

DATE: Tuesday, 25 November 2025

TO: Cr. Angela Toppin, Mayor – Mareeba Shire Council

SUBJECT: LGAQ Policy Executive Update for the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils Meeting – Thursday 2 October 2025

1. *Policy Executive Meeting Update*
2. *Empowering Councils Bill introduced*
3. *LGAQ Annual Conference Final Outcomes document and key releases*
4. *Queensland Indigenous Council Leaders Accord signed*
5. *Roads and Transport Update*
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8. *#BinTheTax Campaign*
9. *The 2025 Cost Shifting Survey*
10. *Local government awareness campaign*
11. *Depreciation Taskforce*
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14. *Environment and Climate Update*
15. *Biosecurity and NRM Update*
16. *Energy Update*
17. *Funded Projects Update*
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1. Policy Executive Meeting Update

- The Policy Executive met on the Gold Coast on Sunday, October 19, ahead of the LGAQ's 129th Annual Conference.
- The Minister for Local Government, Water, and Volunteers, the Hon. Ann Leahy attended the meeting alongside her director-general Bronwyn Blagoev, to give the Policy Executive an update on key portfolio issues and to take questions from Policy Executive members on issues of importance to councils across the state.
- Other key items on the agenda included:
 - **Queensland Freight Delivery Plan and Freight Subsidy Review:** The Policy Executive was updated on the consultation underway regarding the Queensland Freight Delivery Plan as well as advocacy regarding the review undertaken by the State into the freight subsidy. Members were also given a further update on this issue at the Roads and Transport Forum on the Monday of Annual Conference with both the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, the Hon. Brent Mickelberg, and his Director-General Sally Stannard and Deputy Director-General Andrew Mahon in attendance.
 - **Community Benefit Agreement Template and Local Government Guidance:** The Policy Executive was updated on key work underway to support councils to navigate the new community benefit framework. Policy Executive members have also shared the work underway by their own councils, as well as by councils within their Policy Executive districts, to help inform this advocacy work.
 - **Cemeteries Research:** The Policy Executive was updated on the finalisation of the body of research work into cemeteries and the issues facing councils and communities across the state. The research was the subject of a panel session on Tuesday at Annual Conference as well as a Policy Executive Motion that was debated and subsequently passed by members on Wednesday. You can read the research in the business papers on Congruent. A media release which includes the publicly available research highlights document is also available [here](#).
 - **First Nations Housing:** The Policy Executive was updated on ongoing advocacy to secure funding for remote First Nations housing to end overcrowding across rural and remote communities.
 - **Statewide awareness campaign:** The Policy Executive was briefed on the chosen concept behind the LGAQ's new awareness campaign to be launched on behalf of members, to help inform the community of the vital work of councils. This is a key piece of work undertaken by the LGAQ each term.
 - **Cost-shifting survey:** The Policy Executive was given an insight into the early results coming in from the latest cost shifting survey launched with members. Those results are showing the figure is already on track to surpass the \$360 million in cost-shifting uncovered in the last survey, released last year. Members needing support to complete their surveys should contact the team via costshifting@lgaq.asn.au
 - **State of the Assets Report:** The Policy Executive approved the 2025 Queensland State of the Assets report ahead of its launch at the LGAQ Annual Conference on Wednesday. The report was compiled for members with the support of the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia. You can read the report [here](#). A media release issued to launch the report can be found [here](#).
 - **Other key items:** Other key items to come to the Policy Executive at its October meeting included work underway regarding the Prosper 2025 Plan as well as updates from Chief Digital Officer Tracy Whitelaw and Head of Assist Brett Johnson. Policy Executive also discussed pre-notified items of general business raised by Policy Executive members including the issue of safety of elected members, the ability of councils to be able to invest outside Category One investment powers under the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982 so they can support financial institutions to continue to operate locally and regionally, and the need for councils to be represented as part of the Hazards Insurance Partnership.

- **Key projects:** The Policy Executive was updated on key projects being delivered by the LGAQ on behalf of members including the Cleaner Road Runoff Project, the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Project, the First Start Program, the Indigenous Capacity Building Project, the QCoast2100 Program, the Queensland Climate Resilient Councils Program, Queensland Council Energy Partnerships, the Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program and the Rural and Remote Capacity Building Project. This update included a video detailing the work of the Queensland Climate Resilience Councils program.
- The next meeting of the Policy Executive, and the final meeting for 2025, will be held on Friday, 5 December.
- Please do not hesitate to raise any specific issues you would like discussed in the general business section of this meeting, or any items you would like included on the agenda at a future meeting.
- Please contact your district representative Mayor Angela Toppin to raise any issues you would like discussed at this meeting or any future meeting.

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

2. Empowering Councils Bill introduced

- A new Bill has been introduced into State Parliament to amend the Local Government Act 2009 (LGA), City of Brisbane Act 2010 (COBA) and associated regulations and the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 (LGEA).
- You can read the Local Government (Empowering Councils) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 [here](#) and the Explanatory Notes [here](#).
- Some of those amendments include:
 - Removing conduct breaches from the councillor complaints framework. The definition of misconduct will be amended to include more serious conduct breaches, namely bullying, sexual harassment for investigation by the Office of the Independent Assessor and determination by Councillor Complaints Tribunal.
 - Amending section 12 of the LGA to put beyond any doubt the longstanding position that the mayor is the official spokesperson of the council.
 - Amending section 14 of the COBA and section 12 of the LGA respectively to reinforce that all councillors have a responsibility to communicate with the community on local government issues, but that they are doing so as individual councillors, not as the official spokesperson on behalf of the council.
 - Amending section 12 of the LGA to put beyond doubt that the mayor of a local government is the default chairperson for ordinary and special meetings of the local government, which includes managing the conduct of the participants at the meeting. This change will not apply to the COBA, nor will it apply to council standing committees with the chairperson of a standing committees to continue to be determined in accordance with section 267 of the Local Government Regulation.
 - Amending various Acts to only require new candidates for a quadrennial election, a by-election or a fresh election, to complete mandatory candidate training. Returning councillor/candidates would not be required to complete the training if they had already done so previously.
 - Replacing the current conflicts of interest framework in the COBA and LGA with the previous framework that was in place from 2013 to early 2018, with some minor modifications. This includes:

- The removal of the requirement for non-conflicted councillors to vote on whether to allow a conflicted councillor to participate in decision-making.
- The removal of the concept of a 'close personal relationship' with a councillor from conflicts of interests.
- The removal of the duty on a councillor to report a belief or suspicion of another councillor's conflict.
- Reinstating the concepts of material personal interest and conflict of interest
- Retaining the current conflict of interest exceptions for councillors such as, small value gifts and hospitality, club memberships, religious beliefs and political affiliations; and the current ordinary business matters of a local government, including the development of whole of local government documents such as the budget and operational plan.
- Updating the framework for dealing with breaches, including penalties:
 - serious breaches (that is, the intention to gain a benefit, or avoid a loss, for a councillor or someone else) – maximum penalty of 200 penalty units or 2 years imprisonment, and,
 - other breaches – dealt with as 'misconduct' under the councillor conduct framework.
- Removing the requirement for an election candidate and other participant to include their residential address in election material. Instead, a candidate or participant would be given the option of including other contact information, for example, a PO Box address.
- Providing for a general approval to make major policy decisions about Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements assistance during local government caretaker periods, removing the need to seek a ministerial exemption for each contract.
- Clarifying rating powers for First Nations local governments, including providing a framework to enable these councils to levy rates in the future. The LGAQ will continue to work with the Minister, Department, Valuer-General and members to progress this.
- The Bill includes an amendment that is currently contrary to an existing member position – an amendment to automatically remove a councillor or mayor from office if they nominate to run for election to State Parliament.
- The LGAQ will be consulting with members on this change as well as on all other amendments within the Bill.
- The Bill has now been referred to the Parliamentary Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee for consideration.
- The Committee is due to report back to Parliament on the Bill by 30 January 2026.
- A closing date for submission had not been nominated by the Committee at the time of writing.

LGAQ Contacts for this matter: Lucy Greene, Intergovernmental Relations Manager or Kris Bullock, Senior Governance Advisor.

3. LGAQ Annual Conference Final Outcomes document and key releases

- Following Annual Conference in October, the LGAQ has now released the Final Outcomes document containing the outcomes from the Annual General Meeting on the Wednesday of the LGAQ's 2025 Annual Conference.
- Of the 133 motions put forward for debate at this year's Annual Conference, 126 were passed and are now resolutions to be progressed by the LGAQ team on behalf of member councils.
- Letters containing the 2025 resolutions have been circulated to State Ministers and Directors-General.

- Letters will also be circulated to the relevant Federal Ministers and Department Secretaries following the LGAQ's delegation to Canberra in the first week of November.
- You can download your copy of the Final Outcomes document from Congruent [here](#).
- Thank you to all councils that submitted motions for this year's Annual Conference.
- Other key releases from Annual Conference included:
 - The release of the [Queensland State of the Assets Report](#) containing new research that confirms the need for critical infrastructure funding to flow from State and Federal governments.
 - New research to better understand key challenges facing councils facing a "burial boom" with cemeteries running out of space. Read the highlights [here](#).
 - A release regarding the passing of critical motions on the need for action to support the provision of childcare in rural and remote Queensland. Read the release [here](#).

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

4. Queensland Indigenous Council Leaders Accord signed

- The Queensland Indigenous Council Leaders Accord was signed ahead of the Indigenous Leaders Forum at the October Annual Conference.
- The Accord was signed by Local Government Minister Ann Leahy, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Partnerships Minister Fiona Simpson, LGAQ President Matt Burnett and LGAQ Policy Executive members, Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Mayor Wayne Butcher and Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Mayor Alf Lacey.
- This historic agreement guarantees First Nations leaders a seat at the policy-making table to secure real outcomes for their communities.
- Discussion with members will now commence regarding the timeline of future meetings and priority issues that will inform the Accord's agenda.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Angus Sutherland – Intergovernmental Relations Lead.

5. Roads and Transport Update

Queensland Freight Delivery Plan (QFDP)

- The Department of Transport and Main Roads has begun consultation with stakeholders on priorities for the refreshed QFDP that will shape future investment and policy to improve freight efficiency, resilience and regional connectivity. There is a strong focus on first and last mile access, freight route resilience and aligning infrastructure with regional economic development.
- The Department of Transport and Main Roads has hosted the first round of consultation workshops to inform the delivery plan and ensure it reflects regional freight challenges, with a North Queensland workshop held on 24th October 2025 and a First Nations workshop held on the 31st of October.
- Further opportunities to provide input into the development of the QFDP will be issued in the coming weeks.
- The LGAQ will prepare a submission on the freight challenges for councils and is seeking feedback on issues such as freight costs, access and logistics, infrastructure constraints, seasonal impacts and challenges experienced in First Nations communities. Feedback can be provided via the survey available [here](#).

State of Australia's aviation sector and its ability to deliver reliable and affordable services to rural, regional and remote communities

- The Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee has an ongoing inquiry into the state of Australia's aviation sector.
- The inquiry focuses on the current ability to deliver reliable and affordable services to rural, regional and remote communities with particular reference to:
 - Costs, fees, levies, taxes and charges that are core components to the pricing of airfares
 - Disparities of these costs across rural, regional and remote airports
 - Mechanisms for recovering federally mandated security and regulatory costs and options for achieving greater financial equity across the aviation sector
 - Competitiveness of the aviation sector to service regional, rural and remote communities and the implications of reducing or withdrawing those services
 - Adequacy of government fees and levies to equitably address costs for airline services incurred due to federal legislation
 - Effectiveness of government processes and mechanisms to identify and quantify capital and ongoing costs due to federal legislation and regulations
 - Policy or practical measures that could be established to assist the aviation sector in providing services to rural, regional and remote communities
- The LGAQ will develop a submission on behalf of member councils and seeks feedback on this topic by **8 December 2025**. Please email [Jarrod Hellmuth](mailto:Jarrod.Hellmuth@lgaq.asn.au), Lead – Roads & Transport with any comments.

Federal Productivity Inquiry into Regional Airfares

- The Federal Productivity Commission (The Commission) has announced they will undertake an inquiry into the determinants of regional airfares.
- The LGAQ highlighted challenges associated with the cost of regional airfares in a submission on the Aviation White Paper.
- The Aviation White Paper found that the average ticket price per kilometre was 52 per cent higher for flights involving regional airports than for flights between capital cities.
- The Commission will conduct a review of the determinants of regional airfares in Australia and make recommendations on policy settings to support a competitive, reliable and affordable regional aviation framework.
- Terms of Reference for the Inquiry have been released and can be found [here](#).
- The Commission will release an issues paper in due course, with submissions expected to be sought by the Commission in early 2026.
- The LGAQ will be collating a submission on behalf of member councils and will reach out to member councils and ROCs for information and case studies in due course.

Accepted development requirements for waterway barrier works

- The Department of Primary Industries has released Version 2 of the Accepted development requirements for operational work that is constructing or raising of waterway barrier works (ADR).
- Consultation on the second version of the ADR commenced in September 2024, and the updated version reflects significant progress on issues long raised by councils and the LGAQ. The revised version marks a more practical and workable framework for local government infrastructure delivery.
- The new ADR introduces important updates for disaster recovery works on essential public assets. Councils are now able to repair or replace damaged infrastructure in like for like condition within the same or similar footprint for government-funded recovery works, with scope for betterment where appropriate.
- The changes also include:
 - Greater flexibility provided for use of gabions in common scenarios
 - Simplified requirements for western drainage basins

- Rock sizing requirements for aprons and waterway bed scour protection have been made more flexible across amber, red and green waterways
- Greater flexibility for cover requirements around culverts in green, amber and red waterways.
- A transition period of one year to continue utilising the old version of the ADR
- Councils are encouraged to review the new requirement and how they may apply to their delivery programs. You can find the new ADR [here](#).

LGAQ Contact for these matters: Jarrod Hellmuth, Lead – Roads and Transport.

6. Public Health Update

Animal Management

- The next scheduled meeting of the Animal Management Technical Working Group is set for Thursday, 11 December.
- The LGAQ continues to advocate for further reforms and a broader review of the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008* through the Taskforce and Working Group.

Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act review 2025-26

- On 23 May 2025, the Queensland Government asked the Honourable David Thomas to review the *Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009* (QCAT Act), which must be reviewed every 5 years.
- A project team in the Department of Justice (the Department) is supporting Mr Thomas conduct the Review. The terms of reference from the Attorney-General are available for download on their [website](#). The final report is due to be delivered to the Attorney-General by 30 April 2026 and will be tabled in Parliament.
- The LGAQ is preparing a submission in response to the review.
- The LGAQ facilitated a webinar on Tuesday, 28 October for councils to provide feedback to inform the submission.
- A second webinar was held by the Department on Friday, 28 November to inform councils of the review.
- Councils can provide feedback to the LGAQ by contacting Tamarah Moore, Lead – Public Health and Waste Management via tamarah.moore@lgaq.asn.au by Friday, 23 January.
- More information can be found on [Congruent](#).

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Tamarah Moore, Lead – Public Health and Waste Management.

7. Water and Wastewater Update

Quantifying the Infrastructure Cliff Research Project

- Since subsidies stopped in 2008, there has been no dedicated, ongoing State Government funding program to support local government in the renewal and replacement of aging water and sewage assets.
- In 2018/2019, [QWRAP funded research reports](#) found the renewal of water and wastewater infrastructure assets reaching the end of useful life would be critical in the next few decades, estimating the cost to replace in ground assets alone would be as high as \$1.8 billion by 2030 and \$3.8 billion by 2040 at current replacement rates.
- In 2025-2026 financial year, the LGAQ has committed funding for a new research project to be undertaken to establish a contemporary evidence base.
- This new project seeks to quantify the scale, age, and condition of ageing water and wastewater infrastructure across Queensland councils to determine the extent of assets nearing end-of-life ('the infrastructure cliff').

- This research project will support ongoing advocacy around a better funding framework for councils faced with the challenge of the infrastructure cliff, aligned with the water and wastewater PE resolution passed to at this year's LGAQ Annual Conference and build on previous research undertaken through the QWRAP program as well as more recent LGAQ research on Queensland State of Assets and infrastructure funding gaps.
- The LGAQ has procured PSA Infrastructure to commence work on the project and expect a final report to be delivered in early 2026.

LGAQ Contact for these matters: Josephine Raftery, Lead – Water and Wastewater Infrastructure.

8. #BinTheTax Campaign

- The LGAQ's #BinTheTax campaign on behalf of 19 councils impacted by the State Government reduction in the offset paid to councils to stop its waste levy being applied to household bins continues to drive community engagement and awareness.
- At the recent Annual Conference, councils [came together](#) to call for the urgent investment and action they need to chart a fairer path to reducing waste and increasing recycling for communities across the State.
- These priorities informed a [six-point plan](#) released by the LGAQ.
- Targeted paid social media has so far reached over 100K Queenslanders and driven over 8,000 to the campaign webpage.
- On August 18, the LGAQ released polling which showed that nearly 7 in 10 Queenslanders oppose households paying a levy on their household rubbish, continuing to generate media coverage in support of the campaign.
- Councils can utilise a [suite of assets](#) in support of the campaign – as well as order [bin stickers](#) - or contact Campaign Manager Sam Dean to discuss opportunities to collaborate.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Samantha Dean, Campaign Manager

9. The 2025 Cost Shifting Survey

- On 4 August the LGAQ 2025 Cost Shifting survey was launched with information sent to Mayors, CEOs and Finance Managers.
- The LGAQ's first cost-shifting report, released in 2024, has been a powerful tool for our advocacy, providing data and examples of where councils have had to step in as providers of last resort because the other levels of government or private sector have stepped back or stepped out of providing the services our communities cannot go without.
- We believe the actual financial impact on councils is even greater than was uncovered in that 2024 report.
- We have sought to simplify the information request, and we appreciate the work required by councils to respond.
- The resulting report and its release will continue our campaign for a fairer funding deal for Queensland communities, further building on our momentum of recent State and Federal election campaigns.
- We are here to help councils through the process in any way that is needed. Assistance in completing the survey can be sought by emailing costshifting@lgaq.asn.au.
- Responses are still being accepted. Please contact the team for any support.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Lucy Greene, Manager - Intergovernmental Relations.

10. Local government awareness campaign

- As residents look to local government for more than ever before – despite declining levels of funding and increasing costs shifted onto councils and ratepayers – it's an important time for the local government sector to tell its story.

- The LGAQ is currently working on an awareness campaign aiming to improve understanding of the roles and responsibilities of local government. The campaign will be 'always-on' and give councils the opportunity to localise and tailor messaging.
- To ensure this campaign resonates with communities in all corners of Queensland, the LGAQ has been conducting research into what Queenslanders think about local government.
- A summary of this research can be viewed [here](#).
- Council feedback on the campaign has been collected and is currently being used to inform asset creation to ensure this campaign can be highly tailored and localised across Queensland.
- The campaign will be first in market from early 2026 and councils will receive information on how to utilise and leverage the statewide key messages and creative.

LGAQ Contact for these matters: Samantha Dean – Lead, Manager, Campaigns.

11. Depreciation Taskforce

- In August 2025, the Queensland Government established the Local Government Depreciation Taskforce (the taskforce) to tackle the challenges councils face to effectively and accurately manage growing depreciation costs.
- The Taskforce is being led by Mr Neil Castles, who has significant experience both in State Government and the Queensland local government sector, including 23 years at Queensland Treasury Corporation.
- This Taskforce comes off the back off the now Premier's election commitment of establishing a review into depreciation announced at the LGAQ's 2024 Annual Conference.
- The Taskforce's main objective is to identify the challenges for councils in managing depreciation expense, present opportunities to reduce the impacts of depreciation on councils' sustainability and enhance stakeholder awareness of the implications of depreciation on investment decisions.
- The Taskforce reports to the Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers, the Hon. Ann Leahy MP, and will receive strategic oversight and advice from the Local Government Depreciation Executive Steering Committee (ESC), chaired by the Director-General of DLGWV.
- The final report is due to Minister Leahy by 31 December 2025. More information and Terms of Reference are available [here](#).
- The LGAQ is preparing a submission to the taskforce incorporating member asks and case studies. To contribute to the submission, please contact Glen Beckett on glen_beckett@lgaq.asn.au

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Glen Beckett, Senior Specialist Advisor.

12. Waste Update

Resource Recovery Boost Fund

- The Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI) have released [program guidelines](#) for the Resource Recovery Boost Fund (RRBF), a \$130 million package to support Queensland councils to address key waste reduction and recycling priorities, establish critical resource recovery infrastructure, divert waste, and increase recycling.
- The first funding round will see \$60 million available to eligible applicants across two funding streams:
 - Stream 1 (Small projects) – \$20 million to support smaller-scale initiatives that provide waste management and/or resource recovery benefits at the local or regional scale. Individual project funding up to \$2 million (excl GST) with projects to be delivered within 18 months of contract execution.

- Stream 2 (Major projects) – \$40 million to support more substantial undertakings that offer resource recovery solutions and economic benefits on a regional or statewide scale. Individual project funding over \$2 million (excl GST) with projects to be delivered within 3 years of contract execution.
- Applications are now open for the Resource Recovery Boost Fund (RRBF). Applications will close on the following dates:
 - 3:00pm on Thursday 11 December 2025 for Stream 1, and
 - 3:00pm on Thursday 29 January 2026 for Stream 2.
- Details on how to apply and a link to the application portal is on the Department's [website](#).

Inquiry into Improving Queensland's Container Refund Scheme

- On Thursday, 16 October 2025, the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee tabled Report No. 14, 58th Parliament – Improving Queensland's Container Refund Scheme.
- The report includes 21 recommendations made by the Committee to improve the scheme.
- The report and other documents relating to the Committee's inquiry can be viewed on the inquiry [website](#).

Recycle Mate Workshops

- The Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation held a series of workshops throughout November for local government representatives to learn about the Department's partnership with [Recycle Mate](#).
- Six in person three-hour sessions were held, with one held in Cairns on Monday, 17 November. An online session was also held on 28 November.
- An Expression of Interest is currently open for all councils to access opt-in features as part of the Recycle Mate program. Complete the [online EOI form](#) by **Friday 19 December 2025** to be considered for this opportunity.
- For enquiries about the Recycle Mate opt-in subscription options or technical support with the online EOI form, please contact Adaptation Environmental Support Pty Ltd via email at support@recyclemate.com.au. For more information about the EOI process contact the Office of Waste Reduction and Recycling via email at OWRRPrograms@detsi.qld.gov.au.

LGAQ Circular Economy and Waste Management Advisory Group

- The LGAQ Circular Economy and Waste Management Advisory Group met for their fifth and final meeting of 2025 on 3 November.
- The meeting included updates from the LGAQ including a summary of the LGAQ Annual Conference resolutions.
- During the meeting, the Advisory Group was joined by external presenters from Recycle Mate and [Upparel](#).
- The meeting Communique is currently under review and will be made available on [Congruent](#).

Local Government Battery Collection Program

- On the 21 November, the Minister for the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, the Honourable Andrew Powell, [announced](#) that 14 Queensland councils will receive more than \$1 million in funding grants to introduce new battery collection points and services across the state, giving households practical options to dispose of batteries.
- Local government Battery Collection Program recipients include:
 - Burdekin Shire Council (on behalf of Burdekin Shire Council, Charters Towers Regional Council, Hinchinbrook Shire Council, Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council and Townsville City Council)
 - City of Moreton Bay
 - Douglas Shire Council
 - Fraser Coast Regional Council

- Longreach Regional Council
- Mount Isa City Council
- Murweh Shire Council
- Noosa Shire Council
- Quilpie Shire Council
- Sunshine Coast Regional Council
- South Burnett Regional Council (on behalf of Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council and South Burnett Regional Council)
- Southern Downs Regional Council
- Toowoomba Regional Council
- Western Downs Regional Council
- More information about the Program or projects that have received grant funding, can be found on the Department's [website](#).

End of Waste Codes – Annual call for submissions

- The Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation calls for submissions annually for the development of [end of waste \(EOW\) codes](#).
- EOW codes specify outcomes that need to be achieved for a waste to be deemed a resource. It states requirements for the registered resource producer as well as conditions for the use of the resource.
- A person may make a submission to the chief executive about any particular waste for which an EOW code should be prepared. The [annual call for submissions](#) is now open and closes at **5pm on Friday 30 January 2026**. Submissions received will help inform the development of future EOW codes where there is strong industry demand.
- For more information, contact RRS.Consultation@detsi.qld.gov.au with 'EOW codes' in the email subject heading.

Inquiry into the current state of the Australian tyre industry, and any challenges and opportunities for the industry within the context of a circular economy

- The Standing Committee on Industry, Innovation and Science has commenced an inquiry into the current state of the Australian tyre industry, and any challenges and opportunities for the industry within the context of a circular economy. The inquiry was adopted on 5 November 2025, following a referral from the Minister for Industry and Innovation, and the Minister for Science.
- The Committee requests submissions responding to the [terms of reference](#) by **Friday, 23 January 2026**.
- To provide feedback to the LGAQ, please contact Tamarah Moore, Lead – Public Health and Waste Management via emailing tamarah_moore@lgaq.asn.au.

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Tamarah Moore, Lead – Public Health and Waste Management.

13. Tourism Update

Tourism Icons Investment Fund (TIIF)

- The TIIF is an \$80 million program designed to support the development of infrastructure, attractions and experiences that exceed expectations, create jobs and help more tourism-related businesses to grow.
- It will be delivered over four rounds with \$20 million available per round.
- Funding of up to \$5 million (ex GST) is available under Round 1 of the TIIF to eligible applicants and projects, and available funding is on a 1:1 co-contribution basis with applicants to contribute at least 50% of total eligible project costs (ex GST).
- Not-for-profit organisations and Queensland councils that provide a tourism service or experience are eligible to apply for funding under this program.

- Expressions of Interest (EOI) for Round 1 of the TIIF closed on 8 October 2025.
- Following assessment and shortlisting, eligible applicants with EOI registered projects that meet TIIF priorities may be invited to complete and submit a full business case application via the SmartyGrants portal by 8 December 2025.
- Further information about the TIIF can be found [here](#).

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Crystal Baker, Manager – Strategic Policy.

14. Environment and Climate Update

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act reforms – consultation open

- The Federal Government is proposing changes to reform Australia's national environmental laws, including the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). A summary of the proposed EPBC reforms can be found on the [DEECCW website](#).
- Proposed reforms are expected to align to recommendations of the [2020 Independent Review of the EPBC Act](#) (the Samuel Review).
- On 30 October 2025 the [Environment Protection Reform Bill 2025 and six related bills](#) were introduced to the Federal Parliament.
- To contribute to the LGAQ submission on the proposed bills, please send any comments through to [Cass Liney](#), Lead – Environment & Climate, by **Friday 28 November 2025**.
- The closing date for submissions made directly to the [Environment and Communications Legislation Committee](#) is 5 December 2025

Nature Repair market – consultation open

- The Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has released the [Protect and Conserve Consultation Paper](#) outlining proposed methods for Nature Repair Market projects.
- DCCEEW is seeking feedback on the design of the proposed method and will consider stakeholder feedback alongside expert advice to prepare a final proposed method.
- A public webinar will be held at 1:30pm AEDT on 27 November 2025 to provide more information on the proposed Protect and Conserve method. [Register here](#) to attend webinar.
- If your council has any feedback in relation to Nature Repair markets, please send comments through to [Cass Liney](#), Lead – Environment & Climate, by **Friday 5 December 2025**.
- The closing date for submissions made directly to the Department is 10pm on Monday, 15 December 2025.

Queensland bioregional planning – survey on early results

- The Department of Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI) has commenced bioregional planning in three locations, each with different focus industries:
 - Urban development in Potential Future Growth Areas (PFGAs) in south-eastern Queensland.
 - Wind farm developments in the Collinsville area in northern Queensland.
 - Minerals mining in the Julia Creek and Richmond area in north-western Queensland.
- DETSI are seeking feedback on methodology and results so far, in preparation for the draft bioregional plans for public consultation in 2026.
- The survey is quite technical in nature and builds on information gathered between July and October this year.
- The survey closes at 5pm, **Monday 1 December 2025**. Further information can be found on the [DETSI website](#).

LGAQ Contact for this matter: Cass Liney – Lead, Environment and Climate.

15. Biosecurity and NRM Update

Queensland Biosecurity Grants Program- Round 2

- The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) is intending to launch the next round of funding under the Queensland Biosecurity Grants Program before the end of 2025.
- Twelve grant applications across Queensland were [successful recipients of round one funding](#) including Scenic Rim Regional Council to deliver Biosecurity awareness workshops with their community as well as funding for LGAQ to deliver a biosecurity peacetime exercise in collaboration with the North West Regional Organisation of Councils.
- If you would like to receive updates please email Biosecurity.Capability@dpi.qld.gov.au or follow the [Biosecurity Queensland Facebook channel](#) which is used to promote these grants and a range of other initiatives.

Have your say: Sunset clause review of Queensland's Biosecurity Regulation

- The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) is reviewing Queensland's *Biosecurity Regulation 2016* as part of a required ten-year "sunset review" under the *Statutory Instruments Act 1992*.
- This process is aimed at ensuring the Regulation—supporting the *Biosecurity Act 2014*—remains relevant and effective.
- The LGAQ is seeking feedback from councils to help inform initial feedback to DPI on the Regulation to ensure it continues to support Queensland's biosecurity system.
- If your council has any issues or concerns with the *Biosecurity Regulation 2016*, please complete this [survey](#) or email [Byron Kearns](#), Lead – Biosecurity & NRM by **Tuesday 2 December 2025**.

LGAQ Contact for these matters: Byron Kearns – Lead, Biosecurity and NRM.

16. Energy Update

Community Benefits Agreements

- Since the commencement of the Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) framework through amendments to the *Planning Act 2016* on 18 July 2025, development proponents have already started engagement with councils for renewable energy projects.
- The State Government has produced some guidance material, however, there remains a lack of clarity and certainty regarding the implementation of these changes.
- In addition, councils without in-house legal expertise have raised concerns regarding how CBAs should be prepared, what they should include and how they should be negotiated.
- To assist councils, the LGAQ has engaged King & Company to develop an easy-to-use template CBA with guidance notes that can be adopted by councils to support the new framework.
- King & Company are working with the LGAQ and councils that have experience working with energy proponents to assist in the development of the template and supporting materials.
- The LGAQ also facilitated fortnightly meetings with interested local government officers, to support councils' adoption of the new framework. A range of planning, economic development and community services officers have attended these meetings to share lessons, ask questions, and alert the LGAQ to concerns.
- A FAQs list has been developed from questions asked through this forum and the LGAQ is coordinating the responses with King & Company and the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning for inclusion in the template.
- King & Company will work with a Queensland council to pilot the template using a live example.
- A draft has been provided to the LGAQ and shared for feedback with council officers.
- The LGAQ briefed the Energy and Resources Advisory Group on 3 October 2025 on the progress of this project and shared the draft for their input by 31 October 2025.

- The LGAQ Policy Executive was briefed and provided with the draft at their meeting on 19 October 2025.
- King & Co. presented at the Resource Councils Segment Session at the LGAQ Annual Conference on 20 October 2025.
- King & Co and the LGAQ are currently working through feedback received from councils and State Government before finalising the template and supporting materials for broader distribution.

LGAQ Energy and Resources Advisory Group

- At the June 2025 LGAQ Policy Executive meeting, PE members were briefed on and noted the proposed establishment of the Energy and Resources Advisory Group.
- On 19 August 2025, the LGAQ sent a targeted expression of interest for the Energy and Resources Advisory Group to councils most impacted by the resources and energy sector.
- This targeted approach focuses on councils that are experienced in the resources sector or have emerging renewable or energy hubs. This will ensure that representatives will be highly engaged, experienced and have specialised expertise in the energy and resource sector.
- The first LGAQ Energy and Resources Advisory Group was held on 3 October 2025, with the following key outcomes:
 - Mayor Kelly Vea Veal, Isaac Regional Council was nominated as Chair of the Advisory Group.
 - The group heard about the LGAQ's work program and discussed the Resources Segment Session at the LGAQ Annual Conference.
 - Members raised their biggest issues, with key themes around the energy transition and increased demands on housing, roads and water.
 - The Communique is currently being drafted and pending review by members it will be uploaded to Congruent.

LGAQ Contact for these matters: Robert Chow – Lead, Resources and Energy.

17. Funded Projects Update

Advocating for funding to help achieve members' priorities is core business for the LGAQ and we strive to be a trusted partner with other levels of government to help develop, manage, and deliver outcomes that matter to councils. Currently, the Advocate Funded Projects team has five projects in operation. The table below provides a snapshot of the progress and highlights of the relevant projects.

Project Name	Total Funding	Overall Progress	Key Highlights
Domestic and Family Violence Officer 2024-2026	\$700K	On Track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LGAQ has secured additional funding to extend the project until 2026 to align with the Queensland Government's Fourth Action Plan. Cred Consulting has been engaged to support work for a Needs Analysis to identify key areas of support that align with specific place-based requirements. Free DFV Prevention Training is now being offered to council representatives. Training will be held in-person across seven regions and two online. Limited places are available. To register visit Congruent. The LGAQ Community of Interest - Community Development Officers meeting was held on Wednesday 12 November 2025. The LGAQ's 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based violence social campaign will begin on the 25 November 2025. Councils are encouraged to share on their social media platforms. The Local Government DFV Prevention Champions Network meeting was held on Thursday 2 October 2025. <p><i>Key Contact: Jo Dawson (jo_dawson@lgaq.asn.au)</i></p>
Queensland Council Energy Partnerships Program 2024-2026	\$1.2M	On Track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In May 2024, the Queensland Government entered into a partnership arrangement with the LGAQ to deliver the Queensland Council Energy Partnerships Program (QCEP), aiming to provide support to eligible councils to engage on large-scale renewable energy matters and meet the challenges of the energy transition. Four pilot projects were funded. For their pilot project, Cairns Regional Council is organising a business forum on 27 February 2026, aimed to provide local businesses in the FNQ region with tips on opportunities arising from renewable energy and related developments. Every 6 months the QCEP program gathers councils' insights on the current challenges and opportunities they face during the energy transition. The second round of the survey closed in August, and results are available on Congruent. Round 3 of the survey will open on 1 December and will close early February.

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Project Name	Total Funding	Overall Progress	Key Highlights
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LGAQ recognises the changing landscape and the need for additional support for councils in the energy space. As such the LGAQ will be seeking further funding to expand program activities post April 2026 when the current funding ends. <p><i>Key Contact: Hugo van Roermund</i> (hugo_vanroermund@lgaq.asn.au)</p>
Queensland Climate Resilient Councils 2024 - 2026	\$2M	On Track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On Thursday 25th September the QCRC Climate Resilience Expert Panel was launched by the LGAQ in partnership with the Queensland Government. This panel provides all councils with access to a range of expertise to support project and planning work for climate risk and resilience. The Far North Queensland Climate Alliance has secured \$50,000 to continue to provide a collaboration platform for councils to coordinate efforts in climate mitigation and adaption. Recent works include the expansion of the FNQ Rivers to Reef Climate Action Plan and delivery of a Climate Risk Assessment Tools Workshop with Queensland Treasury. The LGAQ will also be delivering key activities that are being funded under the extension agreement with the Queensland Treasury: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Q CRC Climate Risk Management Framework to align with Federal guidance. Development of the First Nations Climate Risk and Resilience Strategy for all 17 First Nations Councils. <p><i>Key Contact: Karla Vaughan</i> (karla_vaughan@lgaq.asn.au)</p>
Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program 2020-2026	\$1.22 M per year	On Track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program (QWRAP) is a Queensland Government funded program delivered collaboratively with the LGAQ and the qldwater to support local government in the sustainable delivery of essential water and sewerage services in regional Queensland. Early in 2025 the FNQROC delivered their \$200,00.00 QWRAP project with the development of the FNQ Regional Water Capability Plan. This plan outlines a series of scalable, strategic initiatives and actions across short-, medium-, and long-term timeframes, providing a clear roadmap for sustained capability building. The next funding round for QWRAP will open on 8 December 2025 and will close on 30 January 2026.

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Project Name	Total Funding	Overall Progress	Key Highlights
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The QWRAP evaluation research project, funded by DLGWV is progressing to the next stage, with Daniel Field commencing stakeholder engagements. <p><i>Key Contact: Jennifer Hartwig</i> (jennifer_hartwig@lgaq.asn.au)</p>
QCoast2100 2015-2027	\$26.23M	On Track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Round 4 projects were announced in June 2025 by the Honourable Andrew Powell. FNQROC projects that are currently underway include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Cassowary Coast Regional Council Sand nourishment</i> <i>Hinchinbrook Shire Council Lucinda Beach Nourishment and Johnson Park Rockwall project</i> <i>Cassowary Coast Regional Council is part of the Coastal Climate Adaptation Taskforce (CCAT) – Shoreline Benchmarking & Monitoring Project</i> <i>Douglas Shire Council Shoreline Erosion Management Plan Development</i> A full list of approved projects can be found here. <p><i>Key Contact: Emma Schofield</i> (emma_schofield@lgaq.asn.au)</p>

18. LGAQ Submissions Update

Recent Submissions

- *Code for Accepted Development - Tidal works or work completed or partially in a coastal management district (5 August 2025)*
- *Queensland Productivity Commission Interim Report – Construction Productivity Inquiry (28 August 2025)*
- *Great Artisan Basin and Other Regional Aquifers (GABORA) Water Plan (30 August 2025)*
- *Infection Control Guidelines for Personal Appearance Services Consultation Draft (5 September 2025)*
- *A Fresh Start for Private Protected Areas Discussion Paper (12 September 2025)*
- *Australian Productivity Commission Interim Report - Investing in cheaper, cleaner energy and the net zero transformation (15 September 2025)*
- *Draft Investigator's Manual: Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008 (15 September 2025)*
- *Inquiry into Heavy Vehicle National Law Amendment Bill 2025 (16 September 2025)*
- *Review of the Crime and Corruption Commission's activities (3 October 2025)*
- *Queensland social and affordable housing design (8 October 2025)*
- *Implementing Australia's Strategy for Nature - Discussion Paper (15 October 2025)*
- *Net Zero Fund: Proposed Design (15 October 2025)*
- *Exposure Draft Bill - Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 (17 October 2025)*
- *Telecommunications Legislation Amendment (Universal Service Obligation) Bill 2025 (19 October 2025)*
- *Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 (28 October 2025)*
- *Energy Roadmap Amendment Bill 2025 (30 October 2025)*
- *Mandating cash acceptance – exposure draft regulations (31 October 2025)*
- *Regulatory Impact Analysis to reduce default speed limits outside of built-up areas (10 November 2025)*
- *Terrorism and Cyclone Insurance Act 2003 review (11 November 2025)*
- *Draft Reef 2050 Catchment Water Quality Strategy (19 November 2025)*
- *National Road Safety Strategy (25 November 2025)*
- *Evaluation of amendments to the Native Title Act 1993 made by the Native Title Legislation Amendment Act 2021 (28 November 2025)*

Upcoming Submissions

- *Environment Protection Reform Bill 2025 and six related Bills (5 December 2025)*
- *Queensland Freight Delivery Plan (19 December 2025)*
- *Environmental Protection (Efficiency and Streamlining) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 (TBC)*
- *Inquiry into the current state of the Australian tyre industry, and any challenges and opportunities for the industry within the context of a circular economy (23 January 2026)*
- *Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act review 2025-26 (31 January 2026)*
- *State and Federal Government Budget Submissions (31 January 2026)*
- *Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability (3 February 2026)*