

Bowen and Abbot Community Reference Group Meeting Minutes

5.30pm Thursday 16 July 2026 – Bowen Community Centre

Chair:

North Queensland Bulk Ports Senior Advisor Community Relationships Emilie Power

Attendees:

Recreational representatives NA Community representatives Richard Roberts (via Teams) Glenda Robertson Lorraine Maltby Business representatives Barney Menzies – Chamber of Commerce Environmental Representatives N/A Whitsunday Regional Council representative N/A Juru Enterprise Limited N/A Youth representative N/A	Port Industry Representatives Damien Dederer – Abbot Point Operations Marty Trask – Abbot Point Operations NQBP Representatives Senior Advisor Community Relationships Emilie Power Community Relationship Advisor Ange Julian Senior Project Manager Stuart McDonnell MSQ Representative Alex Cramb – (Strategy & Planning - Boat Harbours) Guests Nicholas Nalder – MSQ (A/Principal Manager Strategy & Planning – Boat Harbours) Abigail Adams – MSQ (Senior Advisor Stakeholder Engagement)
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Apologies: Mayor Ry Collins Whitsunday Regional Council, Bradley Stout Juru Enterprises (JEL) Matt Bowkett Engage Marine, Mark Smith – North Queensland Export Terminal (NQXT), Cheryl Bullemor, Julie Keane, Brendan Webb, Darren Brownsey, Carissa Mansfield, James Miller, Jonathan Cutting (WRC), Max Haste (MSQ).

Item	Discussion	Action
1. Acknowledgement of Country, meeting open, agenda	- Meeting opened at 5.34pm - Community Reference Group members were welcomed by Chair/NQBP Senior Advisor Community Relationships, Emilie Power. - An Acknowledgment of Country was provided by Emilie.	
2. Welcome and introductions	Presented by Senior Advisor Community Relationships (Chair), Emilie Power - Apologies were recorded from Matt Bowkett Engage Marine, Mark Smith – North Queensland Export Terminal (NQXT), Cheryl Bullemor, Julie Keane, Brendan Webb, Darren Brownsey, Carissa Mansfield, James Miller, Jonathan Cutting, Max Haste. - Welcome to new member Marty Trask and guests Nicholas Nalder and Abigail Adams from MSQ.	
3. Conflict of Interest	Presented by Senior Advisor Community Relationships (Chair), Emilie Power - Discussion around conflicts of interest was held and Conflict of Interest register reviewed. - No concerns were raised. - No conflicts of interest were declared for this meeting.	
4. Actions Register	Presented by Senior Advisor Community Relationships (Chair), Emilie Power All actions from the previous meeting were closed out.	
5. Commercial and Maritime Services	Presented by NQBP Senior Project Manager Stuart McDonnell Accelerating Fuel Infrastructure Program	

	- The Ports of Mackay and Abbot Point have been included in the Queensland Government's Accelerating Fuel Infrastructure Program. Vessel Maintenance Facility - A process is underway to identify a long-term operator for the Port of Mackay Vessel Maintenance Facility. - The facility would support vessels servicing Mackay, Hay Point and Abbot Point, including tugs, commercial fishing, tourism and superyachts. Comment – Members discussed the challenges of servicing tug vessels in Australia, with some operators required to tow vessels overseas for maintenance. Question – Asked whether NQBP leases any part of the Port to Mackay Marina. Response – <i>Not the port, however the Mackay Marina itself operates under a 99-year lease over the seabed.</i> Question – Asked whether future development within the port is required to align with the Port Master Plan. Response – <i>Yes, all development within the port is aligned and assessed through NQBP's development approval process.</i>	
6. Infrastructure	Presented by NQBP Senior Project Manager Stuart McDonnell Bowen Marine Infrastructure Replacement Project Expressions of Interest for the design and construction contract have closed, with shortlisted contractors to be invited to tender.	

	• The commercial wharf business case is being finalised ahead of internal review and consideration by the Board and Shareholding Ministers. • Discussions continue with Whitsunday Regional Council to align the project with the Bowen Foreshore Master Plan. • A supplier registration process will be launched shortly to help connect local businesses with project opportunities, including construction support services, accommodation and other industries. Comment – Stephanie Cora – Sought clarification on the definition of "local" procurement, noting the Queensland Government's guidelines include suppliers within 250 kilometres. Response – <i>Tenderers will be expected to demonstrate how they will maximise local and Indigenous participation, with local solutions encouraged where practical.</i> Environment and Planning Approvals • The EPBC referral has been lodged, with initial feedback indicating the project is expected to be assessed as a non-controlled action, subject to management measures. • Additional information will be provided on terrestrial noise, curlew management and disposal of existing jetty piles. • State planning approvals are expected to be lodged later this year. Project Timeline • Construction remains on track to commence in 2027, subject to planning and environmental approvals, with completion expected in late 2028.	
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7. Operations update	Presented by NQBP Senior Project Manager Stuart McDonnell Maintenance and operations • A wild dog trapping program was completed at Abbot Point in April and will be repeated in September 2026. • Blasting and painting of bollards, ladders and grab rails at the Abbot Point MOF was completed in July. • The Western Access Road was graded in June. • A small fire at the Bowen Wharf tug berth in June was quickly extinguished, with no impact to ongoing operations. • Bowen Jetty was closed on Monday 13 July to facilitate MSQ's removal of a derelict vessel.	
8. Environment update	Presented by Senior Advisor Community Relationships Emilie Power Environmental Management System Recertification • NQBP's Environmental Management System has been recertified to ISO 14001 until 2029. • No major or minor non-compliances were identified, with six opportunities for improvement recorded.	
9. Indigenous Program	Presented by Senior Advisor Community Relationships Emilie Power Indigenous Program Update • Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training scholarships were awarded for Semester 2, 2026. • The next round of scholarships will open for Semester 1, 2027.	

	- Juru Enterprises Limited continues to deliver land and sea management activities at Abbot Point, including a new land and sea management contract and oil spill response training. NAIDOC Week - NQBP sponsored the Girudala NAIDOC Family Fun Day in Bowen. - NQBP was represented at the event, with support provided at the Juru Enterprises Limited stall.	
10. Community update	Presented by Senior Advisor Community Relationship, Emilie Power Recent Sponsorships and Donations - Recent sponsorship and donation recipients include 2026 Bowen Multicultural Festival, 2026 Bowen Polocrosse Carnival, 2026 Bowen NAIDOC Week, 2026 Whitsunday Mayors Charity Ball, FOGS (Former Origin Greats) Junior Rugby League Clinic. Community Fund Update - Recipients were announced at NQBP's recognition event in June 2026. 13 organisations across Mackay, Hay Point, Bowen and Weipa shared in \$100,000. - Funding will support initiatives focused on youth engagement, mental health awareness, environmental education, accessibility and community participation. - This year's program attracted the strongest response ever with 84 applications. CRG Sponsorship Allocation - CRG members have an annual allocation of \$5,000 for community donations and sponsorships.	

	• The 2025-26 recipient was The Bowen Art Society. • Nominations for the 2026-27 sponsorship will open in November. Facility Access • NQBP has launched a new Facility Access page on its website providing real-time updates on the status of ports and community facilities. • The page provides a single source of information on access impacts resulting from weather, operational activity and maintenance works.	
11. General business	General Business Maritime Safety Queensland (Alex Cramb) • Derelict vessel removals continue across the region, including the removal of the Seven Wonders vessel from Bowen. • Stakeholder workshops are underway to help develop the Bowen Harbour Master Plan, with public consultation expected in September/October 2026. Question – Stephanie Cora – Asked whether a second boat ramp is being considered as part of the Harbour Master Plan. Response – All options are being considered. Abbot Point Operations – (Damien Dederer) • EMS recertification was successfully completed. • A new weekly rail throughput record was nearly achieved, demonstrating strong port capacity. • Major maintenance works are planned for the ship loaders, including structural steel replacement and protective coating works.	

	Whitsunday Regional Council • A written update was provided and attached to the minutes. • The update included recent road resealing works, progress on the Bowen South Sewer project and development of a Community Benefit Agreement policy for renewable energy projects.	
12. Next meeting	Next meeting to be held on Thursday 19 November 2026	
13.	Meeting closed at 6.50pm	