

BROC**Border Regional Organisation of Councils**

MINUTES OF THE BORDER REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS MEETING HELD AT THE INVERELL SHIRE COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION CENTRE, 144 OTHO STREET, INVERELL ON THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2023 COMMENCING AT 2PM (NSW TIME).

Attendees:

Balonne Shire Council	Digby Whyte
Bulloo Shire Council	Donna Hobbs (Zoom)
Goondiwindi Regional Council	Cr Rob McKenzie
Gwydir Shire Council	Cr John Coulton
	Cr David Coulton
Inverell Shire Council	Cr Kate Dight (Chairperson)
	Sharon Stafford
Moree Plains Shire Council	Cr Lisa Orchin
	Nick Tobin
Paroo Shire Council	Cr Suzette Beresford (Zoom)
Southern Downs Regional Council	Cr Andrew Gale
Tenterfield Shire Council	Cr Bronwyn Petrie
Walgett Shire Council	Mike Urquardt (Zoom)

Also in Attendance:

Member for Northern Tablelands	The Hon Adam Marshall MP
NSW Cross Border Commissioner	James McTavish (Zoom)
QLD Police	Chris Mitchell
RDA Darling Downs/South West	Jenny Rix
SES (Guest Speakers)	Lukas Torr
	Craig Ronan (Zoom)
Inland Rail (Dept Infrastructure)	Laura Colley
ARTC	Jo Tait (Zoom)
QLD Dept Main Roads	Bill Lansbury (Zoom)

1 MEETING OPEN

Cr Paul Harmon, Mayor of Inverell welcomed delegates to Inverell. Cr Harmon noted the unique nature of this cross border relationship and encouraged members to continue communicating and advocating for the best outcomes for the border region. Cr Harmon thanked delegates and agencies for investing their time and energy and wished them every success moving forward.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Cr Kate Dight acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Gomeroi People, and paid respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

3 APOLOGIES

RESOLVED (Southern Downs/Goondiwindi) that the following apologies be accepted:

Balonne Shire Council	Cr Samantha O'Toole
	Matt Magin
Goondiwindi Regional Council	Cr Lawrence Springborg
Paroo Shire Council	Cassandra White
Southern Downs Regional Council	Cr Vic Pennisi
Walgett Shire Council	Cr Jane Keir
Member for Lismore	Janelle Saffin MP
Member for Warrego	Ann Leahy MP
QLD Dept Local Government	Bernadette Plummer
	Damon Meadows
<u>Observers</u>	
Bourke Shire Council	Cr Barry Holman
Brewarrina Shire Council	Cr Vivian Slack-Smith
	David Kirby

CARRIED

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.1 MEETING MINUTES – 1 DECEMBER 2022

RESOLVED (Goondiwindi/Paroo) that the minutes of the Border Regional Organisation of Councils meeting held in Goondiwindi on 1 December, 2022, as circulated to members, be confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting, noting the following amendments:

- Jenny Rix RDA was an apology for that meeting.
- ARTC - The Inland Rail Review by Dr Kerry Schott is not intended to look at the route.

CARRIED

4.2 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Nil.

Cr Bronwyn Petrie arrived at 2.09pm.

5 CROSS BORDER COMMISSIONER UPDATE

James McTavish, NSW Cross Border Commissioner update to be held over till later in the meeting.

ADAM MARSHALL MP, MEMBER NORTHERN TABLELANDS

At this juncture, the time being 2.10pm the Chairperson invited the Hon Adam Marshall MP, Member for Northern Tablelands to address the meeting.

Mr Marshall briefed BROCC on the following matters:

- There is a State election in March 2023 and everything is currently geared towards campaigning for this as the government is in caretaker mode.

- If a new government is elected Adam doesn't foresee sweeping changes to communities.
- The roads & bridges program is being rolled out but the biggest problem is finding contractors to complete the construction work.
- Health is currently the biggest issue with the most recent announcement of the introduction of the Single Employer Model (SEM) trial to be rolled out throughout New England Hospitals beginning at the end of this year. This allows for junior doctors to be employed for up to 4 years across both state-run hospitals and in private clinics. This could allow up to an additional 20-30 new doctors practicing in our region and there is a second intake expected in early 2024. There is significant benefit to all parties with this model being a considerably cheaper alternative to the locum model currently in place. BROCC have equally been advocating on this issue for months so this is a very welcome resolve. BROCC recognised Mr Marshall for his tireless support of this issue and congratulated him on this latest announcement, thanking him for his support of local communities.

Mr Marshall left the meeting at 2.30pm.

6 DISASTER MANAGEMENT UPDATE

A/Senior Sergeant Chris Mitchell, District Disaster Management Coordinator – Cross Border Disaster Management briefed BROCC on the following:

- The Queensland MOG (Machinery of Government) for Disaster Management is undergoing structural change and now the QLD Police are acting as the umbrella agency to all other disaster management agencies in Qld, ie SES, Recovery Agencies, Qld Fire & Emergency Services etc. By July 1 2023 it is meant to be fully implemented. However Chris is not anticipating any change in his role and the status quo remains.
- Consequently the Disaster Management Forum planned for 12 & 13 July 2023 needs to be restructured and Chris suggested to the group that it be reduced to 1 day only of practical service delivery implementation. All agreed that this is the most effective part of the forum for BROCC and that we were willing to accommodate this change. Chris will come back to the group with firm details and designs for the forum and welcomes all member Council's input.

RESOLVED (Moree/Goonidwindi) that BROCC support the 2 x half day format proposed for the Disaster Management Workshop to be held 12/13 July 2023.

CARRIED

7 GUEST SPEAKER

A/Superintendent Lukas Torr, Central West, NSW SES and Craig Ronan, Planning & Intelligence, NSW SES, addressed the meeting on the subject of 'Flood Gauges and the Dissemination of Flood Data'.

- Lukas looks after the Central Western Region of NSW and the NE region role is currently changing over. The new position is to be taken up by Tammy Chefley. She is currently undergoing training but is willing to be the SES Disaster Management spokesperson going forward for BROCC.
- The SES are strongly advocating for the uptake of the Hazard Watch App for the dissemination of information during times of disaster. This was previously for fires but has been overhauled to include all climatic disasters ie floods as well.
- The SES act to get citizens to a safe place during times of disaster at which point the new Reconstruction Authority takes over responsibility. There has been extensive review of processes following the last flood and this is the new chain of responsibility.

- Craig Ronan was on screen and added to this presentation as the SES person responsible for liaising with the Bureau of Meteorology and disseminating their information. BOM discuss the flood situation and communicate with SES who manage the Hazards Watch App with this updated information. The app graphically highlights the impacted area, looking for flood peaks etc. They are doing extensive work trying to capture detailed flood data using GIS and special tools to ground truth the flood gauge data. They want to work with locals to further improve this.
- Chris Mitchell agreed to reach out to both Lukas & Craig to bridge the border gap and information flow. There was considerable discussion regarding the operations of the BOM and how interaction with BOM could be better improved. Craig agreed to take this back and investigate further considering it is a federal organisation.

RESOLVED (Moree/Southern Downs) that BROC advocate to the Bureau of Meteorology for improved cross border mapping and that individual Councils raise the issue at the ALGA Conference.

8 STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR BROC

There are 7 areas of strategic importance for BROC and all member Councils agreed to promote and support a restructure of BROC operations so that these areas could be individually addressed and tailored to meet outcomes relevant to BROC. Each area has one member Council electing to lead and drive the advocacy as per the following:

1. Attracting Population and Industry
 Lead Council: Paroo
 Associated Councils: Inverell, Moree
2. Transport Networks
 Lead Council: Gwydir
 Associated Councils: Southern Downs, Tenterfield, Inverell, Bulloo
3. Disaster Recovery, Management & Betterment
 Lead Council: Balonne
 Associated Councils: Goondiwindi, Moree, Tenterfield, Inverell
4. Health Services
 Lead Council: Tenterfield
 Associated Councils: Moree, Inverell, Goondiwindi, Paroo
5. Housing
 Lead Council: Moree
 Associated Councils: Bulloo, Walgett
6. Education & Childcare
 Lead Council: Walgett
 Associated Councils: Bulloo, Moree, Balonne
7. Telecommunication Connectivity
 Lead Council: Goondiwindi
 Associated Councils: Moree, Balonne, Inverell

The lead council will invite all councils to identify and inform the focus group of issues pertinent to that particular area of strategic importance. The working group will then meet to prioritise the issues and report back to the next quarterly BROC meeting.

At this juncture, the time being 3.30pm Mike Urquhart and Jo Tait left the meeting.

9 AGENCY UPDATES

- Laura Colley, Inland Rail (Department Infrastructure)
 - Laura (based in Moree) recently commenced with Inland Rail having taken over the role that Angela Doering previously occupied.
 - The Independent Review of Inland Rail is still ongoing but it's release is imminent.
 - It was noted that construction to North Star is to be completed by April 2023 with expected inland rail operations to begin early 2025. Sections north of the border are still very much in elementary negotiations with EIS to be completed.
- Jo Tait, Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) – emailed through the following points for notation:
 - Some good progress on state approvals for the North Star to Border project – only announced on Thursday. North Star to Border project receives NSW Government approval - Inland Rail (artc.com.au)
 - The Inland Rail Review by Dr Kerry Schott is not intended to look at the route.
 - Hopefully by the time we next meet we will have some more clarity around the Review outcomes.
- Jenny Rix, Regional Development Australia (Darling Downs & South West)
 - The RDA is advocating on a number of issues. The Gas price caps are causing much angst and the flow on effects are having a huge impact on the Darling Downs.
 - The effects of the \$20B infrastructure fund to re-wire the nation is being felt everywhere.
 - RDA are heavily invested in providing Resilience workshops as a result of climate variability.
 - There is \$40M invested in agricultural resilience projects with community co-design.
 - Further funding opportunities are with Stronger Country Communities, Connecting Community Grants, Water Buy Backs, Regional Infrastructure Plan DDSSW.
 - There are numerous jobs & skills opportunities. The latest Future Jobs Forum indicated that there is a skills mis-match and the emphasis is to get jobs where they are needed. We have a once in a generation opportunity to get the unemployed into employment and DARMA is in agreement to fast track workers needing visas, particularly visas for rural & regional employment.

RESOLVED (Tenterfield/Moree) that BROCC write to the Federal Minister for Immigration, the Hon Andrew Giles advocating for visa applications for people proposing to enter the fields of health & education in regional and rural areas to be fast-tracked in an effort to assist with easing the employment crisis.

At this juncture, the time being 4.00pm Bill Lansbury dialled in to the meeting to provide his update.

- Bill Lansbury (Regional Director, Department Transport & Main Roads QLD)

Bill provided BROCC with an update in respect of the following matters:

- Inland Freight Route – Charters Towers to Mungindi
- TMP cost imposts increased by 30%

At this juncture, the time being 4.05pm, Bill Lansbury left the meeting.

10 CORRESPONDENCE

10.1 INWARDS

- Bank Statements and Fixed Term Certificate – National Australia Bank & Credit Union
- Letter from Tenterfield Shire Council confirming BROC delegates

10.2 OUTWARDS

- Letter of Support for Regional Development Australia (Queensland Government's Workforce Connect Fund – Connecting Youth to Industry)
- Letter to the Hon Sam Faraway re: Regional Road Transfer/Classification Review - Bruxner Way
- Letter to Visitor Information Centres re: Border Tourism Trail Proposal
- Letter to the Hon Grace Grace re: Preschools/Kindergartens Funding Model Changes
- Letter to the Hon Di Farmer re: Recognition of Occupational Licensing

RESOLVED (Gwydir/Southern Downs) that the Inwards and Outwards correspondence be received and noted.

CARRIED

10.3 MATTERS ARISING FROM CORRESPONDENCE

Nil.

11 FINANCIAL REPORT

11.1 TRANSACTIONS

National Australia Bank – 69-022-2187

Opening Balance as at 12 October 2022	\$20,781.46
Interest	\$0.42
Sponsorship – Disaster Management Conference	-\$4998.41
Audit Fees – Vanguard Consulting	-\$330.00
Balance as at 11 January 2023	\$15,453.47

National Australia Bank – Term Deposit 42-388-8697

Lodged 27 December 2022 for 12 months @ 3.75%	\$10,583.97
Maturity Date – 27 December 2023	

Warwick Credit Union – Fixed Term Deposit 100005924

Opening Balance as at 31 December 2022	\$ 11,459.74
Interest Rate 1.55%	\$ 44.77
Reinvested 22 January 2023 @ 1.95%	\$ 11,504.51
Maturity Date – 22 April 2023	

RESOLVED (Tenterfield/Moree) that the Financial Report be accepted.

CARRIED

11.2 MATTERS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL REPORT

Nil.

12 ITEMS LISTED

12.1 BROCCONSTITUTION / TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED (Goondiwindi/Paroo) that Clause 2 (iv) of the BROCCONSTITUTION be amended as follows:

‘Areas of Regional Strategic Importance include:

1. Attracting Population and Industry
2. Transport Networks
3. Disaster Recovery Management & Betterment
4. Health Services
5. Housing
6. Education & Childcare
7. Telecommunication Connectivity’

CARRIED

At this juncture, the time being 4.30pm, Donna Hobbs left the meeting.

12.2 TOURISM TRAIL

RESOLVED (Moree/Goondiwindi) that:

- i) BROCCONSTITUTE to recognise the significant benefits this initiative could bring to the entire border region;
- ii) Note that the success of the initiative will depend on a commitment from all stakeholders along the border; and
- iii) Delegates go back to their respective visitor information centres to encourage a commitment to further investigate/scope the proposal if they haven’t committed already.

CARRIED

12.3 MEETING DATES & TIMES

RESOLVED (Tenterfield/Southern Downs) that generally speaking BROC meetings be held on the 2nd Friday of every 3rd month commencing at 9am local time.

Meeting dates for 2023 and 2024:

- Meeting Dates for 2023
 - 19 May 2023 - Balonne Shire Council (St George)
 - 11 August 2023 - Paroo Shire Council (Cunnamulla)
 - 10 November 2023 - Tenterfield Shire Council (Tenterfield)* (AGM & Ordinary)
- Meeting Dates for 2024
 - 9 February 2024 (Brewarrina Shire Council)
 - 10 May 2024 (Southern Downs Regional Council)
 - 9 August 2024 (Walgett Shire Council)
 - 15 November 2024 (Goondiwindi Regional Council)* (AGM & Ordinary)

CARRIED

13 ACTION ITEM LOG

RESOLVED (Goondiwindi/Tenterfield) that:

- a) the Action Item Log be received and noted: and
- b) the following items be removed from the Action Log:

- Flood Gauges / Flood Data Presentation
- Constitution

14 GENERAL BUSINESS

Membership of BROC

An invitation was extended in 2022 to Bourke & Brewarrina Councils inviting them to be members of BROC.

The Chairperson was pleased to inform that Brewarrina have agreed to become a member.

RESOLVED (Gwydir/Moree) that:

- i) Brewarrina Shire Council be accepted as a member of BROC;
- ii) A tax invoice for 2022/23 membership of \$500 be forwarded to Brewarrina Shire Council; and
- iii) The BROC Constitution reflect Brewarrina Shire Council as a member.

Premier's Regional Forums

Cr Rob Mackenzie informed delegates that Balonne Shire Council & Goondiwindi Regional Council have both committed funding for a case study to be prepared lobbying for a Queensland Cross Border Commissioner. The case study will be presented at the Premier's Regional Forum to be held in St George in mid March.

Cr Mackenzie suggested that other QLD councils may wish to co-contribute towards funding the case study. If so, Councils are encouraged to contact Cr Mackenzie directly.

QLD Funding for Preschools and/or Kindergartens

Cr Orchin informed BROC that the Qld Government is no longer supporting the 0-3 year preschool age group at Mungindi as a result of the changed funding model for QLD Preschools and Kindergartens. BROC had noted at our December 2022 meeting that the majority of the children that attended the Mungindi preschool resided in New South Wales.

RESOLVED (Moree/Gwydir) that a letter be sent to the Hon Adam Marshall MP, Member for Northern Tablelands detailing the situation which currently exists in Mungindi and supporting the NSW Department of Education in their efforts in trying to resolve the day care issues facing that community.

CARRIED

5 CROSS BORDER COMMISSIONER UPDATE

At James McTavish, NSW Cross Border Commissioner briefed BROC on the following:

- As stated earlier in the day, the government in NSW is in caretaker mode but the Commission is operating as usual and is not expecting much change regardless of the outcome of the election.
- The Commission office has expanded considerably and they have multiple areas of advocacy. Areas of particular focus; infrastructure and transport, service delivery, building communities, Moree & Goondiwindi MOU to deal with indigenous outcomes for border communities, emergency management & creation of Reconstruction NSW.
- There is a huge amount of work being done with QLD Premier & Cabinet to finalise a memorandum of understanding for cross border collaboration which is exciting and announcements on this are imminent.

At this juncture, the time being 5.15pm, Cr John Coulton and Cr David Coulton left the meeting.

15 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be hosted by Balonne Shire Council (in St George) on Friday 19 May 2023 commencing at 9am local time.

15 MEETING CLOSED

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5.20pm.