



BORDER REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS MEETING MINUTES

1. MEETING DETAILS

Meeting Title: Border Regional Organisation of Councils Meeting Minutes

Date: 10 October 2025

Time: 9.34am

Location: Social Co House, 167 Balo Street, Moree

Meeting Chairperson: Councillor Rob Mackenzie, Goondiwindi Regional Council

Minutes Prepared by: Goondiwindi Regional Council

Welcome by: Councillor Susannah Pearse, Mayor, Moree Plains Shire Council

Attendance

Attendees:

*Attended via Teams

Moree Plains Shire Council	Cr Susannah Pearse Cr Peter Mailler Natalia Cowley Felicity Eden
Goondiwindi Regional Council	Cr Rob Mackenzie Pippi Harris
Gwydir Shire Council	Cr Tiffany Galvin Cr Sean Coleman
Bourke Shire Council	Cr Lachlan Ford* Leonie Brown*
Inverell Shire Council	Cr Kate Dight Sharon Stafford
Bulloo Shire Council	
Paroo Shire Council	Cr Suzette Beresford* Martin Leech*
Balonne Shire Council	Cr Samantha O'Toole Cr Michaela Christensen Michelle Clarke
Tenterfield Shire Council	Cr Greg Sauer Cr Bronwyn Petrie
Brewarrina Shire Council	
Southern Downs Regional Council	Cr Sheryl Windle



Walgett Shire Council	Donna Ausling
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Also in Attendance:

Qld Cross Border Commissioner	Ian Leavers
Inland Rail	Lauren Marer*
NSW Reconstruction Authority	Mitchell Parker
Department of Primary Industries	Astrid Hughes*
Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers, QLD	Katelyn Burey

Apologies:

Premiers Department NSW	Sarah Barton
QLD Fire Department	Chris Mitchell
Toowoomba North Electorate Office	Trevor Watts MP
Northern Tablelands Electorate Office	Brendan Moylan MP
NSW Cross Border Commissioner	Kalina Koloff
Regional Development Australia	Russell Stewart
Northern Tablelands Local Land Services	Paul Hutchins
Bulloo Shire Council	Cr Stewart Morton Donna Hobbs
Gwydir Shire Council	Leeah Daley
Walgett Shire Council	Cr Jasen Ramien
Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers	Hon. Ann Leahy MP

Moved: *Cr Tiffany Galvin*

Seconder: *Cr Peter Mailler*

That the meeting apologies be accepted

Carried

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Border Regional Organisation of Councils meeting held on Friday 20 June 2025 in Bourke (hosted by Bourke Shire Council) are attached separately (minus the presentations).

That the minutes of the Border Regional Organisation of Councils meeting held on 20 June 2025 as circulated to members, be confirmed as a true and correct record of that meeting.

Moved: *Cr Tiffany Galvin*

Seconder: *Cr Greg Sauer*

Carried



3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Leonie Brown met with Minister Moriarty to discuss the status of the dog fence and ongoing wild dog management efforts. The dog fence project has now been completed, and there are currently no plans to extend it further along the QLD/NSW border. A total of \$37.5 million has been spent on the project, with 80km of fencing initially identified as a priority, though funds have since been reprioritised.

There was concern over the low number of reported wild dog incidents, fewer than 70 in Northern NSW over 12 months. BROC attendees expressed disappointment, believing this significantly underrepresents the true impact, particularly given continued stock losses. The Barrington to Hungerford stretch remains unfenced and is considered a vulnerable area.

Cr Rob Mackenzie questioned whether landowners are reporting incidents accurately, suggesting actual numbers are likely higher.

Leonie Brown has been actively encouraging landowners to report wild dog attacks properly.

Cr Peter Mailler proposed shifting the conversation from numbers to financial impact, as this may resonate more with decision-makers.

To improve data collection, QLD Cross Border Commissioner Ian Leavers has offered funding and asked Cr Samantha O'Toole to lead a coordinated effort to gather accurate information. A sub-committee has been recommended by Cr Mackenzie to focus on wild dog management, to be led by Bourke Shire Council, with members including Cr Bronwyn Petrie, Cr Scott Scriven (Balonne Shire Council), and Cr Suzette Beresford.

4. AGENCY UPDATES

Astrid Hughes, Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water

Astrid provided an update which outlined *Prosper 2050*, a 25-year strategy developed with industry and stakeholders to strengthen the profitability, productivity, and sustainability of Queensland's primary industries. The plan will be delivered through regional five-year action plans, aiming to grow the sector's value to \$30 billion by 2030. It focuses on collaboration, evidence-based decision-making, and continuous improvement, supported by a new Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. Sector-specific initiatives include the Queensland Future Timber Plan, ensuring timber supply for one million homes by 2044, and the Queensland Fishing and Seafood Action Plan, currently under consultation to support all fishing sectors statewide. Additionally, QLD DPI has committed \$2 million to support ongoing work on the Queensland side of the dog fence.

Lauren Marer, Inland Rail

Lauren provided a presentation which outlined Inland Rail's plans to enhance national freight capacity, reduce road congestion and emissions, and improve regional connectivity by linking Melbourne to Brisbane via Parkes, Narromine, and Toowoomba. Inland Rail is progressing construction between Beveridge and Parkes, with completion south of Parkes expected by late 2027. The next phase north of Narromine is awaiting government approvals and land acquisitions. Design contracts have been awarded for sections between Moree–Camurra, Narromine–Baradine, and the NSW/QLD Border–Gowrie, as well as for the Narrabri to North Star and Narromine to Narrabri routes. Approvals for the 75km Pilliga State Forest section are still pending, with biodiversity and Native Title work continuing. Site investigations between Narromine and Moree are largely complete, and consultations on hydrology and flood impacts will commence in early 2026. Next steps include further community engagement, reinstating Council Consultative Committees, and refining hydraulic design solutions.



Mitchell Parker, NSW Reconstruction Authority

Mitchell provided a presentation outlining the outcomes of *Exercise Sentinel*, held in Inverell, August 2025 represented by NSW Reconstruction Authority. The exercise focused on improving cross border recovery collaboration following a disaster, using a scenario based on the 2023 Wallangarra/Jennings fire. Over 90 participants attended, including representatives from local councils, state agencies, and MPs. Activities included presentations aligned with the PPRR (Prevention, Preparedness, Response, Recovery) framework and group discussions addressing recovery challenges across NSW and QLD. Key outcomes highlighted strengthened cross border disaster resilience, enhanced strategic collaboration, improved communication between agencies, and a shared commitment to long-term regional recovery and preparedness.

That the letter requesting the Bushfire Management Committee be reinstated be sent from BROC

Moved: *Cr Kate Dight*

Seconder: *Cr Bronwyn Petrie*

Carried

5. CROSS BORDER UPDATES

Ian Leavers, Queensland Cross Border Commissioner, provided an update on cross border matters

NSW Cross-Border Commissioner Update:

- Kalina Koloff has moved to the NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Cross-Border Health Information Sharing

- Ian raised the issue of cross-sharing of health information with the Director-General for Health.
- Awaiting a formal response on the matter.

Wild Dog Fence Project

- Ian expressed support for the initiative and is willing to provide funding towards the project.

Policing and Community Safety

- Boggabilla Police: Officers are being diverted to Moree, leaving Boggabilla under-resourced.
- Youth Justice: Bob Bennett, Youth Justice Officer, has had a positive impact in the Goondiwindi area. Ian would like to see his skills be utilised in other regions.
- Adult Crime Issues: Concerns raised that the "Adult Crime, Adult Time" approach is ineffective due to judicial decisions.
- Mungindi: A Special Police Constable is needed, Ian believes better in-person training is essential and online methods are inadequate.

Health Services Access

- Blood Donation: There are currently no blood donation centres in the Southern Downs or Tenterfield regions.



- Medical Imaging: X-rays cannot be transferred electronically across state borders and must be photocopied, causing delays and inefficiencies for cross border residents.

Occupational Licensing

- Ian is advocating for better recognition and harmonisation of occupational licences across borders.
- Intends to push the Federal Government to address these issues.

University Access

- University Hubs in QLD are not available for use by NSW-enrolled students, limiting access for cross border learners.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

A discussion was held regarding the NSW Government's land acquisition and management practices under the "30% before 2030" project, with concerns raised about the negative impacts on regional communities. It was noted that around 10% of productive land in the local government area has been converted into National Parks, resulting in the loss of council rates, declining populations, reduced employment opportunities, and ongoing issues with feral animal control. Further concerns included poor park management, failure to pay required fees such as Wild Dog Board and LLS rates, and a lack of transparency in purchasing practices, with properties being bought for up to three times their market value. The estimated annual loss in productivity in Bourke Shire alone is approximately \$70 million. Bourke Shire Council is calling on the NSW Government to halt further land purchases until socio-economic studies are conducted, management plans are established for feral animal and weed control, and transparency around costs and acquisitions is improved. Support from other councils is being sought, with about 50% of NSW councils facing similar issues, and BROC members were encouraged to advocate for greater awareness of these impacts, particularly among city-based voters.

That BROC support Bourke Shire Council.

Moved: *Cr Greg Sauer*

Seconder: *Cr Kate Dight*

Carried

The expenses related to the disaster forum held in Inverell totalled \$5,228.45, \$228.45 over the allocated amount.

That BROC approve the over expenditure for the disaster forum.

Moved: *Cr Kate Dight*

Seconder: *Cr Michaela Christenson*

Carried



7. STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA FOR BROC (SPA)

SPA 1 – Economic Development and Tourism – Inverell Shire Council

Industry/Renewable – Southern Downs

EnergyCo has confirmed that the transmission lines will be relocated, resulting in a 12-month delay to the project timeline. In the meantime, the Goondiwindi team has carried out maintenance on the Millmerran lines, which has already led to noticeable improvements in reliability and performance.

Digital Connectivity – Goondiwindi

Field Solutions Group has withdrawn its funding, resulting in ongoing connectivity issues. The Queensland Reconstruction Authority is currently in discussions with a new firm to assess progress and explore potential solutions to address these issues.

Tourism – Paroo/Tenterfield

Following the severe weather events earlier this year, funding has been allocated for release in February 2026 to support tourism recovery in the region. Paroo Shire Council has reported lower-than-expected tourism numbers. Cr Suzette Beresford has expressed interest in exploring strategies to extend the tourism season and attract more visitors to the area.

SPA 2 – Liveability – Moree Plains Shire Council

Health – Tenterfield

The rollout of the Tenterfield mental health hubs has been delayed, though it is hoped they will be operational within the next month or so. In the Moree area, there are ongoing issues with virtual healthcare due to a shortage of doctors and specialists, raising concerns about the effectiveness of service delivery. However, there is hope that this will be a short-term issue and that staffing levels will improve soon.

Housing – Goondiwindi/Bulloo

Goondiwindi Regional Council has waived application fees to encourage increased housing development. The Council has received \$100,000 from the Department of State Development and Infrastructure under the *Pathway 1* program to assist with the review and update of the Town Planning Scheme. Additionally, approximately \$1.1 million is available across two Queensland Government projects under the Residential Activation Fund, one stream for developers and one for councils, aimed at supporting infrastructure connections to facilitate new housing developments.

Education – Gwydir

Gwydir Shire Council has advertised for apprentices, cadets, and trainees as part of the Grow Your Own program, aiming to build local skills and create employment pathways within the region.



Policing/Crime – Goondiwindi/Moree

Crime in the Goondiwindi area has primarily involved theft, with a noted decrease in youth crime but an increase in adult-related offences. In contrast, Walgett is experiencing significant issues with youth crime, however, with 60 police officers in the area, they do not believe that policing levels are the core problem. Balonne Shire has observed a shift towards rising youth crime in their region. Bingara and Warialda continue to face challenges due to a lack of police presence, as officers are predominantly stationed in Inverell. Additional concerns have been raised regarding tobacco shops allegedly selling vapes, illegal cigarettes, and drugs, as well as the suspicious use of drones over rural properties, believed to be used for identifying potential theft targets.

SPA 3 – Infrastructure - Gwydir Shire Council

Road Network – Gwydir/Balonne

Resealing works have commenced on roads shared between councils, with the I B Bore Road now completed. Councils are currently prioritising which roads require attention next. The reclassification of the Bruxner Way as a council road has caused disappointment among local councils, as the State Government advised that if it were reclassified back to a main road, it would not be maintained to the same standard as local governments currently provide. Cr Peter Mailler noted that there are several roads similar to the Bruxner Way presenting ongoing challenges. A review is also underway regarding the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator.

Transport – Moree

Moree Plains Shire Council is facing issues with Qantas flight scheduling, impacting local travel and connectivity.

Water Security, Urban and Wastewater – Inverell

Gwydir Shire Council continues to experience PFAS contamination issues in the Narrabri area. In Moree, aquifers have not been fully replenished since the 2022/2023 period, contributing to ongoing water supply concerns.

SPA 4 – Disaster Management – Balonne Shire Council

Agency Coordination – Balonne

Following the recent Disaster Forum, the need for a shared contact list to be used in the event of an emergency to improve coordination across councils was discussed. A potential Mungindi exercise was also considered, with focus on clarifying which council would take the lead during an evacuation affecting border towns. It was further noted that Balonne Shire Council has installed new flood cameras, which are now live and publicly accessible.

Bio Security – Balonne

It was proposed that a Biosecurity Forum be organised, similar in structure to the recent Disaster Forum. The forum would aim to strengthen cross border coordination and preparedness for biosecurity risks. The preferred timing is August 2026, with Goondiwindi or Moree suggested as potential host locations.



8. CORRESPONDENCE

Inwards

- Statement Summary's, Fixed Term Deposit - Warwick Credit Union
- Statement Summary – NAB
- Inverell RSM Invoice (Disaster Forum)
- Print Anything Invoice (BROC Merchandise)
- RBL Group Invoice (Disaster Forum)
- Water Buyback Letter Response – The Hon Murray Watt
- Bourke Shire Council Correspondence – Wild Dog Exclusion Fence

Outwards

- Letter Addressing Insurance Premium Increases – Andrew Hall, Insurance Council of Australia
- Water Buyback Letter – The Hon Murray Watt
- Wild Dog Fence Letter – The Hon Tara Moriarty, MLC
- Letter relating to NSW Cross Border Commissioner – The Hon Chris Minns MP

That the inward and outward correspondence be received and noted

Moved: *Cr Peter Mailler*

Seconder: *Cr Sheryl Windle*

Carried

9. Matters Arising from Correspondence

Nil

10. FINANCIAL REPORT

National Australia Bank Business Account

Balance as at 30 September 2025	\$7.21
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National Australia Bank Savings Account

Balance as at 30 September 2025	\$21,958.47
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National Australia Bank – Term Deposit 42-388-8697

Reinvested 27 December 2023 for 12 months @ 4.9%	\$11,548.16
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Warwick Credit Union – Fixed Term Deposit 100005924

Balance as at 30 September 2025	\$12,510.27
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13. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of BROC will be held at Tenterfield hosted by Tenterfield Shire Council on Friday 13th February, 2026 at 9.00am (local time).

14. CLOSURE OF MEETING

There being no further business the meeting closed at 1:52pm

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Mackenzie'.

Councillor Rob Mackenzie

Chair