

FNQ Regional Water Alliance

Minutes

Meeting No	40
Meeting Name	FNQ Regional Water Alliance
Date	8 November 2024
Time	9:30am
Venue	Committee Room, Level 3, Cairns Regional Council, Spence Street, Cairns

1. ATTENDANCE

Name	Organisation
Adam Schmalz	Cairns Regional Council
Natasha Glaskin	Cairns Regional Council
Simon Page	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Kerryn Bull	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Robyn Maddalena	Cook Shire Council
Ben Baillie	Douglas Shire Council
Daniel Gatto <i>via teleconference</i>	Hinchinbrook Shire Council
Morris Hamill	Mareeba Shire Council
Christopher Land	Queensland Health
David Wiskar	Queensland Water
Jo Carini	RDMW
Ingrid Formiatti Minnesma	RDMW
Brett Rip	RDMW
Lee-Anne Willis <i>via teleconference</i>	Water Industry Worker
Amanda Hancock	FNQROC

2. APOLOGIES

Name	Organisation
Mark Wuth	Cairns Regional Council
Toni Veronese	Cairns Regional Council
Shane Bandeira	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Brian Pickering	Croydon Shire Council
Peter White	Douglas Shire
Raju Ranjit	Etheridge Shire Council
Mark Lawson	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council

Charles Dyer	Tablelands Regional Council
Kiley Hounslow	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Sam Bann	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council
Garuy Fenwick	LGAQ
Brad Milligan	QLD Health

3. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes noted and accepted.

4. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Action Item	Action	Responsible Person(s)	Status
34.1	Shane Bandiera to provide Amanda with details of non-accredited training to potentially be included in the WIW program. Amanda to circulate to councils to review and for councils to add any further training for inclusion. Amanda to then send the details on to Lee-Anne to investigate further.	Shane Bandiera, CCRC	See Item 10
37.3	Councils to send details of any existing leak detection arrangements to Amanda Hancock to consider the development of a potential regional leak detection arrangement.	All Councils	Complete See Item 7
38.1	Amanda to obtain outstanding biosolids composition data from Douglas Shire Council.	Amanda Hancock, FNQROC	Complete
38.2	Cairns Regional Council to share dewatering options assessment outcomes from Northern Dewatering Upgrade Project.	Cairns Regional Council	Outstanding See Item 8
38.5	All councils to provide FNQROC with an updated list of their Planned Regional Water & Sewer Infrastructure Upgrades. Councils may also choose to include other projects that they are aware of that may not currently be formally planned or funded.	All Councils	Received from CRC, CSC, MSC & TRC to date
38.6	FNQROC to commence procurement process for DWQMP's for 2024/25.	FNQROC	Complete See Item 7

39.1	FNQROC to develop a Scope for a biosolids dewatering and wet weather storage study and circulate to the Water Alliance for approval	FNQROC	Outstanding See Item 8
39.2	Morris Hamill to provide an update on the electro chlorination at Dimbulah and Chillagoe at the next Water alliance meeting.	Morris Hamill, MSC	Complete See Item 5
39.3	FNQROC to investigate potential for a Regional Trade Waste Environmental Management Plan arrangement.	FNQROC	Outstanding

39.3 Councils keen to proceed with this arrangement. Each council is required to produce individual Regional Trade Waste Environmental Plans in accordance with Trade Waste National Guidelines. To avoid duplication of effort and encourage consistency it would be beneficial for FNQROC to develop a Regional Trade Waste Environmental Plan which could accommodate for individual council requirements in the same way as the Regional Development Manual. Potential for funding via QWRAP if required.

5. ELECTRO CHLORINATION – MORRIS HAMIL, MSC

Morris Hamill, MSC provided a presentation on Electro Chlorination as requested at the last meeting alliance meeting.

Copy of Morris Hamill's presentation circulated with the minutes

ACTION POINT 40.1 David Wiskar to circulate details of Electro Chlorination in Mt Isa.

6. REGIONAL WATER CAPABILITY PLAN UPDATE – AMANDA HANCOCK, FNQROC

The Regional Water Capability Plan has now been finalised and Stantec presented to the FNQROC Board at their meeting on 3 October. The plan has now been distributed for review and endorsement at the next FNQROC Board meeting on 5 December 2024.

A copy of the Regional Water Capability Plan Summary, Regional Water Capability Plan and Stante's presentation was circulated to the Water Alliance on 16 October 2024. Hard copies will be provided by Stantec shortly.

7. REGIONAL JOINT PURCHASING – AMANDA HANCOCK, FNQROC

7.1 Regional Leak Detection Arrangement

There has been a positive response regarding a Regional Leak Detection arrangement, to potentially be funded via the Future Drought Fund. All councils indicated interest in participating except for Cairns Regional Council who have just come to the end of a 3-year arrangement and Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council who have also only recently completed a leak detection program.

The maximum funding available for the arrangement is \$200,000 so it is acknowledged that the scope of the arrangement will have to be limited but it is hoped that following the leak detection program, councils will be placed to take advantage of other funding that may be available to undertake works or other mitigation action required.

The Water Alliance agreed to set up a Leak Detection Sub-Committee which will be facilitated by Ieva Pradal, Regional Procurement Coordinator to develop and agree the scope and commence the procurement process.

ACTION POINT 40.2 Each council to nominate a suitable representative to the Regional Leak Detection Sub-Committee. Ieva Pradal to facilitate the committee and progress the Regional Leak Detection Joint Procurement arrangements.

7.2 Drinking Water Quality Management Plan Audits

All councils except for Yarrabah recently expressed an interest in participating in a joint arrangement for Drinking Water Quality Management Plan Audits, due by the end of June 2025. Yarrabah's audit is not due until 2026.

FNQROC recently released a Request for Quote (RFQ) which has been circulated to councils. Details of the quotes will be provided when the RDQ closes on 26 November.

7.3 Regional Sewer Relining

3 councils are participating in this year's sewer relining arrangement – Cairns Regional Council, Cassowary Coast Regional Council and Cook Shire Council and for the first-time manhole rehabilitation as requested by Cook Shire Council. The works commenced in October at Cassowary Coast Regional Council.

ACTION POINT 40.3 FNQROC to set up a meeting to discuss ongoing sewer relining arrangements and any required changes to current Scope to mitigate legacy issues recently identified.

7.4 Regional Supply & Delivery of Water Chemicals

A contract meeting recently took place with Coogee Chemicals and discussions continue with Coogee regarding contract departures in relation to the contracts for the Supply and Delivery of Sodium Hypochlorite.

Cleveland Bay Chemicals, the Townsville based supplier of Liquid Alum, Sodium Chloralhydrate and Caustic Soda have recently received a \$3m state government grant to scale up production of electrolyte used in battery production. It is great to see one of our local expertise being leveraged in the development of sustainable energy.

Ieva will be arranging a contract meeting with Cleveland Bay Chemicals over the coming months.

8. REGIONAL BIOSOLIDS – DEWATERING/WET WEATHER STUDY – AMANDA HANCOCK, FNQROC

At the last meeting it was agreed that FNQROC would develop a Scope for a biosolids dewatering and wet weather storage study. Amanda shared her initial findings that any biosolids dewatering improvement would require upgrades at councils WWTPs. Councils confirmed that they would like to better understand the options and potential costs and are keen to proceed with an options analysis.

Councils are also keen to commence the procurement process for biosolids beneficial reuse as the current contract with Arkwood will expire 30 September 2025. This process will take place in addition to the biosolids dewatering study.

ACTION POINT 40.4 FNQROC to commence development of procurement documentation for the next Regional Beneficial Reuse of Biosolids arrangement as the current contract with Arkwood will expire on 30 September 2025.

9. QWRAP & QLD WATER UPDATE – DAVID WISKAR, QLD WATER

David Wiskar, Qld Water provided a QWRAP update.

Copy of David Wiskar's QWRAP Update presentation circulated with the minutes.

ACTION POINT 40.5 David Wiskar to share copy of Sunwater's pricing policy.

10. WATER INDUSTRY WORKER

Lee-Anne Willis provided the following update:

Update - Action 34.1:

- Went out to operators for their input on training courses.
- Working with qldwater for opportunities for Micro Credential training
- Working with WIOA on their Practical Guides training.

Update - WIW Program

- Councils currently undertaking the treatment training with Envirocheck (ECA) is going well. Delivery finished for 2024, the training is halfway through. Awaiting dates for 2025 from ECA, once received Lee-Anne will send them out.
 - Feedback to date has been relatively positive and if anyone else would like to provide further feedback, they can reach out.
 - Opportunity for FNQROC to submit a Bid pool application for travel and accommodation costs to attend training. Qldwater are working to find an effective way for Alliances to better access travel and accommodation funding, without encroaching too much on QWRAP budgets. FNQROC elected to hold off on making a submission for travel and accommodation funding, opting to see how current applications and discussions evolve.
- Quotes received for training in NWPTRT007 Chlorine Gas, MSWHS216 Breathing Apparatus, councils awarded the training to Total Chlorine Solutions from Western Australia. This training will go ahead on 10th & 11th December. Any councils that would like to join, there are limited places. Douglas has 3, Napranum and Pormpuraaw have expressed interest in attending as well.
- Lee-Anne will be in touch on training for next year. Lee-Anne is aware that Cook would like some Network training. Government subsidy for training when training is delivered outside the Cook region is a concern.

ACTION POINT 40.6 David Wiskar to provide details of Micro Credential training and how the training might be facilitated in the region as opposed to in Brisbane. FNQROC to establish interest from councils and Lee-Anne Willis to assist with facilitation.

11. RDMW – WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT – INGRID FORMIATTI MINNESMA

Ingrid Fomiatti Minnesma had provided highlights from the following update:

Water Plan (Gulf) 2007

- On 15 March 2024, the Minister announced that the replacement of the Gulf Water plan.
- The Preliminary Public Consultation period was announced following the Minister's performance assessment report (released on 5 December 2023). The report identified some emerging issues and matters, and the importance of the water plan in supporting growth in both agriculture and the emerging critical mineral industries.
- The water plan review will revisit the share of water between all water interests including the interests and values of water for First Nations peoples, towns and communities, agriculture, industries, emerging critical mineral requirements and the environment.
- The first round of public consultation closed 19 July 2024.
- Meter revalidations are due for the Gilbert River catchment area on 30 November 2024.
<https://www.rdmw.qld.gov.au/water/consultations-initiatives/strengthened-water-metering-standards>
- <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/mining-energy-water/water/catchments-planning/water-plan-areas/gulf>

Gulf Regional Water Assessment (RWA)

- On 15 March 2024, the Minister announced the \$4M Gulf RWA, with \$2M funding support from the Department of Resources' Office of Critical Minerals Queensland. The RWA will progress in parallel with the Gulf water plan review.
- The RWA is a two-year process that will be informed by extensive stakeholder engagement, stakeholder groups will help to identify all water supply options in the regions.
- The Gulf RWA will be a comprehensive assessment that examines future water demand and will set out how existing infrastructure, new infrastructure and non-infrastructure solutions can be used to maximise water supply in the Gulf and drive economic growth.
- [Regional Water Assessment Program | Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water \(rdmw.qld.gov.au\)](#)

Water Plan (Cape York) 2019

- The Minister's performance assessment report was released on 1 June 2024.
- Meter revalidations are due for the Lakeland water licence zones 1 and 2 of the Cook underground water management area on 30 November 2024. <https://www.rdmw.qld.gov.au/water/consultations-initiatives/strengthened-water-metering-standards>
- [Cape York water plan area | Business Queensland](#)

Water Plan (Wet Tropics) 2019

- Minister's performance assessment report was released on 14 June 2024. Based on the outcomes from the Minister's Performance Assessment Report, it is proposed to postpone the expiry of this water plan from 1 September 2024 to 1 December 2032. Consultation on the proposal to postpone the expiry of the water plan closed on 15 July 2024.
- Meter revalidations are due for the Mulgrave -Russell catchment area on 30 November 2024.
<https://www.rdmw.qld.gov.au/water/consultations-initiatives/strengthened-water-metering-standards>
- [Wet Tropics water plan area | Business Queensland](#)

Water Plan (Burdekin Basin) 2007

- The expiry date has been postponed by three years to 1 September 2026.
- The process to review and replace the Burdekin Basin water plan is underway.
- Meter revalidations are due for the Burdekin groundwater management area on 30 November 2024.
<https://www.rdmw.qld.gov.au/water/consultations-initiatives/strengthened-water-metering-standards>
- [Burdekin Basin water plan area | Business Queensland](#)

Burdekin Regional Water Assessment (RWA)

- The RWA is a two-year process that will be informed by extensive stakeholder engagement, stakeholder groups will help to identify all water supply options in the regions.

- Assessment activities are now under way after an inaugural stakeholder advisory group meeting was held on 12 October 2023.
- <https://www.rdmw.qld.gov.au/water/consultations-initiatives/regional-water-assessment-program>
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Water Plan (Fitzroy Basin) 2011

- The expiry date has been postponed by three years to 30 August 2025.
- The process to review and replace the Fitzroy Basin water plan is underway.
- [Fitzroy Basin water plan area | Business Queensland](#)
- There is a proposal to change water planning in Central Queensland (CQ) to manage the Fitzroy Basin, Boyne River Basin and Calliope River Basin areas in one CQ water plan, with the proposal to bring in three adjacent coastal basins, Styx, Shoalwater and Waterpark (which currently do not fall under any water plans) into Queensland's water planning framework.
- Feedback on the CQ Water Plan proposal closed on 4 November 2024.
- <https://www.rdmw.qld.gov.au/water/consultations-initiatives/water-planning-central-qld>

Central Queensland Regional Water Assessment (RWA)

- The RWA is a two-year process that will be informed by extensive stakeholder engagement, stakeholder groups will help to identify all water supply options in the regions.
- Assessment activities are now under way after an inaugural stakeholder advisory group meeting on 21 February 2024.
- <https://www.rdmw.qld.gov.au/water/consultations-initiatives/regional-water-assessment-program>

Water Plan (Barron) 2023

- The Barron water plan review was finalised on 23 June 2023 with the release of the Water Plan (Barron) 2023, Barron Water Entitlement Notice 2023, and the Barron Water Management Protocol June 2023.
- [Barron water plan area | Business Queensland](#)

Water Plan (Mitchell) 2007

- The Minister's Performance Assessment Report was released on 5 December 2023. The report confirms that the water plan and its implementation continue to sustainably manage water resources in the Mitchell catchment.
- The Mitchell water plan expires on 1 November 2027.
- [Mitchell water plan area | Business Queensland](#)

Water Plan (Great Artesian Basin and Other Regional Aquifers) 2017

- The Minister's Performance Assessment Report was released in October 2022.
- The GABORA water plan expires in on 1 September 2027.
- [Great Artesian Basin and other regional aquifers water plan | Business Queensland](#)
- Meter revalidation are due for the Surat Hutton groundwater sub-area on 30 March 2025.
<https://www.rdmw.qld.gov.au/water/consultations-initiatives/strengthened-water-metering-standards>

12. RDMW – WATER SUPPLY REGULATION – JO CARINI & BRETT RIP, RDMW

Brett advised:

- Annual reports are due by 16 December
- Some change in personnel taking place but this will be communicated to councils.
- Note procurement for Regional DWQMP audits is underway and keen to be kept informed of the position regarding contract award and audits.

13. QUEENSLAND HEALTH – BRAD MILLIGAN, QLD HEALTH

Chris advised:

- Consultation on changed to the ADWG for PFAS taking place
- Wet weather preparation underway
- Currently updating the information on water providers in the area

14. UPCOMING EVENTS

- 21-22 November - Emerging Contaminants Workshop

15. NEXT MEETING

2025 schedule of meetings to be confirmed shortly.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 1pm

Minutes prepared by Amanda Hancock, Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator

ACTION ITEMS OVERLEAF

AGREED ACTION ITEMS

Action Item	Action	Responsible Person(s)
38.2	Cairns Regional Council to share dewatering options assessment outcomes from Northern Dewatering Upgrade Project.	Cairns Regional Council
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40.1	David Wiskar to circulate details of Electro Chlorination in Mt Isa.	David Wiskar, QLD Water
40.2	Each council to nominate a suitable representative to the Regional Leak Detection Sub-Committee. Ieva Pradal to facilitate the committee and progress the Regional Leak Detection Joint Procurement arrangements.	All Councils & FNQROC
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40.4	FNQROC to commence development of procurement documentation for the next Regional Beneficial Reuse of Biosolids arrangement as the current contract with Arkwood will expire on 30 September 2025.	FNQROC
40.5	David Wiskar to share copy of Sunwater's pricing policy.	David Wiskar, QLD Water
40.6	David Wiskar to provide details of Micro Credential training and how the training might be facilitated in the region as opposed to in Brisbane. FNQROC to establish interest from councils and Lee-Anne Willis to assist with facilitation.	David Wiskar, QLD Water, FNQROC & Lee-Anne Willis, WIW