REGIONAL road map.

Far North Queensland & Torres Strait Region

Regional Development Australia

FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND AND TORRES STRAIT INC

Growing our Futures

2013- 2016

July 2013

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Chair's Foreword

As Committee Members of Regional Development Australia Far North Queensland and Torres Strait (RDA FNQ&TS), we are charged with going into our community and finding common ground on the views, issues, opportunities and priorities for the region. This year, we have done this as part of our Regional Road Map 2013-16 process and through the ongoing development of twelve Strategic Priority Packages. Since the last Road Map review, a twelfth priority, Cultural Vitality, has been added.

Over the past year, and in collaboration with the Chairs from RDA Townsville & North-West, RDA Mackay Isaac Whitsunday and RDA Fitzroy & Central-West, the RDA FNQ&TS Committee has helped secure $4.1bn towards the Bruce Highway, $210 million for Cape York feeder roads and infrastructure and $4.8 million for the Cairns CBD revitalization. The four RDAs have also supported stakeholders and advocated for Reef Rescue II ($200 million) and some $2.5 million for the North Queensland Energy Plan. On the policy front, we have also had a significant influence on land tenure reform, fisheries closures and northern development. It is clear that the north Queensland super-zone, a zone of economic cooperation in north Queensland is a powerful voice.

The region also managed to secure $13.1 million through Regional Development Australia Fund Rounds two and three with four successful projects: Torres Strait Island Regional Council (sea walls for Boigu and Sabai islands), Tablelands Regional Council (Atherton Forest Mountain Bike trails), Cairns Regional Council (Skate in the Tropics) and Northern Peninsula Regional Council (airport upgrade).

After a period of prolonged sluggishness in economic growth in the region as a result of the combined effects of the GFC and the impact of a very high dollar on the region's large tourism sector, 2012-13 saw evidence of a turnaround starting to occur, and we are proud to have played a role in helping this to happen.

The employed workforce as recorded by Australian Bureau of Statistics rose and unemployment fell back, but remained above State and national levels at an average of about eight per cent. Despite the high dollar over the year, tourism growth was recorded for the first time in a number of years (especially from within Australia and New Zealand). New seasonal direct air services commenced with China which saw this market increase considerably.

There were mixed conditions in the agricultural sector with sugar prices remaining high and underpinning an expansion. There was a larger banana crop, however yielding lower prices. The cattle industry continues to feel the effects of Indonesian trade restrictions following the live cattle export ban.

Value of mining production was affected in 2012-13 by the closure of Kagara but Cairns' mining services role further afield continued to strengthen. Marine services sector has recovered and the aviation servicing sector continued its growth path.

There has been an increase in volume of movements on the property market (however an upturn in prices is yet to occur).

Analysis of workforce data from the 2006 – 2011 Census confirms trends since the GFC:

a) That over the period, a substantial part of the growth in employment occurred through residents gaining work outside the region, associated especially, but not wholly, with mining fly-in fly-out;

b) That Cairns' 12 per cent growth in workforce was underpinned by a 100 per cent growth of mining workforce from a small base but especially from a 47 per cent growth in workforce in health and community services, 28 per cent in education and 24 per cent in public administration and safety.

Looking forward, while government expenditure is expected to remain tight, the region's prospects for a resurgence in private sector growth are looking better than at any time since the GFC.

The fall in the Australian dollar, and the associated national policy switch to lower interest rates will increase the region's competitiveness in tourism and other export sectors. Direct flights to China are promising to bring with them large new investment in tourism facilities aimed especially at that market.

An increase in mining related employment is in the pipeline with direct flights starting to Moranbah involving 250 additional jobs. A go ahead for Rio Tinto's $1.3bn South of Embley project will involve a 2,000 bed FIFO workforce construction camp. The region's links with a growing Papua New Guinea economy are continuing to strengthen.

Long term interest in the region's potential for expanded export crops is emerging with a new irrigation scheme being proposed for the Gilbert River.

The announcement of the National Marine Reserves Network will bring significant changes to the region's fishing, diving and ancillary industries. As a region, strong leadership is required to forge a new future which involves innovation and continued economic diversification.

Changes to the State's TAFE sector will see the Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE merge with two other northern Queensland institutes while also acquiring the Great Barrier Reef International Marine Training College. This merger and acquisition will enable powerful positioning for international and domestic students alike.

RDA FNQ&TS continues to work with both Federal and State governments to position the region as a hub of renewable energy excellence – offering both a solution and opportunity for Queensland's increasing energy costs.

As Chair, our focus over the coming year is on implementation of the 12 Strategic Priority Packages in conjunction with both Commonwealth and State governments and in conjunction with the neighbouring RDA Chairs, negotiation of budgetary requirements under the Northern Queensland Strategy.

I look forward to a busy and productive year.

Yours sincerely

Allan Dale

Dr Allan Dale
Chair

Executive Summary

The RDA Far North Queensland and Torres Strait (RDA FNQ&TS) region covers an area roughly the size of the state of Victoria with three distinct geographical/economic zones.

Transforming from an economy heavily reliant on the agriculture industry to one now diversified with tourism, mining and fisheries and robust education and health services sectors, and with a population rising at a rate of three per cent per annum over the past 30 years, some issues for infrastructure and government services have arisen.

The region is well positioned to take advantage of the Asian Century with proximity to key burgeoning Asian markets as well as Papua New Guinea and Indonesia leveraging local port and aviation infrastructure.

Regional focus areas include the expansion of the region's outside earnings, ensuring that the region's social services and infrastructure are at levels appropriate to the population, re-establishing confidence in the region's future opportunities, leveraging opportunities to enhance employment opportunities for the region's Indigenous population and ensuring long-term planning commitments from governments to tackle water and energy security and climate adaptation measures. These focus areas have been distilled into twelve Strategic Priority Packages (SPPs), documents developed with regional partners, stakeholders and community, and used in negotiations with Federal and State Governments to affect investment into the region through annual budget cycles. These Packages form the region's priorities and can be found in Section 4.

The FNQ&TS region's strengths lie in its relative comparative advantages of two World Heritage listed sites and vast agricultural base. The Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics rainforest area is protected by skilled Natural Resource Mangement (NRM) groups and Indigenous rangers; there is an opportunity to export this tropical knowledge throughout the Torrid Zone. A growing renewable energy sector can play a key role in north Queensland's energy security as well as exporting this knowledge to Asia-Pacific. The region's advanced tourism industry has seen a marked increase in international visitors partly due to newly introduced direct routes from China – it is imperative that these routes are sustained. Cairns' appeal as a destination for mining families is growing and this combined with a large private enterprise base provides an opportunity to meet demand for emerging regional projects (Rio Tinto Alcan's South of Embley and Cape Alumina's Pisolite Hills bauxite mines) along with existing and emerging PNG and Papua Indonesia projects.

Challenges persist in terms of key infrastructure needs including provision of alternative freight routes during times of natural disaster; upgrades to and sealing of key roads including the Hann Highway, Peninsula Development Road and Kuranda Range Road are critical for economic stability. Increased conservation areas namely through the newly introduced Marine Park Reserves provide both opportunities and threats to the local tourism industry and marine and fisheries sectors respectively. The region's exposure to external economic events, due to the tourism industry's large contribution to Gross Regional Product, continues the region's drive for both tourism product enhancement and new product development and other industry diversification and innovation. The high Indigenous unemployment rates in remote communities will form a key focus of RDA FNQ&TS's strategies over the coming year – partnerships with local councils, Traditional Owners, the Regional Organisation of Councils of Cape York (ROCCY) and Remote Jobs and Communities Program service providers will leverage the work being undertaken by the Queensland Government to address land tenure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities. The 2013-14 state budget provides for $115 million in improvements and upgrades to Cairns Base Hospital, Atherton Hospital and Mareeba Hospital, yet a collective regional, State and Federal effort is needed to address the very real threat of Drug Resistant Turberculosis from PNG and ensuring adequate funding to support the Cairns Base Hospital in servicing a large geographic area spanning Cape York, Torres Strait and PNG. Addressing key economic enablers such as water, energy and climate adaption is a focus for both RDA FNQ&TS and also, the wider group of RDAs in northern Queensland through the Northern Queensland Strategy. Cairns' consumptive water needs and overall regional water security will form a priority over the coming year along with steps towards a north Queensland energy plan in order to deliver cost effective electiricity and energy security for households and business.

In progress and planned projects provide opportunities to grow the economy and support community wellbeing including the potential Cairns Port development to allow larger cruise ships into Trinity Inlet, the expansion of both convention and performing arts facilities to target domestic and international visitors and to provide arts-based activities for locals, work in developing emerging agricultural precincts (and through water resource development/allocation of the Gilbert and Mitchell River catchments and water use efficiency and planning frameworks), expansion of Australian Defence Force presence in the region, development of both Cairns and Mourilyan ports for both cargo shipping and the handling of explosives and minerals, development of Cairns International Airport through the Land Use Plan and positioning of Cairns as the gateway to Asia, development and promotion of the region's tropical know-how in agriculture, mining, green-architecture, renewable energy, Natural Resource Management and tropical medicine, attraction of the Australian Institute of Sport branch to Cairns to allow training for the Rio Olympics and further development of the sports tourism market and postioning of Cairns as an international study destination leveraging the growth from China, India and Middle East given the relaxing of the Australian dollar and also, leveraging the potential markets that the Great Barrier Reef International Marine College and Cairns Aviation Skills Centre bring.

Further regional requirements involve working with local employers, Regional Training Organisations and employment agencies to develop a place-based approach to skills development and job placement at the sub-regional level. Innovation and entrepreneurship will continue to play a role in wealth creation and future job creation and RDA FNQ&TS will work collaboratively with key partners to develop a pathway leading to tropical commercialization. Addressing engagement with incoming investors, particularly from the direct China flights will ensure a collective, regional approach to investment-matching for the benefit of both investors and community. Work will continue with governments, local stakeholders and the Australian Insurance Council to address high insurance premiums in the region which is a barrier to start-ups and further investment.

Overall, the region is well-positioned to take advantage of future opportunities as part of the Asian Century. RDA FNQ&TS will continue to work with stakeholders, local government and communities to drive the 12 SPPs with both levels of government to affect change in our region.

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1 Vision For The Region

1.1 REGIONAL VISION

To be the world's leading sustainable tropical region.

The vision of RDA FNQ&TS is that the region will be recognised as the world's leading sustainable tropical region by being the happiest, healthiest, best educated, wealthiest, economically resilient and most environmentally responsible region in the tropical world by 2050. The organisation will play a significant facilitative role in leading our region on a path to realisation of the regional vision. To achieve this, the following top six priorities and goals have been set. Diagram 1 depicts the six goals.

1.2 ECONOMIC VITALITY

A diverse and prosperous economy that is resistant to boom and bust cycles and can lead the tropical world in creating a genuinely sustainable and vibrant community within a stunning natural environment.

The Economic Vitality pillar heads our list as the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and high Australian dollar has again shown our regional economy to be highly vulnerable to boom and bust financial cycles and other economic risks, resulting in some of the highest unemployment rates in the country. This has given us a focus, not just on building the size of our economy, but on enhancing its vitality and resilience. Indigenous economic participation must play a role here and central to this is addressing land tenure issues in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island communities. Key lines of evidence drawn on to develop the goal, actions and key initiatives have included:

- Commissioned research and analysis undertaken by Cummings Economics;
- Regular employment trend updates supplied to RDA FNQ&TS by the region's Local Employment Coordinator;
- Local government community plans and Council corporate plans (Attachment 3); and
- Various reports, strategies, discussion papers and plans as highlighted in Section 7.

1.3 WORLD CLASS SUSTAINABLE NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Our critical natural, cultural and world heritage assets sustain us through regionally agreed targets and adaptive management.

The Word Class Sustainable Natural & Cultural Resource Management pillar was consistently raised throughout the original Road Map development process (2009-2010), including the plan review process, the survey and the focus group workshops. This pillar is no less relevant today as it reminds us that as a region, the FNQ&TS economy is highly dependent on the health of its natural assets, particularly its world heritage, water, soil and pastoral resources. The region is now fully serviced by four regional NRM bodies and Indigenous Rangers whose knowledge and skills in caring for country has enhanced our resource management capabilities. Because of this, strategic thinking behind this theme is well supported by the existing regional NRM plans and the ongoing processes for planning, upgrade and continuous improvement. Other key lines of evidence include:

- The Wet Tropics region water supply strategy and Draft Water Resource Plan;
- Consultation processes and regional debates concerning the expansion of national parks and the proposal for World Heritage listing of Cape York Peninsula;
- Various reports, strategies, discussion papers and plans as highlighted in Section 7; and
- Emerging climate change research and adaptation strategies, particularly with regard to the Torres Strait.

There has also been reef and rainforest research within the region, under the auspices of the Marine and Tropical Research Facility, delivered by the Reef and Rainforest Research Corporation (RRRC).

1.4 VISIONARY & ENABLING BUILT INFRASTRUCTURE

Planning and construction of built infrastructure that strengthens our culture and economy while minimising our ecological footprint.

Being a remote region, FNQ&TS still has critical infrastructure shortages. We believe that infrastructure development will 'turbo charge' social and economic development and result in improved environmental management. Therefore, the actions developed around the Visionary & Enabling Built Infrastructure pillar aims to identify the critical infrastructure barriers to improving quality of life in the region. For the full potential of remote Indigenous communities to be realised, a coordinated effort is needed to identify and deliver optimum and sustainable infrastructure. Key sources drawn on in developing the goal and the strategy include:

- The FNQ 2031 Regional Plan;
- State and Commonwealth infrastructure planning processes;
- Far North Queensland 2031 Plan, the Queensland Infrastructure Plan, Bruce Highway Action Plan and Draft Single State Planning Policy;
- Local government planning schemes;
- Various reports, strategies, discussion papers and plans as highlighted in Section 7; and
- Other planning activities being undertaken by local government and industry across the region.

1.5 INCLUSIVE PLANNING & DELIVERY OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Securing inclusive health, social and cultural services to meet community aspirations and improve equity between southern Australia and the FNQ&TS region.

As a rural and remote region, FNQ&TS still lags behind the social, health and human service delivery levels expected and received by most Australians. Many of these issues are particularly acute in our remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Additionally, there has not been sufficient past investment in building the capacity of the services sector, and there remains a gap in strategic and integrated regional approaches to planning. Additionally, there is a desperate need for an increasing focus on preventative health and social service delivery, and reducing the need for response-based servicing. The geography of the Torres Strait and its proximity to PNG puts this region in the front line of human and natural bio-security risk for Australia as a whole. In addition to our regional engagement processes, health research excellence through James Cook University has helped to inform the development of our goals and critical actions.

1.6 EMPOWERED PEOPLE THROUGH KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

FNQ&TS develops the skills and knowledge base required to compete as a workforce location of choice and to service major economic development initiatives within our region and across northern Australia and the Asia-Pacific.

With Economic Vitality heading our list of priorities, much evidence is pointing to the need for the region to fundamentally increase its skills base if it is going to effectively participate in the emerging northern Australian and Asian Pacific economies. The regular mantra discussed in the RDA committee is skills, skills, skills. Equally, we are aware that, being a region with such a great liveability asset, we must work harder to attract new skills to the region, and encourage major employers to locate their skilled workforce within our region. This lack of skills (diversity and quantity) makes us highly vulnerable to boom and bust financial cycles and other economic risks, such as high unemployment rates.

There is a high level of interplay between this goal and our economic vitality goal, particularly in relation to Indigenous communities. Without land tenure normalisation, limited capital investment or business start ups can take place. The labour supply in remote communities must be ready to meet the demand created from land normalisation and the focus on foundation skills and vocational training will play a key role here. Key lines of evidence drawn on to develop the goal, actions and key initiatives have included:

- Thinking and planning within James Cook University (JCU) and our tropical expertise processes;
- Commissioned research undertaken by Cummings Economics;
- Regular employment trend updates supplied to RDA FNQ&TS by the region's Local Employment Coordinator; and
- Various reports, strategies, discussion papers and plans as highlighted in Section 7.

1.7 RECONCEPTUALISING REGIONALISM

Creating regionally appropriate solutions and bringing decision making to home turf.

Perhaps one of the most pervasive findings from our engagement processes has been a consistent feeling across all sectors that there has been an increasing tendency for governments to centralise decision making, leading to poor policy outcomes and significant social conflict within the region. Another key issue is the perception of increasing levels of fragmentation of policy making, planning and service delivery within governments. With great limits to our own institutional capacities, fragmentation within government approaches impacts our capacity to be proactive even further. We deal with social, economic, cultural and environmental issues in integrated ways, but many government programs separate these issues.

Indigenous councils in particular find challenges in dealing with multiple government department overlays in service delivery and the omission of appropriate consultation with, and decision making by Elders and community members. An approach which enables remote communities to be the makers of their own destinies is essential for advancement.

The RDA FNQ&TS committee has a vision that declining trust in government can be reversed and that real trilateral partnerships can be formed to forge a better future for the region. This is why "Reconceptualising Regionalism" has been included as a pillar in its own right.

Diagram One: Regional Road Map Pillars

2 Role of RDA FNQ&TS

2.1 POLICY CONTEXT

RDA FNQ&TS will support, promote and disseminate information on government policy initiatives for the benefit of local communities. The Committee and Chair will have a strong understanding of Federal, State and local government policies and initiatives, and the ways in which local communities can engage with them.

In light of recent changes to the Federal government and a strong focus on regional areas at both Federal and State levels, the priorities of government in relation to regions is in many ways evolving. The relevance, significance and future of Australia's regions have become a high priority topic on the planning boards of all governments and as a result the role of all RDA's is growing significantly.

In particular, via the development of Road Map SPPs, RDA FNQ&TS will focus on the involvement of specific State and/or Federal government linkages into the regional leadership groups and networks involved with Package development. We are particularly conscious that this must interface with all State and Federal policy initiatives, including, but not limited to:

- Commonwealth election commitments concerning Regional Australia;
- State election commitments concerning Regional and Remote Queensland;
- Closing the Gap Framework;
- National Defence Strategic Positioning Exercise;
- National Marine Park Reserves Management Plans;
- National Broadband and Digital Economy Plans;
- National and Queensland Infrastructure Plans;
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan;
- Better Schools Funding Plan;
- Regional Education, Skills and Jobs Plans;
- Remote Jobs and Communities Framework;
- Queensland Biodiversity Strategy;
- National Climate Change Adaptation Policy;
- National Water Reform Initiative and State 30-Year Water Strategy;
- State 30-Year Electricity Strategy; and
- Bruce Highway Upgrade Strategy.

2.2 WHAT IS REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA?

Regional Development Australia (RDA) is an Australian Government initiative that brings together all levels of government to support the growth and development of regional Australia. RDA is delivered through a national network of 55 Committees who build partnerships between governments, regional development organisations, local businesses, community groups and key regional stakeholders to provide strategic and targeted responses to social, economic and environmental issues affecting regional Australia.

Queensland has 12 RDA Committees. Regional Development Australia Far North Queensland and Torres Strait Inc (RDA FNQ&TS) is led by a voluntary Committee, made up of 14 community leaders and experts who know and understand the region. Each of these members has a unique set of skills and knowledge, and together they create a strong, unified committee with a vast experience of private enterprise, education, local government, Indigenous engagement, natural resource management, and regional development.

The Committee works with existing regional development structures and organisations, creating synergies between the high level strategic, macro and micro social, environmental and economic development perspectives of the region through an inclusive, collaborative model.

2.3 ROLE OF RDA FNQ&TS

The Far North Queensland and Torres Strait (FNQ&TS) region will soon comprise 21 local government shires and regions which include Aurukun, Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Cook, Croydon, Etheridge, Hope Vale, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Mapoon, Mareeba, Napranum, Northern Peninsula Area, Pormpuraaw, Port Douglas, Tablelands, Torres, Torres Strait Island, Weipa Town, Wujal Wujal and Yarrabah. The region covers a total area of 273,157.4 square kilometres or 15.8 per cent of Queensland's total area. In 2012, the region was home to 269,667 persons[1] of which 61.5 per cent lived in Cairns (R), 16.9 per cent in Tablelands (R) and 10.6 per cent in Cassowary Coast (R).

RDA FNQ&TS engages with communities through local government, private sector, not-for-profits, academia and other development agencies, to understand the local issues which affect the growth of our region. We advocate Queensland and Commonwealth governments for policy and regulatory reform, investment and resources for our region in order to deliver long-term economic, social, environmental and cultural priorities.

RDA FNQ&TS partners with community and works with all levels of government to enhance our lifestyle and grow our region's futures, both individually and collectively.

A further role of RDA FNQ&TS is to deliver information to local stakeholders about programs, services, grants and initiatives for regional development by all three levels of government. We want to align our priorities, strategic actions and crucial initiatives to emerging government programs and priorities.

Each RDA across the country is responsible for developing a Regional Road Map. The Road Maps are used by both levels of government to inform policy, planning and investment into the regions. The document is also used by local stakeholders to assist with strategy and planning and is seen as the over-arching vision and strategic plan for each region.

In summary, the role of the RDA FNQ&TS Committee is to:

- Engage the community and inform governments of regional priorities and areas of greatest need.
- Identify and drive, together with the community the key things that need to happen for our region's future wellbeing.
- Address these regional priorities by providing a framework (Road Map) for developing strategic actions and initiatives.
- Conduct ongoing engagement with the key planning and delivery institutions within the region to implement these strategic actions and initiatives.
- Provide a single point of contact or one-stop-shop for regional development and for individuals and agencies driving economic, social, environmental, cultural and governance initiatives.
- Carry out structured negotiation with all levels of government and neighbouring regions as opportunities and challenges emerge.
- Deliver information to local stakeholders about programs, services, grants and initiatives for regional development by all three levels of government.

[1] *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*

3 Analysis Of The Region

4.1 Our Geography

The RDA FNQ&TS region essentially covers a previously underdeveloped tropical frontier region in Australia's far north east with a wide range of opportunities but with a distinctive range of challenges.

In depth, the region covers half the latitudes of the State of Queensland 9° to 19° south and is as deep as New South Wales with an area roughly equivalent to the State of Victoria.

Essentially, the region has three geographical/economic zones:

1) A regional capital city of Cairns in the south east with a residential population of over 150,000 with an additional visitor population up to 25,000 on any given day;
2) A surrounding high rainfall rural farming area including the Cassowary Coast, Tablelands and Douglas area with a relatively dense population of about 85,000, with a good proportion of these identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander;
   (Note: Cairns plus this area has a residential population of close to 240,000, making it the largest concentration of regional population in northern Australia.)
3) An extensive remote area in Cape York, the Torres Strait and Gulf (towards the size of Victoria in area) with low population densities and in most parts a majority of Aboriginal and Islander population.

4.2 Our Economic Context

From being an economy heavily dependent on agriculture (especially sugar), the region's outside earnings have grown very strongly over the past 30 years based on realisation of previously underdeveloped resource potential including in tourism, agriculture, mining and fisheries, plus trade with the near north, defence and surveillance.

Of special importance has been the development of two skills based manufacturing and repair sectors in maritime services, shipbuilding and repair, and aviation, both of which cater for wider markets into the Asia/Pacific area. Also important has been development of outside earnings from conferences and conventions and international education.

The strong growth in outside earnings has been contributed to by proximity to growing markets in Asia, transport developments in shipping, and land transport and aviation that have broken down old barriers of remoteness and developments of technology suited to the tropics and the area, not just in technology important to industry, but in everyday living conditions.

As in other regions, much of the consequent growth has been in services and in the regional city of Cairns that has averaged a population growth rate of close to 3 per cent per annum over the past 30 years. This has caused some issues for infrastructure and government services not keeping up with the level of population in the area.

While over the past 30 years growth has been strong, it has not been smooth.

The region is highly private enterprise oriented with large numbers of small businesses and a relatively high level of exposure to world and national economic conditions.

Growth has tended to come in strong bursts with very high levels of construction followed by periods of subdued growth as downward multiplier effects take effect. The region has had three periods over the last 30 years where a sharp reversal has seen unemployment rise to over 10 per cent and well above national averages – the early 1990s, late 1990s following the Asian crisis and recently following the GFC, when unemployment peaked at over 13 per cent.

Apart from the GFC's related impacts on construction, the high Australian dollar from 2006 onwards and reductions in air capacity to Japan, led to a downturn in earnings of about 20 per cent in real terms, in the important tourism sector that accounts for about 40 per cent of the region's outside earnings. This was against a background where the region's ability to achieve compensating growth from the mining sector was limited and not as strong as a number of other northern regions.

However with economic conditions in the region down, a major factor holding growth up has been the degree to which the city and core region has been able to provide workforce for projects outside the immediate region. About half of the growth in Cairns' employed workforce, 2006 to 2011, was in jobs outside the city, especially in mining, but also in construction, transport and some classes of manufacturing.

Post GFC stimulatory measures by the Commonwealth Government also assisted along with a major rise in employment in health and education, as these sectors started to be brought up to levels appropriate to the region's population size.

Indigenous economic interests include opportunities in caring for country (through Ranger programs) and in tourism and related cultural industry. A good example of this is the recently opened Mossman Gorge Gateway project.

4.3 Regional Focus Areas

Against this background, priority areas of attention for the regional economy are as follows:

1) To expand the region's outside earnings;
2) To ensure that the region's services in areas like health and education and social facilities and infrastructure in the form of roads, ports, airports are brought up to levels appropriate to the region's population;
3) To re-establish confidence in the region's future opportunities and achieve major new investment in the region's industries;
4) To pay particular attention to opportunities to achieve development and employment for the Indigenous population, in places Indigenous people are significantly represented;
5) To ensure long-term planning and commitments from governments around energy and water security and addressing the increased likelihood of natural disasters.

The opportunities for the region to achieve a reacceleration of outside earnings are widespread. Recent downward movements in the level of the Australian dollar will assist.

Of particular importance will be the following.

(a) Expansion of outside earnings:

In tourism:

- To ensure that the Government supported new air routes to China are sustained and that new routes are introduced;
- To ensure that Cairns is able to capitalise on expanded opportunities in cruise shipping through deepening the channel to enable the larger ships, now being used, to enter the port;
- To ensure that protection, interpretation and promotion of Aboriginal cultural values to ensure economic advancement of Indigenous people;
- To ensure that opportunities in non leisure tourism, in businesses and sports tourism are realised by expanding display space in association with the Convention Centre and providing upgrading of sporting facilities.

In mining:

- To facilitate hinterland mining opportunities as they occur;
- To continue the drive to achieve FIFO workforce and services and supply opportunities in Queensland, across the north and into PNG and Papua Indonesia;
- To support proactive and positive relations/negotiations with Traditional Owners to ensure economic advancement of Indigenous people;
- To realise opportunities for the region in education and training for mining across the wider service area.

In primary industries:

- To open out a new interior direct sealed road transport route for Tableland produce to Melbourne and Adelaide but also of benefit to tourism and pastoral industries;
- To further develop the region's large underdeveloped agricultural potential through water resource development in the Gilbert and Mitchell River basins and through reducing costs of production in the Peninsula through road infrastructure improvement.
- Attracting/leveraging investment in regional food processing and value-adding opportunities (eg. Horticulture - Canneries, Beef – live cattle or boxed beef).

In defence and surveillance:

- To achieve expansion of defence facilities in the area, especially the Naval Base in Cairns and Sherger Air Base at Weipa as part of new defence initiatives.

In maritime servicing:

- To achieve an industry structural adjustment package and adequate compensation for losses in the marine industries sector from new marine reserves;
- To expand cargo shipping services out of Cairns to mining developments in the near north, especially Papua New Guinea;
- To expand Cairns' role as a FIFO workforce centre for marine and port developments related to mining and offshore LNG developments across Australia and PNG;
- To expand the Great Barrier Reef International Marine College capacity.

In aviation servicing:

- To assist the Cairns Aviation Skills Centre expand its offerings including in handling 'composite materials';
- To work with Cairns Airport to ensure that the general aviation and aviation servicing operations continue to expand.

In trade with near north:

- To continue the effort of businesses to service the PNG market through the Trade Linked initiative;
- To support efforts to streamline visa processes between Cairns and Port Moresby;
- To expand shipping services to the near north out of Cairns to PNG.

In tropical expertise:

- To nurture the region's infant role as a global centre for tropical expertise with potential to generate future income from product and building design, consultancy services, research and education;
- To support industry development of the tropical green build sector including R&D and education capacity of regional institutions;
- To build capacity in the Regional Organisation of Councils of Cape York (ROCCY), Rainforest Aboriginal People's Alliance (RAPA) and other groups, to enable identification and development of Indigenous Intellectual Property for export purposes.

(b) Bringing services & infrastructure up to levels appropriate to the region's population:

In education and training:

- To assist the international education sector realise opportunities from a moderated Australian dollar;
- To ensure that recent moves to reorganise TAFE education caters for the region's needs;
- To support continuing growth in specialist marine and aviation training and expand it to mining;
- To encourage implementation of a place-based Skills Plan that meets a need for collaborative cross industry effort to address training needs.

In health:

- To support the upgrading of Cairns Base Hospital to top level rating in recognition of the size of population serviced and special needs of the region;
- To encourage continuing attention to special health needs of the region in Indigenous communities but also in fields like dengue elimination;
- To address the serious lack of adequate health care services in rural areas, such as the Gulf;
- To support measures that reduce risk of transmission of drug-resistant TB into the Torres Strait region.

In social and community facilities:

- To achieve expansion of sports tourism income through investment in suitable venues and facilities, sports medicine and training facilities;
- To encourage special events and investment in the region's social and cultural facilities with emphasis at this point in time on theatre, performing arts complex, regional museum or aquarium.

In infrastructure:

- To achieve funding for improvement of road and rail links to the south including the Bruce and Hann Highways;
- To focus attention on the need to improve efficiency of the region's internal road system including need for major investment in the Kuranda Range Road and the Peninsula Developmental Road;
- To ensure that high-speed broadband is rolled-out, as planned, across the region reaching 98 per cent of the population;
- To work with regional partners and Federal government to address the communication blackspot issues facing the region;
- To achieve upgrading of Cairns seaport but also of Mourilyan seaport for handling minerals and other commodities including explosives needed for mining development;
- To achieve progressive upgrading of Mareeba and Innisfail airports as alternative locations to Cairns for some aviation activities.

In governance:

- To ensure Indigenous organisations especially Traditional Owner structures are supported through leadership and governance capacity building.

(c) Investment attraction:

- To recognise that Cairns and the region's image as a place to invest has been damaged by the post GFC impacts and reports of high unemployment and that there is a need to restore confidence in the region's prospects in business, investor and government circles throughout Australia;
- To support the work of RAPA to capitalise on the cultural re-listing of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area;
- To use the advent of new air and tourism links with China to provide a new opportunity to engage with investors in China.

In addressing land tenure and land use:

- To support the Queensland government and Indigenous councils and Traditional Owner groups with land tenure policy reform to enable economic advancement of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- To identify legislative mechanisms (eg. Economic Development Act 2012) to trial innovative economic and community land use agreements.

(d) Employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations and remote localities:

- To work with Remote Jobs and Communities Program providers and Job Services Australia providers in the region to align training needs to identified employer vacancies;
- To link any new development projects with locally available labour supply (eg expansion of Sherger Air Base at Weipa);
- To build capacity within the Regional Organisation of Councils of Cape York (ROCCY) to enable delivery of strategic economic development initiatives;
- To broker Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teams to mining sites both in Australia and in PNG and Papua Indonesia;
- To deliver income generation from Traditional Owner eco-system services, horticulture, fisheries and beef industry activities 'on country';
- To support the work of the Cape York Welfare Reform trial through inclusion of key outcomes in Federal and State Indigenous policy.

(e) Addressing the 'Enablers' - Energy, water and climate adaptation:

- To continue the process of cyclone proofing property and industries to minimise damage and help bring insurance premiums under control;
- To support the investigation, feasibility and delivery of a regional insurance entity with local businesses and householders as shareholders;
- To deliver a regional response to consumptive water needs through effective planning, coordination and water use efficiency;
- To support the development of a North Queensland energy plan as part of the wider Queensland government 30-year electricity plan noting that the region has a large renewable energy sector;
- To support Ergon Energy and the private sector to attract R&D investment into renewable energy technologies and near to grid and off-grid solutions;
- To support current and emerging agricultural precincts through triple-bottom line water assessments;
- To address the deficit of power generation in the north and ensure energy security through development of the region's renewable energy sector including investigation of viable hydro electric schemes.
- To support the development of sustainable buildings, recognising tropical expertise in our construction sector addresses climate adapatation and building resilience for the Tropics.

For a detailed overview of the geographical, social and demographic and economic profiles see Attachment 4.

4 Regional Priorities

4.1 DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC PRIORITY PACKAGES

To produce the 2011 version of the Regional Road Map, RDA FNQ&TS worked closely with regional stakeholders to develop a series of Implementation Tables which outlined the top six pillars (goals) of the region. For each of the pillars, key strategic actions were identified along with the broad initiatives required to achieve each of these. These tables informed the agenda of RDA FNQ&TS. These Implementation Tables have become the foundation for the series of Strategic Priority Packages. In a similar fashion to the Implementation Tables, the Strategic Priority Packages were developed in conjunction with regional stakeholders who have the ability to advocate the priorities and play a significant role in their implementation.

The Strategic Priority Packages delve to a deeper level of detail than the Implementation Tables. Each package outlines the long term strategic opportunities available in the region, as well as implementation pathways to be enacted.

These 12 Strategic Priority Packages are Far North Queensland and Torres Strait's regional priorities and are as follows:

1. Infrastructure for Connecting our Region
2. Regional Adaptation for a Changing Climate
3. Energy & Water Transformations in FNQ&TS
4. Tropical Knowledge Economy
5. Agricultural Futures
6. Tourism and Aviation Futures
7. Business and Resource Sector Growth
8. Strong Local Governance
9. Social Planning and Development & Remote Service Delivery
10. Land & Sea Livelihoods
11. Devolved Government
12. Cultural Vitality

4.2 ALIGNMENT WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

To ensure the Packages represent and complement the priorities of the Local Government Area's (LGAs) RDA FNQ&TS undertakes a number of actions:

- Each package was developed after extensive consultation with community, LGAs and industry leaders.
- An annual analysis of the Community Plan or other Strategic documents for each LGA is undertaken to understand the synergies between their strategies and those of the Strategic Priority Packages. Any new initiatives which are aligned to the Regional Road Map pillars are included in the Packages.
- Each Package is governed by a Regional Leadership Group, which consists of Local and State Government representatives, as well as key industry/sector leaders.

4.3 INFRASTRUCTURE FOR CONNECTING OUR REGION

Our region is one of the largest and most geographically dispersed of all Australian regions. We are remote from the rest of Australia and our communities and industries are widely scattered. Despite this, we are incredibly well positioned to service emerging markets across northern Australia, South East Asia and the Pacific. In this sense, while Cairns is a key hub, Thursday Island, Weipa and the Gulf are also important distribution nodes in their own right. Our strategic location and capacities also define our specialist advantages in supporting the nation's defence. This package looks to remove the critical infrastructure/capacity blockages to connectivity across the region, the nation and the world. To broaden our economic base and strengthen our traditional industries, we have a particular focus on port, defence and transport infrastructure and progression of the digital economy.

4.4 REGIONAL ADAPTATION FOR A CHANGING CLIMATE

Our region is one of the most vulnerable to climate change in Australia. Five Torres Strait Islands face inundation problems associated with sea level rise. Reef environments face severe bleaching risks. Communities in the Wet Tropics now understand the real risks from an increased frequency of severe tropical cyclones. Cape York communities are not well prepared for intense cyclonic events. The Gulf is particularly vulnerable to extensive isolation from flooding. Through research and development work in recent years, we know some of the key adaptation strategies needed, but coordinated effort is required to see these responses fully developed and implemented.

4.5 ENERGY AND WATER TRANSFORMATIONS IN FNQ&TS

The twin threats of climate change and peak oil make it imperative that our region urgently reduces its dependency on fossil fuels. While we are less dependent than much of Queensland, little strategic work has commenced in driving the transformation required, even though there are unique opportunities and emerging innovations in wind, solar and biofuels. Equally, while we have a high rainfall environment, both Cairns and rural/remote communities face significant water security and consumptive water quality issues into the future. Our agricultural productivity will also be significantly constrained if urgent industry-driven reforms in water use efficiency falter.

4.6 TROPICAL KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

As one of few developed tropical economies, our tropical expertise, infrastructure and research capabilities are now uniquely positioned to deliver targeted and field tested products and services to both developing and developed tropical economies around the world. FNQ&TS's competitive advantage in building and exporting tropical knowledge sits within the sustainable development, agriculture, education, health, architectural design, natural resource management and municipal management fields. This region's foundations for success include: (i) real-world business to business brokerage; (ii) independent research-to-management brokerage; (iii) a strong teaching and research capacity across the tropical environmental, social, primary production and manufacturing fields; (iv) a point of integration focussed on relevant, practical and cross disciplinary outcomes within the research sector; and (v) a strong research commercialisation framework. Many of these institutional foundations are now falling into place through a regional alliance among groups like JCU's Cairns Institute, Reef Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC), Tropical Green Build Network, Queensland Government, Tropical Innovators Forum and local government authorities. There is a real opportunity to tap into a surging market, with a focus on outreach across northern Australia, PNG, South East Asia and the wider Pacific. Core investment in the capacity of, and partnerships between, key delivery institutions is required.

4.7 AGRICULTURAL FUTURES

Agriculture is a major, stable pillar in our regional economy with significant potential for growth through targeted investments in productivity, knowledge, infrastructure and trade, market and workforce development. Our agricultural foundations buffered us from economic instability during the GFC and its importance is set to increase, particularly with growing markets and investment interest from South East Asia. Facilitating sustainable agricultural expansion/ intensification in priority locations, securing regional meat processing capacity and more devolved regional control of tropical R&D are critical priorities.

4.8 TOURISM AND AVIATION FUTURES

Tourism is, and will continue to be an economic foundation in FNQ&TS. However, due to the high Australian dollar, the GFC and the national resources boom, a two-speed economy has been created. As a result, northern Queensland's resources wealth currently supports Far North Queensland's economy; historically however, the reverse has been true with tourism supporting our southern neighbours. This link is undeniable, and during the boom major and strategic reinvestment in the industry is needed to support product diversification and build resilience. The lack of a strong outbound market is a major issue in achieving optimum aviation configuration while the current federal aviation attraction model also needs attention. Boosting marketing efforts to align with other service-related industries is a necessity to ensure the region continues to 'punch above its weight'. Capacity building of SMEs and leveraging the NBN will also support the industry's sustainability goals.

4.9 BUSINESS AND RESOURCES SECTOR GROWTH

FNQ&TS has a small business economy servicing key sectors such as tourism, mining and agriculture. We also have a significant underemployed pool of residents without the ideal skill mix for the booming resources sector. While this presents great opportunities, the rapid growth in the resources sector is largely outside the region and this is also driving up the Australian dollar, with serious consequences for local employment. We need a major refocus on building and brokering local skills (among SMEs and skilled and under-skilled individuals) to better engage key and emerging industries and to attract high quality workforces and administrative centres to our quality lifestyle region. Consideration should also be given to our Northern neighbours, PNG, to ensure streamlined access to both Australians and PNG Nationals to continue to foster this crucial relationship.

4.10 STRONG LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Local government is the heart of Community Planning and service delivery across FNQ&TS. The region has made huge strides in voluntary regionalism, increasing the effectiveness of local government in many areas. Combined with the expanded use of new infrastructure program models based on strategic asset management (e.g. Roads Alliance in Qld), major progress could be made in several domains. We are looking for support to further enhance voluntary regionalism and progress dialogue on devolved government of the Torres Strait Islands. We also wish to see the Roads Alliance model enhanced and expanded into other key asset areas. Finally, effective management of our natural assets will require both Federal and State governments to reinvigorate a devolved and integrated community based Natural Resource Management (NRM) model which continues to build the strong partnerships with local government in this region.

4.11 SOCIAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND REMOTE SERVICE DELIVERY

While FNQ&TS has had strong growth in the strategic planning capacity of its economic and natural resource sectors, the social, cultural and human services sectors have not been supported at a strategic level. This limited the focus of this sector on the key targets, delivery systems and monitoring strategies required to make progress.
It is time to focus on and invest in building the strength of the sector across the region, and tackling emerging stresses from two-speed population ageing, homelessness and a serious lack of preventative health care.

4.12 LAND AND SEA LIVELIHOODS

Many in the south value the wilderness of FNQ&TS. Purely regulatory approaches to securing these values, however, have not created real livelihoods for Traditional Owners. We need entirely new approaches to securing the property rights for Traditional Owners, thereby securing economic development and strengthening the governance of Traditional Owner institutions and the creation of an effective ecosystem services economy.

4.13 DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT

RDA FNQ&TS is focused on devolved governance, involving both devolution of decision making and budgeting, as well as decentralization of Government staffing. We consider a gradual but strategic approach to decentralization should be explored in key areas of regional relevance (e.g. Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, Indigenous Affairs, DFAT/ AusAID). This could be achieved by identifying program areas that could be devolved and progressively filling vacancies into the region. Such approaches, however, would require the trialling of next-generation video meeting technologies, at least linking Cairns and Thursday Island with Brisbane and Canberra. Local procurement policy by Federal and Queensland governments needs to reflect the many small-to-medium enterprises in the region, allowing for smaller tender packages and the ability for consortium bids to develop.

4.14 CULTURAL VITALITY

FNQ&TS has a vibrant arts sector with strong influence from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural communities. Industry capacity development is needed in order to progress culture as a dimension of everday life in communities and in the public policy sphere. Cultural community development education and training is a key necessity for the region, culminating in arts and cultural organisations that govern and collaborate effectively for the benefit of artists, practioners and policy makers.

For more information on the Strategic Priority Packages see Attachment 5.

5 Key Initiatives

5.1 KEY INITIATIVES AND MONITORING PROGRESS

Each Strategic Priority Package has been developed in consultation with a Regional Leadership Group consisting of key regional and State Government stakeholders. Each package lists key initiatives and the implementation pathways. RDA FNQ&TS and its key stakeholders will together monitor progress against the agreed key performance indicators in the Strategic Priority Packages, to ensure the actions achieve the intended objectives and outcomes for our region. Refer to Diagram 2 below for details.

5.2 INFRASTRUCTURE FOR CONNECTING OUR REGION (Strategic Package 1)

Key Package Initiative	Time Frame
Facilitating cruise liner access by progressing strategic docking infrastructure and marketing in Cairns, including consideration of possible defence benefits.	2015-16
Securing a Super Yachts industry by progression of regional development of and investment in a (infrastructure and marketing) strategy.	2014-15
Removing port-based freight blockages by developing a regional maritime freight infrastructure development and investment schedule.	2015-16
Securing an expanded ADF presence in FNQ&TS in line with our strategic advantages, including: 1.Patrol Boat hosting and servicing; 2. High value training and hydrographic capabilities; 3. Strategic Airforce roles at Scherger; 4. Customs and surveillance functions; and 4. Potential integrated roles for NORFORCE type units.	2014-15
Securing gaps in our strategic land transport and freight network by ironing out key pressure points in our road-based freight, tourist and transport network.	2015-16
Bringing Forward the Digital Economy Revolution through negotiation of key bring-forward opportunities for NBN within the region in cooperation with Townsville and Mackay.	2013-14
Turbo-charging the Cairns Public Transport Plan by developing a clear forward works program and investment pathways to secure significant implementation of the Public Transport Plan.	2014-15
Progress development of Weipa marine and port industries	2015-16

5.3 REGIONAL ADAPTATION FOR A CHANGING CLIMATE (Strategic Package 2)

Key Package Initiative	Time Frame
Progress development of a significant Regional Climate Change Adaptation Package addressing the specific priorities of the Torres Strait, Gulf, Cape York Peninsula and Wet Tropics communities.	2014-15
Secure and adaptively manage the effective roll out of the Carbon Farming Initiative to maximize landscape scale co-benefits and economic opportunities across the Far North Queensland and Torres Strait Landscape.	2014-15
Greater regional devolution in prioritizing disaster recovery priorities, better integrating response, recovery and making sure these efforts build longer term resilience in the face of natural disasters.	2013-14

5.4 ENERGY AND WATER TRANSFORMATIONS IN FNQ&TS (Strategic Package 3)

Key Package Initiative	Time Frame
An evidence-based investment framework and prospectus for transformational green energy (wind, solar, hydro and biofuel) opportunities in FNQ&TS.	2014-15
Support councils and private sector to facilitate strategic development of bio-energy industries including research and feasibility studies.	2015-16
A regionally prioritized and negotiated Commonwealth/ State program investment structure (based on the Roads Alliance model) for progressive upgrade of strategic infrastructure for targeted upgrade of consumptive water delivery standards.	2014-15
A major joint Commonwealth-State investment package (based on Reef to Rescue style development and extension program) for fast tracking the finalisation of water allocation for consumptive use and major productivity gains through rural water use efficiency.	2014-15
A major, regionally partnered triple bottom line assessment of the most effective strategies for securing Cairns' known future water needs.	2013-14

5.5 TROPICAL KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY (Strategic Package 4)

Key Package Initiative	Time Frame
Working towards Cairns having an international reputation and focus on brokering tropical knowledge via engaging Governments, business and industry, (nationally and internationally) on Tropical Innovation.	2014-15
Further development and expansion of an international and national Tropical Expertise strategic marketing, business development program and tropical solutions brokerage to meet national and international needs.	2014-15
Building and progressing the Tropical Knowledge package through a strong Regional Alliance for tropical knowledge.	2014-15
Securing increased core research and education delivery capacities within the region in the sustainable tropical design and planning, environment and natural resource management, health, and international development fields.	2015-16
Establish the institutional foundations for substantially growing FNQ&TS's not-for-profit natural resource and environment science and brokerage arrangements.	2013-14
Increase more explicit partnership arrangements between the tropical knowledge research capacity in FNQ&TS and AusAID programs, including strategic deployment of AusAID capacity in the region.	2014-15

5.6 AGRICULTURAL FUTURES (Strategic Package 5)

Key Package Initiative	Time Frame
Securing significantly devolved and coordinated approach to strategic research into tropical agriculture within the region.	2014-15
Securing integrated regulatory reform to rethink the system and the relationship between productivity and environmental outcomes from agricultural lands.	2014-15
Value adding to the beef industry supply chain to increase productivity and efficiency.	2014-15
Develop a sustainable regional model to address domestic and Asia-Pacific food security issues.	2014-15
Facilitate localism and sustainable development through re-focusing whole of government approach from key agencies and supporting the development of agricultural precincts.	2013-14
Drive industry capability through coordinated and cohesive efforts to attract and retain employees and entrepreneurs, while addressing seasonal employment issues.	2014-15
Re-think current financing options for agricultural sector in order to reduce farm debt ratios.	2013-14
Develop an integrated agricultural pest management program for feral animals.	2013-14

5.7 TOURISM AND AVIATION FUTURES (Strategic Package 6)

Key Package Initiative	Time Frame
Driving the existing aviation strategy by addressing freight and backfill opportunities and reforming federal airline attraction and operating models.	2013-14
Broaden the appeal of the destination through the promotion of significant sub-regional tourism precincts (nodes) and draw a clearer link between the (generally sub-regional natural or cultural tourism assets) and the associated service and infrastructure requirements.	2014-15
Rethinking the interaction between natural assets and tourism development and investment by addressing operating models and land security.	2014-15
Elevating the region's brand position through evidence-based methodology, cross-sectoral product development, positioning of new products and increased marketing funds.	2014-15
Develop industry skills and business capacity by leveraging the NBN, certification to meet the needs of growing markets and addressing regulatory issues.	2013-14
Strategic aviation industry development to leverage resources boom and freight opportunities.	2013-14
Build resilience and diversity through key product diversification.	2013-14

5.8 BUSINESS AND RESOURCES SECTOR GROWTH (Strategic Package 7)

Key Package Initiative	Time Frame
Nurture and grow capacity in the local workforce by developing better pathways into the resources sector and value-added apprenticeships, including development and a Collaborative Centre of Excellence model and associated retention strategy.	2013-14
Build a versatile local small to medium enterprise (SME) base to service the resources sector by building capacity, capability and productivity in mining service enterprises, orchestrating local procurement agreements and refocusing clusters.	2013-14
Increase sub-regional data and social impact assessment knowledge and disseminate research through cohesive hub and program of activity.	2014-15
Enhance Cairns' appeal as a resources hub (both human and goods and services) through a concerted approach to addressing route capacity to key markets and positioning Cairns city as a supportive community for resource sector workers and their families.	2013-14
Attract key resource sector corporates by providing decision makers with trustworthy, easy access to regional information and experiences.	2014-15
Enhance the ability of the region to maximise benefits from Papua New Guinea's current economic boom by reducing or removing 'red tape' blockages between the two countries	2014-15

5.9 STRONG LOCAL GOVERNANCE (Strategic Package 8)

Key Package Initiative	Time Frame
Enable local governments to define and implement their communities strategic priorities identified within Long Term Community Plans.	2014-15
Regional Managers Coordination Network effectively resourced (financial, and with authority) to coordinate and respond to regional issues.	2013-14
Apply the Qld Road Alliance Model across other asset classes (hard and natural).	2013-14
From the onset engage resource and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait local governments to continue to improve governance and participate effectively in the projects which will have an impact on their communities.	2014-15
Support and encourage further development of the Far North Qld Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) and ROCCY	2013-14

5.10 SOCIAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND REMOTE SERVICE DELIVERY (Strategic Package 9)

Key Package Initiative	Time Frame
Improving on social, health and human service delivery.	2015-16
Addressing the insufficient past investment in building the capacity of the services sector.	2014-15
Addressing the gap in strategic and integrated regional approaches to planning.	2014-15
Providing an increased focus on preventative health and social service delivery and reduce need for response-based servicing.	2014-15
Tackle the shared health and quarantine challenges in the Southern Papua New Guinea and Torres Strait Islands region.	2013-14

5.11 LAND AND SEA LIVELIHOODS (Strategic Package 10)

Key Package Initiative	Time Frame
Facilitate multi-partite community pilots to address tenure reform on both Indigenous and non-Indigenous land to allow economic growth and security.	2014-15
Rethink the approaches to governance and capacity building in Traditional Owner institutions to support tenure reform and economic advancement from living on 'country'.	2014-15
Support the normalisation of Weipa governance in order to diversity the local economy and grow the social and economic fabric of the township	2013-14

5.12 DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT (Strategic Package 11)

Key Package Initiative	Time Frame
Devolution of decision making and budgeting, as well as decentralisation of Government staffing.	2015-16
Strategic approach to decentralisation in the areas that are relevant to the region (parks and wildlife, health, agriculture, indigenous affairs, customs, DFAT, AusAID, AIS)	2015-16
Strategic approach to progressively filling vacancies in program areas that could be devolved.	2015-16
Trialling of next generation video meeting technologies.	2014-15
Developing an approach that breaks through the silo approach by the government and incorporates social, environmental and economic issues.	2014-15
Working with the broader regions in the northern alliance to progress larger regional issues.	2013-14

5.13 CULTURAL VITALITY (Strategic Package 12)

Package currently in development stage.

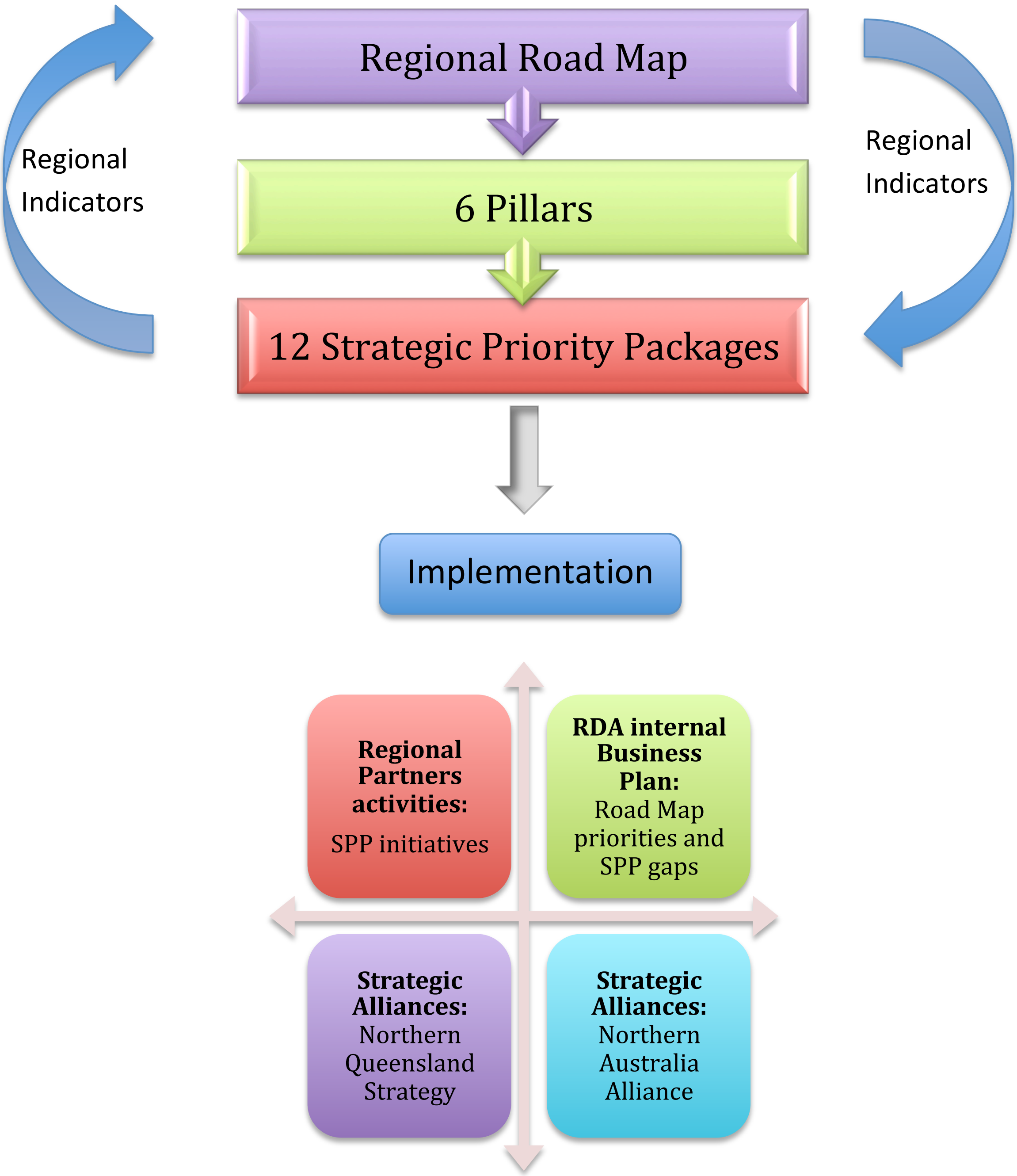
Diagram 2 depicts the interplay between the Road Map, the 12 priority packages and implementation.

The 12 Strategic Priority Packages (SPP) focus the Road Map goals into manageable policy and delivery areas. Each SPP contains a number of strategies to address blockages and also a number of implementation pathways or initiatives against each strategy. These pathways are categorised into two areas:

1. Initiatives which are already being undertaken by regional stakeholders, that is, it is part of their normal 'business' or scope of work; and
2. Initiatives which have been identified as gaps. Dependent on the intent of the intiative, it is RDA FNQ&TS's responsibility to source funding, resources or form policy positions on behalf of the region. These initaitives are prioritised and are located in the RDA FNQ&TS annual Business Plan.

Running concurrently to the 12 SPPs are two separate implementation initiatives; the Northern Queensland Strategy and the Northern Australia Alliance. These initiatives are a collective effort by the Northern Australia RDAs, State and Commonwealth governments to deliver key outcomes in the areas of infrastructure, agriculture, mining, tourism, tropical knowledge, land tenure reform and normalization, energy and water security and climate adaptation.

Diagram 2: Implementation of the Regional Road Map



6 Sources

Relevant Strategic Document	Relevance	Key Strategies/Goals
Federal		
Tropical North Qld Regional Economic Plan, *Advance Cairns*, 2011	Entire Region (excluding Etheridge & Croydon LGAs)	Outlines a 20-year economic vision for the region and has emanated from, and been built on the back of extensive consultation and research carried out over 2010-2011.
National Strategic Rural R&D Investment Plan, *Rural Research and Development Council*, 2011	Entire Region	Outlines a rationale for balancing Australiand Government investment in rural RD&E, details the current level of investment and offers a vision for the rural RD&E system.
National Security Strategy 2013, *DPM&C*, 2013	Entire Region	Surveys Australia's national security outlook and describes our national security objectives and explains how we are achieving those objectives.
Australia in the Asian Century White Paper and Implementation Plan, *DPM&C*, 2013	Entire Region	Details the governance structures it will put in place to work with State and Territory and local governments, businesses and educational institutions, unions, academics and community groups to achieve the White Paper's 25 objectives. It also outlines progress already made against longer-term targets and communicates how and when the Government will report on its progress on the White Paper's objectives.
2013 Defence White Paper, *Dept of Defence*, 2013	Entire Region	Addresses the range of significant international and domestic developments since 2009, which influence Australia's national security and defence settings, including their impact on force posture, future force structure and the Defence budget.
Tourism 2020 Tourism Employment Plans Strategy, *DRET*, 2011	Cairns, Port Douglas, Tablelands, Mareeba, Cassowary Coast LGAs	Details delivery of targeted and practical measures to address labour and skills issues in the eight TEP regions. TEPs will link tourism businesses with programs geared towards improving education, training and employment outcomes.
Australian Maritime Workforce Development Strategy, *Maritime Workforce Development Forum*, 2013	Entire Region	Recommends a plan for reform and transformation of maritime workforce arrangements.
The Critical Decade: Qld Climate Impacts and Opportunities, *Climate Commission*, 2012	Entire Region	Draws on the Climate Commission's reports *The Critical Decade: Climate Science, risks and responses* and *The Critical Decade: Climate change and health*, and is the Climate Commission's 14th Report.
Draft National Wildlife Corridors Plan, *National Wildlife Corridors Plan Advisory Group*, 2012	Entire Region	Reflects that biodiversity conservation and sustainable land uses can be better integrated across Australia's landscapes in ways that will improve the connectivity and resilience of our natural ecosystems.
Feeding the Future, *DFAT*, 2012	Entire Region	Joint study between Australia and China on how to strengthen investment and technological cooperation to enhance food security.
Marine Nation 2025: Marine science to support Australia's Blue Economy, *Oceans Policy Science Advisory Group*, 2013	Entire Region	Provides a framework for a national discussion about a number of grand challenges facing Australia that relate to our ocean estate, and how marine science can contribute to their solutions. It identifies strengths and weaknesses in marine research infrastructure and capability and recommends development of a 10-year marine science strategy.

Relevant Strategic Document	Relevance	Key Strategies/Goals
National Food Plan: Our food future, *DAFF*, 2013	Entire Region	Developed to ensure our policies position the food system for the future. It provides a framework for Australia's food system, firmly grounded on the national objectives set by the Australia in the Asian Century White Paper. The plan sets the long-term direction for our food system and will help us prioritise our actions and decide where to focus our resources.
Agiculture, Fisheries and Forestry in the Cairns Region of Qld, *DAFF/ABARES*, 2013	Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Yarrabah and part of Tableands LGAs	Overview of the Cairns region, value of production, employment, number and type of farms, farm financial performance and fisheries and forestry sectors profile.
Agiculture, Fisheries and Forestry in the Outback Region of Qld, *DAFF/ABARES*, 2013	Entire Region excluding Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Yarrabah and part of the Tablelands LGAs	Overview of the Outback FNQ Qld region, value of production, employment, number and type of farms, farm financial performance and fisheries and forestry sectors profile.
Regional Education, Skills and Jobs Plan, *DEEWR*, 2012	Entire Region	Present locally identified opportunities and challenges and outline local strategies to improve education, skills and jobs outcomes in regional Australia.
National Land Freight Strategy Update, *Infrastructure Australia,* 2012	Entire Region	Provides background to the freight industry in Australia, including size, scope and policy settings. It identifies key freight constraints on productivity and proposed directions forward.
Australia to 2050: Future Challenges, *Attorney General's Dept*, 2010	Entire Region	Identifies an ageing and growing population, escalating pressures on the health system and an environment vulnerable to climate change as major challenges that will place substantial pressure on the economy, living standards and government finances over the next 40 years.
State of Australian Cities 2012, *Dept of Infrastructure and Transport,* 2012	Cairns Local Government area	Prepared by Infrastructure Australia, the 'State of Australian Cities 2012' report brings together current research and data including available dat from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing to present a comprehensive snapshot of Australian cities. It details changes in urban population and settlement and examines indicator srelating to productivity, sustainability and liveability.
Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Regional Plan 2009–2029	Torres Strait Island Regional Council area, Torres Shire Council area and Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council	The Regional Plan, developed by TSRA and three regional councils, provides regional goals to guide strategic policy of all government service providers in the region. It sets out goals and strategies to inform government planning and service delivery.
Torres Strait Development Plan 2009–2013, *TSRA,* 2009	Torres Strait Island Regional Council area, Torres Shire Council area and Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council	Details how the TSRA will, through seven new or revised programs contribute to the COAG Building Blocks for overcoming Indigenous disadvantage, the six 'Closing the Gap' targets, and Indigenous-specific outcomes of National Partnership Agreements.
Closing the Gap: National Partnership Agreements, *COAG,* 2008	Entire Region	Indigenous-specific National Partnership Agreements which commit governments to a common framework of outcomes, progress measures and policy directions to guide Indigenous reform, build on current initiatives and address shortfalls, as well as providing additional funds.

Relevant Strategic Document	Relevance	Key Strategies/Goals
Inspiring Australia: Science engagement into and for Australia's Tropical Region, *Dept. of Climate Change, Industry and Innovation*, 2010	Entire Region	Recommends a way forward for national leadership and coherent action in public engagement that will further harness the potential of Australia's investment in the sciences.
Strong Foundations for Sustainable Local Infrastructure Report, *DoRALGAS*, 2012	Entire Region	Addresses the main challenge faced by the local government sector – how to meet its infrastructure obligations without the ability to rely upon increased funding from states, territories and the Commonwealth.
Clean Energy Futures Program/CFI Legislation, *Australian Government,* 2011	Entire Region	Includes legislative change package to address climate change including carbon pricing mechanism, clean energy futures programs, tax reform and increased household payments. The carbon farming initiative (CFI) is a carbon offsets scheme that creates new economic opportunities for farmers.
State		
Tropical North Qld Renewable Energy Profile and Plan, *DEEDI*, 2012	Entire Region	The Profile delivers a concise overview of industry players, economic value and employment data for the region. The Plan outlines four strategies to implement the vision with a forecast for growth to 2020.
The Contribution of the Primary Industries Sector to North Qld Regional Economies, *DEEDI*, 2010	Entire Region	Reports on the full contribution of the primary industries sector to the economy of the northern Queensland regions covered by the Far North, Northern and North West Statistical Divisions. Defines both the gross value of output of the sector and the 'flow on' impacts of the sector on various elements of the economy.
Input Output Analysis & Modelling the Regional Economies of North Qld, *Cummings Economics*, 2010	Entire Region	Provides input output tables to reflect how expenditure on a given industry/product will flow through to a demand for inputs from other industries, in first round, and then subsequent round effects. Also identifies how incomes earned by employees will flow through in consumption activity.
Far North Queensland Infrastructure Plan 2009-2031, *DSDIP,* 2009	Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Tablelands, Wujal Wujal and Yarrabah LGAs	The plan identifies current and future needs of the region, infrastructure required to support desired growth in an efficient manner, and build resilience to the impacts of climate change and peak oil.
Queensland Regionalisation Strategy, *DLG&P*, 2011	Entire Region	Whole of government strategy which facilitates the economic development and improved liveability of all Queensland regions through a range of statewide and region-specific actions to attract people and investment.
Far North Qld Regional Plan 2031, *DSDIP,* 2011	Cairns, Cassowary Coast, Tablelands, Wujal Wujal and Yarrabah LGAs	The first statuatory regional plan to be developed outside a major metropolitan area. It builds on the former non-statutory regional plan – FNQ Regional Plan 2010. While managing urban growth is a key focus, the FNQ Regional Plan also addresses various rural and natural resource management issues with a land use planning component.
Queensland 30-Year Electricity Strategy Directions Paper, *DEWS*, 2013	Entire Region	Outlines the context for the reform program, the challenges the state is facing and the steps needed to develop a 30-year electricity strategy for Queensland. The aim of developing the strategy is to focus not only on the issues of today, but to take a horizon view of what opportunities and challenges lie ahead for the sector in the decades to come.
Far North Qld Regional Water Supply Strategy, *DERM*, 2010	Tablelands and Cairns LGAs	Progresses solutions for the future urban, rural and industrial water needs of Atherton, Cairns and Tableands. This long-term strategy aims to achieve the best possible environmental, social and economic outcomes. The strategy supports methods already

Relevant Strategic Document	Relevance	Key Strategies/Goals
		adopted to conserve water and improve efficiencies in the region, and recommends a commitment to continuous improvement in water use efficiency.
Cairns Integrated Public Transport Plan, *DTMR*, 2005	Cairns LGA	Focus of the plan is to create a public transport system in Cairns that is fair, accessible, and offers an alternative to the private car.
Cape York Bio-Region Plan Scoping Paper, *DEHP*, 2012	Cape York Peninsula	Incorporates protected estate management, pristine waterway management, and appropriate economic development to allow for an integrated approach to the conservation of the region's natural and cultural heritage.
Great Barrier Reef Ports Strategy 2012-2022, *DSDIP*, 2012	Cook, Cairns and Cassowary Coast LGAs	Outlines the Qld government's strategic approach to port development along the Great Barrier Reef coastal region to 2022.
Qld Agriculture Strategy: a 2040 vision to double agricultural production, *DAFF*, 2013	Entire Region	Outlines the four key pathways to double Qld's agricultural production by 2040 with a focus on securing and increasing resource availability, driving productivity growth across the supply chain, securing and increasing market access and minimising the costs of production.
Qld's Water Sector: a 30-year Strategy Discussion Paper, *DEWS*, 2013	Entire Region	Identifies issues, challenges and, importantly, opportunities to realise the vision of creating a Qld water sector with the capability to deliver integrated catchment-based recreation, water supply, sanitation, irrigation and environmental services at low cost.
Queensland Agricultural Land Audit, *DAFF*, 2013	Entire Region	Identifies land important to current and future production and the constraints to development, highlighting the diversity and importance of Queensland's agricultural industries across the state.
Queensland Business Innovation Report 2012, *DSITIA*, 2012	Entire Region	Provides a snapshot of how firms are responding to the changing structural conditions in the economy.
Tropical North Queensland Tourism Opportunity Plan 2010-2020, *Tourism Qld and TTNQ*, 2010	Entire Region	Provides direction for the sustainable development of tourism in the region over the next seven years to 2020.
Queensland Health Strategic Plan 2012-2016, *Qld Health*, 2012	Entire Region	Describes the main drivers of the department's work, and summarises the implications of the reforms and that of the new Hospital and Health Services. It sets out the outcomes sought and how they will be achieved.
Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service, Torres Strait-Northern Peninsula Area Hospital and Health Service and Cape York Hospital and Health Service Strategic Plans, 2013	Cairns, Tablelands, part of Cassowary Coast, Cook, eight Aboriginal Shire Councils in Cape York and Yarrabah LGAs	Describes the organisation's purpose, vision, priorities, strategies and measures to deliver health care in designated areas in FNQ&TS.
Queensland Drive Tourism Strategy 2013-2015, *DTMESBCG*, 2012	Entire region	Developed in consultation with the tourism industry, QTIC, government agencies, RTOs and industry associations to encourage more travellers to tae a driving holiday in Qld and position the state as a world-leading drive tourism destination.
Evaluation Report for the Queensland Skills Plan, *DETE*, 2012	Entire region	The Queensland Skills Plan 2008 outlined the short and long term measures the Queensland Government will take to alleviate skill shortages at all occupational levels. The 2012 report

Relevant Strategic Document	Relevance	Key Strategies/Goals
		provides a final evaluation of the Plan and assesses its impact on the VET system in Queensland and on producing a highly skilled labour force to support productivity and economic growth. The findings of this evaluation will inform the next phase of reforms for the VET sector.
The Indigenous Employment Policy for Queensland Government Building and Civil Construction Projects (IEP 20% Policy)	Entire region	The Indigenous Employment Policy for Queensland Government Building and Civil Construction Projects (IEP 20% Policy) is part of the Queensland Government's commitment to reconciliation and to 'closing the gap' on Indigenous disadvantage. This includes improving the quality of life, equality of opportunity and fulfilment of the diverse aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.
Strategic Plan 2010 – 2014, *DET*, 2010	Entire Region	Strategic Plan 2010 – 2014 provides a framework aimed at giving children a flying start; laying strong educational foundations, developing skills for the economy and creating a capable, agile and sustainable organisation.
Bruce Highway Action Plan, *DTMR*, 2012	Entire Region	Details a program of works which will improve the safety, flood immunity and capacity of the Bruce Highway over the next ten years.
Local		
Regional Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Action Plan, *FNQROC*, 2011	Member LGAs	Aligns all Councils with a consistent approach to mitigating greenhouse gas emissions. The process has highlighted opportunities for effective regional initiatives which support the efforts of individual Councils.
Regional Pest Management Strategy, *FNQROC*, 2004	Member LGAs	Comprises Stage Four of a four-stage process of integrating the individual Pest Management Plans across member councils. What follows is the substance of pest management strategies, and the rationale behind them.
Regional Asset Management Strategy, *FNQROC*, 2010	Member LGAs	Aims to provide a strategic asset framework which will guide the planning, construction, maintenance, and operation of infrastructure essential to deliver the vision of the Councils and communities of FNQ.
FNQ Regional Roads Group Alternative Business Models Study (Roads), *FNQROC*, 2010	FNQ Regional Road Group	Provides an alternative business operating model between DTMR and local government when managing the State's road networks. Study outcome includes a model which extends the term of existing arrangements between DTMR, member councils and RoadTek as well as delivering an expanded suite of services at regional level through a Program Management Office.
Tablelands Regional Council Corporate Plan 2009 – 2013	Tablelands Regional Council	Sets the foundation for the delivery of Council services and projects for the next five years. It details the vision, values and principles which best reflect the needs of the community for today and tomorrow.
Tablelands Community Plan 2021	Tablelands Regional Council	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.
Cooktown and Environs Youth Development Plan 2009 – 2014	Cook Shire Council	Identifies needs, opportunities and addresses issues for youth within the region. The plan also develops a range of systems, programs, strategies, services and recommendations to better the services and opportunities of youth within the region and encourage a collaborative approach.
Cook Shire Council Corporate Plan 2007 – 2012	Cook Shire Council	Identifies short and long-term goals for the community and outcomes the Council must deliver to bring the community closer to the overall vision of the Council.
Cairns Regional Council	Cairns Regional	The Plan reflects Council's vision for a prosperous, vibrant and

Relevant Strategic Document	Relevance	Key Strategies/Goals
Corporate Plan 2013 – 2018	Council	livable region which balances economic development, environmental management and social well-being.
Cairns Economic Development & Innovation Strategy and Delivery Program 2012-2015	Cairns Regional Council	Presents the Council's plan of action to help build prosperity and sustainable growth in Cairns region. The strategy provides council with a framework to guide the region's business and industry focused activities towards building a vibrant and diverse economy. The strategy is focused on building Cairns' existing attributes, developing competitiveness and capacity to innovate, and attracting and retaining business investment and employment.
Cairns Regional Council State of Environment Report 2008/2009	Cairns Regional Council	Provides an information base to support the community, industry and government in working towards improved environmental management and the sustainable use of our resources.
Cairns Regional Council Imagine Tomorrow – Your Community Plan 2011-2031	Cairns Regional Council	Provides a Community Plan that manages the environment, creates a dynamic culture, preserve well-being and lead in sustainable economic development.
Defining an economic development model for the Cassowary Coast 2009	Cassowary Coast Regional Council	An economic development model aimed to inform Council's decision making process in relation to economic development services within the region. Economic maturity, diversity, services provided by regional organisations, Council resources and strategic direction of community will shape and help design an economic development model.
Cooktown and South-East Cape Marketing Plan	Cooktown Chamber of Commerce and Tourism and Cook Shire Council	Both organisations joined to promote tourism and tourism development and develop stronger and focused communication channels for the benefit of tourism within the Cooktown and South-East Cape York sub-region.
Planning Schemes (11)	Existing planning schemes for the entire region	Planning scheme which guides appropriate land use development within the local government areas.
Aurukun Shire Council Corporate and Operational Plan 2008 - 2012	Aurukun Aboriginal Shire Council	Sets the foundation for the delivery of Council services and projects.
Cassowary Coast Region Community Plan 2011 - 2021	Cassowary Coast Regional Council	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.
Cassowary Coast Regional Council Tropical Futures 2016	Cassowary Coast Regional Council	Outlines a set of strategies and priority actions to 2016. The plan is the first in an ongoing series of five-year plans. The plan focuses on laying a foundation that raises the profile of the region and buiding the capacity of the region's individual industry groups and business networks.
Cook Shire Community Plan 2011 - 2021	Cook Shire Council	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.
Croydon Shire Community Plan 2011 - 2021	Croydon Shire Council	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.

Relevant Strategic Document	Relevance	Key Strategies/Goals
Etheridge Shire Council Corporate Plan[2] 2010 - 2015	Etheridge Shire Council	Sets the foundation for the delivery of Council services and projects.
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council Community Plan 2012	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.
Lockhart River Community Plan 2011 - 2021	Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.
Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council Community Plan 2010 - 2020	Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.
Napranum 10 year Community Plan	Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.
Northern Peninsula Area Community Plan 2010 - 2020	Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.
Pormpuraaw Community Plan 2011- 2021	Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.
Torres Shire Council - Operational Plan 2012 – 2013	Torres Shire Council	Sets the foundation for the delivery of Council services and projects.
Torres Strait Island Regional Council Community Plan 2009 - 2029	Torres Strait Island Regional Council	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.
Weipa Town Authority Community Plan 2012 - 2022	Weipa Town Authority	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.
Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council Community Plan 2011 –2021	Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council	Sets out the aspirations, ideas and concerns of the community and will set out the priorities for the long-term progress of the region in the areas of social, economic, environment, and governance.
Other		
Far North Queensland Business Priorities Report, *CCIQ*, 2013	Entire Region	In 2012 regional businesses were given an opportunity to contribute to the CCIQ policy and advocacy agenda through a series of regional business workshops, consultation activities and direct one-on-one business case studies. That engagement culminated in the FNQ Business Priorities Report and this will serve as the key reference document for CCIQ's advocacy agenda over the coming twelve months.
Cairns Airport Land Use Plan, *Cairns Airport Ltd*, 2012	Cairns LGA	Provides the planning framework to achieve the $1billion redevelopment of the Cairns Airport over the next 20 years.

[2] *Community Plan no longer valid*

Relevant Strategic Document	Relevance	Key Strategies/Goals
Tourism Tropical North Queensland Strategic Marketing Plan 2011-2015 and Strategic Plan 2011-2015, *TTNQ*, 2011	Entire Region	Outlines the strategic direction until 2015 and follows the modelling developed by Tourism Australia which focuses on Australia's potential to capture a larger share of domestic and outbound international markets for those countries seen as the most profitable prospects.
Smart Farming: leveraging the impact of broadband and the digital economy, *CSIRO*, 2013	Entire Region	Creates greater awareness and understanding of the potential for a smart farming enabled by broadband and digital services. The report is not intended to be comprehensive in terms of the full range of smart farming initiatives across Australia, but rather illustrate the broad opportunities in a practical way for potential users.
From Hand Out to Hand Up Vol 2, *Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership*, 2007	Aurukun, Coen, Hope Vale, Mossman Gorge	To be read in conjunction with the From Hand Out to Hand Up: Design Recommendations Report released in June 2007. Volume 2 builds on the initial report and contains greater detail in several key reform areas, including housing, education, supports and evaluation. It contains a complete statement of the Cape York Institute's recommendations.
Queensland Resource Sector State Growth Outlook Study, *Qld Resources Council*, 2011	Entire Region	The study is intended to provide a consistent point in time assessment of the demand for the labour, electricity and water that will result from the planned expansion of the resources sector. Demand for these inputs has then been assessed against the current and forecast supply to identify any potential shortfalls.
Conceptualising, Evaluating and Reporting Social Resilience in Vulnerable Regional and Remote Communities Facing Climate Change in Tropical Qld, *RRRC*, 2011	Entire Region	Establishes a set of regional community resilience indicators that can also be scale-able to sub-regional and community levels.
Our Future World: Global megatrends that will change the way we live, *CSIRO*, 2012	Entire Region	The report presents a narrative of the future through six interlinked megatrends. The indicative timeframe for the analysis is 20 years.
Game Changing Priorities for the Future of Tourism in Qld, *QTIC*, 2011	Entire Region	Aims to bring focus to the fundamental challenges faced by the Qld tourism industry and to articulate priority actions for both government agencies and government.
Sustaining the Wet Tropics, Regional NRM Plan, *FNQ NRM Ltd*, 2004-2008	Wet Tropics	Takes an assets-based rather than issues-based approach, examining how these assets can be enhanced and how the threats they face can be addressed.
The Aboriginal Cultural and NRM Plan, *FNQ NRM Ltd*	Wet Tropics	A holistic framework that clearly represents he way in which Traditional Owners view and manage Country.
Advance Tropical Green Build: Connecting TNQ Capacity to Market – Capability Assessment, *Cummings Economics and DSDIP*, 2012	Entire Region	Determines the composition, capability and economic value of the Tropical Green Build sector and identifies market opportunities and industry challenges for future growth of the sector. A Business Directory profiling the capability of 112 local businesses was also included.

7 Attachment 1: Regional Profile

1. HUMAN CAPITAL

1.1 Regional Workforce Challenges & Workforce Development Priorities

1.1.1 General

The region's workforce structure and challenges are heavily influenced by the region's geography, history and patterns of industry development.

There are some major variations in workforce structure and challenges to those typical in major metropolitan centres:

a) Major differences between two geographical zones;
b) Attracting population and workforce into a region remote from major metropolitan areas with a different climate;
c) Coping with volatile growth;
d) Changing industry and workforce structures;
e) Indigenous workforce challenges;
f) Other workforce problem areas.

a) Two Geographic Zones

The region has effectively two major very different population and workforce zones:

1) A developed high rainfall south east including the city of Cairns where population is, by Australian standards, quite dense and the largest concentration in northern Australia.
2) A vast remote area in Cape York, the Torres Strait and the Gulf, where population density is low and in most areas predominantly Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Workforce structure and challenges vary markedly between the two areas.

b) Attracting Population & Workforce – General

The strong growth of the region's economy in recent decades has meant there has been a need to attract additional population and workforce to the region to take up the opportunities.

In recent decades, this has mainly meant attracting population and workforce from the major population areas in southern Australia.

Apart from challenges faced by all non metropolitan regional areas in attracting population and workforce to live in smaller communities with reduced levels of service availability, a shift from southern Australia to the far north of Australia involves a substantial degree of adaptation to a different climate and environment and moving to an area very distant from family and friends in major metropolitan centres.

The attractive environment of Cairns and the immediate region, technological advances like air-conditioning, improved community facilities in health, education, sporting, cultural activities, and availability to cheap air travel, have reduced past barriers. However problems of remoteness and climate adaptation still remain of some relevance.

However compared with other regions in the north, Cairns and the immediate region offer marked lifestyle advantages and there has been evidence of population continuing to flow in and a reluctance to leave, in the face of relatively high unemployment levels.

However problems become acute in attracting workforce to the more remote areas of the region.

c) Coping with Strong but Volatile Growth

As the previous overview description indicates, over the past 30 years, Cairns has recorded one of the fastest rates of growth of population in Australia.

However this growth has been unstable, coming in strong bursts followed by marked slowdown periods. While average population growth for Cairns city has been towards 3 per cent per annum, growth has reached highs of over 5 per cent and dropped to below 1 per cent.

Unemployment has peaked twice up around 13 per cent and in another period above 10 per cent.

Studies for Cairns Regional Council have indicated that up to a two-year lag has been occurring between slowdown shocks and sharp upturns in employment and in the inflow of population and workforce slowing or accelerating to appropriate levels.

The studies have also indicated, that the base industries earning outside income (tourism, agriculture, fisheries and mining) are highly exposed to international markets with fortunes changing quite strongly due to outside influences (eg. national recessions, the Asian Crisis, the Global Financial Crisis, the level of the Australian dollar, and global commodity prices).

Over the past 30 years, the region has seen tourism growth as high as doubling in three years to no growth and decline for five years. The sugar industry was almost put out of business by very low world prices in the early 2000s, but is currently in the throes of a major expansion. Mining activity has fluctuated between $200m to almost $1 billion. Shipbuilding has fluctuated with employment by the main company involved from about 700 to very small levels.

Fortunately, while the regional economy has a relatively high dependence on tourism, its tourism markets are more diversified than most Australian regions, its large primary industries sector is also highly diversified and even mining in and serviced by the region is diversified by mineral type and spread over a wide area.
While the sum total in outside earnings has moved up and down, the fluctuations have not been as strong as might appear, and the general trend has been up.

Where impact on the region's workforce has mainly been felt, has been through exaggerated upturns and downturns in the construction sector, and some manufacturing and business categories associated with construction. **Table 1** illustrates inter-censal movements in workforce by industry.

Table1: Workforce Changes by Industry, Cairns Statistical Sub Division (SSD), Usual Place of Residence, Actual 1996 – 2001, 2001 – 2006 & 2006 – 2011

		Growth 1996 - 2001	Growth 2001 - 2006	Growth 2006 – 2011	(cf) (Tvle) (2006-2011)	(cf) (Aust) (2006-2011)
(2)	Agriculture, forestry & fishing	-15.88%	-27.04%	+6.5%	-24.7%	-11.1%
(2)	Mining	-23.96%	+74.35%	+101.9%	+27.9%	+65.2%
(6)	Manufacturing	+5.16%	+0.02%	0.0%	+24.7%	-5.2%
(6)	Electricity, gas, water & waste services	+53.28%	+21.68%	+28.4%	+26.7%	+29.2%
(1)	Construction	-14.66%	+71.93%	-8.2%	+13.3%	+16.8%
(4)	Wholesale trade	-6.14%	-8.48%	+9.1%	+7.2%	+1.8%
(4)	Retail trade	+15.23%	+10.94%	+2.4%	+11.1%	+2.3%
(2)	Accommodation & food services	+1.83%	-2.44%	+2.0%	+16.3%	+13.1%
(5)	Transport, postal & warehousing	+3.34%	+15.33%	+3.5%	+14.3%	+12.0%
(6)	Information media & telecommunications	-12.11%	-3.94%	-13.8%	-3.5%	+0.8%
(1)	Financial & insurance services	-13.77%	+12.50%	-3.7%	+2.5%	+0.8%
(1)	Rental, hiring & real estate services	-6.55%	+26.06%	-7.7%	+2.2%	+3.2%
(6)	Professional, scientific & technical services	+0.56%	+21.68%	+20.7%	+25.1%	+21.3%
(6)	Administration & support services	+4.06%	+3.65%	+1.7%	+20.6%	+13.0%
(3)	Public administration & safety	+9.21%	+38.48%	+24.2%	+7.6%	+13.3%
(3)	Education & training	+19.52%	+11.93%	+27.9%	+15.0%	+15.2%
(3)	Health care & social assistance	+15.14%	+26.57%	+46.8%	+30.8%	+22.1%
(6)	Arts & recreation services	-6.14%	+2.40%	+17.7%	+15.0%	+18.9%
(1)	Other services	-12.81%	+12.45%	+19.1%	+19.1%	+11.8%
	Total	**+1.21%**	**+16.35%**	**+12.1%**	**+14.0%**	+11.6%

Source: Cummings Economics from ABS data.

Charts 2 & 3 illustrate the fluctuations in dwelling approvals and in total value of all building approvals.
The region has thus faced a challenge and is likely to continue to face challenges in the future in meeting changing needs in the level of growth of the workforce and the structure of the workforce.

d) Changing Industry & Workforce Structure

Apart from volatility in employment levels and structures due to short term economic conditions, the region has needed to cope with changing long term structures.

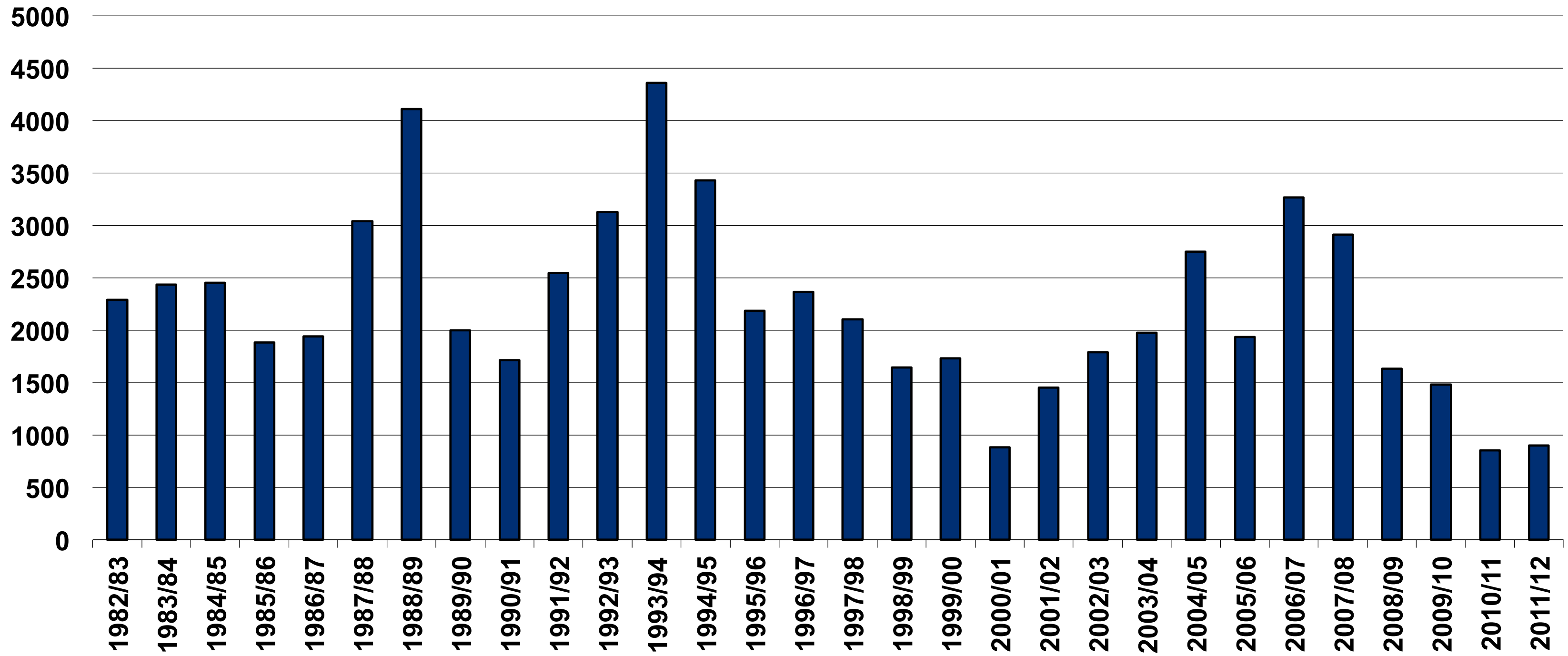
The rapid rise in tourism in the 1980s and 1990s has seen a need to establish additional education and training in those areas.

The emergence of the two economic skill-based clusters in maritime services and aviation services has seen a need for a response in those directions.

The continuing drift towards health and education employment and professional and scientific services has seen a need to respond in university campus development.

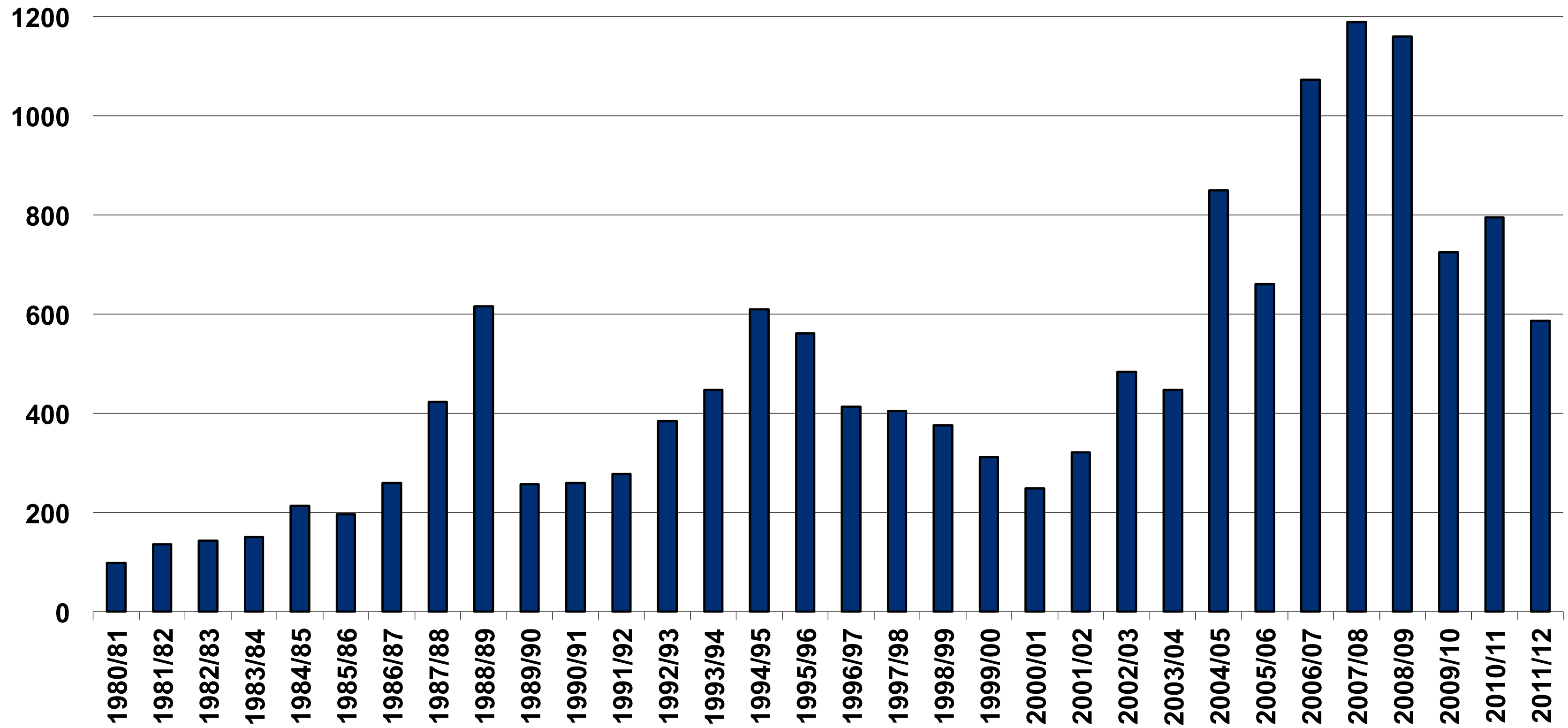
Table 1 illustrates the massive growth that has taken place in those sectors over the 2006 – 2011 inter-censal period with increases of over 40 per cent in health and over 20 per cent in education.

Chart 2: Dwelling Approvals, Far North Queensland Statistical Division



(1) Note: Based on 10 months to end April 2012.
Source: Cummings Economics from ABS data.

Chart 3: Value of Building Approvals, Far North Queensland Statistical Division



(1) Note: Based on 10 months to end April 2012.
Source: Cummings Economics from ABS data.

A more recent trend that has needed addressing has been the sharp rise in workforce to service the needs of a rapidly growing mining sector across the north and into the near north in Papua New Guinea. Cairns has developed as a major source of FIFO workforce, a trend likely to continue into the near future with extra FIFO workers being sought:

- For coal mines seeking to restructure costs in central Queensland,
- For potential new Galilee Basin major projects and expansions, and
- For expansion of bauxite mines in the Peninsula.

A major new market is developing out of China for tourism with workforce implications.

An expanding engagement is taking place with a rapidly developing Papua New Guinea economy to help meet their workforce ' and training needs.

An opportunity has been identified to develop the area as a centre of excellence in 'Tropical Green Building' of potential significance for delivery of services to wider areas in the tropics.

e) <u>Indigenous Workforce Challenges</u>

Some 15 per cent of the population of the region is Indigenous with much of this population located in remote communities with limited local employment opportunities.

Indigenous unemployment figures in Cairns and the immediate regional hinterlands of the Tablelands and Cassowary Coast are high compared with the non indigenous communities and this represents a challenge of workforce skills development (see **Table 4**).

Table 4: Comparative Unemployment Indigenous & Non Indigenous, RDA FNQ&TS Region

	Indigenous	Non Indigenous	Total
Cairns Statistical District	25.0%	6.1%	**6.7%**
Remaining Immediate Cairns Region	30.0%	3.9%	**7.9%**
Remainder (Peninsula, Gulf & Torres Strait)	13.6%	3.9%	**7.9%**
Total	**22.0%**	**5.4%**	**7.1%**

Source: Cummings Economics from ABS data.

Indigenous unemployment levels recorded in the remoter areas of the Peninsula, Torres Strait and Gulf are artificially low due to CDEP type 'work for the dole' schemes dependent on federal government funding. The challenge in these areas is extreme. Not only is there a workforce skills development issues, there is often a lack of non government funded employment opportunities.

The general Australian workforce has a high degree of mobility that leads to relocation to where jobs are available. Social and community structures in the Indigenous communities plus a lack of workforce skills and experience results in a low degree of mobility.

There is one positive aspect to this situation. As discussed in previous Section (b), one of the workforce challenges faced in the region is that of attracting skilled workforce to live in remote areas with a climate different to that of southern Australia. The Indigenous population in these areas represent a potential workforce that is well acclimatised and wants to live in the area. The challenge is to overcome the low levels of workforce skills and experience.

Data for the 2011 Census in **Table 4** illustrates that the high Indigenous unemployment rate results in the regional unemployment rate being 1.7 percentage points higher than it would otherwise be. This is a rise on the 1.0 percentage point effect identified from 2006 Census data.

f) <u>Other Workforce Problem Areas</u>

Various reports analysing the workforce structures and trends in Cairns have identified problem areas of poor performance:

a. Younger age groups account for about 40 per cent of all unemployment;
b. High unemployment levels for those with lower education achievement;
c. Mismatch between education courses undertaken and sectors in which additional jobs are becoming available resulting in unnecessary unemployment and underachievement (eg. graduates with degrees in environmental studies working as secretaries/personal assistants).

It is likely that most of these problems are not special to the region. However they remain a problem for the region.

1.2 Research & Organisational Responses

The sharp rise in unemployment in 2009 led to the appointment by the Commonwealth Government of a special office (Local Employment Coordinator) in Cairns to address these issues.

The Commonwealth Government also funded the appointment of a FIFO coordinator to help development of this opportunity and to address FIFO workforce development issues. This appointment comes to an end shortly and the region is considering further options to build upon the work delivered over the past two years.

Funding was provided for a coordinator to work to a Far North Queensland Industry Workforce Development Group as part of Advance Cairns to address cross sectoral workforce development issues in the region. This group produced a strategy document in 2012. Funding has recently ceased for the coordinator.

Initial funding through the Queensland Skills Plan (2008) and subsequent funding from local agency QITE, enabled the formation and ongoing operation of the Tablelands Industry Workforce Group Incorporated (formerly the Atherton Tablelands Skills Formation Strategy). This group continues today.

Cairns Regional Council funded a Workforce Needs Study in 2010-11 to try to project forward likely workforce needs over a 5 to 10-year period.

More recently, Skills DMC commissioned Queensland Resources Council working with Dr Sharon Harwood and Cummings Economics to research and produce a Skills Plan for Cairns that addressed wider skills development needs across industry sectors against a background of increased demand for FIFO workforce for mining. This study has not yet been released along with an analysis of the capacity of the region's education and training organisations to respond.

Investigations are in progress to develop a 'place-based' approach to address workforce development issues with a focus on working directly with employers at a sub-regional level. The model aims to identify current employees for promotion (and upskilling), which will then create entry-level vacancies upon promotion.

1.3 Workforce Deficiencies

Recent studies have identified special shortages in fields listed in the following **Table 5.**

Table 5: Skill Needs, Gaps & Shortages

1. MINING	Major Expanded Need	▪ Drillers, miners and shot firers ▪ Carpenters and joiners ▪ Construction trade workers ▪ Metal fitters and mechanics Construction managers ▪ Machinery operators and drivers
2. MANUFACTURING	Shipbuilding & Repair	▪ Marine fitters ▪ Marine surface finishers (coatings)
	Aircraft Maintenance	▪ Composites ▪ Qualified engineers
	Structural Steel	▪ Rigger/dogmen ▪ Boilermakers and welding (especially for pressure vessels and pipelines)
	Engineering	▪ Superior mechanical engineers and specialist technicians
	Heavy Machinery Distribution & Servicing	▪ High skill diesel fitters
	Food Manufacturing	▪ Food technologists
	Building Products	▪ Furniture – computer numeric control CNC and computer aided design CAD
	Clothing & Footwear	▪ Domestic sewing machine mechanics ▪ Fashion sample machinists, cutters and makers
	General for New Technology	▪ Robotics ▪ Computer aided and digital ▪ Network enabled ▪ Bio technology and nano technology
3. CONSTRUCTION	General	▪ Attraction of new apprentices ▪ If upsurge brick/block layers and plasterers ▪ Electricians
	Civil Contractors	▪ Project managers ▪ Quality staff ▪ Machinery operators ▪ Grader operators ▪ Forepersons ▪ Diesel fitters
4. ELECTRICITY, GAS & WATER	Electricity Supply	Projects Causing Major Additional Needs: ▪ Instrumentation control and automotive ▪ High voltage switching ▪ VET trainers ▪ Electricians ▪ Supervisors ▪ Estimators ▪ Lineworkers, including live ▪ Electrical engineers – (professional/para professional) ▪ Doggers and riggers ▪ Drillers (special critical need) ▪ Well servicing ▪ Electrical fitters/mechanics ▪ Fibre network designers ▪ Health, safety and environmental
5. TRANSPORT, POSTAL & WAREHOUSING	Marine	▪ Diesel fitters ▪ Boilermakers ▪ Engineers ▪ Masters ▪ Mates ▪ Deckhands
	Heavy Road Transport	▪ Drivers

	Aviation	▪ Pilot training ▪ Air crew
6. AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY & FISHERIES	Fishing	▪ Engineers ▪ Diesel mechanics
	Beef	▪ Rangeland Management & Natural Resource consultants ▪ Animal Nutritionalists ▪ Stock persons
	Field Crops	▪ Agronomists ▪ Bug checkers ▪ Plant disease, irrigation and fertilizer specialists ▪ Large machinery drivers
	Horticluture	▪ Horticulturalists ▪ Bug checkers
	Sugar Industry	▪ Haul out drivers
7. OTHER	Local Government	▪ All engineering disciplines ▪ Civil design – high level ▪ Project management – high level ▪ Information technology – all disciplines ▪ Management leadership – high level ▪ Trades
	Managerial & Professional	▪ Doctors and higher medical ▪ Solicitors ▪ Higher level managers ▪ Accountants ▪ Auditors ▪ Engineers
	Remote Communities	▪ Managerial ▪ Skilled trades
	Health Care & Community Services	All - strongest in: ▪ Pathology ▪ Diagnostic imaging ▪ Health care ▪ Midwives
	Tourism	▪ Good customer service skills ▪ Mandarin speakers including with English and driving skills ▪ Accountants – high level ▪ Tour guides ▪ Chefs ▪ Marine diesel fitters and boiler makers ▪ Engineers ▪ Dive instructors ▪ Masters/crew

1.4 Education & Training Responses

The current situation and foreseeable future indicates special needs for the education and training sector to respond.

Overarching Regional Organisation

There is likely to be an overarching need for the proposed Skills Plan to be implemented by continuing funding of an industry led organisation to oversee meeting the needs for inter-industry collaboration and direction in meeting workforce skill development needs.

Youth Unemployment

Youth unemployment is a significant issue for the region and has been compounded by the cessation of the 'Get Set for Work' program previously funded through the Queensland government under the 'Skilling Queenslanders for Work' program. Changes to the Youth Support Coordinator service will see the Federal government provide funds directly to school principals rather than service providers from January 2014 and this change coincides with the state government's review of youth services through the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. A coordinated regional response to address youth unemployment by all levels of government is needed.

University Level Education
As observed in the previous 'Overview' section, higher education delivery in Cairns is well below achieving national regional averages for the level of population in the city and region. The very strong trend towards increased employment in professions and higher skilled work further underlines this need.

Meeting the Needs of the Mining Sector
Research carried out into the impacts of increased FIFO workforce indicates some problems had occurred for supply of workforce in a number of trades in non mining sectors, particularly the maritime and maritime servicing sector, engineering, electrical, construction and civil engineering sectors.
As a general statement, mines are not a good place for basic skill training and even specialist training for the mining industry. The Cairns area is already something of a 'nursery' training area for mining across a wide region.

a. For a number of types of skills that are dominated by the mining sector, there is a need for special expansion of mining specific education and training capacity in the region. The setting up of specialist training organisations for the region's large aviation and maritime sectors has proven highly successful in responding to needs and there are moves to develop a specialist mining school at Mareeba. The school's location close to Lotus Glen Correctional Centre plus the special opportunity to meet remote mine workforce needs through upskilling workforce for remote Indigenous communities emphasises the possibilities.
b. There is a need through the Workforce Development Group for strong collaboration between mining and the various other industries involved to find pathways for expansion of the workforce in trade areas like engineering, electrical, civil construction, where there is strong competition for workers.
c. Opportunities are starting to occur for Cairns to play a significant role in meeting the critical education and training needs of Papua New Guinea (eg. Tropical North Queensland TAFE training for personnel for Freida River Mine).

<u>Maritime</u>
Cairns is the major base in the north and a major centre across Australia for marine industries with a comparatively large pool of trained personnel. Studies have indicated that the expansion of port work and offshore LNG projects around Australia is causing a FIFO strain in the provision of skilled personnel in this sector and there is a need for continuing expansion of the Great Barrier Reef International Marine College capacity.

<u>Aviation</u>
The Cairns Aviation Skills Centre is experiencing strong demand from throughout the north and Papua New Guinea and continuing expansion is needed including specialist capacity to handle new 'composite materials'.

<u>Changing Tourism Needs</u>
From the 1980s onwards, the Cairns region adapted its tourism offering and workforce skills to cater for a major non English speaking market from Japan. New air links and growing tourism out of China pose a similar challenge to be met.

<u>Tropical Green Build</u>
A special need has been identified to develop architecture and tropical design at the James Cook University Cairns Campus at this point in time.

2. Sustainable (Economic, Environmental & Social) Communities & Population Growth

2.1 Socio Economic Profile
High socio economic profiles in Australia tend to be associated with areas of high employment in government services and mining.

The Cairns/FNQ&TS region has substantial variations in socio economic profile.

As a city, Cairns does not have a high profile reflecting its high number of small businesses, relatively high tourism employment, lower level of government employment to some cities and a comparatively high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait population (see **Table 6**).

Table 6: Socio/Economic Indicators, RDAFNQ&TS Region, 2011 Census

	Cairns North	Cairns South	Douglas	Casso-wary Coast	Table-lands East	Outback Far North	Qld	Aust
Medians								
Median age of persons	37	34	40	41	43	31	36	37
Median total personal income ($/weekly)	$683	$601	$585	$475	$455	$419	$587	$577
Median total family income ($/weekly)	$1,578	$1,325	$1,251	$1108	$1,056	$1,021	$1453	$1481
Median total household income ($/weekly)	$1,344	$1,083	$988	$929	$861	$1,044	$1235	$1234
Median mortgage repayment ($/monthly)	$1,840	$1,733	$1,647	$1317	$1,473	$1,453	$1850	$1800
Median rent ($/weekly)	$290	$240	$240	$180	$200	$75	$300	$285
Average number of persons per bedroom	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.3	1.1	1.1
Average household size	2.6	2.5	2.3	2.5	2.4	3.0	2.6	2.6
Dwelling Ownership								
Owned outright	23%	22%	28%	37%	41%	20%	29%	32%
Owned with a mortgage	39%	32%	29%	25%	27%	14%	35%	35%
Rented	35%	43%	40%	33%	29%	60%	33%	30%
Other	2%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	3%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Need for Assistance								
Has need for assistance	2.9%	4.1%	3.9%	5.0%	5.1%	2.8%	4.4%	4.6%

Source: Cummings Economics from ABS 2011 Census data.

The surrounding immediate region has a typical rural areas socio economic profile of relatively high median age, lower average incomes but high home ownership.

The Peninsula and Torres Strait's low socio-economic profile is reflected in the limited job creation opportunities with the exception of Weipa which is a mining town and has a high socio-economic profile. The combination gives the FNQ&TS region overall a moderate profile.

Employment and workforce implications of the profile are discussed in the previous section on workforce. It should be noted however that the region is one in which people wish to live, in both Cairns and its immediate hinterland and for Indigenous people in their traditional homelands in the Peninsula and Torres Strait. Over a period of time, relatively high unemployment rates have accompanied relatively high job creation rates.

(Note: Average annual population growth in Far North Queensland Statistical Division, 1989 to 2010, was 2.16 per cent per annum. Average employed workforce growth was 2.66 per cent. Source: Workforce Needs Analysis, Cairns Regional Council, September 2011.)

Addressing the situation in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities including those living in Cairns and the surrounding rural areas has long been a challenge the region has needed to address. While the situation remains a challenge, it should be noted that substantial progress has been achieved with well educated and progressive leadership emerging.

In economic terms, special assistance to the region for Indigenous programmes represents a substantial special income stream through CDEP and other programs that in the past has been assessed at being of the order of $200 million per annum (see also Section 1.1 Regional Workforce Challenges).

2.2 Changes in Industry Composition

As described in Section 1.1 Regional Workforce Challenges, the region's economy is made up of a diversity of industries supplying outside earnings in tourism, agriculture, mining, defence, marine and aviation services, international education and supply of workforce, goods and services to surrounding regions.

In recent decades, tourism growth has been a major factor in achieving strong growth in outside earnings. The high Australian dollar in recent years saw that growth cease from about 2006 onwards, with heavy negative impacts experienced from the GFC events in late 2008.

Unlike a number of northern regions, the Far North Queensland and Torres Strait region was not in a position to benefit as strongly from mining income mainly derived from a growing Chinese market.

As **Table 1** of workforce by industry changes 2006 to 2011 for Cairns' urban statistical area and following **Table 7** analysis of movements in workforce by place of residence and place of work indicates, the region has responded as follows.

a) As **Table 7** indicates, there has been a major response, especially in the city of Cairns, for workforce to find employment outside of the city, especially in mining, construction, manufacturing and transport. **Table 8** from 2011 Census data shows almost 2,900 residents from the Cairns and immediate region area gave their place of work outside the area down to central Queensland and across the north. Those working in PNG are not included.
b) Much of this outside employment was in mining where employment outside the immediate region increased by 136 per cent.
c) The period saw a massive increase of over 46.8 per cent in employment in health in Cairns city, reflecting the need for a 'catch up' on previously under supplied services given the city and region's population size.
d) Employment in education in Cairns grew by 27.9 per cent with a strong growth in higher education, again representing the start of a 'catch up' on under provision of services given the size of the city and regional population.
e) Special government post GFC funding and an earlier decision to expand the Lotus Glen Correctional Centre and Cairns Base Hospital and employment away from the city helped keep construction employment roughly at a 2006 level.

Thus, despite the severe impact of the GFC and high dollar, Cairns managed to record a residential workforce growth of 11.6 per cent 2006 to 2011 and the Cairns and immediate region 6.6 per cent in real terms.

Table 7: Cairns – Workforce Changes by Place of Residence & Place of Work, 2006 to 2011

Change by place of residence	+7294
Change by place or work	+ 3016
Indicated change in numbers working outside of Cairns	**+ 4278**

Source: Cummings Economics from ABS Census 2006 & 2011 data.

Table 8: Number of Cairns & Immediate Region Residents Giving Place of Work Outside of Area Across Northern Australia, 2011 Census	
Far North (Peninsula & Torres Strait)	980
North West Queensland	699
Townsville region	300
Mackay region	253
Fitzroy region	107
East Arnhem (Groote & Gove)	237
Other Northern Territory	130
Kimberley/Pilbara	169
Total	**2875**

Source: Cummings Economics from ABS Census 2011 data.

2.3 Opportunities & Challenges

Since 2011, the city is facing a challenge of wind down of special post GFC government funding with an impact on the non dwelling general construction sector. Private general construction is at a low level. However dwelling construction approvals have been rising again after recording lows in 2011. Major Indigenous housing programs in the Peninsula and Torres Strait are assisting by providing employment out of Cairns. A major post Yasi national reconstruction program on roads is assisting, again with most of the jobs outside of Cairns itself.

In the field of road construction, the region has a major problem of under development of its road system. There is a major challenge of keeping funding levels high to achieve a 'catch up'.

Included in the challenge is the need for a major investment in developing improved road access from Cairns to the Tablelands. The inability of the current road to carry freight efficient road transport is a major negative for Cairns in its role as a distribution centre and imposes a significant extra cost burden for hinterland development. Like the original building of the Kuranda Range railway in the late 1800s that opened up the region, upgrading the Kuranda Range Road will be a costly but necessary investment.
The region's major current challenge in the construction field is to get private investment into general construction in the city and immediate region.

Additional FIFO opportunities are occurring with the proposed expansion of bauxite mining in the Peninsula, the 250 FIFO jobs with BMA in central Queensland and continuing expansion of mining in Papua New Guinea, north west Queensland and Northern Territory.

Clearly, more stringent government funding at State and Federal levels will mean that the very strong expansion of funding that took place in health and education during 2006 to 2011 is likely to moderate.
The region still has a problem of under servicing in those fields compared with its population and needs, and there is a major challenge against this background to achieve continuing 'catch up'.

While domestic tourism started to lift in 2012, there is some evidence that domestic economic conditions are such that growth is not continuing strongly in 2013. The kick start of direct services from China with government incentives, and prospects of a moderation of the Australian dollar, offers hope for a substantial rebound in Cairns' tourism fortunes.

The major challenge is to ensure that growth out of China keeps the services continuing and to step up visitation from other markets. The Chinese services offer a special opportunity and challenge to attract investment funding into tourism projects but also into fields like agriculture, mining and infrastructure.
A strongly growing cruise ship market in Australia offers an opportunity for the region as an existing major cruise ship port. However this growth has been accompanied by an increase in the size of cruise ships. Cairns has a major challenge to achieve a deepening of the harbour channel and port anchorages to take the larger cruise vessels now in common use.

Compared with its water and land availability and the area's plant growth potential, the region's agricultural sector, although the largest in tropical Australia, is underdeveloped. Against this background, agriculture has been a steady growth element in the economy with more recent expansion switching back to sugar.

Rising world demand for agricultural products, new attitudes to water storage and irrigation and to land development for agriculture, open up possibilities of a major expansion of agriculture in the FNQ&TS region over the next decade.

There is a major challenge for the region to realise this opportunity.

Because of Cairns' strategic position, defence and surveillance is a substantial element in the regional economy with direct employment of over 1,000. The region faces a challenge of realising opportunities from reviews taking place of Australia's defence arrangements.

Cairns' maritime servicing and shipbuilding facilities lead northern Australia.

However they have faced a major challenge with competition from government subsidised facilities in southern states and new facilities being built in Port Moresby. The fishing industry activity has been contracted. Government ship building has been lost.

The city faces a major challenge to focus on its marine industries and port role including tourism, defence, cruise ship, cargo handling (including future LNG handling facilities), slipways and industrial and service back up.

2.4 Environmental

2.4.1 Water Resources

The FNQ&TS region accounts for about 20 per cent of Australia's water run off (and with the adjacent Gulf region 26 per cent). The Mitchell River catchment alone has a water run off just a fraction below the whole of the Murray Darling basin.

The only major water resource development in the region is the Cairns water supply at Copperlode, the Tinaroo Dam on the Barron River and a few weirs on the Walsh River.

Against this background, the question of environmental conservation versus development, is a major issue in the region – a major opportunity, a major constraint, a major challenge to get the right balance.

2.4.2 Energy Sources

The region has a long history of taking up opportunities for non carbon energy resources through the Barron and Kareeya hydroelectricity schemes and wind generation on the Tablelands. This is being extended by new proposals for wind farms on the Tablelands, Etheridge Shire and near Cooktown.

A recent study undertaken by the Queensland Government highlights that the region's renewable energy industry is worth $100 million to the economy, sustaining around 700 full-time jobs. The industry is expected to grow to $750 million and 2,500 jobs by 2020. The opportunities for exporting of this tropical expertise to the Asia-Pacific region is substantial.

The region has seen significant areas of 'Pongamia' planted in recent years to supply 'biofuel'. Although promising, Pongamia is still in its infancy and at a 'trial' stage of development.

Recent exploratory activity of the region's geothermal potential has not resulted in any viable project proposal.

There are strong indications that the region will need to look to setting up facilities to import and distribute cleaner burn LNG as this form of energy becomes a possible replacement fuel for cruise ships, other shipping, heavy mining and earthmoving equipment, road transport and possibly electricity generation. It has been reported that one mining project involving high grade silica production in the Georgetown area may have an opportunity to develop processing that would require power equivalent to the current Cairns consumption.

There is a current need to address the region's future energy security.

2.4.3 Natural Environment

The Great Barrier Reef and the "Wet Tropics" rainforest are very important as part of the region's world class tourism product.

Both have been recognised with World Heritage status and both have among Australia's and the world's most developed environmental protection systems.

However it needs to be recognised that environmental protection can be at the expense of local natural resource based industries and at the expense of the region's economy. It is an important issue for the region that this is recognised and compensated and that, in light of the marine park declarations, that appropriate industry structural adjustment happens.

2.4.4 Cyclones

The advent of two strong cyclones within five years causing heavy damage to property, bananas, sugar cane and forest plantings has been a setback for the Cassowary Coast area including in confidence about investing and living in the area.

They emphasise the continuing need to cyclone proof properties and adopt farming practices to minimise damage.

The cyclones, plus other events elsewhere in Australia, have left the region with the burden of massive escalation of insurance premiums. Meeting the challenge are some construction industry businesses that have demonstrated a capacity to develop triple bottom line sustainable built environments with a track record of delivering tropical innovation and expertise in the field. They play an important role going forward by adapting current building stock and developing new buildings that reduce demand on non-renewable resources and that are resilient in tropical climates.

2.5 Social

The GFC and recent downturn in growth has seen Cairns' traditional comparatively high home prices and rentals moderate.

Cairns' immediate future urban growth needs are well catered for by the Mt Peter project area south of Edmonton. However opening up land for rapid urban growth has been an issue in the past, and could emerge again quickly if an upturn takes place on the scale of past rapid growth surges.

Cairns and the region have a long history of multicultural interaction and absorption from diverse backgrounds from Europe, early Asian migration and population of Aboriginal, Torres Strait and Pacific Island backgrounds.

While most more recent migration has been from southern Australia, there has been special elements more recently of people from other tropical countries wanting to continue to live in the tropics and elements associated with tourism growth, especially from Japan and now from China. Cairns and the region has a wide diversity of cultural organisations, festivals, activities and religious establishments. This plus a strong mix of visitors from around the world gives the city and region a strong multicultural atmosphere.

Health issues in the region are important. Traditional tropical diseases such as malaria and hookworm have been virtually eliminated for generations, but there is a major research effort taking place to bring dengue under control, not just locally but to contribute to achieving progress on a global scale.

High Indigenous population, especially in remote areas, causes special health requirements. Cairns has long been a major base for the Royal Flying Doctor services. Patients also come down from Papua New Guinea seeking treatment including from the Torres Strait border area. Meeting the region's diverse requirements against a background of conservative fiscal measures is a continuing challenge.

While the Cairns region is seen as a desired place to live, some residual problems of attracting people to live in the area's different climate to southern Australia and distant from metropolitan centres, families and facilities are covered in Section 1.1, Workforce Challenges.

The distance of Cairns from major metropolitan centres (Cairns is as far from Brisbane as Brisbane is from Melbourne), the scale of distances within the region (for northern Torres Strait people, Cairns is almost as far away as Cairns is to Brisbane), and between the northern cities (Cairns and Townsville are almost as far apart as London and Paris), highlights the need to develop regional social, cultural and sporting facilities, but also education facilities.

While there has been a strong spirit of self help, the region faces a constant challenge to achieve funding for these types of facilities with major issues at present being to achieve upgraded theatre facilities, square sporting stadium, upgraded swimming facilities and major regional museum facilities.
Unfortunately, there is at times an attitude in governments that providing such facilities in Townsville is an adequate solution for the Cairns region.

While the region faces issues of aging of the population along with other parts of Australia, strong inward migration into Cairns has generally been in working age groups giving the city a relatively young age profile. Indigenous communities have a high birth rate and have had a high mortality rate resulting in a very young average age profile. The problem in these communities is one of improving health and achieving longer life spans.

The rural areas of the Cassowary Coast and Tablelands however face a real challenge of loss of younger age groups and population aging.

3. Access to International & National Markets

3.1 Region's Developmental Situation

As with other northern regions, development of many manufacturing and service industries is not viable due to limited local markets and being distant from major national markets, of being, 'the forgotten far north'.

On the other hand, the region is much closer to very major markets in Asia and in a special position to service markets to the near north, of being, a gateway into Australia and into the Asia-Pacific region.
Against this background, regional progress has mainly depended on growing the region's 'outside earnings' through:

- Developing the region's previously underdeveloped resource base, be it in natural tourism resources, mining, agriculture, or fisheries;
- Developing specialist skills based manufacturing and services where local markets are relatively large (eg. marine activities and aviation), that then go on to achieve wider markets;
- Developing strategic location and other advantages (eg. defence and surveillance and sea and air trade with the near north, workforce services and goods, to a wider North Australia/Pacific market).

In this, the region has been assisted by four major underlying economic trends:

1) Growing global markets especially the nearby major global growth areas in Asia;
2) Improving transport links and falling real comparative transport costs, breaking down old barriers of extreme remoteness;
3) Improvements in technology suited to tropical areas, not just aspects like improved plant and animal breeds, but also in tourism and in various aspects affecting everyday living;
4) Success breeds success factors, with larger population leading to better infrastructure and services, making the area a more desired place in which to live.

3.2 Transport Links

Developments in transport technology and investment in roads, rail, ports and airports has been vital to the continuing economic development of the region.

The region's outstanding tourism resources have been around all the time.

The whole history of tourism in the region can be written in terms of transport developments progressively breaking down time and cost barriers to access from major tourism markets - from coastal, passenger ships prior to the 1920s, the linking of the railway line in the 1920s, the advent of the family car and final sealing of the Bruce Highway in the 1970s, and finally the advent of jet aircraft and upgrading of Cairns airport to take long distance wide bodied jets from overseas and southern capitals in the 1980s.

Similarly, superior road transport vehicles and the upgrading of the national highway system has led to the region being able to use its superior growing conditions to develop a tropical fruit industry (especially bananas) based on major markets in southern Australia.

The post war development of bulk ore carriers helped open up Weipa bauxite deposits and Cape Flattery silica sands.

Cairns airport is the major hub airport in the north and Cairns seaport has the most shipping movements. The region's seaports, including Karumba, handle more cargo tonnage than the Northern Territory, the Townsville region and is almost equal to South Australia.

The Bruce Highway between Cairns and Innisfail carries the most traffic of any road outside Queensland's south east corner and the Kuranda Range Road more traffic from the coast to inland centres than any other Queensland regional city.

Today the major priorities are:

1) Continuing opening up and consolidation of direct air routes to China and also to Singapore as a gateway to India and Middle East markets;
2) Continuing development of FIFO routes across the north to Papua New Guinea, the Pacific and Indonesia;
3) Upgrading Cairns seaport for cruise ships;
4) Establishing coastal shipping links PNG/Pacific and to Northern Territory, and seeking to establish direct shipping links with Asian ports;
5) Continuing upgrading of the Bruce Highway and sealing the Hann Highway to establish a second more direct interior route to Melbourne and South Australia;
6) Attending to the need for a major upgrading of the road system with the region including the Kuranda Range Road and the Peninsula Developmental Road;
7) Improving the efficiency of the rail line from Townsville north;
8) Expanding Cairns and Mourilyan seaports capacity and Karumba in the Gulf, especially channel deepening at Cairns for cruise shipping but also for cargo and defence purposes.

It should be noted however that there is a 'dark side' to falling transport costs, as imports from the outside would become cheaper.

The region has suffered losses, especially in manufacturing for local markets, and especially during times of slower growth and loss of confidence. This has included loss of the brewery at the time of the 1990 recession (small local brewing has recently been re-established), the clay brick works in the 1990s and recently the printing of the regional daily newspaper.

Similar effects have been taking place due to communication and computer technology. There have been major positives for tourism (mobile telephones on international roaming, international use of credit cards and ATM's). There have been major benefits in reducing remoteness penalties in the Peninsula and Torres Strait. There has been an improved facility to communicate with other tropical communities. However a 'dark side' has been the hollowing out of local employment in fields like banking.

A challenge today is to realise the opportunities and meet the challenges the NBN network will bring.

4. COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE & BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS

4.1 Three Levels of Comparative Advantage

As set out in Section 3.1, the region's major comparative advantage, like most regions of northern Australia, lies first in taking advantage of growing world markets (especially in Asia), improved transport technology and growing technological capacity to develop previously underdeveloped resource potential like tourism, agriculture and mining to increase outside earnings. As in the rest of Australia, a major recent disadvantage has been a high dollar and high internal costs, made worse in the case of this region, by poor internal transport networks.

In meeting demand in this field, the region has a comparative advantage of air links, but some sea links disadvantages.

Compared with other regions in the north, it has major comparative advantages in tourism resources, rainfall and plant growth (agricultural) potential and marine resources. Its mineral resources are not as strong but in this field, it is the next level of comparative advantages that is important.

The second major competitive advantage lies in Cairns' strategic position in relation to the wider regional markets in a developing northern Australia and adjacent PNG/Pacific and Papua Indonesia.

Unfortunately, the market in this wider area is fragmented by State and national boundaries and cultural divides. Cairns has a socio/political challenge as a city, only shared in Australia by Darwin, to develop institutions and business expertise to cope with this situation. In this wider area, it has a major advantage of the size and range of its business structure, excellent air hub connections, and superior lifestyle conditions.
Weaknesses include a failure for State and Federal Governments, remote from the area, to extend their thinking beyond State national boundaries, and to understand the opportunities created by Cairns' strategic position.

The air hub advantages need to be complemented by shipping routes, especially to Papua New Guinea.
The third major competitive advantage lies in Cairns' first world lifestyle advantages in the tropics and a growing institutional capacity to play a wider role in tropical areas around the globe.

4.2 Tropical Technology

Development of technology suited to the tropics and the region has been a major factor in the continuing economic success of the region:

- In agriculture - in superior plant and animal breeds and mechanisation;
- In tourism - in fast passenger catamarans to the reef, semi-submersible reef viewers, dive equipment improvements, and cableway to view the rainforest;
- In everyday living conditions – air-conditioning, superior insecticides, jet sprays and detergents, satellites and cyclone tracking and warning, and better tropical disease control.

Today, the establishment of the James Cook University campus over 25 years ago and the recently launched Cairns Institute, has seen a step up in environmental research, health research, marine research and social research.

Cairns businesses are networking to seek to achieve leadership in tropical design and tropical green building.

Apart from aiming to improve technology for local use, there is an opportunity and a challenge to have relevance to and a role in the wider tropical areas as:

- A focal point for tropical research and development;
- A focal point for information sharing about developments in tropical technology;
- A centre for education;
- A source of consulting expertise, goods and services adapted to a tropical environment.

4.3 Regional Arts, Creative and Sporting Industries

Given the city's and region's tourism infrastructure, air access, lifestyle, and multicultural background, Cairns sees itself as having a future in sports tourism and arts events, despite its distance from metropolitan populations.

The Cairns/Far North region has been leading tropical Australia in employment in arts and entertainment industries. A large visitor population added to the largest residential population gives the region a competitive advantage in this field.

The existence of a large creative Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and demand by visitors for distinctively Australian material contributes to this. The recently established annual Cairns Indigenous Arts Fair is proving a major success with an international and not just a national focus. In the sporting field, again the recently established Iron Man event has taken on an international and not just a national focus.

The city regularly hosts hockey pre-Olympic training matches and mountain bike championships, with the recent announcement that region will host the 2014 and 2016 Union Cycliste Internationale mountain bike championships.

Part of the city's infrastructure is the most successful regional Convention Centre that is currently seeking to expand its exhibition space.

Sports medicine capacity is expanding at James Cook University Cairns Campus and the city has been lobbying the Australian Institute of Sport to establish a tropical annex in Cairns.

8 Attachment 2: Stakeholder Consultation and Partnerships

8.1 CROSS-SECTORAL, INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS AND INTEGRATED REGIONAL PLANNING

RDA FNQ&TS recognises that the development of key strategic partnerships is crucial to achieving the regional vision, and supports their development in a number of ways.

Strategic Priority Packages Regional Leadership Groups
Each Strategic Priority Package is led by a Regional Leadership Group. This group has been selected to ensure representation from key industry leaders, regional bodies and local governments. The packages are led by an RDA FNQ&TS Committee Member and a State Government representative. Dependent on the industry or sector, Commonwealth Government representation will also be present.

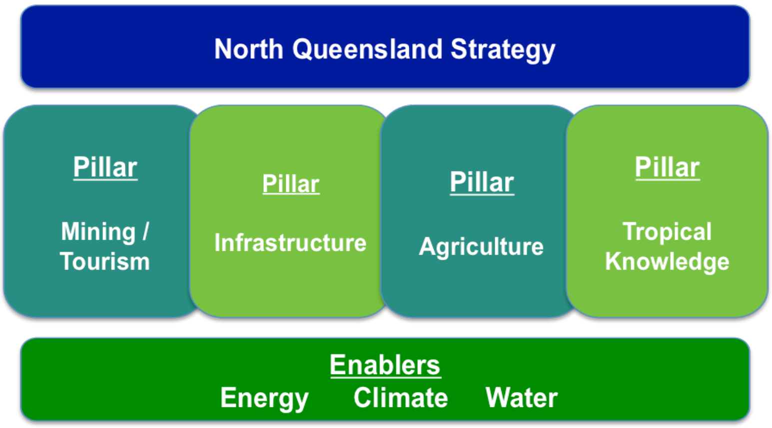
Northern Queensland Strategy
The Northern Queensland Strategy (NQS) is a collorative partnership between RDA FNQ&TS, RDA Townsville and North West Queensland, RDA Mackay Isaac Whitsunday and RDA Fitzroy and Central West and the Commonwealth and Queensland governments. This strategy has allowed the 'super-zone' to take a consolidated and visionary approach to the development of strategic initiatives that strengthen the future of the North Queensland economy as well as build upon recognised Commonwealth and State Government priorities.

The NQ RDAs agreed on four themes that would shape the discussion and direction of this strategy and includes key enablers to support effective economic growth. These four themes are explicitly interlinked and encompass multi-dimensional factors pertaining to achievement of sustainable regional development via the Queensland Government pillars. This strategy seeks to identify cross-regional synergies and correlating opportunities, which can be realised through leadership, leverage and partnerships. Furthermore, the NQS focuses on governance, capacity building and resources for reform and those required for planning and development.

There is potential to extend this place-based approach west to the Northern Territory and northern Western Australia RDAs.

Diagram 1 provides a visual overview of the NQS.

Diagram 1: Northern Queensland Strategy



Policy development
A large component of the work of RDA FNQ&TS revolves around providing strategic and targeted responses to social, economic, cultural and environmental issues affecting Far North Queensland and Torres Strait, often in the form of policy recommendations. The development and submission of such recommendations is done in consultation with State Government representatives.

Structural Adjustment Package
RDA FNQ&TS continues to play a brokering role with the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPAC) and the Minister's department around the Marine Park Zones to deliver an effective process and outcome for the region. Building on previous work in partnership with the Cairns Regional Council, Advance Cairns and the Cairns Chamber of Commerce, RDA FNQ&TS has progressed discussions with the Minister and SEWPAC around a whole of government negotiated regional conservation restructure package to

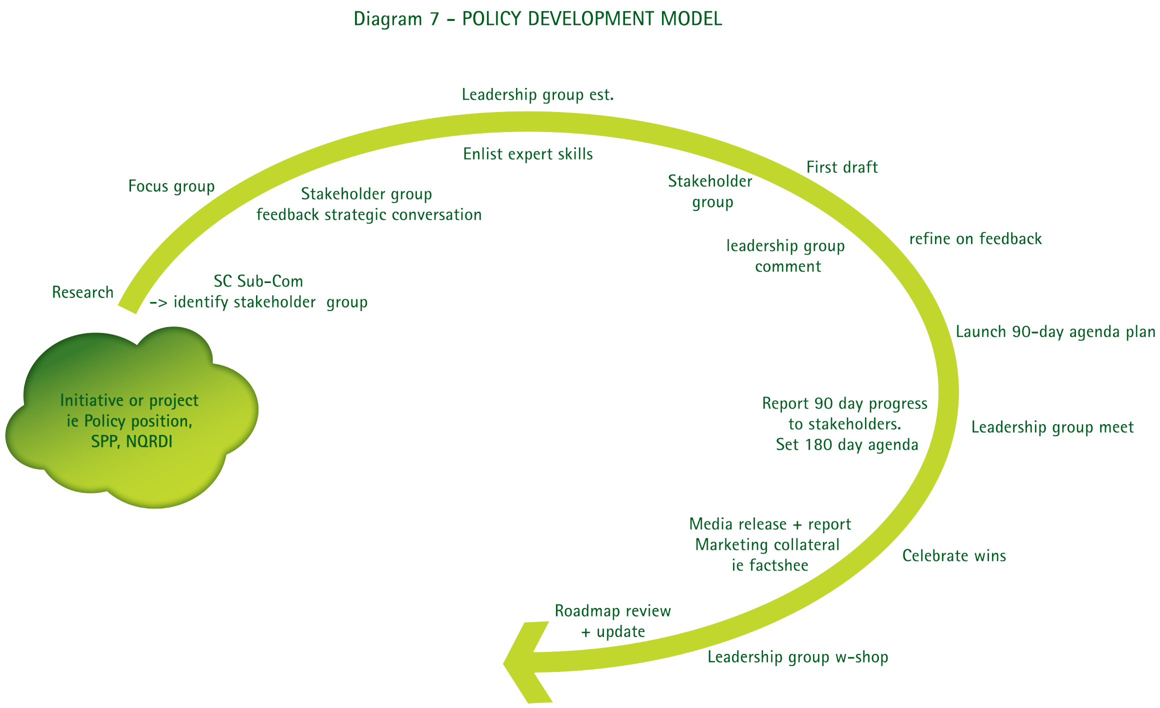
address the cumulative impacts of the marine reserves and other initiatives. This package aims to work across portfolios to fund investment and resources for the region's marine and associated industries.

8.2 ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES 2012-2013 FINANCIAL YEAR

RDA FNQ&TS employs an engagement framework that provides an opportunity to further align business objectives and practices with the needs and expectations of our communities, and help in driving long-term sustainability and community value. Diagram 2 outlines RDA FNQ&TS's Policy Development Model.

Adopting a 90-Day Agenda helps the SPP Leadership groups to set a timeframe for reporting progress. It is enough time to achieve something worthwhile and short enough to maintain focus. At the end of 90 days a meeting reviews action priorities, and sets a new 180-Day agenda cycle. This is also a vehicle for review of communication activity and resetting actions in this regard.

Diagram 2: Policy Development Model

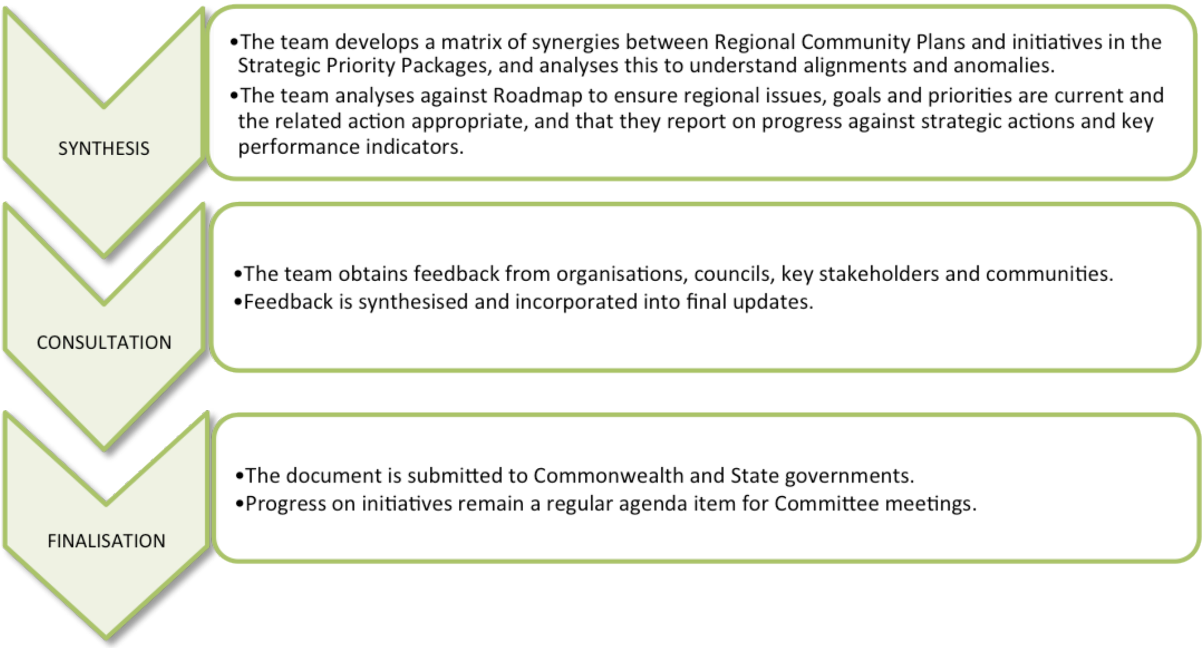


During the previous financial year RDA FNQ&TS engaged with regional partners and built relationships through the following means:

- Holding workshops and meetings with SPP leadership groups
- Private and public online forums to gain feedback on SPPs
- Presenting at Chamber of Commerce events and other sector forums
- Regional Roadshow presentations and teleconferences for RDAF Rounds 3 and 4
- Holding Committee meetings in regional areas allowing an additional day of meeting with stakeholders (Mt Surprise, Mission Beach)
- Representation on Cairns Leadership Group hosted by the Local State Member for Cairns
- Queensland Plan representation (Chair and Policy & Projects Officer)
- Various meetings with both levels of government and neighbouring RDAs as part of the NQS
- Consultation with various stakeholders when forming discussion paper submissions (eg 30-year electricity strategy, 30-year water plan, 30-year agriculture strategy, ARENA RAR program)

8.3 DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGIONAL ROADMAP

STAGE 1: Annual review of document (2012-13 Road Map)



The 2012-13 Road Map annual update centred around an analysis of the synergies between the long term regional Community Plans and the initiatives listed in the Strategic Priority Packages. The purpose of undertaking an analysis of this kind was to:

- Highlight alignments between the individual community areas and the strategies being undertaken by RDA FNQ&TS at a broader sub-regional level;
- Identify initiatives being undertaken by regional councils that were not yet incorporated into the Strategic Priority Packages;
- Identify common regional themes; and
- Ensure the initiatives being undertaken by RDA FNQ&TS continue to align with the needs and goals of the regional communities.

The process was undertaken by obtaining all available regional Community Plans (where possible 20 year plans) and analysing these against the Strategic Priority Packages. The strength of alignments were graded, to allow a certain level of flexibility of reporting.

The second phase was incorporated into the RDA FNQ&TS Road Show, during which the Executive Team conducted visits to communities. Where possible, the team presented a slide show containing the results of the synergy exercise. Agreement and endorsement was then sought from council before the final Synergy Report was produced. For those communities where the Executive Team was unable to visit, correspondence was sent to the Mayor and Council CEO containing a summary of the synthesis exercise for their community and feedback was sought prior to finalisation of the Synergy Report.

The Synergy Report highlighted a number of initiatives that were not included in the Strategic Priority Packages. This report was tabled as an agenda item in the August 2012 RDA FNQ&TS Committee meeting, and agreement obtained to amend the Strategic Priority Packages to incorporate the community initiatives.

STAGE 2: 2013-16 Road Map Process

To ensure the Road Map remains a reflection of the priorities of the region, each Local Government Area was individually contacted to obtain updated versions of their Community Plans. Where a plan had been supersceded, an analysis was completed to understasnd synergies with the Strategic Priority Packages, and an updated synergy report completed. Any new initiaitves where relevant, were incorporated into the Road Map.

The draft 2013-16 Road Map was then released to organisations, councils, key stakeholders and communities for feedback over a three-week period. Feedback was received by email, or in one of two teleconferences held by the RDA FNQ&TS Team.

The full synthesis for the 2013-16 Road Map against local government community plans, corporate plans and other strategic documents can be found in Attachement 3.

8.4 MONITORING THE REGIONAL ROAD MAP

Each of the Strategic Priority Packages contains a number of endorsed Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These KPIs are reported against by the responsible agency and progress is monitored by the Leadership Groups. This monitoring forms part of RDA FNQ&TS's engagement model which is based around a 90 day agenda – see Diagram 2.

Additional work is being progressed through JCU to determine key regional indicators encapsulating the quadruple bottom-line and RDA FNQ&TS anticipates this work will be completed by December 2013.

9 Attachment 3: 2013 Analysis of RDA FNQ&TS Strategic Priority Packages and LGA's Community and Strategic Plans

Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION

RDA FNQ&TS completes an annual update of their key strategic document, the Regional Road Map. A key component of this update is an analysis of the synergies between the regional Community Plans and the initiatives listed in RDA FNQ&TS's Strategic Priority Packages. The purpose of undertaking this analysis is to:

- Highlight alignments between the individual community areas and the strategies being undertaken by RDA FNQ&TS at a broader sub-regional level;
- Identify initiatives being undertaken by regional councils that were not yet incorporated into the Strategic Priority Packages;
- Identify common regional themes; and
- Ensure the initiatives being undertaken by RDA FNQ&TS continue to align with the needs and goals of the regional communities.

The process is undertaken by obtaining all available regional Community Plans (where possible 20 year plans) and analysing these against the Strategic Priority Packages. Where a Community Plan is not available, an Operational Plan has been used instead. Any updates are incorporated into the annual synergy report. The strength of alignments are graded to allow a certain level of flexibility of reporting.

When the analysis is completed the Executive Team seek endorsement from each council before a final Synergy Report is produced. The report is then tabled as an agenda item in an RDA FNQ&TS Committee meeting and any new synergies are incorporated into the Strategic Priority Packages.

1.1 2013 UPDATE

This document is the second version of the report, and includes the results of the synthesis's from 2012 and 2013. A number of documents have been released, updated or superseded since the previous version. Updates have been provided to the following sections:

- Aurukun Shire Council
- Cairns Regional Council
- Etheridge Shire Council
- Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
- Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council
- Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council
- Torres Shire Council
- Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council

The review of these documents supported the emerging themes outlined in the 2012 version. In addition, a number of alignments to the Strategic Priority Packages were evident within each community. Those most prevalent were alignments with the Agricultural Futures, Strong Local Governance and Social Planning and Development and Remote Service Delivery packages. These packages seek to resolve issues that are more likely to affect remote and rural communities; given that all the new documents were from either an Indigenous or a remote community, these results are not surprising.

1.2 DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Documents reviewed to complete the synergy report include:

- Aurukun Shire Council - Corporate and Operational Plan 2008 - 2012[3]
- Cairns Regional Council – Corporate Plan 2013 – 2018
- Cassowary Coast Regional Council - Cassowary Coast Region Community Plan 2011 – 2021
- Cook Shire Council – Cook Shire Community Plan 2011 – 2021
- Croydon Shire Council – Croydon Shire Community Plan 2011 – 2021

3 Community Plan not available, and no updated Corporate Plan available

- Etheridge Shire Council - Corporate Plan4 2010 – 2015
- Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council - Community Plan 2012
- Lockhart River Aboriginal Shire Council - Lockhart River Community Plan 2011 – 2021
- Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council – Community Plan 2010 – 2020
- Napranum Aboriginal Shire Council - Napranum 10 year Community Plan[5]
- Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council – Northern Peninsula Area Community Plan 2010 – 2020
- Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council – Community Plan 2011- 2021
- Tablelands Regional Council – Tablelands Community Plan 2021
- Torres Shire Council - Operational Plan 2012 – 2013
- Torres Strait Island Regional Council – Community Plan 2009 – 2029
- Weipa Town Authority – Community Plan 2012 – 2022
- Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council– Community Plan 2011 – 2021

4 Community Plan no longer valid

[5] Napranum Community Plan provides a summary of community cultural survey and tactical delivery of foundation goals

2 HIGH LEVEL OVERVIEW OF SYNERGIES

The matrix below provides a high level overview of synergies found between Community Plans and RDA FNQ&TS's Strategic Priority Packages. For full package information see Section 5.2 - 5.13.

Table 1: High level overview of synergies

Community Plan	Package 1	Package 2	Package 3	Package 4	Package 5	Package 6	Package 7	Package 8	Package 9	Package 10	Package 11	Other
Aurukun Shire	3				3					3		✓
Cairns	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	
Cassowary Coast	2	2	3		2	2	2	3	1			
Cook Shire	3	2	3		3	2	2	2	2		3	
Croydon Shire	3	2	3		2	2	3	3	2	3		
Etheridge Shire	2	2	2		2	3	3	3	1		3	✓
Hope Vale Shire					3			3	3			
Lockhart River Shire	3	3	3		3			3	3	3		
Mapoon Shire						3	3		2	3		
Northern Peninsula Area	3	3				3	3		2	3		
Pormpuraaw Shire							3	3	2	3		
Tablelands	2	1	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	3	3	
Torres Shire		2	3					3				
Torres Strait Islands	3	2	3				3		1	2		
Weipa	3	3	3			3	3	3	2	2	3	
Wujal Wujal Shire					3				3			

Rating methodology:

1 – Strong alignment with RDA FNQ&TS Strategic Priority Package

2 – Medium alignment to RDA FNQ&TS Strategic Priority Package

3 – Some indication of alignment to RDA FNQ&TS Strategic Priority Package

Note: No alignment to a package is shown as a blank cell.

3 COMMON REGIONAL THEMES

A number of common themes and patterns emerged across the region. These themes are listed below.

Strong support for changing environmental circumstances

The initiatives in the Strategic Priority Packages that relate to issues associated with the change in environmental circumstances are strongly supported by the regional Community Plans. In particular, Climate Adaptation and Water and Energy Transformations have a particularly high level of synergy.

Most local government areas are aware of the emerging threats associated with climate change, and the diminishment of the natural resources that so many communities currently rely on. Hence, there is a strong recognition of the need to make sustainable changes in resource management, particularly in relation to moving to alternative fuel sources.

A few of the Community Plans approach the issue from a dual economic and environmental perspective, by listing the economic benefits of moving to a long term environmentally sustainable community. For example, developing a bio-fuel industry or maximizing benefits from the carbon emission scheme.

Improvements on social planning and remote service delivery

Nearly all Community Plans identify issues relating to social planning as an integral component of their strategic plan. This is largely considered as a purely social problem; there are rarely parallels made between the social, environmental and economic pillars. The state of the health service sector was mentioned in most plans, with improvements to service delivery often listed as a key strategy.

Maximising the link between business and the resources sector

The larger government areas all identified the benefits that the resources sector can have on their economic status. Generally speaking, there was strong evidence of synergies between strategies and initiatives developed. These largely centred around developing the workforce to be better positioned to participate.

Willingness to cooperate with neighbouring local government areas

Many communities identified working together with neighouring areas as a key strategy for improving the regional and long term benefits of the region. This was largely mentioned in terms of improving infrastructure, particularly roads. Many plans recognised that consensus between neighbours strengthens their ability to petition the State and Commonwealth governments for further funding.

Local focus, rather than a strategic regional perspective

As expected and mandated, the Community Plans' focus is generally on the immediate locality, and often neglected to draw links between identified issues in their community and the impacts on the broader region. Therefore, the resulting strategies are largely inwardly faced, rather than looking to regional strategies as a solution.

4 COMMUNITY SPECIFIC ALIGNMENTS

In addition to analysing the common themes, the team endeavoured to create detailed understandings of how each regional Community Plan aligned with the initiatives in the Strategic Priority Packages. These Community alignments are below.

4.1 AURUKUN SHIRE COUNCIL[6]

a) Community snapshot

The Shire of Aurukun is located 811km from Cairns on the north-west coast of the Cape York Peninsula and covers an area approximately 7,500 square kilometres. It is one of the larger Aboriginal communities in the Cape, with a population of 1,445 persons[7].

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

<u>Infrastructure for connecting our region</u>

The Aurukun Shire Council prioritises the need to seek Federal and State funding to ensure that there is all-weather access to the Peninsula Development Road. Given that this road is the key infrastructure connecting the Shire with Weipa, the nearest town, it is not surprising that this is a listed as a key strategy. The plan also outlines the need to work with other councils and regional bodies to maintain all roads in a safe condition.

- Upgrades to Peninsula Development Road

<u>Agricultural Futures</u>

The Corporate Plan outlined the need to reduce the number of wild dogs in the community and implement a feral animal program.

- Develop an integrated agricultural pest management program for feral animals.

<u>Land and Sea Livelihoods</u>

Aurukun Shire Council lists a number of strategies that are aimed at increasing Land and Sea Management practices by re-introducing a successful ranger program. Also included is developing Blue Lagoon into a successful tourist venture as a means of increasing economic viability in the community.

- Economic advancement from living on 'country'

4.2 CAIRNS

a) Community snapshot

Cairns is the largest (by population) Local Government Area in RDA FNQ&TS's footprint, and serves as the region's business hub. It is governed by the Cairns Regional Council, and works closely with other councils in the surrounding regions. The fabric of the community is made up of a variety of cultures and religions, including a large Indigenous population. In 2012, the estimated resident population of the Cairns (R) area was 165,859 persons[8]. The Cairns Regional Council will de-amalgamate from 1 January 2014 and a new Port Douglas Shire will be formed.

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6 *Source: Aurukun Shire Council and Community Corporate Plan (2008 – 2012 and Operational Plan (2011-2012)*

7 *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*

8 *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*

b) Emerging themes and synergies

The Cairns Regional Council's Corporate Plan 2013 – 2018 provides a strategic overview of the key strategic actions to be implemented to achieve strategic goals across community, economy, environment and governance.

The Corporate Plan notes the importance of national, state and regional advocacy with a focus on partnerships and collaboration to enhance service delivery and infrastructure investment. Due to the higher level strategic nature of the Corporate Plan it was difficult to match up specific initiatives under the Strategic Priority Packages with strategic outcomes.

Whilst the Corporate Plan does not include specific strategic actions to address particular industries including agriculture, aviation, marine industries, mining, tropical expertise, defence, international education, retailing, tertiary education and sprots tourism, it does acknowledge the importance of these industries to the region and Council's commitment to pursue a more diversified regional economy. Thus indicating broad alignment across the following SPPs:

- Energy – Water Transformations - energy efficiency built environment (3.2.1)
- Agricultural Futures
- Tropical Knowledge Economy
- Social Planning and service delivery
- Land and Sea Livelihoods – best practice natural resource management (3.1.3)
- Cultural Vitality – Community strategic actions around strengthening cultural development and cultural agencies.

Medium Alignment to RDA Road Map

Regional Connectivity

There appears to be broad support for the specific SPP intiatives around increasing ADF presence in the Cairns region, facilitating cruise liner access and Super Yacht industry development however no specific strategic actions are identified in these areas.

The strategic actions under the Economy strategic goal broadly aligns with this SPP, specifically around the following initiatives:

- Securing gaps in our strategic land transport and freight networks by ironing out key pressure points in our road-based freight, tourist and transport networks.
- Bringing forward the Digital Economy revolution through negotiation of key bring-forward opportunities for high speed broadband within the region in cooperation with Townsville and Mackay.

Climate Adaptation

Climate change features under the Environment strategic goal as does effective disaster management response (Community Strategic Goal), relevant to the following initiatives in the SPP:

- Progress development of a significant Regional Climate Change Adaptation Package addressing the specific priorities of the Torres Strait, Gulf, Cape York Peninsula and Wet Tropics communities.
- Greater regional devoution in prioritising disaster recovery priorities, better integrating response, recovery and making sure these efforts build longer term resilience in the face of natural disasters.

Tourism and Aviation Futures

Tourism is noted as a key driver of the regional economy and strategic actions to deliver a diversified and innovative business sector (2.1) in the Corporate Plan include strategies that align with the following SPP initaitves:

- Elevating the region's brand position through evidence-based methodology, cross-sectoral product development, positioning of new products and increased marketing funds.
- Develop industry skills and business capacity by leveraging the NBN certification to meet the needs of growing markets and addressing regulatory issues.

Business and Resources Sector Growth

Strategic actions implementing the Economy strategic goal cover a range of themes common to the Business and Resources Sector Growth SPP including strengthening the region's competitive advantage, supporting the Tropical North Qld Regional Economic Plan, increasing local training and employment opportunities and developing local industry solutions to workforce demands. Promoting and positioning Cairns is recognized as a critical component of a robust future economic development strategy.

In particular the following SPP initiatives are aligned:

- Nurture and grow capacity in the local workforce by developing better pathways into the resources sector and value-added apprenticeships, including development and a Collaborative Centre of Excellence model and associated retention strategy.
- Enhance Cairns' appeal as a resources hub (both humand and goods and services) through a concerted approach to addressing route capacity to key markets and positioning Cairns city as a supportive community for resource sector workers and their families.
- Attract key resource sector corporates by providing decision makers with trustworthy, easy access to regional information and experiences.

Strong local governance

Whilst the Corporate Plan does not specifically state that it wants to use the QLD Road Alliance Model, it does demonstrate a strong willingness to work together with other communities to achieve sustainable and long term results for the entire region. The Corporate Plan also emphasises the importance of collaborations across local, regional and national scales including participation in the FNQ ROC.

- Using QLD Road Alliance Model across other asset classes
- Support and encourage further development of the FNQ ROC and ROCCY.

Devolved government

Whilst the RDA FNQ&TS Strategic Priority Package focuses on devolution of government and increased decision making capacities in Far North Queensland, the Cairns Regional Council Corporate Plan specifies a desire to form relationships with the decision makers in government so that their voice is heard in external decisions. Specific initiatives that align include:

- Developing a strategy that breaks through the silo approach by the government and incorporates social, environmental and economic issues.

Working with the broader regions in the northern alliance to progress larger regional issues.

4.3 CASSOWARY COAST

a) Community snapshot

The Cassowary Coast is situated between Cairns and Townsville. 2012 Census results demonstrate that 28,667 people usually reside in the region, with this number consisting of a large multicultural component[9]. The region covers approximately 4,700 kilometres, with the region stretching from Innisfail in the North to Cardwell in the South. The area is governed by a Cassowary Coast Regional Council.

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Strong alignment with RDA Roadmap

<u>Social planning and development and remote service delivery</u>

Social planning features strongly within the social fabric section. The plan aligns with nearly all of the initiatives in the Strategic Priority Package. All of the initiatives that it does align with are those that have an immediate positive effect on the community.

- Improving social, health and human service delivery
- Increasing investment in building the capacity of the services sector
- Taking a strategic and integrated planning approach
- Increasing the focus on preventative health services

Medium alignment to RDA Roadmap

<u>Business and the resources growth</u>

The Cassowary Coast Regional Council Community Plan envisions a future where community members can maximise economic opportunities. It recognises that a strategy for achieving this is to build the capacity of residents to participate in the resources growth phenomenon.

- Develop better pathways into the resources sector
- Build a versatile small to medium business base to service the resources sector

<u>Climate adaptation</u>

It is evident that preparation for climate adaptation is an environmental priority for the region. There is importance placed not just on maintaining and protecting the unique biodiversity of the region, but also on improving and enhancing natural assets.

- Secure iconic Cassowary populations
- Increase disaster preparedness
- Greater regional devolution in prioritizing disaster recovery priorities

<u>Regional connectivity</u>

The Community Plan recognises the economic and social benefits that regional connectivity can bring to the community. Whilst there is a strong focus on infrastructural connectivity, particularly during the wet season, the impact of digital connectivity is also of some significance in the plan. The benefits of this are recognised in both the economic and social fabric sections, with the introduction of the NBN seen as a way to introduce the community to a digital era of enhanced learning and connectivity.

[9] *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0).*

- Remove port-based freight blockages
- Secure gaps in strategic land transport and freight network
- Bring forward the Digital Economy Revolution

Agricultural futures

Agriculture is recognized as a key economic driver for the region, and strategies for its enhancement are entwined throughout the plan. There is a particular focus on increasing the capacity of the community members and developing the region's workforce potential.

- Ensure infrastructure investments align with current and future needs
- Drive industry capability by attracting and retaining employees

Tourism and aviation futures

The tourism industry is also recognized as an industry of fundamental importance to the region, and one that the Cassowary Coast Regional Council will continue to enhance. There is recognition that the area will benefit from the impact of the NBN, particularly within the small business sector.

- Broaden the appeal of the destination through promotion of regional tourism precincts
- Develop industry by leveraging NBN

Energy - Water transformations

The Cassowary Coast Regional Council shows some alignment with four out of the five initiatives in this package. However, in a similar manner to the Cairns Regional Council, although the vision and intended outcomes are the same, the strategies for achieving them are not outlined at the same level of detail as shown in the package.

- Framework and prospectus for transformational green energy
- Upgrade of strategic infrastructure for consumptive water delivery standards
- Rural water use efficiency

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Strong local governance

Whilst the Community Plan does not specifically state that it wants to use the QLD Road Alliance Model, it does demonstrate a strong willingness to work together with other communities to achieve sustainable and long term results for the entire region. However, this is the only initiative that the Community Plan aligns with.

- Using QLD Road Alliance Model across other asset clauses

4.4 COOK SHIRE

a) Community snapshot

The Cook Shire region is located in the Cape York Peninsula. In the 2012 Census the area had a usual resident population of 4,516[10], which represents 1.7 per cent of the total region. Results of the census also show that 20

[10] *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*

per cent of this population identified themselves as Indigenous. The Cook Shire region adjoins 13 Aboriginal, regional, and shire Local Government Areas and one town authority.

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Medium alignment to RDA Roadmap

Strong local governance

The Cook Shire Council is one of only a few communities to align this strongly with this package. The Council demonstrates a real willingness to work with other governing areas to ensure the benefits to the region are strategically maximized. There is also a real impetus to ensure that local Indigenous communities are supported and empowered.

- Empower local communities to define and implement their Community Plans
- Work strategically with communities across the region to obtain broad, long term outcomes
- Empower local Indigenous communities to actively participate in projects

Business and the resources growth

Jobs and employment were identified by the community as one of the most pressing issues. Therefore, the Council has placed a strong importance on building the capacity of the community members in an effort to increase employment. There is also a real focus on building the capacity of small business enterprises and developing local enabling infrastructure such as the Archer Point Barge Point facility.

- Grow the capacity of the local workforce
- Build a small business base to service the resources sector

Climate adaptation

The Cook Shire Council has demonstrated its understanding of impending environmental issues and identified a number of areas in which preparation for climate change can be implemented.

- Maximizing the benefits of the Carbon Farming Initiative
- Empowering regions to manage disaster recovery priorities

Tourism and aviation strategies

The strategies outlined in the Community Plan align with two out of the seven initiatives in the package, with a focus on building tourism within the immediate region through initiatives like the waterfront development. The Shire also aims to build capacity at the airport and provide commercial investment through an airport subdivision.

- Prioritizing investment in built and natural assets
- Elevating the brand and marketing of the region

Social planning and development and remote service delivery

Health is identified by the community as a top priority issue (eg introducing a maternity unit at the hospital), so it is of little surprise that the Community Plan aims to improve the services available. The focus is on increasing the services available in the community and reducing the need and costs of travel to Cairns for medical treatment.

- Improvement in social, health and human service delivery
- Increased focus on preventative health and social services delivery (reducing the need for response-based servicing)

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Agricultural futures

Although agriculture is a key economic driver for the Cook Shire region, the strategies in the Community Plan only partially aligned with the package. However, agricultural development is still a priority for the region; the strategies and foci of the Community Plan were aimed at local development and strategy, rather than at the high level regional focus on the Strategic Priority Package.

- Facilitate localism and sustainable development
- Drive industry capability by attracting and retaining workers to the region

Regional connectivity

Regional connectivity is a key priority for the Cook Shire region, with road infrastructure identified by the community as the number one issue affecting the area, particularly during the wet season. Although, again, the strategies outlined in the Community Plan were aimed at a local level, not a regional level.

- Peninsula Development Road upgrade
- Bringing forward the Digital Economy Revolution

Energy-Water transformations

Again, the Cook Shire demonstrates its understanding of environmental issues by focusing on ensuring the energy and water infrastructure is appropriate for the next ten years. The Community Plan includes a vision of a green future (through solar projects), and one in which water supply is adequate to meet the needs of the area.

- Framework and prospectus for transformational green energy
- Upgrade of strategic infrastructure for consumptive water delivery standards

4.5 CROYDON SHIRE

a) Community snapshot

Croydon Shire is located just south of the base of the Gulf of Carpentaria and encompasses an area of 29,538 square kilometres. The 2012, there were 320 persons[11] in the Croydon Shire Council region.

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Medium alignment to RDA Roadmap

Agricultural futures

Agriculture is identified as one of Croydon's key economic drivers, so it is not surprising that the Community Plan has alignments with the RDA FNQ&TS Strategic Priority Package. In both the narrative and the strategies, the Community Plan identifies infrastructural network upgrades as a priority for the community. In particular, upgrades to Richmond Road, a designated cattle corridor. Linked to this is the recognition that limited job opportunities and housing restrictions limit population growth. Therefore, the Community Plan lists strategies such as increasing housing stock, increasing infrastructural networks and increasing training opportunities as key to increasing employment opportunities and fostering population growth.

[11] *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*

- Focus on infrastructural freight improvements that impact on the future of agriculture
- Drive industry capability by attracting and retaining employees and entrepreneurs
- Other initiative – Pest management and pasture health – Reduce threats of feral animals, weeds and pests

Tourism and aviation futures

The Community Plan identifies tourism as a growing economic sector, and feels that the region is well positioned to grow its accommodation and related services. Therefore, in the economic development and infrastructure section of the Community Plan it states that the council intends to lobby for a regular air service between Croydon and Cairns. In addition, a key strategy to facilitate the growth of the tourism sector is to continue to develop local tourist products, and improve the tourism strategy.

- Drive existing aviation strategy
- Address freight and backfill opportunities and increase number of flights to the region
- Develop brand and marketing for the region
- Other initiative – Increased aviation network – Increase aviation capacity of the Shire

Social planning and development and remote service delivery

The Community Plan identifies health as a concern for the region, and states that the services currently available in the community are less than satisfactory. Therefore, it is of little surprise that the plan aligns with the Regional Priority Package. The section in the Community Plan that relates to a healthy, resilient community focuses on improvements to the health services available in the community, as well as planning for health services that are responsive to the community needs.

- Improve social, health and human service delivery
- Increase investment in building capacity of services sector
- Increase preventative health and social services

Climate adaptation

The Community Plan recognises the impact that carbon emissions are having on the environment, and aims to transition all council operations to environmentally sustainable operations. As this strategy is situated under the economic development and infrastructure outcomes section and has a performance indicator that is based on minimal carbon tax, a tentative alignment has been made between this and maximising benefits from the Carbon Farming Initiative. The plan also states that disaster management will continue to benefit from strong community leadership and direction.

- Maximise benefits from the Carbon Farming Initiative
- Increased empowerment with disaster management and recovery

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Regional connectivity

The alignments between the Croydon Shire Council and the Regional Priority Package are largely in the area of land transport and freight. Given the region's strong agricultural economy, reliable road infrastructure is key to the development of the region, particularly during the wet season.

- Securing gaps in strategic land transport and freight networks (Hann Highway)
- Bringing forward the Digital Economy Revolution

Energy and water transformations

The Croydon Shire Council Community Plan intends to ensure that rural properties have adequate access to water. The council also recognises the importance of green energy, which is evident in its strategy to develop ways to decrease its carbon emissions.

- Framework and prospectus for transformational green energy
- Rural water use efficiency

<u>Strong local governance</u>

Whilst the Community Plan does not specifically state that it wants to use the QLD Road Alliance Model, it does demonstrate a strong willingness to work together with other communities to achieve sustainable and long-term results for the entire region. However, this is the only initiative that the Community Plan aligns with.

- Using QLD Road Alliance Model across other asset classes

<u>Business and the resources growth</u>

The Croydon Shire Council recognises that the capacity of the community members to participate in the resources growth phenomena but is limited by training opportunities available in the region. To this end, it intends to increase available training, in an attempt to increase workforce skills.

- Grow the capacity of the local workforce

4.6 ETHERIDGE SHIRE[12]

a) Community snapshot

The Etheridge Shire lies at the base of Cape York Peninsula over a vast area of ancient rock. It covers 38,850 square kilometres from the Great Diving Range in the east to Gregory Range in the west. The main centre of the Etheridge Shire is Georgetown. In 2012 there were 909 persons[13] living in the Shire.

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Medium alignment to RDA Roadmap

<u>Agricultural futures</u>

The agricultural industry features heavily in the economic development section of the Community Plan, demonstrating its importance to the region. The impact of infrastructure in the region on the agricultural industry is evident in the infrastructure services section. Here, there is a direct link made between economic success and the road network. In particular, it discusses the need to ensure that the people and goods can be moved in an efficient manner, and that stock can be moved to market at critical times of the year. Although there are no overt references to 'localism', the support of Etheridge Shire for the Gilbert River Irrigation Scheme was deemed in line with the development of the agricultural precincts that this package refers to. Essentially, the package aims to remove blockages that are impeding the success of such precincts, which is in line with the goal of Etheridge Shire Council.

- Focus on infrastructural freight improvements that impact on the future of agriculture
- Increase food security
- Facilitate localism and sustainable development

<u>Social planning and development and remote service delivery</u>

Social planning and development featured heavily in nearly all regional Community Plans. In Etheridge, it largely aligns with the strategies under the community and lifestyle section. There is a distinct link between the council's

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12 *Source: Etheridge Shire Council Community Plan and Corporate Plan*
13 *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*

strategy of improving remote health services and childcare and the package. Council states that they are looking to maximise services and capacity by integrating and coordinating approaches.

- Improve social, health and human service delivery
- Increase investment in building the capacity of the services sector
- Take a strategic and integrated planning approach

Climate adaptation

The Council stipulates the need to ensure the local disaster management committee is well prepared, capable and up to date. In addition, it recognises that the Council needs to support industries and community to adapt to climate change by providing education and monitoring of changes to waste management practices, as well as taking action to reduce the councils own carbon footprint.

- Disaster preparedness
- Increased empowerment with disaster management and recovery

Regional connectivity

The Etheridge Shire Council recognises the important implications that improved digital connectivity can have on the region. It also recognises the need to upgrade the gulf roads, including the Hahn Highway, Kennedy Development Road and Gregory Development Road.

- Securing gaps in our strategic land transport and freight network
- Bringing forward the Digital Economy Revolution

Energy - Water transformations

In a similar manner to Croydon Shire Council, the Etheridge Shire Council understand the environmental implications of future water use, and intend to develop and implement strategies that will have a positive impact on water use in the future. An example of this is the construction of Charleston Lake to ensure guaranteed waer supply to Forsayth and Georgetown. There is also a strong emphasis on developing renewable energy projects as well as sustainable agricultural developments.

- Upgrade of strategic infrastructure for consumptive water delivery standards
- Rural water use efficiency

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Tourism and aviation futures

Etheridge Shire Council places importance on the cultural aspects of their tourism market. They wish to see this increased and marketed as such.

- Broaden the appeal of the destination through the promotion of significant sub-regional tourism precincts (nodes) and draw a clearer link between cultural tourism assets and the associated services and infrastructural requirements

Strong local governance

Whilst the Community Plan does not specifically state that it wants to use the QLD Road Alliance Model, it does demonstrate a strong willingness to work together with other communities to achieve sustainable and long-term results for the entire region. However, this is the only initiative that the Community Plan aligns with.

- Using QLD Road Alliance Model across other asset classes

Business and Resources Sector Growth

The plan outlines the need to encourage the development of small and large mining operations in the region, by advocating for the reduction of red tape.

- Attract key resource sector corporates

Devolved government

The Etheridge Shire Council recognises that the key to achieving long term, sustainable results within the region is to work together. The Community Plan expresses a desire to do just this.

- Working with the broader regions in the Northern Alliance to progress larger regional issues

4.7 HOPE VALE ABORIGINAL SHIRE

a) Community snapshot

Hope Vale is located 46 kilometres north of Cooktown and 370 kilometres north of Cairns. It has a primarily indigenous population of 1,087 people[14]. The council was formed in 1986 after becoming the first community to receive a Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT).

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Medium alignments to RDA Roadmap

Social planning and development and remote service delivery

Social wellbeing features strongly in the Community Plan, with a number of strategies focused solely on improving health outcomes. These strategies recognise the need to work with Government departments.

- Increased focus on preventative health and social services delivery (reducing the need for response-based servicing)

Agricultural Futures

The Plan recognises the need for improved pest management practices, implemented through a ranger program.

- Develop an integrated agricultural pest management program for feral animals.

Strong local governance

The Council have a focus on improving the capacity of community members to ensure that there remains a strong local governance system in place. It recognizes that a key component of this is to ensure that traditional cultural practices are sustained.

- Ensure the local government continues to improve governance and participate effectively in the projects which will have an impact on their communities.

4.8 LOCKHART RIVER ABORIGINAL SHIRE

a) Community snapshot

Lockhart River is an Aboriginal community located approximately 755 kilometers north of Cairns. In 2012, Lockhart River had a population of 536 persons[15]. The large majority of Lockhart River residents originate from five major

[14] *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*

traditional Aboriginal language groups in the region. The traditional territories go from Double Point to Breakfast Creek and inland to the mountains.

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Social planning and development and remote service delivery

A major goal of the community is that health and wellbeing becomes a priority for all. To achieve this goal, the Council outlines the need for improved health service delivery and educational programs aimed at prevention feature heavily. In addition, there is a push for training of local community members to be best positioned to deliver these services.

- Increased focus on preventative health and social services delivery (reducing the need for response-based servicing)

Strong local governance

The Council expresses the need to continue to support and build the capacity of the Council through adequate training and professional support.

- Ensure the local government continues to improve governance and participate effectively in the projects which will have an impact on their communities.

Agricultural Futures

In a similar fashion to the other Indigenous communities, Lockhart River recognizes the need to protect the environment by introducing a feral animal plan. There is also a strategy that is aimed at ensuring agricultural practices occur in a sustainable fashion.

- Develop an integrated agricultural pest management program for feral animals.

Land and Sea Livelihoods

The Council draws a strong link between the health of the community and its members and the way the land is managed. A number of strategies are listed, each of which focus on land and sea natural and cultural protection. These include education on Land and Sea agreements, training and employment of community rangers and supporting people to go back on country.

- Support tenure reform and economic advancement from living on 'country'.

Energy and Water Transformations

Although the plan does not align directly with any of RDA FNQ&TS's key strategy initiatives, there is a strategy that relates to educating the community about appropriate recycling, water conservation and waste management practices.

Infrastructure for Connecting Our Region

Again, although there are no direct alignments with the key strategic initiatives, there are a number of actions in the plan that relate to the need to upgrade and maintain infrastructure, including roads and the airport. There is also a focus on the digital network, which is linked to improvements in the economy, as well as education.

[15] *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*

Regional Adaptation for a Changing Climate

A goal of the community is that there is an effective disaster management program in place. This encompasses having appropriate plans in place, a designated shelter and running education programs for the community.

- Disaster preparedness

4.9 MAPOON SHIRE

a) Community snapshot

Mapoon Shire is situated on the traditional lands of the Tjungundji, Yupingathi, Thaniquith, Bwaquithi, Warrungu and Ankamuthi peoples. The area is held under a Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) for 'Aboriginal Reserve Purposes' under the Land Act (Qld) and covers 1,839 square kilometres. The traditional lands have mining leases overlapping and many of these sites have arrangements which distribute royalties to Traditional Owners. The main township is situated in Red Beach with housing and infrastructure spread between Thuungu and High-rise in the South and out to Cullen Point (North-West) where the Old Mapoon Mission site is located. Since 2000, the Mapoon shire has been administered by the Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council. The Mapoon Trustees who were appointed by the Queensland Government have ownership responsibilities for the DOGIT. The Trustees work with the Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council with respect to land use administration matters. In 2012 estimated residential population for Mapoon(s) is 290 persons[16].

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Social planning and development and remote service delivery

Health is a specific focus area in the Community Plan, and many of the desired outcomes align with the initiatives in the package; improvement in social, health and human service delivery

- Increased focus on preventative health and social services delivery (reducing the need for response-based servicing)

The Council will achieve this end goal through the implementation of a number of initiatives, including:

- Community engagement policies
- Calender of social events
- Cultural calendar
- Sport and Recreational planning (including master plan)

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Tourism and aviation futures

There are a number of potential economic ventures listed in the Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council Community Plan, all of which will require investment of some kind before they become viable tourism operations. For example, there is the potential for crocodile tours, bird watching etc.

- Prioritizing investment in built and natural assets

In addition, the Council is conducting the following:

[16] *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*

- Infrastructure review
- Visitor management planning

Land and sea livelihoods

The current tenure status of most Aboriginal lands makes economic development of the community nearly impossible. To this end, the Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council want to see the resolution of tenure issues, so that individual home ownership and wealth creation can have a positive impact on the region. Work has commenced to validate interest and to implement a land use policy consistent with the rest of the State.

- Tenure reform and home ownership

To achieve successful reforms in land management, land tenure and home ownership, the Council is currently implementing the following:

- Planning scheme and Land use Master Plan
- Indigenous Land Use Agreement
- Environmental protection
- Ranger Services
- Ghost Net removal and Turtle Research

Business and the resources growth

Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council recognises that the remoteness of the region contributes to low workforce capacity. The Council is committed to securing opportunities which demonstrate commitment to improve education services and training opportunities for community members.

- Grow the capacity of the local workforce

In addition, the Council aims to:

- Secure project opportunities
- Establish partnerships and maintain networks

4.10 NORTHERN PENINSULA AREA

a) Community snapshot

The Northern Peninsula Area (NPA) covers an area on the north-western coast of Cape York Peninsula. It encompasses the townships of Bamaga, Injinoo, New Mapoon, Umagico and Seisia. The NPA was home to 2,599[17] persons in 2012.

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Medium alignment to RDA Roadmap

Social planning and development and remote service delivery

The Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council acknowledges that there are a number of health and social issues evident within the communities, and not enough health services to support and prevent these. Improvements are therefore of vital importance to the area.

[17] *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*

- Improving social, health and human service delivery
- Taking a strategic and integrated planning approach
- Increasing the focus on preventative health services

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Tourism and aviation futures

Although the Community Plan doesn't have any direct alignments with the initiatives in the package, there are many similarities in the vision and goals. The Plan recognises the importance of aviation to the economic future of the region, and plans to maximise opportunities available through tourism and marketing.

- Drive existing aviation strategy
- Reincentivise and prioritize natural and built assets investment
- Elevate the region's brand and marketing
- Other initiative – increase aviation network in Cape York

Regional connectivity

The Community Plan emphasises the impact that increased digital services can have on the community, particularly given its remote location.

- Bringing forward the Digital Economy Revolution

Land and sea livelihoods

The current tenure status of most Aboriginal lands makes economic development of the community nearly impossible. To this end, the Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council want to see the resolution of tenure issues, so that individual home ownership and wealth creation can have a positive impact on the region.

- Tenure reform and home ownership

Climate adaptation

Given recent environmental events, the Community Plan identifies the need for the area to be prepared in the event of a natural disaster.

- Disaster preparedness

Business and the resources growth

There is an acknowledgement that improvements to the capacity of the workforce need to made to increase the economic situation of the region. The Council aim to increase the capacity of individuals to undertake enterprise development.

- Grow the capacity of the local workforce
- Build a small business base to service the resources sector

4.11 PORMPURAAW SHIRE

a) Community snapshot

Pormpuraaw is located on the west coast of Cape York, approximately 500km from the tip of Australia. The Local Government Area is approximately 4,360 square kilometres and borders Kowanyama to the South and Aurukun to the North. In 2012, Pormpuraaw had a usual resident population of 740 persons[18], with 90.3 per cent identifying as Indigenous.

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Medium alignment to RDA Roadmap

Social planning and development and remote service delivery

Like most Indigenous communities, Pormpuraaw has a low standard of health services. Therefore, the Community Plan details improvements to the health sector as an area of vital importance for the community.

- Improving social, health and human service delivery
- Increasing the focus on preventative health services

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Strong local governance

The Community Plan identifies the need to grow the capacity of the council and its people to better serve the region. In line with this is the desire for increased empowerment and subsequently, accountability.

- Empower local communities to define and implement their Community Plans
- Empower local Indigenous communities to actively participate in projects

Land and sea livelihoods

The current tenure status of most Aboriginal lands makes economic development of the community nearly impossible. To this end, the Pormpuraaw Council want to see the resolution of tenure issues, so that individual home ownership and wealth creation can have a positive impact on the region.

- Tenure reform and home ownership

Business and the resources growth

In a similar manner to the other Indigenous communities, the Council have identified a need to increase the workforce capacity of the region. This includes increasing employment opportunities, as well as available training and education.

- Grow the capacity of the local workforce

4.12 TABLELANDS

a) Community snapshot

The Tablelands encompasses a region of 64,678 square kilometres[19]. The 2012 estimated resident population was 45,563 persons[20]. The main population areas on the Tablelands are Mareeba, Atherton, Malanda, Herberton, Kuranda, Ravenshoe, Millaa Millaa, Chillagoe, Dimbulah, Mt Garnet, Mt Molloy, Tinaroo and Yungaburra. The

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[18] *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*
[19] *Tablelands Regional Council website: http://www.trc.qld.gov.au/discover*
[20] Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)

Tablelands Regional Council will be de-amalgamated from 1 January 2014 and a new Mareeba Shire Council will be formed.

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Strong alignment with RDA Roadmap

Tourism and aviation futures

The Tablelands Regional Council Community Plan aligns with five out of the six initiatives in the package. There is a strong emphasis on linking the regional tourism and aviation outcomes (ie beyond the Tablelands) with the future of the Tablelands. This relates not just to achieving economic outcomes, but also social outcomes.

- Broaden the appeal through promotion for sub-regional tourism precincts (nodes)
- Reincentivise and prioritize natural and built assets investment
- Elevate the region's brand and marketing
- Develop industry skills and business capacity by leveraging the NBN
- Strategic aviation industry development to leverage resources boom and freight opportunities

Agricultural futures

Agriculture is identified as a key economic driver for the region, and the Council have therefore ensured that strategies for development are well defined and thought through. There is a strong strategic focus to the desired actions, and most of them will have a broad impact on the region.

- Devolved and coordinated strategic research into tropical agriculture
- Align infrastructure investments with current and future resource sector needs
- Address food security issues
- Drive industry capability through attracting and retaining employees
- Value-add to secure niche markets
- Re-think current financing options for agricultural sector in order to reduce farm debt ratios
- Other initiative – Pest management and pasture health – minimise impact of feral animals, pests and weeds

Climate adaptation

The Tablelands Regional Council is well aware of environmental issues, and the plan intends to strategically position the region to benefit from changes, both at the environmental and economic levels. There is a strong impetus to drive environmental innovation, particularly in the agricultural industry.

- Increased disaster preparedness
- Maximise opportunities of the Carbon Farming Initiative
- Greater regional devolution in prioritizing disaster recovery priorities
- Other initiative – bio-based industry development

Business and the resources growth

The Tablelands Regional Council Community Plan demonstrates the intention of the communities to maximise economic benefits from the resources sector. The region intends to encourage and support innovative small enterprises and industries, increase the number of skilled workers in the region and create a culture of research and learning.

- Develop better pathways into the resources sector
- Build a SME base to service resource industry
- Increase sub-regional data and social impact assessment knowledge

<u>Social planning and development and remote service delivery</u>

It is also evident that the Tablelands Regional Council views health and services as a key development area and of particular importance to meet the needs of the growing and ageing population of the region. The social and inclusion section of the Community Plan details a number of short, medium and long term strategies for improvement.

- Improving social, health and human service delivery
- Increasing investment in building the capacity of the services sector
- Taking a strategic and integrated planning approach
- Increasing the focus on preventative health services

Medium alignment to RDA Roadmap

<u>Strong local governance</u>

Governance is a key theme in the Community Plan. There is an emphasis on community participation and empowerment, inclusive decision making and leadership and accountability. This also includes a focus on working together to achieve strong outcomes.

- Enable local communities to define and implement their Community Plans
- Develop and resource Regional Managers Coordination Network
- Apply the QLD Road Alliance Model across other asset classes

<u>Regional connectivity</u>

The Tablelands Regional Council places importance on both physical and digital connectivity of the region. It recognises the economic benefits of the digital reform and has developed strategies for supporting and maximising these benefits. In addition, it places importance on the physical connectivity of the region to both national and global markets.

- Remove port-based freight blockages
- Secure expanded ADF presence
- Secure gaps in strategic land transport and freight network
- Bring forward the Digital Economy Revolution
- Other initiatives – Tablelands Infrastructural upgrades – the plan also lists a number of upgrades to remove freight based blockages

<u>Tropical knowledge economy</u>

The Tablelands Regional Council obviously recognises the potential benefits to be gained from positioning itself as a global expert in tropical innovation and knowledge. Many of the strategies entwined throughout the various focus areas are aimed at achieving this vision. However, these strategies are more at a community level than a regional level.

- Build and progress tropical knowledge through a strong regional alliance

- Secure key research and education delivery capacities

Energy - Water transformations

In a similar manner to the other larger Local Government Areas, the Tablelands Regional Council demonstrates a commitment to transitioning to more environmentally sustainable energy sources. There are strong synergies in desired outcomes and visions for the region between the Community Plan and the package. However, the strategies to be employed by the communities are not targeted at the same level as the Strategic Priority Package.

- Framework and prospectus for transformational green energy
- Upgrade of strategic infrastructure for consumptive water delivery standards
- Rural water use efficiency

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Devolved government

The Tablelands Regional Council Community Plan recognises the benefits of decentralising government decision making and instead considering a model of localised decision making in its good governance section.

- Devolution of decision making and budgeting, as well as decentralisation of government staff

4.13 TORRES SHIRE

a) Community snapshot

The Torres Shire Council covers the northernmost part of Cape York Peninsula, together with the islands of Torres Strait. As the only part of Australia with an active international border and where the neighbouring country is visible from the shoreline, the Torres Strait has gained a strategic focus from Commonwealth and State governments. The issues of customs, quarantine, immigration and defence are administered daily from Waibene within a treaty that also maintains traditional cultural and trade ties between Papua New Guinea and the people of the Torres Strait. In 2012 there were 3,607 persons[21] residing in the Torres Shire area.

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Medium alignment to RDA Roadmap

Regional Adaptation to a Changing Climate

Given the significant effects of climate change to the Torres Strait Islands, it is of little surprise that there is a focus on monitoring and reducing the effects of erosion.

- Development of a significant Regional Climate Change Adaptation Package
- Disaster management

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Energy and Water Transformations

There is a push for the regulation of water usage, specifically by the introduction of a Water Smart Management Program. There are also a number of strategies aimed at alternative and sustainable energy sources and effective waste management systems.

[21] *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*

- Transformational green energy (wind, solar, hydro and biofuel)

Strong local governance

The Council expresses the need to continue to support and build the capacity of the Council through adequate training and professional support.

- Ensure the local government continues to improve governance and participate effectively in the projects which will have an impact on their communities.

4.14 TORRES STRAIT OUTER ISLANDS

a) Community snapshot

The Torres Strait Islands are located in Far North Queensland, scattered throughout the 200km between the tip of Cape York Peninsula and Papua New Guinea. The Torres Strait Island Regional Council represents fifteen island communities, including Badu, Boigu, Dauan, Erub, Hammond, Iama Kubin, Mabuiag, Masig, Mer, Poruma, Saibai, St Pauls, Ugar and Warraber. In 2012 the estimated resident population for the Torres Strait Island (s) was 4,771 persons[22].

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Strong alignment with RDA Roadmap

Social planning and development and remote service delivery

The Community Plan recognises that the health standards in the communities are of a much lower standard than most other areas. Therefore, there is a strong emphasis on improving health outcomes in the community.

- Improving social, health and human service delivery
- Increasing investment in building the capacity of the services sector
- Taking a strategic and integrated planning approach
- Increasing the focus on preventative health services

Medium alignment to RDA Roadmap

Land and sea livelihoods

The Torres Strait Island Regional Council Community Plan is one of few plans to identify the need to increase the capacity of Indigenous Traditional Owner institutions. In addition, it focuses on the need to resolve tenure problems surrounding Indigenous land, so that housing can be improved and economic opportunities maximised.

- Tenure reform and home ownership
- Capacity building of Traditional Owner institutions
- Triple bottom line focus for livelihoods on country

Climate adaptation

The Community Plan shows an understanding of the impacts of climate change, and has developed objectives that centre on managing or minimising these effects.

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[22] Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)

- Increased disaster preparedness
- Maximise opportunities of the Carbon Farming Initiative

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Regional connectivity

The Community Plan recognises the benefits that its remote communities can obtain from the digital economy. It places importance on both this and physical infrastructure as necessary to enhance the national connectivity of the region.

- Secure gaps in strategic land transport and freight network
- Bring forward the Digital Economy Revolution

Energy - Water transformations

Although the Community Plan does not directly align with any initiatives in the package, it does indicate a move to more environmentally sustainable energy sources.

- Framework and prospectus for transformational green energy

Business and the resources growth

The economic development section of the Community Plan focuses on improving the economic standing of both the region and its people. The strategies for implementation revolve around increasing training and capacity building opportunities, fostering small business initiatives and creating employment opportunities.

- Develop better pathways into the resources sector
- Build a SME base to service resource industry

4.15 WEIPA

a) Community snapshot

Weipa is situated on the Western Cape. Weipa (T) was home to 3,643 persons in 2012[23]. The town has strong economic relationships with the nearby bauxite mines. Weipa is the only town in Queensland that does not currently have a local government. The Weipa Town Authority manages the town and is partly funded by Rio Tinto Alcan Pty Ltd, and is a subsidiary of that company.

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Medium alignment to RDA Roadmap

Social planning and development and remote service delivery

There is a focus in the Community Plan on ensuring that the various health centres work collaboratively to deliver the best possible services. In addition, there is recognition that changes need to be made to increase the health services available in Weipa, and reduce the need to travel to Cairns.

[23] *Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)*

- Improving social, health and human service delivery
- Taking a strategic and integrated planning approach

Land and sea livelihoods

The current tenure status of most Aboriginal lands makes economic development of the community nearly impossible. To this end, the Weipa Town Authority want to see the resolution of tenure issues, so that individual home ownership and wealth creation can have a positive impact on the region. The Community Plan also states that there is a need for industrial, commercial and residential land to be released for sale and development. In addition, the uncertain governance structure of the Weipa township is recognised in the Community Plan as an area requiring resolution.

- Tenure reform and home ownership
- Normalisation of Weipa governance

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Strong local governance

There is a strong desire in the community to work with other regions to ensure the area is better positioned to lobby State and Commonwealth governments for required changes.

- Enable local communities to define and implement their Community Plans
- Apply the QLD Road Alliance Model across other asset classes

Devolved government

The Community Plan states that there should be an increased ability for the community to make decisions that impact on the future of the area.

- Devolution of decision making and budgeting, as well as decentralisation of government staff

Tourism and aviation futures

Tourism is recognised as a key economic driver for the region, and one that the community intends to develop further. Strategies for development include development of a comprehensive marketing plan, cooperation with other neighbouring regions and ensuring that the region is accessible at all times.

- Drive existing aviation strategy
- Rethink tourism strategies for sub-regional nodes
- Elevate the region's brand and marketing

Regional connectivity

The Community Plan details the long term aspirations of the region to support the enhancement of the Peninsular Development Road, so that the community is accessible by road at all times and in all weather conditions. It also describes a desire to develop the port infrastructure to create a strong marine industry.

- Secure gaps in strategic land transport and freight network
- Other initiative - Weipa marine and port industries

Climate adaptation

The Community Plan recognises the need for the community to move towards a more climate friendly and sustainable energy source. Whilst there isn't a direct alignment with this package, there is still an intention for transition.

- Maximise opportunities of the Carbon Farming Initiative

Energy - Water transformations

The Weipa Town Authority demonstrates its understanding of environmental issues by focusing on ensuring the energy and water infrastructure is appropriate for the next ten years. The Community Plan includes a vision of a green future, and one in which water supply is adequate to meet the needs of the area.

- Framework and prospectus for transformational green energy
- Upgrade of strategic infrastructure for consumptive water delivery standards

Business and the resources growth

Given the proximity of Weipa to the Rio Tinto mines, the community is well aware of available opportunities, and continue to work towards maximising these.

- Develop better pathways into the resources sector

4.16 WUJAL WUJAL

a) Community Snapshot

Wujal Wujal is an Aboriginal Shire, originally known as Bloomfield, later known as Bloomfield River Mission. The Shire covers an area of 12 square kilometres and is located in the Bloomfield Valley, on the banks of the Bloomfield River, inside the World Heritage Area some 170km to the North of Cairns and 70km South of Cooktown. The present community of Wujal Wujal has existed on the site for many hundreds of years and is set around the highly sacred waterfalls of Wujal Wujal meaning 'many falls' in the local language. There were 296 persons[24] living in Wujal Wujal shire in 2012.

b) Emerging themes and synergies

Some indication of alignment to RDA Roadmap

Agricultural Futures

The Plan outlines the need to implement a pest management plan, although this is to protect the natural environment, not necessarily to improve the agricultural industry in the region.

- Develop an integrated agricultural pest management program for feral animals

Social planning and development and remote service delivery

There is a focus in the Community Plan on decreasing the prevalence of chronic disease, as well as upgrading the existing community care centre.

- Improving social, health and human service delivery

[24] Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)

5 NEW INITIATIVES

The 2013 analysis highlighted a number of initiatives from the regional Community Plans that were not part of the Strategic Priority Packages.

Aurukun Shire Council

<u>Improvements to existing aerodrome</u>

Program 6 – Utilities, in the Corporate Plan outlines a number of initiatives aimed at improving existing aerodrome services, in an effort to prepare the community to maximize benefits from mining activity in the region. In particular, it lists the need to increase maintenance, install a permanent refueling facility, train Airport Reporting Officers, and develop a safe and secure baggage handling system.

Etheridge Shire Council

<u>Release of state land</u>

The Etheridge Shire Council argues that a key component affecting the ability of the region to attract and develop economic investments is the availability of State Land. It states that a key strategy for them is to advocate for the release of state land.

<u>Development of rural skills centre / Agriculture College</u>

The Council intends to undertake a comprehensive feasibility study into a Skills Centre, and progress according to the results.

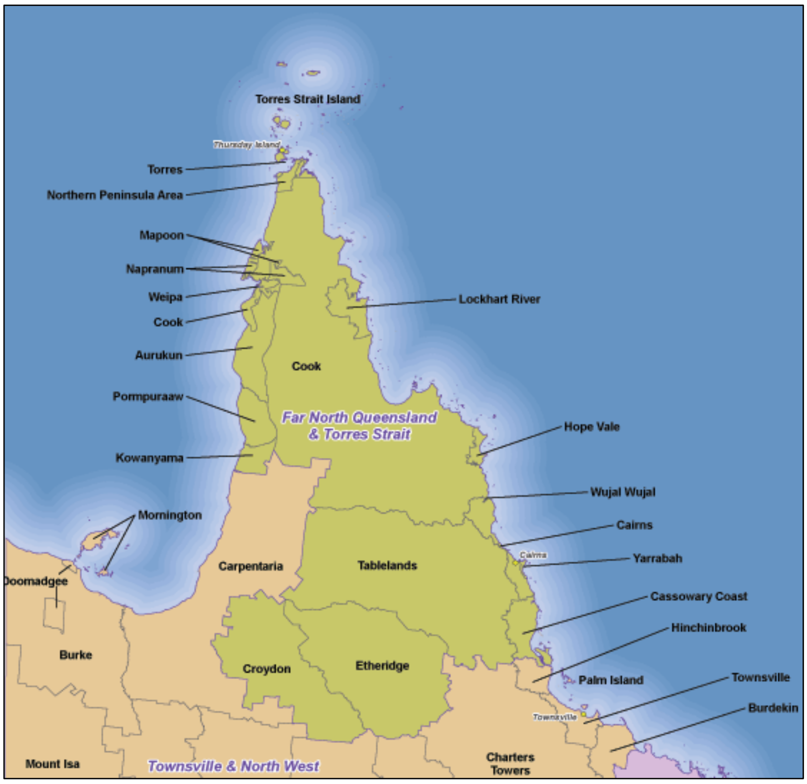
10 Attachment 4: Our Region

1.1 OUR GEOGRAPHICAL PROFILE

Important points to recognise about the region are that:

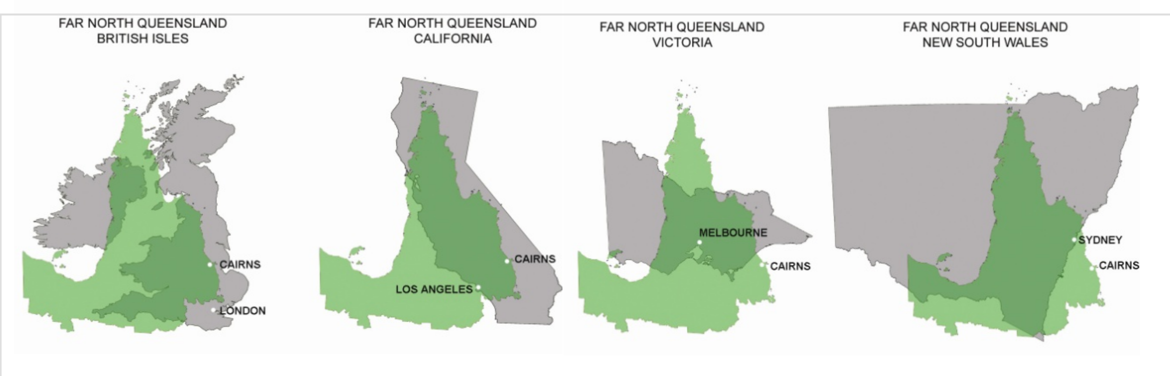
1. The RDA FNQ&TS region covers 19 local government areas in the far north of Queensland (see Map 1). From January 2014, the FNQ&TS region will include 21 local government areas with the addition of Port Douglas Shire and Mareeba Shire.

Map 1 – Regional Development Australia Far North Queensland and Torres Strait region



2. This region covers an area 1½ times the size of Victoria, is equivalent in area to the British Isles and is almost equal to the area of California. In depth, it accounts for half the latitudes of Queensland and is equivalent in latitudinal depth to New South Wales (see **Map 2**).

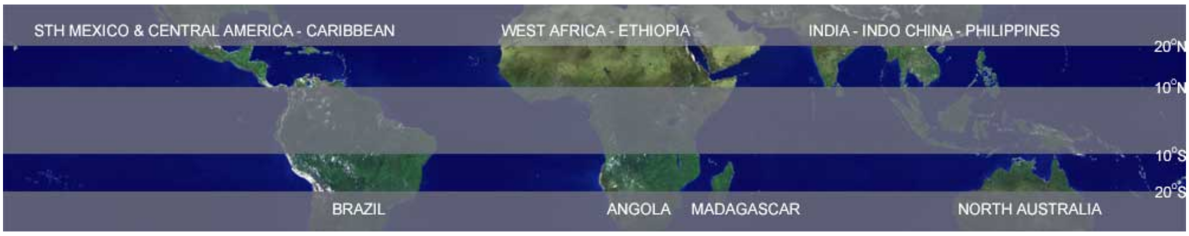
Map 2 – Equivalent Size & Area of Far North QLD & Torres Strait Region



Source: Cummings Economics, September 2010

3. The area is tropical and lies in the same latitudes and shares many climatic attributes with the countries shown in **Map 3.**

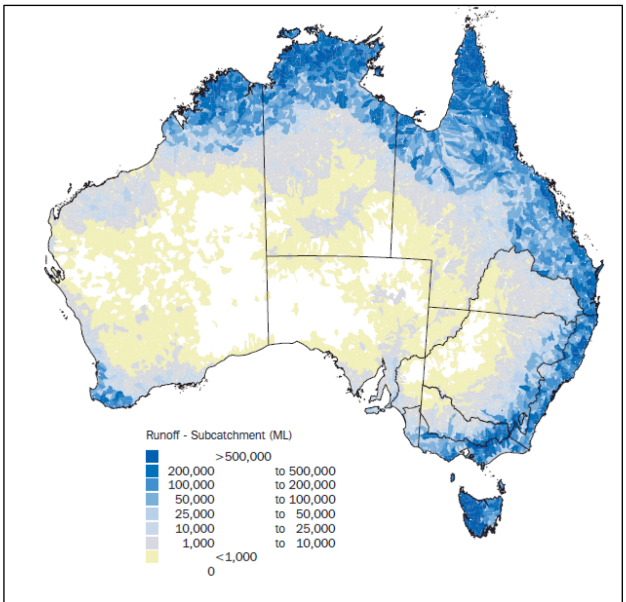
Map 3 – Tropical Zone



Source: Cummings Economics, September 2010

4. The region accounts for 26 per cent of Australia's water runoff[25] (see **Map 4**).

Map 4 – Australia's Mean Annual Run Off[26] 2008

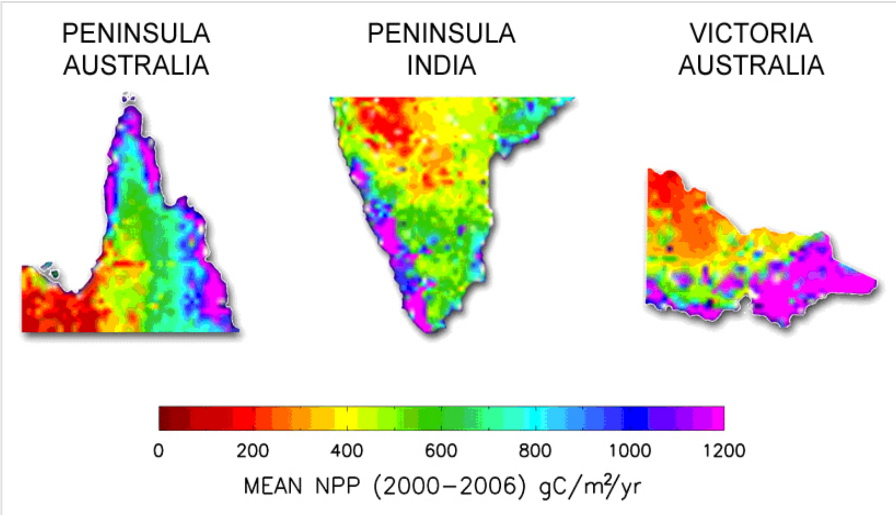


Source: Bureau of Rural Sciences 2008, data available on request, Geoscience Australia 2004.

25 Commonwealth Government, Australian Natural Resources Atlas, Natural Land and Water Resources Audit, 2009
26 Map from Australian Bureau of Statistics, Yearbook Australia, 2009-10 (Cat no. 1301.0)

5. Measures of plant growth indicate that its underlying agricultural potential is equivalent to Victoria and Peninsula India and dominates tropical Australia (see **Map 5**).

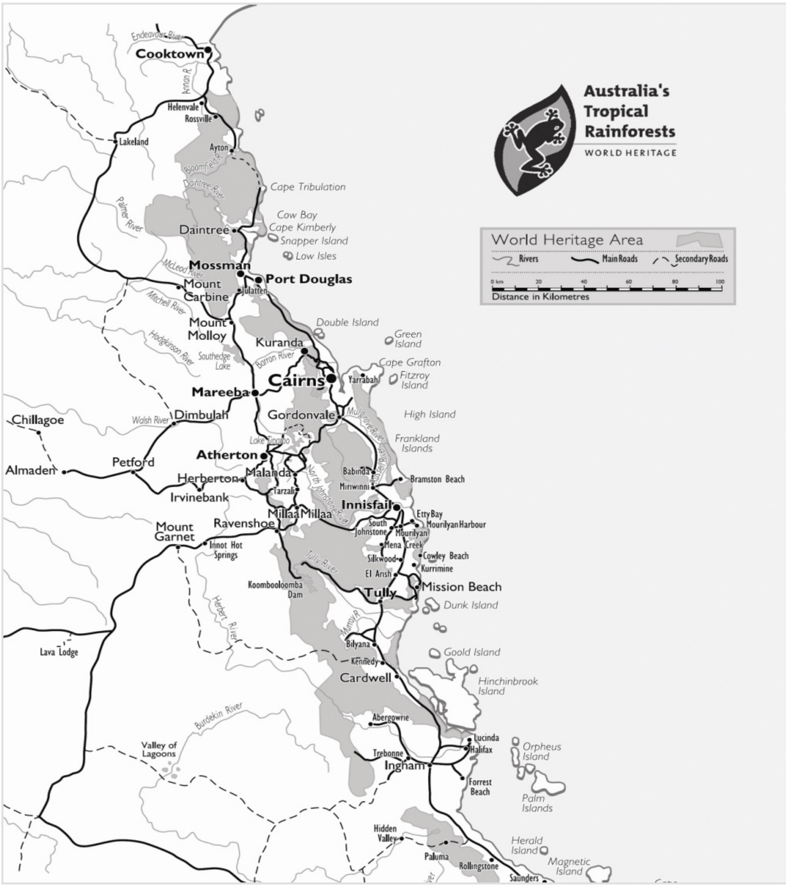
Map 5 – Nett Primary Production



Source: NITC University of Montana from Modis Satellite Data

6. The Wet Tropics area in the region's south-east is probably the area of most prolific plant growth and potential carbon sequestration in Australia. One of Australia's major natural World Heritage areas is located in the region (see **Map 6**) and much of the rest of the region has international biodiversity and cultural values (e.g. Cape York Peninsula).

Map 6 – World Heritage Wet Tropics Areas of Far North Queensland

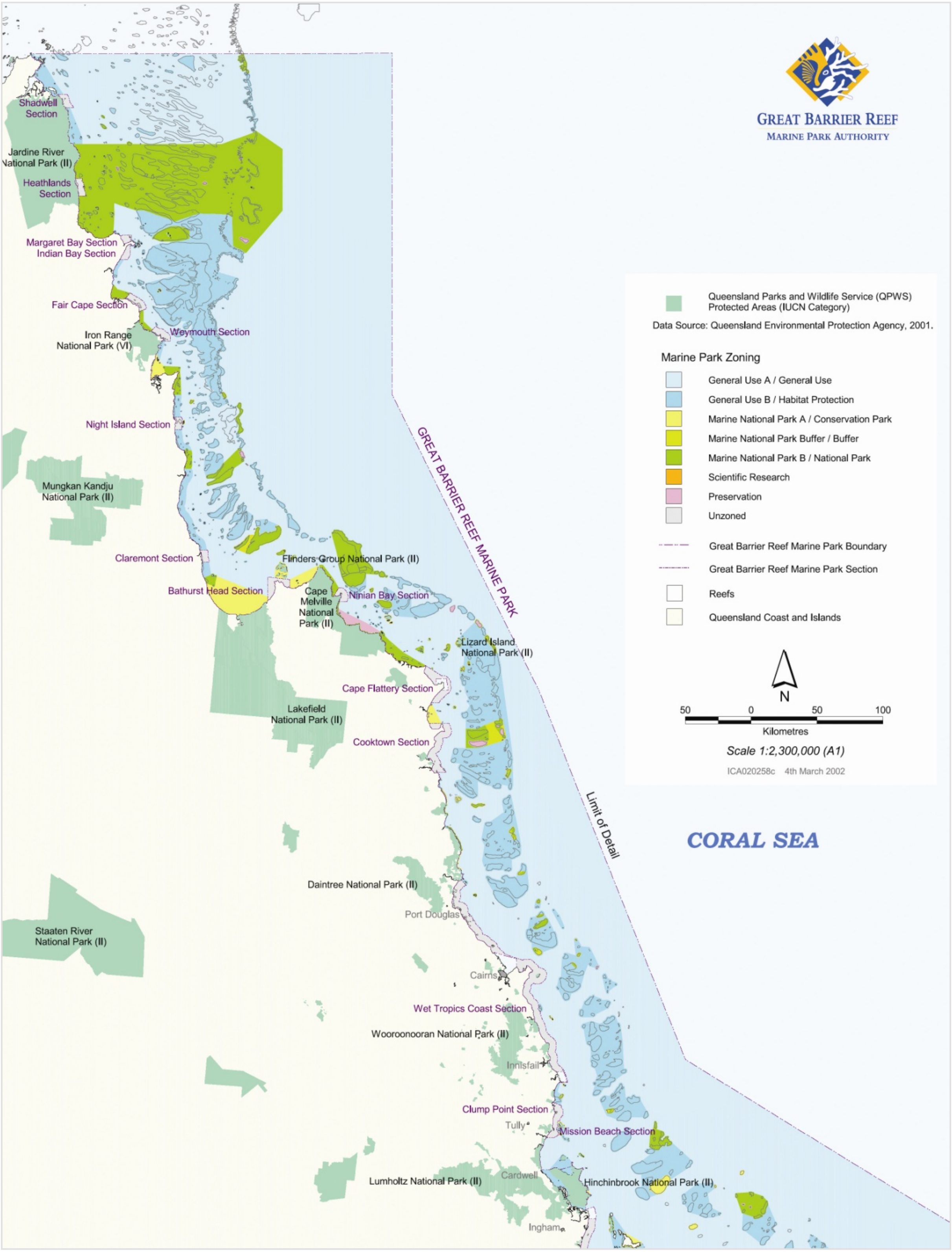


Source: Cairns 2020/2050 Business Research Manual

7. Being part of a major peninsula, no part of the region is more than about 300km from the sea. Our coastline from Cardwell to Cape York, down the region's west coast and across to the Northern Territory border is equivalent in length to the coastline from Brisbane to Adelaide.

8. Along the east coast is the northern half of the Great Barrier Reef and the major part of a second World Heritage area (see **Map 7**). The Torres Strait and shallow waters of the Gulf are rich in marine life and support important fisheries. Both Commonwealth and State governments increasingly acknowledge the role of Traditional Owner groups in sea country management in their areas.

Map 7 - Great Barrier Reef



Source: Cairns 2020/2050 Business Research Manual.

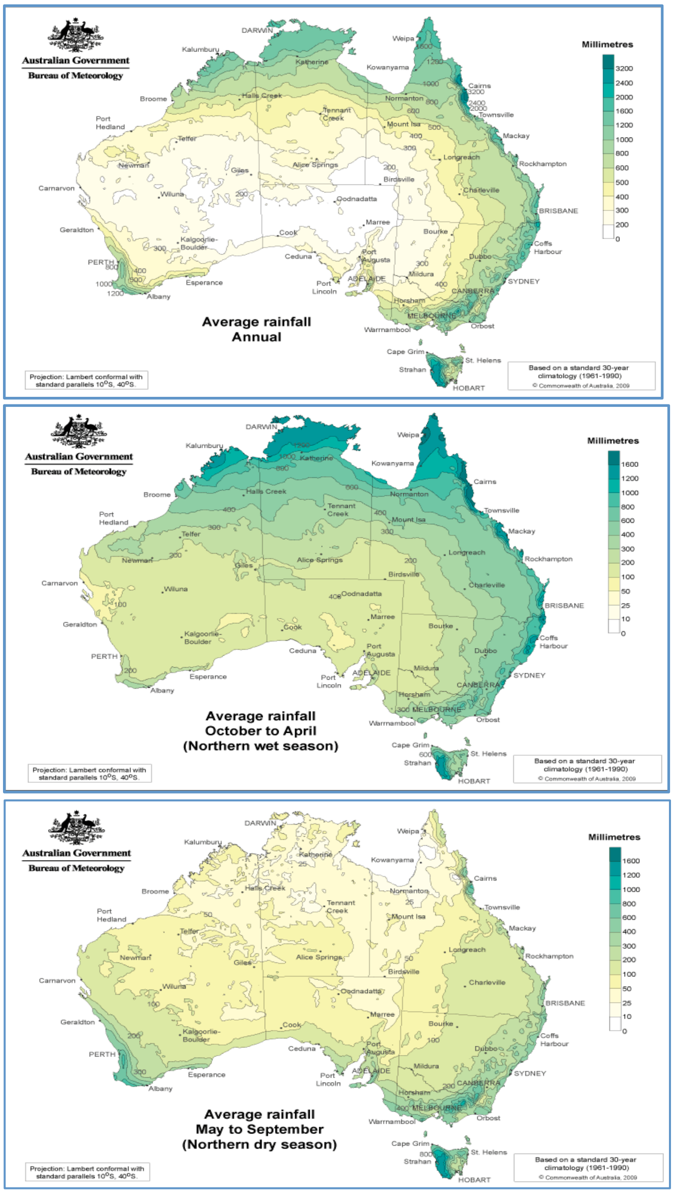
9. Topography of the region and weather patterns result in a wide diversity of micro climates. The whole area experiences a summer monsoon (wet season) November to April (strongest and most regular in the north), followed by a lower rainfall winter and early summer dry season, May to October. We are also one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change in Australia, most significantly due the potential increased frequency of cyclones and sea level rise.

10. Behind the east coast from Cardwell to just south of Cooktown lies coastal ranges, plateaux and the Great Dividing Range, including the highest mountains in Queensland and northern Australia. The angle of the coast to the prevailing winter south-east trade winds and high mountains causes sufficient rainfall to sustain all year round growing conditions and rainforest.

11. The area further north backed by the McIllwraith Range is another area of rainforest and higher rainfall. To the west of the ranges, plateaux and Great Divide lie the great flat plains of the Gulf and the Western Cape.

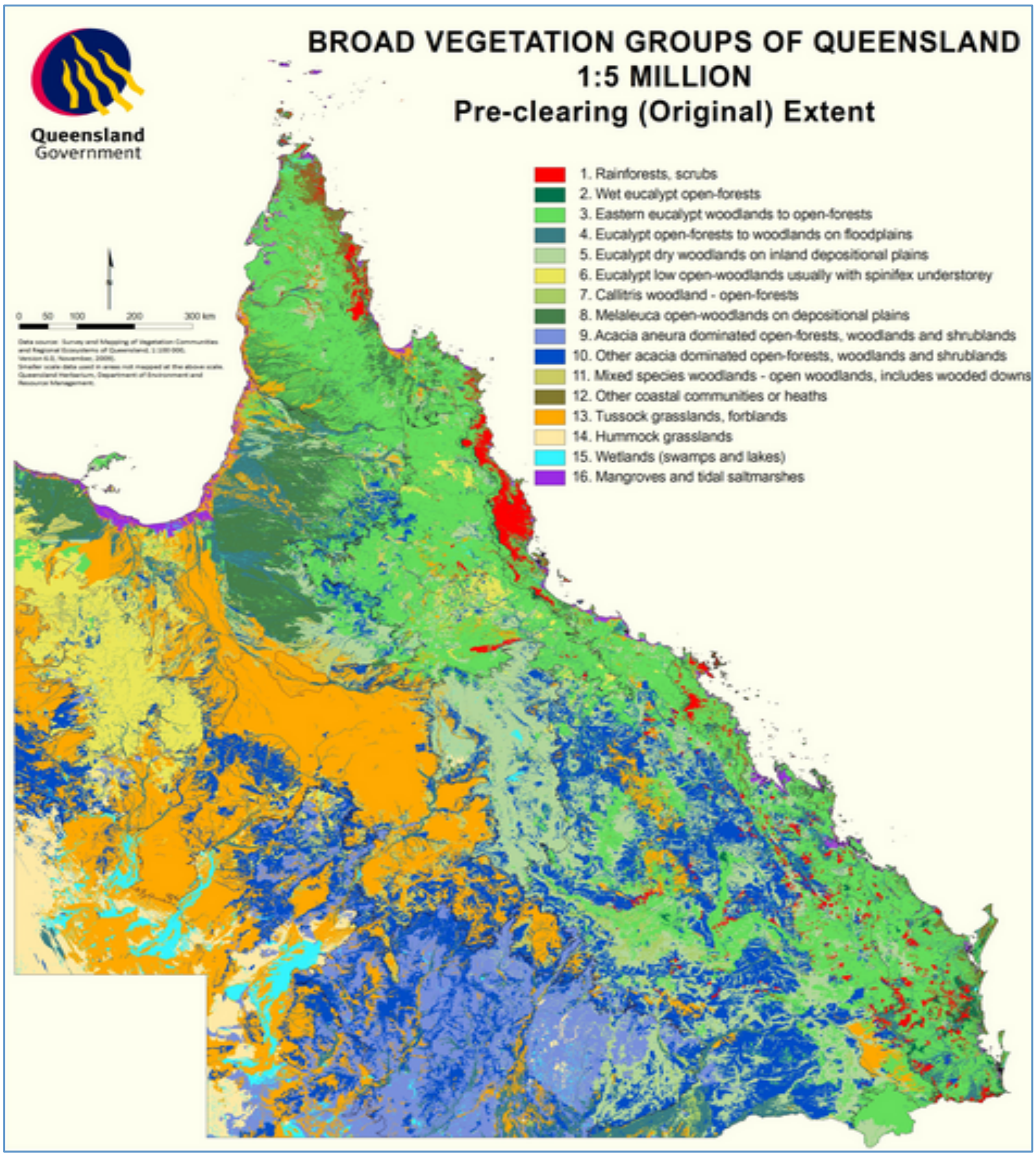
12. **Map 8** shows seasonal rainfall patterns. **Map 9** shows natural vegetation zones.

Map 8 – Average Seasonal Rainfall in Australia



Source: Bureau of Meteorology website

Map 9 – Natural Vegetation Zones in QLD



Source: Department of Environment and Heritage website

13. These natural zones translate into economic zones (see **Map 10**) as follows:

1. <u>Tropical Coast</u>
   Cairns (R)
   Wujal Wujal(S)
   Yarrabah(S)
   Cassowary Coast(R)

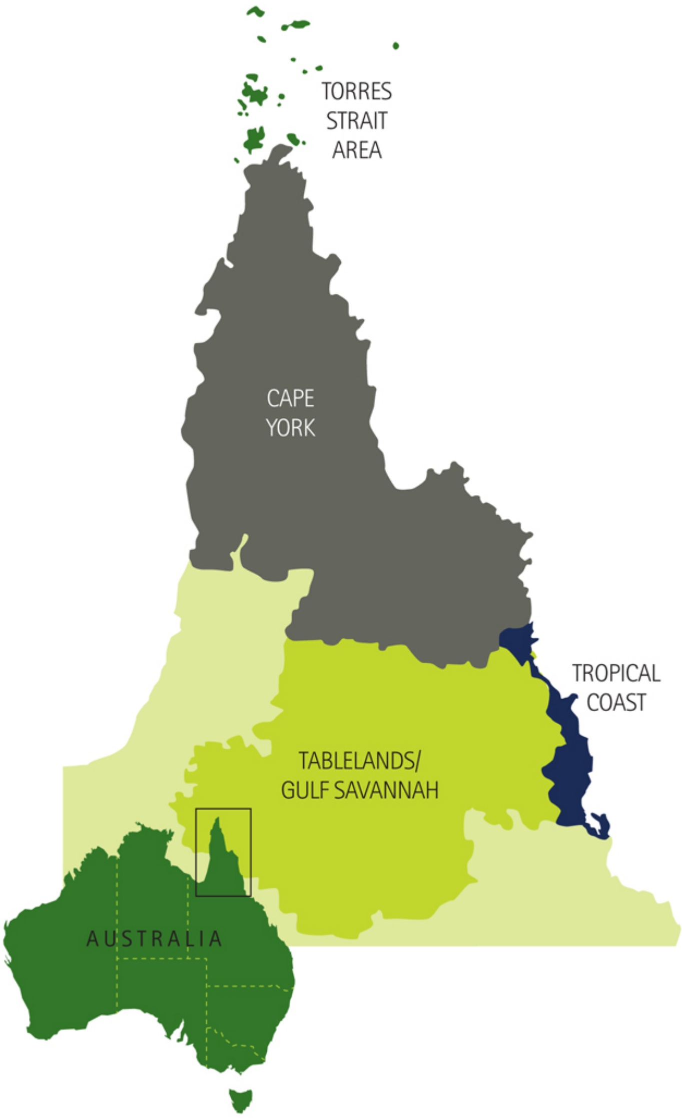
2. <u>Tablelands/Gulf Savannah</u>
   Tablelands (R)
   Croydon (S)
   Etheridge (S)

3. <u>Cape York</u>
   Cook (S)
   Aurukun (S)Hope Vale (S)
   Kowanyama (S)

Hope Vale (S)
Lockhart River (S)
Mapoon (S)
Napranum (S)
Pormpuraaw (S)
Weipa (T)

4. <u>Torres Strait Area</u>
   Northern Peninsula Area (R)
   Torres (S)
   Torres Strait Islands (R)

Map 9 - Far North Queensland Sub-Regions



Source: RDA FNQ&TS

1.2 OUR REGION AS AN INDIGENOUS DOMAIN

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are Traditional Owners across the Torres Strait, Cape, Gulf Savannah, Tropical Tablelands and south-east areas. The RDA FNQ&TS Committee acknowledges the Traditional Owners, the heritage they bring including that shared for all Australians and benefits to be gained by all with Traditional Owners participating in decision making. The Committee considers it particularly important that public entities, land management and culture related bodies, education institutions and tourism networks acknowledge the significance of Indigenous culture in Australia and the region.

There are more than 60 Traditional Owner groups across the FNQ&TS region, with families and Clans observing custodial relationships with country at local levels, Native Title Prescribed Body Corporates and other organisations operating sub-regionally and regionally, and in some cases, cross regional bodies. Without attempting to name all the Traditional Owner groups, a general approach to the region as a Traditional Owner Indigenous domain involves the following framework:

- Torres Strait – four areas and language groups are recognised, being Murulag (Eastern), Kala Lagaw Ya (Central), Meriam Mir (Western) and Kalaw Kawaw Ya (Top Western). There were 7,882 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons in the Torres strait region in 2012 which represented 80.4[27] per cent of the population in that region.

- Cape York – The Cape York languages include, In East Cape York, Kuuku Ya'u, Umpila, Kaanju, Lama Lama and Guugu Yimidhirr amongst others, and in Western Cape Koko Bera, Yir Yoront, Thaayorre, Wik Mungkan, Wik Ngathan, and many more language groups in the top Western Cape. Seventeen communities are generally recognised across Cape York including Kaiwalagal (Kaurareg), New Mapoon, Umagico, Injinoo, Lockhart River, Mapoon, Napranum, Aurukun, Kowanyama, Pormpuraaw, Coen, Port Stewart, Laura, Cooktown, Hope Vale and Wujal Wujal. Approximately 6,596 Indigenous persons live in the Cape york region representing 50.5 per cent of the total population[15].

- Tablelands/Gulf Savannah – In the Southern Gulf the Carpentaria Land Council involves Traditional Owners from nine language groups; the Council's Land and Sea Unit established in 2007 employs over 24 rangers caring for land and sea country based in Mornington Island, Burketown and Normanton. Seven different Indigenous language groups in the Northern Gulf participate in natural resource management through the Northern Gulf Indigenous Savannah Group . Approximately 4,626 Indigenous persons live in the Tablelands Savannah region representing 10.3 [28]per cent of the total population.

- Tropical coast – 18 Rainforest Aboriginal groups are formally recognised involving over 40 organisations. Groups include Bandjin, Djabugay, Djiru, Girramay, Gugu-Badhun, Gulnay, Gunggandji, Jirrbal, Koko Muluridji, Eastern Kuku Yalanji, Mamu, Ngadjon, Nywaigi, Warrgamay, Warungnu, Wulgurukaba, Yidinji and Yirrganydji. There are at least 56 named clans within these groupings. There are 19,575 indigenous persons living in the Tropical coast region or 10.5[16] per cent of the total population.

It is important that we all recognise and value the significance of Australia's Indigenous cultures and peoples and Indigenous heritage for all Australians. It is equally important to embrace the spirit of reconciliation between Indigenous Australians and other Australians and to be inclusive of all groups.

Over 2,000 generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have lived within the FNQ&TS environment. Protocols and ceremonies are fundamental parts of Indigenous cultures. Appropriate cultural engagement seeks to

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[27] Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Indigenous Profile – I03
[28] Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Indigenous Profile – I03

observe protocols and the sharing of cultural practices. Valuing and respecting appropriate Traditional Owner ceremony is significant to increasing the understanding and mutual respect for cultural practices by both Indigenous Australians and the wider community. One of the most fundamental protocols is observing, in its depth, the welcome to country by the respective Traditional Owners. Another protocol, one that is both basic and highly complex, involves respecting the human rights of Indigenous peoples to free, prior and informed consent in matters relating to their lands, waters and cultures.

Due recognition of the Traditional Owners of country assists in developing strong connection to the country for all people, and the basis for partnership relationships with Indigenous communities. It also demonstrates the commitment of the parties to achieving excellence and equity for all. In the context of Traditional Owner cultural and environmental considerations, the RDA FNQ&TS committee acknowledges the multi-dimensional social and economic situations for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the region. There are significant populations in small very remote locations, such as the Outer Islands of Torres Strait, the Cape and small townships in the Gulf. There is a large urban Indigenous population centred around Cairns, and people move between Cairns, Torres Strait, Cape and Gulf communities regularly. The region has many discrete Aboriginal communities, places like Doomadgee, Aurukun and Lockhart River.

1.3 OUR HISTORICAL REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The market-based economic development of the tropical north has always posed immense logistical and climatic challenges. For settlers from north western Europe, the Mediterranean climate of southern Australia posed problems, but by and large the suite of plants and animals they brought with them adapted to the local conditions – sheep, European breeds of cattle, cereals, fruit and vegetables along with refined housing styles, clothing and seasonal customs.

The challenges posed by tropical Australia were extreme. The area was settled by Europeans later than most of southern Australia and Queensland. Cairns was not founded until 1876 (while Sydney was almost 100 years old at the time). As in other areas of Australia, people exploring the country used Aboriginal walking paths and even Aboriginal guides. In time, these paths became bullocky tracks, rough roads and bitumen highways. Invariably there were clashes with Aboriginal people and some of the region's geographical names and publicly acknowledged history allude to the loss of many Aboriginal people and their knowledge, including by disease. The region also has a significant Aboriginal mission and reserve history, and the discrete Aboriginal communities of today are part of that legacy.

Initial European settlement was chequered with episodic failures. Sheep did not prosper outside of the Mitchell Grass plains of the central west. Tick fever from Asia almost wiped out the early cattle herds based on British breeds. Successes with sugar were challenged by restrictive immigration regimes and many tropical diseases remained a problem for the first 50 years of European settlement. Progress was slow and hard won.

In 1941, the region became the forward line of Australia's defence, leading to a significant lift in economic activity and national/international relevance. By 1947, the region had a recorded population of a mere 66,928 and Cairns a population of just over 29,622[29] people.

However, four underlying factors have underpinned the economic growth of the region since that time based on the realisation of the region's plant growth, marine, mineral and natural tourism/liveability potential.

Growth of the global economy has resulted in world markets reaching out for previously underdeveloped resources in the region. The region is close to one of the great global growth areas in north eastern Asia.

Recent transport developments are breaking down previous barriers of remoteness from major markets in southern Australia and overseas. The advent of bulk carriers, improved road transport, and importantly, the development of

[29] Based on amalgamated data for the Cairns (c), Barron (s), Douglas(s) and Mulgrave (s) which at the time included Yarrabah(s). Source: Government Statisticician, Population by local government area, Queensland, 1859 to 2007.

long distance wide bodied jets are enabling growth in mineral resources, tropical fruit markets in southern Australia, and world markets for tourism, including emerging markets in Indigenous-related tourism and the arts.

Technology such as improved plant and animal breeds, fast passenger catamarans and semi-submersibles improving access to the reef, ceiling fans, air conditioning and superior insecticides and detergents has improved everyday living conditions by overcoming some of the disadvantages of living in the tropics.

As infrastructure, industry and population have built up, the region has been able to support higher service levels in education, health, arts, sport and entertainment, making the area a more comfortable place to live and set up business.

By the 1950s, the region still had a narrowly based economy with 60–70 per cent of the value of its base industries earning income from outside the region dependent on sugar (see **Table 4**).

Table 4 – Estimated Gross Value of Production 'Base Industries' in Far North Queensland Statistical Division, 1957 & 2008/09

	1957		2008/09	
	$m	*% of Total*	$m	*% of Total*
Sugar Cane	$33.9 m	*42.2%*	$240 m	*4.1%*
Other Agriculture/Pastoral	$21.6 m	*26.9%*	$890 m	*15.1%*
Total Agriculture	$55.5 m	*69.1%*	$1,120 m	*19.1%*
Mining	$ 1.5 m	*1.9%*	$680 m	*11.5%*
Fishing (see Note [3])	na	*na*	$200 m	*3.4%*
Manufacturing (est Value Added)	$23.3 m	*29.0%*	$850 m	*14.4%*
Tourism	na	*na*	$2,450 m	*41.5%*
Other	na	*na*	$600 m	*10.2%*
Total	$80.3 m	*100.0%*	$5,900 m	*100.0%*

[1] *Note : It should be noted that a number of the figures for 2008/09 are estimates and basis is given below.*
[2] *Note : 'Base Industries' generally refers to those industries earning income from outside the region.*
[3] *Note : For 1957, included in other agriculture.*
Source : Cummings Economics from :
1957 Figures – 1959 Q'ld Year Book.
2008/09 Agriculture – Cummings Economics, ABS & other sources.
2008/09 Mining – Q'ld Department of Mines.
2008/09 Fishing – Estimate from various work carried out by Cummings Economics.
2008/09 Manufacturing – Estimate based on ABS Sales of Goods & Services Figures 2006/07 less Value of Inputs.
2008/09 Tourism – Tourism Research Australia, NVS & IVS overnight visitors.
2008/09 Other – Estimate based on information from other work.

Since then the region has massively expanded its outside earnings. It has expanded its sugar production but developed other agricultural industries that now exceed the value of sugar production by a wide margin. The region has developed major fisheries, expanded mining production and developed tourism to a position of national and international leadership.

The region has developed service industry clusters in maritime and aviation servicing with wider markets and a servicing and defence role in relation to the region's near north, including Indigenous services delivery from Cairns into the wider northern and western regions.

All this has provided the basis for growth of population in the region especially in the city of Cairns (see **Table 5**). From a regional perspective, the Far North Queensland and Torres Strait region is the second fastest growing in northern Queensland **(see Table 6)**.

Table 5 – Comparative Long-Term Growth in Population – QLD's Main Regional Cities, 1981 to 2011.

Table #8: Comparative Long Term Growth in Population, Queensland Regional Cities

City Statistical Sub Division	1981	2011	*% Growth*
Cairns	58,270	146,177	*+150%*
Townsville	96,310	167,626	*+74%*
Mackay	45,880	83,250	*+81%*
Rockhampton	55,620	75,648	*+36%*
Bundaberg	40,800	65,726	*+61%*
Toowoomba	73,040	125,785	*+72%*

Source: Cummings Economics from ABS Estimated Residential Population.

Table 6 - Estimated Resident Population by Regional Development Australia Queensland regions, 2001 and 2012.

	Estimated Resident Population		per centage	annual average
Regional Development Australia Region	2001	2012	change	growth
	—number—		—per cent—	
Far North and Torres Strait	224,163	269,667	16.9	1.7
Townsville and North West	225,126	265,536	15.2	1.5
Fitzroy and Central West	199,541	235,010	15.1	1.5
Mackay/Whitsunday	137,539	175,702	21.7	2.3
Wide Bay Burnett	232,008	282,848	18.0	1.8
Darling Downs and South West	235,963	262,392	10.1	1.0
Sunshine Coast	247,167	322,624	23.4	2.5
Moreton Bay	286,532	399,406	28.3	3.1
Brisbane City	896,649	1,109,664	19.2	2.0
Ipswich and West Moreton	202,668	273,938	26.0	2.8
Logan and Redlands	354,488	438,689	19.2	2.0
Gold Coast	387,102	524,583	26.2	2.8

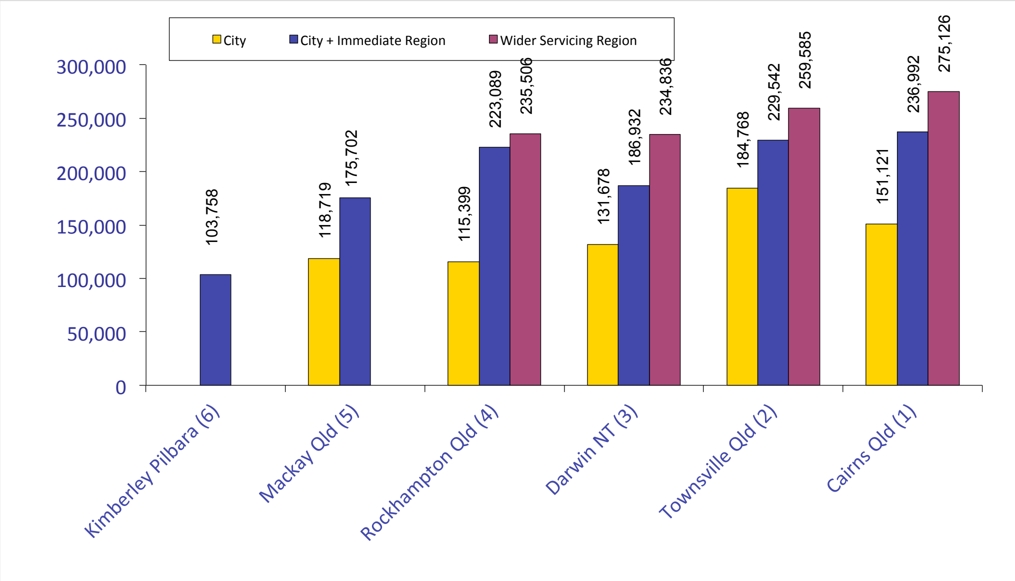
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2011-12, cat. no. 3218.0 and unpublished data.
Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.4 OUR ECONOMIC PROFILE

1.4.1 POPULATION

As at 2012, the population of the wider Cairns and Far North service region had become the largest in northern Australia (see **Figure 1**) and in total census count population, Cairns Local Government Area (LGA) was just ahead of Townsville LGA.

Figure 1 – Estimated Residential Population of Cities & Regional Servicing Areas in Northern Australia, 2012.



Note (1): Cairns defined by Cairns North & South SA3s; Cairns Immediate Region defined as Cairns SA4; Cairns Servicing Region defined as Cairns SA4, plus Outback Far North SA3, Carpentaria SA2.
Note (2): Townsville defined by Townsville SA3; Townsville Immediate Region defined as Townsville SA4; Townsville Servicing Region defined as Townsville SA4, plus Outback North SA3, less Carpentaria SA3.
Note (3): Darwin defined by Darwin SA4; Darwin Immediate Region defined as Darwin SA4 plus Katherine, Arnhem East & West SA3s; Darwin Servicing Region defined as the whole of the Northern Territory.
Note (4): Rockhampton defined by Rockhampton SA3; Rockhampton Immediate Region defined as Fitzroy SA4; Rockhampton Servicing Region defined as Fitzroy SA4 plus Longreach, Barcaldine, Blackall and Far Central West.
Note (5): Mackay defined by Mackay SA3; Mackay Immediate Region defined as Mackay SA4.
Note (6): Kimberley and Pilbara defined by SA3s.
Source: Cummings Economics from ABS data.

In 2012, Cairns C) had a population of approximately 166,000 persons with a average annual growth rate of 1.9 percent. (see **Figure 2**). When compared with other local government areas, it can be seen that Cairns (C) is significantly positioned as a major regional centre in Australia.

Figure 2 –Estimated Residential Population for selected local government areas, 2011-2012.

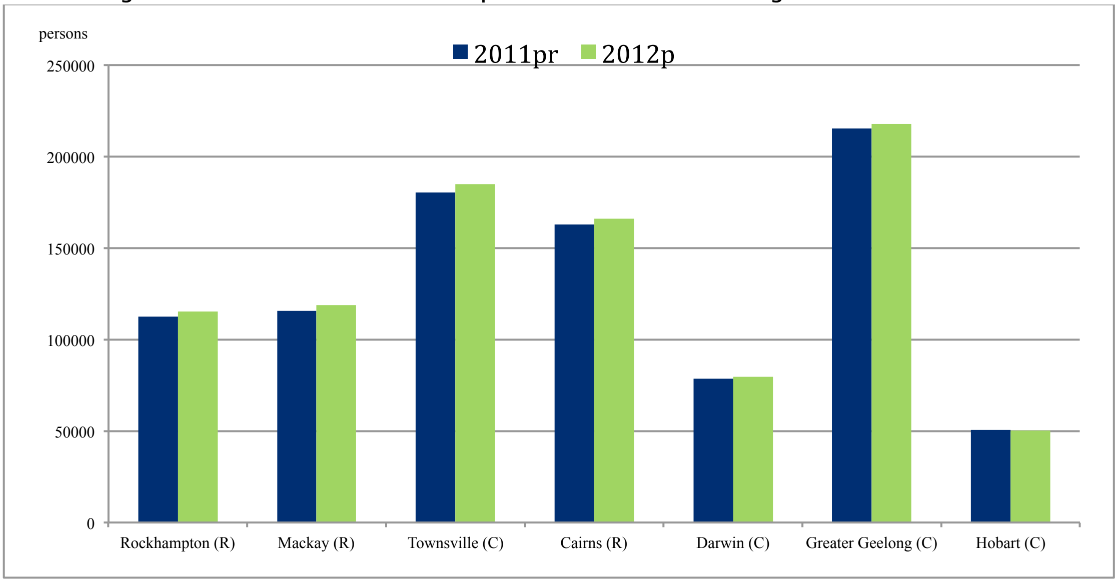


Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)
Pr=preliminary rebased; p = preliminary; (S) = Shire; (R) = Regional; (T) = Town'; .. = not applicable

As neighbouring regional cities, Cairns and Townsville are often compared. Each city influences a larger labour force region. The population in the Cairns region has now surpassed Townsville. While Cairns has approached Townsville in size, some of the key regional facilities are located outside of Cairns, e.g. prison (Tablelands), foundry (Innisfail), meaning that Cairns local government area has remained smaller than Townsville in residential population, but ahead of Townsville in terms of the labour force region (see **Table 7**).

Table 7 - Estimated Resident Population for Cairns and Townsville SA4 regions, 2011-2012

	2011	2012
	—number—	
Cairns[1]	233,565	236,992
Townsville[1]	225,137	229,543

1. Based on Statistical Area 4 boundaries of the 2011 ASGS

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

Comparatively, the Cairns statistical area 4 region shows a large regional population. In 2012, Cairns had a growth rate of only 1.5 per cent which is indicative of the slump in the current economic environment (see **Table 8**).

Table 8 – Estimated Resident Population for selected SA4's, 2011-2012.

	ERP at 30 June		annual average
Statistical Area 4	2011pr	2012p	growth
	—number—		%
Cairns	233,565	236,992	1.5
Townsville	225,137	229,543	2.0
Fitzroy	217,161	223,089	2.7
Mackay	171,297	175,702	2.6
Greater Darwin	129,062	131,678	2.0
Greater Hobart	216,276	216,959	0.3
Geelong	255,686	259,213	1.4

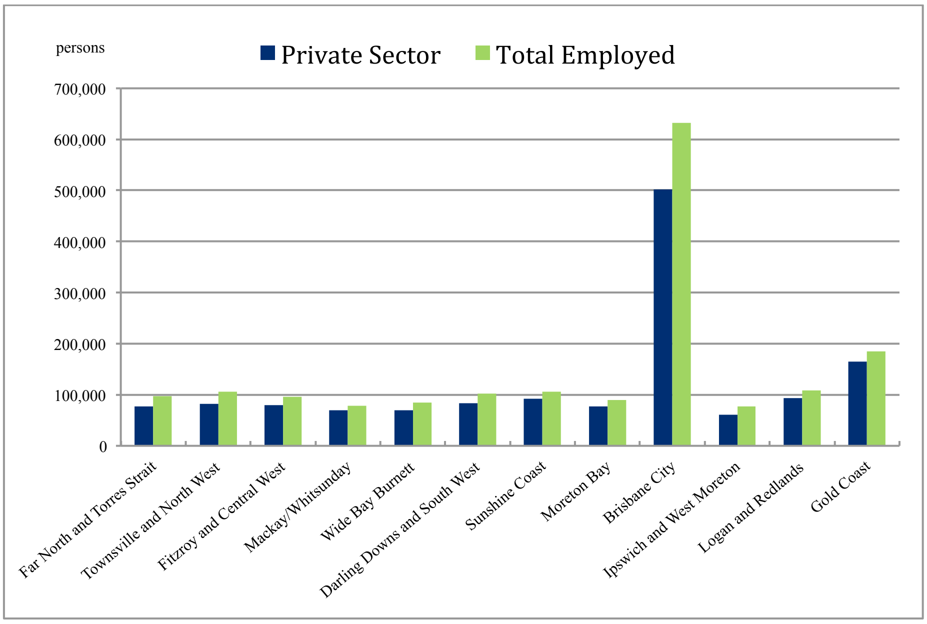
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.4.2 A PRIVATE ENTERPRISE DOMINATED ECONOMY

In the FNQ&TS region, approximately 80 percent of employed persons work in the private sector. **Figure 3** reflects the region's non-government employment in comparison to the other Queensland based Regional Development Australia regions.

Figure 3 – Private sector and total employment by Queensland Regional Development Australia region, 2011.



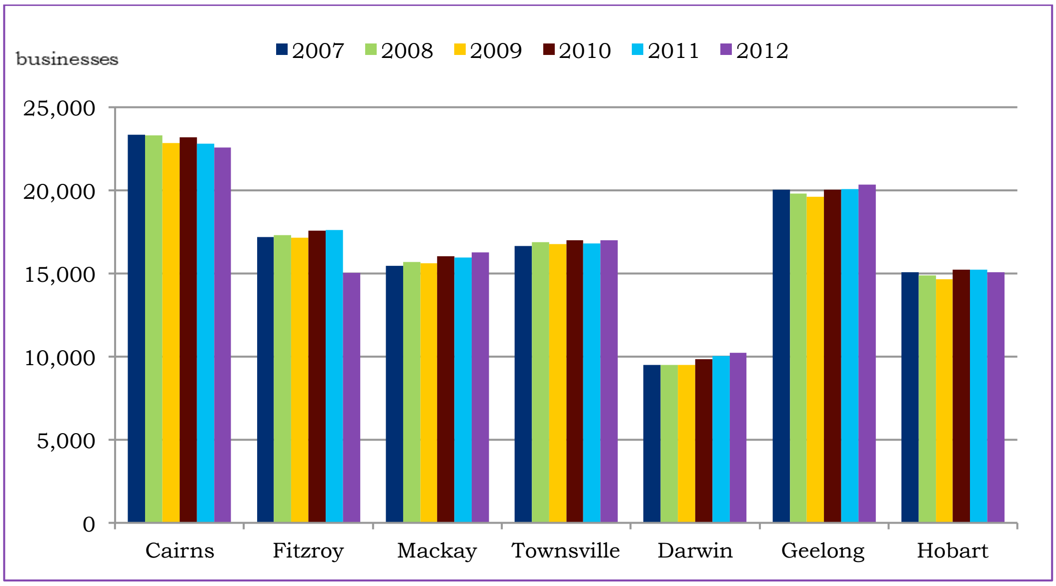
Note: Based on place of work

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Working Population Profile - W15.

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

The FNQ&TS region has a very strong private enterprise orientation and leads tropical Australia in number of businesses. The profile of the number of businesses compared to other regional areas confirms the region's leadership in business activity (see **Figure 4**).

Figure 4 – Number of registered businesses for selected Statistical Area 4s, 2008 to 2011



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, National regional profile, selected SA4 regions, 2007-2011, cat no. 1379.0.55.001 and Australian Bureau of Statistics, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2007 to June 2012, cat. no. 8165.0.

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.4.3 BASE INDUSTRIES

General

The region's base industry sectors (tourism, primary industries and mining), earning income from outside the region, provide the foundation for the region's economy.

Tourism

Tourism has the largest nominal value, with expenditure by visitors staying overnight at $2.17bn in 2013. However, tourism is an industry measured by the customer and not by the product. The $2.17bn covers all visitors travelling more than 40km and staying overnight. It includes local movements within the region and substantial expenditure on non-leisure travel, including business, visiting friends and relatives, employment, education, and health purposes. (Cairns Base Hospital is a major visitor accommodation establishment.)

The region's strength and size in tourism in northern Australia is illustrated by **Table 9** giving visitor numbers by regions.

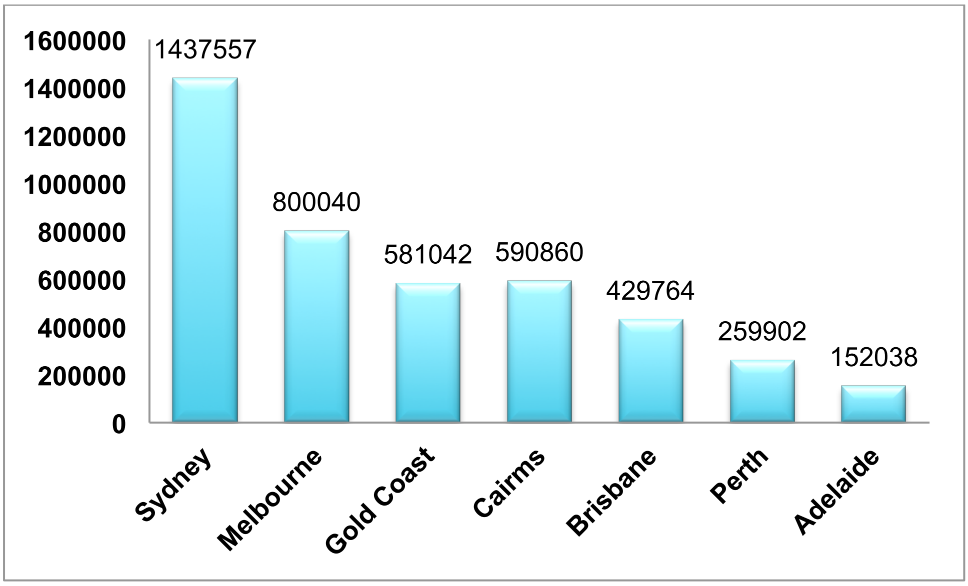
Table 9 - Tropical Australia Comparative Overnight Visitor Numbers, Year Ending Mar Qtr 2013

	Domestic	International	Total
Cairns Region	1,504,000	664,000	2,168,000
Townsville Region	644,000	81,000	725,000
Whitsundays	480,000	163,000	643,000
Mackay	748,000	43,000	791,000
Northern Territory	1,032,000	254,000	1,286,000
Pilbara & Kimberley Region	603,000	67,000	670,000

Source: Tourism Research Australia data.

In international holiday visitors, Cairns region has been competing with Melbourne as the second largest after Sydney in national terms having passed the Gold Coast some time ago (see **Figure 5**) - recording levels higher than the smaller states. Over the last few years, the loss of Japanese flights and other Global Financial Crisis impacts have seen it slip behind Melbourne and back behind the Gold Coast. The second half of 2010 saw expanded flights and then new China flights in 2012, leading to a recovery.

Figure 5 – International Holiday Visitor Numbers, Year Ending Mar Qtr 2013



Source: Tourism Research Australia IVS.

The region's overall strength in tourism is illustrated by the number of visitors compared with metropolitan cities where it is just behind Brisbane and ahead of Adelaide and Perth.

A strength of the region's tourism lies in the diversity of its markets with high visitor numbers from within Queensland and interstate as well as international guests from UK/Europe, North America, Japan and other Asian countries including an increasing number from China.

Tourism in the region is concentrated in the Cairns city area, but there is a long-term trend to expand northward along the coast to the Northern Beaches, Port Douglas and Cape Tribulation with a smaller outlier to the south in the Mission Beach area (see **Table 10**).

Table 10 – Summary of Tourism Accommodation
Tropical North Queensland, 2012

2012(a)	Establishments	Rooms	Persons employed	Room occupancy rate	Average length of stay	Takings from accommodation
	—number—			%	days	$
Clifton Beach - Kewarra Beach	16	995	397	51.0	4.1	30,003,031
Trinity Beach - Smithfield	8	234	33	60.3	5.4	6,955,014
Cairns City	63	5,298	2,230	69.9	3.0	166,958,354
Tully	6	222	112	58.0	1.9	5,943,118
Daintree	4	132	75	36.1	1.9	3,157,957
Port Douglas	39	2,244	1,009	48.1	4.4	62,409,542
Atherton	3	67	13	56.5	2.4	1,311,225
Other SA2s in region	33	1,519	528	55.2	..	37,668,072
Tropical North Queensland (TR)	172	10,710	4397	60.5	3.2	314,406,313

(a) Figures are derived by taking an average of all quarters in 2012. Takings from accommodation is the total takings for the year. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Tourist Accommodation, Small area data, Queensland, March to December Quarters 2012 (Cat No.8653.3.55.001).

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

It is a matter of concern that the region's tourism income has tended to stagnate over the past five years (see **Table 11**), however since the introduction of direct China flights and continued direct flights to Japan, the past 18 months have strengthened.

Table 11 – Tourism Expenditure (overnight visitors), Far North Queensland, Year Ending Mar Qtr 2013

	Domestic $M	International $M	Total $M
2008	1,559	1,033	2,592
2009	1,339	976	2,315
2010	1,791	816	2,607
2011	1,387	755	2,142
2012	1,791	792	2,583
2013 (YE Mar)	1,585	877	2,462

Source: Tourism Research Australia IVS and NVS.

Primary industries

The region is the leading primary industry (agricultural, livestock, fishing and forestry) production area in northern Australia and on a par with the state of Tasmania (see **Table 12**).

Table 12 – Gross Value Agricultural Production Comparison Far North Queensland & Tasmania, 2010/11

	Far North Q'ld	Tasmania
Crops	$649 m	$480 m
Livestock	$362 m	$672 m
Total	$1,011 m	$1,152 m

Source: Cummings Economics from ABS Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced.

A tendency for primary industry to be measured by value of production at farm-gate prices and for on-farm employment only to be measured, tends to grossly understate the importance of the primary industries sector in regional economies.

An analysis by Cummings Economics for the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) Qld, indicates that when post farm-gate activities including processing, transport, merchanting, other value adding and associated education and government sectors are taken into account, direct turnover in the region is over $1.7bn with direct employment of about 9,000 (**Table 13**).

Table 13 – Summary of Primary Industries(1) 2008/2009

	Turnover/Output			
	Far North [2]	North[2]	North West[2]	Total
Pre Farm-Gate	$1,306 m	$791 m	$351 m	$2,448 m
Post Farm-Gate Value Added	$390 m	$386 m	$19 m	$795 m
Associated	$41 m	$43 m	$3 m	$87 m
Total	$1,737 m	$1,220 m	$373 m	$3,330 m
Estimated Employment	9,000	6,800	1,600	17,400

[1] Note: Includes Forestry & Fisheries. [2] Note: Statistical Divisions.
Source: Cummings Economics.

The sector accounts for much of the activity outside of Cairns in the sub-regional economies of the Cassowary Coast, Tablelands and the Einasleigh Uplands.

As with tourism, strength lies in diversity, with over 40 different crops being grown commercially, seven livestock industries, a range of fisheries and three different types of forestry production.

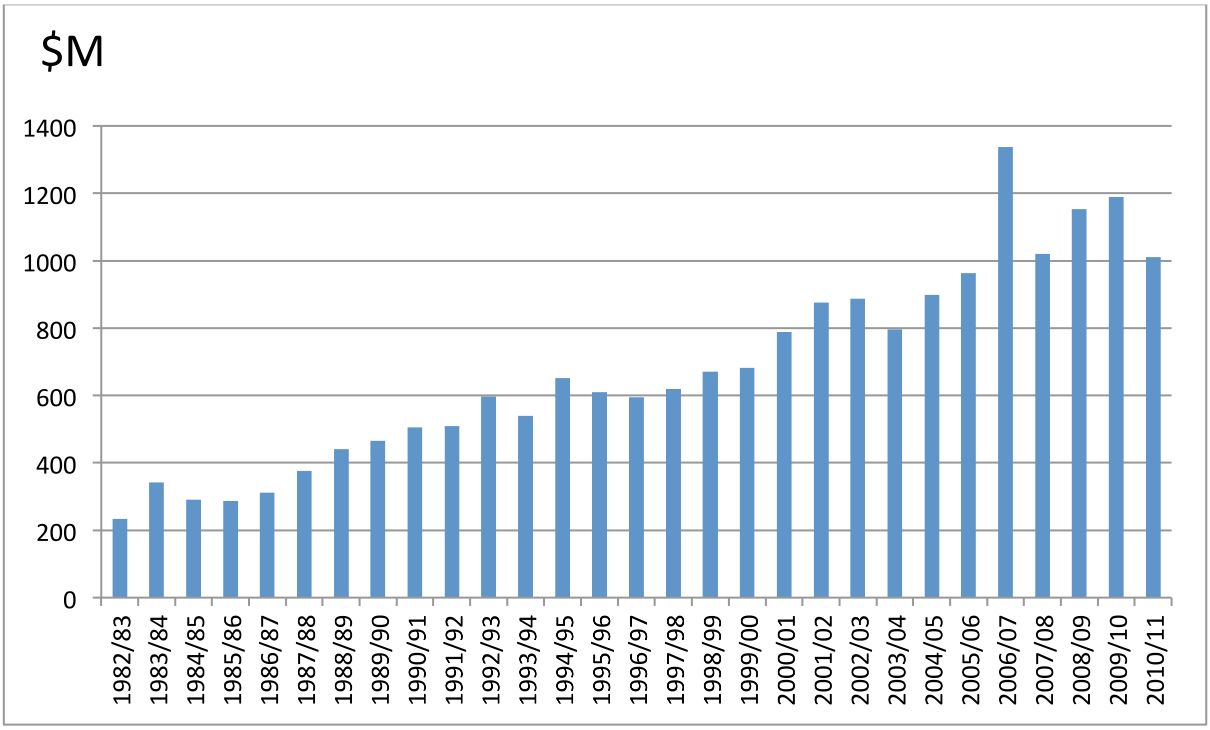
Unlike many other parts of Australia, the agricultural and livestock industries have been a long-term growth factor in the regional economy (see **Figure 6**) with real growth in value of production in the 2 – 3 per cent per annum range (**Table 14**).

Table 14 – Gross Value of Agricultural Production by Type ($M)

Year	Crops				Livestock Products	Livestock Disposals	Total
	Sugar Cane	Fruit	Other	Total	Total	Total	
1982/83	107	27	48	182	17	34	233
1992/93	177	239	81	497	34	66	597
2010/11	197	376	76	649	36	323	1,011
Av An Gwth 1982/83-2010/11	2.2%	9.9%	1.7%	4.6%	2.7%	8.3%	5.4%
Av 'Real' (1) Annual Growth	(-1.6%)	6.1%	(-2.1%)	6.8%	(-1.1%)	4.5%	1.6%

[1] Note: Deflated by Consumer Price Index, Brisbane.
Source: Cummings Economics from ABS Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced.

Figure 6 – Gross Value Agricultural Production, Far North QLD Statistical Division
(Long Term Growth 1982/83 to 2010/11)



Source: Cummings Economics from ABS Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced.

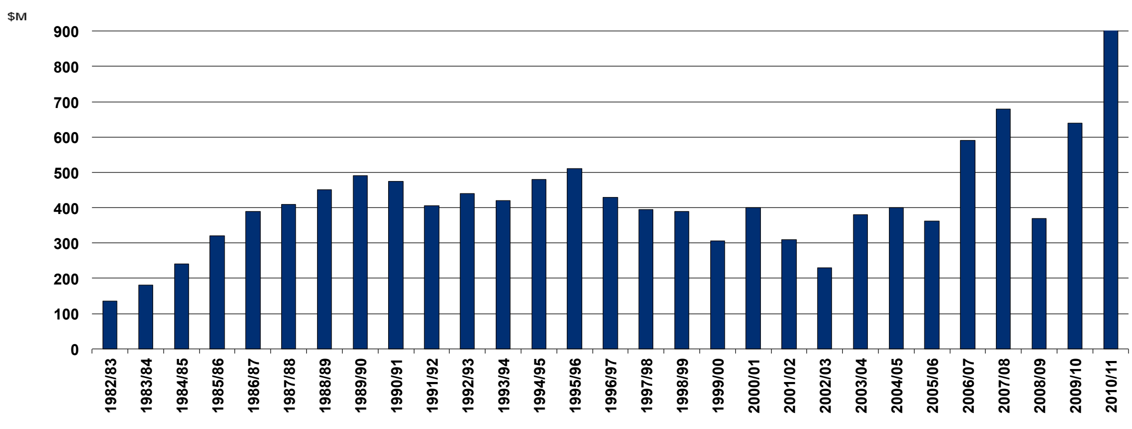
Mining

A range of mineral deposits in the Cairns hinterland played a vital role in the early development of the region's economy and infrastructure, however, mining growth faded after the 1920s.

There was a varied resurgence in the 1970s to 1990s, especially with the development of the sedimentary bauxite and silica deposits in the Peninsula, but the Asian crisis saw value of output fall back to a low of less than $300m in the early 2000s.

High world mineral prices fuelled a resurgence in value of production in more recent years to around $900m by 2010-11 (**Figure 7**).

Figure 7 – Value of Mining Production, 2010/2011 Far North Queensland and Torres Strait region

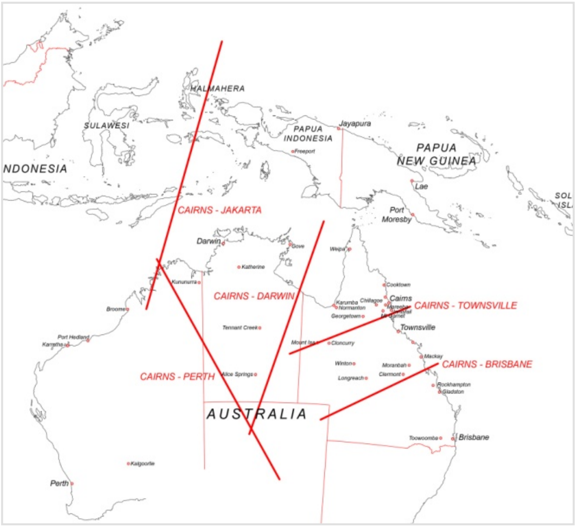


Source: Cummings Economics from QLD Mines & Energy Data

Air services coupled with a trend towards a fly-in/fly-out workforce has led to the sector being more important to the region's economy than has been generally recognised.

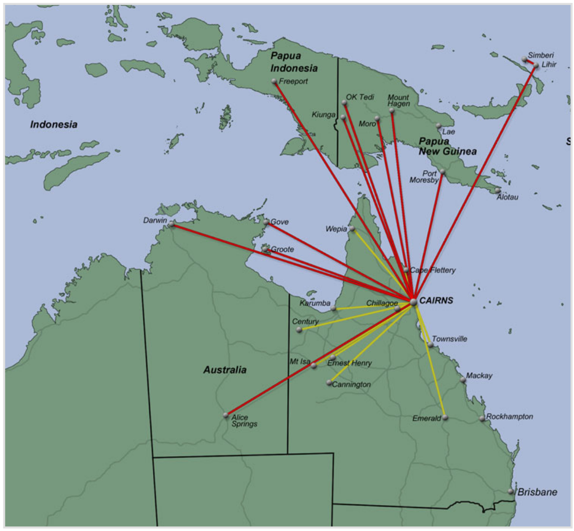
Research in 2010 found that the region's large workforce, Cairns' position as the leading air hub in the north and flying distance advantages (see **Map 11**) have led to the city developing air servicing links to some 18 different mining related centres (see **Map 12**) supporting a fly-in workforce estimated at about 1,900, taking the mining related workforce in the region to over 3,000 (see **Table 15**).

Map 10 – Lines of Equal Flying Distance



Source: Cummings Economics

Map 11 – Mining-Related & Other Relevant Air Services



Source: Cummings Economics

Table 15 – Estimated Workforce Involved in Mining in Far North Queensland, 2009/10

		Estimate	
Estimated residential mining workforce in the region		1,150	} 1,300
Estimated workforce flying into mines in the region		150	
Estimated workforce flying in to mines outside the region		1,500	
North West Queensland	700		
PNG and NT	800		
Estimated equivalent full time workforce for construction and maintenance operations at mines		500	
Total		3,300	

Source: Cummings Economics from industry information.

Approximately three ships a week leave the port of Cairns, as estimated by Cummings Economics from industry information, to be carrying in the order of $300m per annum in cargo to service mines in Papua Indonesia and the Peninsula.

Trends and prospects in this sector are also discussed further in **the Regional Profile section.**

1.4.4 THE CLASSIC MARINE AND AVIATION SERVICING CLUSTERS

A large fleet of small vessels in the region (fishing, tourism and trading), together with Cairns' role as one of the Australian Navy's four operational bases, has led to the development of a maritime servicing and shipbuilding sector in Cairns that includes three slipways and a newly developed marine training facility.

Research in 2009 indicated the region leads the north in employment (see **Table 16**); this figure excludes the Gulf area captured in the Townsville and North West figures where a portion of employment in this region is conncted to the Far North and Torres Strait region. New statistical definitions exclude the 'Reef Fleet' and defence elements. Turnover value of the marine sector is about $800m (see **Table 17**).

Table 16 – Employment in Maritime Industries by selected regions, 2011

Marine Industry	Far North and Torres Strait	Townsville and North West	Fitzroy and Central West	Mackay/Whitsunday	Wide Bay Burnett
			—number—		
Boatbuilding and Repair Services	169	59	40	92	112
Fish Trawling, Seining and Netting	4	3	0	4	14
Fishing, nfd	17	15	15	13	38
Line Fishing	3	0	7	6	0
Other Fishing	10	3	3	3	6
Other Water Transport Support Services	295	62	172	114	37
Port and Water Transport Terminal Operations	76	125	415	408	16
Prawn Fishing	53	14	5	3	40
Rock Lobster and Crab Potting	36	15	10	3	13
Shipbuilding and Repair Services	175	39	33	19	6
Stevedoring Services	5	111	65	10	0
Water Freight Transport	78	27	32	21	18
Water Passenger Transport	34	25	13	49	0
Water Transport Support Services, nfd	4	3	4	0	3
Water Transport, nfd	95	51	39	57	22
Total	1,054	552	853	802	325

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Basic Community Profile – Tablebuilder

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

Table 17 – Estimated Turnover & Employment Marine Services Sector Far North QLD 2007/2008

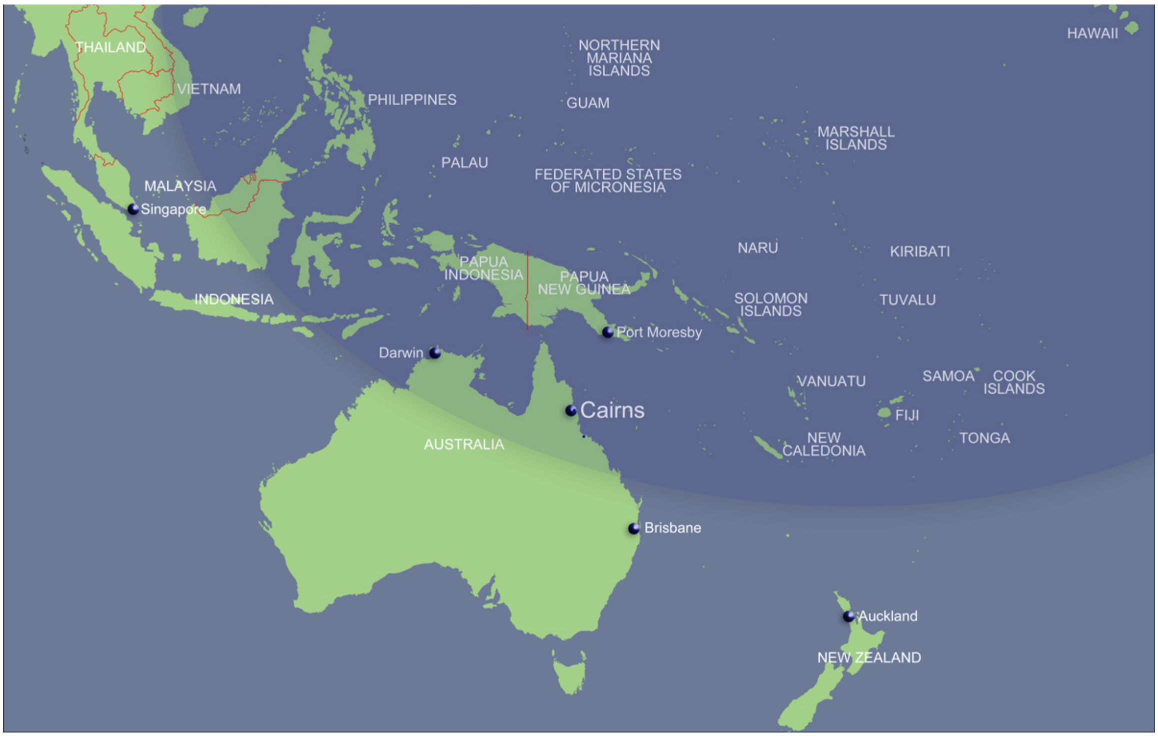
	Est Turnover	Est Employment
Fishing Commercial & Recreation	$200 m	900
Trading & Other Work Vessels	$75 m	360
Reef Fleet & Tourism	$190 m	750
Government, Navy & Pilot Vessels	$146 m	960
Slipways Repair & Maintenance	$105 m	700
Other Marine Industry Services	$122 m	620
Total Far North	$838 m	4,290

Source: Cummings Economics' FNQ Marine Industries Capability Study, 2008.

Marine services markets extend into the Pacific (see **Map 13**) due to a lack of land transport infrastructure in the Cape and Cairns' strategic position in relation to Papua Indonesia. This has led to the region having the north's leading fleet of coastal trading vessels, with Seaswift and Perkins on weekly cycles to the Torres Strait, Weipa and Freeport Indonesia, shipping over $260m worth of goods a year on a 10-day cycle to Amamapare in Papua Indonesia.

However, there is currently no direct international shipping services to PNG or Asia. The deficiencies in port infrastructure in Cairns and Mourilyan and other ports to meet regional needs is a matter covered further in the Regional Connectivity Strategic Priority Package.

Map 12 – Marine Services Market & Major Competitor Centres



Source: Cummings Economics

More recently, a large regional and general aviation sector has led to the development of an aviation servicing cluster including aircraft maintenance and training at Cairns with an estimated turnover of $322 million[30], again with markets stretching up into PNG and the Pacific. There are over 1,000 people employed in the sector (see **Table 18**). There were 780 persons who were members of the Defence forces (including civilian support personnel) in the region at the time of the 2011 Census.

Table 18 – Estimated Employment in the Aviation Sector 2011

Far North Queensland and Torres Strait region (a)	2011
	persons
Aircraft Manufacturing and Repair Services	221
Air and Space Transport	1,003
Airport Operations and Other Air Transport Support Services	238
Total Aviation	**1,462**

(a) Based on Place of Work

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Tablebuilder

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.4.5 KEY INFRASTRUCTURE

Transport infrastructure and services

The region's size and remoteness from major markets means that transport infrastructure and services play a major role in the economy.

[30] *Cummings Economics from Cairns Regional Aviation, Capability Profile, Economic Associates 2008*

A number of factors have resulted in Cairns airport developing as the leading hub airport in the north and Australia's major north-eastern gateway (**Table 19**).

Table 19 – Total Passenger and Freight movements at selected airports, 2012.

Australian Port	Domestic	Regional	International	Total	International Freight
		—passengers—			tonnes
Cairns	3,190,842	378,443	511,359	4,080,644	5,305
Darwin	1,436,167	175,911	328,714	1,940,792	296
Gold Coast	4,844,830	10,055	824,424	5,679,309	6,240
Brisbane	15,160,727	1,440,622	4,483,409	21,084,758	103,091
Adelaide	5,853,643	563,172	650,077	7,066,892	19,327
Melbourne	21,428,570	669,780	6,819,242	28,917,592	238,096
Perth	8,371,853	627,718	3,618,768	12,618,339	79,426
Sydney	22,652,282	1,986,595	12,372,246	37,011,123	418,242
Mackay	928,850	197,393	0	1,126,243	0
Townsville	1,310,084	299,662	0	1,609,746	0
Rockhampton	477,646	262,831	0	740,477	0

Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics, Airport Traffic Data, May 2013.

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

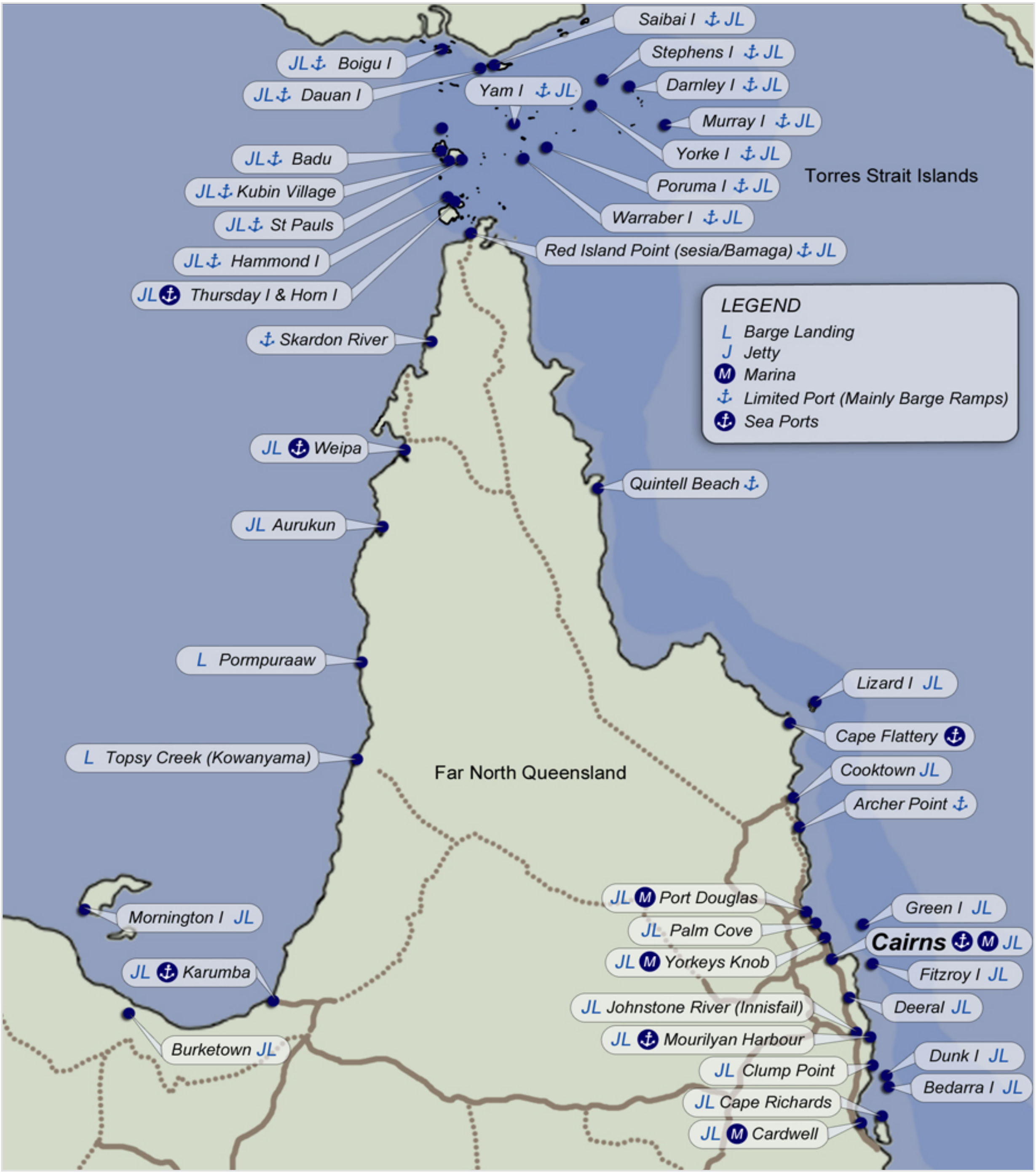
Cairns airport has direct links to all Australian metropolitan centres including Darwin and Alice Springs, as well as regional links within the north, and nearby Papua New Guinea and Papua Indonesia. There are also overseas links with Auckland, Guam, Tokyo, Osaka, Hong Kong, Singapore (via Darwin), Shanghai and Guangzhou.

In terms of overseas air links, Cairns is roughly on a par with Adelaide and Perth, especially if the links with PNG and Papua Indonesia are taken into account. This is important for the development of a wide range of air transport related activities including tourism, education, sports tourism, international events, mining fly-in, and corporate offices.

Apart from international and domestic aviation links however, Cairns also leads in regional services. One of the reasons for this is the poor land transport infrastructure in the region, especially into the Cape.

The region's peninsula geography has led to it having five significant bulk sea ports – Mourilyan and Cairns for sugar, and Cape Flattery, Weipa and Karumba for minerals, with over 40 seaports and significant landings in the area (see **Map 14**).

Map 13 – Sea Ports, Marinas and Landings in Far North Queensland



Source: Cummings Economics' FNQ Marine Industries Capability Profile, 2008

With its large operational fishing, tourism, trading, work and naval fleet, Cairns seaport is one of Australia's busiest ports in terms of vessel movements.

Overseas exports through the region's ports exceeds 12 million tonnes (given that Karumba port is associated with the Far North Queensland and Torres Strait region and is administered by Ports North from Cairns). Weipa port, with just over 11 million tonnes, has the highest throughput of all the ports in the FNQ&TS region. (see **Table 20**).

Table 20 – Overseas exports by port, value and volume, Queensland, 2011–12

Shipping ports	2011–12	
	– tonnes –	– $'000 –
Cairns	218,294	290,920
Cape Flattery	–	–
Innisfail	454,402	189,670
Weipa	11,218,365	268,926
Thursday Island	2	78
Far North Queensland and Torres Strait Total	11,891,063	749,594
Karumba	595,076	414,492
Lucinda	–	–
Townsville	5,744,519	6,992,707
Townsville and North West Total	6,339,595	7,407,200
Abbot Point	13,573,918	1,924,015
Hay Point	83,299,976	18,055,433
Mackay	960,596	443,781
Mackay/Whitsunday Total	97,834,490	20,423,229
Rockhampton	–	–
Gladstone	62,769,353	12,086,343
Fitzroy and Central West Total	62,769,353	12,086,343
Bundaberg	103,158	70,079
Brisbane	16,095,215	12,234,460
Other shipping ports	1,781,896	33,316

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Foreign Trade (unpublished data) from Government Statistician

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

There are large deficiencies in the region's road infrastructure.

With over 400,000 tonnes of primary produce carried to southern markets per annum, the region has developed significant local road transport (see **Table 21**). The Bruce Highway to the south is a major national route capable of handling B-double trucks.

Table 21 – Estimated Value of Road Transport Operations Carrying Fruit & Vegetables from Far North Qld, 2008/2009

Estimated Value	Estimated Employment
$62 M	**505**

Source: Cummings Economics from industry information.

While the roads in the region's south east corner are extensive and sealed, there are major constraints to road freight movements between the major coastal regional centres and ports and the hinterland. The main Kuranda Range route cannot take B-double size trucks, but they are allowed on the Palmerston and concessionally on the Rex Range Road. Road trains are constrained to areas north and west of Mareeba and west of Mt Garnet.

The road to Normanton and Karumba is sealed, but narrow in places. However, the route across from the Gulf to Boorooloola in the Northern Territory is unsealed. There is a sealed route from the Tablelands via Charters Towers to the south, but the direct inland route due south to Melbourne via Charleville, Cobar and Griffiths is constrained by a 160km unsealed section from the Lynd to Hughenden.

Recent sealing of the route from the Tablelands through to Cooktown and to Laura has had significant benefits for the development of tourism and agriculture in that district. But the Cape, covering an area approaching the size of Victoria, is serviced only by an unsealed road that can remain closed during the wet season for four to six months of the year, forcing all transport of freight and passengers to go by ship or air.

The region's rail network suffers from even worse deficiencies. The north coast line from Townsville to Cairns is substandard with restricted speeds, leading to an 8-hour journey for freight trains.

The interior line is heavily used for scenic tourism tours to Kuranda but freight is severely restricted and large sections west of Mareeba are now unused.

Road and rail deficiencies are mentioned further in **Regional Connectivity Strategic Priority Package.**

Electricity infrastructure and services

The region has grown from being a net exporter of electricity (from its hydro electricity stations on the Barron and Tully Rivers) to being a major importer of coal based electricity from central Queensland.

While the grid extends west into the Gulf and north to Cooktown, the Cape area is not connected to the grid with centres serviced by expensive diesel generators.

There are wind generators near Ravenshoe and more are proposed for the Tablelands and Cooktown area.

Communication

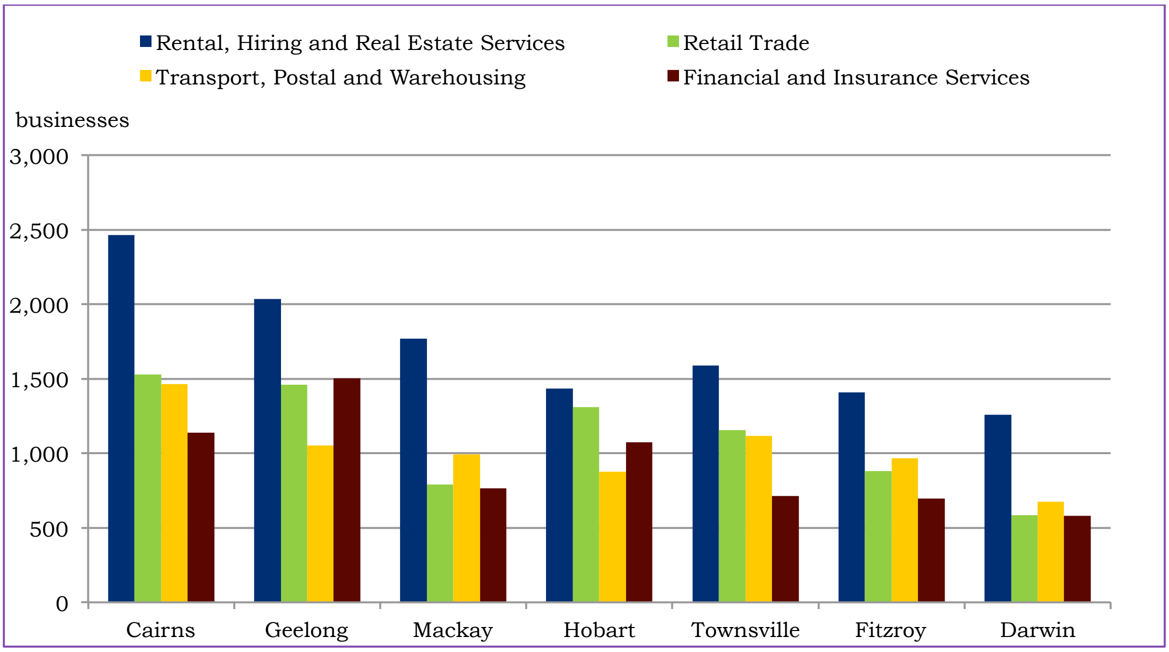
Fibre optic cable links Cairns to the south. Given relatively small populations in the Gulf, Peninsula and Torres Strait areas, Telstra have performed well in extending communication networks through those areas. The National Broadband Network roll-out has commenced delivery in Cairns suburbs, Northern beaches and parts of the Tablelands. By 2016, all of Far North Queensland will be linked through high-speed fibre optic cable, fixed wireless or satellite communications technology.

1.4.6 COMMERCIAL SERVICES

The region is well provided with commercial services commensurate with its population, with Cairns as the major hub. **Figure 7** and **Figure 8** show comparative employment in retailing, financial and other business services across the northern region and other regional centres, illustrating the Far North's leading position.

Figure 8 – Businesses in Financial and insurance services, Rental, hiring & real estate, Transport postal and warehousing, and Retail trade industries for selected regional centres[31], 2011-2012

[31] Based on SA4 boundaries



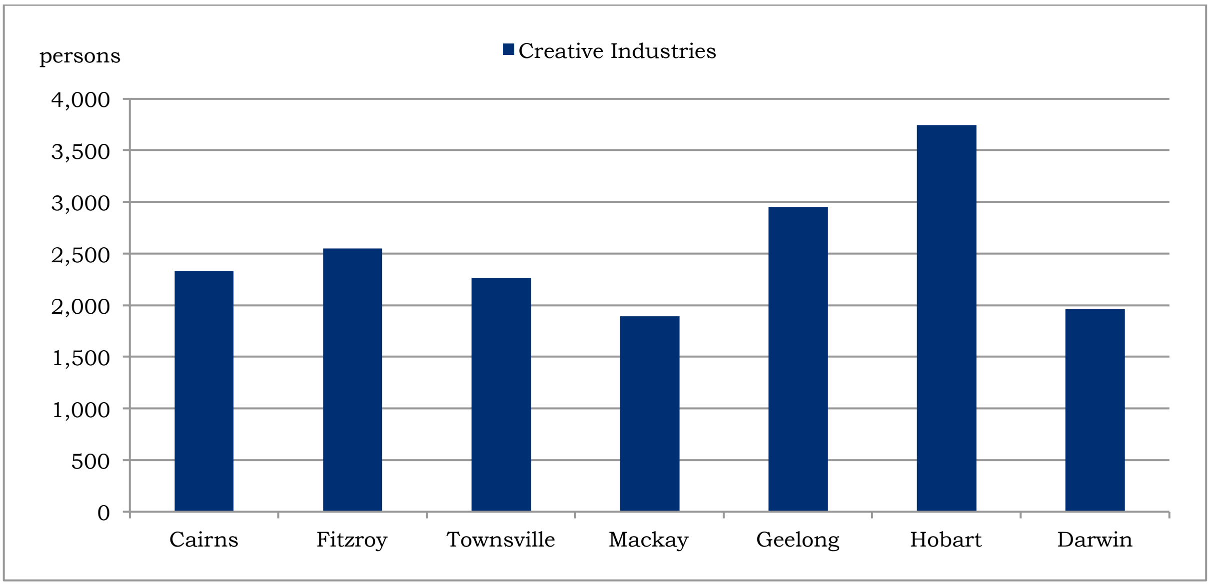
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2007 to June 2012, cat. no. 8165.0.

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

The Cairns Weekend Post has the biggest circulation of the north's daily newspapers. The region has good representation of both ABC and SBS and free-to-air television and numerous public, community and commercial readio stations.

Creative industries is an emerging sector of the regional economy with employment numbers at the time of the 2011 Census greater than those for Townsville, Mackay and Darwin **(Figure 9).**

Figure 9 – Persons employed in Creative Industries for selected regional centres[32]



[32] Based on SA4 boundaries

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Place of Work profile, Tablebuilder

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.4.7 GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Defence

While the area does not have the defence population of Townsville and Darwin, the location of the Navy base in Cairns and the 51st Bn Northern Surveillance Unit (approximately 780 persons who were members of the Defence forces (including civilian support personnel at the time of the 2011 Census), coupled with Cairns Airport serving as the base for air surveillance in Australia's north east means that defence and surveillance employment is quite high in regional terms.

In addition Cairns airport, seaport and the Torres Strait have significant employment in immigration, customs, AQIS and Federal Police services. Total employment in the defence, surveillance and security services is probably in the order of 2,000.

Education and health

Growth of the region's population has outstripped the provision of education and health services, especially at higher levels.

Table 22 illustrates the low relative employment in these two sectors. Despite servicing a larger population than either Townsville or Darwin hospitals, plus servicing a large Indigenous population and demand from PNG, Cairns Base Hospital has not been treated as a tertiary centre.

Table 22 – Employment in Health care and social assistance, selected regional centres and Queensland, 2011

	Employed in Health care and social assistance	Total Population[1]	Percentage working in Health care and social assistance
	— persons —		%
Cairns (R)	9,228	74,504	12.4
Townsville (C)	10,904	87,017	12.5
Bundaberg (R)	4,969	34,012	14.6
Ipswich (C)	9,078	74,810	12.1
Toowoomba (R)	9,367	68,828	13.6
Rockhampton (R)	6,369	49,839	12.8
Mackay (R)	4,979	57,342	8.7
Moreton Bay (R)	22,245	174,488	12.7
Sunshine Coast (R)	18,005	135,070	13.3
Gold Coast (C)	25,685	231,646	11.1
Logan (C)	13,475	127,307	10.6
Brisbane (C)	69,792	540,386	12.9
Queensland	**242,559**	**2,039,275**	**11.9**

(S) = Shire *(R) = Regional*

1. Count of employed persons aged 15 years and over based on place of usual residence.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Basic Community Profile - B43.

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

Table 23 illustrates employment in the education and training industry in the FNQ&TS region. The dispersed nature of the region places a high demand for educational services with deficiencies particularly evident in the higher education sector. Current James Cook University Cairns Campus student numbers of about 4,000[33] is about half of regional university averages in relation to population. By contrast, private sector English language schools, vocational and study tour business has made Cairns the largest region for this type of activity outside the metropolitan centres and the Gold Coast.

Table 23 – Employment in Education and Training, selected regional centres and Queensland, 2011

	Employed in Education and Training	Total Population[1]	Percentage working in Education and Training
	— persons —		%
Cairns (R)	5,831	74,504	7.8
Townsville (C)	7,012	87,017	8.1
Bundaberg (R)	2,732	34,012	8.0
Ipswich (C)	5,186	74,810	6.9
Toowoomba (R)	6,825	68,828	9.9
Rockhampton (R)	4,464	49,839	9.0
Mackay (R)	3,315	57,342	5.8
Moreton Bay (R)	12,115	174,488	6.9
Sunshine Coast (R)	10,956	135,070	8.1
Gold Coast (C)	16,466	231,646	7.1
Logan (C)	8,175	127,307	6.4
Brisbane (C)	49,352	540,386	9.1
Queensland	**160,921**	**2,039,275**	**7.9**

(C) = City *(R) = Regional*

1. Count of employed persons aged 15 years and over based on place of usual residence.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Basic Community Profile - B43.

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

General Government

The region has a vibrant local government structure with special arrangements for community councils in the Indigenous communities of the Cape and Torres Strait.

The region is strongly represented in State and Commonwealth Indigenous service offices and functions but often deficient in State and Commonwealth government functions compared with Darwin and Townsville.

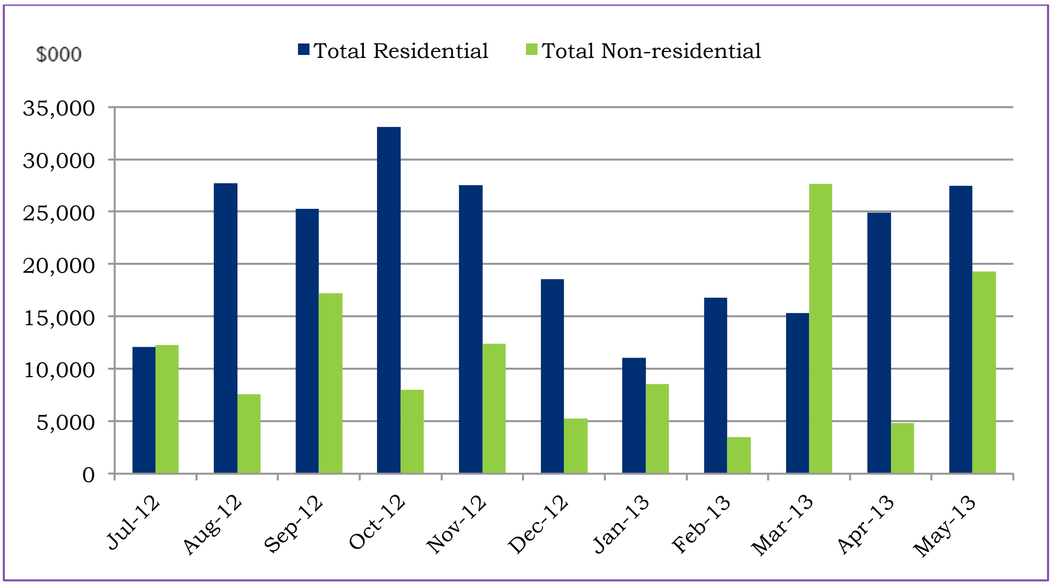
1.4.8 CONSTRUCTION

The region's population growth and size has generated the highest level of construction activity in the north.

Traditionally, construction has been mainly private with less government activity but Government construction has helped hold up approval levels after the GFC. Construction activity has been highly volatile (see **Figure 10**), and as discussed in **Section 4.4.10**, this has played a major role in recent rises in unemployment.

Figure 10 – Value of Building Approvals ($M) Far North Queensland and Torres Strait region, July 2012 to May 2013

[33] James Cook University website.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Building Approvals, Australia, May 2013 (Cat No. 8731.0)

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.4.9 MANUFACTURING

Table 24 and **Figure 11** show employment and manufacturing businesses in the region, illustrating a robust sector particularly among small to medium enterprises.

Table 24 – Manufacturing Employment in the Far North Queensland and Torres Strait region, 2011

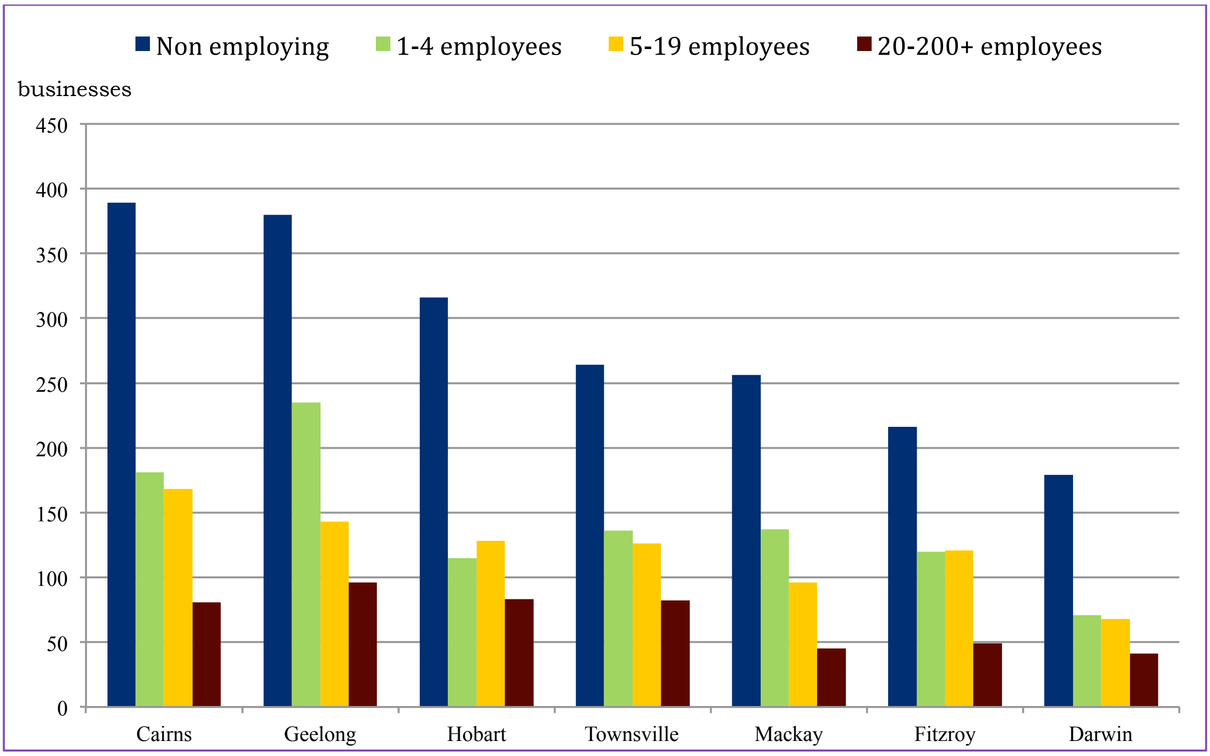
Far North Queensland and Torres Strait region (a)	2011
	persons
Food Product Manufacturing	1,485
Transport Equipment Manufacturing	655
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	530
Primary Metal and Metal Product Manufacturing	498
Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing	365
Wood Product Manufacturing	281
Non-Metallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	249
Furniture and Other Manufacturing	238
Printing (including the Reproduction of Recorded Media)	149
Textile, Leather, Clothing and Footwear Manufacturing	136
Polymer Product and Rubber Product Manufacturing	79
Basic Chemical and Chemical Product Manufacturing	71
Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	65
Pulp, Paper and Converted Paper Product Manufacturing	50
Petroleum and Coal Product Manufacturing	19
Manufacturing, nfd	439
Total Manufacturing	5,309

(a) Based on Place of Work

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Tablebuilder

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

Figure 11 – Manufacturing businesses by employment size range for selected SA4 regions, 2012.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2007 to June 2012, cat. no. 8165.0.

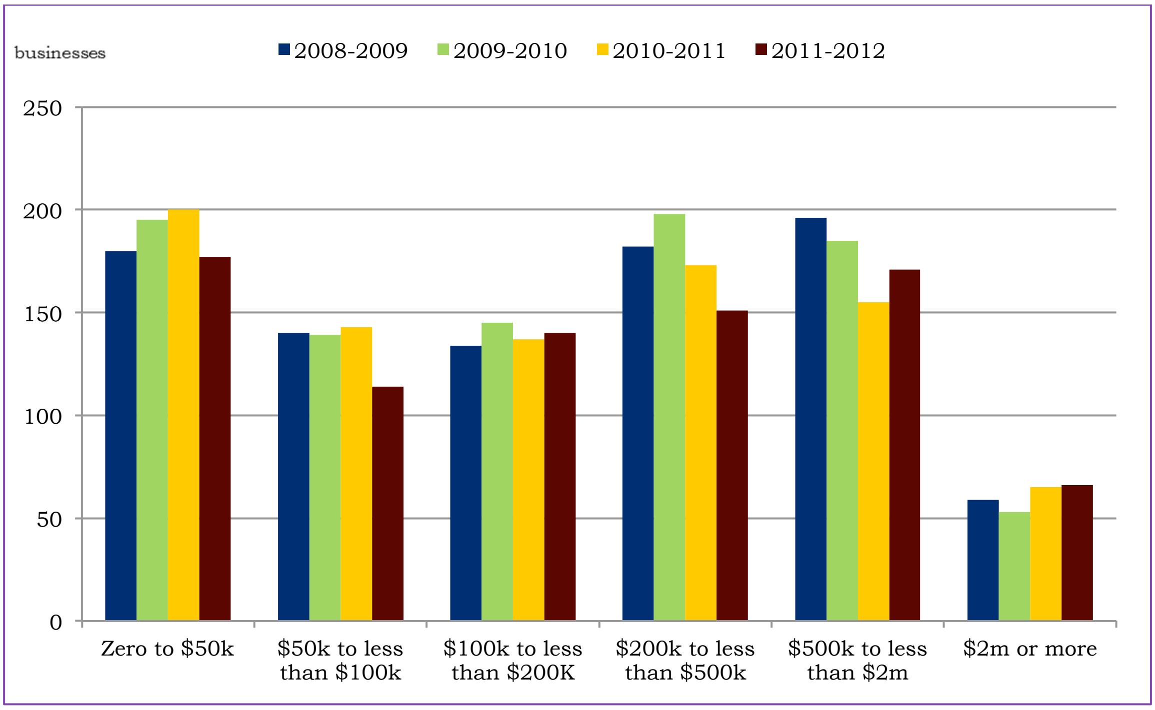
Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

Manufacturing in the region is composed of three major elements:

- Primary product processing (sugar mills, dairy factories, meatworks, poultry processing, timber mills and a range of small establishments further processing the region's fruit and vegetable output including wineries for local and tourism markets).
- Local service manufacturing (including bakeries, printers, small engineering works, dry cleaners, bitumen plants, etc.), typical of a region of this size, with particular strengths in printing (influenced by tourism marketing needs), food products (influenced by restaurant activity and aviation catering) and engineering works (catering for farming and fishing industries).
- Local service manufacturing that has developed markets outside the region, for example industries based on the region's build up of skills in the marine and ship building and aviation clusters. The region is remote from major national markets and at a disadvantage in this field. The Northern Iron & Brass Foundry near Innisfail fits into this category. It is of concern that the region has lost substantial defence ship building work in recent years.

The region has seen a decline in turnover for manufacturing businesses as seen in **Figure 12.** The larger scale business generating $2 million or more are holding relatively steady.

Figure 12 – Manufacturing businesses by turnover range for Cairns SA4 region, 2008-2009 to 2001-2012.



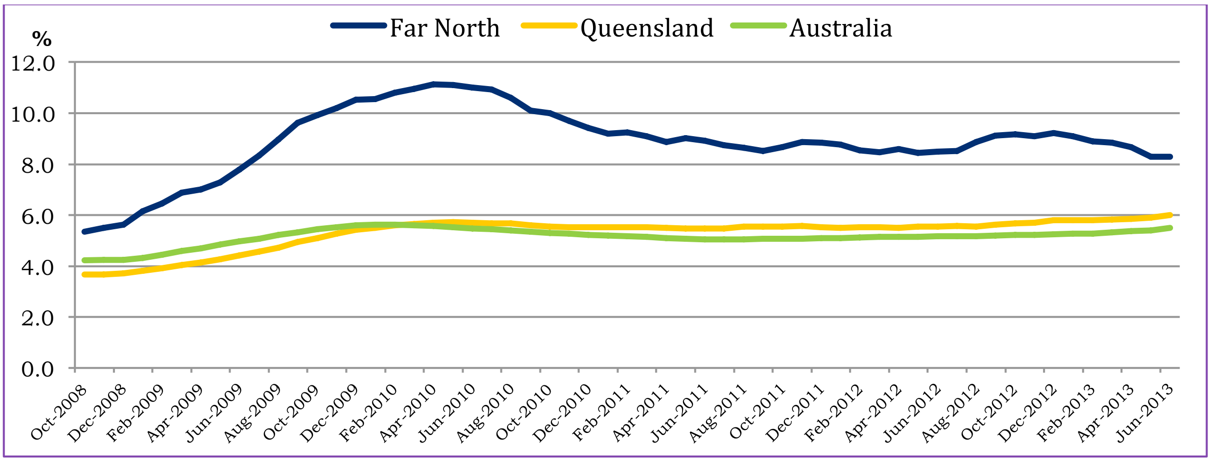
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2007 to June 2012, cat. no. 8165.0.

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.4.10 WORKFORCE & EMPLOYMENT

The region has the largest workforce in the north. The Cairns Cassowary Coast and Tablelands area offers lifestyle advantages and have little trouble attracting and holding population. Relativly high unemployment rates concurrent with high job creation rates have been typical. **Figure 13** illustrates that unemployment rates can rise sharply in response to economic downturns.

Figure 13 – Average Annual Unemployment Rate, Far North Queensland, Queensland & Australia, 2008 to 2013



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. Labour Force, Australia, Detailed – Electronic Delivery, June 2013 (Cat no. 6291.0.55.001)
Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

The pilots' dispute followed by the early 90s recession saw tourism shed jobs quickly and construction slow sharply resulting in unemployment rising significantly at that time.

These circumstances have been repeated again in 2009 with equally sharp rises occurring. The post Asian crisis however, saw less of a rise. Tourism and construction had already moderated when the Asian crisis hit, softening the impact. However, it was more prolonged. Despite slower population growth in the 90s in response to national and international economic conditions, the region (including the areas outside of Cairns) has continued to grow.

The unemployment rate after peaking in September 2009 at 13.8 per cent has come back to the 8.7 per cent on an annual average basis in April 2013.

Indigenous employment is a particularly intractable problem in the area. While recorded unemployment rates tend to be higher in the Indigenous communities, the comparatively small size of the Indigenous population affects the region's overall unemployment rate by about 1.7 percent (based on 2011 Census).

1.4.11 GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT

Gross Regional Product (GRP) for the FNQ&TS region in 2010/11 is estimated at of the order of $12 bn[34] and that of the Cairns Regional Council area for 2010/11 at $7.3 bn[35].

Latest reliable figures on likely composition comes from Queensland Government GRP figures given in **Table 25** compared with Queensland as a whole. They confirm comparative strengths in agriculture, forestry and fishing, public administration and safety and accommodation and food services.

Table 25 - Composition of gross value added (a), Current prices, Far North and Queensland, 2000–01 and 2010–11

Industry	Far North			Queensland		
	Composition		Change in composition	Composition		Change in composition
	2000–01	2010–11		2000–01	2010–11	
	– per cent –		percentage points	–per cent –		percentage points
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	10.5	7.2	-3.3	4.7	2.7	-2.0
Mining	4.9	6.4	1.6	7.3	10.7	3.4
Manufacturing	7.9	5.3	-2.6	10.9	8.1	-2.7
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	1.8	2.6	0.8	2.0	2.6	0.6
Construction	6.3	7.5	1.2	6.8	9.3	2.5
Wholesale trade	4.8	4.0	-0.8	5.8	5.3	-0.5
Retail trade	7.1	6.6	-0.4	6.2	5.4	-0.8
Accommodation and food services	6.8	4.6	-2.3	3.5	2.6	-0.9
Transport, postal and warehousing	8.3	7.4	-0.9	6.8	6.2	-0.5
Information media and telecommunications	2.7	2.0	-0.7	3.5	2.1	-1.4
Financial and insurance services	3.3	3.6	0.3	5.8	6.6	0.8
Rental, hiring and real estate services	2.1	2.5	0.4	2.3	2.5	0.2
Professional, scientific and technical services	2.8	3.5	0.7	4.6	6.1	1.5
Administrative and support services	2.4	2.4	0.0	2.0	2.1	0.2
Public administration and safety	6.8	7.9	1.1	5.5	5.6	0.0
Education and training	4.6	5.1	0.5	4.8	4.1	-0.7

[34] *Source: Queensland Treasury and Trade, Experimental Estimates of Gross Regional Product 2000–01, 2006–07 and 2010–11.*
[35] *Source: Cairns Regional Council Economic Snapshot 2012.*

Health care and social assistance	5.7	8.1	2.4	6.0	6.4	0.4
Arts and recreation services	1.2	0.8	-0.4	1.0	0.6	-0.4
Other services	2.1	2.3	0.1	2.4	1.8	-0.5
Ownership of dwellings	7.9	10.3	2.3	8.2	9.2	1.0
Gross Value Added	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0	

(a) GVA is used to analyse industry contributions to regional production as there is no adequate method to allocate taxes less subsidies on products across industries.

Source: Queensland Treasury and Trade, Experimental Estimates of Gross Regional Product 2000–01, 2006–07 and 2010–11

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.5 OUR SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1.5.1 POPULATION LEVELS, DISTRIBUTION AND VISITOR POPULATION

The comparative level and growth of population in the region shown in **Section 4.4.1** illustrates that it has been a fast growing region in the north and is becoming more populous. **Table 26** shows the distribution of residential population across the region. Cairns(R) has the largest resident population in the RDA FNQ&TS region with 61.5 per cent, followed by 16.9 per cent for the Tablelands(R) and 10.6 per cent for the Cassowary Coast (R).

Table 26: Estimated Resident Population by local government area, RDA Far North and Torres Strait Region, 2011pr and 2012p.

	ERP at 30 June		Change		2012p ERP as % of
Local Government Area	2011pr	2012p	2011pr-2012p		RDA FNQ&TS region
	—number—		%	no.	%
Aurukun (S)	1,449	1,445	-0.3	-4	0.5
Cairns (R)	162,740	165,859	1.9	3,119	61.5
Cassowary Coast (R)	28,627	28,667	0.1	40	10.6
Cook (S)	4,494	4,516	0.5	22	1.7
Croydon (S)	322	320	-0.6	-2	0.1
Etheridge (S)	915	909	-0.7	-6	0.3
Hope Vale (S)	1,071	1,087	1.5	16	0.4
Kowanyama (S)	1,154	1,150	-0.3	-4	0.4
Lockhart River (S)	529	536	1.3	7	0.2
Mapoon (S)	286	290	1.4	4	0.1
Napranum (S)	925	936	1.2	11	0.3
Northern Peninsula Area (R)	2,568	2,599	1.2	31	1.0
Pormpuraaw (S)	742	740	-0.3	-2	0.3
Tablelands (R)	45,243	45,563	0.7	320	16.9
Torres (S)	3,609	3,607	-0.1	-2	1.3
Torres Strait Island (R)	4,772	4,771	0.0	-1	1.8
Weipa (T)	3,467	3,643	5.1	176	1.4
Wujal Wujal (S)	292	296	1.4	4	0.1
Yarrabah (S)	2,740	2,733	-0.3	-7	1.0
RDA FNQ&TS region	**265,945**	**269,667**	**1.4**	**3,722**	**100.0**
Queensland	4,474,098	4,560,059	1.9	85,961	..
Australia	22,323,933	22,683,573	1.6	359,640	..
RDA FNQ&TS region as % of Queensland	5.9	5.9	..	0	..
RDA FNQ&TS region as % of Australia	1.2	1.2	..	0	..

pr = preliminary rebased *p = preliminary* *.. = not applicable*

(S) = Shire *(R) = Regional* *(T) = Town*

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011-12 (Cat No. 3218.0)

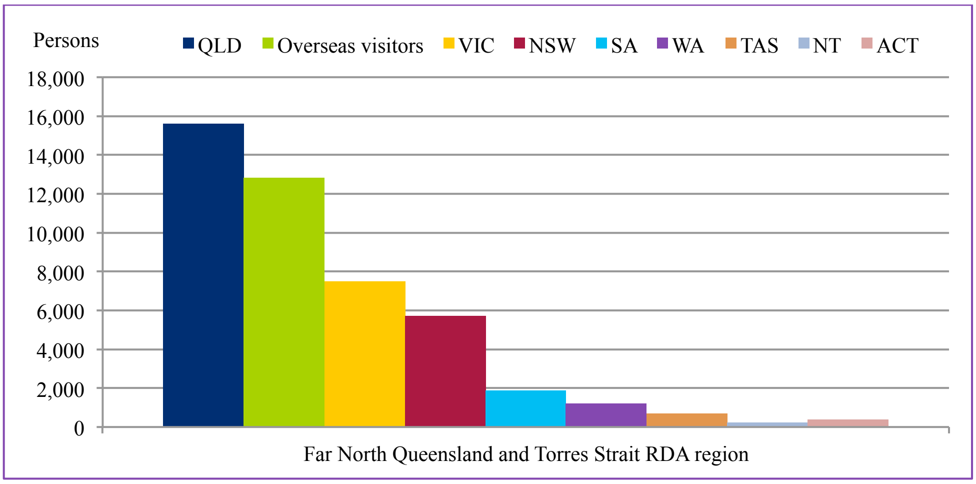
Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.5.2 VISITOR POPULATION

A feature of the region is the high visitor population which peaks during the winter months. At the time of the 2011 census, there were approximately 33,000 visitors in Cairns (R) with just under 47,000 visitors in the entire

FNQ&TS region. **Figure 14** illustrates the origins of visitors to the region and shows its popularity as a destination amongst overseas tourists.

Figure 14 – Visitors to the Far North Queensland and Torres Strait region at the time of the Census, 2011.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Place of Enumeration Profile - P03.

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.5.3 INDIGENOUS POPULATION

Table 27 illustrates that the region has one of the highest Indigenous populations in Australia at about 15.2 per cent. The majority of the population in the Cape and Torres Strait is Indigenous.

Table 27 – Comparative Indigenous Populations of the Far north Queensland and Torres Strait region and subregions, 2011 Census

Region[36]	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Total	Indigenous persons as a proportion of total population
Cape York	6,596	5,763	13,065	50.5
Torres	7,882	1,508	9,807	80.4
Tropical	19,575	154,241	186,517	10.5
Tablelands	4,626	37,902	44,936	10.3
RDA FNQ&TS	**38,679**	**199,414**	**254,325**	**15.2**
Queensland	155,827	3,952,706	4,332,738	3.6
Australia	548,370	19,900,765	21,507,719	2.5

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Indigenous Profile - I03.

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

[36] Regions are based on previously defined economic subregions.

1.5.4 LANGUAGE

Table 28 & **Table 28a** show that those who spoke a different language at home in the FNQ&TS region was higher than the Queensland percentage. This is due to the high number of Indigenous persons and a large tourism workforce. Indeed, the region's international tourism leads to high levels of non-English language speaking, signage, and language services in the region.

Table 28 – Language Spoken at Home at the time of the 2011 census, Far North Queensland and Torres Strait, Queensland and Australia

At home speaks:	FNQ&TS	Queensland	Australia
		—number—	
English only	201,890	3,675,958	16,509,290
Other language	34,300	423,843	3,912,939
Not stated	18,127	232,938	1,085,490
Total	254,317	4,332,739	21,507,719
		—per cent—	
Percentage speaks language other than English	13.5	9.8	18.2

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Basic Community Profile – BCP13

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

Table 28a – Top 5 Languages spoken at home at the time of the 2011 Census, Far North Queensland and Torres Strait, Queensland and Australia.

Top 5 languages	FNQ&TS	Queensland	Australia
1	Australian Indigenous languages	Mandarin	Mandarin
2	Italian	Cantonese	Italian
3	Japanese	Vietnamese	Arabic
4	German	Italian	Cantonese
5	Tagalog	German	Greek

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Basic Community Profile – BCP13

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.5.5 AGE STRUCTURES

Table 29 & **Figure 15** show a variable median age, influenced by:

- Young age group profiles in the Indigenous population with high birth rates and lower life expectancy;
- High inward migration in working and family creation age levels, especially in Cairns and Douglas; and
- Low inward migration of retirees, unlike the Gold and Sunshine Coasts.

This is balanced to some degree by typically higher age profiles of the Tablelands and Cassowary Coast rural areas.

A marked deficiency in the 15 to 29 years age groups (see **Figure 15**) is influenced by a number of regional factors. The proportion of population over the age of 65 is low when compared to Queensland.

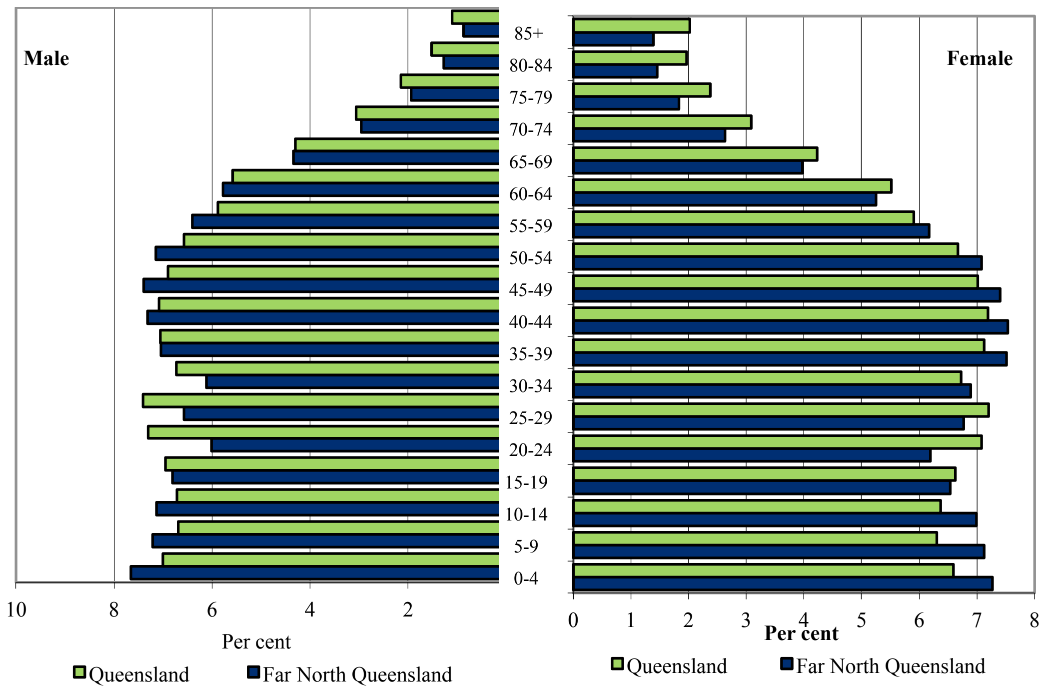
Table 29 – Median Age by local government area in the Far North and Torres Strait region at the time of the 2011 Census

Region	Median Age
Aurukun (S)	25
Cairns (R)	36
Cassowary Coast (R)	42
Cook (S)	38
Croydon (S)	36
Etheridge (S)	43
Hope Vale (S)	25
Kowanyama (S)	28
Lockhart River (S)	26
Mapoon (S)	31
Napranum (S)	23
Northern Peninsula Area (R)	22
Pormpuraaw (S)	33
Tablelands (R)	43
Torres (S)	28
Torres Strait Island (R)	23
Weipa (T)	30
Wujal Wujal (S)	24
Yarrabah (S)	22
Queensland	**36**
Australia	**37**

Source: Australian Bureau of statistics, Census of Population and Housing,2011, Basic Community Profile - B02.

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

Figure 15 – Population Pyramid for the Far North Queensland and Torres Strait region and Queensland, 2011



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2011, cat. no. 3235.0.
Graph produced by Facts on Figures consulting

1.5.6 EDUCATION

Please refer to **Section 4.4.7**.

1.5.7 EMPLOYMENT

Please refer to **Section 4.4.10**.

1.5.8 MEDIAN INCOMES

Table 30 compares median household incomes in the region with the rest of Australia.

Table 37 – Median Weekly Income by local government area in the FNQ&TS region, 2011.

Region	Median total personal income	Median total family income	Median total household income	Average household size
		– dollars per week –		persons
Aurukun (S)	259	633	1,153	5.0
Cairns (R)	620	1,393	1,145	2.5
Cassowary Coast (R)	503	1,145	931	2.5
Cook (S)	497	1,062	831	2.3
Croydon (S)	467	1,053	1,020	2.8
Etheridge (S)	487	944	729	2.3
Hope Vale (S)	294	738	895	3.9
Kowanyama (S)	286	760	1,077	4.1
Lockhart River (S)	312	1,062	1,140	3.9

Mapoon (S)	298	854	892	3.2
Napranum (S)	260	692	827	4.2
Northern Peninsula Area (R)	439	907	959	3.6
Pormpuraaw (S)	321	768	1,053	3.5
Tablelands (R)	451	1,049	854	2.4
Torres (S)	682	1,577	1,579	3.4
Torres Strait Island (R)	314	788	849	3.7
Weipa (T)	1,242	2,647	2,503	2.8
Wujal Wujal (S)	257	614	942	3.6
Yarrabah (S)	274	728	1,015	4.9
Queensland	587	1,453	1,235	2.6
Australia	577	1,481	1,234	2.6

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Basic Community Profile - B02.

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.5.9 ETHNICITY AND DIVERSITY

Table 31 indicates that in addition to a high proportion of Indigenous population, the region has a relatively high proportion of population born overseas for an Australian non-metropolitan region.

In addition, the region has a significant proportion of traditional population who have come from non-English speaking backgrounds, especially Italy, but also from Japan, India, and Philippines. More recent migration has predominantly been from southern Australia. International tourism workers and strong links with Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Islands adds to the mix **(see Table 32).**

Table 31 – Persons Born Overseasby local government area, 2011 Census

Local government area	Born in English speaking background countries	Born in non-English speaking background countries	Total Born Overseas	Total	Total Born Overseas, Persons
		— number —			Per cent
Aurukun (S)	0	0	0	1,295	0.0
Cairns (R)	15,184	16,413	31,597	156,169	20.2
Cassowary Coast (R)	1,510	2,161	3,671	27,668	13.3
Cook (S)	266	692	958	4,153	23.1
Croydon (S)	6	10	16	313	5.1
Etheridge (S)	55	16	71	894	7.9
Hope Vale (S)	0	0	0	985	0.0
Kowanyama (S)	0	0	0	1,032	0.0
Lockhart River (S)	0	0	0	483	0.0
Mapoon (S)	0	0	0	264	0.0
Napranum (S)	0	0	0	856	0.0
Northern Peninsula Area (R)	11	3	14	2,300	0.6
Pormpuraaw (S)	0	3	3	663	0.5
Tablelands (R)	3,026	3,316	6,342	43,727	14.5
Torres (S)	101	137	238	3,257	7.3
Torres Strait Island (R)	8	11	19	4,248	0.4
Weipa (T)	198	161	359	3,333	10.8
Wujal Wujal (S)	0	0	0	271	0.0
Yarrabah (S)	0	0	0	2,407	0.0
Far North Region	**20,365**	**22,923**	**43,288**	**254,318**	**17.0**
Queensland	478,290	410,346	888,636	4,332,738	20.5

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Basic Community Profile – BCP09

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

Table 32 – Top 10 Places of Birth, Far north Queensland, Queensland and Australia

	FNQ&TS	Queensland	Australia
1	England	New Zealand	England
2	New Zealand	England	New Zealand
3	Papua New Guinea	South Africa	China
4	Philippines	India	India
5	Italy	Philippines	Italy
6	Germany	China	Vietnam
7	Japan	Scotland	Philippines
8	India	Germany	South Africa
9	Scotland	Vietnam	Scotland
10	South Africa	USA	Malaysia

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2011, Expanded Community Tables, XCP01

Table produced by Facts on Figures Consulting

1.6 OUR ENVIRONMENTAL PROFILE

1.6.1 NATIONAL PARKS

Between the two World Heritage areas and large areas designated in Cape York (see **Maps 6 and 7,** pg 65 and 66), the region has a significant proportion of its land and marine surface under national park or other conservation zoning. The newly announced Gulf and Coral Sea Marine Reserves are the subject of community debate. Environmental restrictions and their impact on development is a major issue for Indigenous communities in the Cape.

1.6.2 CULTURAL HERITAGE

The region has a broad mix of cultural heritage including:

- Thousands of years of rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, both tangible and intangible (such as Indigenous knowledge systems);
- A tropical pioneering history including a significant maritime element, and
- Early elements of migration from Asia, China, India, Japan, Italy and Indonesia (Malays).

1.6.3 WATER RESOURCES

The region accounts for over 26 per cent of Australia's water run-off[37] (see **Section 4.1)** and apart from the Barron River catchment, most catchments have very low usage for agricultural and human consumption.

1.6.4 ENERGY

The region has a large identified capacity for non-fossil fuel energy production including hydro electricity, wind, solar, geothermal and biofuels (ethanol and pongamia based bio-diesels).

There are no coal fired power stations in the region, and electricity in remote areas is generated by diesel. Fishing and aviation industries are currently highly fossil fuel dependent.

1.6.5 REGIONAL NRM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

The region is serviced by a regional NRM planning and delivery framework, supported and integrated by four key regional NRM bodies. The baseline information and key environmental priorities and actions are underpinned by, and drawn from, the region's four regional NRM planning processes.

1.7 OUR MAJOR PROJECTS

Major government and non-government projects in progress as at mid-2012 are shown in **Table 39.**

[37] Commonwealth Government, Australian Natural Resources Atlas, Natural Land and Water Resources Audit, 2009

Table 39 – State Government Construction Projects

State Government Project	Project Description	Total Est Cost $m	Commenced (Y/N)
Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (Program Office)	Lot Development Project in remote indigenous communities (Includes Aurukun, Doomadgee, Hope Vale, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Napranum, Mapoon, Mornington Island, Napranum, NPA, Palm Island, Pormpuraaw, TSRIC, Woorabinda and Wujal Wujal). New and existing work.	38.40	Y
Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (Program Office)	Saibai Island Retail Store	1.80	Y
Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (Program Office)	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council Retail Precinct	0.27	Y
Department of Commuity Safety Services (QLD Corrective Services)	Lotus Glen Correctional Centre expansion and re-development	28.30	Y
Department of Community Safety (QLD Fire and Rescue Service)	Replacement of Auxilary Fire and Rescue Station at Mareeba	3.30	N
Department of Community Safety (QLD Fire and Rescue Service)	Replacement of Auxilary and Fire Rescue Station at Millaa Milla	1.20	Y
Department of Community Safety (Emergency Services)	New State Emergency Headquarters in Cairns	1.30	N
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Great Barrier Reef Marine Training College – Stage 2 expansion	1.03	Y
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Tully State High School – Rectification & reinstatement works	6.34	Y
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Redlynch State College – Extension to existing special education unit	0.70	Y
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Whitfield State School – New 8 space classroom block	3.80	Y
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Cairns State High School – Roof Upgrade to Block A	0.56	Y
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Lockhart River State School Air Conditioning Replacement Program	0.98	Y
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Tagai State College Air Conditioning Replacement Program for Darnley Island Campus; Kubin Campus and Yorke Island Campus	1.80	Y
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Croydon State School New Residence	0.40	Y
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Modular Building Replacement Program – Tully State High School, Edge Hill State High School and Freshwater State School	1.00	Y
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Northern Peninsula Area College – Injinoo Junior – Replacement Amenities Block	0.51	Y

Department of Education, Training and Employment	Western Cape College – Weipa Tuckshop to Senior Campus	0.73	Y
Department of Education, Training and Employment	Cyclone Shelters Program – Tully & Port Douglas State Schools	1.29	Y
Department of Local Government	Indigenous State Infrastructure Program – Aurukun – 17 lot subdivision works, 1.2ML concrete reservoir, upgrades to sewer pump stations	11.25	Y
Department of Local Government	Indigenous State Infrastructure Program – Doomadgee – 2ML Reservoir, 24 Lot subdivision works	8.70	Y
Department of Local Government	Indigenous State Infrastructure Program – Hope Vale – Upgrades to existing sewerage treatment ponds, replacement of water reticulation network and upgrade of exisiting landfill site.	4.00	Y
Department of Local Government	Indigenous State Infrastructure Program – Kowanyama – Wate, Sewerage and 16 subdivision works	4.00	Y
Department of Local Government	Indigenous State Infrastructure Program – Mornington Island – Water supply upgrade, sewerage system and extension to new subdivision and new telementry SCADA system	3.43	Y
Department of Local Government	Indigenous State Infrastructure Program – Lockhart River – Upgrade sewerage pump stations and ponds (completed), 5 lot subdivision (not commenced)	1.52	Y
Department of Local Government	Indigenous State Infrastructure Program – Napranum – Water, Sewerage and 18 lot subdivision works	5.80	Y
Department of Local Government	Indigenous State Infrastructure Program – Palm Island – Water and Sewerage Upgrades	2.93	Y
Department of Local Government	Indigenous State Infrastructure Program – Pormpuraaw – 40 lot subdivision works	1.13	Y
Department of Local Government	Indigenous State Infrastructure Program – Pormpuraaw – Planning and design water reticulation, sewerage upgrades	0.50	Y
Department of Local Government	Indigenous State Infrastructure Program - Woorabinda – Water, Sewerage and 10 lot subdivision works	6.80	Y
Department of Local Government	Indigenous State Infrastructure Program – Wujal Wujal- Water, Sewerage and 5 lot subdivision works	5.16	Y
Department of Local Government / Torres Strait Regional Authority (joint funding)	Major Infrastructure Program (MIP) 4 – Poruma Reticulated Sewerage Treatment	16.20	Y
Department of Local Government /	Major Infrastructure Program (MIP) 4 –	7.10	Y

Torres Strait Regional Authority (joint funding)	NPARC Asset Sustainability Project – Replacement of high cost reticulated sewerage and roads		
Department of Local Government / Torres Strait Regional Authority (joint funding)	Major Infrastructure Program (MIP) 5 – Infrastructure projects Torres Strait and NPA over next 2-3 financial years	33.00	N
Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing	Redevelop Visitor Infrastructure, Chillagoe Smelters, Chillagoe – Mungana Caves National Park	0.29	Y
Queensland Health and Hospital Service	Upgrade to Health facilities at Mareeba Hospital	2.00	N
Queensland Health and Hospital Service	Upgrade to Health facilities at Atherton Hospital	9.90	N
Queensland Health and Hospital Service	Upgrade to Health facilities at Thursday Island Hospital	1.45	N
Queensland Health and Hospital Service	Cairns Base Hospital re-development – Staged development due for completion 2015	446.30	Y
Queensland Health and Hospital Service	Sabai Island Primary Health Care Centre	8.40	Y
Queensland Health and Hospital Service	Cape York improved Primary Health Care Centre	1.80	Y
Queensland Health and Hospital Service	Torres Strait Staff Accommodation	5.79	Y
Queensland Health and Hospital Service	Cape York Staff Accommodation – Kowanyama	1.30	Y
Queensland Health and Hospital Service	Thursday Island Chronic Disease Centre	39.01	Y
Queensland Health and Hospital Service	Minor Capital Projects and Acquisitions – Cairns and Hinterland, Cape York, Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula	49.10	N
Department of Housing and Public Works	Capital Works – Cairns Construction	7.47	N
Department of Housing and Public Works	Refurbishment of Cairns Convention Centre	6.30	Y
Department of Transport and Main Roads	Flood Damage repair program (jointly funded by state and federal governments)	260.00	Y
Department of Transport and Main Roads	Barron River Bus Stops	2.30	N
Department of Transport and Main Roads	Construction of road to sealed standard, including three high level bridges on the Peninsula Development Road between Lakeland and Laura (jointly funded by state and federal govt)	30.00	Y
Ergon Energy	Logistics warehouse and associated hardstand and yard storage. Stage 1 includes building of a new logistic warehouse and associated hardstand and	25.00	N

	yard storage.		
Ergon Energy	Refurbishment Lot 1 391-401 Spence Street and Lot 2 308-314 Hartley Street Cairns to locate Energy Sustainability and Market Development's Cairns operations into a single site	2.50	Y
Ports North – Port of Cairns	Tingira Street Land Development (Stage 1)	2.00	N
Ports North – Port of Cairns	Marlin Marina – Sullage Reception Facility	0.35	N
Ports North – Port of Cairns	Cairns shipping channel EIS Approvals – Stage 1 of the State Government approved $40 Expansion of the Port of Cairns shipping channel in Trinity Inlet to accommodate larger cruise ships; and the upgrade of associated land-based infrastructure and services	2.50	Y
	TOTAL	$1108.99M	

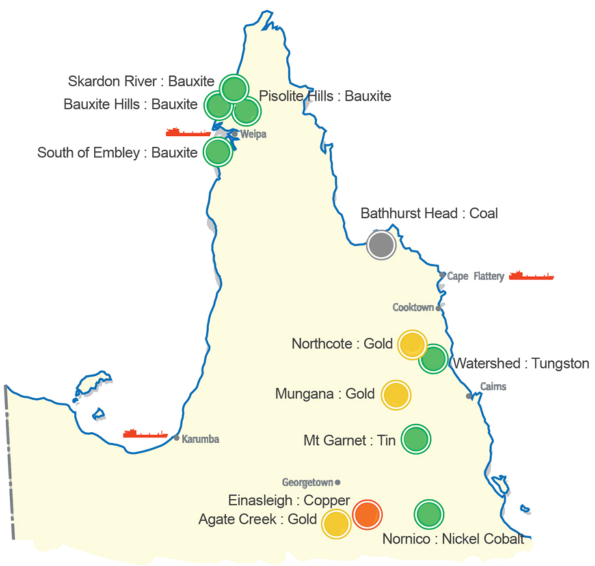
Source: Queensland Department of State Development, Infrastructure & Planning.

* For a full list of local government and private sector projects:
http://www.dsdip.qld.gov.au/resources/report/cairns-major-projects-booklet.pdf

A range of substantial mining projects are being scoped, potentially raising the number of ports in the region handling mineral products from three to seven.

Map 14 illustrates a number of these mining projects in the immediate Cairns hinterland.

Map 14 – Advanced Mining Locations Far North Queensland



Source: Cummings Economics

11 Attachment 5: Strategic Priority Packages

FNQ&TS Roadmap Priority Implementation Package 1:

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR CONNECTING OUR REGION

Regional Development Australia
FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND AND TORRES STRAIT INC

Package Narrative: Our region is one of the largest and most geographically dispersed of all Australian regions. We are remote from the rest of Australia and our communities and industries are widely scattered. Despite this, we are incredibly well positioned to service emerging markets across northern Australia, South East Asia and the Pacific. In this sense, while Cairns is a key hub, Thursday Island, Weipa and the Gulf are also important distribution nodes in their own right. Our strategic location and capacities also define our specialist advantages in supporting the nation's defence. This package looks to remove the critical infrastructure/capacity blockages to connectivity across the region, the nation and the world. To broaden our economic base and strengthen our traditional industries, we have a particular focus on port, defence and transport infrastructure and progression of the digital economy.

Regional Leadership Group	RDA and Government Leads
Ports North, JCU, Cape York Sustainable Futures, Gulf Savannah Development, Aecom, Advance Cairns. Invitations extended to: FNQROC, ROCCY, TSRA, TFC.	Brett Moller (RDA) Ian McKirdy (DSDIP) Tony Potter (DTMR)

#	Key Package Initiatives (WHAT)	Pathways (HOW)
1	**Facilitating cruise liner access** by progressing strategic docking infrastructure and marketing of Cairns, including consideration of possible defence benefits.	Ports North has determined the infrastructure needs to grow cruise shipping into the Port of Cairns and commenced the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) of the Cairns Shipping Development Project to deliver this infrastructure. This infrastructure will result in significant growth in cruise ship numbers, improve opportunities for Defence and improve Port operational efficiencies. Support is required in finalising the EIS and the funding of the Capital works of this important community project. Early government preparedness is required for timely and strategic investment.
2	**Securing a Super Yachts industry** by progression of regional development of and investment in a (infrastructure and marketing) strategy.	Ports North and the Super Yachts Cluster are currently progressing a three-phase process, including marketing, skills development and berthing and servicing infrastructure. Early government preparedness is required for timely and strategic investment.
3	**Removing port-based freight blockages** by developing a regional maritime freight infrastructure development and investment schedule.	Ports North is currently finalising an integrated strategy, business case and costing. Key elements include: • Cairns wharf extensions, crane facility and barge ramp facilities to promote diversification through targeting of specialist market freight opportunities targeting PNG; • Mourilyan Port Development Master Plan and associated infrastructure, land use plan and road upgrades (for mineral and woodchip and sugar and explosives); • Strategic Karumba Freight Project assessments. Early Government preparedness is required for timely and strategic investment. Partnership brokerage/coordination with mines in area to determine logistics requirements.
4	**Securing an expanded ADF presence in FNQ&TS** in line with our strategic advantages, including: 1.Patrol Boat hosting and servicing; 2. High value training and hydrographic capabilities; 3. Strategic Airforce roles at Scherger; 4. Customs and surveillance functions; and 4. Potential integrated roles for NORFORCE NORFORCE type units.	A collaborative Regional Working Group formed with associated Project Plan has been established to engage ADF and build on the outcomes of the ADF Posture Review to ensure the 2013 Defence White Paper takes into consideration the opportunities that Cairns offers. In addition to the White Paper, short-term increases in regional marine training and Defence vessel servicing are a focus. Early Government recognition of and support for the region's strategic advantage has been noted.

<table>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Securing gaps in our strategic land transport and freight network by ironing out key pressure points in our road-based freight, tourist and transport network.</td><td>Proposed key progression mechanisms are through:
Peninsula Development Road upgrade to two lane seal to Weipa ($50m/year from Federal/ State sources);
Upgrade to a two lane seal on all ATSI roads on the Cape ($50m/year, over 20 years);
Hahn Highway, Kennedy Development Road and Gregory Development Road strategic gaps to enhance freight including roads in Townsville region ($15m/year, for 3 years);
Gulf Development Road strategic gaps to enhance freight;
Jointly funded commitment ($635m, over 10 years) under the Bruce Highway Action Plan;
Road capacity upgrade in Cairns/rural centres of Innisfail, Mareeba & Atherton ($2b, over 25 years);
Overtaking lanes in the Cairns & Tablelands council areas ($40m/year, over 5 years);
State commits not to close rail west of Dimbulah;
Commitment to joint strategic rethink of the Cairns to Kuranda transport;
Study into future rail requirements, routes and corridors;
Provide suitable B-double access in the Tablelands region by construction of town by-passes;
Provide B-double set-down pads in the Tablelands region at appropriate locations.</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>Bringing Forward the Digital Economy Revolution through negotiation of key bring-forward opportunities for fast broadband within the region in cooperation with Townsville and Mackay.</td><td>FNQ&TS participation in a whole of north Qld approach to securing ubiquitous, fast, affordable, high speed broadband across the region:
Facilitating fast broadband roll out;
Supporting strategic initiatives to build the region's capability in the application of high speed broadband services; and
Securing Commonwealth scoping investment in establishment of key priority pilots in the region, including Malanda Technology Village demo and the Babinda new economy initiative.</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>Turbo-charging the Cairns Public Transport Plan by developing a clear forward works program and investment pathways to secure significant implementation of the Public Transport Plan.</td><td>DSDIP and CRC empowered to develop priority investment and cost sharing schedule. State and Australian government commitment to cohesive integration in coming budget cycles. Should include:
Construct the Cairns Transit Network in stages to achieve the 20% on public transport goal ($750m, over 25 years).
Extend the active transport network in the region ($150m, over 25 years).</td></tr>
<tr><td>8</td><td>Progress development of Weipa marine and port industries.</td><td>Seek support for the development and implementation of ferry service and marina upgrades in Weipa.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Package Indicators</td><td>Strategic Reference Documents</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Freight indicators (DMR)
Port efficiency indicators (Ports North)
Level of Commonwealth investment in the digital economy
“Broadband Availability Index” (comparative analysis of price, speed, data across Cairns)
Logistics productivity, efficiency and safety indicators (Australian Logistics Council)
Cruise ship passenger numbers
Port tonnage figures and new cargo/product diversity</td><td>Queensland Regionalisation Strategy
Queensland Infrastructure Plan
Far North Queensland 2031 Plan and TNQ REP
Bruce Highway Upgrade Strategy
Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century</td></tr>
</table>

FNQ&TS Roadmap Priority Implementation Package 2:

CLIMATE ADAPTATION

Regional Development Australia
FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND AND TORRES STRAIT INC

Package Narrative: Our region is one of the most vulnerable to climate change in Australia. Five Torres Strait Islands face inundation problems associated with sea level rise. Reef environments face severe bleaching risks. Communities in the Wet Tropics now understand the real risks from an increased frequency of severe tropical cyclones. Cape York communities are not well prepared for intense cyclonic events. The Gulf is particularly vulnerable to extensive isolation from flooding. Through research and development work in recent years, we know some of the key adaptation strategies needed, but coordinated effort is required to see these responses fully developed and implemented.	
Regional Leadership Group	**RDA and Government Leads**
JCU, Cape York Sustainable Futures, Torres Strait Regional Authority, Northern Gulf NRM, Reef Rainforest Research Centre, Cairns and Far North Environment Centre, Cassowary Coast Regional Council.	Allan Dale (RDA)
Key Package Initiatives (WHAT)	**Pathways (HOW)**
Progress development of a significant Regional Climate Change Adaptation Package addressing the specific priorities of the Torres Strait, Gulf, Cape York Peninsula and Wet Tropics communities.	Secure a brief Package prioritization and scheduling project to scope and cost the highest priority investments that build regional resilience in the face of climate change (estimated one off $100,000). Through this process, work jointly with Commonwealth Climate Change and Regional Development Ministers and the Queensland Government to champion a budget-based, cohesive 5 year investment program commencing from the 2013/14 Budget cycle. Following prioritization and scheduling, key Package components are to at least include: • Strategic revetment works ($23 million) and social transformation processes on the five most vulnerable islands in the Torres Strait; • Strategic Radar warning infrastructure investments in Cape York, Gulf and Torres Strait; • Rivers to Reef Proposal ($25 million) in Wet Tropics to secure a long term flood mitigation framework; • A targeted cyclone risk assessment for Cape York communities and coastal infrastructure; • A completed Category 5 Shelter Program, Cairns Hospital Emergency Strategy and increased disaster preparedness in major urban communities; and • Direct $25 million SEWPAC Carbon and Biodiversity funding to secure iconic cassowary populations in cyclone-devastated landscapes. • Internationally and regionally engaged $11 million disaster recovery centre and review of declining 51st Battalion capacity. • Support for negotiation of major insurance industry partnership for major centres ($30,000).
Secure and adaptively manage the effective roll out of the Carbon Farming Initiative to maximize landscape scale co-benefits and economic opportunities across the Far North Queensland and Torres Strait Landscape.	Urgently resource the Regional NRM Bodies Working Group, in partnership with RDA FNQ&TS ($100,000 per annum over three years from the CEF Biodiversity Program) to actively research, review and road-test the evolving regulatory arrangements under the Carbon Farming Initiative to maximize carbon abatement, multiple landscape benefit and landholder uptake nationally, using the FNQ&TS Region as a live case study. Within

	this process, key reforms would be clearly identified and negotiated in a structured way between RDA's, Regional NRMs, the Department of Climate Change, SEWPAC and the Queensland Office of Climate Change. Australian Government to also commence structured modelling of likely uptake and landscape impact under proposed regulatory rules.
Greater regional devolution in prioritizing disaster recovery priorities, better integrating response, recovery and making sure these efforts build longer term resilience in the face of natural disasters.	State and the Commonwealth Government commitment to a joint workshop between senior management in RDA and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, RDA FNQ&TS and Local government to identify key deficiencies in the current NDRRA arrangements and progress implementation of current Productivity Commission Review priorities. A key outcome being sought is better pre-disaster planning and coordination and enabling a more locally/ regionally planned disaster response program to be negotiated more directly with both Governments. A more integrated approached to response, recovery and securing long-term 'betterment' infrastructure, environmental and community resilience is also an essential outcome being sought.
Package Indicators	**Strategic Reference Documents**
• Progressive monitoring of regional resilience indicators to be developed at sub-regional level (currently being pursued via GBRMPA & JCU). Aim would be to secure durable funding via the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.	• Clean Energy Futures Program/ CFI legislation. • Queensland Climate Change Strategy. • FNQ 2031 Climate Change Working Group. • MTSRF Climate Resilience Transition Project.

FNQ&TS - Roadmap Priority Implementation Package 3

Energy and Water Transformations in FNQ&TS

Package Narrative: The twin threats of climate change and peak oil make it imperative that our region urgently reduces its dependency on fossil fuels. While we are less dependent than much of Queensland, little strategic work has commenced in driving the transformation required, even though there are unique opportunities and emerging innovations in wind, solar and biofuels. Equally, while we have a high rainfall environment, both Cairns and rural/remote communities face significant water security and consumptive water quality issues into the future. Our agricultural productivity will also be significantly constrained if urgent industry-driven reforms in water use efficiency falter.

Regional Leadership Group	RDA and Government Leads
Portbajool, Evolve Energy, Ergon, Cape York NRM Board, Torres Strait Regional Authority, Northern Gulf NRM, Advance Cairns.	Allan Dale (RDA) Kathy Rankin (DSDIP) TBA (DNRM)

#	Key Package Initiatives (WHAT)	Pathways (HOW)
1	**An evidence-based investment framework and prospectus** for transformational green energy (wind, solar, hydro and biofuel) opportunities in FNQ&TS.	While the region has a significant range of alternative energy opportunities for transformational change, a serious, evidence based investment framework and associated prospectus is required ($500 000 from CEF resources). This needs to be backed with a clear position within DSDIP to actively facilitate and coordinate associated Federal, State and Local government support and approval proposals.
2	Support councils and private sector to **facilitate strategic development of bio-energy industries** including research and feasibility studies**.**	
3	**A regionally prioritized and negotiated Commonwealth/ State program** investment structure (based on the Roads Alliance model) for progressive upgrade of strategic infrastructure for targeted upgrade of consumptive water delivery standards**.**	Beyond Cairns itself, there are serious and outstanding water supply (both reliability and quality) problems that need targeted resolution, before real progress can be made on improved urban water use efficiency. Ad hoc, project based approaches mean funds are not going to the highest risk-based issues, nor are there reliable, longer-term investment frameworks that give real traction to resolving these basic service delivery problems. Coordinated and long term reconfiguration of current State and Federal investment into a strongly regionalized program is required in a way that also raises the water management capacity of our rural and indigenous Local governments and water utilities.
4	A major joint Commonwealth-State investment package (based on Reef to Rescue style development and extension program) for fast tracking the **finalisation of water allocation for consumptive use and major**	The new Barron and emerging Wet Tropics Water Resource Plans are defining the reality that significant operational planning and investment are required to maximize productivity in the agricultural sector from our increasingly constrained water resources. To maximize the economic potential for agricultural

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	productivity gains through rural water use efficiency.	production and environmental protection in the region, this will require a significant State/ Commonwealth budgetary initiative and increased staffing commitment by 2013/2014. This would need to specifically include: • Reef Rescue style, target-based investment in rapidly enhanced rural water use efficiency; • Community driven bio-regional land use plan for the Gilbert and Flinders rivers in the Gulf; • Urgent “second tier” planning, assessment and project facilitation in priority development zones outside the Wet Tropics and Barron WRP areas (e.g. Lakeland Downs, Weipa Basin); • Urgent assessment of most effective and sustainable potable water sources for Forsayth and Georgetown; and • Increased DNRM staffing/ resources to facilitate ROP refinement, system development monitoring, compliance and local area decision making on periodic restrictions in stressed catchments.
5	A major, regionally partnered **triple bottom line assessment of the most effective strategies for securing Cairns’ known future water needs.**	A least cost study underpins the current strategy for securing a reliable water supply for the future of Cairns, and approval and funding uncertainties remain in securing timely resolution of required developments. A more cohesive, triple bottom line approach to exploring the most effective and sustainable future water needs of this rapidly expanding urban and agricultural area is required and could progress without prejudicing current and planned water resource development processes.

Package Indicators	**Strategic Reference Documents**
• Ongoing monitoring of benchmark for regional fossil fuel dependency and emissions (WTMA). • TBA regional measures of energy efficiency (DSDIP). • Regional water use efficiency indicators (DNRM). • Regional water safety reporting (Q Health).	• Clean Energy Future and Qld Energy Strategy • Barron and Wet Tropics Water Resource Plans • North Australia Taskforce Report • FNQ Water Supply Strategy • Least Cost Analysis of Cairns Future Water • Queensland Infrastructure Plan • Far North Queensland 2031 Plan and TNQ REP

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FNQ&TS - Roadmap Priority Implementation Package 4

Tropical Knowledge Economy

Package Narrative: As one of few developed tropical economies, our tropical expertise, infrastructure and research capabilities are now uniquely positioned to deliver targeted and field tested products and services to both developing and developed tropical economies around the world. FNQ&TS's competitive advantage in building and exporting tropical knowledge sits within the sustainable development, agriculture, education, health, natural resource management and municipal management fields. This region's foundations for success include: (i) real-world business to business brokerage; (ii) independent research-to-management brokerage; (iii) a strong teaching and research capacity across the tropical environmental, social, primary production and manufacturing fields; (iv) a point of integration focussed on relevant, practical and cross disciplinary outcomes within the research sector; and (v) a strong research commercialisation framework. Many of these institutional foundations are now falling into place through a regional alliance among groups like JCU's Cairns Institute, Austropex, Reef Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC), Queensland Government, and local government authorities. There is a real opportunity to tap into a surging market, with a focus on outreach across northern Australia, PNG, South East Asia and the wider Pacific. Core investment in the capacity of, and partnerships between, key delivery institutions is required.

Regional Leadership Group	RDA and Government Leads
Advance Cairns, Cairns Institute, Reef Rainforest Research Centre, Austropex, Tropical Green Build Network.	Kathy Rankin (DSDIP) Paul Gadek (RDA)

#	Key Package Initiatives (WHAT)	Pathways (HOW)
1	Working towards Cairns having an **international reputation and focus on brokering tropical knowledge** via engaging Governments, business and industry, (nationally and internationally) on Tropical Innovation.	• In partnership with Events Queensland, Cairns Regional Council growing the national and international focus and reach of the Tropical Innovation Awards.
2	Further development and expansion of an international and national **Tropical Expertise strategic marketing, business development program and tropical solutions brokerage** to meet national and international needs.	• Secure core (but performance-based) State/ Commonwealth investment ($150 000 per annum) in supporting marketing, business development and brokerage arrangements and annual Austropex conference arrangement, alongside development of core business membership investment.
3	Building and progressing the Tropical Knowledge package through **a strong Regional Alliance for tropical knowledge.**	• Foundations for the Alliance now in place with DSDIP facilitation and support. In partnership with RRRC, Advance Cairns and others, influence policy and investment into the region.
4	Securing **increased core research and education delivery capacities within the region** in the sustainable tropical design and planning, environment and natural resource management, health, and international	• Early collaboration among regional partners to explore building enhanced sustainable design, urban development, and planning research and innovation capacity. • Negotiation of core Commonwealth, AusAID, State and University investment in creating a substantive

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	development fields.	international development partnerships program. • Progression and implementation of committed funding for JCU's Tropical Health Initiative. • Early collaboration among regional partners to build a stronger international and northern Australian environment, agriculture and natural resources research, innovation and education capacity post Tropical Landscapes Joint Venture (TLJV).
5	**Establish the institutional foundations for substantially** growing FNQ&TS's not-for-profit natural resource and environment science and brokerage arrangements**.**	• Reconfigure core Commonwealth investment (currently NERP) to more regionally-negotiated, knowledge brokerage model underpinning the FNQ&TS natural resource-based economy, including more specific investment in the Gulf and Cape York. • RRRC Board reformed towards a skills-based Board and stronger membership to strengthen the regional partnership arrangements between stakeholders and science providers. • State and Commonwealth co-investment with PNG STP in developing a major international partnership trial in PNG in the marine protection, climate change mitigation, health and biosecurity areas.
6	Increase more explicit **partnership arrangements between the tropical knowledge research capacity in FNQ&TS and AusAID programs**, including strategic deployment of AusAID capacity in the region.	• Continue and increase strategic regional dialogue between Foreign Minister, DFAT and AusAID senior management. • Develop a business case to support the establishment of AusAID presences including supporting personnel, administrative arrangements and project management for PNG and the Pacific region.

Package Indicators	**Strategic Reference Documents**
• Growth in tropical knowledge service figures, income and employment levels. • Growth of international and local student numbers in both University and TAFE systems. • Brand salience of region's positioning as Tropical Knowledge centre.	• Troplinks Review. • Inspiring Australia Expert Working Group for Science Engagement in & for Tropical Australia. • Asian Century White Paper. • TNQ Regional Economic Plan. • Cairns Region Economic Future 2012-2015.

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FNQ&TS Roadmap Priority Implementation Package 5:

AGRICULTURAL FUTURES

Regional Development Australia
FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND AND TORRES STRAIT INC

Package Narrative: Agriculture is a major, stable pillar in our regional economy with significant potential for growth through targeted investments in productivity, knowledge, infrastructure and trade, market and workforce development. Our agricultural foundations buffered us from economic instability during the Global Financial Crisis and its importance is set to increase, particularly with growing markets and investment interest from South East Asia. Facilitating sustainable agricultural expansion/ intensification in priority locations, securing regional meat processing capacity and more devolved regional control of tropical R&D are critical priorities.

Regional Leadership Group	**RDA and Government Leads**
Terrain IAG, Canegrowers, Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation, Terrain NRM, Agforce, Cape York Sustainable Futures, Torres Strait Regional Authority, Qld Dairyfarmers' Organisation, Growcom, Pawpaw Growers, Reef Rainforest Research Centre, Organic Farmers, Gulf Savannah Development, Tablelands Workforce Industry Group.	Geraldine McGuire (RDA) Alison Brunker (DAFF)
Key Package Initiatives (WHAT)	**Pathways (HOW)**
Securing significantly **devolved and coordinated approach to strategic research into tropical agriculture** within the region.	• Building a devolved and growth-oriented FNQ-based cooperative agricultural research/training capacity in partnership with industry and with State and Commonwealth governments' backing.
Securing **integrated regulatory reform** to rethink the system and the relationship between productivity and environmental outcomes from agricultural lands.	• Progressing the concept of major projects coordination mechanism in FNQ in parallel with a significant trial of a regulatory reform project. • Progressing the concept of an evidence-based Regulatory Reform Advocate or Commissioner (in partnership with industry/ community).
Value adding to the beef industry supply chain to increase productivity and efficiency.	• Securing regional meat processing capability, including abattoir capability within FNQ and linking with key beef development infrastructure. • Building a further understanding of the FNQ "point of differentiation along the value chain" and positioning accordingly, particularly via Grass Fed Tropical Beef.
Develop a **sustainable regional model to address domestic and Asia-Pacific food security issues.**	• Coordinate regional efforts to position FNQ as a key player in addressing food security issues across Asia-Pacific. • Work with industry to identify new high-value foreign investment opportunities that sustainably grow FNQ communities.
Facilitate localism and sustainable development through re-focusing whole of government approach from key agencies and supporting the development of agricultural precincts.	• Support the development of existing or 'in progress' agricultural precincts, such as Gilbert River irrigation area, by up-front regional planning with respect to utilities, tree clearing and production systems. • Drive government focus and resources to assess and establish new precincts in the Atherton Tablelands, Weipa and Lakeland districts with focus on establishing new opportunities, markets, sustainable production systems and

	infrastructure utilities to secure critical mass for long-term viable enterprises. • Facilitate forums between key Cape York Indigenous economic development entities to allow for localism and sustainable development.
Drive industry capability through coordinated and cohesive efforts to attract and retain employees and entrepreneurs, while addressing seasonal employment issues.	• Strategic support for regional industry peaks to 'bring industry back together again' with a focus on revitalizing youth and attracting women to the industry. • Develop a concerted program to target schools in order to position tropical agriculture and farming as viable careers, including introducing school-based VTE modules. • Develop mentoring program to link youth, Indigenous and women to experienced and innovative farmers. • Engage the Innovative Learning and Training Facility (a collaboration between governments, nor-for-profit sector and industry) to provide individualized experiential learning in a non-traditional environment. • Broker stable seasonal worker teams from across the region to address lack of available labour during peak seasons.
Re-think current financing options for agricultural sector in order to **reduce farm debt ratios**.	• Broker banking sector discussions to investigate regional financing solutions for FNQ agricultural sector. • Investigate flexibility of the Farm Management Deposits model to allow for tax breaks in times of emergency and/or natural disasters. • Gain further resources to support family-based properties in the grazing industry through management and small business capacity building.
Develop an **integrated agricultural pest management program for feral animals**.	• Work with NRM bodies to develop best practice and sustainable strategy for the trapping, shooting and baiting of feral pest animals. Should be linked to current National Environmental Research Program (NERP) funding.
Package Indicators	**Strategic Reference Documents**
• Decrease in the average age and increase in the skills base of our region's farmers. • Growth in regional agricultural production and diversity. • Benchmarked improvements in key management practices across the region. • Decrease in the cost of farm gate transport. • Reduction in farm debt ratios.	• The Contribution of the Primary Industries Sector to NQ Regional Economies (Cummings 2010a). • Input Output Analysis & Modeling the Regional Economies of NQ (Cummings 2010b). • Qld DPI&F North Region: An Analysis from the Top (DEEDI 2009). • Cairns and FNQ Strategic Regional and Industry Profile (DEEDI 2010). • Feasibility Study for Organic Farming Concept (Advance Cairns/DEEDI). • Tropical North Qld Regional Economic Plan (2011) • National Strategic Rural R&D Investment Plan (2011)

TOURISM & AVIATION FUTURES

Regional Development Australia
FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND AND TORRES STRAIT INC

Package Narrative: Tourism is, and will continue to be an economic foundation in FNQ&TS. However, due to the high Australian dollar, the GFC and the national resources boom, a two-speed economy has been created. As a result, Northern Queensland's resources wealth currently supports Far North Queensland's economy; historically however, the reverse has been true with tourism supporting our Southern neighbours. This link is undeniable, and during the boom major and strategic reinvestment in the industry is needed to support product diversification and build resilience. The lack of a strong outbound market is a major issue in achieving optimum aviation configuration while the current federal aviation attraction model also needs attention. Boosting marketing efforts to align with other service-related industries is a necessity to ensure the region continues to 'punch above its weight'. Capacity building of SMEs and leveraging the NBN will also support the industry's sustainability goals.

Regional Leadership Group	RDA and Government Leads
Tourism Qld, Tropical Tourism North Qld, Savannah Way, Cape York Sustainable Futures, Aviation Cluster, Torres Strait Regional Authority, Cassowary Coast Regional Council, Tablelands Regional Council, Cairns Airport Ltd, Skytrans, Wet Tropics Management Authority.	Cam Charlton (RDA) Gavin Taylor (DSDIP)

#	Key Package Initiatives (WHAT)	Pathways (HOW)
1	**Driving the existing aviation strategy** by addressing freight and backfill opportunities and reforming federal airline attraction and operating models.	• Integrate with TNQ Regional Economic Plan, lead agencies Cairns Airport and TTNQ in order to support the aviation strategy. • Leverage the Queensland government's aviation initiatives ($8M over four years) and Tourism Australia's aviation support program ($3M per annum). • Work with Advance Cairns/TTNQ to deliver on the State's pre-election commitment gap of $3.2M for new route marketing. • Form working group to develop and implement the plan to address blockages to freight exports and explore how the region can take advantage of backfilling opportunities. • Instigate regulatory reform around the Commonwealth's airline attraction process, with the view that contracts should shift to a performance-oriented/ incentive-based approach (i.e. from an outputs to outcomes focus with a higher level of regional control).
2	**Broaden the appeal of the destination through the promotion of significant sub-regional tourism precincts (nodes)** and draw a clearer link between the (generally sub-regional natural or cultural tourism assets) and the associated service and infrastructure requirements.	• Progress a preliminary study into revitalizing key sub-regional precincts (nodes) with a focus on TQ's TOP: positioning Cape York (wilderness experience and the world's oldest culture), Tablelands (food trail and adventure tourism), Cooktown (based on its historical legacies), Torres Strait and NPA (based on super-yacht and Island cultures), Cassowary Coast (Mission Beach redevelopment and Cassowaries), Babinda (lower key nature-based and farm tourism), Port Douglas (revitalising the Daintree World Heritage brand and Port Douglas infrastructure) and Gulf (building on Gulf Savannah foundations and 'accessible outback' status). • Support TTNQ in delivering on its strategy to 'Build regional diversity via experiences and equity in the suite of TNQ precinct brands' by affecting budgetary cycles to gain additional funding. • Drive a strategy to deliver more uniform agreement between State and Local governments and industry, about protecting and enhancing key sub-regional tourism assets and exploring how existing programs can be re-aligned to provide investor confidence.
3	**Rethinking the interaction between natural assets and tourism development** and investment by addressing operating models and land security.	• Advocate for targeted National Park and pastoral lease tenure reform (user-pays model) and asset negotiations (permit/leasing changes) to allow a fairer system for tourism operators and Traditional Owner groups. • Ensure a strongly community driven regional discussion in partnership with State and Federal governments concerning bio-regional planning in Cape York and very new models for protecting World Heritage values (while allowing sustainable tourism development). • Integration of National Landscapes initiative as part of Tourism Australia's international programs. • Advocate for a set of health and safety and building codes with flexibility for seasonal and remote facility development in natural areas.

4	**Elevating the region's brand position** through evidence-based methodology, cross-sectoral product development, positioning of new products and increased marketing funds.	• Drive a multi-faceted approach to China including linkages with the education sector (ie study tour market), regional product development strategy (ie outback) and visa reform (particularly with Chinese (FIT) visas). • Work with government to align marketing dollars for TTNQ to other service-based industry spending. • Use key sector indicators to monitor tourism segment movements and the link, if any, to marketing, infrastructure investment and training dollars. • Link tourism messages with the outcomes of the Advance Cairns regional branding exercise. • Resolve the model for regionalizing resourcing of tourism promotions.
5	**Develop industry skills and business capacity** by leveraging the NBN, certification to meet the needs of growing markets and addressing regulatory issues.	• Work with VET sector under National Partnership Agreement (training to Cert III) to develop certification for service delivery to Indian/Chinese markets. • Incorporate Port Douglas into the pre-NBN roll-out capacity building to show how the industry can make the most of it. • Implement the FNQ Tourism Employment Plan (TEP) to ease labour and skill shortages. • Grow capacity through addressing the federal taxation model, building code red tape (Qld government) and town planning issues (Local govt.)
6	**Develop Cairns as 'Australia's Gateway to Asia Pacific'** through strategic aviation industry development and leveraging existing policy.	• Enhance past work in development of a stronger regional aviation cluster. • Focus on rapid finalization of the Cairns Airport Land Use Plan, including adjustment support arrangements to allow for non-aviation development (aeronautical and aerospace). • Drive customs clearance solutions for Australia through Cairns Airport.
7	**Build resilience and diversity through key product diversification.**	• Work with JCU and CRC Sustainable Tourism to establish the TMI Tropical Sports Institute (TSI) of the Australian Institute of Sport and export knowledge. • Focus energy on new product development including mountain bike trails in the Tablelands, an outstanding Entertainment Facility for Cairns, Dreaming Track for Cape York. • Implement the Cruise Ship Strategy (TTNQ/Ports North) and the Sports Tourism strategy (TTNQ/JCU).

Package Indicators	**Strategic Reference Documents**
Additional funding received for promotional purposes. Attraction of direct flights from Asia. Increase in international visitor nights and average spend, particularly outside of Cairns. Increase in domestic visitor nights and average spend, particularly outside of Cairns. User pay model in National Parks. Increase in the number of Chinese FITs. Number of SMEs 'China and India Ready'. TSI established.	TNQ Regional Economic Plan. Tourism 2020 Tourism Employment Plans (TEPs) Strategy. Cairns Airport Proposed Draft Land Use Plan 2010. TTNQ Digital Strategy – Getting Involved. Strategic Marketing Plan 2011 – 2015; A Five-Year Vision for the Region.

FNQ&TS Roadmap Priority Implementation Package 7:

BUSINESS & RESOURCE SECTOR GROWTH

Regional Development Australia
FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND AND TORRES STRAIT INC

Package Narrative: FNQ&TS has a small business economy servicing key sectors such as tourism, mining and agriculture. We also have a significant underemployed pool of residents without the experience and/or ideal skills mix for the resources sector. While this presents great opportunities, the rapid growth in the resources sector is largely outside the region and impacting on the Australian dollar, with serious consequences on other sectors like tourism, and hence for local employment. We need a major refocus on building and brokering local skills (among SMEs and skilled and under-skilled individuals) to better engage key and emerging industries and to attract high quality workforces and administrative centres to our quality lifestyle region. Consideration should also be given to our Northern neighbours, PNG, to ensure streamlined access to both Australians and PNG Nationals to continue to foster this crucial relationship.

Regional Leadership Group	RDA and Government Leads
Advance Cairns, Australian Business Consulting & Solutions, Dawson Group, Cairns Chamber of Commerce, Tropical Institute of TAFE, Tablelands Industry Workforce Group, Cairns Regional Council, Cummings Economics, Ports North, Local Employment Coordinator.	Sonja Johnson (RDA) Debbie Maguire (DSDIP)

#	Key Package Initiatives (What)	Pathways (How)
1	**Nurture and grow capacity in the local workforce** by developing better pathways into the resources sector and value-added apprenticeships, including a Collaborative Centre of Excellence model and associated retention strategy.	• Undertake a resource/civil/agricultural sector supply and demand analysis including capacity of regional training infrastructure. Map out improved future career progression strategy including retention. • Radically address industry training funds mismatch via new partnerships that deliver supply-chain apprenticeship schemes/ Job Services Australia (JSA) links. • Supply superior apprentices via regional employer accreditation program/enhanced training model, building trust in training sector and closer relationships with companies. • Trial a VET Contribution Scheme (VETCS) similar to HECS to allow the under-skilled (and predominantly low socio-economic group) to meet the needs of the industry. • Form collaborative VET/RTO/research model that links with ‘real-life’ resource sector experience via an Australian Mining Skills Centre. • Progress intent to establish Minerals and Energy Academy with QRC and State govt. • Effectively broker Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island teams/SMEs to specific mining sites, including revised mentoring programs.
2	**Build a versatile local small to medium enterprise (SME) base** to service the resources sector by building capacity, capability and productivity in mining service enterprises, orchestrating local procurement agreements and refocusing clusters.	• Undertake an assessment of capability of the mining services sector to understand under-utilization of current services and service gaps (and develop regional capability statement). • Work with DSDIP, RDA Kimberley, RDA NT and resource sector to ensure up-to-date intelligence is readily available to the region’s businesses, on mining developments occurring throughout relevant areas across Qld, NT and northern sections of WA, PNG, Pacific Islands and Papua Indonesia. • Through TO groups, CYSF, Balkanu, Chambers and other industry and development organisations, deliver SME-based preferred supplier agreements with resource sector (i.e. buy local).

		• Resharpen the SME-based sectoral/cluster model and focus brokerage into national/ international resources sector. • Identify activities to target PNG resources sector in order to gain funding external to DMC contract (includes skills work through TAFE).
3	**Increase sub-regional data and social impact assessment knowledge** and disseminate research through cohesive hub and program of activity.	• Establish data research office (JCU as hub) to influence national data issues and link research with regulatory requirements. • Continue to pursue ABS branch in Cairns and address data gaps at sub-regional level through joint DEEWR/Cummings/OESR/ABS project. • Build regional SIA capacity for development approval process and deliver targeted research to end-users.
4	**Enhance Cairns' FIFO appeal** through a concerted approach to addressing route capacity to key markets and positioning Cairns as a supportive FIFO community.	• Build attractiveness of Cairns as a major point of hire by incorporating flight route requirements to NQ, CQ NT and WA in the wider NQRDI aviation strategy. • Investigate what programs already exist for FIFO or similarly affected Defence families, and develop 'supportive community' programs appropriate to the region and future residents. • Continue the FIFO positioning campaign (Advance Cairns) to deliver appropriate messages with priority focus on PNG, northern and central Qld, NT and WA. • Partner with CRC to fund social and sporting activities specifically for FIFO families. • Work with expanding or new mines to position Cairns as their corporate or project hubs and 'transitional accommodation strategy' and work with Australian Government to support routes.
5	**Attract key resource sector corporates** by providing decision makers with trustworthy, easy access to regional information and experiences.	• Establish points of coordination with the sector (Jeremy Blockey/Sharon Dawson) via mine superintendents, corporate level employees and international corporates, to build relationships with the aim of attracting branch offices (70 employees), through the CCoC familiarisation program and other means, with focus on links with PNG.
6	Enhance the ability of the region to **maximise benefits from Papua New Guinea's current economic boom** by reducing or removing 'red tape' blockages between the two countries.	• Reduce aviation barriers by allowing passenger and incoming PNG baggage clearances to be completed as part of the departure process at Cairns International Airport. • Commission report seeking improvements to availability of work visas for both Australian and Papua New Guinea governments.

Package Indicators	**Strategic Reference Documents**
• Portion of underemployed joining resources sector. • Extent of multi-sector pathway partnerships. • Number of Indigenous people placed into resources sector jobs. • Number of new mining and mining support enterprises attracted to region. • Economic impact of mining services. • Extent of satisfaction with Cairns as FIFO destination amongst residents.	• Cairns Region Economic Future 2012-25 • Queensland Infrastructure Plan • Qld Resource Sector State Growth Outlook (QRC) • FNQ Resources Report (Cummings) • 20th Australia Papua New Guinea Ministerial Forum, Business Issues • 2008 Mining Services Study (Cummings)

FNQ&TS Roadmap Priority Implementation Package 8:

STRONG LOCAL GOVERNANCE

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Package Narrative: Local government is the heart of community planning and service delivery across FNQ&TS. The region has made huge strides in voluntary regionalism, increasing the effectiveness of local government in many areas. Combined with the expanded use of new infrastructure program models based on strategic asset management (e.g. Roads Alliance in Qld), major progress could be made in several domains. We are looking for support to further enhance voluntary regionalism and progress dialogue on devolved government of the Torres Strait Islands. We also wish to see the Roads Alliance model enhanced and expanded into other key asset areas. Finally, effective management of our natural assets will require both Federal and State governments to reinvigorate a devolved and integrated community based NRM model which continues to build the strong partnerships with local government in this region.

Regional Leadership Group	RDA and Government Leads
Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils, Regional Organisation of Councils Cape York.	Gordon Malcolm (DLGCRR) Cr Peter Scott (RDA)

#	Key Package Initiatives (WHAT)	Pathways (HOW)
1	Enable local governments to define and implement their communities' strategic priorities identified within Strategic Plans.	• State and Federal recognition that Strategic Plans are the discreet directions of communities within Local Government Areas (self-determined). Joint active implementation is required (financial and resources) to deliver identified priorities 'on ground'. • Senior State and Federal agencies and staff should explicitly have delivery of Councils Strategic Plans built into their Key Performance indicators.
2	Regional Managers Coordination Network effectively resourced (financial, and with authority) to coordinate and respond to regional issues.	• Resource and provide strong Terms of Reference and Key Performance Indicators for the Regional Managers Coordination Network (RMCN) (which is to include Local and Federal representatives **as equal partners**) to provide local recommendations/ submissions and agreed regional action plans on policies, planning and service delivery reform and delivery which affects our region. • Local Governments and regional organisations have all undertaken fairly rigorous community engagement to develop Strategic Plans. These plans should be 'owned' and form part of State and Federal Regional Manager key performance indicators (link to package 1). • This will support active collaboration between local, state and federal agencies.
3	Apply the Qld Road Alliance Model across other asset classes (hard and natural).	• The Road Alliance model has seen the successful and strategic application of Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme funds within the region. The Councils within the region with DTMR prioritise this funding. This region is mature enough to apply this same model across hard and natural assets. For example, funding for Water and Waste, Natural Resources (Natural Assets) and Landfills could be managed the same way. Councils within the region are then accountable to their neighbouring Councils whilst eliminating the transaction costs of competitive funding.
4	From the onset engage resources and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait local governments to continue to improve governance and participate effectively in the projects, which will have an impact on their communities.	• Major projects applying to all Indigenous communities in the Cape and Torres Strait, need to be worked through a central 'portal' which is made up of a Federal, State and ROCCY representation to check for; duplication of efforts, 'over load' of projects within a community and linkage to their community plans (i.e. what the community wants!). • For those projects which apply to one community, Councils should be consulted and endorse the project prior to commencement. • Invest in Regional Organisations of Councils to progressively lift governance performance benchmarks and enable local governments collectively to collaborate with Federal and State Governments to review and facilitate major projects prior to their commencement. They will then be responsible for ensuring that representative agencies engage with the relevant individual/s at the appropriate time.

5	Support and encourage further development of the FNQROC and ROCCY	• Supporting regional alliances such as Regional Organisation of Councils (ROC's) with funding will allow Federal and State Governments to obtain a regional consensus on key policy and investment issues. Supporting regional alliances of Councils will also give rise to managing capacity and resourcing issues as a collective (i.e. sharing resources).

Package Indicators	Strategic Reference Documents
Independent review to be undertaken every two years to ascertain the benefit both quantitatively and qualitatively (dependent on funding) and linked to each of these packages ($100k per ROC per annum for 4 years).	• Councils Long Term Community Plans • FNQROC Regional Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Action Plan • FNQROC Regional Pest Management Strategy • FNQROC Regional Asset Management Strategy • FNQRRG Alternative Business Models Study (Roads) • ROCCY Cape York Regional Disaster Mitigation Management Strategy • ROCCY Regional Investment Strategy (in prep.)