

FNQ Regional Water Alliance

Minutes

Meeting No	47
Meeting Name	FNQ Regional Water Alliance
Date	18 June 2026
Time	9:30am
Venue	McKenzie Room, Level 2, Cairns Regional Council, Spence Street, Cairns

1. ATTENDANCE

Name	Organisation
Adam Schmalz <i>via teleconference</i>	Cairns Regional Council
Josh Smith <i>via teleconference</i>	Cairns Regional Council
Shane Bandiera	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Simon Page <i>via teleconference</i>	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Dan Dixon <i>via teleconference</i>	Croydon Shire Council
Peter White <i>via teleconference</i>	Douglas Shire Council
Nadine Riethmuller <i>via teleconference</i>	Hinchinbrook Shire Council
Morris Hamill <i>via teleconference</i>	Mareeba Shire Council
Aditya Mishra <i>via teleconference</i>	Mareeba Shire Council
Emma Taylor <i>via teleconference</i>	Mareeba Shire Council
Charles Dyer	Tablelands Regional Council
Jennifer Hartwig <i>via teleconference</i>	LGAQ
Jacinta Ryan <i>via teleconference</i>	Queensland Health
Louise Reeves <i>via teleconference</i>	Queensland Water
Amanda Hancock	FNQROC

2. APOLOGIES

Name	Organisation
Kristina Davidson	Cook Shire Council
Asa Pasanen	Douglas Shire Council
Alan Clark	Etheridge Shire Council
Onesimo Mukodo	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
Mark Vis	Tablelands Regional Council
Arek Sowula	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
Sam Bann	Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

Giovannella Carini	DLGWV
Ingrid Fomiatti Minnesma	DLGWV
Brett Rip	DLGWV
Neil Holmes	QLD Water
Christopher Land	QLD Health
Brad Milligan	QLD Health

3. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes noted and accepted.

4. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Item No	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 & YASC outstanding	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	First meeting scheduled for Friday 26 June 2026
46.1	Joshua Heberlein, to investigate the availability and potential provision of SWIMS for school site visits.	Josh Heberlein DLGW&V	Outstanding
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	Complete See Item 5
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	Complete
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	CRC have nominated council officers. CCRC and DSC also plan to send nominations.

10.18am Josh Smith arrived at the meeting

5. PROJECT HALOGEN, GRENOF – AMANDA HANCOCK, FNQROC

Amanda advised:

- FNQROC have been contacted by Grenof Water Technologies who are building a new domestic chlor-alkali facility in Gladstone in partnership with Queensland Investment Corporation (QIC).
- New source of chlorine and related chemicals in Queensland from 2028.
- Grenof are keen to understand regional demand and delivery requirements and would like to engage with councils.
- Current contract expires 31 May 2027 with the option to extend by a further 12 months
- The Water Alliance agreed that Grenof should be invited to the next Water Alliance meeting to provide an overview of the facility.

ACTION ITEM 47.1 FNQROC to invite Grenof Water Technologies to the next Water Alliance meeting to provide an overview of the new chlor-alkali facility being built in Gladstone.

Amanda further advised:

- The NHMRC has an open consultation on proposed guidance for ammonia, nickel and chlorate with a new health-based guideline value for chlorate in drinking water.
- The proposed change will introduce a health-based guideline value for chlorate in drinking water of 0.8 mg/L that will apply to the ADWG.
- Councils confirmed that they are not currently experiencing significance incidences of exceedances of the guidelines value and no immediate plans for any council to move from the use of liquid chlorine to chlorine gas.
- Louise Reeves kindly shared a link of a WSAA chlorate discussion which councils may find of benefit.

Recording link to chlorate discussion shared with permission from WSAA circulated with the minutes.

6. REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE (RDRP) – AMANDA HANCOCK

Amanda advised:

- Round One Leak Detection project is underway with the plan to use underspent funds on flow meters and valve replacements.
- Project proposals for Round Two funding have been submitted and following a project prioritisation process undertaken by the FNQRO Climate Resilience Technical Committee, the Regional Water Monitoring project proposed at the last Water Alliance meeting has been supported for submission to the DPI.
- The RDRP regions differ slightly from the FNQROC footprint
- If approved, we will potentially be allocated \$210,000 as follows:
 - Gulf Hinterland - \$75,000 Mareeba Shire Council
 - Wet Tropics - \$135,000 Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- Whilst the proposed funding will only support a limited number of flow meter installations, if the project proves successful it may provide a foundation for seeking additional funding through future programs such as QWRAP.

7. REGIONAL WATER CAPABILITY PLAN – AMANDA HANCOCK, FNQROC

8.1 Regional Asset Criticality Assessment

Amanda advised:

- 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.
- FNQROC are still 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 Hinchinbrook Shire Council and Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council.
- Invitations for the first SACDA Sub-Committee meeting on Friday 26 June 2026 have been sent.
- Draft Terms of Reference for the Sub-Committee and the Project Scope have been developed for discussion and agreement.
- Updates will be provided to the Water Alliance on the work of the Sub-Committee at each meeting.

8.3 Building and sustaining and strong water workforce in FNQ.

- FNQROC sent an email on 26 May 2026 seeking representatives to participate in a Water Workforce Sub-Committee.
- The Sub-Committee will act as Subject Matter Experts to help progress the progress the various actions arising out of Initiative 11 of the Water Capability Plan – Building and sustaining a strong water workforce for FNQ.

ACTION ITEM 47.2 Councils to identify and nominate a suitable representative/s to participate as Subject Matter Experts in the Water Workforce Sub-Committee.

9 QLD WATER – LOUISE REEVES, QLD WATER

Louise Reeves, QLD Water provided an update on QLD Water.

10.57am Nadine Riethmuller departed the meeting

11.05am Dan Dixon departed the meeting

10 QWRAP – JENNIFER HARTWIG, LGAQ

Jennifer Hartwig, LGAQ provided an update on QWRAP.

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

11.17am Jacina Ryan departed the meeting

11.21am Adam Schmalz departed the meeting

- A query was raised by Cassowary Coast regarding the Rural and Remote Capacity Building Project - a \$3m investment for the Queensland Government to deliver targeted training to 24 rural and remote Queensland councils to address workforce challenges.

- Only Etheridge Shire Council, Mareeba Shire Council and Tablelands Regional Council included from the FNQROC region.

ACTION ITEM 47.3 FNQROC to reach out to Isaac Dufficy, Workforce Project Officer at LGAQ to understand the criteria for councils to be included in the Rural and Remote Capacity Building Project.

- Jennifer additionally advised that she would shortly be taking maternity leave and recruitment was underway for someone to fill her role whilst she is on leave.

11 REGIONAL JOINT PURCHASING – AMANDA HANCOCK, FNQROC

Amanda advised that FNQROC are currently facilitating 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

Councils encouraged to let FNQROC know if there are any other opportunities for joint purchasing.

12 WATER INDUSTRY WORKER – LEE-ANNE WILLIS

Lee-Anne Willis, WIW 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 that 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 30th 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.

- On behalf of the FNQ Water Alliance, Amanda thanked Lee-Ann for her hard work and commitment to the role, noting that she would be missed.

- Lee-Anne advised that she would shortly be joining QLD Water in the role of Industry Skills and Jos Advisor (ISJA) Project Manager, leading workforce development initiatives for Queensland’s urban water sector.

11.28am Lee-Anne Willis departed the meeting

11.31am Emma Taylor departed the meeting

13 GENERAL BUSINESS

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

14 UPCOMING EVENTS

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

15 NEXT MEETING

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 11.42am.

Minutes prepared by Amanda Hancock, Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator

ACTION ITEMS

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47.1	FNQROC to invite Grenof Water Technologies to the next Water Alliance meeting to provide an overview of the new chlor-alkali facility being built in Gladstone.	FNQROC
47.2	Councils to identify and nominate a suitable representative/s to participate as SUBJECT Matter Experts in the Water Workforce Sub-Committee.	All Councils
47.3	FNQROC to reach out to Isaac Dufficy, Workforce Project Officer at LGAQ to understand the criteria for councils to be included in the Rural and Remote Capacity Building Project.	FNQROC