow chart below:



 <p><b>FNQROC</b> FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils</p>	<p><b>FNQROC MEETING NOTE</b></p> <p><b>DATE 18 APRIL 2024</b></p>	<p><b>B102</b></p>
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The current plan is to have written support for the Regional Drought Resilience Plans tabled in the board meeting if time is provided to review the plan and delegate to the CEO to approve any minor changes after the review is completed by CSIRO.

**ATTACHMENTS**

A late attachment if the draft plans from the Final Engagement are completed in time prior to the meeting.

Anthony Archie  
**FNQROC Chief Executive Officer**



**REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLANNING: Gulf Hinterland Pathways.**

The following Drought Pathways and Actions are with CSIRO for review and will be presented at the Regional Drought Forums for a final round of stakeholder feedback on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

**Pathway 1: Security in water, energy and connectivity.**

**Pathway 2: Support measures towards economic resilience in the business and agriculture sectors by diversifying and adapting to drought conditions.**

**Pathway 3: Build community resilience through ongoing support of mental and physical health, wellbeing, capacity building and community connections.**

**Pathway 4: Manage landscapes more effectively, protect property and prepare natural and cultural assets for drought impacts to conserve ecosystems and vulnerable species.**

**Pathway 5: Support First Nations people to be drought resilient and ensure they have equal access to healthy Country.**

**Pathway 6: Support regional governance capacity to deliver regional drought resilience.**



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### **Pathway 1: Security in water, energy and connectivity.**

#### ACTIONS

- 1.1 Inform the Far North Queensland regional planning process to reflect the important agricultural development opportunity from available water resources in the Mitchell, Gilbert and Wet Tropics catchments, and explore the formalisation of a State/Federal/Regional leadership group to scope and develop the most appropriate options.
- 1.2 Develop a regional water management strategy based on findings from the water usage audit, identify high-priority areas and recommendations for achieving water security during dry season and drought scenarios including water audits for urban and rural consumptive use.
- 1.3 In urban and rural communities, promote water conservation by supporting existing education initiatives, developing regional water-wise messaging, and conducting campaigns to educate both the community and visitors on water flow dynamics and the impacts of reduced water during the Dry Season.
- 1.4 Develop and extend best practice options for capturing, retaining and storing water e.g. through land management practices that keep moisture in the ground.
- 1.5 Explore new infrastructure technologies (e.g. underground dams and off-stream storage) and water trading platforms that might deliver innovative but improved water security solutions within the region.
- 1.6 Maintain and upgrade existing infrastructure to minimise loss of potable and irrigation water (e.g. water leakage detection programs).
- 1.7 Work collaboratively across the region to improve the reliability and resilience of our telecommunications and energy infrastructure through targeted network upgrades, service expansion and technical support for new technologies.

### **Pathway 2: Support measures towards economic resilience in the business and agriculture sectors by diversifying and adapting to drought conditions.**

#### ACTIONS

- 2.1 Assess and coordinate the system for supporting Business Resilience Planning and implementation in the region and support property scale economic diversification as a tool for drought adaptation including research into business-level vulnerabilities, and options for de-risking and diversification.
- 2.2 Support extension and adoption for primary producers to implement drought-resilient agricultural production including trial options for local fodder production on-farm hay and silage production and novel fodder crops, such as leucaena, desmanthus, dual-purpose peanut, dual-purpose sorghum, pigeon pea; (ii) Investigating the drought resilience potential of silvopastoral systems.
- 2.3 Support the uptake of water efficiency in agricultural systems including soil health and reducing evaporative loss by a range of measures such as the use of mulches and cover crops, replacing small stock dams with pipes and troughs, managing and monitoring water use through telemetry-based systems and other measures.
- 2.4 Strengthen business capacity through measures such as business resilience planning, exploring different fiancé models to support enterprise/farm resilience and improved decision-support tools.
- 2.5 Develop a regional workforce strategy that addresses drought-related workforce disruption, skills, labour and housing shortages for a diversified and resilient economy, including (i) auditing and costing place-based labour market challenges; (ii) addressing training and education pathways to deliver new skills and build capacity (iii) develop an innovative migration and housing strategy linked with workforce attraction and retention.



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### **Pathway 3: Build community resilience through ongoing support of mental and physical health, wellbeing, capacity building and community connections.**

#### ACTIONS

- 3.1 Support the strengthening of community resilience in the region and develop a strategic response to increase social capital and cohesion through supporting not for community groups and agricultural producers to operate in the face of declining population and volunteer base, support vulnerable and at risk communities and novel ways to use existing community resources to respond to drought conditions.
- 3.2 Enhance community education, awareness and capacity building through providing: (i) water conservation education to communities, tourists and FIFO staff; (ii) awareness and education for tourists and seasonal workers about the dangers of heat stress and mitigation strategies; (iii) financial planning support for small businesses likely to be impacted by general economic downturn triggered by drought in agriculture-dependent communities; and (iv) budgeting and financial management education to individuals who may be impacted by economic downturn.
- 3.3 Encourage the development of a place-based, collaborative framework for meeting preventative and acute needs for positive physical and mental health outcomes. This would include: (i) advocacy for improved health services; (ii) target health, well-being and social connection activities before, during and after drought; (ii) developing long-term partnerships to preventative health and health servicing.
- 3.4 In rural townships, provide built up environment conducive to wellbeing through: (i) encouraging water-efficient gardening, including the use of native and drought tolerant plants, and the responsible use of rainwater tanks; and (ii) ensuring sufficient water to maintain some community green spaces for mental health and wellbeing; and (iii) considering climate sensitive urban design in town planning, including the use of green spaces, shade, water features, and building design to mitigate heat.
- 3.5 Work collectively across the region to develop a regional partnership focused on improving digital connectivity literacy and digital literacy.

### **Pathway 4: Manage landscapes more effectively, protect property and prepare natural and cultural assets for drought impacts to conserve ecosystems and vulnerable species.**

#### ACTIONS

- 4.1 Incorporate the impact of drought events on natural ecosystems in regional climate risk assessment and NRM plans.
- 4.2 Investigate and trial a regionally based approach to landscape-scale stewardship and ecosystem service payments, grants and incentives for implementation of proactive land management practices that create landscape resilience including investment for farming and First Nations organisations to manage land, water and places of cultural importance.
- 4.3 Explore the potential use of area management approaches under the Vegetation Management Act to improve the capacity of land managers to maintain productivity and improve fire and weed management.
- 4.4 Support land managers to develop and implement proactive bushfire management plans for the protection of property conservation of ecosystems and vulnerable species.
- 4.5 Develop indicators and deliver ongoing monitoring and reporting on the impacts of drought events on ecosystems and vulnerable species.
- 4.6 Advocate for significant public investment into strategic pest and weed management.
- 4.7 Explore policy and investment mechanisms to lift the long-term capacity and resilience of Rural Fire Brigades



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### **Pathway 5: Support First Nations people to be drought resilient and ensure they have equal access to healthy Country.**

#### ACTIONS

- 5.1 Support the region's Traditional Owner institutions to build their long-term governing capacity to ensure their active economic, social and cultural participation in the region and drought security.
- 5.2 At the regional scale, empower Traditional Owners to have a stronger influence in water planning and regional water assessments.
- 5.3 Identify and assess the specific water and food security risks and opportunities for First Nations peoples in the Gulf Hinterland region, commencing with a focus on the Gilbert River catchment.
- 5.4 Support the strengthening of Indigenous-led businesses and social enterprises.
- 5.5 Advocate for support of accessible delivery of drought-resilient housing (including concurrent events such as heatwaves), drinking water and health services for First Nations during drought events.
- 5.6 Partner with Indigenous narratives, knowledge and practices to increase resilience to drought, heatwave and bushfire events, increasing the capacity of traditional owners to participate in landscape management.
- 5.7 Support Traditional Owners to protect culturally significant sites and their abilities to access healthy Country during drought-heatwave-bushfires events.

### **Pathway 6: Support regional governance capacity to deliver regional drought resilience.**

#### ACTIONS

- 6.1 Continue a cross-regional partnership approach to support implementation and review of the RDRP, managing drought resilience with cohesive and coordinated approaches with key stakeholders, including NRM bodies, industry bodies, education providers, governments, and regional economic organisations, disaster management agencies.
- 6.2 Establish a foundational institutional capacity within key regional institutions for long term drought resilience planning, delivery, monitoring, evaluation, and learning embedded within the QRA resilience planning framework.
- 6.3 Work collectively with BOM to develop anticipatory capacity, data and knowledge systems and resources for drought resilience
- 6.4 Support grass roots voice building through key partners through arrangements to impact relevant decision making, investment and policy outcomes.
- 6.5 Jointly advocate to ensure that land and water policies in the region support regional drought resilience strategies identified in this Plan



**REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLANNING: Wet Tropics Pathways.**

The following Drought Pathways and Actions are with CSIRO for review and will be presented at the Regional Drought Forums for a final round of stakeholder feedback on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

**Pathway 1: Secure available agricultural and potable (drinking) water, energy supply and access to communications across the region.**

**Pathway 2: Support regional and local businesses adapt to drought events including compounding bushfires and heatwaves by preparing the workforce, assisting agricultural innovation and sustainable land management practices.**

**Pathway 3: Build community resilience through ongoing support of mental and physical health, capacity building and social connections.**

**Pathway 4: Manage landscapes more effectively, protect property and prepare natural and cultural assets for drought impacts to conserve ecosystems and vulnerable species.**

**Pathway 5: Integrate First Nations people's knowledge of drought resilient Country and ensure they have equal access to health and other services and healthy Country.**

**Pathway 6: Support regional governance capacity to deliver regional drought resilience.**

## **Pathway 1: Secure available agricultural and potable (drinking) water, energy supply and access to communications across the region.**

### ACTIONS

- 1.1 Building on the CRCN WSAG process, develop a regional water usage audit to understand current and future water demands and associated water security strategy that identifies high-priority areas for achieving water security during dry spell/'drought' scenarios.
- 1.2 Through active implementation of the Tablelands Regional Water Assessment, explore priority new water developments, including infrastructure technologies (e.g. underground dams) and water trading platforms that might deliver innovative but improved water security solutions within the region.
- 1.3 Across the region, promote water conservation by supporting existing education initiatives, developing regional water-wise messaging, and conducting campaigns to educate both the community and visitors on water flow dynamics and the impacts of reduced water during the Dry Season in the Wet Tropics.
- 1.4 Collaboratively advocate the region's water security needs on a state and national stage (e.g. funding to fix existing infrastructure leakage issues.)
- 1.5 Work collectively to develop a regional partnership to improve the reliability of telecommunications infrastructure, service expansion, technical support, connectivity literacy and digital literacy.
- 1.6 Work with power utilities to develop wider energy security, affordability and transition in rural, remote and Indigenous communities.

## **Pathway 2: Support regional and local businesses adapt to drought events including compounding bushfires and heatwaves by preparing the workforce, assisting agricultural innovation and sustainable land management practices.**

### ACTIONS

- 2.1 Develop a Regional Heatwave Risk Management strategy to address workforce issues and identify and manage the impacts of heatwaves on human health of outdoor staff.
- 2.2 Undertake a cost-benefit analysis of the impacts of drought events, including concurrent bushfire and heatwave events on current vs future business practices and identify strategies to mitigate impacts and costs on key industries such as tourism, agriculture, and local businesses.
- 2.3 Through more coordinated extension of business resilience plans, increase businesses' accessibility to additional support during recovery between drought and other natural disaster events and implement preparedness.
- 2.4 Provide regionally coordinated support for businesses to pilot diversification for resilience to climate variability through devolved or direct funding or incentive programs.
- 2.5 Develop a fit-for-purpose Wet Tropics awareness and education program for drought, heat wave and bushfire preparedness for diverse audiences, including tourists, promoting water conservation practices, bushfire safety and heatwave health practices.
- 2.6 Promote the incorporation of best practice technologies and processes for drought resilience in industry including in water conservation in soil and drought resilient crops/animals, in the construction of infrastructure and buildings; and roads and transport.
- 2.7 Support the integration of urban greening initiatives into planning schemes, strategic frameworks and development guidelines.



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### **Pathway 3: Build community resilience through ongoing support of mental and physical health, capacity building and social connections.**

#### ACTIONS

- 3.1 Seek resources to fund delivery of mental health initiatives including training, across regional communities to enhance the skills and confidence of individuals, empowering them to support each other during response and recovery to drought events. Include drought and climate resilience initiatives in programs and projects targeting physical well-being and recreation.
- 3.2 Develop and implement a heatwave-drought response framework that maps out key roles and responsibilities across sectors to understand and deliver actions that support community resilience. Including the delivery of proactive heatwave risk management plans for vulnerable cohorts.
- 3.3 Undertake a heatwave refugia analysis for regional and remote communities and address gaps in accessibility through infrastructure upgrades, retrofits and new facilities.
- 3.4 Develop and integrate local climate-resilient actions in partnership with established on-ground community-driven groups and build human and community capacity for multi-hazard resilience.
- 3.5 Provide devolved and direct funding to support local champions and community groups for resilience upskilling and knowledge sharing among community members (Volunteers).
- 3.6 Build community capacity by strengthening local and regional institutions and increasing activities that enhance cohesion through support, sharing of knowledge, experiences and technologies.

### **Pathway 4: Manage landscapes more effectively, protect property and prepare natural and cultural assets for drought impacts to conserve ecosystems and vulnerable species.**

#### ACTIONS

- 4.1 Manage and prepare natural assets for drought impacts to conserve ecosystems and vulnerable species through the incorporation of drought and heatwave events in regional climate risk assessment.
- 4.2 Support all land managers to develop and implement proactive multi-hazard management plans for the protection of property, conservation of ecosystems and vulnerable species, and provide incentives and programs to support the protection of habitat that is essential for climate refuge on private land.
- 4.3 Develop indicators and deliver ongoing monitoring and reporting on the impacts of drought and heatwave events on ecosystems and vulnerable species.
- 4.4 Explore policy and investment mechanisms to lift the long-term capacity and resilience of Rural Fire Brigades.
- 4.5 Support the development and implementation of cultural fire management programs led by Traditional Owner institutions.



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### **Pathway 5: Integrate First Nations people's knowledge of drought resilient Country and ensure they have equal access to health and other services and healthy Country.**


#### ACTIONS

- 5.1 Support the region's Traditional Owner institutions to build their long-term governing capacity to ensure their active economic, social and cultural participation in the region and drought security.
- 5.2 At regional scale, empower Traditional Owners to have a stronger influence in water planning and regional water assessments.
- 5.3 Build partnerships to apply indigenous knowledge and practices to increase resilience to drought, heatwave and bushfire events.
- 5.4 Build integrated investment opportunities to support the management of cultural sites and healthy Country (e.g. include drought in the Wet Tropics Cultural Values Management Plan) heatwaves, drinking water and health services for First Nations during drought events.
- 5.5 Better coordinate support for the delivery of First Nations health care and support services during natural disaster events.
- 5.6 Continue advocacy for better housing design and condition (i.e. cool housing design and retrofit to improve resilience).

### **Pathway 6: Support regional governance capacity to deliver regional drought resilience.**

#### ACTIONS

- 6.1 Establish a strong cross-regional drought partnership arrangement across TNQ that facilitates collaborative approaches to the implementation, monitoring and review of RDRPs.
- 6.2 Undertake a regional climate risk assessment and advocate for drought-related impacts in regional, state and national plans and strategies.
- 6.3 Continue collaboration with existing Climate Action Programs that support climate resilience in individual Councils through resource sharing and networking and work towards regional guidelines for the inclusion of compounding, cascading and concurrent impacts from climate hazards in business continuity plans.
- 6.4 Through cross-regional collaboration, secure resources to provide regional coordination and collaboration across key stakeholders to implement climate-resilient actions including drought-specific actions.
- 6.5 Support the development of a framework and incentives for organisations and businesses to develop and report climate-resilient actions (e.g. EcoBiz).
- 6.6 Develop an approach to advocate for the inclusion of drought resilience strategies (particularly water security) in statutory regional planning and policy.

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## **REGIONAL CLIMATE RESILIENCE COORDINATOR**

**Staff name: Anthony Archie (DM7396494)**

### **Recommendation:**

*The Regional Climate Resilience Coordinator contract is extended till 30 September 2025 in line with FNQROC staff contracts, with an option for an extra year delegated to the CEO for execution.*

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

FNQROC has significantly advanced its commitment to enhancing regional climate resilience since the establishment of the Regional Climate Resilience Coordinator position in April 2023. Through strategic initiatives and collaborations, such as the development of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan and participation in the National Climate Risk Assessment process, FNQROC Councils have begun to position themselves as a leader in climate adaptation, mitigation, and transition efforts. This response is commensurate with the increasing demands on the region in relation to extreme and unprecedented severe weather events experienced in recent years.

Given the ongoing emphasis on this subject from all levels of Government and prospective projects, including a partnership with CSIRO and applications for substantial funding to continue vital climate resilience and adaptation strategies, it is important to consider the extension of the tenure for the Regional Climate Resilience Coordinator for an additional two years. This State and Federal agency express the convenience of being able to target twelve (12) Councils that are highly impacted as well as prepared to move forward as an opportunity for them, and us as a region. The extension will ensure the continuity of the work and expansion of FNQROC's impactful work in response to climate-related challenges.

### **BACKGROUND:**

At meeting 154 in June 2022, co-chairs of the Rivers to Reef Climate Resilient Alliance, Cr Lenore Wyatt (MSC) and Cr Dave Bilney (TRC), joined Michelle O'Loughin and Travis Sydes in presenting to the FNQROC Board on the findings and recommendations of the pilot project. Following discussion, it was moved by Cr Michael Kerr and seconded by Cr Angela Toppin to provide the Board with a proposal for the continuation of the Climate Resilience Coordinator role and extending the engagement to all member Councils.

At meeting 156 in August 2022, a report was tabled for FNQROC to establish a new position in the organisational structure to take advantage of TNQ Hub funding to develop a Tropical North Queensland Drought Resilience Plan and extend the role with if funding provisions were available to implement the strategy.

The board supported the option to support the continuation of the role with the following considerations:

- a) the establishment of an FNQROC Climate Resilient Technical Committee,

- b) Co-investment with the Tropical North Queensland Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub (\$106,500 in funding and FNQROC contribution of \$53,250 + in kind + discretionary funding as the Executive Officer sees fit, (this funding to come from FNQROC Reserves) and
- c) the Executive Officer to negotiate the contract.

The position was filled on the 3 of April 2023; therefore, the fixed-term contract expires on the 30 August 2024 and as of the time of this report, the position has been fully funded through external funding.

### **Progress to Date**

A Climate Resilient Technical Committee (CRTC) has been established with a term of reference confirmed and four meetings held. Participation in the CRTC has included member Councils, BOM, QRA, Regional NRM Groups, Cairns and Hinterland, Hospital and Health Services, WTMA, LGAQ, Tropical Public Health Services, NEMA.

To date, this area of FNQROC has been responsible for or worked 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.

Recently, 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 Regional Drought Resilience Plan is at its final drafting stage and will be shortly supplied to CSIRO for its final review before presentation to the FNQROC for adoption.

Furthermore, recently, the position was involved in the National Climate Risk Assessment through participation in multiple workshops, in which we helped to identify climate risks and their impacts.

Within the last few months, FNQROC has been successful in its application for an accelerator Grant for Community Climate Action for the Reef through the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, where we secured \$93,300 to complete or update a Greenhouse Gas Emission Inventory for each Council in the region.

### **Funding Applications**

Recently, we made submissions to two funding arrangements that would deliver regionally specific climate resilience and adaptation strategies, implementation, and knowledge.

1. CSIRO has engaged with FNQROC to develop a quantitative risk assessment and adaptation strategy, including an evaluation and monitoring framework. The funding would be \$60,000 for the Regional Climate Resilience Coordinator's time, \$65,000 to organise and coordinate workshops and technical committees, and CSIRO is seeking confirmation of \$200,000 in Commonwealth funding to proceed with the project. Currently waiting on confirmation of funding; the CSIRO have expressed a keen interest in moving forward.
2. Queensland Regional Risk and Resilience 2024. FNQROC have applied for the Climate Resilience Coordinator to be funded for two years with a cost of \$53,200 from FNQROC reserves in addition to in-kind resources. The project would be to develop a Climate Risk and Resilience Strategy and Regional Climate Action Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. The framework would provide 12 Local Government Councils with:
  - a. increased understanding of identified risks, needs and vulnerabilities;
  - b. increased understanding of the capacity required to increase resilience to the identified risks;

- c. direction and prioritisation of resilient actions that will address identified risks, needs and vulnerabilities; and
- d. this in turn will assist Local Governments in, better planning for, responding to and recovering from disaster events thereby minimising the impact of natural disasters on the local economy, environment, and community.

In summary, this project's deliverables include developing a monitoring and evaluation framework to identify targets and track regional progress towards risk reduction from climate-related events. This funding is being announced after 30 June.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil

Anthony Archie

**FNQROC Chief Executive Officer**

# Profit and Loss

## Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils 30241 For the 9 months ended 31 March 2024

JUL 2023-MAR 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 Roads & Transport

RRTG: Annual 2.75% contribution	163,817.97
RRTG: Funding/Subsidies	152,064.00
<b>Total Regional Roads &amp; Transport</b>	<b>315,881.97</b>

#### Regional Procurement Group

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

Water: Short Term Projects: QWrap Funding	50,000.00
Water: DESBT Water Services Agreement	30,000.00
Climate Resilience Program	27,000.00
<b>Total Trading Income</b>	<b>1,047,873.07</b>

**Gross Profit** 1,047,873.07

### Other Income

Interest Income	6,423.51
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>6,423.51</b>

### Operating Expenses

Bank Service Charges	138.00
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#### FNQROC

FNQROC: Subscription/membership	18,051.94
FNQROC: Chairs Honorarium	4,500.00
FNQROC: Mayoral delegations - accommodation, meals, travel expenses	3,430.29
FNQROC: External Meeting Expenses: Registration Fees	4,377.39
FNQROC: External Meeting Expenses: Travel, Accom & Meals	12,044.34
FNQROC: Internal Meeting Expenses: Miscellaneous	526.81
FNQROC: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	1,649.37
FNQROC Expenses: Miscellaneous: Staff Christmas Party	1,432.65
FNQROC: Mobile Phone Expenses	1,401.02
FNQROC: Salaries	176,224.28
FNQROC: Stationery & Office Expenses	3,486.74
FNQROC: Stationery & Office Expenses:Website	261.00
FNQROC: Training	3,890.91
FNQROC: Vehicle Expenses	8,837.95

FNQROC: Miscellaneous expenses	3,279.34
<b>Total FNQROC</b>	<b>243,394.03</b>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	
Infrastructure: Salaries	110,073.68
Infrastructure: Mobile Phone Expenses	491.49
<b>Total Infrastructure</b>	<b>110,565.17</b>
<b>Regional Roads &amp; Transport</b>	
RRTG: External Meetings: Travel, Accom & Meals	12.84
RRTG: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	263.34
RRTG: Regional Road Trip	1,039.50
<b>Total Regional Roads &amp; Transport</b>	<b>1,315.68</b>
<b>Regional Urban Water</b>	
Water: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	384.36
Water: External Meeting Expenses: Registration Fees	435.00
<b>Total Regional Urban Water</b>	<b>819.36</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	4,877.40
Nat Asset: External Meetings: Registration Fees	829.98
Nat Asset: External Meetings: Travel, Accom & Meals	515.71
Nat Asset: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	1,105.56
Nat Asset: Mobile Phone Expenses	491.49
Nat Asset: Salaries	97,053.08
Nat Asset: Stationery & Office Expenses	1,276.27
<b>Total Regional Natural Asset Management</b>	<b>106,149.49</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	667.27
Reg Planner/economic development: Mobile Phone Expenses	491.49
Reg Planner/economic development: Salaries	75,030.90
<b>Total Regional Planning &amp; Economic Development</b>	<b>76,550.67</b>
<b>Regional Procurement</b>	
Regional Procurement: Bitumen Reseal Project:Project Coordinator Fees	34,880.00
Regional Procurement: Mobile Phone Expenses	479.74
Regional Procurement: Salaries	88,651.39
<b>Total Regional Procurement</b>	<b>124,011.13</b>
<b>Regional Development Manual</b>	
Regional Development Manual: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	64.13
Regional Development Manual: Legal Expenses	2,890.46

Regional Development Manual: Stationery & Office Expenses	431.00
<b>Total Regional Development Manual</b>	<b>3,385.59</b>
FNQROC: Uniforms	226.00
Nat Asset: Miscellaneous	1,295.45
Nat Asset: Subscription/membership fees	1,311.88
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
Water: External Meeting Expenses: Travel, Accom & Meals	1,876.69
Corporate GHG Inventory	1,500.00
FNQROC: Mayoral delegations	3,549.54
Climate Resilient Councils Program	82,069.99
FNQ Regional Plan consultant	40,002.00
FNQROC: Recruitment Services	6,000.00
Keeping Our Cool Project	1,036.36
Regional Procurement: Sewer Relining - Consultant Fees	61,840.00
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>884,765.67</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>169,530.91</b>

# Balance Sheet

## Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils 30241 As at 31 March 2024

31 MAR 2024

### Assets

#### Bank

Cheque Account	386,755.66
FNQROC Savings	1,506,443.51
<b>Total Bank</b>	<b>1,893,199.17</b>

#### Current Assets

Accounts Receivable New	31,548.67
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>31,548.67</b>

#### Total Assets

**1,924,747.84**

### Liabilities

#### Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	57,562.03
ANZ Credit Card:FNQROC	6,374.82
GST	16,262.09
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>264,399.19</b>

#### Total Liabilities

**264,399.19**

### Net Assets

**1,660,348.65**

### Equity

Current Year Earnings	169,530.91
Opening Bal Equity	293,928.07
Retained Earnings	1,196,889.67
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>1,660,348.65</b>

**Meetings attended by: Anthony Archie, FNQROC Executive Office**  
**For the period: 2 February 2024 to 17 April 2024**  
 Leave: 12 – 19 February 2024

DATE	MEETING DETAILS
2 February 2024	RDATN – Launch of TEDS
5 February 2024	Michelle Carter, Libraries Queensland
7 February 2024	David Moody – Strategic Directions
9 February 2024	Kelly Reaston, Up North
21 February 2024	Ryan Longland, DSDILGP
22 February 2024	Nicholas Campton-Smith, Department of Defence
21 February 2024	Hari Gavanahalli – Copyright
27 February 2024	Michelle Carter – Libraries Queensland
28 February 2024	Qld Parliament – Cairns Community Cabinet Cairns
6 – 7 March 2024	Tropical North Queensland Delegation (Meetings with Qld Ministers)
11 March 2024	Regional Leadership Network
15 to 22 March 2024	Sustainable Trails Conference – New Zealand
27 March 2024	Darryl Jones, DTMR
27 March 2024	Craig Crawford, Member for Barron River
28 March 2024	Regional Leadership Network
2 April 2024	Regional Disaster Resilience Forum
10 April 2024	FNQ Trade & Investment Group – Local TNQ Investable projects
17 April 2024	Special Mayors Forum – Parliament House Brisbane
11 March 2024	Regional Leadership Network
15 to 22 March 2024	Sustainable Trails Conference – New Zealand
27 March 2024	Darryl Jones, DTMR
27 March 2024	Craig Crawford, Member for Barron River



# Information Guide

COUNCILS WORKING TOGETHER ON AGREED  
REGIONAL POSITIONS AND PRIORITIES

APRIL 2024



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# ABBREVIATIONS

AMTC	Animal Management Technical Committee		Road and Transport Group - Technical Committee
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	GBRMPA	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation	IBAPF	Interactive Biodiversity Assessment Planning Framework
DAF	Department of Agriculture and Fisheries	JP&RS	Joint Purchasing and Resource Sharing
DCSSDS	Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services	LG	Local Government
DEC	Department of Energy and Climate	LGAQ	Local Government Association of Queensland
DE	Department of Education	LRRS	Local Roads of Regional Significance
DESI	Department of Environment, Science and Innovation	MRF	Material Recovery Facility
DESBT	Department of Small Business and Training	MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
DHLGPPW	Department of Housing, Local Government, Planning and Public Works	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
DJAG	Department of Justice and Attorney General	NAMAC	Natural Asset Management Advisory Committee (FNQROC)
DPC	Department of Premier and Cabinet	NBN	National Broadband Network
DR	Department of Resources	NRM	Natural Resource Management
DRDMW	Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water	OIR	Office of Industrial Relations
DRFA	Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements	QAO	Queensland Audit Office
DSDI	Department of State Development and Infrastructure	QFES	Queensland Fire and Emergency Services
DTATSIPCA	Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities, and the Arts	QH	Queensland Health
DTMR	Department of Transport and Main Roads	QPWS	Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service
DTaS	Department of Tourism and Sport	QRA	Queensland Reconstruction Authority
FNQ	Far North Queensland	QT	Queensland Treasury
FNQ2031	Statutory Regional Plan for Far North Queensland	QTC	Queensland Treasury Corporation
FNQPAF	Far North Queensland Pest Advisory Forum	QWRAP	Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program
FNQROC	Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils	RDRP	Regional Drought Resilience Plan
FNQ RRTG	Far North Queensland Regional Road and Transport Group	RTAPT	Roads and Transport Alliance Project Team
FNQ RRTG TC	Far North Queensland Regional	RMPC	Road Maintenance Performance Contract
		RA	Roads Alliance
		ROC	Regional Organisation of Councils
		SEQ	South East Queensland
		TC	Technical Committee
		WHS	Workplace Health and Safety
		WTMA	Wet Tropics Management Authority
		WTWHA	Wet Tropics World Heritage Area

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) is a collaborative entity dedicated to fostering regional collaboration, advocacy, and regional strategy for Far North Queensland.

FNQROC membership consists of the following Councils:

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

As a key advocate for the area, FNQROC enhances policy formation, funding acquisition, and the implementation of strategic initiatives to support the region. Recent funding arrangements by both levels of government seem to prefer funding projects that can be applied regionally or are linked to a regional strategy.

Our mission and vision are centred on fostering advocacy and collaboration. FNQROC brings together the councils and stakeholders of Far North Queensland, offering a structured platform for sharing expertise and resources. This collaboration strengthens the region's ability to address regional challenges and opportunities.

FNQROC is recognised by federal and state governments for our central role in regional advocacy and delivering regional projects. Our strategic focus on the region and a deep understanding of local needs makes us a key advisor in shaping policies, strategies, and projects that benefit Far North Queensland. We are committed to enhancing infrastructure, ensuring access to

essential services such as water and waste, and protecting the environment to reflect our dedication to the region's future.

As the newly elected mayors of the Far North Queensland region, you will anticipate robust support, collaboration, and advocacy from FNQROC, designed to enhance the prosperity and well-being of our communities:

## Advocacy and Representation

- Strong, unified representation of Far North Queensland's interests at state and federal levels.
- Active lobbying for regional priorities, including infrastructure, funding, and policy support.

## Collaboration Opportunities

- Participation in regular meetings and forums to share insights and learn from peers.
- Joint projects and initiatives that leverage collective resources for regional benefits.

## Resource Sharing

- Access to a wealth of resources and best practices to enhance council operations.
- Opportunities to participate in shared services for cost efficiency and effectiveness.

## Networking and Relationship Building

- Build valuable relationships with other mayors, councillors, executive officers, and council officers across the region.
- Continue with relationships with State and Federal agencies, Regional Leadership Network, Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ), Regional Development Australia Tropical North (RDATN), and others.
- Engage with a network of professionals and experts in local government and related fields.

## Project Support and Development

- Assistance in planning, funding, and executing regional projects that benefit multiple councils.
- Support in developing initiatives that address local and regional challenges.



CROYDON

COOK

MAREEBA

ETHERIDGE

TABLELANDS

HOPE VALE

WUJAL WUJAL  
DOUGLAS

YARRABAH

CAIRNS

CASSOWARY COAST

HINCHINBROOK

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of where we live and work and throughout Far North Queensland. We pay respects to elders past, present and emerging, and the enduring connections to Country and culture.

# INTRODUCTION TO FNQROC FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dear Mayors and Councillors

It is with great pleasure and anticipation that I extend a warm welcome to each of you on behalf of the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC). As we stand at the threshold of a new term, we are reminded of the immense opportunities and responsibilities that lie ahead in shaping the future of our region.

FNQROC was founded on the principles of collaboration and shared regional vision. Our mission is to bring together the unique strengths of each member council to advocate for our region's needs, drive sustainable development, and enhance the quality of life for our communities. We believe that together, we are stronger and can achieve greater outcomes than any of us could alone.

As you embark on your journey with FNQROC, you will find a culture of support, open communication, and mutual respect. Our collective efforts focus on strategic planning, resource sharing, and advocating for Far North Queensland's interests at all levels of government. We are dedicated to ensuring that our region's voice is heard loud and clear, from the corridors of local government to the halls of state and federal institutions.

Our work is guided by a strategic framework that aligns with our shared goals for economic prosperity, environmental stewardship, and community well-being. We leverage our collective expertise to address regional challenges, seize opportunities for growth, and celebrate the successes that come from our collaborative endeavours.

Our commitment to you is steadfast; FNQROC is dedicated to delivering value without 'empire building'. We pride ourselves on a proven cost-benefit ratio, with past independent reviews highlighting a return of \$13.00, and most recently \$24.31, for every \$1.00 invested in our collective efforts. This testament to our efficiency underpins every initiative we undertake, ensuring that our work not only advocates for the region's needs but also delivers tangible benefits to Councils.

I invite you to engage fully in FNQROC's activities, contribute your insights and experience, and join us in our mission to make Far North Queensland a vibrant, thriving, and resilient region. Together, we will navigate the challenges ahead and seize the opportunities that promise a brighter future for all our communities.

Welcome to FNQROC. Your leadership and collaboration will be instrumental in driving our region forward. I look forward to working closely with you to achieve our common goals and aspirations.

Warmest regards



**Anthony Archie, Chief Executive Officer**

“

Congratulations on being elected as Mayor of your region. You will quickly find out that the FNQROC and the relationships that you form with the other Mayors will be one of your biggest support networks and greatest allies. This incredibly well-respected body sits in the background, assisting local councils in more ways than can be mentioned in this short paragraph, and over the next four years, you will come to understand the endless benefits and resources that this wonderful team will bring to your council. I have no doubt that they will bring the support to you and your councils as they have to the many before you. Remember that #togetherweacheivemore.

”



**Michael Kerr**  
Former FNQROC Chair and former Mayor Douglas Shire Council

“

FNQROC is recognised nationally as an exemplar in Local Government collaboration. Membership is a privilege and opportunity to leverage the benefits of bulk purchasing, place based regional strategy and group political representation. Congratulations and welcome to our proven ROI, expert support team and the experience and collegiality of your fellow Mayors.

”



**Peter Scott**  
Former FNQ RRTG Chair, Former Representative on the LGAQ Policy Executive Committee (District 10 Far North) and former Mayor Cook Shire Council

# MISSION AND VISION



## Mission

Advocate on behalf of, and foster cooperation and resources sharing between FNQROC member Councils



## Vision

Sustainable Economic Growth and Development for Far North Queensland



## Strategic Economic Goals

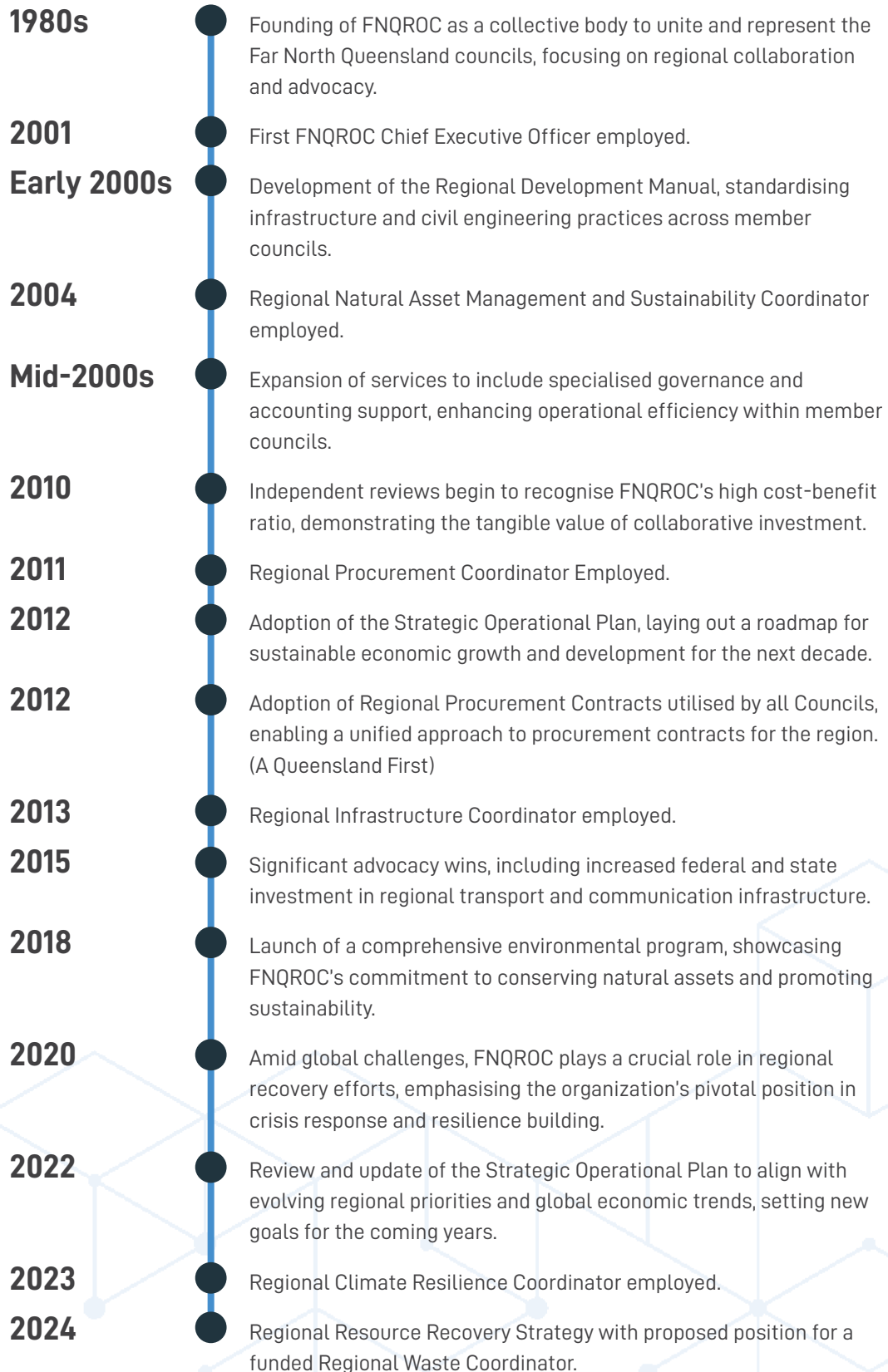
1. Develop resilient transport infrastructure and connectivity
2. Provide reliable and affordable water
3. Provide reliable and affordable energy
4. Respect and manage our natural assets and environment
5. Develop equitable social infrastructure
6. Provide equitable communication networks



## Strategic Operational Plan

This plan - how we use our mission to achieve our vision and strategic economic goals over the next 5 years.

# HISTORY AND GROWTH OF FNQROC

- 
- 1980s** ● Founding of FNQROC as a collective body to unite and represent the Far North Queensland councils, focusing on regional collaboration and advocacy.
  - 2001** ● First FNQROC Chief Executive Officer employed.
  - Early 2000s** ● Development of the Regional Development Manual, standardising infrastructure and civil engineering practices across member councils.
  - 2004** ● Regional Natural Asset Management and Sustainability Coordinator employed.
  - Mid-2000s** ● Expansion of services to include specialised governance and accounting support, enhancing operational efficiency within member councils.
  - 2010** ● Independent reviews begin to recognise FNQROC's high cost-benefit ratio, demonstrating the tangible value of collaborative investment.
  - 2011** ● Regional Procurement Coordinator Employed.
  - 2012** ● Adoption of the Strategic Operational Plan, laying out a roadmap for sustainable economic growth and development for the next decade.
  - 2012** ● Adoption of Regional Procurement Contracts utilised by all Councils, enabling a unified approach to procurement contracts for the region. (A Queensland First)
  - 2013** ● Regional Infrastructure Coordinator employed.
  - 2015** ● Significant advocacy wins, including increased federal and state investment in regional transport and communication infrastructure.
  - 2018** ● Launch of a comprehensive environmental program, showcasing FNQROC's commitment to conserving natural assets and promoting sustainability.
  - 2020** ● Amid global challenges, FNQROC plays a crucial role in regional recovery efforts, emphasising the organization's pivotal position in crisis response and resilience building.
  - 2022** ● Review and update of the Strategic Operational Plan to align with evolving regional priorities and global economic trends, setting new goals for the coming years.
  - 2023** ● Regional Climate Resilience Coordinator employed.
  - 2024** ● Regional Resource Recovery Strategy with proposed position for a funded Regional Waste Coordinator.

# FNQROC ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE 2024



# COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES

Each of our technical committees is composed of skilled experts from the respective councils, pooling their specialised knowledge to form a formidable think-tank. The FNQROC Board guides these committees by suggesting key areas to explore, while the committee members themselves are adept at devising innovative solutions, proactively addressing current challenges and seizing new opportunities to benefit the entire region. This collaborative environment is where expertise meets creativity, resulting in actionable strategies that propel us forward.

- FNQ Regional Roads and Transport Group (RRTG)
- FNQ Regional Roads & Transport Group Technical (RRTG TC)
- FNQ Water Alliance
- FNQ Biosolids Sub-Committee
- Regional Waste Management and Resource Recovery Advisory Committee
- FNQ LG Planners Advisory Group
- FNQ Procurement Advisory Committee
- FNQ Climate Resilience Technical Committee (CRTC)
- FNQ Regional Mountain Bike Strategy Steering Committee
- FNQ WHS & Wellness Advisory Group
- FNQ Natural Asset Management Advisory Group (NAMAC)
- FNQ Animal Management Technical Committee
- FNQ LG Economic Development Advisory Group

## CURRENT STRATEGIES AND ARRANGEMENTS

- [Regional Asset Management Strategy 2010](#)
- [TNQ Regional Mountain Bike Strategy 2015 \(currently under review\)](#)
- [Mobile \(Blackspot\) Coverage Report - 2019](#)
- [Far North Queensland Regional Road Investment Strategy 2021](#)
  - [Regional Roads Investment Strategy – Heavy Vehicle Productivity - 2021](#)
  - [Regional Roads Investment Strategy – Heavy Vehicle Freight Networks - 2021](#)
  - [Regional Roads Investment Strategy – Tourism Routes – 2021](#)
- [FNQROC Long Term Analysis of the Role of Dams – March 2021](#)
- [Regional Animal Management Strategy 2023-2033](#)
- [FNQROC Regional Resource Recovery \(Waste\) Plan Summary - April 2023](#)
- [FNQROC Regional Resource Recovery Plan \(Waste\) – March 2023 \(Technical Document\)](#)
- Regional Water Capability Project (Underway)

# KEY RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS

## Advocacy

- Engagement in Delegations: FNQROC conducted seven (7) delegations at State and Federal levels, meeting with 99 Federal and 79 State dignitaries despite COVID-19 challenges.
- Policy Contributions: Submitted 23 comprehensive responses to various State and Federal Policies, Strategies, Bills, and consultative documents, including key areas such as waste management, water quality, and biosecurity.

## Procurement

- Savings Through Collective Procurement: Enabled significant savings and risk elimination for member councils through collective procurement, particularly in areas like the annual Bitumen Reseal Program, Regional Sewer Relining and Condition Assessment, supply and delivery of Sodium Hypochlorite, Liquid Aluminium, and other chemicals, and the collection and disposal of ferrous metal, non-ferrous metal and used lead acid batteries.
- Innovative Programs: Facilitated the procurement of Flood Warning Infrastructure and a regional arrangement for the removal and beneficial reuse of biosolids, with 100% diverted from landfills.

## Infrastructure and Regional Development

- Strategic Infrastructure Initiatives: Significant progress was made in regional transport, waste management, and water and wastewater management, including the development of the FNQ Regional Road Investment Strategy and a Regional Resource Recovery Strategy.
- FNQROC Regional Resource Recovery Plan endorsed by the board. Implementation has begun with an application to the State to fund a regional coordinator.
- [FNQROC Development Manual](#) – Review of the Development Manual leading the adoption of Version 9.

## Natural Asset Management and Sustainability

- Comprehensive Management Efforts: Progress was achieved in biosecurity, water quality, landscape restoration, biodiversity conservation, and animal management, guided by the Natural Asset Management Advisory Committee (NAMAC) and the Animal Management Technical Committee (AMTC).
- Amazon Frogbit Biosecurity Response Plan endorsed by the board, with implementation yet to commence.
- Regional Animal Management Strategy endorsed by the board. Initial implementation has begun and will continue in 2024.

## Climate Resilience

- Climate Resilience Coordination: Actively worked towards a climate-resilient, low-carbon future, establishing the Climate Resilience Technical Committee (CRTC) to drive initiatives in climate mitigation, transition, and adaptation.
- Focused Projects: Conducted projects under the Queensland Climate Resilient Councils Program and developed action plans for climate adaptation and mitigation, including regional drought resilience planning.

# CURRENT INITIATIVES

- **Strategic Planning and Collaboration:**  
Developing and supporting regional strategies and plans for natural asset management, including the development of an updated FNQ Regional Mountain Bike Strategy and response to emerging environmental issues.
- **Capability Building:**  
Commenced the Regional Water Capability Project to address challenges in the water and wastewater sector and the development of a Regional Water Capability Plan.
- **Road Seal Treatments Study:**  
The commencement of a study to understand the whole of life cost pricing for various road sealing treatments across our region to better inform decisions when procuring.
- **Regional Disaster Management Coordinator:**  
Facilitation of discussion and completion of funding submissions for an FNQROC Coordinator to manage a committee to address current regional wants and needs.
- **Establish greenhouse gas inventories/audit emissions study** funded through the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.
- **Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP):**  
working with the TNQ Drought Hub from JCU to develop the plan for the Wet Tropics and Gulf Savannah.



## GETTING INVOLVED

### Upcoming FNQROC Board Meetings

- Thursday 18 April 2024 – Barlow Park, Cairns
- Thursday 6 June 2024 – Away Board Meeting; Hosted by Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- Thursday 1 August 2024 – Cairns
- Thursday 3 October 2024 – Away Board Meeting; Hosted by Tablelands Regional Council
- Thursday 5 December 2024 - Cairns

Mayors and CEOs can easily bring important matters to our attention by submitting a report or resolution under general business, or simply by picking up the phone for a chat with the FNQROC CEO — we're always open to hearing what's on your mind and ready to support you in getting your item on the agenda.

A substantial number of agenda items are thoughtfully introduced through our technical committees, with dedicated staff from each council bringing their expertise to the forefront, ensuring a comprehensive approach to regional issues.



# KEY AREA SUMMARIES

## FNQROC Board Advocacy

The FNQROC Board, as a collective of Mayors regularly travel to Canberra and Brisbane to meet with Senators, Ministers and Shadow Ministers to advocate for our region. The intent of these delegations is to show consensus and advocate those issues or opportunities, which have an impact on the region. These delegations provide Mayors with networking, knowledge, and confidence to bring their councils back for local issues. Over the past two years, the previous Board developed the FNQROC brand during their delegations and gained respect for our united front.

During delegations, we undertake anywhere from 16 to 26 meetings over 2 days. Generally, there will be one or two key regionally agreed issues that have priority and are discussed at all these meetings. We then leave time for any portfolio specific issues to be conversed. Over time, the FNQROC Board have become polished in how these meetings are performed communicating key messaging.

The Delegation Agenda which includes meeting times, accommodation and flights are coordinated and funded by FNQROC for the benefit of the region.



# FNQ Regional Road and Transport Group (FNQ RRTG)

## Membership

- Cairns Regional Council
- Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- Cook Shire Council (southern part)
- Croydon Shire Council
- Douglas Shire Council
- Etheridge Shire Council
- Mareeba Shire Council
- Tablelands Regional Council
- Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
- Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council
- Department of Transport and Main Roads (FNQ)

## Roads Alliance

The Roads Alliance (RA) is a partnership arrangement between LGAQ on behalf of all Queensland Local Governments and DTMR. Established to create a more collaborative and coordinated approach to road management and investment.

The Roads Alliance evolved due to increasing community expectations for better road infrastructure and recognition that DTMR and Local Governments confront similar problems in managing the road network. In May 2001, DTMR and LGAQ committed to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for a State-wide Management and Investment Alliance (Roads Alliance), this has continued with the signing of a new MOU in 2018.

The key objectives of the Roads Alliance are to:

- Maximise economic development and benefits through better funding allocations.
- Achieve maximum efficiencies for the State and Local Governments through a combined approach to road network planning and project scheduling.
- Invest in improved road management and delivery capability through increased training, advanced technology and systems transfer.

Local Roads of Regional Significance (LRRS) are generally higher-order Local Government roads and lower-order DTMR roads. This network should link communities, economic drivers, transport nodes and tourism locations. LRRS roads available for viewing [here](#).

The Roads Alliance is not just about the distribution of road funding, but about working toward improved long term planning, better asset management practices, smarter purchasing, resource sharing and investment, and improvement of DTMR and Local Government technical capability.

A number of principles as contained in the Roads Alliance MOU underpins the Roads Alliance. In total, the Roads Alliance framework has eight (8) recognised elements to its operation:

- Regional Road Groups and Technical Committees (RRTG)
- Local Roads of Regional Significance (LRRS)
- Asset Management
- Program Development and Reporting
- Road Safety
- Regional funding arrangements, incl. Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme (TIDS) funding
- Joint Purchasing and Resource Sharing
- Workforce Capability

FNQ RRTG meetings generally follow the FNQROC Board meeting and comprises elected members (generally the Mayor) from each Council, together with the District Director of DTMR.

The RRTG Technical Committee (TC) comprises senior staff (in the engineering field) from each Council and DTMR. Both the RRTG and TC meet regularly and separately with recommendations from the TC put to the RRTG for ratification.

## Water Alliance

One major element of local government in Far North Queensland is the management of urban water supply and wastewater services. This area of responsibility is critical, not just for the day-to-day well-being of our communities, but also for the broader economic development and sustainability of our region.

In Far North Queensland, despite our abundant rainfall, we face challenges with water storage capacity for urban use. This limitation is becoming increasingly significant and, without proactive measures, could restrict future growth and development across our region.

Historical and ongoing experiences within the water management sector underline the substantial advantages of adopting a collaborative approach. By working together, local councils benefit directly through the sharing of skills and achieving improved economies of scale. Indirectly, a united front enhances our engagement with State Government agencies and other key stakeholders, ensuring our collective voice is heard and our regional needs are met.

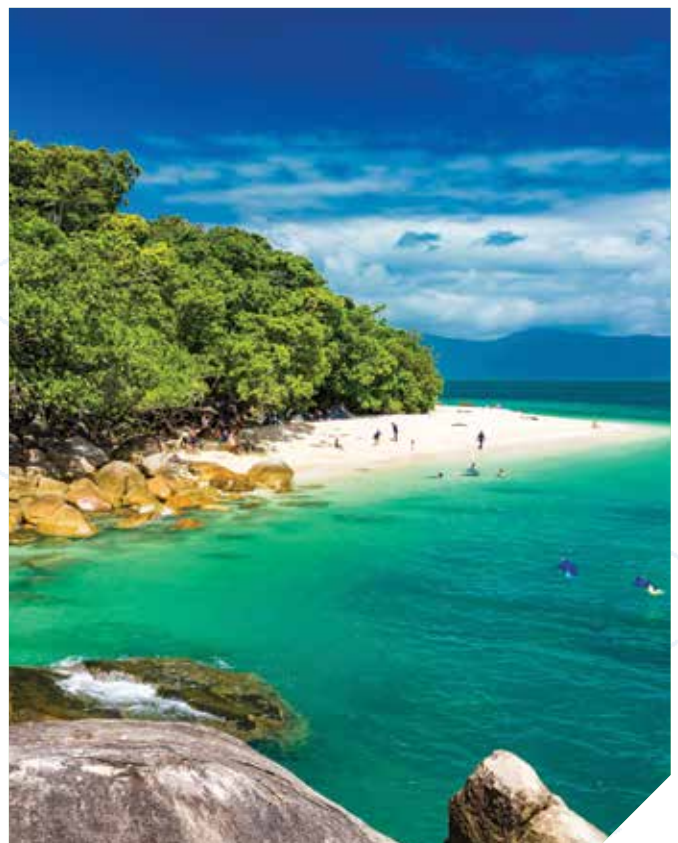
This collaborative ethos underpins our efforts to secure water security as a cornerstone for economic growth in Far North Queensland. By joining forces, we can address our current limitations and pave the way for a sustainable and prosperous future for our region. The Regional Water Capability Plan is 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 both Jobs Queensland and Queensland Water and will be used to demonstrate required policy reform and any funding and assistance required from, both levels of Government to reach the desired future state.

## Waste Management

Far North Queensland faces a unique set of challenges in delivering cost effective and sustainable waste services. Considering the region incorporates two World Heritage listed areas (Wet Tropics and the Great Barrier Reef) those challenges can vary significantly from one council to the next.

All councils in the region struggle with issues such as access to secondary markets, transport costs, and the increasing costs and difficulties in developing new waste infrastructure. This all impacts on the ability of Councils to achieve strategic ambitions, deliver, and operate viable networks of resource recovery facilities.

Originally established in 2004 and comprising of member Councils, the Regional Waste Management Group (RWMG) was to undertake a regional Waste Management Strategy. The adopted Regional Resource Recovery Plan (RRR Plan) presents a series of actions to collaboratively deliver resource recovery outcomes and provide positive impact across its 11 council areas. Councils have committed to sharing and cooperating to minimise waste and maximise resilient and effective resource recovery systems for FNQ and have submitted an application for a funded Regional Waste Management Coordinator to facilitate implementation of the Plan.



## Procurement

The Procurement Coordinator role is now in its twelfth year and 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 being 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 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.

## Removal and Beneficial Reuse of Biosolids

Biosolids are treated sewerage sludge and the major by-product of the wastewater treatment process. When treated and appropriately managed, biosolids can be beneficially used for a number of purposes. Many member Councils Wastewater treatment plants produce biosolids that currently meet the stabilisation criteria required for beneficial reuse. The collective arrangement focuses on streamlined pricing and on ensuring the provision of consistent terms of contract across the region in order to achieve efficiency benefits to both supplier and Councils alike. Seven (7) member councils participate in this arrangement.

## Regional Bitumen Reseal

We are in our eleventh year of the annual Bitumen Reseal Program. This program commenced as a result of councils competing against each other for works to be completed within the financial year. This competition between councils drove prices up and, in some instances, councils were not getting any or only one response to their tenders and regularly the annual program was non-delivered.

The program successfully delivered over 2.6 million m<sup>2</sup> of road sealed and over 5.6 million litres of bitumen used over the past four (4) years.

## Water Chemicals

The contracts for the supply and delivery of Sodium Hypochlorite and Liquid Alum, the most commonly used chemicals by both Water and Wastewater areas of councils, have been made under a collective procurement arrangement since 2012. Eleven member councils now participate in this arrangement, which not only continue to offer good value for money but also the added benefit of centralised contracts management provided by FNQROC.

Sodium Hypochlorite and Liquid Alum: over 10 million litres of Sodium Hypochlorite and over 3.2 million litres of Liquid Alum used over the past four (4) years.

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

This arrangement has been in place since 2015 involving eleven member councils. The intent of the arrangement is that Ferrous Metal and ULAB stockpiles (predominantly car batteries), are managed at acceptable levels and 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. Over 35,000 tonnes of ferrous metal, over 750 tonnes of ULABs, and over 520 tonnes of non-ferrous metal have been collected over the past four (4) years.

## Regional Sewer Relining

Sewer relining involves not only the actual pipe relining but also identifying and accessing manholes, liaising with property owners, arranging traffic control, managing flow-control and other appropriate by-pass methods together with viewing copious amounts of pre and post-works CCTV all of which makes for quite a complex and time-consuming process for both councils and suppliers.

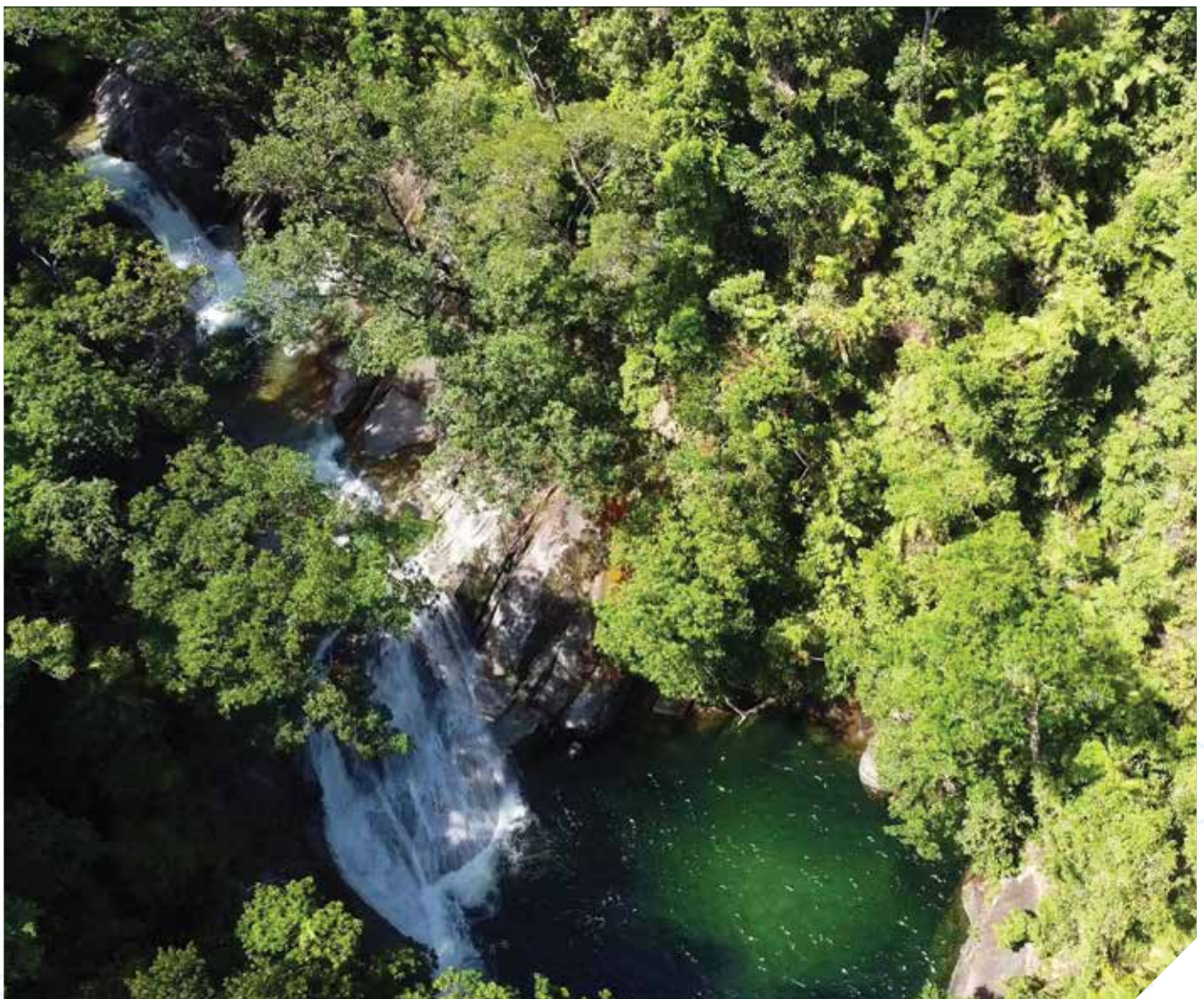
The Regional Sewer Relining arrangement has been in place since 2020.

Over 15,000 linear metres of sewer reticulation were successfully relined across the region in 2022/23. In addition, condition assessments were carried out on over 500 manholes. Cost benefit analysis for this arrangement reveals savings both in terms of the actual cost of relining and further intangible benefits including significant time savings for council officers.

## Regional Procurement & Contract Documentation

The development of regionally consistent contract and procurement documentation was the first of a series of procurement projects endorsed by the Board as part of the Strategic Operational Plan. The project was part funded by the State-wide Capability Development Fund following a funding application submitted by the Far North Queensland Regional Road and Transport Group (FNQ RRTG) and delivered a comprehensive suite of contract and procurement documents to all FNQROC councils.

All 12 FNQROC member councils are participating in this arrangement and council officers are encouraged to make use of the documentation and to provide feedback on what works well or perhaps not so well. The project is one of continuous improvement; therefore, it is important that feedback is captured and actioned accordingly.



## Natural Asset Management and Sustainability

The Natural Asset Management and Sustainability role represents the interests of FNQROC Local Governments across operations related to the natural environment including biosecurity (pests and weeds); water quality and GBR; landscape repair and restoration; biodiversity conservation / planning and climate adaptation.

The Natural Asset Management Advisory Committee (NAMAC) guides the majority of the technical aspects of the role. The NAMAC consists of representatives from member Councils, Terrain NRM and Queensland DAF and so reflects the memorandum of understanding entered into by the State Government (DAF), Natural Resource Management groups (RGC) and Local Government (LGAQ) at a state level.

Beginning in 2019 the role is also facilitating the delivery of the FNQROC Animal Management Technical Committee (AMTC). The AMTC brings together local laws officers and managers from across the region with Queensland Health, Biosecurity Queensland Animal Health and Queensland Police Service, to collaborate on regional issues and programs. The work of the committee supports councils in executing their responsibilities and services under the Animal Management (Dogs & Cats) Act 2008, Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, Biosecurity Act 20014 and the Local Government Act 2009. Alongside the NAMAC, the AMTC works to deliver the FNQROC Animal Management & Wildlife Stewardship Policy. The FNQROC Board recently adopted the Regional Animal Management Strategy.



## Climate Resilience

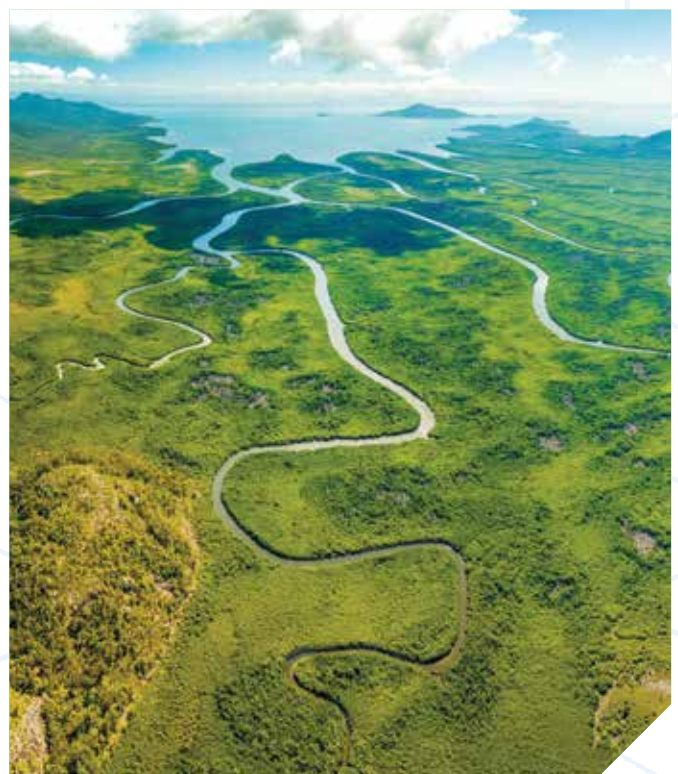
The Climate Resilience Technical Committee (CRTC) is the most recent committee to be established, consisting of all Councils and is dedicated to addressing the challenges and seizing the opportunities associated with creating a climate-resilient and low-emission future.

Building on the achievements of the Rivers to Reef Climate Resilient Alliance, established in 2022, the CRTC is at the forefront of initiatives focused on climate mitigation, transition, and adaptation. These initiatives are designed to yield benefits across social, environmental, and economic spheres.

Under the auspices of FNQROC, the CRTC fosters a spirit of collaboration, enabling members to pool resources and share insights. This collaborative approach is pivotal in shaping and executing strategic plans aimed at enhancing our region's resilience, including:

- The Regional Drought Resilience Plan for the Gulf Hinterland and Wet Tropics.
- The Queensland Reconstruction Authority's Local Resilience Action Plans for our region.
- The FNQROC Rivers to Reef Climate Alliance Action Plan.

Meetings of the committee are convened quarterly, providing a forum for members to deliberate on progress, challenges, and next steps in our collective journey towards a more resilient Far North Queensland.



## Planning

The Regional Planning Committee is a vital part of the FNQROC and currently meets once a month to discuss issues and opportunities related to the development of a new FNQ Regional Plan. Generally, the committee's primary purpose is to share information among the group and provide a forum for discussion. As such, the committee plays a crucial role in representing their respective Council and passing on information to mayors about the ongoing planning initiatives. In the lead up to the State elections in October, the state is keen to have a draft FNQ Regional Plan completed.

Recently, the FNQROC adopted version 9 of the FNQROC Development Manual, a significant and well-utilised planning policy document in the region; the manuals are also used to set a standard for council-constructed infrastructure.

## Economic Development

The FNQROC LG Economic Development Committee consists of representatives from member Council's, Department of State Development and Infrastructure (DSDI), Trade and Investment QLD (TIQ), Regional Development Australia Tropical North (RDATN).

The FNQROC Economic Development Committee discussions focus on the following key strategic deliverables as aligned to the FNQROC Strategic Operational Plan.

- Shared knowledge re Local, State and Federal government programs, grants, policy development and drivers impacting regional Economic Development.
- Collaborate sharing of current Economic Development projects across councils and stakeholders to build regional knowledge and networks.
- Identifying collaborative opportunities for regional branding and sponsorship.
- Identifying sleeper and future economic development issues and opportunities that may impact the region.
- Identifying cross regional events which leverage visitation across council boundaries and present opportunities for joint funding applications.
- Identifying regional training, skill development and future presenters of interest.



## WHS and Wellbeing

The FNQROC WHS and Wellbeing Advisory Group consists of representatives from member Councils and the Office of Industrial Relations (OIR).

The FNQROC WHS and Wellbeing Advisory Group looks at items raised from four (4) yearly audits. The group shares knowledge and information on policies, practical implementation, and best practice.

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