

FNQ Regional Water Alliance

Minutes

Meeting No	45
Meeting Name	FNQ Regional Water Alliance
Date	20 February 2026
Time	10:00am
Venue	Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Innisfail

1. ATTENDANCE

Name	Organisation
Josh Smith <i>via teleconference</i>	Cairns Regional Council
Shane Bandiera	Cassowary Cost Regional Council
Vivian Lardi	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Andrew Musumeci <i>via teleconference</i>	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Kristina Davidson	Cook Shire Council
Robyn Maddalena	Cook Shire Council
Mark Pollard <i>via teleconference</i>	Croydon Shire Council
Ada Pasanen	Douglas Shire Council
Peter White	Douglas Shire Council
Aditya Mishra	Mareeba Shire Council
Charles Dyer	Tablelands Regional Council
Arek Sowula	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Jennifer Hartwig <i>via teleconference</i>	LGAQ
Giovannella Carini <i>via teleconference</i>	DLGWV
Jacinta Ryan	Queensland Health
Amanda Hancock	FNQROC

2. APOLOGIES

Name	Organisation
Adam Schmalz	Cairns Regional Council
Mark Wuth	Cairns Regional Council
Simon Page	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Ken Timms	Etheridge Shire Council
Onesimo Mukodo	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
Daniel Gatto	Hinchinbrook Shire Council

Morris Hamill	Mareeba Shire Council
Mark Vis	Tablelands Regional Council
Sam Bann	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council
Neil Holmes	QLD Water
Ingrid Formiatti Minnesma	DLGWV
Brett Rip	DLGWV
Christopher Land	QLD Health
Brad Milligan	QLD Health

3. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes noted and accepted.

4. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Action Item	Action	Responsible Person(s)	Status
41.1	Charles, TRC to share learnings of upcoming visit from dog leak detection service.	Charles Dyer, TRC	Withdrawn
Charles confirmed item should be removed as dog leak detection did not proceed. TRC participating in FNQROC Leak Detection project – see Item 8.			
44.1	If they have not already done so, Councils to nominate a representative to participate in a SCADA sub-committee (this action replaces action items 42.1 and 42.3) to be facilitated by FNQROC.	All councils	ESC, HSC, TRC. YASC & WWASC nominations outstanding See Item 5.2
44.2	Once all councils have nominated a representative to participate in a SCADA sub-committee, FNQROC to convene first meeting and facilitate the development of the Terms of Reference for consideration and approval by the Water Alliance.	Amanda Hancock, FNQROC	Outstanding
44.3	QLD Water to share details of SCADA projects undertaken by other QWRAP regions.	QLD Water	Complete
44.4	Amanda Hancock to draft a recommendation to the FNQROC Board on behalf of the Water Alliance, that an application be made to QWRAP for Round 3 funding to undertake an options analysis to progress the asset criticality assessment.	Amanda Hancock, FNQROC	Complete
44.5	Amanda Hancock, FQNROC to circulate SWROC Asset Criticality report and other associated documents.	Amanda Hancock, FNQROC	Complete
44.6	Any councils experiencing issues with smart water metres please reach out to Ben Baillie, Douglas Shire Council.	All councils	Ongoing
Cairns Regional Council and Cassowary Coast Regional Council to reach out to Ada Pasanen at Douglas Shire Council regarding their smart water meter experiences.			

5. REGIONAL WATER CAPABILITY PLAN

5.1 Regional Asset Criticality Assessment

Amanda advised:

- Initiatives 5, 6 and 8 relate to raising the strategic awareness of water and wastewater service delivery, prudent and efficient water and wastewater services and driving change in grant funding.
- At the Water Alliance meeting on 7 November 2025, it was agreed that a recommendation would be put to the FNQROC Board that an application be made to QWRAP for Round 3 funding to undertake an options analysis to progress the asset criticality assessment.
- The recommendation was endorsed by the FNQROC Board at their meeting of 2 December 2025.
- A QWRAP application was submitted on 9 December 2025 which has been endorsed by the Working Group but due to the project value being \$50,000 it is now with the Project Steering Committee for approval.
- A Request for Quote has been drafted and will be released as soon as funding has been confirmed.

A copy of the Water & Wastewater Asset Criticality Assessment – Options Analysis, FNQROC Board Report circulated with the minutes.

5.2 SCADA Sub-Committee

Amanda advised:

- Initiative 3 of the Water Capability Plan is Standardised SOPs, work instructions, templates and processes.
- The Water Alliance have previously agreed to set up a SCADA Sub-Committee to work on the development of regionally consistent SCADA Technical Standards which could include a standard equipment list and may lead to councils sharing access to parts.
- There are still several councils that have not nominated a representative to participate in the sub-committee which will be facilitated by FNQROC.
- Once nominations have been received, FNQROC will convene the first meeting and facilitate the development of the Terms of Reference for consideration and approval by the Water Alliance.
- Cairns Regional Council have already shared a significant number of documents following their own internal process review and QLD Water have provided details of other SCADA projects that have taken place with QWRAP support, so we have a good base upon which to start.

5.3 Building and sustaining and strong water workforce in FNQ.

Amanda advised:

- Initiative 11 of the Water Capability Plan is Building and sustained a strong water workforce for FNQ which includes actions such as the development of regional workforce planning framework, tools and templates.
- QLD Water have already developed an IR/HR Toolbox which includes position descriptions, provides guidance on recruitment and retention etc.
- It would be good to form a sub-committee of councils HE/L&D/recruitment representatives to ensure they are aware of the resources available.
- FNQROC will shortly be reaching out for HR sub-committee nominations to progress this initiative.

6. REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE

- Maria Anselmo, FNQROC Regional Climate Resilience Coordinator updated committee members on upcoming Round Two implementation funding under the Regional Drought Resilience Plan.
- Councils were advised to develop project ideas that improve regional water security and submit brief proposals by 25th March for regional prioritisation.
- Cairns Regional Council to share their work on drought resilience
- Cassowary Coast Regional Council to share their recently developed Water Security Strategy
- Tablelands to share their Demand Management study.
- Douglas undertook significant work post Jasper and their leak detection reports have been previously shared.
- The use of flow metres and zones were discussed, and it was agreed that this could potentially be a good project for RDRP Round Two funding.

ACTION ITEM 45.1 Councils to share their work on drought resilience, water security and demand management with FNQROC to inform development of projects for Round Two of funding under the Regional Drought Resilience Plan.

7. QWRAP, QLD WATER & LGAQ – JENNIFER HARTWIG

Jennifer Hartwig provided an update for the QWRAP, QLD Water and LGAQ.

A copy of the QWRAP, QLD Water and LGAQ presentation circulated with the minutes.

- Robyn at Cook Shire Council asked if QWRAP funding could be used for travel costs for staff to attend training which it was confirmed it could not.
- Robyn advised there remains an ongoing issue with user choice funding with Cook Shire Council staff unable to receive same level of funding for courses attended in Cairns, despite the travel costs associated with attendance. This is because funding is linked to location of the training as opposed to location of the attendee.
- This has been raised previously with the Department, but the situation remains as is which limits staff training as it is cost prohibitive for them to attend training outside Cook Shire region.

8. REGIONAL JOINT PURCHASING – AMANDA HANCOCK, FNQROC

Amanda provided a brief overview of the following joint purchasing arrangements currently in place:

- Regional Collection & Beneficial Reuse of Biosolids
Contract commenced 1 October 2025
- Regional Leak Detection
Tender recently closed and contract to be awarded shortly.
- Regional Sewer Relining
Participation currently being confirmed for 2026/27
- Regional Supply & Delivery of Water Chemicals
Current contracts due to expire in May 2026

9. WATER INDUSTRY WORKER – LEE-ANNE WILLIS

Lee-Anne provided the following update:

Certificate III in Water Industry Operations

- Network training undergoing – Douglas and Cairns
- Treatment training undergoing – Cassowary, Tablelands, Mareeba and Cairns
 - Cook is getting organised to commence – potential that Wujal Wujal start with them
- Training Logbooks / Record books
 - Trainees are required to receive a training record book / logbook within 14 days of the training plan being signed
 - The employer and training organisation must check and update your training record at least every 3 months
 - All parties separately sign off each 'competency unit', once the trainee can demonstrate the skills and are considered competent.
 - If supervisors or trainees have not received the record book, please reach out to your training provider

Certificate IV in Water Industry Operations

- Proposals have been received and forwarded to councils that expressed interest in this training.
- Douglas to Southern Downs and out to Flinders councils have expressed interest, in total 9 councils – 52 learners.

Alliances Training status

- Alliances EOIs – WIMWA, DUWTG, SWQWSA, RAPAD, CQW&STG
- Training coming to an end for NQQWRAP
- Training underway – WBBUWA, NWQWSA

10. WATER SUPPLY REGULATION, DLGWV – JO CARINI

- Jo thanked councils for submitting their annual reports.
- They have recently welcomed a new manager, Damon Cheyne, to the team and they also have several new staff on the team focused on responding to the QAO's recent report recommendations.
- They will be holding their annual workshop in Cairns on 21 April 2026 – any councils that would like to participate with a presentation would be most welcome.
- Submissions to the DWQMP guidelines currently under review. For the time being existing guidelines should still be used.

11. QUEENSLAND HEALTH - JACINTA RYAN

Jacinta advised that the National Health Medical Research Council (NHMRC) appear to be looking at chlorate guideline limits.

12. GENERAL BUSINESS

A round room discussion took place with each council sharing details of their council's current water and wastewater priorities.

13. NEXT MEETING

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 12.55pm

Following the meeting, Cassowary Coast Regional Council kindly provided a tour of the Innisfail Water Treatment Plant and Johnston Raw Water Intake

Minutes prepared by Amanda Hancock, Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator

ACTION ITEMS

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45.1	Councils to share their work on drought resilience, water security and demand management with FNQROC to inform development of projects for Round Two of funding under the Regional Drought Resilience Plan.	All Councils