



OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

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Abstract

These FNQROC Operational Guidelines guide resourcing, media releases, formal correspondence, technical committees, Regional Road and Transport Group, Communication, Presentations to the FNQROC Board and our policies.

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1. Purpose and Scope

1.1. Purpose

These operational Guidelines establish a consistent, transparent, and efficient framework for the governance, decision-making, and operations of FNQROC.

They support the delivery of FNQROC's Strategic and Operational Plan by:

- Clarifying roles, responsibilities, and authority
- Supporting effective regional collaboration
- Enabling timely and coordinated advocacy and decision-making

1.2. Scope

These guidelines apply to:

- FNQROC Board
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- FNQROC Staff
- Advisory Committees
- Technical Committees

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the FNQROC Communication Strategy

2. FNQROC Staff

For clarity, FNQROC staff supporting the delivery of the FNQROC Board priorities are employed through Cairns Regional Council.

2.1. The FNQROC employs a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on terms and conditions agreed by member Councils and the Chief Executive Officer.

2.2. The CEO is responsible for:

- providing effective leadership and business direction within the FNQROC region
- Delivering FNQROC priorities in alignment with the Strategic and Operational Plan
- Managing staff and resources within the approved budget.

3. Resources

3.1. The CEO will present a draft annual budget (typically around March) for Board consideration and adoption.

4. Media Releases

4.1. Media releases may be initiated by any member council or the CEO.

4.2. All releases will be prepared by the CEO (or delegate).

4.3. The Chair is the principal spokesperson for FNQROC.

4.4. The CEO may make media statements on:

- Adopted FNQROC Positions, and
- Operational or administrative matters.

4.5. Draft releases will be:

- Approved by the Chair, and
- Circulated to the Board for information prior to release.

4.6. Where urgent timeframes apply, releases may proceed with Chair approval and be circulated as soon as practicable.

4.7. All Approved releases will be distributed to Mayors and CEOs for information.

5. Formal Correspondence

5.1. Formal FNQROC correspondence will be signed as follows:

- The FNQROC Chair is to sign all formal correspondence to Ministers, and
- The CEO: all other formal correspondence

6. Advisory Committees

6.1. Establishment

Advisory committees may be established by the FNQROC Board where:

- Elected member input is required, and
- The matter cannot be effectively addressed at Board level.

The Board will consider:

- Strategic Value
- Need for elected member insight
- Impact on decision-making efficiency

6.2. Operations

Advisory Committees will be supported by FNQROC staff and be required to:

1. Develop a term of reference (ToR),
2. Provide updates to each FNQROC Board meeting
3. Submit minutes for inclusion in Board agendas

6.3. Authority

Advisory Committees:

1. Provide strategic guidance, validity (social licence) of initiatives and challenge the technical.
2. Review and endorse proposed directions to the FNQROC Board.
3. Must be able to commit or seek commitment from their council

All FNQROC branded advocacy requires CEO approval.

6.4. Recommendations to the Board

Recommendations should be limited to significant matters, including:

- Funding requests
- Strategic or public-facing initiatives

Submission pathways include:

- Board report – endorsed by the Advisory Committee and CEO
- Discussion Paper – where CEO endorsement is not provided, or further consideration is required.

7. Technical Committees

7.1. Establishment

Technical Committees require Board endorsement and must demonstrate:

- a. Alignment with FNQROC Strategic Direction
- b. Clear purpose and regional value, and
- c. Availability of resources

Requests may originate from:

- a. The Board,
- b. Member Councils
- c. Existing committees
- d. External stakeholders

7.2. Operations

Technical Committees will:

4. Develop a term of reference (TOR),
5. Prepare an annual operational plan aligned with FNQROC priorities.
6. Submit meeting minutes for Board agendas.

7.3. Authority

Technical Committees:

- Can not commit member councils without Board approval.
- The term 'commit' could be interpreted broadly and if guidance is needed between Board meetings it should be sought through the CEO.

7.4. Recommendations to the Board

It is expected through regional collaborations that recommendations to the FNQROC Board will come from technical committees. These recommendations will vary in complexity and depth.

Recommendations may be presented as:

- For noting ("tick and flick")
this can be highlighted within the FNQROC Agenda under the relevant minutes for noting.
- Board Report
- For complex or strategic matters. This report is signed off by the relevant Coordinator and or the CEO.
- Discussion paper used when:
 - Further guidance is required
 - council wants to raise an issue for discussion
 - The CEO does not support a recommendation from an advisory or technical committee

8. FNQ Regional Road and Transport Group (FNQRRTG)

Given the alignment of FNQROC and the FNQRRTG, FNQROC supports the administration of the FNQ RRTG.

The FNQRRTG operates under its own constitution and guidelines, in accordance with the Roads Alliance. These are complimentary to FNQROC's Charter and Operational Guidelines.

9. Communication

The FNQROC Board has adopted a Communication Strategy which covers expectations of FNQROC Staff and committee representatives.

10. Presentations to the FNQROC Board

Presentations to the FNQROC Board will be limited to:

- the first hour of Board meetings and
- 20mins in duration(generally).

The CEO in consultation with (where needed) the Chair will determine presenters. The priority order for presentations is:

1. FNQROC Board invited presenters and Federal/State Members
2. State/Federal Agency department heads (i.e. Director General, Deputy DG)
3. Strategic Priority topics
4. Agency matters impacting Local Government.
5. Regional Organisations i.e. TTNQ, RDA, Advance Cairns
6. All others

11. Policies

Policies will be developed and reviewed as required to support effective governance and delivery of strategic priorities.

12. Submissions and Advocacy Protocol

To establish a consistent, transparent and efficient processes for the development, endorsement and submission of FNQROC submission to external agencies the following principles apply:

- Represent collective regional interests
- Maintain strategic alignment with FNQROC priorities
- Enable timely and effective responses to government consultations
- Ensure appropriate governance and oversight
- Provide clarity and transparency to member councils

FNQROC will seek to ensure that no Board member is surprised by a submission that carries strategic, political or reputational implications.

12.1. Submission Categories

12.1.1. Strategic Submissions

Strategic submissions are those that:

- Have significant regional, political or advocacy implications
- Relate to governance, or legislative reform
- May impact multiple councils at a strategic or policy level

Approval Requirements

- a. Where the position is not already captured in existing FNQROC policy or Board endorsed positions – FNQROC Board endorsement is required
- b. Where the submission is consistent with existing FNQROC policy – Approval by the CEO

12.1.2. Operational Submissions

Operational submissions are those that:

- Are technical or program specific
- Align with existing FNQROC priorities
- Require subject matter expertise such as from Technical Committees

Approval requirement:

Approval by CEO

12.2. Escalation:

An operational submission must be escalated to the Board where it:

- Has known political sensitivity
- Conflicts with an existing FNQROC position
- May have reputational implications for FNQROC
- Has mixed or contested views from member councils
- Introduces a new or emerging strategic policy position.
- Has an impact on FNQROC Budget approval levels.

12.3. Out of Session Motions (between Board Meetings)

It is recognised that some submissions and advocacy matters arise outside scheduled Board meetings and require timely consideration.

To ensure responsiveness while maintaining appropriate governance, matters may be progressed outside a Board meeting when submission deadlines fall before the next scheduled Board meeting, and three or more member councils request an FNQROC response.

Where this occurs, the draft submission will be shared with all member councils for comment and a vote.

A successful vote is 50% plus 1.

12.4. Decision making in Uncertain Circumstances

Where there is uncertainty, the CEO will consult with the Chair and or Deputy Chair to determine whether escalation to the full Board is required.

Where uncertainty remains, the matter will be escalated to the Board.