



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications

Senator The Hon Bridget McKenzie MP

**Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and
Regional Education**

– SPEECH COVERSHEET –

Event

Name: Regional Australia Council 2031
Hosted by the Regional Australia Institute (RAI)
Date/Time: Wednesday 22 September 2021, 9am
Venue: by Zoom

Departmental Contact Officer/s

Name: 47E
Title: Director, Regionalisation and Drought
Regional Dev, Local Government & Regional Recovery Division
Phone: 47E

Clearance

Name: Joe Castellino
Title: Assistant Secretary, Regional Policy and Recovery
Regional Dev, Local Government & Regional Recovery Division
Phone: 02 6274 6426 or 47E

Speechwriter

Name: 47E
Title: Assistant Director, Regionalisation and Drought
Regional Dev, Local Government & Regional Recovery Division
Phone: 47E

Regional Australia Council 2021

Acknowledgements

- Thank you Liz (Ritchie, CEO, Regional Australia Institute) for the kind introduction. [TBC]
- Members of the Council.
- The traditional owners of the many lands on which we are meeting today - in my case, the [Ngunnawal/Wiradjuri] people [TBC].

I pay my respects to their elders, past present and emerging, and acknowledge their continuing connection to land, sea and culture.

Introduction

Ladies and gentlemen...

I was thrilled to become Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Connectivity and Regional Education in July this year.

And, as Barnaby Joyce told the National Press Club¹ recently, I insisted on 'regionalisation' in my portfolio title.

It better captures the 'glass half-full' optimism I feel for regional Australia. Where decentralisation of government staff and services is one strand of a much broader policy ambition.

I'm confident the title will last as long as the policy commitment does in future governments. After all, it is not that long ago – in 2007 – we had our first Minister for Infrastructure, which is now the norm.²

My title reflects my vision for our regions, as strong and dynamic with diverse local economies, inclusive communities and strong local leadership.

¹ Deputy Prime Minister's address to the National Press Club, 3 September 2021

² The Hon Anthony Albanese was appointed as Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government in the Rudd Government in December 2007. See - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minister_for_Infrastructure,_Transport_and_Regional_Development

But more than that, I am also ambitious for regional Australia to be the home of great inland regional cities underpinned by private industries, built on the competitive advantages of each region and supported by a skilled and stable workforce.

A move to the regions helps every citizen and taxpayer. Including those experiencing the daily grind of congestion in our crowded capitals, where the cost of major infrastructure projects per-kilometre is comparably high.

So encouraging more Australians to enjoy the lifestyle and sense of community found in the regions is one of the simplest ways of improving daily life for everyone.

As Minister for Regionalisation, I want to ensure businesses, families and investors know of the opportunities already on offer, and foster future growth in our regions – through the right advocacy and the right policy.

Regions are important and growing.....

As you may know, a consequence of our COVID-constrained lives is an increasing appetite for regional life.

Families are more and more aware there's so much to love about life in regional Australia. From the lower cost of living, including housing, to job opportunities and the amazing lifestyle on offer.

And they're voting with their feet.

A net 43,000 Australians moved to regional areas from capital cities last year, the largest net inflow to the regions since the beginning of the series in 2001³.

Since January 2020, the unemployment rate in regional Australia has been consistently lower than the combined capital cities⁴. In May 2021, there were 69,300 job vacancies across regional Australia⁵, a record high.

Two key policy enablers underpinning this shift are better **digital connectivity** and better access to **tertiary education**. I now am a passionate voice for both in Cabinet.

Indeed, my full title is Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education.

³ ABS, 04/05/2021 <https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/net-migration-regions-highest-record>

⁴ Source: ABS 2021, *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed*, 26/08/2021 release. Note: Figures are original and have not been smoothed or seasonally adjusted

⁵ Regional Australia Institute, 29/06/2021 <http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/record-demand-for-labour-in-regional-areas/>

- Better connectivity

Better digital connectivity provides increased opportunities for people to live, work, and establish businesses in the regions.

Work from home almost doubled when COVID began in 2020 and, before the current lockdowns starting in June, it had not decreased as restrictions eased in the final month of 2020 and the first half of this year⁶. The COVID experience has told Australians that they can work from home. And they can make that work in regional Australia.

In the regions, our Government is delivering on **improved telecommunications connectivity**, having committed \$380 million to the Mobile Black Spot Program, \$183 million to the Regional Connectivity Program, and \$68.5 million of dedicated funding to improve telecommunications infrastructure across Northern Australia.

These continuing investments will underpin a range of opportunities for regional industries and businesses to expand their reach.

On this point, the Nationals have ensured that – no matter who is in office – the Government of the day must undertake a health check every three years on regional telecommunication access.

The fifth legislated Regional Telecommunications Review is underway and the Independent Review Committee has undertaken over 20 virtual public consultations across different regional areas of Australia. Submissions to the Committee’s Issues Paper are due on 30 September - I encourage you to make a submission.

We've also committed \$50 million from the Build Better Regions Fund to support the establishment of **Community, Workplace and Innovation Support Hubs** in regional Australia.

These Hubs will provide modern meeting and event spaces for community organisations and local businesses, and provide fully-equipped workplaces for those working remotely.

- Better university access

Regional education is essential for our regional communities, especially access to tertiary education that allows our young people to undertake further study without leaving their home town or region.

⁶ *ABS Household impacts of COVID-19 survey*, released 18/05/2021, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/household-impacts-covid-19-survey/apr-2021>

That's why we've invested an additional \$146 million through the Job-ready Graduates package to support an increase of 3.5 per cent per year in commencing students at regional campuses, through the Commonwealth Grants Scheme⁷.

We also established the Regional University Centres program to help students in regional and remote areas to access higher education without having to leave their community. To date, the Australian Government has announced \$74.2 million for the program and there have been 26 Centres supported – providing campus-style facilities for students that study online.⁸

Through major policy initiatives like these, our Government has been building stronger regions since we came to office in 2013: Methodically reducing the lifestyle disparities between our cities and regions.

So when COVID made many Aussies rethink their own personal choices and consider the regions, we were much more likely to be 'pushing on an open door'.

This confluence of our efforts and global events made it a no-brainer to back the RAI's national awareness campaign, '**Move to More**'.

We are very pleased to be supporting such a worthy and timely initiative with a \$4.6 million contribution.

I want to thank you all for the contributions you have made in shaping that campaign.

We are challenging businesses to come to the regions, and backing that in

Now, turning to business...

If we are to accelerate growth in the regions – which I believe is in the national interest – the private sector must be persuaded to embrace locating in the regions as a low-risk opportunity with considerable upside.

To this end, I recently announced almost \$6 million for two short-term, industry-led collaborative research projects through a regional stream in the **Co-operative Research Centre – Projects grants program**. At least one business partner must relocate to regional Australia from a capital city.

- A grant of \$3 million will support the establishment of a research centre in Gippsland, Victoria, for additive manufacturing of energetic materials to advance manufacturing capability for a rocket fuel additive for space launch.

⁷ https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/statements/2020_2021/ministerial-statement/education-skills-employment.aspx

⁸ Provided by the Department of Education and Employment

- A grant of over \$2.8 million is being provided for a commercial pilot-scale fermentation facility in Goulburn, New South Wales, to develop lipid fermentation for the local manufacture of future foods.⁹

We're also providing grants to support research and the commercialisation of innovative raw materials in regional areas through the **Securing Raw Materials Program**. This program is backing businesses that move to regional areas to research and develop innovative and locally sourced raw material supplies, in partnership with a regional university or research organisation.

Two projects are being funded.

- \$5 million is being provided to develop compostable plastics from grape and grain waste in Muswellbrook, New South Wales¹⁰.
- \$847,000 will support the cultivation of high quality fresh seaweed for consumption, nutraceuticals, cosmeceuticals and biodegradable plastic alternatives in Hervey Bay, Queensland.

We've also commissioned **research into regulatory barriers** impacting businesses that want to relocate to regional Australia. We will use the outcomes of that research to bust unnecessary red or green tape and reduce costs to businesses.

We need to **attract skilled workers to the regions**. Just recently, the Nationals secured agriculture visas to source farm workers from Southeast Asia.

And I will work with the Treasurer Josh Frydenberg and the Assistant Minister to the Treasurer Michael Sukkar to ensure a regional focus in our **population policy** more broadly, to secure skilled workers that are matched with our diverse local economies.

But we will do more....

I want to ensure regional Australia is more resilient to economic shocks and disasters of the future – drought, floods, pandemics and cyber-attacks. It is not enough to just meet these challenges, we must also embrace opportunity. Fostering dynamic local economies and growing population in the regions needs a cooperative approach.

It will require all levels of government and business to work together to identify regions with significant growth potential and capitalise on their **comparative advantage**. Of course, this will be different for each region.

I want to thank the National Farmers Federation and the Business Council of Australia for their support in this work.

⁹ '\$47 million in grants to boost research collaboration in manufacturing' – joint media release with Minister Porter, 3 September 2021.

¹⁰ 'Government funding for innovative project to re-use raw materials in New South Wales Hunter' – joint media release with Senator Davey, 7 September 2021.

However, we're not beginning with a blank page.

We're already working to better connect existing regional businesses with their markets. Just as the Nationals have done for over a century – through trade agreements and nation-shaping infrastructure.

Our flagship project for this generation of Nationals, is **Inland Rail** – a 1700 kilometre corridor of commerce.

The Inland Rail is, in and of itself, a very good reason to move industry to the regions.

As well as savings to transport costs, relocating to the Inland Rail corridor will allow businesses to access cheaper land, be closer to raw materials, and access wider labour markets.

The first wave of investment from the public and private sector is already underway – with the transport and logistics sector embracing the potential of this transformative project.

This includes Special Activation Precincts in Moree and Wagga to grow jobs and economic activity in those regions, and the northern NSW Inland Port planned by the Narrabri Shire Council.

As well as industry investment and expansion by SCT Logistics, Pacific National, Linfox, Interlink SQ, Wagner Corporation, and producers and suppliers searching for new market opportunities.

Relocating public services

I began my remarks by saying that Regionalisation is much, much more than just the relocation of public servants, but it does play a role.

Already, over 430 positions have either relocated to, or been established in the regions, between 2018 and 2020. And earlier this month, the Deputy Prime Minister announced the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority will also be relocated to Bowen in – wait for it – North Queensland.

My department has commissioned a study to assess the potential to establish Australian Public Service Hubs in regional Australia – a secure workspace for those who want to remain in the regions, and creating a critical mass of workers across agencies.

This study will inform decisions of government on establishing pilot Hubs.

In summary

Today, I have talked about my new role and how it impacts individuals, through better digital connectivity and better access to university.

I've also talked about the ways we are encouraging the relocation of businesses, including through direct grants and building the 'corridor of commerce'.

As the Minister for Regionalisation, I am focused on developing and growing our regions.

Which will benefit us all.

But I need your help.

Ultimately, it is the **private sector** that creates jobs, backs innovation and fosters (local or international) trading relationships which help them grow.

And within the private sector, it is individuals who lead. Those who are open to considering the advantages on offer in our regions and then committing to action.

In doing so, you also help local businesses and service providers ride out the cyclical challenges sometimes associated with an over reliance on a dominant employer or industry.

This is truly a win / win.

Let me work with you to make regional Australia your home.

Tell me what you need for your business to 'move to more', and I will do what I can to help you get there.

Thank you for listening, and for stepping up to become members of RAC2031.

[ENDS]

1971 words = approx. 16 minutes @ 120 words per minute

Archived: Friday, 22 October 2021 9:14:01 AM

From: 47E

Sent: Tue, 31 Aug 2021 21:10:16

To: 47E

Cc: CASTELLINO Joe; PICKWORTH Julia

Subject: Backbrief - DPM MYEFO approach [SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET]

Sensitivity: Normal

Attachments:

DPM Regional MYEFO briefing Aug 2021.docx; Attachment out of scope - s22.

PROTECTED, SH:CABINET

Hi 47 and team

s22

- DPM listed and reflected back on each example and what the story was in each example.
 1. Burdekin – DPM sees the story as how to use this investment to get water west. That is the narrative. Secretary noted we need to build the dam first and then, as the technology is ready, we have options of how to move water west. Further discussion on Queensland water infrastructure and Bowen. They talked through Population, mine at Julia Creek, Charters Towers, NQWIA moving to Bowen (new version of Snowy hydro). **Press club address to announce moving NQWIA to Bowen** – move it and grow it. Can announce this as it is within DPM authority. Talk to person in Qld about vision for Bowen, unlocking billions.

s22

- DPM vision – its about decentralisation, our key assets, growth of vital infrastructure, unlocking opportunities for the region and the nation.

s22

- Press Club on Friday – sell story/vision. Announce NQWIA moving to Bowen. City in the North West. s22

s22

Actions

- Rachel to back brief Brendan. NQWIA to be advised of announcement.

s22

PROTECTED, SH:CABINET

-



Australian Government
**Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Communications**

To: The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP (decision)

cc: Mr Simon Atkinson, Secretary

cc: Brendan McRandle, Deputy Secretary

North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority (NQWIA) - preliminary advice on implementing its relocation to Bowen, Queensland

Action required by: 8 October 2021

Reason:

Recommendation/s:	
<p>1. That you note the work already underway to relocate the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority (NQWIA) to Bowen, Queensland and that the Department will return with further advice that will support implementation of your decision.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Noted / Please Discuss</p>	
<p>2. That you sign the enclosed letter (Attachment A) to the Prime Minister advising him of your decision ^{s22}</p>	
Signed / Not Signed	
<p>The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP Date:</p> <p>Comments:</p>	

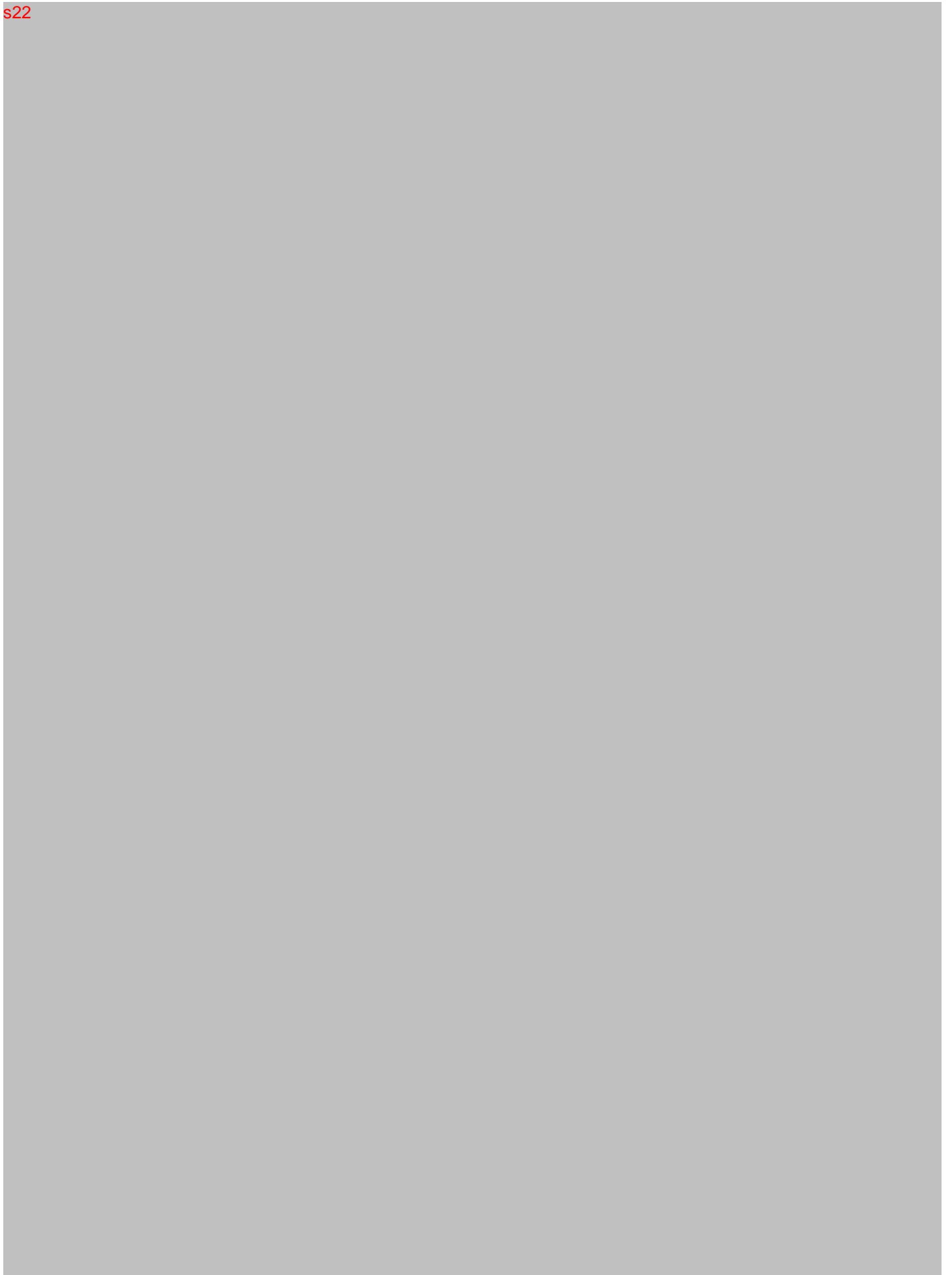
Key Points:

1. You have requested an implementation plan to give effect to your decision to relocate NQWIA’s headquarters to Bowen in North Queensland, announced on 3 September 2021.
2. This brief outlines actions underway by the Department and actions you will need to take.

Actions already underway

3. The Department has briefed the Australian Government’s contracted accommodation provider (Colliers) to start finding suitable office accommodation in Bowen. Before finalising any lease, NQWIA will need to identify how many positions are to be based in Bowen.
4. While NQWIA can be headquartered in Bowen, to deliver on the Government’s objectives for the Burdekin region, it will also need to maintain staff across several locations where key stakeholders are located. This includes Townsville and Brisbane, both to engage with industry and the Queensland Government. This is critical for successful delivery.

s22



s22

Immediate action

12. As an immediate action, the Department recommends that you write to the Prime Minister to:

- a. Notify him of your decision to relocate NQWIA as an essential component of delivering on your vision for new irrigated agriculture in North Queensland.

s22

s22

15. The Department will return with comprehensive advice that will include:

- a. An implementation plan and timings – with the expectation that NQWIA will be established in Bowen within the next 3-6 months (subject to a CEO being appointed and suitable office accommodation being secured).

s22

Stakeholder Implications:

Your announcement that NQWIA would be located in Bowen received strong local support in North Queensland.

The Office of Northern Australia can provide a supporting role alongside a relocated and expanded NQWIA as projects develop across north Queensland.

Consultation:

North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority.

Media Opportunities:

We will work with your office on further announcements as your decision is implemented. We would expect the next two opportunities to be the appointment of an ongoing CEO and securing office accommodation in Bowen.

Name: **Malcolm Southwell**
Position: **Assistant Secretary**
Division: **National Water Grid Authority**
Ph: **02 6274 6833**
Mob: **47E**
Date: 27 September 2021

Contact Officer: **47E**
Section: **Communications and
Engagement**
Ph: **47E**

Attachments:

A: Draft letter to the Prime Minister



The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP

Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development
Leader of The Nationals
Federal Member for New England

Ref: MC21-001921

The Hon Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

NORTH QUEENSLAND WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AUTHORITY

You might recall that our Government established the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority (NQWIA) in March 2019, a separate executive agency in my portfolio. NQWIA was established to give a specific focus to the development of water infrastructure projects in north Queensland, including the Hughenden Irrigation Scheme, the Hells Gates dam, and Big Rocks weir.

I expect the Big Rocks weir to be signed up under a bilateral construction schedule very shortly, and the business cases for Hughenden and Hells Gates are due at the end of this year and early next year, respectively. As such, we have an opportunity to progress these projects as major water investments within the next 12 months.

These are large and complex projects; potentially worth around \$6 billion collectively. Moving them from planning into construction will require a good deal more effort than is needed for the current business cases. However, the economic benefits delivered by each will be enormous for north Queensland. In the case of the Hells Gates project, we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create new areas of long term economic prosperity in regional Australia – a goal about which I am passionate and deeply committed.

Emphasising the importance I place on these projects, I announced on 3 September 2021 that NQWIA would be relocated to Bowen in north Queensland. I see this as an essential first step in delivering on our broader goals for developing north Queensland. s22

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

s22

At the present time, the functions of NQWIA remain as per the Executive Order establishing the Agency. When this needs amendment, I will seek a new Order by the Governor General.

I look forward to your earliest consideration of this request. I have copied this letter to the Minister for Finance and the Treasurer.

Yours sincerely

Barnaby Joyce MP

NORTH QUEENSLAND WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AUTHORITY

FAST FACTS

Financial information as at 31 August 2021 – costs are GST exclusive unless otherwise stated

- The Australian Government established the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority (NQWIA) in March 2019 as a separate executive agency in the Infrastructure portfolio.
- NQWIA was established to give a specific focus to the development of water infrastructure projects in north Queensland, including the Hughenden Irrigation Scheme, the Hells Gates dam, and Big Rocks weir.
- The former CEO, Mr Richard McLoughlin, retired on 30 April 2021. Recruitment for a replacement CEO is underway with the role advertised nationally on 20 May 2021.
- On 3 September 2021, the Deputy Prime Minister announced that the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority office would relocate to Bowen, Queensland. The Department is currently assisting with arrangements for this relocation.
 - The acting CEO of the NQWIA, Dr Peter Wallbrink, is the accountable authority.

s22

Relocation to Bowen, Queensland

- On 3 September 2021, the Deputy Prime Minister announced the relocation of the NQWIA headquarters to Bowen, in Queensland.
- The Deputy Prime Minister has requested advice on the steps required to implement his announcement and the Department is preparing this advice.
- The Department's corporate services team is supporting NQWIA in identifying suitable office accommodation in Bowen and has briefed the Australian Government's contracted whole-of-government accommodation provider (Colliers).
 - Colliers is currently undertaking a desktop market sweep to investigate what office space may be available for lease in Bowen. This includes exploring potential co-location opportunities with other Commonwealth, State or local government entities.
 - If asked on costs of the relocation – The costs of establishing a headquarters in Bowen remains to be identified, however, NQWIA's headquarters in Canberra is located within the Department's footprint, and therefore there is no lease that requires termination.

s47C

- The relocation is rightfully a decision of the Deputy Prime Minister.
 - The decision reflects the high priority that the Deputy Prime Minister attaches to the significant water infrastructure projects in North Queensland that are currently in the planning stage. The decision will also generate local employment opportunities in the Bowen region.
 - *If asked about timing of the announcement:* The Deputy Prime Minister's office advised the Department **and NQWIA** about the NQWIA relocation decision on 2 September 2021. The Department assisted the Deputy Prime Minister's Office in preparing a media release about the relocation on 3 September 2021.
 - *If pressed about advice from the Department:* The Department was not asked to provide any advice to the Deputy Prime Minister about relocating the NQWIA to Bowen ahead of the announcement on 3 September 2021.

Regionalisation policy

- Australia's economic activity is strongly connected to the distribution of its population. Around one third of Australians live in regional Australia, and the regions account for around one third of Gross Domestic Product. The Regionalisation Agenda supports diverse and productive local economies and creates jobs. It places a strong focus on both public and private sector relocation.
- The Government announced the relocation of 432 public service jobs from 18 agencies to regional areas between 2017 and 2021. These announcements followed a thorough assessment of operations by government departments and agencies to identify opportunities to locate appropriate functions and staff closer to communities and relieve the pressure on capital cities.
 - This assessment occurred prior to the NQWIA relocation decision and the NQWIA relocation is not captured in these figures.

s47C



The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

MEDIA RELEASE

3 September 2021

AUTHORITY'S SHIFT NORTH TO HELP TAKE WATER WEST

The Australian Government will relocate the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority to Bowen in north Queensland, boosting local economic opportunity and kicking off a vision to move water west to deliver unprecedented growth and prosperity.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Barnaby Joyce said the move would locate the Authority in the heart of the region where the major water infrastructure projects it oversees are located.

“This shift will see the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority strategically located adjacent to the proposed Urannah Dam, and the same region where we are building the Big Rocks Weir project and investigating a future Hells Gates Dam,” the Deputy Prime Minister said.

“North Queensland is also where we will start on the long-term nation-building task of expanding irrigated agriculture by moving a portion of the abundant resource of water west.

“The Authority will become a bigger organisation, with the people and skills to realise the economic transformation of north Queensland.

“This expanded organisation will have the task of taking water to the west to open up new opportunities for agriculture.

“This will of course require new dams and pipelines. It will be a major undertaking, and will change our vision for the future of that region for decades to come.

“Relocation of the Authority will put it closer to the industries and communities it supports.

“It will also create skilled, highly paid jobs in the region, encouraging new families to move to the region to support the local economy, including local businesses and service providers.

“This will in turn stimulate flow-on jobs later down the track – making this a truly exciting time for the entire region of north Queensland.”

Mr Joyce said to realise the Government’s vision of northern Australia becoming the food bowl of Asia, water from where there is an abundance is needed to irrigate where the black soils of Western Queensland do not have enough.

“This Government has started having the discussions to create the entity, similar to what this nation had to develop in the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme, to start the long-term plan for this major agricultural irrigation expansion,” he said.

“The new entity would work closely with the National Water Grid Authority (NWGA), and this builds on the broader work we are doing through the NWGA to deliver the next generation of water infrastructure for this nation.

“Just last month, we announced \$108 million to deliver 40 new projects through the National Water Grid Connections funding pathway, improving water security and reliability across the nation.

“The best thing we can do for this country is ensure a secure future for water, our farmers and our regional communities that continue to drive our economic recovery.

“The \$3.5 billion National Water Grid Fund is paving the way to national water security, while promoting local economic activity and job creation along the way – with 70 National Water Grid construction projects in total.”

For more information on the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority, visit www.nqwia.gov.au.

More information on the Australian Government’s broader water infrastructure investments through the National Water Grid, visit nationalwatergrid.gov.au.

Media contact:

Deputy Prime Minister – s47E

Archived: Friday, 22 October 2021 9:16:44 AM

From: s47E

Sent: Fri, 3 Sep 2021 10:19:20

To: s47E

Cc: NWGA Communication

Subject: FW: For Info: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Sensitivity: Normal

Attachments:

SEPT21 - MR - DPM - NQWIA to NQ NWGA.docx;

OFFICIAL

Hi s47E

Please find attached media release with suggested amendments. s22

Thank you

s47E

OFFICIAL

47E

Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 10:02 AM

To: 47E ; MCRANDLE Brendan ; Middleton, Vicki ; SOUTHWELL Malcolm

Cc: 47E

Subject: RE: For Info: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

We'll certainly push this up the line and reiterate the importance. Will keep you posted.

47E

Director • Communication and Engagement

National Water Grid Authority

47E(c)

• Please note I don't work Wednesdays •

OFFICIAL

s22

OFFICIAL

s22

OFFICIAL

s22

OFFICIAL

From: s47E [redacted] <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 9:50 AM

To: s47E [redacted] <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>; MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>; Middleton, Vicki <vicki.middleton@communications.gov.au>; SOUTHWELL Malcolm <Malcolm.Southwell@infrastructure.gov.au>

Cc: 47E [redacted] <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: For Info: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi [redacted]

s22

\ql“This shift will see the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority strategically located adjacent to where we are building the proposed Urannah Dam, and the same region where we are building the Hells Gates and Big Rocks Weir project and investigating a future Hells Gates Dam,” the Deputy Prime Minister said.

s22

Cheers

s47E

OFFICIAL

From: s47E [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 9:43 AM

To: MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>; Middleton, Vicki <vicki.middleton@communications.gov.au>; SOUTHWELL Malcolm <Malcolm.Southwell@infrastructure.gov.au>

Cc: s47E [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>; 47E [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: For Info: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi Brendan, Vicki and Malcolm

Please find attached the draft media release for today's Press Club announcement.

Both NQWIA and my team is looking at this now, pending a 10.30am deadline.

Cheers

s47E [redacted]

Director - Communication and Engagement

National Water Grid Authority

s47E [redacted]

• Please note I don't work Wednesdays •

OFFICIAL

From: Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 9:36 AM

To: s47E [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>; Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; 47E [redacted]

47E (cc) [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Cc: s47E [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s47E [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks s47E [redacted] Will standby.

OFFICIAL

From: s47E [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 9:06 AM

To: Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; 47E [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Cc: s47E [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s47E [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47E [redacted]

Thanks for the heads up. We're having a chat with the office now about some of the assertions in the release, but will get the MR back to you ASAP.

Regards

s47E [redacted]

OFFICIAL

From: Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 2 September 2021 9:01 PM

To: NWGA Communication <communication.nwga@infrastructure.gov.au>

Cc: Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>; 47E <47E@infrastructure.gov.au>; s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Importance: High

OFFICIAL

Hi all

Apologies for the late notice but the DPMO require a media release by **10:30am Friday** ahead of an announcement planned for the DPM's Press Club address.

We have urgently drafted the attached based on the below points. Grateful if you could please review and approve first thing in the morning.

The priority is to clear the text, however we'll discuss with the DPMO whether they might wish to consider offering quotes to Minister McKenzie given the Regionalisation (decentralisation) aspect.

Many thanks and happy to discuss,

s47E

Media Manager (Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development)

Media Services - Communication Branch

s47E

GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
CONNECTING AUSTRALIANS - ENRICHING COMMUNITIES - EMPOWERING REGIONS

cbpat5@infrastructure.gov.au   

The department acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live.

We recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities.

We pay our respect to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

OFFICIAL

From: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 2 September 2021 8:04 PM

To: Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47E my apologies that you didn't get this today.

This is what the Secretary's office sent for the speech:

Today I am announcing that I will relocate the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority to north Queensland [Bowen]. It will be a bigger organisation, with the people and skills to realise the economic transformation of north Queensland.

This expanded organisation will have the task of taking water to the west to open up new opportunities for agriculture. This will need new dams and pipelines. It will be a major undertaking, and will change our vision for the future of that region for decades to come.

Relocation of the Authority will put it closer to the industries and communities it supports.

It will also create skilled, highly paid jobs in the region. New families moving to the region will support the local economy, including local businesses and service providers. Flow-on jobs will follow.

Text from the draft speech is:

We need water from where there is an abundance to irrigate where the black soils of Western Queensland do not have enough. Today I announce that the North Queensland Water Authority, currently based here in Canberra, is moving to North Queensland, to Bowen, adjacent to where we are building Urannah Dam, and the same region where we are building Hells Gates, where we will start on the long-term nation building task of expanding irrigated agriculture by moving a portion of the abundant resource of water west. This Government has commenced the discussions to create the entity, similar to what this nation had to develop in the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme, to start the long-term plan for this major agricultural irrigation expansion.

We will need it back by 10.30am.

Many thanks,

s47E

Office of the Hon Barnaby Joyce MP

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

Leader of The Nationals

Federal Member for New England

s47E

infrastructure.gov.au

MG41, Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600

OFFICIAL

Archived: Friday, 22 October 2021 9:17:05 AM

From: s47E

Sent: Tue, 12 Oct 2021 18:11:02

To: SOUTHWELL Malcolm

Cc: WALLBRINK Peter

Subject: FW: INFO REQUIRED | ABC - NQ Water Infrastructure Authority [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Sensitivity: Normal

OFFICIAL

FYI

OFFICIAL

From: s47E

Sent: Tuesday, 7 September 2021 10:43 AM

To: Media (Infrastructure)

Subject: FW: INFO REQUIRED | ABC - NQ Water Infrastructure Authority [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47E

As discussed. Suggested answers below.

s47E

OFFICIAL

From: WALLBRINK Peter <Peter.Wallbrink@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 7 September 2021 10:42 AM

To: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: INFO REQUIRED | ABC - NQ Water Infrastructure Authority [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Yes, those answers seem appropriate, as things stand.

Cheers Peter

Dr Peter Wallbrink

A/G Chief Executive Officer

North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority

t: 02 6274 6415 | m: s47E

e: Peter.Wallbrink@infrastructure.gov.au ;

www.nqwia.gov.au

GPO Box 594, Canberra ACT 2601



Australian Government

North Queensland
Water Infrastructure Authority

The department proudly acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Australia, and their continuing connections to the land, waters and communities. We pay our respects to them and to their Elders past, present and emerging.

OFFICIAL

From: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 7 September 2021 10:33 AM

To: WALLBRINK Peter <Peter.Wallbrink@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: FW: INFO REQUIRED | ABC - NQ Water Infrastructure Authority [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi Peter

Suggested answers below.

s47E

OFFICIAL

From: Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 6 September 2021 6:29 PM

To: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>

Cc: Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: Fwd: INFO REQUIRED | ABC - NQ Water Infrastructure Authority [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47E

Another one for input and review tomorrow AM.

Thanks

s47E

OFFICIAL

From: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>

Date: Monday, 6 September 2021 at 6:23:20 pm

To: "Media (Infrastructure)" <media@infrastructure.gov.au>

Cc: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: INFO REQUIRED | ABC - NQ Water Infrastructure Authority [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

UNOFFICIAL

Hi team,

We've received the below enquiry on the NQWIA move.

We'll finalise a statement in the office tomorrow – but can you please review the red text I've inserted and flag any concerns/factual inaccuracies?

We'll also need some background info on the two highlighted questions.

Can you please come back to us by **11am Tuesday**?

s47E

UNOFFICIAL

From: s47F

Sent: Monday, 6 September 2021 6:05 PM

To: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: ABC - NQ Water Infrastructure Authority

Hi s47E

Just following on from our phone chat earlier.

Could I clarify:

- Why was Bowen chosen as the site for the NQ Water Infrastructure Authority?

Bowen is at the heart of the region the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority supports.

Here, it will be strategically located adjacent to the proposed Urannah Dam, and the same region where the Government is building the Big Rocks Weir project and investigating a future Hells Gates Dam.

The relocation will also enable the NQWIA to implement the Government's vision to move water from where it is abundant in the east, to towns and communities in the west. This will help to irrigate the regional soils of Queensland, driving increased agricultural activity and delivering unprecedented economic growth and prosperity.

- How many staff already working at the NQWIA are currently based in Townsville?

The North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority currently has an allocation of 10 staff in Canberra and Townsville.

The move to Bowen will see staff numbers increase in the future as the Authority gets on with the job of delivering key northern Queensland projects and kicking off the Government's vision of driving regional growth and prosperity by moving water west.

- How many staff already working at the NQWIA are currently based in Canberra?

As above.

- How many staff are intended to end up working in Bowen, once the relocation is complete?

The staffing footprint for Bowen, Canberra and Townsville will be finalised as part of the implementation plan.

- How many staff are expected to remain in Canberra?

The staffing footprint for Bowen, Canberra and Townsville will be finalised as part of the implementation plan.

- When is the relocation to Bowen expected to be complete (approx. i.e. one year, 5 years?)?

The Deputy Prime Minister has tasked his department with developing an implementation plan and the move will be finalised as soon as practicable.

- Given there is already an established NQWIA office in Townsville, did the agency originally have plans to employ more staff in Townsville before the announcement about the Bowen location was made? If yes, why were these plans changed?

The North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority had previously committed to engaging more staff in North Queensland and in closer proximity to projects.

- Which bodies/agencies were consulted about the relocation to Bowen?

Deadline 12pm tomorrow (Tuesday 6 September).

s47F

s47E

From: MCRANDLE Brendan
Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 2:19 PM
To: 47F
Subject: FW: Ministers' subscription service [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47F

I left you a short voicemail message. It was around the DPM's speech at the National Press Club today. The key portfolio announcement was the decision to move NQWIA to Bowen. The media release is below with a link.

Happy to discuss further when it suits.

Best wishes

Brendan

Brendan McRandle

Deputy Secretary Water Infrastructure and Northern Australia, and CEO National Water Grid Authority

Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au

P +61 2 6271 7457 • M +s47E
GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

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OFFICIAL

From: subscriptions infrastructure
Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 1:25 PM
To: MCRANDLE Brendan
Subject: Ministers' subscription service [SEC=OFFICIAL]

From: subscriptions infrastructure

Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 1:25 PM

To: MCRANDLE Brendan

Subject: Ministers' subscription service [SEC=OFFICIAL]



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications

North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority shifts north to help take water west

The Australian Government will relocate the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority to Bowen in north Queensland, delivering an economic boost to the region and kicking off a vision to move water west to deliver unprecedented growth and prosperity.

Click [here](#) to view.

You have received this email as part of your subscription to the Ministers' website updates

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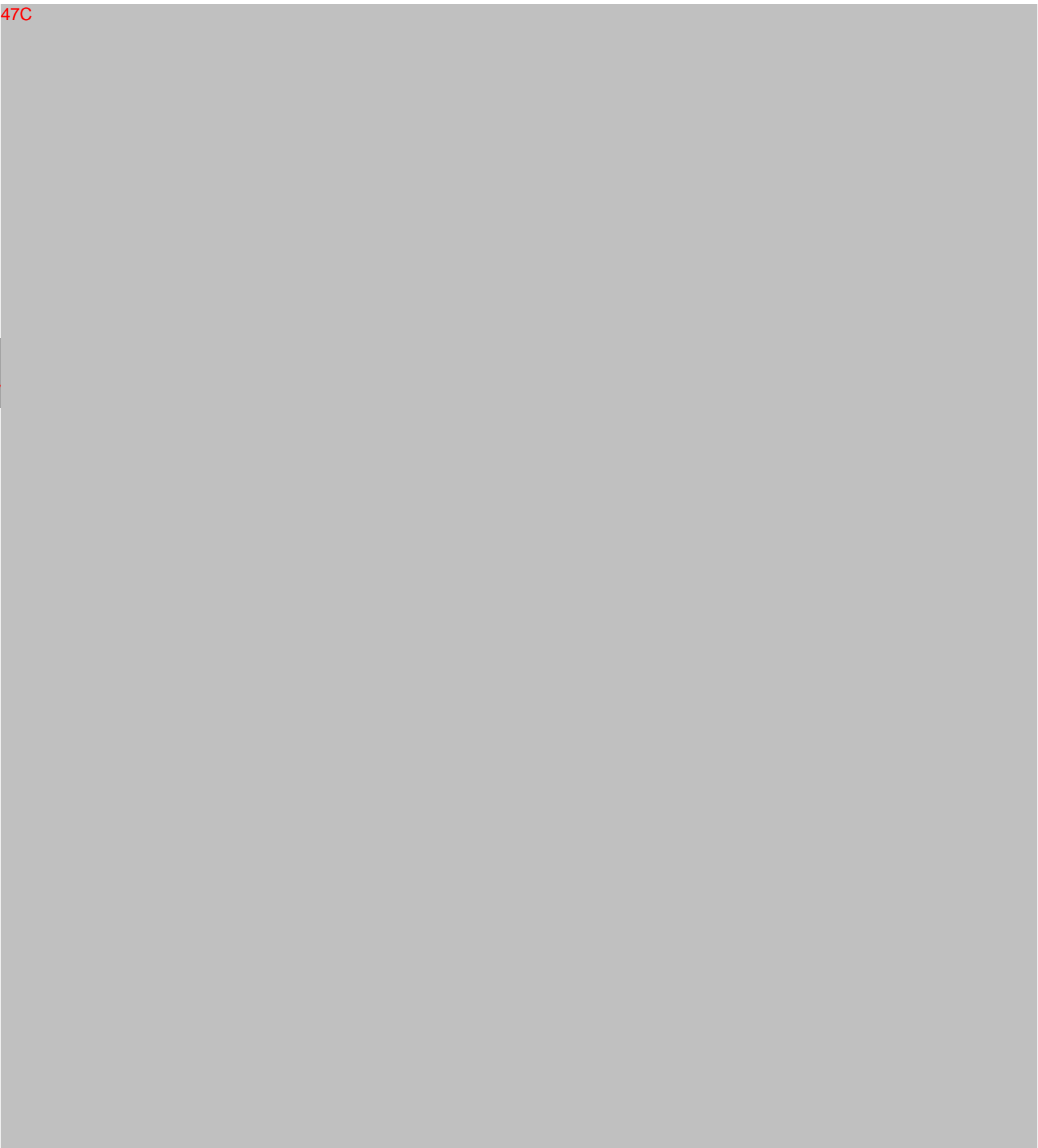
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47E

A large rectangular area of the page is completely redacted with a solid grey fill.

47C

The majority of the page is redacted with a solid grey fill, covering almost all text and graphics.



Archived: Friday, 22 October 2021 9:18:03 AM

From: s47E

To: s47E

Cc: s47E

Subject: FW: Follow up to phone call [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

Sensitivity: Normal

UNOFFICIAL

Hi s47E

As discussed, can you please progress the below investigation with Sandra to identify accommodation options in Bowen.

We are interested to understand all options for either co-location with another Commonwealth or State Government entity and options to lease a premises.

Regards

s47E

Director • Property / Human Resources and Property Branch • People, Governance, Parliamentary & Communication Division

s47E

GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

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UNOFFICIAL

From: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 13 September 2021 6:06 PM

To: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: Follow up to phone call [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

UNOFFICIAL

Hi s47E

Once again, many thanks for your time this afternoon.

As I mentioned, the DPM announced on 30 August the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority would be relocating to Bowen in Queensland. Although we don't have specifics, we are assuming that all up and fully staffed, we are looking at around 10 ASL including the CEO being based in Bowen.

To kick things off, and in line with your advice, we'd really appreciate your team reaching out to a provider to undertake a market sweep of potential office accommodation in Bowen. As per our discussion, I've put together a list of essentials and desirables for your consideration. Welcome your thoughts and ideas for improvements.

Essentials

47C

Desirable

- Co-location with another Commonwealth agency
- Dedicated meeting room
- Capability to undertake fit out of Infrastructure network equipment (eg servers)
- Videoconferencing capability, either via meeting room, SES B2 office, or through IT network

Many thanks again for the advice, and happy to discuss further.

regards

s47E

Chief Operating Officer
North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority
GPO Box 594, Canberra ACT 2601



Australian Government

**North Queensland
Water Infrastructure Authority**

s47E

[re.gov.au](http://www.nqwia.gov.au) | [w www.nqwia.gov.au](http://www.nqwia.gov.au)

UNOFFICIAL

Archived: Friday, 22 October 2021 9:18:12 AM

From: CASTELLINO Joe

Sent: Wed, 1 Sep 2021 13:00:54

To: PICKWORTH Julia

Cc: s47E

Subject: FW: For Review - Press Club Input - combined [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Sensitivity: Normal

Attachments:

Draft - Input - DPM Press Club - 3 Sep 21.docx;

OFFICIAL

Julia – as discussed, see the team’s draft. s47E

Thanks.

OFFICIAL

I am passionate about making sure regional Australia has the water it needs to help our agriculture sector achieve our target of being a \$100 billion industry by 2030.

That is why we have a \$3.5 billion National Water Grid Fund and we are working with state and territory governments to get dams and water infrastructure built. And we are succeeding on that front. Nearly half of our water infrastructure projects have either been delivered or is in construction.

s22

Today I am announcing that I will establish the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority in north Queensland. It will need to be a bigger organisation, with the people and skills to realise the economic transformation of north Queensland agriculture.

This new organisation will have the task of taking water to the west to open up new opportunities for agriculture. This will need new dams and pipelines. It will be major undertaking, and it will drive economic benefits for decades to come.

There are a number of studies for water infrastructure in north Queensland coming through to government in the months ahead. These studies have their place, but they are no substitute for building real infrastructure.

s47C



The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

MEDIA RELEASE

3 September 2021

AUTHORITY'S SHIFT NORTH TO HELP TAKE WATER WEST

The Australian Government will relocate the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority to Bowen in north Queensland, boosting local economic opportunity and kicking off a vision to move water west to deliver unprecedented growth and prosperity.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Barnaby Joyce said the move would locate the Authority in the heart of the region where the major water infrastructure projects it oversees are located.

“This shift will see the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority strategically located adjacent to the proposed Urannah Dam, and the same region where we are building the Big Rocks Weir project and investigating a future Hells Gates Dam,” the Deputy Prime Minister said.

“North Queensland is also where we will start on the long-term nation-building task of expanding irrigated agriculture by moving a portion of the abundant resource of water west.

“The Authority will become a bigger organisation, with the people and skills to realise the economic transformation of north Queensland.

“This expanded organisation will have the task of taking water to the west to open up new opportunities for agriculture.

“This will of course require new dams and pipelines. It will be a major undertaking, and will change our vision for the future of that region for decades to come.

“Relocation of the Authority will put it closer to the industries and communities it supports.

“It will also create skilled, highly paid jobs in the region, encouraging new families to move to the region to support the local economy, including local businesses and service providers.

“This will in turn stimulate flow-on jobs later down the track – making this a truly exciting time for the entire region of north Queensland.”

Mr Joyce said to realise the Government’s vision of northern Australia becoming the food bowl of Asia, water from where there is an abundance is needed to irrigate where the black soils of Western Queensland do not have enough.

“This Government has started having the discussions to create the entity, similar to what this nation had to develop in the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme, to start the long-term plan for this major agricultural irrigation expansion,” he said.

“The new entity would work closely with the National Water Grid Authority (NWGA), and this builds on the broader work we are doing through the NWGA to deliver the next generation of water infrastructure for this nation.

“Just last month, we announced \$108 million to deliver 40 new projects through the National Water Grid Connections funding pathway, improving water security and reliability across the nation.

“The best thing we can do for this country is ensure a secure future for water, our farmers and our regional communities that continue to drive our economic recovery.

“The \$3.5 billion National Water Grid Fund is paving the way to national water security, while promoting local economic activity and job creation along the way – with 70 National Water Grid construction projects in total.”

For more information on the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority, visit www.nqwia.gov.au.

More information on the Australian Government’s broader water infrastructure investments through the National Water Grid, visit nationalwatergrid.gov.au.

Media contact:

Deputy Prime Minister – s47E

Archived: Friday, 22 October 2021 9:18:18 AM
From: s47E
Sent: Mon, 11 Oct 2021 17:00:00
To: SOUTHWELL Malcolm
Cc: s47E x
Subject: FW: NQWIA relocation to Bowen [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Sensitivity: Normal

OFFICIAL

FYI

s47E
Director • Communication and Engagement
National Water Grid Authority

s47E
• Please note I don't work Wednesdays •

OFFICIAL

From: 47E@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 11 October 2021 3:42 PM
To: 47E
Cc: 47E
Subject: RE: NQWIA relocation to Bowen [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks 47 – much appreciated.

4 – FYI . I'll incorporate into our estimates brief.

47E

OFFICIAL

From: s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 11 October 2021 3:36 PM
To: s47E
Subject: RE: NQWIA relocation to Bowen [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47E

As discussed, we have approached our Property Services Provider (PSP) appointed under the WoAG Property Services Contract, to conduct a desktop market sweep to investigate what office space may be available for lease in Bowen. We also asked them to approach the Commonwealth Strategic Property Advisor (SPA) to seek advice as to any Commonwealth entities that may have offices in Bowen and have space to accommodate the NQWIA requirements and enable co-location. We have also asked that they investigate any State Government entities for the same.

To date our PSP have advised that they have completed a desktop market sweep and there are no suitable premises for lease in Bowen and only one suitable property near Bowen, located in Cannonvale, QLD 4802. They have also been advised by the SPA that, there is no surplus space in any Commonwealth tenancies in Bowen or surrounding areas.

We have asked our PSP to investigate if any State or local Government space is available.

Happy to discuss.

Regards

s47E

Director • Property / Human Resources and Property Branch • People, Governance, Parliamentary & Communication Division

s47E

GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

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OFFICIAL

From: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 11 October 2021 11:52 AM

To: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: NQWIA relocation to Bowen [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Importance: High

OFFICIAL

Good morning s47E

I'm preparing our Senate Estimates brief on the NQWIA which will cover its relocation to Bowen, Queensland. Could you please give me a call to discuss your team's role in the logistics of a move for an executive agency, and specifically any info you can provide me on the planning for the NQWIA relocation?

Many thanks,

s47E

Policy, Science & Engagement

National Water Grid Authority

s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>



OFFICIAL

s47E

From: SOUTHWELL Malcolm
Sent: Friday, 24 September 2021 12:32 PM
To: NWGA BMU
Cc: s47E; DARROUGH Mark; MCRANDLE Brendan; Middleton, Vicki;
s47E
Subject: RE: Advice - Senate Estimates Brief [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks s47E

Can we say instead:

- In September, the Deputy Prime Minister announced the relocation of the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority’s headquarters to Bowen in north Queensland. This will provide for local employment opportunities.

Yes, it can note that questions can be directed to NWGA and NQWIA.

Cheers

Malcolm.

OFFICIAL

From: NWGA BMU
Sent: Friday, 24 September 2021 12:24 PM
To: DARROUGH Mark ; SOUTHWELL Malcolm
Cc: s47E ; NWGA BMU
Subject: FW: Advice - Senate Estimates Brief [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Good afternoon M&M,

Could you please advise what is the best answer to the query below about NQWIA in the Senate Estimate Brief?

Thank you,

s47E

Team Member • BMU • National Water Grid Authority

s47E

GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

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OFFICIAL

From: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 24 September 2021 9:37 AM
To: NWGA BMU <NWGA.BMU@infrastructure.gov.au>; s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: Advice - Senate Estimates Brief [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47E and team

I am finalising a Senate Estimates Brief on regionalisation [decentralisation]. Following the DPM's announcement at the Press Club, we have included the following in our SEB

- In September, the Government announced the relocation of the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority to Bowen in north Queensland, delivering an economic boost to the region.

I wanted to add a point in background advising that any questions on this relocation be directed to the NWGA – are you happy with this approach?

Please give me a call if you would like to discuss.

s47E

Director • Regionalisation and Drought Section • Regional Development, Local Government and Regional Recovery Division

s47E

GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

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OFFICIAL

s47E

From: MCRANDLE Brendan
Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 10:46 AM
To: s47E
Cc: NWGA Communication; s47E Middleton, Vicki; s47E
 SOUTHWELL Malcolm; WALLBRINK Peter; s47E
Subject: RE: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Attachments: SEPT21 - MR - DPM - NQWIA to NQ.docx
Importance: High

OFFICIAL

Thanks s47E and team

I'm attaching the version I'm prepared to clear. It's currently in tracks s47E can you proof read and if all good, please accept and sent to the DPMO via media tea,. Any questions, call me on s47E

B

OFFICIAL

From: s47E
Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 10:38 AM
To: MCRANDLE Brendan
Cc: NWGA Communication ; s47E ; Middleton, Vicki ; s47E ; SOUTHWELL Malcolm
Subject: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi Brendan

Please find attached the clean draft MR for your review.

I have also attached the tracked version, in case you wanted to see the history of what has changed from the original.

Happy to discuss.

Kind regards

s47E

Communication and Engagement
National Water Grid Authority

s47E

• Please note I don't work Wednesdays •

OFFICIAL

From: MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 10:20 AM
To: s47E <[REDACTED]>@infrastructure.gov.au>; s47E <[REDACTED]>@infrastructure.gov.au>; Middleton, Vicki <vicki.middleton@communications.gov.au>; SOUTHWELL Malcolm <Malcolm.Southwell@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: NWGA Communication <communication.nwga@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: For Info: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Importance: High

OFFICIAL

Hi everyone. DPMO spoke to me and asked me to clear the media release. Can you send me the proposed final version now with any recommended changes to the draft that came in this morning.

B

OFFICIAL

From: s47E <[REDACTED]>@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 10:02 AM
To: s47E <[REDACTED]>@infrastructure.gov.au>; MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>; Middleton, Vicki <vicki.middleton@communications.gov.au>; SOUTHWELL Malcolm <Malcolm.Southwell@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: s47E <[REDACTED]>@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: For Info: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

We'll certainly push this up the line and reiterate the importance. Will keep you posted.

s47E <[REDACTED]>
Communication and Engagement
National Water Grid Authority

s47E <[REDACTED]>
• Please note I don't work Wednesdays •

OFFICIAL

From: s47E <[REDACTED]>@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 10:00 AM
To: s47E <[REDACTED]>@infrastructure.gov.au>; MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>; Middleton, Vicki <vicki.middleton@communications.gov.au>; SOUTHWELL Malcolm <Malcolm.Southwell@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: s47E <[REDACTED]>@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: For Info: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks s47E <[REDACTED]>

s22

K

OFFICIAL

From: s47E [redacted] <[\[redacted\]@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au)>
Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 9:57 AM
To: s47E [redacted] <[\[redacted\]@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au)>; MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>; Middleton, Vicki <vicki.middleton@communications.gov.au>; SOUTHWELL Malcolm <Malcolm.Southwell@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: 47E [redacted] <[\[redacted\]@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au)>
Subject: RE: For Info: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

s22

OFFICIAL

s22

“This shift will see the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority strategically located adjacent to **where we are building the proposed** Urannah Dam, and the same region where we are building the **Hells Gates and** Big Rocks Weir project **and investigating a future Hells Gates Dam,**” the Deputy Prime Minister said.

s22

Cheers

s47E

OFFICIAL

From: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 9:43 AM
To: MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>; Middleton, Vicki <vicki.middleton@communications.gov.au>; SOUTHWELL Malcolm <Malcolm.Southwell@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>; 47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: For Info: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi Brendan, Vicki and Malcolm

Please find attached the draft media release for today's Press Club announcement.

Both NQWIA and my team is looking at this now, pending a 10.30am deadline.

Cheers

s47E

Director • Communication and Engagement
National Water Grid Authority

s47E

• Please note I don't work Wednesdays •

OFFICIAL

From: Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 9:36 AM
To: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>; Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; 47E(c) <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Thanks s47E Will standby.

OFFICIAL

From: s47E [redacted] <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Friday, 3 September 2021 9:06 AM
To: Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; 47E(c) [redacted]
[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au
Cc: s47E [redacted]
[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au
Subject: RE: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47E [redacted]

Thanks for the heads up. We're having a chat with the office now about some of the assertions in the release, but will get the MR back to you ASAP.

Regards

s47E [redacted]

OFFICIAL

From: Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 2 September 2021 9:01 PM
To: 47E [redacted] <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>; s47E [redacted]
s47E [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au; s47E [redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au; s47E [redacted]
[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au
Subject: FOR URGENT CLEARANCE: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]
Importance: High

OFFICIAL

Hi all

Apologies for the late notice but the DPMO require a media release by **10:30am Friday** ahead of an announcement planned for the DPM's Press Club address.

We have urgently drafted the attached based on the below points. Grateful if you could please review and approve first thing in the morning.

The priority is to clear the text, however we'll discuss with the DPMO whether they might wish to consider offering quotes to Minister McKenzie given the Regionalisation (decentralisation) aspect.

Many thanks and happy to discuss,

s47E [redacted]

Media Manager (Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development)
Media Services • Communication Branch

The department acknowledges the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live. We recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

OFFICIAL

From: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 2 September 2021 8:04 PM
To: Media (Infrastructure) <media@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: North QLD water announcement [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi s47E my apologies that you didn't get this today.

This is what the Secretary's office sent for the speech:

- **Today I am announcing that I will relocate the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority to north Queensland [Bowen].** It will be a bigger organisation, with the people and skills to realise the economic transformation of north Queensland.
- This expanded organisation will have the task of taking water to the west to open up new opportunities for agriculture. This will need new dams and pipelines. It will be a major undertaking, and will change our vision for the future of that region for decades to come.
- Relocation of the Authority will put it closer to the industries and communities it supports.
- It will also create skilled, highly paid jobs in the region. New families moving to the region will support the local economy, including local businesses and service providers. Flow-on jobs will follow.

s22

Text from the draft speech is:

We need water from where there is an abundance to irrigate where the black soils of Western Queensland do not have enough. Today I announce that the North Queensland Water Authority, currently based here in Canberra, is moving to North Queensland, to Bowen, adjacent to where we are building Urannah Dam, and the same region where we are building Hells Gates, where we will start on the long-term nation building task of expanding irrigated agriculture by moving a portion of the abundant resource of water west. This Government has commenced the discussions to create the entity, similar to what this nation had to develop in the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme, to start the long-term plan for this major agricultural irrigation expansion.

We will need it back by 10.30am.

Many thanks,

s47E

Senior Media Adviser

Office of the Hon Barnaby Joyce MP
Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development
Leader of The Nationals
Federal Member for New England

s47E  infrastructure.gov.au

MG41, Parliament House | Canberra ACT 2600

OFFICIAL



The Hon Barnaby Joyce MP

Deputy Prime Minister

Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

MEDIA RELEASE

3 September 2021

AUTHORITY'S SHIFT NORTH TO HELP TAKE WATER WEST

The Australian Government will relocate the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority to Bowen in north Queensland, boosting local economic opportunity and kicking off a vision to move water west to deliver unprecedented growth and prosperity.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Barnaby Joyce said the move would locate the Authority in the heart of the region where the major water infrastructure projects it oversees are located.

"This shift will see the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority strategically located adjacent to ~~where we are building~~ the proposed Urannah Dam, and the same region where we are building the Big Rocks Weir project and investigating a future Hells Gates Dam ~~building the Hells Gates and Big Rocks Weir project,~~" the Deputy Prime Minister said.

"North Queensland is also where we will start on the long-term nation-building task of expanding irrigated agriculture by moving a portion of the abundant resource of water west.

"The Authority will become a bigger organisation, with the people and skills to realise the economic transformation of north Queensland.

"This expanded organisation will have the task of ~~taking~~ delivering my strategy of moving water from where it is plentiful, to the west to open up new opportunities for agriculture in the west."

"This will of course require new dams and pipelines. It will be a major undertaking, and will change our vision for the future of that region for decades to come.

"Relocation of the Authority will put it closer to the industries and communities it supports.

"It will also create skilled, highly paid jobs in the region, encouraging new families to move to the region to support the local economy, including local businesses and service providers.

"This will in turn stimulate flow-on jobs later down the track – making this a truly exciting time for the entire region of north Queensland."

Mr Joyce said to realise the Government's vision of northern Australia becoming the food bowl of Asia, the water from where there is an abundance, is needed to irrigate the regional soils of Queensland that do not have enough ~~water from where there is an abundance is needed to irrigate where the black soils of Western Queensland do not have enough.~~

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"This Government has started having the discussions to create the entity, similar to what this nation had to develop in the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme, to start the long-term plan for this major agricultural irrigation expansion," he said.

"This builds on the broader work we are doing through the National Water Grid Authority to deliver the next generation of water infrastructure for this nation.

"Just last month, we announced \$108 million to deliver 40 new projects through the National Water Grid Connections funding pathway, improving water security and reliability across the nation.

"The best thing we can do for this country is ensure a secure future for water, our farmers and our regional communities that continue to drive our economic recovery.

"The \$3.5 billion National Water Grid Fund is paving the way to national water security, while promoting local economic activity and job creation along the way – with 70 National Water Grid construction projects in total, with 12 new projects adding to our investment pipeline in this year's Budget."

For more information on the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority, visit www.nqwia.gov.au.

More information on the Australian Government's broader water infrastructure investments through the National Water Grid, visit nationalwatergrid.gov.au.

Media contact:

Deputy Prime Minister – **S47E**

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Archived: Friday, 22 October 2021 9:24:11 AM

From: MCRANDLE Brendan

To: SOUTHWELL Malcolm

Cc: Middleton, Vicki

Subject: RE: NQWIA - preliminary advice on relocation [~~SEC-PROTECTED, CAVEAT-SH-CABINET~~]

Sensitivity: Normal

~~PROTECTED, SH:CABINET~~

Thanks – probably good to get a range of options on size so we have the data points.

~~PROTECTED, SH:CABINET~~

From: SOUTHWELL Malcolm

Sent: Tuesday, 21 September 2021 9:41 AM

To: MCRANDLE Brendan

Cc: Middleton, Vicki

Subject: RE: NQWIA - preliminary advice on relocation [~~SEC-PROTECTED, CAVEAT-SH-CABINET~~]

~~PROTECTED, SH:CABINET~~

Thanks Brendan,

I'll flick up later today to s47E and ask to have a chat.

On property in Bowen. Spoke with s47E who confirmed that they have reached out to Colliers. Colliers are doing a market sweep for options that include co-location Cth or state as well as lease. Within 4-6 weeks they should have a range of options for consideration (presumably for ops committee).

They are s47C

s47E sked for:

Essential – s47C

Desirable – co-location with another Cth agency

- Meeting room

- VC in meeting room

I let s47E know that we don't yet have a readout from DPM on size of organisation but the numbers above represent current funding and the intent is that the organisation grows, potentially double. I said it may be that they need more like 10-12 work points in Bowen. Also said we would let him know if we hear anymore and are working closely with Peter W.

Regards

Malcolm.

~~PROTECTED, SH:CABINET~~

From: MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 21 September 2021 6:57 AM

To: SOUTHWELL Malcolm <Malcolm.Southwell@infrastructure.gov.au>; Middleton, Vicki <vicki.middleton@communications.gov.au>

Subject: RE: NQWIA - preliminary advice on relocation [~~SEC-PROTECTED, CAVEAT-SH-CABINET~~]

~~PROTECTED, SH:CABINET~~

Thanks Malcolm

Ok for this to be finalised and provided to the DPM. See if you can get some time with s47E to walk through the main points. Happy to assist if that helps.

B

~~PROTECTED, SH:CABINET~~

From: SOUTHWELL Malcolm <Malcolm.Southwell@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 20 September 2021 9:18 PM
To: MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>; Middleton, Vicki <vicki.middleton@communications.gov.au>
Subject: RE: NQWIA - preliminary advice on relocation [~~SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET~~]

~~PROTECTED, SH:CABINET~~

Updated brief for consideration.

~~PROTECTED, SH:CABINET~~

From: MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 15 September 2021 7:09 AM
To: SOUTHWELL Malcolm <Malcolm.Southwell@infrastructure.gov.au>; Middleton, Vicki <vicki.middleton@communications.gov.au>
Cc: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>; DARROUGH Mark <Mark.Darrough@infrastructure.gov.au>; s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: NQWIA - preliminary advice on relocation [~~SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET~~]

~~PROTECTED, SH:CABINET~~

Hi Malcolm and thanks for this. There are a few points in the brief that I'd like to discuss before we put the advice up. We have a long day ahead of us with the AB meeting, but perhaps we could speak later this afternoon - perhaps around 4.30ish?

B

~~PROTECTED, SH:CABINET~~

From: SOUTHWELL Malcolm <Malcolm.Southwell@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 September 2021 7:34 PM
To: MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>; Middleton, Vicki <vicki.middleton@communications.gov.au>
Cc: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>; DARROUGH Mark <Mark.Darrough@infrastructure.gov.au>; s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: NQWIA - preliminary advice on relocation [~~SEC=PROTECTED, CAVEAT=SH:CABINET~~]

~~PROTECTED, SH:CABINET~~

Hi Brendan, Vicki,

Attached is the draft brief on the NQWIA relocation – providing the initial advice that was requested. Incorporates input from Peter on the brief.

s47E thanks also for your input. Mark – copying you in, in the context of your NWGA role.

Given content of draft letter I think limit further circulation at this time.

Regards

Malcolm.

~~PROTECTED, SH:CABINET~~

Archived: Friday, 22 October 2021 9:25:03 AM

s47E

Sent: Thu, 23 Sep 2021 10:07:06

To: s47E

Subject: RE: Follow up to phone call [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

Sensitivity: Normal

UNOFFICIAL

Hi s47E

Many thanks for getting back. We always thought Bowen would be limited in terms of options.

Look forward to hearing about some possible co-location options.

Thanks again for keeping on top of this.

s47E

UNOFFICIAL

From: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Thursday, 23 September 2021 8:50 AM

To: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Follow up to phone call [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

UNOFFICIAL

Good morning s47E

We have approached our Property Services Provider (Colliers) to conduct a market sweep to identify what office space may be available for lease. We have also asked them to approach the Commonwealth Strategic Property Advisor to seek advice as to any Commonwealth entities that may be located in Bowen and have space to accommodate our requirements and enable co-location. We have also asked that they investigate any State Government entities for the same.

To date Colliers have advised that they have completed a desktop market sweep and there are no suitable premises for lease in Bowen and only one suitable property near Bowen.

Property details are:

47C

There seems to be a number of properties in Mackay, but I expect that this location may not be suitable given the travel time of approx. 2 hours.

Colliers are awaiting a response from the Commonwealth Strategic Property Advisor as to any Commonwealth entities that NQWIA may be able to co-locate with and are continuing investigation with State Government entities.

I'm happy to discuss if you would like to give me a call.

Regards

s47E

Director • Property / Human Resources and Property Branch • People, Governance, Parliamentary & Communication Division

s47E

GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
CONNECTING AUSTRALIANS • ENRICHING COMMUNITIES • EMPOWERING REGIONS

infrastructure.gov.au



I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live. I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities. I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

UNOFFICIAL

From: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 22 September 2021 3:59 PM
To: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Follow up to phone call [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

UNOFFICIAL

Hi s47E

Hope all is well with you.

Just thought I'd follow to see if there was any info re the below request. Weve got a meeting with the office scheduled, and it would be great if there was some information to pass along.

Happy to discuss

s47E

UNOFFICIAL

From: s47E <[redacted]>
Sent: Monday, 13 September 2021 6:06 PM
To: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: Follow up to phone call [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

UNOFFICIAL

Hi s47E

Once again, many thanks for your time this afternoon.

As I mentioned, the DPM announced on 30 August the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority would be relocating to Bowen in Queensland. Although we don't have specifics, we are assuming that all up and fully staffed, we are looking at around 10 ASL including the CEO being based in Bowen.

To kick things off, and in line with your advice, we'd really appreciate your team reaching out to a provider to undertake a market sweep of potential office accommodation in Bowen. As per our discussion, I've put together a list of essentials and desirables for your consideration. Welcome your thoughts and ideas for improvements.

Essentials

- s47C <[redacted]>

Desirable

- Co-location with another Commonwealth agency
- Dedicated meeting room
- Capability to undertake fit out of Infrastructure network equipment (eg servers)
- Videoconferencing capability, either via meeting room, SESB2 office, or through IT network

Many thanks again for the advice, and happy to discuss further.

regards

s47E

Chief Operating Officer
North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority
GPO Box 594, Canberra ACT 2601

s47E



UNOFFICIAL

s47E

From: WERNER Stephanie
Sent: Thursday, 2 September 2021 9:38 AM
To: CASTELLINO Joe; BACON Rachel; MCRANDLE Brendan
Cc: PICKWORTH Julia; s47E
Subject: RE: For Review - Press Club Input - combined [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]
Attachments: joyce_press club.docx

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

Thanks Joe. Secretary has seen and is happy with it with one change, marked up in the attached. He asked for this to be with the Office in the next half hour.

Thanks and regard Stephanie

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

From: CASTELLINO Joe <Joe.Castellino@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Wednesday, 1 September 2021 5:16 PM
To: BACON Rachel <Rachel.Bacon@infrastructure.gov.au>; MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>; WERNER Stephanie <Stephanie.Werner@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: PICKWORTH Julia <Julia.Pickworth@infrastructure.gov.au>; s47E
 infrastructure.gov.au
Subject: RE: For Review - Press Club Input - combined [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

Hi Stephanie - the attached version now incorporates comments from Brendan and Rachel. For the Secretary's consideration please.

Thanks,
 Joe.

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

From: CASTELLINO Joe
Sent: Wednesday, 1 September 2021 2:10 PM
To: BACON Rachel <Rachel.Bacon@infrastructure.gov.au>; MCRANDLE Brendan <Brendan.McRandle@infrastructure.gov.au>
Cc: PICKWORTH Julia <Julia.Pickworth@infrastructure.gov.au>; s47E
 @infrastructure.gov.au>; WERNER Stephanie <Stephanie.Werner@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: FW: For Review - Press Club Input - combined [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]
Importance: High

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

Hi Rachel and Brendan,

As discussed, please see attached draft material to support the DPM's speech on Friday. Brendan, this incorporates your input on water, thank you. Grateful if you can see if we have the wording around the NQWIA right in terms of establishing / relocating.

Rachel, as discussed, I'm copying to Stephanie in case the Secretary only has a limited window today and in recognition that he wanted to see this as well.

Happy to discuss.

Joe.

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

OFFICIAL

DRAFT – 1 September 2021

Department Input – Vision for Regional Australia

DPM Press Club Speech – 3 September 2021

VISION: *Unlocking Regional Growth through Infrastructure Investment*

- Investing in our regions will make our national economy stronger. It is the way to create wealth in our regions, which is good for the nation.
- Regional Australia's key industry sectors – including agriculture and resources – are the foundations of Australia's economy.
- Unlocking regional Australia's assets and protecting our sovereignty requires commitment and investment. I am committed to getting big projects delivered that can create wealth for the economy – not just in the short term, but over decades. It can take time to change the course of a region and a nation. The post-War Snowy Mountains scheme shows that as a nation we can do the big things.
- To do this, it's about the right infrastructure in the right places at the right time. And building on what's there and getting ready for what's coming. And I want to make sure we are making the most of our big infrastructure builds – to build on and unlock these opportunities.
- I want to create a base for growth and to give regional Australians the means to create wealth.
- I want to grow our population centres across the north, including in north west WA, through the centre and across into north Queensland. Centres with the schools, hospitals, jobs and infrastructure that people want to stay in and move to.
- I want to unlock and grow industries which are important for our sovereignty and for high value exports. Boosting these sectors will strengthen our regional economies and secure our future as a nation.
- I want to make sure local small businesses can benefit from work in these industries and in our infrastructure builds.
- And I want all of our key assets and our vital infrastructure and our regional areas to work together to drive our recovery and our nation's future. Doing this is for the good of our regions and the good of all of Australia.

Deleted: Regional Australia holds the assets that underpin Australia's economic performance.¶

We are a Government that has the big ideas and the vision, and backs it in with major infrastructure investment in regional Australia:

- Inland Rail is a key example of nationally significant infrastructure that will unlock regional Australia's assets. Through a Government commitment of \$14.5 billion, Inland Rail will give rise to new economic potential along the corridor – including cotton processing, food processing hubs and mining support hubs. Inland Rail is about much more than construction – it will level the playing field for regional producers and create inland jobs and business opportunities for decades.
- We've also established a \$3.5 billion National Water Grid Fund and we are working with state and territory governments to get dams and water infrastructure built. And we are succeeding on that front, with nearly half of our water infrastructure projects either delivered or in construction.
- **Today I am announcing that I will relocate the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority to north Queensland [Bowen].** It will be a bigger organisation, with the people and skills to realise the economic transformation of north Queensland.

OFFICIAL

DRAFT – 1 September 2021

- This expanded organisation will have the task of taking water to the west to open up new opportunities for agriculture. This will need new dams and pipelines. It will be a major undertaking, and will change our vision for the future of that region for decades to come.
- Relocation of the Authority will put it closer to the industries and communities it supports.
- It will also create skilled, highly paid jobs in the region. New families moving to the region will support the local economy, including local businesses and service providers. Flow-on jobs will follow.

There are even more future opportunities to harness regional Australia's assets and grow regional centres:

- There is abundant potential to grow regional economies by harnessing export opportunities in emerging resources sectors, such as hydrogen and critical minerals.
 - The hydrogen industry has the potential to bring \$11 billion annually to GDP by 2050. Australia produces lithium and is a top-six resource holder of five other critical minerals and multiple rare earth elements.
 - Unlocking these resources can create new centres of wealth where they are needed. For example, there is currently no major population centre between Perth and Darwin, despite abundant resources. We can change this through well targeted investments in the right infrastructure, in the right places, and by working together.

Archived: Friday, 22 October 2021 9:25:36 AM

From: SOUTHWELL Malcolm

Sent: Tue, 12 Oct 2021 12:09:19

To: s47E

Subject: RE: For review: Updated BPB: 15 NQWIA [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Sensitivity: Normal

Attachments:

RM Workspace - 21#434696DOC NWGA BP 15 - NQWIA.DOCX;

OFFICIAL

Thanks s47E

A few edits. Let's review this again after this afternoon's discussion with Peter and s47E We will have a few extra Q&A to add.

Cheers

Malcolm.

OFFICIAL

From: s47E @infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 11 October 2021 6:57 PM

To: SOUTHWELL Malcolm <Malcolm.Southwell@infrastructure.gov.au>

Cc: s47E infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: For review: Updated BPB: 15 NQWIA [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

Hi Malcolm

In preparation for our catch up tomorrow, please find an updated NQWIA back pocket brief attached. Many thanks to s47E for his work preparing this.

As you will see, we have included advice received re the regional agenda and Bowen property search as discussed with Marisa and Vicki. We will ensure the respective areas also include similar info in their briefs, in case they are asked NQWIA / Bowen related questions separate to us.

On a minor note, I suggest the highlighted text is redundant, in my opinion, but you may wish to keep it, i.e. to be explicit as to where we are up to as at a certain date, if needed.

Happy to discuss

Cheers

s47E

Director • Communication and Engagement
National Water Grid Authority
P 02 6274 6248 • M 0428 785 992
• Please note I don't work Wednesdays •

OFFICIAL

From: s47E @infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Monday, 11 October 2021 5:12 PM

To: s47E @infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: BPB: NQWIA for review [SEC=OFFICIAL]

OFFICIAL

NORTH QUEENSLAND WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AUTHORITY**FAST FACTS****Financial information as at 31 August 2021 – costs are GST exclusive unless otherwise stated**

- The Australian Government established the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority (NQWIA) in March 2019 as a separate executive agency in the Infrastructure portfolio.
- NQWIA was established to give a specific focus to the development of water infrastructure projects in north Queensland, including the Hughenden Irrigation Scheme, the Hells Gates dam, and Big Rocks weir.
- The former CEO, Mr Richard McLoughlin, retired on 30 April 2021. Recruitment for a replacement CEO is underway with the role advertised nationally on 20 May 2021.
- On 3 September 2021, the Deputy Prime Minister announced that the North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority office would relocate to Bowen, Queensland. The Department is currently assisting with arrangements for this relocation.
 - The acting CEO of the NOWIA, Dr Peter Wallbrink, is the accountable authority.

s22

BACKGROUND

22

Relocation to Bowen, Queensland

- On 3 September 2021, the Deputy Prime Minister announced the relocation of the NQWIA headquarters to Bowen, in Queensland.
- The Deputy Prime Minister has requested advice on the steps required to implement his announcement and the Department is preparing this advice.
- The Department's corporate services team is supporting NQWIA in identifying suitable office accommodation in Bowen and has briefed the Australian Government's contracted whole-of-government accommodation provider (Colliers).
 - Colliers is currently undertaking a desktop market sweep to investigate what office space may be available for lease in Bowen. This includes exploring potential co-location opportunities with other Commonwealth, State or local government entities.
 - If asked on costs of the relocation – The costs of establishing a headquarters in Bowen remains to be identified, however NQWIA's headquarters in Canberra is located within the Department's footprint, and therefore there is no lease that requires termination.

- The relocation is rightfully a decision of the Deputy Prime Minister.
 - The decision reflects the high priority that the Deputy Prime Minister attaches to the significant water infrastructure projects in North Queensland that are currently in the planning stage. The decision will also generate local employment opportunities in the Bowen region.
 - *If asked about timing of the announcement:* The Deputy Prime Minister's office advised the Department and NQWIA about the NQWIA relocation decision on 2 September 2021. The Department assisted the Deputy Prime Minister's Office in preparing a media release about the relocation on 3 September 2021.
 - *If pressed about advice from the Department:* The Department was not asked to provide any advice to the Deputy Prime Minister about relocating the NQWIA to Bowen ahead of the announcement on 3 September 2021.

Regionalisation policy

- Australia's economic activity is strongly connected to the distribution of its population. Around one third of Australians live in regional Australia, and the regions account for around one third of Gross Domestic Product. The Regionalisation Agenda supports diverse and productive local economies and creates jobs. It places a strong focus on both public and private sector relocation.
- The Government announced the relocation of 432 public service jobs from 18 agencies to regional areas between 2017 and 2021. These announcements followed a thorough assessment of operations by government departments and agencies to identify opportunities to locate appropriate functions and staff closer to communities and relieve the pressure on capital cities.
 - This assessment occurred prior to the NQWIA relocation decision and the NQWIA relocation is not captured in these figures.

Archived: Friday, 22 October 2021 9:25:45 AM

From: s47E

To: CASTELLINO Joe; s47E

Subject: RE: Further guidance on today's notes for DPM [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

Sensitivity: Normal

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

No worries....

k

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

From: CASTELLINO Joe <Joe.Castellino@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 1 September 2021 11:44 AM

To: s47E

infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Further guidance on today's notes for DPM [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

These look great, thank you. But I have just spoken with Brendan McRandle, who was asked by the Secretary to do some points on water, including the NQWIA move. He'll send them through to me in the next 10 minutes. See how much of the below we need to add.

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

From: s47E @infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 1 September 2021 11:14 AM

To: CASTELLINO Joe <Joe.Castellino@infrastructure.gov.au> s47E

infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Further guidance on today's notes for DPM [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

Hi s47E

Some dot points on the NQWIA follows Not sure if this is what you are after or if it aligns with your points, but Im happy to rework them as needed.

- The North Queensland Water Infrastructure Authority is delivering the Hughenden Irrigation and the Hells Gates Dam projects. It works with stakeholders, local governments and the Queensland Government to plan and deliver this infrastructure.
- To ensure the Authority is in close proximity to both the projects and local communities being supported by the new infrastructure, it will relocate to Bowen, Queensland. New positions to support the Authority's work will also be created.
- Relocation and expansion of the Authority will create skilled, highly paid jobs in the region. New families moving to the region will support the local economy, including local businesses and service providers. Flow-on employment opportunities can be expected.

s47E

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

From: CASTELLINO Joe <Joe.Castellino@infrastructure.gov.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 1 September 2021 10:20 AM

To: s47E

infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: Further guidance on today's notes for DPM [SEC=OFFICIAL:Sensitive]

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

s47E [redacted] advice from Simon:

- ½ page dot points on the vision. s22 [redacted]
- 3 dot points on the NQWIA – move to Bowen and expand. Create jobs for the community. s22 [redacted].

47F [redacted] I'll call you to give background and see if you can add something on the benefits of public sector decentralisation on the second point.

Rachel and Brendan would like to see this at midday (sorry) and the Secretary wnts to review as well.

OFFICIAL:Sensitive

Archived: Friday, 22 October 2021 9:25:57 AM

From: Rogers, Sandra

Sent: Wed, 22 Sep 2021 09:26:47

s47E

Subject: RE: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

Sensitivity: Normal

Hi s47E

As response from the SPA is still pending, however I highly doubt there will be a Commonwealth agency in Bowen with the exception of possibly Services Australia. I will commence a search with State and Local governments. I just wanted to send you some information about what is currently available in the commercial market.

I will come back to you with the rest of the information once I have it.

Have a good day.

Sandra Rogers

Associate Director, Government Property Services | Occupier Services

s47F

Main +61 2 6257 2121 | Fax +61 2 6257 2937 | [vCard](#)

Level 8, 68 Northbourne Ave | Canberra, ACT 2600 | Australia



[We welcome your feedback.](#)



From: s47E <[REDACTED]@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 21 September 2021 3:21 PM

To: Rogers, Sandra <s47F@colliers.com>

Cc: s47E <[REDACTED]@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

UNOFFICIAL

Hi Sandra, I know you mentioned the desktop sweep below but was there anything with the SPA in regards to other commonwealth entities in Bowen ? what about state govt?

If that's a no go in regards to those things then we can go back and check internally about how far they want us to search outside of Bowen.

Cheers

s47E

UNOFFICIAL

From: Rogers, Sandra <s47F@colliers.com>

Sent: Tuesday, 21 September 2021 12:10 PM

To: s47E <[REDACTED]@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>

Cc: s47E <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>; s47E <[REDACTED]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

Hi s47E

I've just done a desktop market sweep and there is only one suitable property near Bowen (none in Bowen). There seems to be a number of properties in Mackay, but I won't extend the search area until I hear back from you.

47C

Property details are:

47C

Regards

Sandra Rogers

Associate Director, Government Property Services | Occupier Services

s47F

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[We welcome your feedback.](#)



From: s47E <[redacted]@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 21 September 2021 11:59 AM

To: Rogers, Sandra s47F <[redacted]@colliers.com>

Cc: s47E <[redacted]@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

UNOFFICIAL

Hi Sandra,

I will double check and come back to you.

Cheers

s47E

UNOFFICIAL

From: Rogers, Sandra s47F <[redacted]@colliers.com>

Sent: Tuesday, 21 September 2021 11:38 AM

To: s47E <[redacted]@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

Hi s47E

Thanks for the additional information and it was great to speak to you earlier. You mentioned that the search area could reach beyond Bowen, does that include Townsville? Or is the preference to stay out of the metro area?

Regards

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From: s47E <s47E@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 21 September 2021 10:12 AM
To: Rogers, Sandra <s47F@colliers.com>
Cc: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: FW: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

UNOFFICIAL

Hi Sandra,

As discussed please see below,

Cheers

Cheers

s47E

UNOFFICIAL

From: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 21 September 2021 9:33 AM
To: s47E <s47E@infrastructure.gov.au>
Subject: RE: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

UNOFFICIAL

Hi s47E,

I just got off the phone with Malcolm Southwell, AS of NWGA and he advised that it will be a least 10 staff so can you please update Sandra that we are seeking:

s47C

Regards

s47E

Director • Property / Human Resources and Property Branch • People, Governance, Parliamentary & Communication Division

s47E



I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land on which we meet, work and live.
I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters and communities.
I pay my respects to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

UNOFFICIAL

From: s47E <[REDACTED]@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 20 September 2021 3:58 PM
To: 's47F [REDACTED]@colliers.com' <s47F [REDACTED]@colliers.com>
Cc: Ls47E [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
Subject: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

UNOFFICIAL

Hi s47E

We have been asked to assist one of our portfolio entities with a market search for space in Bowen, QLD.

Below are some details for what is required:

Essentials

- s47C [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Desirable

- Co-location with another Commonwealth agency
- Dedicated meeting room
- Capability to undertake fit out of Infrastructure network equipment (eg servers)
- Videoconferencing capability, either via meeting room, SES B2 office, or through IT network

We are interested to understand all options, based on the above, for either co-location with another Commonwealth or State Government entity and options to lease a premises.

Cheers

s47E [REDACTED]
Property Leasing and Projects Senior Adviser • Human Resources and Property Branch
People, Governance, Parliamentary & Communication Division

s47E [REDACTED]



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UNOFFICIAL

UNOFFICIAL

Archived: Friday, 22 October 2021 9:26:42 AM
 From: 47E
 Sent: Wed, 6 Oct 2021 10:51:49
 To: Rogers, Sandra
 Cc: 47E
 Subject: RE: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]
 Sensitivity: Normal

UNOFFICIAL

Thanks Sandra, I gather there wasn't any State or local government space available either ?

We will go back to the team in question and ask them about broadening the search area.

Cheers

s47E

UNOFFICIAL

From: Rogers, Sandra <s47F@colliers.com>
 Sent: Wednesday, 6 October 2021 9:30 AM
 To: s47E@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au
 Cc: s47E@infrastructure.gov.au
 Subject: RE: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

Good morning s47E

The SPA has advised the following:

"Based on the response received from PSPs, there is no surplus space in any Commonwealth tenancies in Bowen or surrounding areas.

The only lead provided was potential vacant space at NIAA, Townsville (total tenancy size is 132.6 square metres with 14 workpoints). However, another entity is currently in-contact to occupy the surplus space available."

I'll await your further instructions in regard to exploring other options or broadening the search area.

Regards

Sandra Rogers

Associate Director, Government Property Services | Occupier Services

s47F

Main +61 2 6257 2121 | Fax +61 2 6257 2937 | [vCard](#)

Level 8, 68 Northbourne Ave | Canberra, ACT 2600 | Australia



[We welcome your feedback.](#)



From: Rogers, Sandra
 Sent: Tuesday, 5 October 2021 11:57 AM
 To: s47E@infrastructure.gov.au
 Subject: RE: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

Hi s47E

I haven't heard back from the SPA yet, I will give them a call today and come back to you.

Regards

Sandra Rogers

Associate Director, Government Property Services | Occupier Services

s47F

Main +61 2 6257 2121 | Fax +61 2 6257 2937 | [vCard](#)

Level 8, 68 Northbourne Ave | Canberra, ACT 2600 | Australia



[We welcome your feedback.](#)



From: s47E <COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>

Sent: Tuesday, 5 October 2021 11:33 AM

To: Rogers, Sandra s47F <@colliers.com>

Cc: s47E

<COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>

Subject: FW: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

UNOFFICIAL

Hi Sandra, hope you had a good weekend.

Just thought I would touch base on the below and see how the search was going.

Cheers

s47E

UNOFFICIAL

From: Rogers, Sandra s47F <@colliers.com>

Sent: Wednesday, 22 September 2021 9:26 AM

To: s47E

<@infrastructure.gov.au>

Subject: RE: Market search - Bowen QLD [SEC=UNOFFICIAL]

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Sent: Tuesday, 21 September 2021 3:21 PM
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Cc: s47E <[redacted]@COMMUNICATIONS.gov.au>
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GPO Box 594 Canberra, ACT 2601

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
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infrastructure.gov.au



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UNOFFICIAL

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