

FNQ Regional Water Alliance

Minutes

Meeting No	48
Meeting Name	FNQ Regional Water Alliance
Date	28 August 2026
Time	9:30am
Venue	McKenzie Room, Level 2, Cairns Regional Council, Spence Street, Cairns

1. ATTENDANCE

Name	Organisation
Josh Smith <i>via teleconference</i>	Cairns Regional Council
Shane Bandiera	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Simon Page	Cassowary Coast Regional Council
Kristina Davidson	Cook Shire Council
Rajith Jayasekara <i>via teleconference</i>	Croydon Shire Council
Connan Negus <i>via teleconference</i>	Douglas Shire Council
Morris Hamill	Mareeba Shire Council
Charles Dyer	Tablelands Regional Council
Amanda Hancock	FNQROC

2. GUESTS

Name	Organisation
Giovannella Carini <i>via teleconference</i>	DLGWV
Daniel Field <i>via teleconference</i>	LGAQ
Neil Holmes <i>via teleconference</i>	QLD Water
Jacinta Ryan <i>via teleconference</i>	Queensland Health
Maria Anselmo <i>via teleconference</i>	FNQROC

3. APOLOGIES

Name	Organisation
Adam Schmalz	Cairns Regional Council
Dan Dixon	Croydon Shire Council
Asa Pasanen	Douglas Shire Council

Peter White	Douglas Shire Council
Shane Butler	Etheridge Shire Council
Alan Clark	Etheridge Shire Council
Nadine Riethmuller	Hinchinbrook Shire Council
Onesimo Mukodo	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
Emma Koper	Mareeba Shire Council
Aditya Mishra	Mareeba Shire 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

4. CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes noted and accepted.

5. 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.	HSC & YASC	No further nominations received. See Item 10
46.1	Joshua Heberlein, to investigate the availability and potential provision of SWIMS for school site visits.	Joshua Heberlein	Complete
SWIMS initially provided by Joshua were for working with heights as opposed to organizing a field trip. Joshua then provided a link to EDQ policy on arranging a school excursion was provided but noted that there does not appear to be single SWIMS. A link to their list of hazard and risk control documents was also provided.			
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	Complete
Training took place in Cairns on 28 & 29 July 2026 with delegates from CRC & CCRC.			
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	Outstanding
47.2	Councils to identify and nominate a suitable representative/s to participate as Subject Matter Experts in the Water Workforce Sub-Committee.	AI Councils	Outstanding
47.3	FNQROC to reach out to Isaac Dufficy, Workforce Project Officer at LGAQ to understand the criteria for councils to	FNQROC	Outstanding

	be included in the Rural and Remote Capacity Building Project.		
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6. QWRAP UPDATE – DANIEL FIELD, LGAQ

Daniel Field provided a presentation on the following:

- QWRAP update
- LGAQ Advocacy
- Rural & Remote Capacity Building Project
- Indigenous Capacity Building Project

Daniel offered to find out some more information about the criteria for councils to be included in the Rural and Remote Capacity Building project.

7. QUEENSLAND WATER UPDATE – NEIL HOLMES, QLD WATER

Neil Holmes provided a Queensland Water update.

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

A question was raised regarding the potential extension of the Water Industry Worker program, with councils noting the absence of this position is having an impact on their operations. It was advised that the program is currently being considered by the QWRAP Project Steering Committee.

8. REGIONAL DROUGHT RESILIENCE PLAN (RDRP) UPDATE – MARIA ANSELMO, FNQROC

Maria Anselmo provided an update on the Regional Drought Resilience Plan (RDRP).

- Round 1 has reached its halfway point with projects progressing well with project variations approved for Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Hinchinbrook Shire Council and Mareeba Shire Council to deliver targeted water monitoring improvements.
- Round 2 - Eleven project applications have been submitted to the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) supporting initiatives that strengthen drought and climate resilience across the region.
- Three projects will be of particular interest to the Water Alliance –
 - Regional Water Monitoring – Installation of flow meters at Cassowary Coast Regional Council and Mareeba Shire Council - FNQROC led project
 - Water Audit Training – Audit training for council staff – Cairns Regional Council led project
 - Water Sensitive Urban Design Standards for councils – Cairns Regional Council led project
- Advice on the outcomes of the various applications are expected in December 2026.

10:21am Maria Anselmo departed the meeting

9. REGIONAL WATER CAPABILITY PLAN – AMANDA HANCOCK, FNQROC

Amanda shared the presentation she recently delivered at the QWRAP Chairs and Coordinators Forum, which provide an overview of the status and progress of the three projects being delivered as part of the Regional Water Capability Plan.

8.1 Regional Asset Criticality Assessment

- The QWRAP Deed due to expire on 30 June 2026 has been extended through to 31 December 2026.
- A QWRAP Bid-Pool variation application was submitted on 15 July 2026, and we are currently awaiting approval.
- If approved, the first stage of the FNQROC Regional Water and Wastewater Asset Criticality Assessment – Options Analysis will need to be completed and acquitted by 18 December 2026.
- It was noted that councils may wish to defer the project pending the possible execution of a new Deed, which may provide more time for project delivery.
- Should councils choose to proceed, it was acknowledged that the project has already been deferred once following the original application due to concerns regarding delivery timeframes. Councils would therefore need to commit to being available to work with the consultant appointed to undertake the project.
- All councils agreed to proceed with the project, acknowledging the proposed timelines and associated commitments.

8.2 SCADA Sub-Committee

- The first FNQ SCADA sub-committee meeting took place at the end of June 2026.
- The committee discussed the Terms of Reference and Project Scope which will be reviewed by each committee member ahead of the next meeting
- Committee members will also consider priority projects for inclusion in the project plan.
- All agreed that there is considerable value in developing a degree of regional standardisation across SCADAs systems and processes, while maintaining sufficient flexibility to accommodate the individual operation requirements, resources and circumstances of each council.

A copy of the FNQ Water Alliance – SCADA Sub-Committee Meeting No.1 Minutes – 26 June 2026 circulated the minutes.

8.3 Building and sustaining and strong water workforce in FNQ.

- Despite a previous request and reminder for nominations, councils are yet to nominate a Subject Matter Expert (SME) to participate in the Water Workforce Sub-Committee.
- Councils to nominate a representative asap.

10. FNQROC ADVOCACY – AMANDA HANCOCK, FNQROC

Amanda advised that the QWRAP Chair and Coordinators presentation also include an update on FNROC Water Advocacy at the recent State and Federal Government delegations.

A copy of the FNQ Water Alliance presentation to the QWRAP Chairs and Coordinators Forum circulated with the minutes.

10:50 Charles Dyer departed the meeting.

10:57am Neil Holmes & Daniel Field departed the meeting

11. REGIONAL JOINT PURCHASING – AMANDA HANCOCK, FNQROC

Amanda advised that the tender was currently being evaluated for the Regional Sewer Relining, Manhole Rehab and Gravity Manhole Refurb.

The following arrangements are ongoing:

- Leak Detection (RDRP)
- Supply & Delivery of Water Chemicals
- Collection & Beneficial Reuse of Biosolids

12. WATER SUPPLY REGULATION UPDATE – JO CARINI, WATER SUPPLY REGULATION, DLGWV

Jo Carini provided the following update:

- **Annual Reports Due 17 December 2026.**
Service providers are encouraged to submit early where possible. Providers anticipating delays should contact their allocated officer as early as possible to discuss support options.
- **Guideline for the Preparation, Review and Audit of Drinking Water Quality Management Plans**
Review and consultation continuing through the working group (Queensland Water, Department, selected water service providers and the Water Security team), with the next meeting scheduled for September 2026. Current guidelines remain in effect until the revised guidelines are officially published.
- **WSR Workshops**
Brisbane workshop held on 25 August 2026 with strong attendance and valuable stakeholder input. Upcoming workshops scheduled for Charleville (2 September 2026) and Townsville (12 October 2026, prior to the AWA Conference).
- **Commissioning of New or Upgraded Infrastructure**
Draft best practice document being developed by WSR, Queensland Health and Public Health Units to support a consistent understanding of commissioning expectations across stakeholders. The document is guidance only and not a regulatory requirement.
 - Early engagement with regulators throughout planning, design, DWQMP development, commissioning and validation is encouraged to support a smoother approval process.
 - Ongoing engagement throughout the project lifecycle can help streamline DWQMP amendment and approval processes and ensure new or upgraded infrastructure is appropriately reflected in the DWQMP.

13. QUEENSLAND HEALTH UPDATE – JACINTA RYAN, ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Jacinta Ryan provided the following update:

- Brad Milligan is no longer with Cairns Public Health Unit
- The new Manager of Environmental Health (MEH) is Andrew D'addona

14. GENERAL BUSINESS

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

Shane Bandeira requested that councils with staff interested in undertaking Certificate III or Certificate IV 4 training advise him as soon as possible to assist with planning and coordination.

ACTION ITEM 48.1 Councils with staff interested in undertaking Certificate III or Certificate IV 4 training to advise Shane Bandeira, Cassowary Coast Regional Council as soon as possible to assist with planning and coordination.

15. UPCOMING EVENTS

- 30 Sept -to 2 Oct - IPWEA-QNT Annual Conference, Sunshine Coast
- 13-14 October - AWA Qld Conference, Townsville
- 16 October - WIOA FNQ Interest Day, Cairns
- 13 November - AWA QLD Gala Dinner & Awards 2026, Brisbane

16. NEXT MEETING

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 11.46am.

Minutes prepared by Amanda Hancock, Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator

ACTION ITEMS

Item No.	Action	Responsible Person(s)
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
48.1	Councils with staff interested in undertaking Certificate III or Certificate IV 4 training to advise Shane Bandeira, Cassowary Coast Regional Council as soon as possible to assist with planning and coordination.	All Councils