



**BOARD MEETING
OF
FNQ Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC)
No. 176th**

**Thursday 5th March 2026,
10.30am to 2.00pm**

Cairns Regional Council

Microsoft Teams meeting

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Agenda

1. WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

2. APOLOGIES

Mr Peter Franks, CEO	Mareeba Shire Regional Council
Ms Jacqui Cresswell, CEO	Croydon Shire Council

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Lainie Poon, CEO, RDA Tropical North

- 3.1.1 RDA will present on the Tropical Economic Development Strategy (TEDS)

(20m)

3.2 Prof. Simon Biggs, Vice President, JCU

- 3.2.1 Prof Biggs will provide an update on medical training places and the Cairns Tropical Enterprise Centre (CTECT)

(20m)

3.3 Lucy Abbott, LGAQ, Lead Intergovernmental Relations (LGAQ)

- 3.3.1 LGAQ will provide an overview of LGAQ's recent activities as per the Briefing Note circulated prior to the meeting.

(10m)

4. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

4.1 Confirmation of Minutes of the 175th Far North Qld Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) Board meeting held on Tuesday 2 December 2025

Pages 0001 to 0014

Recommendation:

That the FNQROC Board moves the minutes of the 175th FNQROC Board meeting held on Tuesday 2 December 2025 to be confirmed and adopted.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1 Action items from 2 December 2025 FNQROC Board Meeting

Meeting	Action	Responsible person
3255c	When the State and Federal sitting dates have been published for 2026, calendar invites are to be sent to Mayors ASAP for State delegation first half of 2026 and Federal delegation in August 2026.	Darlene Irvine, CEO
Completed – invitations sent: State delegation 21-23 April 2026, Federal Delegation 10 – 13 August 2026		
3272	Mr Benton Wecker will follow up on the State Government directory link through the LGAQ website.	LGAQ
Completed – LGAQ advised that there are no plans to reinstate the directory link due to IT security and cybersecurity requirements of Queensland departments and State Government’s public service directory (GovNet) is not regularly maintained. Recommendation to contact LGAQ for any contact information.		
3275	FNQROC to invite RDA TN to FNQROC Board Meeting to discuss review of TEDS, ongoing consultation with councils and what is their role/focus.	Darlene Irvine, CEO
Completed		
3277.1	FNQROC CEO to clarify why housing as a term has been chosen over dwelling in our draft submission on the FNQ Regional Plan.	Darlene Irvine, CEO
Completed – 4 th December – dwelling has been selected to be consistent with the Regulation		
3277.2	FNQROC CEO to formalise the draft Delegation Brief and share with the Board.	Darlene Irvine, CEO
Completed		
3280	FNQROC to share AICD courses with the Board with those interested to contact Scott Osman – CEO Douglas Shire Council	Darlene Irvine, CEO
Completed - 4 th December		

6. BOARD REPORTS (WITH NOTICE)

6.1 B119 - Budget and Operations Report

Pages 0015 to 0024

Recommendation:

That the FNQROC Board adopts:

1. Operational Plan 2026 - 2027
2. FNQROC Operational Budget with:
 - a. Member Council contribution for the 2026/2027 financial year being:
 - a) Cairns Regional Council - \$118,700
 - b) Cassowary Coast Regional Council - \$87,906
 - c) Cook Shire Council - \$52,114
 - d) Croydon Shire Council - \$20,738
 - e) Douglas Shire Council - \$63,659
 - f) Etheridge Shire Council - \$21,378
 - g) Hinchinbrook Shire Council - \$35,987
 - h) Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council - \$21,834
 - i) Mareeba Shire Council - \$78,964
 - j) Tablelands Regional Council - \$84,042
 - k) Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council - \$20,781
 - l) Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council - \$24,083
 - b. Regional Road and Transport contribution remaining at 2.75% of council funding received, and
 - c. Croydon Shire Council, Etheridge Shire Council, Hinchinbrook Shire Council, Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council, Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council and Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council contribute 20% of any direct savings realised through their involvement in regional procurement activities, and
 - d. Councils outside the FNQROC boundary contribute 30% of direct savings realised through their involvement in FNQROC procurement activities.

6.2 B120 - Regional Road Investment Strategy

Pages 00025 to 0027

Recommendation:

That:

1. The Regional Road Investment Strategy is updated,
2. FNQROC contributes 50% of the costs up to a maximum of \$75,000 from reserves.

7. POLICIES FOR REVIEW

7.1 Reviewed Policy No 10 – Training

Page 0028

Recommendation:

That the FNQROC Board moves to adopt the amended Policy No. 10 – Training.

7.2 Administration Instruction – Vehicle Provided to FNQROC under lease from Cairns Regional Council

Pages 0029 to 0030

Recommendation:

That the FNQROC Board:

1. moves to rescind Policy No. 1 – Use of FNQROC Vehicle; and
2. moves to adopt Administration Instruction – Vehicle Provided to FNQROC under lease from Cairns Regional Council.

8. DISCUSSION TOPIC

Nil.

9. FINANCIAL REPORTS

9.1 Financial Report Year to date

9.1.1 Profit & Loss Statement 1 July 2025 – 17 February 2026

9.1.2 Balance Sheet as of 17 February 2026

Pages 0031 to 0034

Recommendation:

That the FNQROC Board adopts the Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet reports for the period 1 July 2025 to 17 February 2026.

10. Information for the Board

10.1 FNQ Regional Plan Update

10.1.1 CEO to provide a verbal update.

10.2 State Delegation – April 2026

10.2.1 CEO to provide verbal update

10.3 Incoming / Outgoing Correspondence

10.3.1 Incoming

02/02/2026 - the Hon Kristy McBain re R&R-SEZ

10.3.2 Outgoing

Nil

Page 0035 to 0036

10.4 CEO Report

To be taken as read - discussion only if clarification is needed or CEO needs to highlight.

Pages 0037 to 0049

10.4.1 Minutes of FNQROC Advisory Committees:

- **FNQROC Regional Roads and Transport Technical Committee #143 – 29 January 2026**
Minutes – [available on website](#)
Next Meeting – Friday 13 March 2026
- **FNQROC Regional Mountain Bike Steering Committee #5 – 13 February 2026**
Minutes – will be available on website
Next Meeting – Friday 26 June 2026
- **FNQROC Regional Waste Management Plan Technical Committee #6 – 12 December 2025**
Minutes – [available on website](#)
Next Meeting – Thursday 26 March 2026
- **FNQROC Animal Management Technical Committee #24 – 6 February 2026**
Minutes – [available on website](#)
Next Meeting – Friday 19 June 2026
- **FNQ Regional Water Alliance #45 – 20 February 2026**

Minutes – will be available on website
Next Meeting – Thursday 20 August 2026

- **FNQROC Climate Resilience Technical Committee #11** – 30 January 2026
Minutes – [available on website](#)
Next Meeting – Friday 27 March 2026

10.4.2 Minutes of Confidential Meetings:

- **FNQROC Bitumen Reseal Contract Meeting #3 & #4** – 9 December 2025 & 17 February 2026
Minutes – *available on request*
Next Meeting – TBA
- **FNQROC Regional Collection and Beneficial Reuse of Biosolids – 5 February 2026**
Minutes – *available on request*
Next Meeting – TBA
- **FNQROC Regional Collection and Disposal of Ferrous Metal, non-Ferrous Metals and Used Lead Acid Batteries – Friday 6 February 2026**
Minutes – *available on request*
Next Meeting – TBA
- **FNQROC Bitumen Reseal Contract Meeting – 17 February 2026**
Minutes – *available on request*
Next Meeting – TBA
- **FNQROC Sewer Relining Contract Meeting – 18 February 2026**
Minutes – *available on request*
Next Meeting – TBA
- **FNQROC Regional Procurement Advisory Committee #49** – 20 February 2026
Minutes – *available on request*
Next Meeting – Friday 15 May 2026

11. GENERAL BUSINESS

11.1 Department of Housing Issues – CCRC overview attached

Pages 0050 to 0057

12. MEETING CLOSE AND NEXT MEETING

12.1 Next Meeting

Date & Time Thursday 7 May 2026 – 10.30am

Venue Cairns Regional Council

Minutes of the 175th FNQROC Board Meeting

Meeting No	175
Meeting Name	FNQROC Ordinary Board Meeting
Date	2 December 2025
Time	10.30pm
Venue	Cairns Regional Council

REPRESENTATIVES

CHAIR

Cr Angela Toppin AM, Mayor	Mareeba Shire Council
Cr Barry Hughes, Mayor	Etheridge Shire Council
Cr Teresa Millwood, Mayor	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Cr Lisa Scomazzon, Mayor	Douglas Shire Council
Cr Amy Eden, Mayor	Cairns Regional Council
Cr Robyn Holmes, Mayor	Cook Shire Council
Cr Trevor Pickering	Croydon Shire Council
Cr Alister Gibson, Mayor	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Cr Daryl Sexton, Mayor	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council
Cr Dave Bilney, Deputy Mayor	Tablelands Regional Council

CEO'S

Mr Brian Joiner, CEO	Cook Shire Council
Mr Peter Franks, CEO	Mareeba Shire Council
Dr Nikola Stepanov, CEO	Tablelands Regional Council
Mr Scott Osman, CEO	Douglas Shire Council
Mr Ken Gouldthorp, CEO	Cairns Regional Council
Ms Jacqui Cresswell, CEO	Croydon Shire Council
Mr Andrew Graffen, CEO (online)	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Mr Ken Timms	Etheridge Shire Council
Mr Michael Miller, CEO	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

OBSERVERS

Cr Matthew Tickner	Division 2, Cairns Regional Council
Mr Benton Wecker	Lead Intergovernmental Relations LGAQ
Ms Tamarah Moore	Lead, Public Health and Waste Management LGAQ

Emily Reid
Mr Terry James MP

Region Manager, Department of Local
Government, Water and Volunteers
Member for Mulgrave

FNQROC STAFF

Ms Darlene Irvine	Chief Executive Officer
Ms Amanda Hancock	Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator
Ms Liz Wakelin	Executive Support Officer
Ms Bhakti Devi	Regional Waste Management Plan Coordinator
Mr Travis Sydes	Regional Natural Asset Management and Sustainability Coordinator
Ms Maria Anselmo	Climate Resilience Coordinator
Ms Ieva Pradal	Regional Procurement Coordinator

3270. MEETING OPEN AND WELCOME

The meeting commenced at 10.26pm

The Chair welcomed everyone to the last meeting for 2025 and acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we met and paid respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

The Chair also welcomed Mr Michael Miller, the new CEO for Yarrabah Aboriginal Council.

Mayor Toppin also thanked the CEO and staff for their efforts during the year.

3271. APOLOGIES

Cr Ramon Jayo, Mayor	Hinchinbrook Shire Council
Cr Mary Brown, Deputy Mayor	Hinchinbrook Shire Council
Cr Rod Marti, Mayor	Tablelands Regional Council
Mr Graham King, CEO	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Mr Lew Rojahn, A/CEO	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
Cr Bruce Gibson	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council

3272. BOARD PRESENTATIONS

3272.1 Presentation from Leanne Erakovic, CEO Australian Banana Growers Council

Presentation provided with Minutes.

Key Points;

- DAFF have allocated the resources to move into the next phases re Philippines' request to supply bananas to Australia
- Australia does not have a supply and demand problem

- ABGC have invited DAFFS technical team to come to FNQ to understand the biosecurity standards, practices and how the region works, before they go to the Philippines.
- DAFF advised that they are working on an issues paper to provide more info about their process – at this stage, DAFF have no confirmed date of release, but the understanding is that there will be approximately 60 days to respond to the draft report.
- ABGC have made a targeted effort to build relationships over the past three years and are committed to advocating for the Australian banana industry, it is critical that there is an understanding across what the industry does. There is incredible public support, which is crucial for the work in the coming months.

Questions from the floor;

- Ms Nikola Stepanov enquired if there is an expectation that DAFF would only accept banana imports from regions where no disease is evident, and how are the diseases spread?

Ms Erakovic advised that diseases are prevalent across the Philippines. Moko is a bacteria found in the fruit itself and rots the fruit – it would cost an estimated \$134M per year to contain. Diseases can be spread through the soil, water movement and insects. There is no spraying regime which can fix the problem. In the Philippines, areas are farmed until they no longer can be, then they move onto another area.

ABGC are planning to release a Spotlight on Diseases paper by end of December, providing and in-depth article. The paper will be available online and in hard copy.

The Chair acknowledged Emily Reid joining the meeting.

3272.2 Benton Wecker LGAQ, Lead Intergovernmental Relations (LGAQ)

The Chair noted the Policy Executive Meeting held prior to LGAQ.

Key points:

- Inconsistency to freight subsidies, reflecting on cost of goods
- The Cemeteries investigation continues – extensive research has been done, including models of non-permanent sites
- State campaign on behalf of members
- The Cost Shifting Survey

From the floor:

- It was noted that there is ongoing public confusion around Council responsibilities - there is a campaign to highlight the work that Councils do and what is State/Federal responsibility.
- Advocacy is often misinterpreted as responsibilities by the community, clear guidelines are needed as to who the community should contact in particular circumstances.
- Councils identified they find it difficult to ascertain who to talk to in the state department.

Ms Darlene Irvine noted that in previous years, there was a link to the State Government directory within the LGAQ website which was an effective resource to find out the best contacts, but it is no longer available.

3272.2 ACTION - Mr Benton Wecker will follow up on the State Government directory link through the LGAQ website.

Mr Wecker gave an overview of the Briefing Report circulated prior to the meeting.

Additional points;

- The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) Enviromon product will no longer be accessible effective June 2026 – it is noted that this will be an issue for Council’s disaster management processes. The LGAQ have worked closely with Minister Leahy and met with Minister Kirsty McBain in Canberra to discuss the impacts to Councils. LGAQ will meet with BOM CEO in a couple of weeks and will be pushing hard to retain free live access to Onerain for councils. Request for Councils to reach out with feedback, if they have already switched to the new system, Onerain.
- Another submission re cost shifting and financial sustainability
- State and Federal budgets are coming up –campaign on TIDS receiving up to \$100 million per annum – continuing to put out videos and information services
- Some changes in the Empowering Councils Bill which have not been drawn from member feedback – one being that Councillors must resign if they run for State Parliament. This has been put out to members to get a contemporary view to accurately reflect members position on the matter.

From the floor:

- Discussion re:
 - BOM
 - Biosecurity Costs
 - DRFA – delay in funding release
 - Clarity re SES over to Police
- Cr Teresa Millwood noted that she would like to see the cost shifting report expanded, not just about funding for tasks shifted to councils, but also councils handing back the responsibilities which they’ve taken on from the State.
- Cr Barry Hughes highlighted the impacts of floods on major freight infrastructure from Cook, Mareeba, Etheridge, Croydon, river systems and emphasised the need for strong leadership by LGAQ to push back on the BOM.

Mr Wecker assured the Board that it is a high priority and feedback will be provided once the meeting with the BOM CEO has taken place.

- Dr Nikola Stepanov – councils want to know costs and asked for those not currently registered users of Enviromon, can they still access the program?
- Cr Robyn Holmes questioned if consideration could be given to review the allocation of disaster relief funding being provided via independent groups – can the funds be

issued directly through Councils so that they receive the full amount and are able to coordinate recovery on the ground.

Mr Wecker confirmed that all works within the remit of council should be funded directly.

- Cr Teresa Millwood noted the importance of the timeliness of issuing disaster relief funding and providing Councils with the ability to use the money – in particular, releasing funds retrospectively, when recovery works have already been carried out.

3273. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

MOVED: Cr Lisa Scomazzon

SECONDED: Cr Teresa Millwood

That the Board:

Moves the minutes of the 174th FNQROC Board meeting held on Thursday 2 October 2025 to be confirmed and adopted.

CARRIED

3274. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Action items from 2 October 2025 FNQROC Ordinary Board Meeting

Meeting	Action	Responsible person
3223b (Dec 2024)	To enable FNQROC endorsement of the TNQ Economic Development Strategy (TEDS), the CEO is to work with the Economic Development Technical Committee to review and provide recommended amendments to RDA TN. Once completed to the satisfaction of the Technical Committee the FNQROC Board will review and endorse. Comments provided to RDA TN 4 June 2025 – awaiting response from RDA TN	Darlene Irvine, CEO and RDA TN
STATUS	Completed - See Item 6.1	
3238c (June 2025)	FNQROC CEO to bring forward a recommendation to the FNQROC Board on progressing the asset criticality assessment.	Darlene Irvine, CEO
STATUS	Completed - See Item 6.3	
3255c	When the State and Federal sitting dates have been published for 2026, calendar invites are to be sent to Mayors ASAP for State delegation first half of 2026 and Federal delegation in August 2026. On hold. FNQROC Board meetings will be in Brisbane or Canberra if delegations fall on the same projected date.	Darlene Irvine, CEO

STATUS	Ongoing - 2026 sitting dates yet to be announced. DI Proposed 11-13 August with FNQROC Board Meeting during the mayoral delegation. Go to March for State delegation - agreed	
3262a	FNQROC to provide LED rollout data projection on smaller areas. e.g. Silkwood, Mission Beach and El Arish	Darlene Irvine, CEO
STATUS	Complete – councils to contact maria with asset numbers and she will be able to get this information for you.	
3262b	FNQROC to follow up if there will be a tariff and charge amendment to councils, following completion of LED Replacement Program. DI to send out spreadsheet with Minutes	Darlene Irvine, CEO
STATUS	Completed - Yes there will be and the change differs depending on asset ownership. A detailed explanation will be shared with councils.	
3262c	Can Ergon let councils know when they have transitioned streetlights to LED so councils can inform their communities?	Darlene Irvine, CEO
STATUS	Completed - Contact details for Fiona Wright will be shared with member councils. Fiona can arrange their access to LightMap which is a program the Public Lighting team manage for the Ergon Network. There is then a visual and way of mapping the lights location and type.	
3265	The CEO to draft a letter from FNQROC to the Department seeking the release of the Draft FNQ Regional Plan for public consultation.	Darlene Irvine, CEO
STATUS	Completed	
3266a	FNQROC to invite ABGC to speak at the next meeting.	Darlene Irvine, CEO
STATUS	Completed	

3275. BOARD REPORTS

3275.1 B116 – RDA Tropical Economic Development Strategy (TEDS)

Ms Irvine provided an overview of the report, advising that:

- This is completion of the action from December 2024 for the Economic Development Technical Committee to work with Darlene to draft changes to ensure the TEDS reflected priorities.
- The process was undertaken at the same time as the FNQ Regional Plan review so that the TEDS reflected this.
- The Economic Development Technical Committee supported the attached draft.

- The TEDS is a federal requirement of each of the RDA's and when she returned from a year's leave one of the issues raised was that the TEDS didn't reflect local government priorities and it would be advantageous if our priorities are included.
- Ms Irvine advised that she has been actively working with and sought feedback from each Councils' Economic Development Officers, who have provided data.

From the floor:

- Concerns raised about the RDA TN consultation process with Councils,
- Questions were raised about RDA TN mandate – what is their role?
- Clarity is required on what is the role of RDA, where should/is their focus.
- Want to see collaboration with TCICA
- Cook – 7 communities not 4.
- Cr Amy Eden noted that such reports have merit on a Federal level for reading by advisors and bureaucrats, and that they tie in with white paper review.
- The Chair reiterated the value in collaborating on the strategy as it carries weight in Federal Government.

Ms Irvine advised that there is no deadline to update the document, it is an existing document, and she will continue to work with RDA TN to advise on the items which need to be updated to reflect a truly collaborative document for Board endorsement.

- Cr Barry Hughes suggested RDA TN be invited to a FNQROC Board meeting.

3275 ACTION: FNQROC to invite RDA TN to FNQROC Board Meeting to discuss review of TEDS, ongoing consultation with councils and what is their role/focus.

3275.2 B117 – Animal Management Options Paper

Mr Travis Sydes gave an overview of the report, proposing an options paper for a deeper dive into transforming how we currently manage domestic animals.

Key Points:

- Stepping away from compliance only, to a more human centred approach.
- Need to respond to existing processes – intervention – fencing – re-fencing – animal surrendering – animal adoption
- Best practice is needed to assist council's currently swamped and working reactively – creating a strategic response to set them up to work proactively.
- Onus is on local government to initiate necessary change within the community.
- Offer more info to community about what future decisions in animal management might be
- Lots of great examples globally – rarely small steps, rather large steps have a bigger impact

- Reduce animal management costs to councils
- Improve recognition of roles and responsibilities
- To be developed in conjunction with RSPCA, LGAQ and remote and rural indigenous communities.

From the floor;

Ms Nikola Stepanov declared a potential COI, as a voluntary Board member of RSPCA.

- There was discussion around the benefits to each member councils.

Mr Sydes noted that it depends on the nature of interaction with community on registering animals – possibly different set up in terms of animal ownership, and having work animals – more advantage for councils who are experiencing animal management issues, particularly seeing an increase in cat ownership but noted that there is cross over between wandering stock, bio security and domesticated cats.

MOVED: Cr Dave Bilney

SECONDED: Cr Teresa Millwood

That the Board:

Allocate \$35,000 from reserves to engage a suitably qualified consultancy to develop an *Animal Management Options Paper*.

CARRIED

3275.3 B118 – Water & Wastewater Asset Criticality Assessment – Options Analysis

Amanda Hancock gave an overview of the paper.

Key points:

- FNQ Water Alliance were asked to initiate a water asset criticality assessment, and invited the consultant who did the SWQROC assessment to the Water Alliance meeting.
- All councils are in different stages but desk top analysis of what we've got would be beneficial
- The project is significant and the costs to undertake the SWQROC are significant – SWQROC ~\$1.2million. Intention is to look at the options to stage a similar project.
- Funding application just requires a motion from the Board to apply for funding.

MOVED: Cr Barry Hughes

SECONDED: Cr Amy Eden

That the Board:

Approves an application to the Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program (QWRAP) for funding up to \$50,000 to undertake an options analysis to progress the regional asset criticality assessment as recommended by the FNQ Water Alliance.

3276. FINANCIAL REPORTS

Financial Report Year to date

MOVED: Cr Trevor Pickering

SECONDED: Cr Barry Hughes

That the Board:

Adopts the Profit and loss and Balance Sheet reports for the period 1 July 2025 to 26 November 2025.

CARRIED

3277. INFORMATION FOR THE BOARD

3277.1 FNQ Regional Plan Update

FNQROC CEO provided a verbal update.

Key points:

- The Draft plan was released 12 November 2025 with submissions due 5 January 2026
- We raised the timeline for consultation however the Minister believed we have had a significant time with the draft plan before release.
- A draft submission was shared with Mayors and CEOs 28 November 2025
- Give the timeline, it was agreed at the last Planners meeting (25 November) that:
 - councils would cover local issues and FNQROC will take on regional view.
 - Where local and regional issues do not compete, the FNQROC CEO offered to include council issues in the regional submission where necessary.
- Due to council closedown, it is planned to submit the regional submission by 24th December.
- The Plan still effectively had the minimum 60 hectare rule in but we believe we can get the wording amended to take this out.
- The plan is light/silent on four key areas:
 - Kuranda Range Road (future proofing) infrastructure needs
 - Water
 - Digital Connectivity
 - Social community infrastructure, and
 - energy
- There was discussion and clarification around the changes which have been made to the Plan.

- Cr Amy Eden requested reference be included around the blue highway (shipping) and that the alternative to Trade Hub included the term 'Indo pacific' (Page 11).
- Dwelling vs housing was raised and why we chose housing. Dwelling has been used in numerous strategies. MS Irvine advised that she would get some clarity on that.

The Chair thanked the Mayors who were able to attend the Regional Plan launch event.

There was general discussion around effective methods for engaging the community to review the plan and provide feedback. One suggestion which had worked in other councils was to tell everyone that it's a secret and not to tell anyone.

3277.1 ACTION: FNQROC CEO to clarify why housing as a term has been chosen over dwelling in our draft submission on the FNQ Regional Plan.

3277.2 State Delegation

FNQROC CEO advised that the draft delegation briefing is underway, identifying issues such as:

- Remote & Rural Special Economic Zone (R&R-Sez)
- Commitment to commence Regional Growth Strategy
- Tourist Levy
- Public Transport
- Birthing in Cooktown
- Consultation on closing the gap service delivery
- Rates – State buildings and housing not rateable
- Impact of leasehold going to State Lands – losing ratable properties
- Waste in National Parks and the council cost impost.
- Transferring to State.

Other matters were requested for inclusion;

- Removing State charges from Rates Notices i.e. Fire Levy
- Fatigue management in regional and remote health services area
- Keeping kids in the region for schooling
- Country Road Connect

The Chair strongly encouraged Mayor's to attend the delegation as there is power in numbers.

Given the 2026 State sitting dates haven't been released as yet, it was believed that March would be a better month than February.

3277.2 ACTION: FNQROC CEO to formalise the draft Delegation Brief and share with the Board.

3277.3 Incoming / Outgoing Correspondence

3277.3.1 Incoming

3277.3.2 Outgoing

- Federal members we met with in October
- Michael Healy MP
- Bob Katter MP
- Shane Knuth MP
- David Kempton MP
- Robbie Katter MP
- Terry James MP
- Bree James MP
- Matt Smith MP
- Darling Downs and South West Queensland Council of Mayors
- North Queensland ROC
- Central Queensland ROC
- Greater Whitsunday Council of Mayors
- Remote Area Planning and Development Board
- North West Queensland ROC
- South West Queensland ROC
- Torres Cape Indigenous Council Alliance Inc.
- Wide Bay Burnett ROC

FNQROC CEO noted discussions around the Medicare Levy and encouraged everyone to reach out if they need anything to be added to R&R-SEZ

Cr Amy Eden noted that there had been discussions in Canberra about securing trades and services.

NOTED

3278. CEO REPORT

FNQROC CEO gave a brief update on the CEO report which was taken as read.

- Mayor Holmes asked about a number of the actions taken being associated with FNQ Regional Plan which didn't cover all councils.

Ms Irvine advised that the Draft FNQ Regional Plan was going to be the template for all reviewed regional plans going forward and she would assist those councils when their plans are reviewed.

NOTED

3279. FNQROC MEETINGS

3279.1 Minutes of FNQROC Advisory Committees: -

- **FNQROC Regional Roads and Transport Technical Committee #141** – 15 October 2025
Minutes – [available on website](#)
Next Meeting – 29 January 2026
- **FNQROC Regional Mountain Bike Steering Committee #4** – 17 October 2025
Minutes – [available on website](#)
Next Meeting – 13 February 2026
- **FNQROC Regional Waste Management Plan Technical Committee #7** - 23 October 2025
Minutes – *will be available on website*
Next Meeting – 12 December 2025
- **FNQROC Natural Asset Management Technical Committee #64** - 31 October 2025
Minutes – [available on website](#)
Next Meeting – 5 March 2026
- **FNQROC Animal Management Technical Committee #23** - 7 November 2025
Minutes – [available on website](#)
Next Meeting – 6 February 2026
- **FNQ Regional Water Alliance #44** – 7 November 2025
Minutes – [available on website](#)
Next Meeting – 20 February 2026
- **FNQROC Climate Resilience Technical Committee #10** – 14 November 2025
Minutes – *will be available on website*
Next Meeting – 30 January 2026
- **FNQ Regional Roads and Transport Technical Committee #142** – 14 November 2025
Minutes – [available on website](#)
Next Meeting – 29 January 2026
- **FNQROC Regional Planners Meeting #83** – 25 November 2025
Minutes – will be available on the website
Next Meeting - TBD

NOTED

3279.2 Minutes of Confidential Meetings

- **FNQROC Bitumen Reseal Contract Meeting #2** - 15 October 2025
Minutes – *available on request*
Next Meeting – 9 December 2025

- **FNQROC Sewer Relining + Sewer and Manhole Condition Assessment Meeting - 12 November 2025**
Minutes – *available on request*
Next Meeting – TBA
- **FNQROC 25/26 Sewer Relining Meeting #2 - 19 November 2025**
Minutes – *available on request*
Next Meeting – TBA
- **FNQROC Regional Procurement Advisory Committee #48 - 28 November 2025**
Minutes – *available on request*
Next Meeting – 20 February 2026

NOTED

3280. GENERAL BUSINESS

- Cr Robyn Holmes asked why Cook wasn't part of the Rural & Remote Compact which was raised with Minister Leahy at our 10am meeting – Minister Leahy advised she would get back to Mayor Holmes.
- FNQROC CEO called from suggestions for away Board meetings for 2026. It was agreed that the June Board Meeting will be hosted by Douglas Shire Council.
- Mr Scott Osman advised that he has been doing some work with the AICD who are delivering some bespoke sessions in Brisbane and can also deliver them in FNQ, depending on numbers (min 12 people max 25). Full course being delivered in Cairns in June at an approximately cost of \$8K.

3280 ACTION: FNQROC to share AICD courses with the Board with interested parties to respond to Scott Osman – CEO Douglas Shire Council.

3281. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 12th February 2026, 10.30am at Cairns Regional Council.

There being no further business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 12.30 pm.

.....
Cr Angela Toppin AM
FNQROC Chair

ATTACHMENT 1

Actions from Board Meeting held on 2 December 2025

Meeting	Action	Responsible person
3255c	When the State and Federal sitting dates have been published for 2026, calendar invites are to be sent to Mayors ASAP for State delegation first half of 2026 and Federal delegation in August 2026.	Darlene Irvine, CEO
Ongoing - 2026 sitting dates yet to be announced.		
DI Proposed 11-13 August with FNQROC Board Meeting during the mayoral delegation.		
Go to March for State delegation given we don't have February dates - agreed		
3272	Mr Benton Wecker will follow up on the State Government directory link through the LGAQ website.	LGAQ
3275	FNQROC to invite RDA TN to FNQROC Board Meeting to discuss review of TEDS, ongoing consultation with councils and what is their role/focus.	Darlene Irvine, CEO
3277.1	FNQROC CEO to clarify why housing as a term has been chosen over dwelling in our draft submission on the FNQ Regional Plan.	Darlene Irvine, CEO
Completed – 4 th December – dwelling has been selected to be consistent with the Regulation		
3277.2	FNQROC CEO to formalise the draft Delegation Brief and share with the Board.	Darlene Irvine, CEO
3280	FNQROC to share AICD courses with the Board with those interested to contact Scott Osman – CEO Douglas Shire Council	Darlene Irvine, CEO
Completed 4 th December		



FNQROC BOARD MEETING

5 MARCH 2026

B119

FNQROC BUDGET FOR 2026 – 2027

Darlene Irvine: #7796285

Recommendation:

That the FNQROC Board adopts:

1. *Operational Plan 2026 - 2027*
2. *FNQROC Operational Budget with:*
 - a. *Member Council contribution for the 2026/2027 financial year being:*
 - a) *Cairns Regional Council - \$118,700*
 - b) *Cassowary Coast Regional Council - \$87,906*
 - c) *Cook Shire Council - \$52,114*
 - d) *Croydon Shire Council - \$20,738*
 - e) *Douglas Shire Council - \$63,659*
 - f) *Etheridge Shire Council - \$21,378*
 - g) *Hinchinbrook Shire Council - \$35,987*
 - h) *Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council - \$21,834*
 - i) *Mareeba Shire Council - \$78,964*
 - j) *Tablelands Regional Council - \$84,042*
 - k) *Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council - \$20,781*
 - l) *Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council - \$24,083*
 - b. *Regional Road and Transport contribution remaining at 2.75% of council funding received, and*
 - c. *Croydon Shire Council, Etheridge Shire Council, Hinchinbrook Shire Council, Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council, Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council and Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council contribute 20% of any direct savings realised through their involvement in regional procurement activities, and*
 - d. *Councils outside the FNQROC boundary contribute 30% of direct savings realised through their involvement in FNQROC procurement activities.*

INTRODUCTION:

In accordance with the FNQROC Operational Guidelines, a budget and operational plan must be presented to members for consideration by March each year. With the shift in regular meeting dates, today's meeting (5 March) is the first opportunity to do so since our last meeting December 5 2025.

Operational Plan

The proposed Operational plan for 2026/27 is attached in detail as Appendix A and aligns with the Strategic Operational Plan adopted February 2023.

As a summary of the key deliverables:

- We will deliver coordinated State and federal advocacy, including at least one delegation to each level of government, supported by ongoing submissions and priority presentations.
- A full review of the Strategic Operational Plan
- Full Development Manual Review
- Across technical committees:
 - The Regional Animal Management Strategy
 - Natural Asset Management Strategy
 - Regional Mountain Bike Strategy
 - Deliver FNQ RRTG Capability agreement and action Plan
 - Deliver FNQ regional Water Capability Plan
 - Develop Regional Animal Management Options Paper
 - Annual report cards for animal management and natural assets
 - Maintenance of regional biosecurity mapping,
 - Development of a regional adventure trails working group
 - Delivery of the regional road treatment study
 - An updated Regional Road investment strategy
 - Regional asset criticality assessment
 - Coordinate SCADA standardisation
 - Progress regional trade waste management
 - Regional procurement training
 - Oversee regional leak detection program
 - Climate risk assessment
 - Decarbonisation action plan
 - Review climate action plan
 - Implementation of Phases 1 and 2 of the regional drought resilience Plan
 - Implement regional Waste management plan
 - Contribute to 2026 review of the SARA triggers and State Planning Policy
 - Implementation of the FNQ Regional Plan
 - Contribute to the development of the Cape York and Gulf Regional Plans

2026/27 Budget

Several components require Board direction to finalise the 2026-27 Budget. These elements should be considered collectively and include:

1. Member Council base contribution for 2026-2027,
2. Local Roads of Regional Significance (LRRS) contribution, and
3. Procurement Contributions.

1. Member council base contribution for 2026/27

Although operational expenses have increased, these costs have been largely offset by additional grant revenue, and removal of emergent delegation funds. As such, it is proposed that the base contribution methodology remains unchanged from 2020/21.

The 2020/21 methodology is:

- a) flat rate at \$20,360
- b) the population rate¹ remains at \$1.40 per person
- c) cap at \$93,700

2. LRRS contribution

It is recommended that the Regional Road and Transport Group contribution continue at 2.75% of funding received.

3. Councils Procurement contributions

It is recommended that current procurement contribution arrangements remain unchanged:

- \$25,000 for Cairns, Cassowary, Cook, Douglas, Mareeba and Tablelands Councils.
- Remaining member Councils: 20% of direct savings
- Non-member Councils contributing 30% of savings.

4. Excess Reserves

IN accordance with Resolution 1056 from the Annual General Meeting held 2 October 2025, the Board determined that no excess reserves exist.

OPTIONS:

- a. Approve the recommendation
- b. Amend the recommendation
- c. Request a review of options presented within the report.

¹ Based on <https://profile.id.com.au/fnqroc/population-estimate> as at 13 January 2026

CONSIDERATIONS:

Statutory:

- Under the *Local Government Act 2009* Council hold jurisdiction to ensure good government within their area.
- Under Section 4 (Resources) of the FNQROC Operational Guidelines, a Budget must be presented to the FNQROC Board for approval by March.

Financial:

The budget for 2026 – 2027 is estimated as follows:

Expenses	2026/27
Salaries + on costs for 5FTE	\$990,000
Reseal Program Supervisor (RPEQ)	\$65,000
FNQROC Delegation expenses	\$50,000
FNQROC Emergent delegations	
Vehicle leases and expenses	\$20,000
Stationery and office (including audit costs, Bank fees & Internet)	\$15,000
Mobile phones	\$6,055
Software Licences & Subscriptions (includes i.d)	\$30,000
Travel and accommodation	\$30,000
External meetings & Training	\$20,000
Board and Advisory Committee Meeting expenses	\$12,000
Chair Honorarium	\$10,000
Contingencies	\$2,127
Total expenses	\$1,250,182

Recommended Council contributions:

Council Contribution	2026/2027	Flat Procurement fee	Less Excess Reserves	Total Contribution (Excluding RRTG)
Cairns	\$93,700	\$25,000	-	\$118,700
Cassowary	\$62,906	\$25,000	-	\$87,906
Cook	\$27,114	\$25,000	-	\$52,114
Croydon	\$20,738		-	\$20,738
Douglas	\$38,659	\$25,000	-	\$63,659
Etheridge	\$21,378		-	\$21,378
Hinchinbrook	\$35,987		-	\$35,987
Hope Vale	\$21,834		-	\$21,834
Tablelands	\$59,042	\$25,000	-	\$84,042
Mareeba	\$53,964	\$25,000	-	\$78,964
Wujal Wujal	\$20,781		-	\$20,781
Yarrabah	\$24,083		-	\$24,083
	\$480,186	\$150,000		\$630,186

Funding	2026/2027
Road Alliance Funding	\$151,903
RRTG contribution 2.75%	\$167,093
QCRC	\$-
QWRAP	\$35,000
RDRP (accrued for 26/27)	\$70,000
Waste Contract	\$196,000
Total external Funding	\$619,996
Plus, Council contribution	\$630,186
TOTAL Funding	\$1,250,182

CONCLUSION:

Our intent remains to:

- a) Maintain a compact organisational structure that focuses solely on member council priorities,
- b) Remain agile and responsive to emerging issues identified by member Councils
- c) Pursue external funding to reduce the financial burden on member councils

The proposed operational plan and budget reflects these objectives.

Darlene Irvine
CEO

Appendix A: FNQROC Operational Plan 2026/2027

Advocacy

- Minimum of one State delegation
- Minimum one Federal Delegation
- State and Federal submissions as relevant to the priorities of the region
- Presentation of FNQROC priorities at relevant meetings/conferences/seminars
- Attendance at relevant meetings (local, State and Federally) as required to advance FNQROC priorities.

Strategic Operational Plan

- Review Strategic Operational Plan

Planning

- Regular meeting with FNQROC Planners
- Contribute to Review of the SARA triggers and State Planning Policy
- FNQ Regional Plan implementation
- Cape and Gulf Regional Plan development.

Animal Management Technical Committee

- Facilitate regional cat management taskforce for collaboration on key actions including delivery of 2026 Wet Tropics Cat Management Research Program workshop
- Implement Regional Animal Management Strategy.
 - Undertake Regional Animal Management Options Paper to inform Regional Animal Management Strategy.
 - Re-establish indicators and produce an annual report card.
 - Assist in disaster management capacity development across Councils.
- Conduct four Technical Committee meetings.

Natural Asset Management Advisory Committee

- Implement individual Councils' natural assets strategy and strategic asset management plan.
- Review and implement Council Biosecurity Plans.
- Implement and review the regional natural asset management strategy.

- Support local natural asset and biosecurity advisory committees and working groups.
- Re-establish indicators and produce an annual report card.
- Maintain regional biosecurity mapping project.
- Assist in disaster management capacity development across Councils.
- Contribute to the review of the Land Protection Fund methodology.
- Represent regional and local priorities on the State Oversight Group.
- Support Wet Tropics Healthy Waterways Partnership and Technical Working Group initiatives.
- Conduct four technical committee meetings.

Regional Mountain Bike Strategy Steering Committee

- Implement Regional Mountain Bike Strategy
 - Investigate whole-of-life trail maintenance approach.
 - Establish a Regional Adventure Trail Working Group.
 - Support partnerships between Councils, clubs, and state agencies to deliver strategy actions.
 - Support GIS and on-ground rollout and communication of trail upgrades and features.
 - Collaborate on the development of a regional destination marketing plan to develop and promote regional products, services and events.
- Advocate for the rollout of the mountain bike infrastructure plan.
- Conduct four steering committee meetings.
- Conduct two workshops and four meeting of Adventure Trails Working Group.

Regional Roads and Transport

- Conduct at least two RRTG meetings as per Roads Alliance Guidelines.
- Conduct at least four RRTG Technical Committee meetings.
- Develop and implement the FNQ RRTG Capability Agreement & Action Plan.
- Manage a four-year works program in the new PMT.
- Update the FNQ Regional Road Investment Strategy, including a review of the Heavy Vehicle Network and first/last-mile roads (excluding tourism roads) in collaboration with TMR.
- Organise and participate in the RRTG Technical Tour in September 2026 (Cassowary Coast Regional Council)
- Finalise delivery of the Regional Road Treatment Study

Water Alliance

- Conduct at least four Water Alliance meetings per year.
- Submit quarterly coordinator reports and an annual report to LGAQ.
- Continue implementation the FNQ Regional Water Capability Plan, including but not limited to the following actions;
 - Undertake a Regional Asset Criticality Assessment – Options Analysis and thereafter progress the Regional Asset Criticality Assessment in accordance with the agreed staging and scope.
 - Facilitate a SCADA sub-committee to work on developing regionally consistent SCADA Technical Standards and to identify other opportunities for regional collaboration.
 - Investigate opportunities to progress workforce based initiatives.
- Continue participation in the Regional Trade Waste Uplift Project (TWIG) with a view to implementing a Regional Trade Waste Environmental Management Plan.

Development Manual Review

- Conduct a full review of the Development Manual in 2026

Procurement

- Work with the Regional Procurement Technical Committee to promote and progress joint purchase and resource sharing initiatives.
- Conduct a minimum of four Procurement Technical Committee meetings.
- Maintain regular communication with government agencies (e.g., Local Buy) and provide feedback.
- Review and update the FNQROC Procurement document suite.
- Coordinate procurement and construction contract management training across the region.
- Facilitate identification and evaluation of new regional procurement opportunities.
- Undertake contract administration for existing regional contracts.
- Conduct contract reviews for expiring regional contracts:
 - Bitumen Reseal (30 June 2026)
 - Sewer Relining (30 June 2026)
 - Sodium Hypochlorite (31 May 2026)
 - Liquid Alum (31 May 2026)
- Oversee procurement and project delivery for FNQROC Regional Water Leak Detection Program.

Climate Resilience Technical Committee

- Continue implementation of the Rivers to Reef Climate Action Plan (2021-2026); including but not limited to the following actions (funding dependant);
 - Conducting a Regional Climate Risk Assessment (Corporate)
 - Developing a Regional Decarbonisation Action Plan
 - Developing Regional Framework for Local Natural Environment Disaster Preparedness Plan
 - Reviewing the Climate Action Plan
- Develop the FNQROC Climate Resilience Committee Action Plan (2026-203X).
- Oversee implementation of the Regional Drought Resilience Plan (Wet Tropics & Gulf Hinterland), including but not limited to:
 - Implementation of Phase 1 Funding to 30th November 2026, this includes receiving progress updates from delivery partners regarding;
 - Pilot Regional Water Leak Detection Program
 - Gulf Savannah NRM – Business and Community Drought Resilience Program
 - Implementation of Phase 2 Funding to 2029, this includes;
 - Recommending projects for implementation, and
 - Receiving progress updates from delivery partners.
 - Participate in Project Control Group and Regional Working Group meetings and report back at Technical Committee meetings.
- Conduct four Technical Committee meetings.
- Continue participation in LGAQ Queensland Climate Resilient Council Program
- Continue participating in Heat-Health Impact, Monitoring, Action and Communication Project Advisory Group meetings.

Regional Waste Management Plan Implementation

- Continue the facilitation of RWMP Implementation Plan
- Develop Regional Waste Education & Marketing activity schedule customized to member Councils and tools to support its delivery by Councils .
- Support Council applications for LGIS funding & any other grant funding to incentivise home composting.
- Explore funding to support piloting of Cooperative model for resource recovery starting with recovering fuels and other value products from end of life tyres
- Facilitating collaboration opportunities for enhancing kerbside commingled recycling within FNQROC member Councils
- Ongoing advocacy for:

- More accessible and equitable distribution of product stewardship & take back schemes into FNQROC member Council's region
- Product stewardship for white goods
- State policies & programs that enable local government in transitioning to circular economy.

	<p>FNQROC BOARD REPORT</p> <p>5 MARCH 2026</p>	<p>B120</p>
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REGIONAL ROAD INVESTMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

Staff name: Amanda Hancock (DM 7821690)

Recommendation:

That:

1. The Regional Road Investment Strategy is updated,
2. FNQROC contributes 50% of the costs up to a maximum of \$75,000 from reserves.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Regional Road Investment Strategy (RRIS), finalised in 2020, provides a prioritised, evidence-based framework to guide investment across more than 6,000km of State and local roads in Far North Queensland.

The RRIS also identifies key opportunities for increasing road freight productivity through removing both first/last mile barriers and increasing overall freight network connectivity. Not only does this generate economic benefits beyond FNQROC's boundaries, but it also provides better connections to remote communities that are heavily reliant on road freight.

It identified \$839 million over the next 20 years (excluding the range roads) was required with \$522 million needed to address immediate priority route deficiencies. It also identified that around 10% of the state controlled network and 56% of the local government roads will require rehabilitation or reconstruction over the next 20 years.

Since its completion, there has been significant investment, particularly through Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA), continued growth, increasing freight demand, and escalating impacts from extreme weather events. With limited funding available, investment must be targeted toward projects that deliver the highest economic, safety and resilience outcomes.

An update of the RRIS, undertaken in partnership with TMR, will ensure priorities are current and aligned with regional opportunities identified in the Draft FNQ Regional Plan 2025 and future Cape York and Gulf Regional Plans.

The estimated cost of the update is approximately \$150,000. It is proposed that 50% external funding be sought, with FNQROC contributing up to \$75,000 from reserves.

COMMENT:

In 2018, FNQROC engaged Jacobs to undertake a 20-year assessment of the regional road network. The RRIS:

- Identified Tourism, Heavy Vehicle, and First & Last Mile networks
- Identified structural (CAPEX) and fatigue (maintenance) deficiencies

- Prioritised where investment should occur based on regional benefit, and
- Put a value on tourism roads (the first time in Australia)

The RRIS has supported regional advocacy and provides a 10% scoring benefit under the TIDS Project Management Tool.

The key challenges the region continues to face:

- Limited funding
- Geography and climate
- Investment across jurisdictional boundaries
- Network safety
- Network efficiency and reliability
- Competing needs of road users
- Population growth and development
- Access to affordable transport options.

The RRTG Technical Committee at its meeting on 26 January 2026 recommended that the RRIS be reviewed to ensure its currently, particularly considering disaster recovery investment and regional plan reviews (FNQ, Cape and Gulf). The RRTG considered this recommendation at its meeting prior to the FNQROC Board meeting. It is envisaged that they will support the recommendation and a verbal update will be provided at the FNQROC Board meeting.

RECOMMENDATION OPTIONS:

Option 1: (Recommended)

That:

1. The Regional Road Investment Strategy is updated,
2. FNQROC contributes 50% of the costs up to a maximum of \$75,000 from reserves.

Option 2:

The FNQROC Board provides an alternative/amended recommendation.

Option 3:

That the Board does not support updating the Regional Road Investment Strategy.

CONSIDERATIONS:

Risks:

- External funding is not secured
- Project cost exceeds estimate, requirement scope adjustment or additional funding.

Finance

The estimated project cost is \$150,000. Proposed funding is as follows:

- 50% external funding (SCDF or TIDS)
- Up to \$75,000 FNQROC contribution

Final costs will be confirmed following procurement.

Statutory

Procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009*.

FNQROC Strategic Priorities

The Regional Road Investment Strategy works to advance the Resilient transport priorities and enables informed, region-wide investment decisions.

CONCLUSION:

Updating the Regional Road Investment Strategy is essential to strengthen evidence-based advocacy and ensure Far North Queensland's transport networks are fit for purpose.

A refreshed RRIS, aligned with the reviewed regional plans, will provide a contemporary, will provide a contemporary and robust foundation for prioritising limited investment where it delivers the greatest safety, resilience and productivity benefits. Securing external funding alongside FNQROC's contribution will support a clear strategic direction for road network planning and enable continued, effective advocacy for the infrastructure required to sustain connected, thriving and resilient communities.

Amanda Hancock

FNQROC Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator

Darlene Irvine

Chief Executive Officer

Policy No. 10

Training

Intent

Through this policy, where FNQROC aims to provide relevant training (when requested by member councils) within the region to:

- Ensure technical knowledge in the region remains current
- Increase learning opportunities
- Reduce travel and accommodation costs for councils
- Ensure training costs are not worn by FNQROC from non-attendance

To ensure as many people as possible can attend within the constraints of council training budgets, training costs will be on a cost neutral basis.

Scope

This policy will be implemented through the completion of the FNQROC training registration form.

Policy Process

The following process underpins the FNQROC Training Policy:

1. When interest in a training session is identified, FNQROC will seek expressions of interest from member councils in attending this session.
2. If there is broad interest, FNQROC will seek a proposed date and costs (and funding if available) from the training provider.
3. FNQROC will then advertise the training, date and cost per participant.
4. Registration will be via FNQROC Training Form being submitted to FNQROC.
5. Upon registration an invoice will be issued. Once the invoice has been issued, no refund is available to the council.
6. Council can substitute the registered attendee with another staff member.

Original Approval Date	18 April 2016
Current Adopted Date	5 August 2021
<u>Amended Adopted Date</u>	
Next Revision Due Date	202 <u>2030</u>
<u>Next Adopted Date</u>	

Administration Instruction

Vehicles provided to FNQROC under lease from Cairns Regional Council

Intent

To clarify the circumstances and conditions under which vehicles provided to FNQROC may be used. Unless otherwise specified, the Cairns Regional Council Administrative Instruction (CRC AI) applies.

Scope

This applies to all motor vehicles provided under lease from Cairns Regional Council to Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Council's (FNQROC) control.

Provisions

Within FNQROC there are two vehicles which are based on the operational needs of the organisation and relates to specific operational requirements.

Category 1

Category 1 applies to the FNQROC CEO. Upon commencement of, or during employment, the CEO may opt to enter into a salary agreement whereby a fully maintained vehicle is provided for use for FNQROC duties with full and unrestricted private use. The vehicle is to be driven to work every day other than leave periods. The vehicle will be made available to FNQROC staff if required and as available.

Provision of a vehicle is on a full cost recovery basis in line with the calculations in Appendix 1.

Category 2 – 4

As per CRC AI.

FNQROC Category 5 – Any additional FNQROC Lease Vehicles

Any FNQROC vehicles leased from Cairns Regional Council with the exception of Category 1 is at the discretion of the FNQROC CEO and based on least cost assessment.

Unless otherwise approved by the FNQROC CEO, use of this vehicle is for business only, it cannot be used for commuter use and is to be returned to the FNQROC office during periods of leave.

Conditions of use relating to all categories

As per CRC AI

Conditions relating to Category 1

As per CRC AI

Conditions relating to Category 3 and 4

As per CRC AI

Conditions relating to FNQROC Category 5

- The vehicle shall bear no Council marking or identification
- Commuter use is not permitted
- Travel shall only be within the FNQROC boundaries
- There is no use of vehicle during periods of leave. The vehicle should be returned back to the FNQROC office.

Standard of Equipment and Accessories (Category 1)

As per CRC AI

Changeover Period of Vehicles

As per CRC AI

Appendix 1

As per CRC AI with the exception of contribution payable for Category 1 vehicles. The contribution will be deducted from the gross annual salary and is equivalent to the annual amount invoiced to FNQROC for the lease + Fringe Benefits Tax.

Originally approved:	
Next Review	2030

Profit and Loss

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils 30241 For the period 1 July 2025 to 17 February 2026

1 JULY 2025-17 FEB
2026

Trading Income

FNQROC

FNQROC: Annual Contribution	628,092.00
FNQROC: Miscellaneous: Staff Christmas Party	260.00
Total FNQROC	628,352.00

Waste and Resource Recovery

Regional Waste Management Plan Funding	188,750.00
Total Waste and Resource Recovery	188,750.00

Regional Roads & Transport

RRTG: Annual 2.75% contribution	165,673.21
RRTG: Funding/Subsidies	152,064.00
Total Regional Roads & Transport	317,737.21

Regional Climate Resilience

Climate Resilience: Resilience Program	19,940.91
Climate Resilience: Corporate Greenhouse Gas Inventories	9,330.00
Regional Drought Resilience Funding - Wet Tropics	110,000.00
Regional Drought Resilience Funding - Gulf Hinterland	120,000.00
Total Regional Climate Resilience	259,270.91

Natural Assets

Wet Tropics Bio Security Future	37,436.77
Total Natural Assets	37,436.77

Water

Water: QWrap Funding	35,000.00
Total Water	35,000.00

FNQROC: Miscellaneous Sales	150.00
Total Trading Income	1,466,696.89

Other Income

Interest Income	10,891.92
Total Other Income	10,891.92

Gross Profit

1,477,588.81

Operating Expenses

Bank Service Charges	218.61
FNQROC	
FNQROC: Chairs Honorarium	10,000.00
FNQROC: Delegations	3,541.16
FNQROC: Mayoral delegations - accommodation, meals, travel expenses	12,486.36
FNQROC: External Meeting Expenses: Registration Fees	1,579.98

FNQROC: External Meeting Expenses: Travel, Accom & Meals	6,585.08
FNQROC: Internal Meeting Expenses: Miscellaneous	1,518.19
FNQROC: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	241.03
FNQROC: Staff Christmas Party	636.71
FNQROC: Mobile Phone Expenses	9,017.96
FNQROC: Salaries	166,496.49
FNQROC: Stationery & Office Expenses	7,315.73
FNQROC: Stationery & Office Expenses:Website	1,385.78
FNQROC: Subscription/membership	17,883.73
FNQROC: Training	1,219.09
FNQROC: Vehicle Expenses	9,965.13
FNQROC: Uniforms	249.59
Miscellaneous	7,131.37
Total FNQROC	257,253.38
Infrastructure	
Infrastructure: Salaries	83,014.41
Infrastructure: Mobile Phone Expenses	445.48
Total Infrastructure	83,459.89
Regional Roads & Transport	
RRTG: External Meetings: Registration Fees	3,351.65
RRTG: External Meetings: Travel, Accom & Meals	126.48
RRTG: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	1,589.24
RRTG: Regional Road Trip	1,451.15
RRTG: Regional Road Surfacing Study	12,700.00
Total Regional Roads & Transport	19,218.52
Regional Urban Water	
Water: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	226.18
Water: External Meeting Expenses: Travel, Accom & Meals	(590.06)
Total Regional Urban Water	(363.88)
Regional Waste & Recycling	
Waste: Meeting, Travel, Accom & Meals	3,161.52
Waste: training, and Industry Events	506.50
Waste: Mobile Phone	445.48
Waste: Resource Recovery Salaries	121,120.45
Total Regional Waste & Recycling	125,233.95
Regional Natural Asset Management	
Nat Asset: Vehicle Expense	1,600.00
Nat Asset: External Meetings: Travel, Accom & Meals	538.22
Nat Asset: Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	551.98
Nat Asset: Mobile Phone Expenses	450.02
Nat Asset: Salaries	79,741.30
Nat Asset: Subscriptions/Memberships	1,000.00

WTBFP - Media and Collateral Development	30,836.77
Total Regional Natural Asset Management	114,718.29
Regional Climate Resilience	
Climate Resilience Salaries	40,316.17
Climate Resilience - Internal Meeting Expenses	150.28
Climate Resilience - External Meeting Expenses	13.09
Climate Resilience - Conference/training	1,053.03
Climate Resilience: Climate Resilient Councils Program	955.09
Climate Resilience: Corporate GHG Inventory	972.72
Regional Drought Resilience Plan - Gulf/Hinterland - Remuneration Costs	128,680.81
Regional Drought Resilience - Wet Topics - Remuneration Costs	36,827.27
Total Regional Climate Resilience	208,968.46
Regional Procurement	
Regional Procurement: Bitumen Reseal Project:Project Coordinator Fees	32,900.00
Regional Procurement: Sewer Relining - Consultant Fees	49,700.00
Regional Procurement:Internal Meeting Expenses: Catering	358.55
Regional Procurement: Internal Meeting Expenses: Miscellaneous	108.55
Regional Procurement: Mobile Phone Expenses	445.48
Regional Procurement: Salaries	49,691.78
Regional Procurement: Preparation of procurement and construction documents	904.44
Total Regional Procurement	134,108.80
Regional Mountain Bike Strategy	
Regional MTB Strategy	2,448.09
Total Regional Mountain Bike Strategy	2,448.09
Total Operating Expenses	945,264.11
Net Profit	532,324.70

Balance Sheet

Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils 30241
As at 17 February 2026

17 FEB 2026

Assets

Bank

Cheque Account	556,127.72
QTC Savings	1,658,223.78
Total Bank	2,214,351.50

Current Assets

Accounts Receivable	10,413.00
Total Current Assets	10,413.00

Total Assets

2,224,764.50

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	132,073.70
Accrued Expenses:Accrued RDRP Project Expenses for 2026/27	70,000.00
ANZ Credit Card:FNQROC	6,677.91
GST	(25,269.03)
Payroll Liabilities:AL Payable Current	97,008.22
Payroll Liabilities:LSL Payable Current	10,715.00
Payroll Liabilities:LSL Payable Non-Current	71,033.70
Rounding	7.42
Waste Grant Liability 2024/2025 - Need approval to expend	42,643.73
Total Current Liabilities	404,890.65

Total Liabilities

404,890.65

Net Assets

1,819,873.85

Equity

Current Year Earnings	532,324.70
Opening Bal Equity	293,928.07
Retained Earnings	993,621.08
Total Equity	1,819,873.85



The Hon Kristy McBain MP

Minister for Emergency Management
Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories
Member for Eden-Monaro

Ref: MC25-018875

Cr Angela Toppin AM
Chair
Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils
PO Box 359
CAIRNS QLD 4870

via: liz.wakelin@fnqroc.qld.gov.au

Dear Councillor Toppin

Thank you for your correspondence of 7 October 2025 to the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, regarding the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils' (FNQROC) concept for a Regional and Remote - Special Economic Zone. Minister King has referred your letter to me to respond. I apologise for the delay in responding.

I appreciate the work of your organisation in supporting collaboration between councils and building regional prosperity in Far North Queensland.

Supporting strong, secure, and sustainable regions is an Australian Government priority. The Government recognises that our diverse regions – their communities, businesses, and industries – have always been central to the productivity, vitality, and prosperity of our nation, and offer vast potential and quality of life to the millions of people who call them home.

Since being elected, the Government has focused on delivering what regions need with integrity and transparency, ensuring investments and programs are well targeted, coordinated across governments, and informed by the evidence base, and local voices and priorities. We have also been focused on supporting regions to seize the opportunities of an ever-evolving world. This approach is embedded in our Regional Investment Framework, which guides policy development and decision-making in regional Australia across government priorities.

The Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF) which is a \$7 billion Commonwealth Government financier, also supports investment in infrastructure projects to help deliver economic development, jobs and opportunities across northern Australia. In the Far North Queensland region, NAIF is currently supporting the Cairns Seniors Community Housing Project with a loan of up to \$140 million and the North Queensland Airport Upgrades (Cairns

and Mackay) with a loan of up to \$155 million. These projects will contribute to the region's economy and generate thousands of jobs during construction and operations.

Thank you again for bringing the concept paper to my attention. Noting it discusses a broad range of issues and their intersection with regional economies, many of which fall within the portfolio responsibilities of other Ministers, I have copied this response to them for information.

Yours sincerely



Kristy McBain MP

28/1 /2026

cc The Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP, Treasurer
The Hon Clare O'Neil MP, Minister for Housing
The Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Ageing
The Hon Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy
The Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations
The Hon Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education
The Hon Madeleine King MP, Minister for Northern Australia
Senator the Hon Tim Ayers, Minister for Industry and Innovation



CEO Report to the Board

Prepared by: Darlene Irvine
Board Meeting Date: 5th March 2026

1. Executive Summary

The organisation continues to make strong progress across its strategic priorities with several significant milestones reached during this reporting period. The FNQ Regional Plan submission was lodged on 5 January 2026, and federal and state advocacy programs are well positioned with delegations scheduled for April and August. Regional priorities are increasingly embedded into long-term planning supported by ongoing work in natural asset management, biosecurity resilience, regional transport, mountain biking infrastructure and water security. Key initiatives such as the Asset Criticality Assessment proposal, disaster preparedness planning and development of climate, and transport frameworks are advancing alongside consistent delivery of operational committees, procurement activities and regional contract administration.

Operational performance remains stable, with no staffing or compliance issues to report and strong financial management supported by newly received Regional Drought Resilience Plan funding for the Wet Tropics and Gulf regions. The organisation continues to strengthen relationships with local, State and Federal stakeholders, including through recent contributions to the Senate inquiry on Australian's Productivity. Overall, the organisation remains on track across all major workstreams, with risks well managed and momentum continuing into upcoming advocacy, planning and delivery milestones.

2. Strategic Progress

STRATEGIC PRIORITY	STATUS	NOTES
2.1 FNQ Regional Plan	In progress	Submission made 5 January 2026.
2.2 Regional priorities into long term Strategic Operational Plan	In progress	
2.3.1 Federal Advocacy	Complete	Next delegation due August 2026
2.3.2 State Advocacy	In Progress	Next delegation 21 April 2026
2.4 NATURAL ASSET MANAGEMENT		
2.4.1 Contribute to the review of the Land Protection Fund methodology.	Pending	
2.4.2 Represent regional and local priorities on the State Oversight Group	Ongoing	Aquatic Biosecurity Risk Assessment Program in development with DPI, to be tabled to State Oversight group in March. Wet Tropics Cat Management Research Program Development Workshop scheduled for March.
2.5 REGIONAL MOUNTAIN BIKE STRATEGY		
2.5.1 Investigate whole-of-life trail maintenance approach	Pending	
2.5.2 Advocate for the rollout of the mountain bike infrastructure plan	Ongoing	
2.6 REGIONAL ROADS AND TRANSPORT		
2.6.1 Update the FNQ Regional Road Investment Strategy, including a review of the heavy vehicle network and first/last mile roads in collaboration with TMR		Included in State Advocacy Brief for Delegation in April
2.1 WATER ALLIANCE		
2.1.1 Asset Criticality assessment		A recommendation was put to the FNQROC Board that funding be sought from QWRAP to undertake an Options Analysis to progress an Asset Criticality assessment and this was endorsed at the December meeting. A QWRAP funding application has been submitted and will be considered by the QWRAP working group at their next meeting.

Comments:

3. Regional Advocacy Priorities

ADVOCACY PRIORITIES	STATUS	NOTES
3.1 STRENGTHENING LIVEABILITY AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE		
3.1.1 Address cost shifting	In Progress	LGAQ priority
3.1.2 First nations Housing	In Progress	
3.1.3 Social and Affordable housing	In Progress	
3.1.4 Strengthen climate resilience	In Progress	
<u>Draft concept developed for Regional and Remote Special Economic Zone</u>	Complete	Included in submission to the Senate inquiry re Productivity in Australia Meetings being held with local, State and Federal members on the concept.
3.2 RESILIENT TRANSPORT		
3.2.1 Road Network Resilience	Link	Linked to 2.6.1 Review of Regional Road Investment Strategy Included in State Delegation
3.2.2 Public Transport and Urban Mobility	Pending	State Delegation Brief - April
3.2.3 Freight and Supply Chains	Link	Linked to 2.6.1 Review of Regional Road Investment Strategy Included in State Delegation (April)
3.2.4 Multi-Modal Integration	Pending	Recommended that Cassowary Coast be on State Group
3.2.5 Emergency and Climate Resilience	Pending	State Delegation (April) – linked to 2.6.1
3.3 NATURAL ASSETS		
3.3.1 Biosecurity preparedness and resilience	Ongoing	Mapping delivered to support Cassowary Coast Disaster Preparedness Plan. Aquatic biosecurity and cat management research program proposals in development.
3.3.2 Collaborative governance	Ongoing	
3.3.3 Integrated domestic animal management	Pending	Animal Management Options Paper proposal endorsed by Board December 2026, currently finalising scope of works and procurement process for delivery.

<p>3.3.4 Support ongoing development of outdoor recreation and tourism</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Mapping and data management for Mountain Biking is ongoing. Destination market development workshop under investigation for mid year. Planned participation in the inaugural Sea Otter Australia Mountain Bike Summit in October 2026. Collaborating with Outdoors Queensland and Blue Sky Trails for delivery of Queensland Mountain Bike Forum, 2026.</p>
<p>3.3.5 Climate and ecological resilience</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Investigating rollout of Disaster Preparedness Plans for natural environment based on framework and mapping methodology from Cassowary Coast pilot project.</p>
<p>3.3.6 Innovation and sustainability</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>3.3.7 Regulatory and Resource efficiency</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Preparing departmental communications regarding conflicts between State legislation regarding disposal of carcasses from feral animal control program.</p>
<p>3.3.8 Integrated land use planning</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Supporting development of local, place-based approaches to Strategic Rehabilitation Areas with regional partners.</p>
<p>3.4 WATER SECURITY</p>		
<p>3.4.1 Regional water infrastructure funding pool to support smaller councils in preparing robust business cases.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>3.4.2 Reform of disaster recovery funding eligibility to recognise water and sewerage as core infrastructure</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>3.4.3 Increased State and federal investment in long term, multi-use water infrastructure (e.g. Dams, hydroelectric projects)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>3.4.4 Climate resilient planning frameworks including risk mitigation for intense rainfall events and debris blockages.</p>		
<p>3.5 WASTE</p>		

3.5.1 State and Federal investment in planning, design, construction and operation	Ongoing	
3.5.2 Fit for purpose solutions for remote and rural communities	Ongoing	
3.5.3 Minimise costs passed on to households and ratepayers	Ongoing	
3.5.4 Address transport and logistic barrier unique to FNQ	Pending	Boost funding application being developed to look at options for tyres and develop a business case for the preferred option.
3.6 ENERGY		
3.6.1 Greater investment in resilient energy infrastructure in regional areas	Ongoing	
3.6.2 Transparent pricing methodologies	Complete	CSO approximates obtained and shared with member councils
3.6.3 Support for decentralised energy solutions and appropriately located renewable technologies.		

4. Operational Overview

OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES	STATUS	NOTES
4.1 FEDERAL DELEGATION		Scheduled for August 2026
4.2 STATE DELEGATION		Scheduled for April 2026
4.3 ANIMAL MANAGEMENT		
4.3.1 Facilitate regional cat management taskforce for collaboration on key actions	In progress	Submission for regional cat management research proposal progressed with State Oversight Group. A workshop to develop a Regional Research Program will take in the new year.
4.3.2 Develop Scope for Workforce Capability Review and Modernisation of Animal Management in Far North Queensland	In progress	Animal Management Options Paper proposal endorsed by Board December 2026, currently finalising scope of works and procurement process for delivery

4.3.3 Assist in disaster management capacity development across councils	ongoing	Annual disaster preparedness scenario planned for November 2026. Investigating rollout of Natural Environment Disaster Preparedness Plans.
4.3.4 Re-establish indicators and produce an annual report card	Linked to 4.3.2	
4.3.5 Conduct four technical committee meetings	Ongoing	Four meetings of the Animal Management Technical Committee planned for 2026, February 6, June 19, September 11, November/December TBC
4.4 NATURAL ASSET MANAGEMENT		
4.4.1 Review and implement Council Biosecurity Plans	Ongoing	Scheduled review for Tablelands early 2026.
4.4.2 Implement and review the regional natural asset management strategy	Planned	Strategy review is included in 2026 workplan
4.4.3 Support local natural asset and biosecurity advisory committees and working groups	Ongoing	
4.4.4 Assist in disaster management capacity development across councils	Ongoing	Annual disaster preparedness scenario planned for early December 2026. Investigating rollout of Natural Environment Disaster Preparedness Plans.
4.4.5 Re-establish indicators and produce an annual report card	Ongoing	Review of report card and indicators planned for 2026.
4.4.6 Support Wet Tropics Healthy Water ways initiatives	In progress	First draft of Aquatic Invasive Weeds indicator developed now progressing in partnership with Technical Working Group
4.4.7 Conduct 4 technical committee meetings.	Ongoing	Four meetings of the Natural Asset Management Advisory Committee planned for 2026 – February 27, June 12, Friday 18
4.5 REGIONAL MOUNTAIN BIKE STRATEGY		
4.5.1 Establish a regional adventure trail working group	In progress	Terms of reference developed. EOI circulated. Working group workshop #1 scheduled for March 2026.
4.5.2 Support partnerships between Councils, clubs, and state agencies to deliver strategy actions	Ongoing	

<p>4.5.3 Support GIS and on-ground rollout and communication of trail upgrades and features.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Mapping data and trail information collated. Collating and preparing adventure trail data for Adventure Trails Working Group. Aligning regional mapping approaches</p>
<p>4.5.4 Conduct four steering committee meetings.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Four meetings of the Regional Mountain Bike Strategy Steering Committee planned for 2026, February 13, June 26, September 4, November/December TBC</p>
<p>4.6 REGIONAL ROADS AND TRANSPORT</p>		
<p>4.6.1 Conduct 2 (min) RRTG meetings</p>	<p>Planned</p>	<p>Next meeting scheduled to take place on 5 March 2026</p>
<p>4.6.2 Conduct 4 (min) RRTG TC meetings</p>	<p>Planned</p>	<p>Next meeting scheduled to take place on 29 January 2026.</p>
<p>4.6.3 Develop and implement the FNQ RRTG Capability Agreement & Action Plan</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>Currently under review. Bridge Inspection training identified as a regional training opportunity potentially funded via the Statewide Capability Development Fund (SCDF)</p>
<p>4.6.4 Manage four year (\$24.8mil) works program</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Shepherd Services working to progress required system development following a meeting with TMR. Works program for 2025/26 to 2027/28 endorsed by the RRTG on on 2 December 2025.</p>
<p>4.6.5 RRTG Technical Tour September 2025</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>The 2025 Technical Tour took place from 15 October 2025 to Friday 17 October 2025. Hosted by Douglas Shire Council, the tour travelled from Captain Cook Highway over the Daintree to Cape Tribulation Road and onto the Bloomfield Track via Wujal Wujal to Rossville. We were accompanied by representatives from TMR's Far North District and Local Government Partnership team in Brisbane and LGAQ and we were able to view a number of both DRFA and TIDS project sites, as well as a tour kindly organised by Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council to view the impacts of Cyclone Jasper and various restoration works.</p>
<p>4.6.6 Complete Regional Road Treatment Study</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>Draft Road Treatment Good Practice Guide circulated to the RRTG TC on 11 November 2025 for review and feedback. Timeline for provision of the final report extended to ensure sufficient time for feedback given proximity to Christmas break.</p>

4.7 WATER ALLIANCE		
4.7.1 Conduct 4 Alliance meetings	Ongoing	Last meeting held on 7 November 2025. Next meeting scheduled to take place on 20 February 2026.
4.7.2 Submit quarterly reports and annual reports to LGAQ	Ongoing	2025/26 Regional Coordinator Funding Application & Annual Work Plan approved by LGAQ and invoice for \$35,000 QWRAP Funding Coordinator funding submitted.
4.7.3 Commence implementation of the FNQ Regional Water Capability Plan		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.7.3.1 Initiative 3 – Standardised SOPs, work instructions, templates and processes 	In progress	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.7.3.2 Initiative 4 – Standardised water and wastewater asset design and specification 	In progress	Initial focus is on SCADA. CRC SCADA Coordinator attended the last Water Alliance meeting to share the standards recently developed by CRC. Once sub-committee formed, Terms of Reference to be agreed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.7.3.3 Initiative 11 – Building and sustained a strong workforce for FNQ. 	In progress	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.7.3.4 Strategic initiatives – see 2.1.1 See Asset Criticality Assessment in-progress. 	In progress	See 2.1.1.
4.7.4 Conduct an EOI for Biosolids centralised storage/dewatering, transport and disposal options	Removed	4.7.4 replaced with 4.7.5
4.7.5 Facilitate implementation of a new Regional Beneficial Reuse of Biosolids arrangement commencing 1 October 2025	In progress	New contracts with Arkwood came into effect on 1 October 2025 for 3 years with the option to extend by a further 2 x 12 month periods.
4.7.6 Develop and implement a Regional Trade Waste Environmental Management Plan	In progress	Trade Waste Uplift Project (TWIG) being led by Col Hester, QLD Water WBBUWA Coordinator. Representatives from Cairns Regional Council, Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Cook Shire Council, Douglas Shire Council and Tablelands Regional Council involved in the project. First draft Model Regional Trade Waste Management Plan circulated on 18 November 2025.
4.8 DEVELOPMENT MANUAL		
4.8.1 Conduct a review of the Development Manual	Planned	

4.9 PROCUREMENT		
4.9.1 Conduct 4 technical committee meetings	Ongoing	The next meeting is scheduled for May 2026.
4.9.2 Maintain regular communication with agencies (e.g. Local Buy and State Government) and provide feedback	Ongoing	
4.9.3 Review and update the FNQROC Procurement website and document suite	Ongoing	The LGT 3.0 Document Suite was released in January 2026 to the FNQROC Councils. It is tailored specifically to address evolving procurement and contract management practices. To support the new document suite release, FNQROC is anticipating organising construction contract training in April 2026.
4.9.4 Facilitate identification and evaluation of new regional procurement opportunities	Ongoing	
4.9.5 Undertake contract administration for existing regional contracts.	Ongoing	
4.9.6 Conduct contract reviews for:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bitumen Reseal 	In progress	<i>Regional Bitumen Reseal</i> – Participating councils have approved their programs for Financial Year 2025/26 and works started in October 2025. Approximately 40% of 2025/26 works have delivered within FNQROC region. FNQROC is working on open tender for 2026/27 Bitumen Reseal program.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewer Relining 	In progress	<i>Regional Sewer Relining</i> – Participating councils have approved their programs for Financial Year 2025/26 and works started in September 2025. More than 70% of 2025/26 works have been delivered within FNQROC region. FNQROC is working on open tender for 2026/2027 Sewer Reline Program.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of Biosolids 	In progress	<i>Regional Removal and Beneficial Reuse of Biosolids.</i> - Arkwood Organics has been approved as sole supplier and a new contract commenced on 1 October 2025. (See also 4.7.5)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrap Metal and ULABs 	In progress	<i>Collection & Disposal of Ferrous, Non-Ferrous Metals and ULABS</i> –SIMS Metal has been awarded the contract for Collection and Disposal of Ferrous, Non-Ferrous, Metals and ULABs . New contract commenced in December 2025.
4.9.7 Oversee procurement for the Regional Water Leak Detection Program	In Progress	FNQROC is evaluating suppliers’ submissions, and the contract for the Regional Leak Detection Services will be awarded in March 2026.

4.10	Climate Resilience		
4.10.1	Conduct 4 Technical meetings	On going	Fourth meeting scheduled for 27 th March 2026
4.10.2	Prepare and implement Greenhouse gas emissions reduction action plan	In progress	Technical Report GHG Emissions inventory for 12 Council's completed. Emissions Reduction Action Plan for 8 Councils in FNQROC completed by Ironbark Sustainability. Information from these documents have informed the FNQROC Decarbonisation Reduction Action plan draft currently under review by the Climate Resilience Technical Committee.
4.10.3	Undertake a regional climate risk assessment	In progress	Scope of works underdevelopment
4.10.4	Develop the FNROC Climate Resilience Action Plan (2026 – 2031)	In progress	Commencing Q4
4.10.5	Continue to identify funding and implement the Regional Drought Resilience Plans (Wet Topics and Gulf Hinterland)	On going	Project delivery underway for Phase 1 Implementation of the RDRP funds for Gulf Hinteland and Wet Tropics. Gulf Savannah NRM have hired a FT drought Resilience Officer to deliver Business and Community Drought Resilience Project. FNQROC to deliver Regional Water Leak Detection pilot project and oversee implementation of Wet Tropics RDRP. Project end date November 2026. Project Planning for Phase Two of implementation funds have commenced with Regional Working Group meeting chaired by ReCO held January 2026.
4.10.6	Continue to identify funding and implement QRA Regional Resilience Plans	In progress	
4.10.7	Continue to support updating QRA Local Resilience Action Plans	On hold	Local Councils are updating their LRAPS. QRA Regional Officers are supporting Local Councils with updating and submitting the LRAPS, due mid-2026. Climate Resilience Technical Committee members have discussed the opportunities and what to include in the LRAPS.
4.10.8	Develop regional framework for local natural environment disaster preparedness plan – pilot project with Cassowary Coast Regional Council.	In progress	Draft Plan reviewed by CCRC. The Plan scheduled for presentation to CCRC Local NAMAC Members and a workshop to test the plan with key stakeholders during March 2026.
4.10.9	Expand and implement the Rivers to Reef Climate Action Plan (2021-2026)	In progress	Expansion completed to include Douglas Shire, Croydon Shire and Cassowary Coast Regional Councils. Implementation of actions under mitigation, transition and adaptation are ongoing with updates provided at Climate Resilience Technical Committees.

4.11 REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT		
4.11.1 Provide updates to DETSI as required	On going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have been unsuccessful in Round 1 of BOOST Funding Application Recycle Mate app Opt-in funding for 3 years – Councils have been invited to apply for funding to cover subscription cost for 3 years of access to Recycle Mate App with waste education & behaviour change features designed for Councils to integrate in their Waste Education program
4.11.2 Appoint a Regional EBCI Coordinator (Contractor)	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding application for appointing a contractor for undertaking the role of EBCI Coordinator has been unsuccessful.
4.11.3 Manage the delivery of the regional waste education and marketing plan	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RWMP Coordinator is developing the waste education & behaviour change plan customised to each council and also provide access to resources to help them deliver the activities.
4.11.4 Undertake a needs assessment for enhancing data capability in FNQROC Councils	in progress	
4.11.5 Facilitate collaboration opportunities for enhancing kerbside commingled recycling & resource recovery of priority and problematic waste streams		

5. People and Culture

- Staffing:
 - No changes
- Workforce wellbeing or culture insights
 - Nil workplace or union issues
 - All staff back from leave over the Christmas period
 - CRC EBA approved which will apply to FNQROC Staff excluding the CEO.

6. Finance

- Financial snapshot
 - Regional Drought Resilience Plan Scheme funding has been received for Wet Tropics and Gulf – managed by FNQROC and delivered in partnership with Terrain NRM and Gulf NRM.

7. Governance and Compliance

- Compliance actions - Nil
- Changes in legislation, standards or reporting requirements - Nil

8. Risks and Issues

RISK/ISSUE	IMPACT	MITIGATION
(Eg project delays due to resourcing)	Medium	(Engaging contract support)
Nil to report		

9. Advocacy and External Relations

- Submission to Senate inquiry into Australia’s productivity – 16 February 2026
- Stakeholder Engagement

Date	Engagement
4 Dec	RLN FNQ Meeting – DTMR Office
4 Dec	TTNQ MTB Destination Marketing Plan
10 Dec	ROC’s, EO Meeting
11 Dec	RDA TN, CEO Meeting – Tropical Economic Development Strategy
29 Dec – 2 nd Jan	ANNUAL LEAVE
13 Jan	Service Review Discussion with NWQROC EO
15 Jan	NQ Monsoon and TC Koji - Environmental Recovery Meeting #1 with DETSI
21 Jan	Ex-Tropical Cyclone Koji and North and North-West Queensland Flooding Event - Joint Roads & Transport and Economic Functional Recovery and Resilience Group Meeting with Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning

29 Jan	Meeting with new CEO, Advance Cairns
29 Jan	Mayor Holmes – State delegation report
30 Jan	Mayor Toppin – monthly catch up
4 Feb	RLN FNQ Meeting
4 Feb	ROC – CEO’s catch up
10 Feb	Training- ALGA – six step AI Strategy for LG (online)
11 Feb	Training – AICD – AI in the boardroom (online)
17 Feb	Mayor Toppin – Monthly catch up
17 Feb	Robbie Katter re R&R SEZ
19 Feb – 4 Mar	ANNUAL LEAVE

10. Looking Ahead

- IPWEAQ presentation on Regional Plan process – 6th March
- State delegation in April (21st – 23rd)
- Presentation to Engineers Australia Transport Conference – ‘Two Australia’s – Why transport Equity Matters’ – 9 June
- ROC Assembly ~14th – 15th July
- Federal delegation in August (11th – 13th)

Dept of Housing

Management of properties crisis

“Cassowary Coast: the Most Liveable Tropical Community”

The Issues

- Overgrown properties
- Animal Management
- Rubbish
- Very slow or no response from Dept Housing
- Significant impact on Council resources
- Ongoing public health issues
- Council can't breach State Govt



Overgrown properties

- Continual non-compliance
- Slow or no response from Dept Housing
- Maintenance regime not suitable for tropics
- Pressure from customers for Council to respond
- Degrades amenity of area
- Health and safety risk – snakes, rats



17 Seymour St, Innisfail Estate



26 Seymour St, Innisfail Estate



24 Seymour St, Innisfail Estate



Elizabeth St, Flying Fish Point



Jacobs Road, Kurrimine Beach

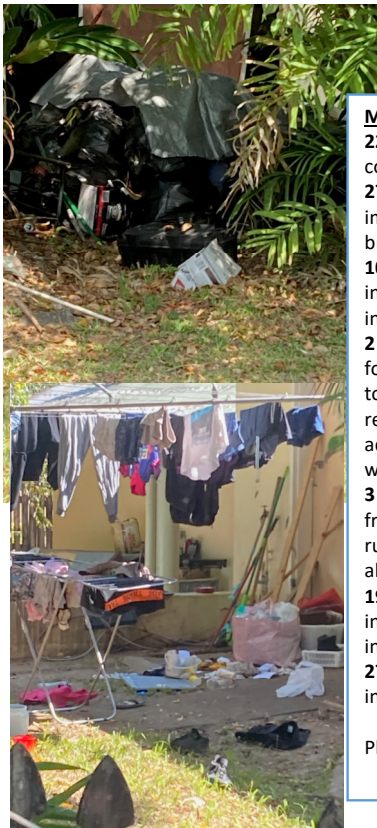


Badilla Street,
Hudson



Rubbish

- Lack of response from Dept of Housing
- Odour, flies and vermin issue for neighbours
- Continues to accumulate
- Inappropriate waste disposal arrangements



Moriarty St:
22 October 25: Council inspected following complaints
27 October 25: Email sent to HHS with images. HHS reply outlining the plan to breach the tenant
10 November 25: Council follow up inspection. No change. Email sent to HHS for information and update. No reply.
2 December 25: Council again conducts a follow up inspection. No change. Email sent to HHS for information and update. HHS replies that they were actively working to address the matter and was collaborating with tenant.
3 January 26: Council receives a complaint from nearby resident about the stinking rubbish and advised the house has been abandoned. Council inspects.
19 January 26: Council conducts a follow up inspection. No change. Email sent to HHS for information and update. No reply.
27 January 26: Council conducts follow up inspection.

Photos – 19th January 2026 10:10am

**Why do we follow up?
Because we care.**



Brand new housing complex Ernest St, Innisfail



1 Sherwood Street, East Innisfail



Animal Management

- Lack of fencing
- History of non-compliance
- Dog attacks and menacing risk
- Indiscriminate breeding of cats and dogs
- Burden on animal welfare organisations and pounds



Department of Housing – vision and purpose

Department of Housing and Public Works Strategic Plan 2024–28

This Strategic Plan was reviewed June 2025 and remains current for the reporting period 2025-26



Our vision
A brighter future for Queenslanders through housing, building and service innovation



Our purpose
Deliver a place to call home for more Queenslanders | Create a more prosperous Queensland through government procurement, youth engagement and a thriving night-life economy | Strengthen the construction sector

- Our values**
- Customers first
 - Ideas into action
 - Unleash potential
 - Empower people
 - Be courageous
 - Healthy and safe workplace

Our guiding principles

- Integrity** – Our behaviours match our words and our decisions are transparent
- Partnership** – We work across boundaries to deliver our priorities with our stakeholders
- Recognition** – We honour the unique cultural strengths, values and priorities of First Nations peoples
- Leadership** – We make evidence-based decisions and take responsibility for our actions
- Innovation** – We are agile and encourage new ways of working
- Inclusion** – We are kind, we will listen, embrace diversity, and engage widely
- Safety** – We embrace a healthy and safe place to work.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Secure Queensland's housing foundations	Unlock potential	Build Queensland's future	Strengthen our performance
Increase housing options and harness the potential of the community housing and homelessness sectors to grow and deliver housing that helps people find, secure, and keep a place to call home.	Create future prosperity by unleashing Queensland's structural power, bolstering the night-life economy, and activating opportunities for young Queenslanders.	Boost Queensland's productivity through an effectively regulated construction industry and contribute to a more sustainable, low-emission future.	Foster a culture of integrity, wellbeing, learning and inclusion where we empower our people to deliver solutions and continuously improve.

STRATEGIES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver social and affordable homes to meet the Queensland Government's target of 53,500 additional social and community homes by 2044. Strengthen tenancy management for social housing in Queensland. Foster a fair and stable housing market by providing clear, consistent legislation and regulation that attracts investment and supports renters and homeowners. Be an effective and proactive regulator and steward of regulated accommodation industries. Roll out a Master Agreement with the community housing sector to streamline delivery and increase capacity. Expand home ownership opportunities for First Nations peoples in Queensland. Boost homelessness responses and deliver flexible housing pathways to help more Queenslanders move from crisis to stability. Provide support for Queenslanders to access and remain in the private rental market. Champion Queensland's interests to maximise federal funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead and empower efficient, best-in-class procurement practices across government to create exceptional outcomes, drive innovation and deliver value for money for Queenslanders. Drive economic growth and job creation by supporting local businesses through implementation of procurement reforms and capitalising on the procurement processes for the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Develop and implement the Night-Life Economy Strategy to support safe, vibrant precincts and strengthen hospitality and entertainment sectors. Make it easier for suppliers to work with government by streamlining procurement processes and publishing forward pipelines. Embed ethical practices in government supply chains by enforcing the Supplier Code of Conduct. Activate opportunities for young Queenslanders to develop leadership skills and contribute their perspectives to Queensland Government policies, programs and services. Deliver an annual Safer Schools response that enhances the safety of young people and minimises disruption to the local community. Lead a trades and apprenticeships program that sets a new standard for QBuild and the building industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the building regulator and foster intergovernmental collaboration to improve industry performance, efficiency, and effectiveness. Enhance QBuild's value for money services while expanding regional capacity and capability, creating opportunities for small, medium, and First Nations businesses. Uplift industry through modern construction methods, designs and practices, while contributing to the development and growth of a highly skilled construction industry. Provide tailored property and accommodation solutions to government agencies to optimise the delivery of government services to Queenslanders. Deliver sustainable building solutions for government facilities, incorporating cutting-edge design, energy efficiency, accessibility cutting-edge design, energy efficiency, accessibility cutting-edge design, and resilience to natural disasters. Improve the safety, sustainability and value of the government vehicle fleet. Play a leading role in government efforts to assess, recover and strengthen communities at risk or affected by disasters by promoting sustainable and resilient building practices, improving industry knowledge, increasing resilience in homes, and incorporating disaster mitigation strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to high standards of professional conduct and ethical practices in everything we do, with unwavering integrity and a strong sense of accountability. Protect the health, safety and wellbeing of our people so they can perform at their best. Foster a high performing culture driven by innovation, strong leadership and collaboration, and informed risk management. Build our workforce capabilities to meet the evolving needs of customers and respond to a complex operating environment. Create a respectful and inclusive workforce that values diversity, cultural competence, kindness, equity, and inclusion. Enhance our approach to human-centred design so services meet the needs of individuals as we listen to their voices and respect their human rights. Leverage technology and data analytics to enhance service delivery, improve access, and ensure the security and reliability of information to streamline how we work. Embrace contemporary practices to drive efficient and effective project management and deliver desired outcomes on time and on budget.
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KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of social and affordable homes delivered. Average wait time for allocation into government-owned and managed social rental housing. Proportion of new households assisted into the private rental market. Number of people assisted by specialist homelessness services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of client satisfaction with procurement engagement. Percentage of participants who identify as having improved leadership capabilities after attending a youth leadership program. Percentage of QBuild apprenticeship completions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of government-owned employee housing in an acceptable condition. Percentage reduction of vehicle emissions of the QFleet fleet year on year. Percentage of occupied government office accommodation achieving a 5 star or above target rating. Percentage of spend on QBuild customer assets across local small, medium and First Nations businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working for Queensland survey results (percentage positive): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workgroup respect and psychological safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping you well: Leadership Continuous improvement First Nations responses Equity and diversity data (percentage of workforce): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Nations Women in leadership People who speak a language other than English at home People with disability.
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* Full details of performance measures are available at www.housing.qld.gov.au

We contribute to the Queensland Government's objectives for the community:

A better lifestyle through a stronger economy

A plan for Queensland's future

Acknowledgement of Country: We acknowledge Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land. We recognise their connection to land, sea, waterways and community, and pay our respects to their cultures and Elders past and present.



Our opportunities:

- Collaborate with our customer stakeholders across all tiers, community and private sector to better understand their needs, influence their better outcomes.
- Support Queensland business regions, to maximise the long-term economic benefits of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- Be a future-ready organisation with a culture of empowering and enabling our workforce.
- Harness data, research and analytics to optimise service delivery and outcomes for Queenslanders.
- Expand our digital capabilities to transform our services and operations.

Our strategic risks:

Protecting our people and the environment – ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of our people while we adapt to a changing world and deliver our work program.

Responding to the impact of climate change – plan and respond to the impact of climate change and severity of extreme weather events, increased climate variability and sea level rise on our operations.

Delivering housing solutions – ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of our people while we adapt to a changing world and deliver our work program.

Safeguarding our information – ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of our people while we adapt to a changing world and deliver our work program.

Ensuring responsible fiscal management – ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of our people while we adapt to a changing world and deliver our work program.

Our commitment to human rights

Our decisions and actions are guided by our commitment to respect, promote and uphold human rights to foster equitable, just and inclusive communities.

- Dept policy - minimum contact of 2 years.
- Office based in Cairns with a contractor for emergencies in Innisfail.
- 183 Dept Housing properties in Cassowary Coast.
- In two suburbs, 60% of customer requests
- Overall, nearly 50% of our customer requests
- 2 warrants required
- 1.4% of residential properties are drawing 50% of Council's customer request resources.
- It feels like Dept Housing don't care.

What needs to change?

Increase active property management

- More frequent inspections
- Local staff
- More on ground presence
- Contact and collaborate with Council's
- Support holistic approach
 - Gardening
 - Maintenance and waste disposal
 - Drug and alcohol counselling
 - Animal management & fencing
- More care of our state assets.





Thank you

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