

## Queensland Plan Ambassadors Council 15 December 2021 Communiqué

The Queensland Plan Ambassadors Council (the Council) held its third meeting for the year on 15 December 2021 in Mount Isa. The Council embraced the opportunity to meet regionally following the success of the Council's meeting in Roma on 28 April 2021.

Prior to the meeting, the Chair provided the Council with a tour of Mount Isa. The tour provided Ambassadors with a unique perspective on how to better support Queensland's regions.

The Council was pleased to welcome to the meeting the Honourable Grace Grace MP, Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing. Minister Grace is the Premier's representative responsible for the Queensland Plan. Minister Grace's participation in Council meetings continues to enhance the strong relationship between the Queensland Government and the Council.

The Council received a warm welcome from the Mount Isa Mayor, Councilor Danielle Slade. Councilor Slade contributed local knowledge and expertise to the Council meeting.

During the meeting, the Council also met with representatives from local peak bodies on topics including mining and resources, regional event management, innovation, the economic future of rural and regional towns, and community and social disadvantage. These topics aligned with the Council's work program for 2021, including consideration of ways to build a more inclusive Queensland, regional innovation and future economic prosperity, and using collective impact and place-based solutions.

### Building a more inclusive Queensland

The Queensland Plan recognises Queenslanders are our State's greatest asset. By unleashing individual potential, Queenslanders maximises personal, community and economic outcomes. The Council continues to work with community leaders and cultural support workers to promote social inclusion and build community connections.

The Council welcomed Ms Barbara Sam, a proud Aboriginal woman, who shared her lived experiences as an Indigenous artist living in Mount Isa. The Council heard of the challenges experienced by Indigenous artists in North Queensland, including limited self-promotion opportunities and gallery representation. Ms Sam discussed the benefits of capitalising on this unique regional opportunity and asset. The Council recognises the growth of niche industries and local talents will support communities, create employment, and draw people to the region.

The Council met with Ms Maryann Wipaki, General Manager Health, Safety, Environment and Community for Glencore, who discussed women in mining and the company's social investment strategy. The Council heard about Glencore's initiatives to:

- increase women's participation in mining
- support women to achieve their goals within the sector
- support community organisations for capacity building projects

Specific programs targeted at supporting young people were shared and their effect on reducing youth disengagement and anti-social behaviour, increasing health and wellbeing, improving access to educational resources and providing positive role models.

The Queensland Plan acknowledges Queenslanders must work together to reduce poverty and disadvantage. The Council heard from representatives of the North West Queensland Indigenous Catholic Social Services Limited (NWQICSS), who presented on community and social disadvantage in Mount Isa.

The NWQICSS was established to provide local support to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people on issues such as social isolation, low income, unemployment, intoxication, low rates of immunisation, mental health, suicide, and domestic and family violence. The Council discussed the difference in service delivery models across the sector and identified improvement opportunities that were within reach.

## Regional innovation

The Queensland Plan recognises digital technologies are critical enablers of innovation and productivity that can remove geographical limitations. The Council met representatives of Isa Rodeo Limited, who discussed the difficulties in running international events in a regional centre. The Council heard how the vision and dedication of the Isa Rodeo Committee and Board Members had seen the event evolve into a national event attracting national and international media profiling.

The Council heard of the COVID-19 pandemic impacts and the rapid adaption to online delivery of services and programs. The Council acknowledged the benefit the virtual Isa Rodeo provided and encouraged other regional Queenslanders to take advantage of global opportunities available through the digital economy.

## Economic future of rural and regional towns

The Queensland Plan recognises our regions are the engine rooms of the State. The Council values building on what makes Queensland's regions exceptional— people, local enterprise, and natural resources. The Council acknowledges this includes developing strategic and competitive advantage.

The Council recognises regional hubs are centred around the niche industries of mining, tourism, and agriculture. Mr Matt O'Neill, Chief Operating Officer for Glencore, provided the Council with an overview of the importance of Queensland's resource sector to the regions, particularly into the future. The Council recognises the specialist expertise and skilled workforces the mining industry offers Mount Isa, and the contributions Glencore makes to forming strong local bases to grow the mining industry into the future.

The Queensland Plan recognises a strong economy is responsive to global shifts and opportunities. The Council discussed the mining sector's ongoing contribution to rural and regional towns as the world transitions to a low carbon economy. Glencore's portfolio profile provides the flexibility to decarbonise its carbon emissions footprint. The Council explored Glencore's decarbonisation pathway towards net zero by 2050. The Council heard that the metals and minerals Glencore produce will enable its transition to a low-carbon economy.

The Council acknowledges that regions are one of Queensland's greatest strategic assets to position the state for growth. The Council heard about the economic future of rural towns from Ms Emma Harman, member liaison for Commerce North-West, and Ms Catherine Robson, Chief Executive Officer of Mount Isa Townsville Economic Zone Incorporated (MITEZ). The Council also heard about the lived experiences of active leaders and local businesses seeking to promote and advance North West Queensland, attract new consumers, visitors and investors.

The Queensland Plan recognises bright minds will drive innovation and help seize future opportunities. The Council heard of initiatives to promote spending locally and discussed strategies to improve economic infrastructure and industries. The Council was interested to hear of the support and improvements applicable to Mount Isa due to the impact of the flooding of North and North-West Queensland in 2019.

The Council is excited by the opportunities available to the region and acknowledges ideas have real social and economic benefits.

### Place-based regional solutions

The Queensland Plan acknowledges that regional development and service delivery should reflect the needs of that region. Professor Allan Dale presented to the Council on the use of collective impact and place-based solutions to improve community service delivery and economic development. The Council discussed how deeply entrenched and complex social problems can be addressed, and the significant and lasting social changes place-based initiatives can bring. The Council highlights how place-based initiatives support local governments, communities and services to achieve collective outcomes, whether they be social, economic or environmental.

### Mount Isa site visits and community engagement

In addition to the Council meeting, Ambassadors actively engaged with the Mount Isa community through a networking event at the Mount Isa Irish Club and a visit to the Mount Isa Police Station on Wednesday 15 and Thursday 16 Decembers 2021, respectively. The Council appreciated the opportunity to actively engage with the Mount Isa community on the Council's 2021 priorities.

On Thursday 16 December 2021, the Council embraced the opportunity to gain a greater understanding of Mount Isa's infrastructure and economy, undertaking a site visit of Glencore's George Fisher underground mine. The Council discussed the significant contribution commodities provide to advancing everyday life from copper in smartphones to zinc in stainless steel fridges.

### Next meeting

The Council will return to Brisbane for its next meeting to be held in in the first quarter of 2022. This meeting will build on the discussions and experience from Mount Isa, including developing actions around Professor Dale's presentation on place-based solutions.

The Queensland Plan acknowledges that by working together, Queensland communities contribute to the State's future. The Council will continue to engage strongly with regional Queenslanders and has committed to holding at least one regional meeting per year to meet and engage with local businesses, government services and the community on important issues facing Queenslanders.