



**FNQROC**

# **ADVOCACY REPORT**

**FNQROC**

**Mayoral Delegation**

**22-24 November 2021**

# FNQ REGIONAL PRIORITIES AT A GLANCE



## REQUEST

Confirm federal commitment to \$21.5 million for a Strategic Assessment of Service Requirements (SASR), and Preliminary Evaluation and Business Case put on the table in November 2019 under the major Project Business Case Fund.

## REQUEST

Dedicated funding program aimed at increasing high productivity vehicles (HPV) access to and from gazetted transport routes.

## REQUEST

That the Roads of Strategic Importance (ROSI) program continues, and additional funds are added to enable the full efficiency outcomes for HPVs.

## WATER



## REQUEST

Within the National Water Initiative, pricing policy:

- Recognised the economic life of a dam as 100 years, and
- Recognise irrigators are not the sole economic beneficiaries of bulk water supplies and make changes to the pricing policies that reflect/acknowledge indirect economic beneficiaries

## REQUEST

Federal and Queensland government to invest in the future of our region by committing \$215 million to the Cairns Water Security Stage 1 project, just as they have for other regional cities.

## HOUSING



## REQUEST

Development of a National Housing Strategy

## DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY



## REQUEST

More strategic governance of federal and state funding to programs (such as Mobile Black spot Program and Regional Connectivity Program) to meet actual needs of remote people.

## REQUEST

Universal Service Guarantee to be further strengthened and enforced in remote areas, including relieving the onus on individuals to acquire high levels of expertise to enact their rights to voice and internet services.

## REQUEST

Digital literacy interventions - Active promotion of the Regional Tech Hub and other resources that are already available to consumers, but which are not promoted widely in FNQ, such as IoT coverage maps and solutions, and telcos' dedicated regional and enterprise services support (e.g., Telstra Enterprise, NBN Local).

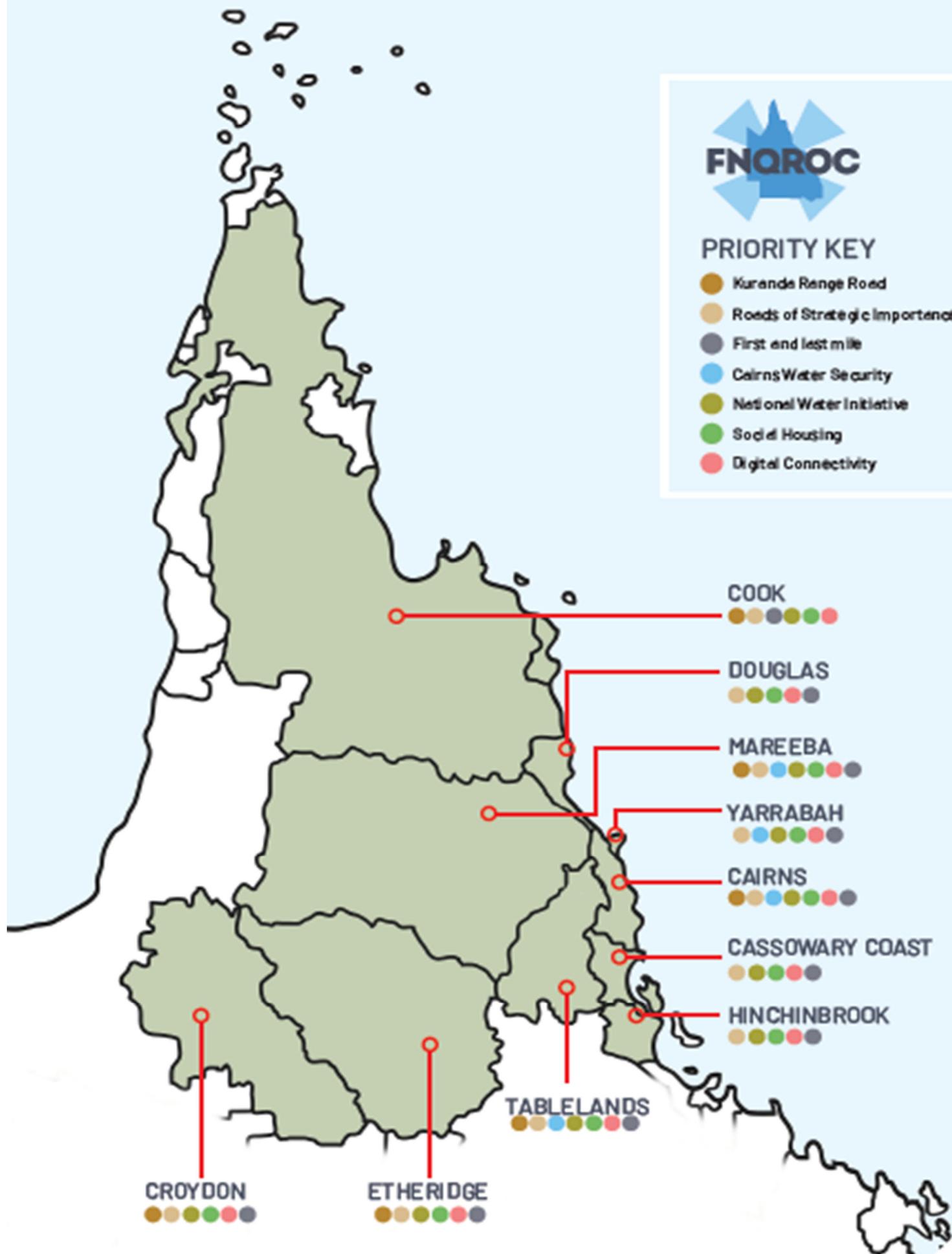
## REQUEST

Private Network Extension - More extensively utilise microwave radio networks to extend fixed broadband service to smaller regional communities or properties. The options may provide point-to-point or point-to-multipoint solutions potentially servicing multiple endpoints.



## PRIORITY KEY

- Kuranda Range Road
- Roads of Strategic Importance
- First and last mile
- Cairns Water Security
- National Water Initiative
- Social Housing
- Digital Connectivity





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## DELEGATION MEMBERS

- **Cr Michael Kerr, FNQROC Chair**  
Mayor, Douglas Shire Council
- **Cr Mark Nolan, Mayor**  
Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- **Cr Peter Scott, Mayor**  
Cook Shire Council
- **Cr Trevor Pickering, Mayor**  
Croydon Shire Council
- **Cr Barry Hughes, Mayor**  
Etheridge Shire Council
- **Cr Angela Toppin, FNQROC Deputy Chair**  
Mayor, Mareeba Shire Council
- **Cr Rod Marti, Mayor**  
Tablelands Regional Council
- **Cr Jason Woibo, Mayor**  
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
- **Cr Bradley Creek, Mayor**  
Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
- **Nick Massasso, Executive Project Officer**  
Cairns Regional Council
- **Mr Stephen Wilton, CEO**  
Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council
- **Ms Darlene Irvine**  
FNQROC Executive Officer

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## FEDERAL PRIORITIES

Key priority projects as identified by the Board and advocated for during this Mayoral Delegation, align with the FNQROC Strategic Economic Priorities of:

- **ROAD INVESTMENT**
- **WATER**
- **HOUSING**
- **COMMUNICATIONS/DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY**

Key Briefing Notes can be accessed via links below

- [FNQROC Federal Priorities](#)
- [Kuranda Range Road](#)
- [FNQROC Regional Roads Investment Strategy – Heavy Vehicle Productivity](#)
- [FNQROC - Regional Roads Investment Strategy – Heavy Vehicle Freight Networks](#)
- [FNQROC – Regional Roads Investment Strategy – Tourism Routes and estimated economic value](#)
- [Long Term Analysis of the role of Dams](#)
- [FNQROC Mobile Coverage Audit](#)

## FNQROC PRIORITY PROJECTS



### ROADS

- Kuranda Range Road
- Roads of Strategic Importance
- First and Last Mile (Heavy Vehicle Productivity Routes)



### WATER

- Cairns Water Security Stage 1 Project
- National Water Initiative – Pricing Policy



### HOUSING

- Development of a National housing strategy



### COMMUNICATIONS

- Digital Connectivity



Hon Chris Bowen, Andrew Garrett, Cr Toppin, Cr Woibo, Cr Nolan, Cr Scott, Cr Hughes, Cr Kerr, Cr Marti, D Irvine and N. Massasso.

**Hon Chris Bowen**

Shadow Minister for Climate Change and Energy

**Senior Advisor**  
Andrew Garrett

**Key Topics and Discussions**

- Kuranda Range Road
- Priority Road funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Water / Dams
- Digital Connectivity
- National Housing Strategy
- Climate Resilience project across Yarrabah, Cairns, Mareeba and Tablelands

Important opportunity in regions. Would like to continue conversation about how they would be able to assist if they form government. \$20b finance facility transmission rewiring. As a country need to bring cheaper cleaner power across the country. The country has ancient transmission grid. Big barrier to getting generation from the area. Where needed, \$20 build plan for developers and transmission distribution companies. For consumers industrial and residential that will flow through to cheaper power prices.

Important to get roads for high production vehicles.

**Outcome Outcomes / Follow Up:**



Cr Hughes, N. Massasso, Cr Kerr, Cr Nolan, Hon Senator Stoker, Cr Toppin, Cr Woibo

**Hon Senator Amanda Stoker**

Senator for Queensland  
Assistant Minister to Attorney-General  
Assistant Minister for Industrial Relations  
Assistant Minister for Women

**Key Topics and Discussions**

- National Housing Strategy
- Dam Study
- Digital Connectivity and Blackspots
- Kuranda Range Road
- Priority Road Funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)

Senator Stoker acknowledged that a National Housing Strategy was needed.

Digital Connectivity – Senator Stoker concerned that Telco’s were not promoting this. Opportunity lies in the ability to decentralise.

Kuranda Range Road – important conversations were already in play.

Senator Stoker has read the Dam Study and said it was a good piece of work.

**Outcomes / Follow Up**

- D. Irvine to send:
- a. Mobile Blackspot Audit, and
  - b. recent study on solutions for improved Digital Connectivity in FNQ  
(Completed)

# ADVOCACY REPORT



Hon Warren Entsch, Cr Toppin, Cr Hughes, Cr Nolan, Cr Kerr, D. Irvine, N. Massasso, Cr Scott, Cr Woibo

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## Hon Warren Entsch Member for Leichhardt

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Kuranda Range and other road funding
- Priority road funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Dams
- National Housing Strategy
- Digital Connectivity

Hon Warren Entsch – Ootann Road, acknowledged that 80km stretch of road still needed to be sealed. Advised FNQROC to keep going seeking commitment to finish project. If there are no further committed funds for Ootann Road by 2023 make sure to push it.

National Housing Strategy - Millions of dollars have been put into Indigenous housing. State allocated the money into areas they shouldn't have.

State to acknowledge there is a need to focus in other areas. Make sure that sufficient money allocated to rural and remote communities.

Kuranda Range Road – Alternative route –(old Bridle Track)

State government has got Cairns to Northern Tablelands Study and are yet to release it. Minister Littleproud has \$21.5m in Major Business Case, need to push the State to apply for it and consider the alternative route as an option.

Dam on the Palmer River, hoping to announce early next year.

Cr Nolan raised the growing of medicinal Cannabis – what can be done to progress. Mr Entsch will pass more information on to Cr Nolan.

Cr Woibo raised Silica mines and putting in a hydro plant to feed back into grid.

### Outcomes / Follow Up

Mr Entsch to pass on information regarding growing medicinal cannabis to Cr Nolan



Senator James McGrath, Cr Hughes, Cr Nolan, Cr Kerr, D. Irvine, Cr Scott, Cr Woibo

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## Senator James McGrath Senator for Queensland

### Advisors

Robyn Cross and Pat Hancock

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Housing
- Kuranda Range Road
- Priority Road funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Dams
- Gilbert River Project
- Proposed Douglas lagoon project

Senator McGrath - Big issue in Queensland is building houses or renovating them. Issue is right across Queensland. Massive issue in terms of housing supply. Unsure what role the Federal government can do. Builders having problems getting goods and supplies and professionals to do the work. Senator McGrath happy to do what he can.

Senator McGrath will do everything he can to help in the region and is doing a lot behind the scenes. Believes the FNQROC priorities are a reasonable doable list.

Kuranda Range is a priority – Senator Susan McDonald and Senator McGrath had a meeting about Kuranda Range recently. Whatever he can do in regard to opening up the Tablelands, not just for residents but for business across the region.

Senator McGrath will be back in FNQ in the new year to discuss the priorities.

### Outcomes / Follow Up

D. Irvine to forward more information on digital connectivity for Senator McGrath to have a better understanding of the issues.

(Completed)

# ADVOCACY REPORT



Hon Kevin Hogan, Cr Nolan, Cr Kerr, N. Masasso, D. Irvine

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## Hon Kevin Hogan

Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister  
Assistant Minister for Local Government

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Kuranda Range
- Priority Road funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Digital Connectivity
- Water
- Housing

Continuation of ROSI, and focused attention on first and last mile together with Kuranda Range Road.

Is familiar with Dam Study.

Discussion around the National Housing Study and the issues affecting affordability, availability and social.

400,000 people came home to Australia due to COVID which could be a contributor.

Banks won't lend to certain areas i.e. Mossman 4873 in which the banks won't touch.

Housing prices are just crazy and is reflected everywhere.

Single parent with kids is difficult. How do we put a door stop on the market?

FNQ Regional Plan is an inhibitor for land release. We are pushing the State to update this. National Housing Strategy not a bad idea, he will push for a review of the regional plan as this is a practical idea.

Did not see the housing and employment issues occurring. If we can get the staff they can't get the housing – reflected all across Australia.

Asked how to fix the staff shortages? Regional Visa is extremely hard and expensive to get. Example given for qualified barber costings \$10,000.

### Outcomes / Follow Up

Write to the Assistant Minister about the FNQ Regional Plan and its impacts on housing and density. (Completed)  
Assistant Minister will come back to us on all our priorities.



Senator Jonathon Duniam, Cr Scott, Cr Hughes

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## Senator Jonathon Duniam

Assistant Minister for Forestry and Fisheries,  
Assistant Minister for Industry Development

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Kuranda Range Road
- Priority Road Funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Dam Study
- Housing
- Digital Connectivity

Agriculture sectors Mareeba and the Tablelands. impediments across broad acre cropping.

Road network below standard. Bringing the roads up to date. To complement those agriculture developments across the region. High priority from a regional perspective.

Kuranda Range Road \$21.5 million under Minister Littleproud portfolio. Being able to get products to major markets. Senator Duniam understands it is on the table but needs to be pushed at state and federal level.

Federal government in support of dams, the Dam Study report makes it easier to get the message across.

Housing - Too much differential between state and federal governments. Way forward is to get a national agreement to get strategy tied down.

Digital Connectivity - Looking for remote serviceability rather than profitability. Connectivity in regions one of the main impediments. Senator Duniam spoke about engagement with Minister Paul Fletcher and Senator Bridget McKenzie.

Cr Scott spoke about Aboriginal freehold land. Any natural resource off aboriginal land should be mandatorily secondary processed.

### Outcomes / Follow Up

Cr Scott to provide more information to Senator Duniam. Cr Barry Hughes spoke about fisheries stocking in new dams. Senator Duniam said it was a State issue within 3 nautical miles and referred Cr Hughes to speak with Minister Mark Furner.

# ADVOCACY REPORT



Craig MacLachlin Chief of Staff, for Minister Peter Dutton, Cr Kerr, D. Irvine, Cr Nolan, Cr Scott, Cr Hughes

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## Craig MacLachlin, Chief of Staff Minister Peter Dutton's Office Minister for Defence

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Defence Naval Base - Weipa

Cr Scott asked if there were any plans to utilise the port in Weipa. Craig said generally, strategic ports are used in the West i.e. Stirling main submarine base. Henderson for other vessels in Sydney. When Defence looks at major ports as a specific base they will look at the other add ons. Will look at sustainment of vessels, family of crew members, schooling of kids and distance of major centers.

Cr Hughes - Australians and Singaporeans, close to his boundary. Acknowledged work and effort going in there and the increased traffic in development stage.

Craig spoke about making the Singaporeans our closest training partner. Good to hear local support and local ambition for improving local infrastructure.



D.Irvine, Cr Kerr, Senator Nita Green, N Massasso, Cr Scott, Cr Hughes, Cr Nolan, Senator Murray Watt

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## Senator Nita Green and Senator Murray Watt Senators for Queensland

### Key Topics and Discussions

- FNQ Regional Plan
- Housing
- Digital Connectivity
- Water Security
- Insurance in FNQ
- Kuranda Range
- Priority Road Funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)

Labor plan to put \$2.6 bill into NBN to make sure it is connecting to most suburbs. Cooktown, Kuranda, Mossman, Holloways, Caravonica and Kanimbla hoping that their plan will extend NBN to those towns. Ms Michelle Rowland looking at announcements before the election and are looking at better connectivity in regional areas. Mobile blackspot program continuing. Will alleviate some of the problems.

LGAQ – housing was the number one issue that came out of a recent meeting. Needing a national housing strategy. Labor has policy around future housing fund. Interest on the fund will be used to build housing and not dip into the budget. Jason Clare addressed LGAQ in Canberra about this issue.

Senator Green keen to keep talking about projects that would be helpful to the region. Would like to see election promises that both sides committed to.

Digital Connectivity – need a universal guarantee.

Water Security - Minister Glenn Butcher, Deputy Premier – formal budget submission. Seeking their support. Want 50/50 funding split commitment to be made in next Queensland and Federal budget.

Senator Green has given feedback on the water security issue. Encouraged it to be framed as a construction project.

Insurance Pool legislation. Federal government promised to have legislation before the election. Labor thinks will cover a niche part of the market.

Cr Scott - Disaster recovery fund - delay in getting the funding. Need to be re-assured of reimbursement. Approval processes should be a lot quicker and streamlined. Would be good if Councils could have a guarantee i.e. 75% guarantee of funding paid. Should be reasonable to have those funds guaranteed.

# ADVOCACY REPORT

Senator Green aware of long delays with fund and would be keen to work with councils to get the problem resolved.

When comes to economic development Labor will continue to support development in northern Australia's traditional industries and new industries. Opportunities in agriculture, resources, tourism.

## Outcomes / Follow Up

- Digital Connectivity – Blackspot report to be sent to Senator Green and Senator Watt. (complete)



Senator Malcolm Roberts, Cr Kerr, D. Irvine, Cr Nolan, Cr Toppin, Cr Hughes

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## Senator Malcolm Roberts

Senator for Queensland

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Kuranda Range Road
- Priority Road Funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Housing
- FNQ Regional Plan
- Digital Connectivity

Discussions raised by the following councils

Cr Hughes - Concerns regarding aging demographic impacting on the livability in the Shires and Communities. Housing an issue in terms of getting young people to the area – issue with housing those people. Push for a national housing strategy.

Resonates with Senator Roberts. As a collective group of Councils, need to come together to push priorities to make inroads. More onus needs to be on the state to say where the funding is going.

FNQ Regional Plan – Acknowledge people emigration from other states and cities to far north Queensland. Mismatch between the levels of government. Federal government collects, state has power and local governments have the problems.

Senator Roberts asked that FNQROC keep on sending through their issues so they are aware.

### Outcomes / Follow Up

Send through the following documents

- Dam Study
- Briefing on Strategic Assessment of the service requirements for the Kuranda Range

(Completed)

# ADVOCACY REPORT



Hon Catherine King, Cr Kerr, D. Irvine, Cr Nolan, Cr Toppin,  
Cr Hughes

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## Hon Catherine King

Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and  
Regional Development

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Kuranda Range Road
- Priority Road Funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Housing
- Water

Hon Catherine King – Has not seen Kuranda Range Road in the budget papers. Major state project fund.

Housing – Jason Clare’s area, announced some time ago \$10mil housing fund.

Stage 1 Water Project, Cairns Regional Council. Shadow Minister aware of that project.

Discussed Federal assistance grant funding 1%. Would like a constant stream rather than grant funding. The Shadow Minister has had that raised before and recognizes the importance. Will pitch loud and clear.

### Outcomes / Follow Up

- Send Regional Roads Investment Strategy
- Provide further information on the Kuranda Range Road. Wanted to know where the commitment of the \$21.5m came from.  
(Completed)



Hon Trevor Evans, Cr Kerr, D. Irvine, Cr Nolan, Cr Toppin,  
Cr Hughes

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## Hon Trevor Evans

Assistant Minister for Waste Reduction and  
Environmental Management

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Kuranda Range Road
- Priority Road Funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Housing
- Water
- Regional Strategic Waste Advisory Group

Waste - Area that is causing great concern. Major ways of treating waste is landfill. Must look at how we work through a circular economy and looking towards better meeting targets on waste. Assistant Minister encourages councils to take a regional approach and was impressed how the Regional Strategic Waste Advisory Group has been proactive.

Waste policy – RDA looking at emerging circular economy around plastics.

Look at guidelines released from NSW State government. Regional and rural recycling facilities and upgrades. National bucket of money. Hoping states will be rolled out by February 2022.

Domestic processing capacity – specific amount earmarked for rural and remote communities. Money just for regional investments. Queensland may take different approach. A national fund to release that.

Digital Connectivity – issues in blackspot areas especially from a DDMG point of view.

### Outcomes / Follow Up

# ADVOCACY REPORT



Hon Dan Tehan, D. Irvine, Cr Kerr, Cr Nolan, Cr Toppin,  
Cr Hughes

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## Hon Dan Tehan

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Kuranda Range Road
- Priority Road Funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Housing
- Regional Plan
- Water

Minister Tehan - Important that federal government step in when state government can't. State roads in regional and rural areas are a problem and are relying more and more on the Commonwealth to supply the funding. Understands regional and rural roads. Need to keep pumping money in to get them upgraded. State Government taking too long and cost blow outs. Councils keep coming back for more money. Wants to work with Warren Entsch to get these things done.

Cr Hughes - Gilbert river, from investment point of view, high value add. Working with RDA in progressing approach on the Gilbert River. Navigate state and regulatory processes, however a major impediment. Have the support from Federal government.

Cr Kerr – issues on staffing levels and accommodation in Port Douglas. Minister Tehan said from 1 December 2021 Agriculture workforce and international students arriving to fill vacancies, this will be important for the tourism industry.

Housing Strategy – shortage of housing in region. Need to make sure planning and developing areas. Regional Plan 13 years old and is blocking local governments to open up land.

### Outcomes / Follow Up



D. Irvine, Cr Kerr, Cr Nolan, Amelia Metcalf, Grant Walsh,  
Cr Hughes

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## Amelia Metcalf, Senior Telco Adviser

Grant Walsh, Senior NBN Adviser

### On behalf of Minister Paul Fletcher

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure,  
Cities and the Arts

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Communications
- Digital Connectivity

**Amelia Metcalf** - 5<sup>th</sup> round of blackspot program. Getting out to areas where it is more costly to build. Bridgett McKenzie is looking at program to see what can be improved for next rounds. Looking at what Telcos are putting in.

Transport routes – stretches of road – series of blackspots. Areas in Katter's electorate areas of concern. Looking at program to see what can be done differently.

**Grant Walsh** – Program funding, review underway. In its deliberations on those things like alternate broadband solutions. Expect this would be picked up in the Regional telecommunications review findings. NBN not the monopoly and is open for solutions. Minister isn't opposed to that.

### Outcomes / Follow Up

# ADVOCACY REPORT



D. Irvine, Cr Kerr, Cr Scott, M. Eades (TCICA), Minister Ken Wyatt, Cr Pickering, Cr Hughes, Cr Woibo and Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council

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## Hon Ken Wyatt, AM MP Minister Indigenous Australians

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Housing / Indigenous Housing
- ID Laws
- Indigenous Tourism
- Kuranda Range Road

Working with Minister Sukkar. States and Territories obligated to supply housing for indigenous Australians.

Housing Aboriginal people is the responsibility of all governments.

WA premier recently made comment that Indigenous Housing was the Commonwealth's problem. A bit of work to do to remind Premiers that they need to provide a level of funding. Includes funding for homelessness. Will raise this. Closing the Gap National agreement is a target for states and territories which has to be reported against.

Data aggregated to Commonwealth. When you use aggregated data exceptional per state. Not showing true picture at state and regional level. Data collected will be regionalised and shared. Another meeting in 2 weeks' time will have data by region to go out to agencies and non aboriginal organisations. Work progressed, will report back at next council meeting.

\$4.1b goes into Aboriginal controlled health organisations.

Housing and land availability – freehold land. Minister Wyatt to speak with Craig Crawford about freehold reserve land.

### **Discussions raised by the following councils**

Housing Plan – looking for consistency.

Cr Woibo - Pama Futures is an ongoing arrangement with NIAA and Queensland government. What priorities and challenges are coming through? Better agreement with Commonwealth and Queensland. Aboriginal Councils need to get a detailed briefing. Cr Woibo has written to the agency asking for feedback on Pama futures and how the information

is going out to organisations. Minister Wyatt is happy to ask agency for feedback on Pama Futures.

Melinda Eades, TCICA – opposing ID laws. Cc'd letter to Minister Wyatt's office. Asked for that bill to be withdrawn. Would like a show of support. Minister Wyatt reiterated that Voter ID is to prevent voting multiple times and to stop people pretending they are someone they are not. The intent is not to knock out aboriginal voters.

Cr Hughes – Indigenous organisations have opened tourism adventures this year and have been very successful in the region.

### Outcomes / Follow Up

- Send Kuranda Range Submission to Minister Wyatt.
- Minister Wyatt Happy to ask NIAA agency for feedback on Pama Futures and how information is going out to organisations.

# ADVOCACY REPORT



Senator Katy Gallagher, D. Irvine, Cr Kerr, Cr Scott, M.Eades (TCICA), Cr Hughes, Cr Pickering



Hon Nola Marino, D. Irvine, Stephen Wilton, Cr Creek, Cr Kerr, Cr Toppin, Cr Scott, Cr Pickering, Cr Hughes, Cr Nolan

**Senator Katy Gallagher**  
Shadow Minister for Finance  
Shadow Minister Public Service  
Senator for ACT

## Key Topics and Discussions

- Kuranda Range Road
- Priority Road Funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Water
- Housing
- Regional Plan
- Digital Connectivity

\$21.5 for a feasibility study. Senator Gallagher asked what the reasons for it were not being done and acknowledged it was a long time for the money to be sitting there if the funds were committed in November 2019 – advised funds were available in the major business case fund but the State had not applied for it.

Senator Gallagher acknowledged that housing was a problem throughout Australia and is seeing similar issues on the South Coast of NSW. States responsibility, however, Commonwealth Government can't just walk away from it. Jason Clare has done work in this area and has briefed parliament recently.

Regional Plan – numerous letters have been written to Minister Miles for a review of the Regional Plan. Senator Gallagher asked what regions were covered by the Regional plan.

Digital Connectivity Cr Scott spoke about a universal service obligation for the regions. Senator Nita Green had been looking at this as part of Labors commitments.

## Outcomes / Follow Up

## **Hon Nola Marino**

Assistant Minister for Regional Development and Territories

## Key Topics and Discussions

- Future Cities
- Roads and Kuranda
- Digital Connectivity
- Housing
- Water / Dams

Assistant Minister Nola Marino spoke about future cities and will share with Mayors on that concept. Senator Bridgette McKenzie has done a lot of work in this area and is looking at regional cities that are capable of significant growth. They have to meet specific strategic objectives. Assessing through 14 criteria.

Touched on the opportunities around renewables net zero space. Renewed focus on the North. i.e. export renewables. Enduring natural competitive advantage.

Digital connectivity – Looking at Initiatives to try and improve the overall coverage.

Key services – Telstra commercial focus. Have to get the interested parties to get capability if major Telcos are not interested. Will have to have good look at that area.

Concerns around procurement money and whether it stays in the region and whether contractors are local.

Cr Hughes – varies from council to council. Biggest hinderance at the moment is the skills shortage.

## Outcomes / Follow Up

- Send Dam Study to Assistant Minister Marino
- Send Mobile Blackspot Report

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Cr Hughes, D. Irvine, Stephen Wilton, Cr Creek, Cr Kerr, Cr Toppin, Cr Marti, Cr Scott, Cr Nolan, Cr Pickering, Hon Michael Sukkar

## Hon Michael Sukkar

Assistant Treasurer, Minister for Housing, Minister for Homelessness, Social and Community Housing

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Overview of FNQROC Regional priorities
- Housing
- Regional Plan

FNQROC seeking National Housing Strategy.

Minister Sukkar sees no benefit to a National Housing Strategy. Each jurisdiction different. A national housing strategy would need to have hundreds of separate strategies. Already have a National housing and homelessness agreement. Regional councils going through similar issues. Low vacancy rates, increasing population etc. Work on budget what can be done to help those housing issues. Decisions around planning and rezoning.

Minister Sukkar happy to work with a collective on what can be done for far north Queensland. Makes more sense to address in this forum. He suggested a regional housing strategy.

Cr Scott spoke about rezoning of land and funding to subdivide. Minister Sukkar liked that idea.

Need a policy to allow for trustee reserve use as Indigenous Councils are so restricted.

Minister Sukkar would support a Regional Housing Strategy. Says overstated how many people are moving. No-one leaving. Elevated levels of population without the housing stock. Grateful the issues is being raised and it is similar to what he is hearing in most places.

Cr Pickering raised the issue around vacant houses in Croydon that were given over to Cairns and District Housing (CDRH). Croydon Shire Council seeking to buy those houses, as no-one has lived in the houses for years and could be used to house people in the community. To date Council has had no response from CDRH. Have also written to Minister Sukkar with no response.

Stephen Wilton, CEO Wujal Wujal - Homelessness big issue. Aboriginal culture won't deny an aboriginal family member a roof over their head. Don't want indigenous issues to be overlooked in the bigger picture.

### Outcomes / Follow Up

- Rebecca from Minister Sukkar's office will be in contact with Cr Pickering regarding houses in Croydon.
- Minister Sukkar will be in touch with FNQROC when decisions have been made around regional housing issues.



D. Irvine, Stephen Wilton, Cr Kerr, Cr Toppin, Cr Scott, Senator Anthony Chisholm, Cr Nolan, Cr Pickering, George Betros

## Senator Anthony Chisholm

Senator for Queensland

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Kuranda Range
- Housing
- Water Security

Senator Chisholm acknowledge that Kuranda Range was put on the table last time and was surprised there had been no progress on this yet. Senator Chisholm asked about the \$21.5 made available to the State to get the design and study done.

Housing – Senator Chisholm spoke about housing issues around the region. Will advocate.

Water Security – Cairns Water Security Stage 1. Senator Chisholm would like a detailed briefing on this between now and the Federal election.

### Outcomes / Follow Up

- Send Dam Study to Senator Chisholm
- Cairns Regional Council to brief Senator Chisholm on Cairns Water Security Stage 1.

# ADVOCACY REPORT



Terri Butler, Cr Kerr, Cr Nolan, D. Irvine

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## Ms Terri Butler

Shadow Minister for the Environment and Water

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Dam Study
- Kuranda Range
- Priority Road Funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Housing
- Water Security

Ms Butler wasn't aware of the Dam study and asked for this to be sent to her.

She spoke about the \$10.5b housing affordability fund announced.

Members spoke of the regional plan which was an inhibitor to density and release of land.

### Outcomes / Follow Up

- Send Dam Study to Terri Butler
- Nick Massasso, Cairns Regional Council to forward information on engagement and water security.

(Complete)



D. Irvine, Stephen Wilton, Cr Creek, Cr Kerr, Cr Toppin, Cr Marti, Senator Larissa Waters, Cr Nolan, Cr Pickering, Jess Feehely

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## Senator Larissa Waters

Senator for Queensland

### Key Topics and Discussions

- Housing
- Kuranda Range Road
- Priority Road Funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Water security
- FNQ Regional Plan
- Digital connectivity

Senator Waters was supportive of a National Housing Strategy.

Kuranda Range Road – agreed from a safety aspect and getting food to market and agreed to follow-up to see what their position was on this.

Housing – Senator Waters said that the State Government were not doing enough and have only made a small commitment to building new homes as 50,000 on waitlist for social housing. Increasing rents making it unaffordable for ordinary people.

Senator Waters was an Environmental Lawyer at the time the FNQ Regional Plan was first written 13 years ago. Believes it is a reasonable ask to have it reviewed given how old it is. Need to build for residents not the Olympic Games.

Cr Nolan spoke about height restrictions in his area, however, Senator Waters had a different perspective, her preference being towards social housing build to assure affordability and compliance with regional plans.

Stephen Wilton, Wujal Wujal wanted to include social housing in indigenous communities and worried as the shortage of housing in other areas could mean that Indigenous housing is forgotten.

Cr Kerr, Port Douglas is in the top 5% of people moving to the area with a huge turnover of properties. This is causing long

# ADVOCACY REPORT

term issues with tenants being forced out of rental properties.



Hon Keith Pitt, D. Irvine, Stephen Wilton, Cr Scott, Cr Marti, N. Masasso, Cr Kerr, Cr Nolan

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**Hon Keith Pitt**  
Minister for Resources and Water

## Key Topics and Discussions

- Housing
- Kuranda Range Road
- Priority Road Funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Water security
- Digital connectivity

Attendees spoke to the regional priorities with a focus on Water and update on Tablelands water assessment process.

Discussed Kuranda Range Road. Frustration at the federal level as Bruce Hwy was announced in 2016 and it's only just started.

Spoke to the National Water Initiative and No. of recommendations from the Productivity Commission – they won't be doing them; it will take time to review but they are reviewing it. Took on board the section 64iv and cost recovery for irrigators.

## Outcomes / Follow Up



Hon Scott Buchholz, Cr Kerr, Cr Toppin, Cr Woibo

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**Hon Scott Buchholz**  
Assistant Minister for Road Safety and Freight Transport

## Key Topics and Discussions

- Kuranda Range Road
- Ootann Road

Federal government has spent a lot of money on roads. Roads are an issue that has dogged Northern Australia for a decade.

Commitment of \$21.5m from Federal government – state has to apply for it, have provided money and it won't be on the table forever, it will eventually have to be reallocated. It will get to a point of use it or lose it. Money on the table to look after people of Northern Queensland, just need a funding stream.

Water infrastructure more problematic. Environment have a different appetite. Roads - Barnaby Joyce announced first and last mile \$150m.

Suggest break down into two components. Fits into funding bucket. Don't put across his desk unless have State government support.

Looking for reasons to get things off his desk, if no funding support from state government, won't look at it.

## Outcomes / Follow Up

# ADVOCACY REPORT



Hon David Littleproud, D. Irvine, Cr Scott, Cr Marti, N. Masasso, Cr Kerr, Cr Nolan, Cr Toppin

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**Hon David Littleproud**  
**Minister for Agriculture and Northern Australia**  
**Deputy Leader of the National Party**

## Key Topics and Discussions

- Water Security/Dams
- Kuranda Range Road
- Priority Road Funding (1<sup>st</sup> and last and ROSI)
- Housing

Discussed Kuranda Range Road. Need to retarget the State. They believe a letter has gone to Minister Bailey. Hon Barnaby Joyce is happy to support it at A1. Federal Government sees it as critical and will back it. Need to start now, the longer it takes the more it will cost.

Cr Marti discussed roads and water constraints as our biggest issues, roads impacting on productivity and safety.

Cr Scott – need to meet with Minister Bailey to drive this point and guarantee from Federal Government. Lakeland Dam/Palmer River – Warren Entsch very supportive.

Cr Nolan – push for Kuranda Range Road from a safety perspective. With La Nina on us Cairns could be impacted, and safest escape route is Kuranda Range Road, could be problematic in an emergency.

Minister advised we'll see some EPBC Act announcements in the next few months. They are working on getting this more workable/practical.

Cairns Water Security Project – Water security for Cairns. Seeking joint Federal and State funding. 37% reduction in storage capacity between now and 2030. Need to push the State on this. Linkage to agriculture allows Federal government to be flexible on funding for this.

Cr Nolan - Applying for Building Our Regions round 6, for a revitalized Mission beach and Dunk Island. Cassowary Coast was unsuccessful in round 5 and has put funds away in last budget and upcoming budget for these projects. Minister

Littleproud advised round 6 should open very soon and he is on the panel, Cassowary Coast should also make Senator McDonald aware of the application.

Cr Nolan spoke of MSF and flagged that the agricultural footprint is shrinking. They have identified land at Cowley Beach (Defense Land) which could be used under lease until defense needs it.

Dams – Agreed that Dams should have 100-year lifespan.

Housing – Issue in all regional areas including Indigenous housing.

Cr Kerr - In Port Douglas with accommodation. 2<sup>nd</sup> top in country of people moving to the area. No places to stay even for employees moving to the area.

Minister Littleproud spoke about regional housing and how Victorian Premier was putting up \$5billion to address social housing crisis there. Queensland should be doing their bit. State and Federal governments need to stick to their laneways. States have to make housing a big priority and important to make a commitment. They will be working with the States as best they can.

Minister Littleproud will hopefully be up in our region early in the new year.

## Outcomes / Follow Up

# ADVOCACY REPORT



Hon Susan McDonald, D. Irvine, Cr Scott, Cr Marti, Cr Creek, Cr Marti, Cr Kerr, Cr Nolan, Cr Andrews, L. Yeatman, Cr Manning, Ken Timms, Cr Toppin, Peter Franks, G. Rinehart

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**Hon Senator Susan McDonald**  
**Chair of Rural and Regional Affairs and**  
**Transport Legislation Committee**  
**Deputy Chair of Rural and Regional Affairs and**  
**Transport References Committee**

## Key Topics and Discussions

- Water Security
- Kuranda Range Road,
- transport routes and roads of strategic importance
- Housing
- Digital connectivity
- Insurance Pool

Senator McDonald supported and agreed that the Cairns Water Security Project is a priority.

Senator McDonald - Water infrastructure under Barnaby Joyce. Waiting on State Government to add to the list. Federal government can't fund the project if the state doesn't support it.

**Kuranda Range Road** – Federal Government funding on table for planning studies. Fully support.

**Housing** –Regional or National Housing Plan - Nationwide idea interesting and will discuss further. Housing has made its way to a national discussion. Alliance of mining towns put together proposal to remove FBT on private housing. Salary sacrifice could get FBT exemption. Needs to roll out across all regions not just mining towns. Consider combining application with them.

**Insurance Pool** – Minister Sukkar to provide an update. Insurance council hopes it can get through parliament with a start date of 1 July 2022.

Cr Hughes - Etheridge Shire considering as part of proposal. Projects that have housing costed into it as there is nowhere for people to live.

Cr Kerr – hard to get loans with 30% deposit – making it

extremely hard to get into the market. Important to have one big strategy.

Senator McDonald - banks deny there is a postcode lending criterion. Underlying issues, regarding insurance and building a house.

**Digital connectivity** – funding programs to meet actual people's needs of the area.

Senator McDonald said it was important to take forward top priority issues. New announcements on dirt road sealing. Utilising 20% contribution of ROSI funding. Difficult to find funding to seal roads. R

## Outcomes / Follow Up