



The Queensland Plan Ambassadors Council

Meeting Communiqué 22-23 February 2018

On 22 and 23 February, the Queensland Plan Ambassadors Council held its first meeting of 2018 at the State Library of Queensland in Brisbane.

Ambassadors were pleased to welcome two special guests to the meeting: Assistant Minister for Veterans Affairs and Assistant Minister of State, Jennifer Howard, the Premier's representative responsible for The Queensland Plan; and Mrs Deb Frecklington, the Leader of the Opposition.

During the two-day meeting, Ambassadors met with representatives from community organisations, peak bodies and the public and private sector with expertise in two of the nine Queensland Plan foundation areas: Infrastructure and Environment. The discussions were an opportunity for Ambassadors to focus on these two closely related foundation areas, and hear from key experts and industry leaders.

Issues and challenges discussed ranged from protection of the Great Barrier Reef and climate change to innovation in waste management and energy capture, as well as infrastructure planning in Queensland more broadly, and new and emerging models for infrastructure delivery. Ambassadors noted the variety of initiatives underway across Queensland, and the pace of innovation in areas fundamental to improving the lives of people and environmental outcomes in Queensland and around the world.

On 21 February, the Chair of the Ambassadors Council, the Hon. Tony McGrady, and Infrastructure foundation area champion, Professor Allan Dale, visited the Gold Coast to hear from state and local government staff about the 2018 Commonwealth Games facilities and the investment in long-term infrastructure for Queensland.


Ambassadors who visited the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games (GC2018) facilities were impressed by the integrated approach taken to regional infrastructure planning and the example this provided for how to leverage special events for broader and longer-term regional social and economic development benefits.

Infrastructure: Being connected

Ambassadors invited panel presentations from senior state government infrastructure planners, representatives of major infrastructure users, regional infrastructure interests, private sector investment corporations and professional associations focused on infrastructure investment and delivery.

Key themes emerging from the Infrastructure panel discussions included:

- While there is support for the State Infrastructure Planning approach, there is a strong need for strategic regional infrastructure vision statements and plans that integrate local, state, and Commonwealth government planning, and identify opportunities for the private sector. These vision statements should provide a clear prioritisation of Queensland infrastructure needs, and support identification of a pipeline of infrastructure investment and delivery.
- Panellists advocated for dialogue with Queensland communities in developing regional infrastructure vision statements and plans, to engage communities about the trade-offs required when prioritising infrastructure projects, as well as the implications of the statewide context and the willingness of users to pay for infrastructure costs when assessing regional infrastructure needs.
- The discussion highlighted how the relative mix of public and private sector investment in infrastructure can be varied according to planning priorities, infrastructure needs and willingness to pay. Private sector investment is better suited to infrastructure projects which attract a higher capacity to pay and public sector investment reserved for less commercial but high priority infrastructure projects.


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- Ambassadors heard how population change and infrastructure usage data informs decisions and thinking about infrastructure planning and priorities, and is critical for ensuring that infrastructure investment reflects current needs and future trends.
 - Panellists expressed strong support for progress being made under the State Infrastructure Plan (SIP), and acknowledged its value as part of the planning framework, while articulating a desire for the SIP to be translated into regional infrastructure plans with a fully integrated approach across transport, water, energy, communications and social infrastructure.
 - The role of local governments was recognised as critical for the provision of local infrastructure, particularly in remote communities with significant infrastructure needs and that have not had adequate infrastructure investment, such as those in many Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities in Far North Queensland.
 - The importance of local infrastructure investment sustaining employment in Queensland for technical professionals whose skills applied in a global marketplace and who otherwise might be attracted elsewhere was identified as a strategic risk to Queensland's economic competitiveness.
 - Genuinely successful and sustainable infrastructure projects require an innovative approach to planning and co-design by investors, professionals and users and must include optimising existing infrastructure through upgrades and systems revitalisation as well as delivering new projects to meet current and future needs. A delegation of Ambassadors saw first-hand, some great examples of this approach in the creation of legacy infrastructure associated with GC2018, including effective partnerships between all three levels of government, the community, industry, the finance sector and indigenous communities.
 - Ambassadors continued to support the strong Queensland focus on integrating both physical and social infrastructure in its infrastructure planning approach.

Environment: *Achieving balance*

In the panel discussions focussed on the Environment foundation area, Ambassadors heard from senior representatives from state government, an independent authority and peak bodies with an environmental agenda, as well as from entrepreneurs driving the development and application of innovative technologies in Queensland delivering environmental benefits.

Key themes emerging from the Environment panel discussions included:

- Developing measures, capturing data and providing information in an accessible way to inform decision-making continues to be a priority for improving our understanding and management of the environment. For example, quality data informs understanding of biodiversity in Queensland, and there is an ongoing need to develop measures and collect data about the condition of biodiversity to inform understanding and development of management strategies to preserve our natural assets.
- Informed public discussion and feedback to government from the community about the environment and natural resources relies on the community having access to accurate information. While government is an important information source, peak bodies and industry organisations can play a valuable role in ensuring their membership base and the community have access to a range of information.
- Representatives from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) and the Queensland Conservation Council referred to the declining condition of the Great Barrier Reef, which the science suggests is increasingly at risk, as is its ability to regenerate. Both organisations also explained that climate change is now recognised as the greatest threat to the reef and that strategies to address the Reef and climate change need to be integrated.

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- Ambassadors heard the Government is looking at a number of initiatives to improve Queensland's performance in waste management and recovery, including reducing plastic in the environment, and industry pointed to the potential for improved waste management in creating closed-loop systems.
 - Innovative business leaders showcased how they are rolling out new technologies for bio-waste management, energy production and storage and soil management. Panellists noted the Government's Advance Queensland agenda is delivering great results in stimulating entrepreneurship and innovation in Queensland. Both panellists and Ambassadors recognised that government and the community can work together to harness the creative power and agility of the private sector, and importantly startups and small businesses, to address environmental problems and capture environmental benefits.
 - Maintaining a business as usual approach will limit Queensland's potential in significant new and emerging industries, and in solving some of our most complex and wicked problems. There is a role for government to develop complimentary legislative and policy responses that enable new and smarter ways of doing things and normalising this approach to natural resources management and environmental protection. Innovative environmental systems and services businesses identified the need for public policy and procurement processes to engage with and support Queensland developed technologies and products.

Looking ahead

The Ambassadors Council is actively considering progress against each of the nine foundation areas – Education, Community, Regions, Economy, Health and Well-being, Environment, People, Infrastructure and Governance. Each Ambassador has been assigned a foundation area aligned with their background and sphere of influence, and is leading a considered analysis of presentations and briefings by experts, government officials, community and sector representatives, and other relevant stakeholders. This process will inform the Ambassadors Council contribution to the five-year review the Premier is required to complete under the *Queensland Plan Act (2014)* by October 2019. The Ambassadors' contribution will be in the form of a report to the Premier about the continuing relevance of The Queensland Plan, its implementation, and opportunities for improvement, in line with the requirements of the legislation.

The Ambassadors Council would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of retiring Ambassador, Emeritus Professor Roger Scott, who brought his expertise and networks in public administration and higher education to Council deliberations. Professor Scott retired from the Council in January 2018 and his contribution will be greatly missed.

The next meeting of the Ambassadors Council will be held in Longreach in June 2018, continuing the Ambassadors commitment to engaging with stakeholders in Queensland's regional communities.

The Ambassadors Council will continue to engage with representatives from across the Queensland community, and welcomes ongoing interest in the Plan. If you would like to contact the Ambassadors Council, please email qldplan.ambassadors@premiers.qld.gov.au.



Queensland Plan Ambassadors

The Honourable Tony McGrady (Chair)

Mr Mark Henley (Deputy Chair), CEO Queensland Council of Social Service

Ms Shelley Argent, National Spokesperson, Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays Australia (PFLAG)

Professor John Cole, Executive Director Institute of Resilient Regions, University of Southern Queensland

Professor Allan Dale, Professor of Tropical Regional Development, Cairns Institute, Centre for Tropical Environmental and Sustainability Studies

Ms Erin Faithful, Student, James Cook University

Mr Daniel Gschwind, CEO Queensland Tourism Industry Council

Mr Taj Pabari, Founder, Fiftysix Creations

Ms Karen Tully, Conservation Sector Director, South West National Resource Management Ltd

Ms Kate Tully, Head of College, Duchesne College, The University of Queensland

Mr Leon Yeatman, Stakeholder Engagement Officer, Community Enterprise Queensland.



Queensland Plan Ambassadors Council Guests and Panel Participants

Kerry Peterson, Deputy Director General, Office of the Commonwealth Games

Bryan Case, Director, Economic Development and Major Projects, City of Gold Coast Council

Scott Krueger, Acting Manager, Economic Development, City of Gold Coast Council

Jo Cochran, Manager, Projects & Partnerships, Gold Coast Health & Knowledge Precinct

Sharyn Scriven, General Manager – Asset Portfolio Optimisation, Energy Queensland

Nicole Hollows, Chief Executive Officer, SunWater

Leisel Moorhead, Partner – Global Infrastructure, Queensland Investment Corporation

Chris Warnock, Committee Member and Infrastructure Spokesperson Queensland, Engineers Australia Queensland Division

Darren Crombie, Deputy Director-General, Infrastructure Policy and Planning, Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning

Jann Crase, Chief Executive Officer, Regional Development Australia – Far North Queensland and Torres Strait

Terry Rossitto, Chair, Infrastructure Association of Queensland

Tony Roberts, Deputy Director-General, Department of Environment and Science

Dr Russell Reichelt, Chair, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (or delegate)

Tim Seelig, Coordinator, Queensland Conservation Council

Rick Ralph, Chief Executive Officer, Waste Recycling Industry Association Queensland

Philip Livingston, Managing Director, Redback Technologies

Tony Rees, Managing Director, GroundWorks

Fiona Waterhouse, Chief Executive, Utilitas

Ross Elliott, Regional General Manager, APP

Stephen Tait, Chief Executive Officer, Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland

Ian Macfarlane, Chief Executive, Queensland Resources Council

Stephen Robertson, Chair, NRM Regions Queensland

Jennifer Howard, Assistant Minister for State and Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Deb Frecklington, Leader of the Opposition