FNQ Regional Water Alliance

Minutes

Meeting No	46
Meeting Name	FNQ Regional Water Alliance
Date	17 April 2026
Time	9:30am
Venue	Committee Room, Level 3, Cairns Regional Council, Spence Street, Cairns

1. ATTENDANCE

Name	Organisation
Josh Smith *via teleconference*	Cairns Regional Council
Shane Bandiera *via teleconference*	Cassowary Cost Regional Council
Michael George	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Simon Page	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Kristina Davidson	Cook Shire Council
Dan Dixon *via teleconference*	Croydon Shire Council
Ada Pasanen *via teleconference*	Douglas Shire Council
Peter White *via teleconference*	Douglas Shire Council
Aditya Mishra	Mareeba Shire Council
Emma Taylor	Mareeba Shire Council
Jennifer Hartwig	LGAQ
Giovannella Carini *via teleconference*	DLGWV
Jacinta Ryan *via teleconference*	Queensland Health
Sarah Henry	Queensland Water
Neil Holmes	Queensland Water
Amanda Hancock	FNQROC

2. APOLOGIES

Name	Organisation
Adam Schmalz	Cairns Regional Council
Mark Wuth	Cairns Regional Council
Alan Clark	Etheridge Shire Council
Onisimo Mukodo	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
Daniel Gatto	Hinchinbrook Shire Council
Morris Hamill	Mareeba Shire Council

Charles Dyer	Tablelands Regional Council
Mark Vis	Tablelands Regional Council
Arek Sowula	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Sam Bann	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council
Ingrid Fomiatti 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
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.	ESC, HSC, TRC & YASC nominations outstanding	ESC, HSC & YASC outstanding – See Item 8.2
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.	FNQROC	Outstanding
Amanda advised that she would shortly be sending out invitations for the first SCADA sub-committee meeting.			
44.6	Any councils experiencing issues with smart water meters please reach out to Ada Pasanen, Douglas Shire Council.	All Councils	Complete
Ada advised that there had been some meaningful conversations regarding issues associated with smart water meters. She additionally advised that there is a SMART Water Metering TEAMS group in place that councils may benefit from being involved in. Ada will share the details. **In addition, Amanda noted that the WIM Alliance has been working on a SMART Water Meter playbook which could also be of assistance. Neil Holmes, QLD Water advised that there were still some issues being worked through before this could be made more broadly available.**			
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	Complete – See Item 6

5. REGIONAL WATER SECURITY - SARAH GILES, DLGW&V

Sarah Giles, Manager Regional Water Security, Water Infrastructure, Policy and Partnerships provided a presentation on the Regional Water Security team and their work on Urban Water Security Assessments completed in partnership with councils.

It was noted that whilst not a statutory requirement, having an Urban Water Security Assessment would support the case for council funding.

A copy of the Regional Water Security presentation circulated with the minutes.

6. WATERWISE PROGRAM - JOSHUA HEBERLEIN, DLGW&V

Joshua Heberlein, Senior Urban Water Security Planner, SEQ Water Security, Water Security, Infrastructure and Governance provided a presentation on the Waterwise Queensland program. This program is aimed at building community resilience and capability of water service providers by raising community awareness and water literacy as water demand strategy.

A question was raised regarding the provision of SWIMS for school site visits which Josh agreed to follow up.

ACTION ITEM 46.1 Joshua Heberlein to investigate the availability and potential provision of SWIMS for school site visits.

A copy of the Regional Waterwise presentation circulated with the minutes.

7. REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN (RDRP) - MARIA ANSELMO, FNQROC

Maria Anselmo, FNQROC Regional Climate Resilience Coordinator provided an update in the Regional Drought Resilience Program and the projects nominated for the upcoming funding round which includes the Water Alliance Regional Water Monitoring Program.

Maria advised that so far, a total of 11 projects had been nominated with the final project prioritisation review taking place on 23 April 2026. The purpose of this session to confirm collective agreement of the final LG priority project list for Round TWO of the RDRP funding program. The agreed list will then be submitted to State Government for pre-screening approval ahead of funding applications which open in July 2026.

8. REGIONAL WATER CAPABILITY PLAN – AMANDA HANCOCK, FNQROC

8.1 Regional Asset Criticality Assessment

Amanda advised that the QWRAP funding application was approved in early March, which was later than expected, placing pressure on the original EOFY completion deadline. The current deed expires in June 2026, preventing any extension at this stage. We are awaiting advice on a potential new deed/dee variation and whether a project extension will be permitted.

8.2 SCADA Sub-Committee

Nominations had now been received from all councils except for Etheridge Shire Council, Hinchinbrook Shire Council and Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council. Invitations for the first SACDA Sub-Committee will be sent out by FNQROC shortly.

8.3 Building and sustaining and strong water workforce in FNQ.

FNQROC will be reaching out shortly for HR sub-committee nominations to progress this initiative.

9 QWRAP – JENNIFER HARTWIG, LGAQ & NEIL HOLMES, QLD WATER

Jennifer Hartwig, Project Manager, QWRAP and Neil Holmes, QLD Water provided an update on the QWRAP program and QLD Water.

A copy of FNQ Water Alliance LGAQ QLD Water Update presentation circulated with the minutes.

ACTION item 46.2 Neil Holmes to share FNQROC details with Grenof for engagement on Project Halogen, the new chlor-alkali facility being developed in Gladstone.

10 WATER SKILLS PARTNERSHIP - SARAH HENRY, QLD WATER

Sarah Henry, Water Skills Partnership Manager, QLD Water provided a presentation on the Water Skills Partnership.

A copy of the Water Skills Partnership presentation circulated with the minutes.

The *'Say What You Are'* campaign was discussed, with council's encouraged to share the message with their water staff that water specific titles should ideally be used in the upcoming 2026 Census to enable better water workforce recognition and planning.

ACTION ITEM 46.3 Councils encouraged to share details of QLD Water's 'Say What You Are' campaign with their staff message that water specific titles should ideally be used in the upcoming 2026 Census.

Sarah also encouraged councils to register their interest and number of potential attendees for the Water Industry Supervisor Essentials (WISE) Course They ideally need a minimum of 10 staff to attend to make the training viable at an approximate cost of between $1,200 and $1,300 per person.

ACTION ITEM 46.4 Councils encouraged to register their interest and number of potential attendees for the QLD Water Industry Supervisor Essentials (WISE) Course potentially taking place in Cairns, with Sarah Henry, QLD Water.

11 REGIONAL JOINT PURCHASING – AMANDA HANCOCK, FNQROC

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

- Regional Collection & Beneficial Reuse of Biosolids
- Regional Leak Detection
- Regional Sewer Relining
  Amanda advised intent to submit a QWRAP funding application in 26/27 for the Program Coordinator service, subject to a new deed being place.
- Regional Supply & Delivery of Water Chemicals
- Drinking Water Quality Management Plan Audits - Completed

12 WATER INDUSTRY WORKER – LEE-ANNE WILLIS

Lee-Anne Willis provided the following update:

Cert III in Water Industry Operations (WIO)

- Douglas and Cairns are undergoing Network training – due to complete the face-to-face training in July 2026.
- Cassowary Coast, Tablelands, Mareeba and Cairns are in a cohort undergoing treatment training.
- Cook and Wujal Wujal are in a cohort undergoing treatment training.
- The two treatment groups will run back-to-back training.
- NWQWRA with Carpentaria is looking at starting a treatment cohort – Croydon was looking to join this cohort; however, operator is no longer able. If plans change, they can still join in the cohort.

Cert IV in Water Industry Operations (WIO)

- Trility are currently undergoing eligibility checks for those expressed interest in Cert IV – this is Cairns and Douglas for FNQROC at this stage.
- Still time to join in this training, councils can reach out to Lee-Anne.

WIW Program Funding

- The funding for the WIW program with a dedicated L&D coordinator ceases on 30 June 2026.
- As QWRAP is waiting on the Deed to be arranged and signed, the WIMWA is unable to submit a Bid Pool application for this program to continue.
- Therefore, Lee-Anne will start a handover process of the WIW program, working with councils and RTOs to continue without the services of the Program Coordinator.

13 WATER SUPPLY REGULATION

A written update was provided by Giovannella Carini for circulation with the minutes.

14 QUEENSLAND HEALTH – JACINTA RYAN

Jacinta Ryan, Environmental Health Officer, Queensland Health advised that she was attending on behalf of Christopher Land, Senior Environmental Health Officer – Water, Queensland Health.

15 GENERAL BUSINESS

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

Cassowary Coast Regional Council advised they had received a request for QAO for self-assessment in association with the Managing Queensland's regional water quality report.

Cairns Regional Council advised supply issues in relation to PVC pipework – 100 ml in particular.

16 UPCOMING EVENTS

Dept of Local Government, Water & Volunteers – Annual Regulatory Workshop – Cairns, 21 April 2026

QLD Water, Water Connections Tour – 11 May 2026 – 14 May 2026

AWA, OzWater 2026 – Brisbane, 26 May 2026 – 28 May 2026

WIOA, Queensland Conference & Exhibition – Gold Coast, 24-25 June 2026

QLD Water, Wastewater Quality & Trade Waste Workshop – Brisbane, 22-23 July 2026

QLD Water, Annual Forum – Brisbane, 19-20 August 2026

17 NEXT MEETING

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 2pm

Minutes prepared by Amanda Hancock, Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator

ACTION ITEMS

Action Item	Action	Responsible Person(s)
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.	ESC, HSC & YASC outstanding
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.	FNQROC
46.1	Joshua Heberlein, to investigate the availability and potential provision of SWIMS for school site visits.	Josh Heberlein DLGW&V
46.2	Neil Holmes to share FNQROC details with Grenof for engagement on Project Halogen, the new chlor-alkali facility being developed in Gladstone.	Neil Holmes, QLD Water
46.3	Councils encouraged to share details of QLD Water's 'Say What You Are' campaign with their staff message that water specific titles should ideally be used in the upcoming 2026 Census.	All Councils
46.4	Councils encouraged to register their interest and number of potential attendees for the QLD Water Industry Supervisor Essentials (WISE) Course potentially taking place in Cairns, with Sarah Henry, QLD Water.	All Councils