

annual report 2009/2010

message from the chairman

This year the Council of Mayors (SEQ) raised its profile considerably at a Federal level and continued to be highly influential at a State level. As the Federal Government and Council of Australian Governments became more interested in metropolitan planning, the Council of Mayors (SEQ) has increasingly been recognised as an important forum representing the councils across our region.

The Council of Mayors (SEQ) believe that stronger partnerships are needed between all three levels of Government - Federal, State and Local - to manage growth in SEQ. We took this message to the Premier's Growth Management Summit in March and on two delegations to Federal Parliament in Canberra. The release of the revised SEQ Regional Plan in July 2009 and the Federal Government push to tie future infrastructure spends to strategic metropolitan plans have reinforced this message.

By 2031, an extra 1.4 million people will call SEQ home. This creates a huge infrastructure challenge, prompting the Council of Mayors (SEQ) to pursue funding for seven key transport infrastructure projects for SEQ. Intensive work with the State and lobbying of the Federal Government resulted in all of our projects being recognised in the SEQ Infrastructure Plan, some by Infrastructure Australia and others in direct funding decisions.

In 2009, the Council of Mayors (SEQ) urged the State not to proceed with its restructure of Council water businesses. The State rejected the Mayors' preferred position of leaving water with the ten SEQ councils, but agreed to keep retail and distribution functions within three regional Council-owned water bodies. While this is an improvement on the Government's previous model, we believe water users would have been better off if water distribution had remained under direct Council control.

SEQ Mayors hold a strong view that local gov-

ernment is better placed than Federal or State Governments to manage strategic planning issues because of our close links with our communities.

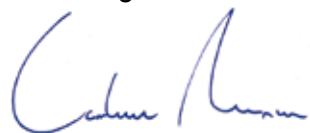
We have been active in process reform of urban planning and development assessment processes, managing \$6.5 million worth of projects funded through the Federal Government's Housing Affordability Fund.

We have continued with a number of sustainability initiatives and we have formed an effective partnership with the State Government to deliver a regional trail bike facility at Wyaralong. I wish to acknowledge the Premier Anna Bligh and Sports Minister Phil Reeves for their part in providing this facility for SEQ's 200,000 plus trail bike riders.

I wish to thank all Mayors, Councillors and Council staff who have contributed time and ideas to the Council of Mayors (SEQ). The influence of our organisation is a direct result of the quality of information provided to it by member councils, and the simple political equation that a well argued collective view makes for a powerful case. I also wish to thank the hardworking staff of our small secretariat for their efforts over the past year and to particularly acknowledge the ongoing support of the Deputy Chairman Cr John Brent.

SEQ Councils can take pride in our collective achievements for our ratepayers through the Council of Mayors (SEQ) this past year. I firmly believe that our ratepayers want all levels of government working together on the big issues. The Council of Mayors (SEQ) influence lies in our strong collective commitment to pool our resources to deliver better outcomes for our residents.

As you can see from this Annual Report, we are continuing to deliver.



Cr Campbell Newman
Chairman – Council of Mayors (SEQ)



Council of Mayors

South East Queensland



executive director's report

This has been a challenging yet productive year for the Council of Mayors (SEQ). We have achieved a number of significant wins across a range of areas, including water reform, regional planning and sustainability initiatives. This success is a credit to the commitment of SEQ Councils to work collaboratively.

Much of our work is by nature a slow and hard slog, such as our advocacy on issues like infrastructure investment, waste management, planning reform and climate change. What our work program and achievements clearly demonstrate is the value of Councils working together for the collective benefit of the region.

Many of the issues faced by SEQ Councils are regional in nature, and the solutions to the challenges they face are often regional in scope. The commitment shown by the Mayors, their officers and their Councils to looking beyond their boundaries to seek regional solutions is a credit to the political maturity of Councils and their leaders in this region.

The long repeated refrain of the Council of Mayors (SEQ) is that the challenge of managing growth in the fastest growing region in Australia is beyond the capacity of any single level of government to fix alone. Cooperation between all three levels of Government is essential, and promoting this remains a key priority.

The Council of Mayors (SEQ) continues to produce well researched evidence-based submissions and reports to support the objectives of the SEQ Mayors.

Good technical backup is crucial to effective advocacy and I want to thank our policy officers of the secretariat as well as the Council officers for their superb effort over the past year.

This organisation runs on a very tight budget, and I wish to also thank the support staff for their highly professional efforts in servicing the Council and committee meetings, our taskforces and projects, and our communications and lobbying efforts.

The Council of Mayors (SEQ) took a major step forward this year, establishing itself as an incorporated entity with its ten member councils as shareholders and the ten Mayors constituting its Board of Directors. With the maturing of the organisation, the Council of Mayors (SEQ) moved away from its hosting arrangement with Brisbane City Council, establishing our own premises and contractual arrangements. I wish to acknowledge the assistance that Brisbane City Council has provided to the Council of Mayors (SEQ) as hosting council over the past five years, and the leadership role it continues to display in collaboration initiatives in the region.

Two-way communication is crucial to ensuring that the Council of Mayors (SEQ) reflects the priorities of its member councils. Each February, the Mayors hold an annual strategic review to set the direction for the Council of Mayors (SEQ) for the following years, seeking to ensure that the organisation continues to focus on how best to make a difference and present the best possible case on behalf of our member councils. We also added a Regional Councillors Forum to our program this year to provide direct feedback to and seek input from councillors on regional activities and priorities. A fortnightly communiqué is provided to all councillors across the region providing updates on our current and emerging issues.

I wish to thank the Chairman Cr Campbell Newman and the Deputy Chairman Cr John Brent for their support and leadership over the past year, and the member Councils for their continuing recognition of the importance of regional cooperation and advocacy.



John Cherry
Executive Director



council of mayors (SEQ)

Membership 2009-2010

Ten SEQ Councils represented by the region's Mayors;

- Cr Campbell Newman (Brisbane), Chairman;
- Cr John Brent (Scenic Rim), Deputy Chairman;
- Cr Pam Parker (Logan), Treasurer;
- Cr Ron Clarke, (Gold Coast);
- Cr Paul Pisasale (Ipswich);
- Cr Steve Jones (Lockyer Valley);
- Cr Melva Hobson (Redland);
- Cr Graeme Lehmann (Somerset);
- Cr Bob Abbot (Sunshine Coast); and
- Cr Peter Taylor (Toowoomba).

Committees

Regional Plan & Growth Management Committee:

Cr John Brent (Scenic Rim), Chair
Cr Pam Parker (Logan), Deputy Chair

Environment & Sustainability Committee:

Cr Melva Hobson (Redland), Chair
Cr Graeme Lehmann (Somerset), Deputy Chair

Infrastructure Committee:

Cr Campbell Newman (Brisbane), Chair
Cr Ron Clarke MBE (Gold Coast), Deputy Chair

Rural Communities Taskforce:

Cr Graeme Lehmann (Somerset), Chair

Trail Bike Taskforce:

Cr Steve Jones (Lockyer Valley), Chair

Regional Carbon Sink Taskforce:

Cr Melva Hobson (Redland), Chair

Executive Director:

John Cherry



Images courtesy of Tourism Queensland

Speaking with one voice for South East Queensland

MISSION

"The Council of Mayors (SEQ) is a political advocacy organisation that represents the interests of one in seven Australians. We proactively influence Federal and State Governments to ensure the long term viability, wellbeing and sustainability of our communities. We speak with one voice to ensure appropriate funding and delivery of infrastructure and services to the residents of South East Queensland."

GOALS

*Review and implement the SEQ Regional Plan, taking into account population growth management;
Improve wellbeing and livability of SEQ communities;
Promote sustainability; and
Demonstrate strong leadership*

promoting liveability

liveability

SEQ water reforms take next steps

SEQ water reforms continue to be an issue of concern to SEQ Councils. The State's takeover of bulk water assets took effect on 1 July 2008, and the State's second stage of 'reforms' to rearrange the ten council water businesses into a single water distribution business and three retailers was due to take effect from 1 July 2010. Council of Mayors (SEQ) has consistently opposed the latter reforms, arguing that water customers would be better off if the businesses remained with councils. With the Government deaf to this lobby, the Council of Mayors (SEQ) put in place a major Water Reform Program to manage the transition to the new structure.

Following the State Election in February 2009, the Mayors again approached the Government seeking a different model, pointing to the high establishment cost of splitting integrated water business into 'distribution' and 'retail' functions. The Government relented, but still insisted on three or four regional water entities rather than the Council's preferred position of the ten councils.

Throughout 2009-10, SEQ Councils worked closely with each other and the State to develop this model. The result has been the formation of three

new regional water entities owned by SEQ Councils but required by law to operate on a commercial basis with independent boards of directors. The new entities created on 1 July 2010 were:

- Unity Water (Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay)
- Queensland Urban Utilities (Brisbane, Ipswich, Scenic Rim, Lockyer Valley and Somerset)
- Allconnex (Gold Coast, Logan and Redland)

From 2010 to 2013, the boards of the independent entities will set their own charges, subject to monitoring by the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA). The QCA will fully regulate prices from 2013. A report by the QCA on water prices charged by Councils in 2009 found Council prices were well below 'full cost reflectivity' principles and were not excessive.

The Queensland Water Commission released the final version of the SEQ Regional Water Strategy in June 2010, replacing the cancelled Traves-ton Crossing Dam with a long term commitment to additional desalination plants. The Council of Mayors (SEQ) has continued to advocate for the multibillion assets built in the SEQ Water Grid to be more effectively utilised, pushing the State to provide recycled water for use by rural industries.

Trail Bikes

Trail bike riding in SEQ has experienced an unprecedented increase in popularity in recent years. With fewer legal locations to ride, illegal trail bike riding has been an emerging issue for SEQ Councils, prompting the Council of Mayors (SEQ) to work in partnership with the State Government to address this problem.

In November 2009 the Premier and the Council of Mayors (SEQ) Chairman announced that a 745 hectare site in Wyaralong, near Boonah, had been identified as a preferred site for the establishment of a regional scale recreational trail bike facility.

The first stage of the Wyaralong Facility is expected to be operational during 2011.

Key achievements in 2009/10 included:

- Commissioning a detailed market evaluation of trail bike riders in SEQ which helped inform planning of the Wyaralong facility;
- Eight SEQ Councils pledging \$1.1 million towards the development of the Wyaralong regional facility, matching the State Government's commitment of \$1 million;
- Commencing planning and development of the Wyaralong facility, facility access and water supply;
- A public Expression of Interest (EOI) process to identify a suitable operator to develop and manage the Wyaralong facility;
- Establishing SEQ Regional Recreational Facilities Pty Ltd as the trustee of the site; and
- Working with the State Government to achieve a fast tracked approval process for the Wyaralong facility through the use of the State Planning Regulatory Provisions (SPRP) for a motor sport activity facility (trail bike) on State-owned land at Wyaralong.



V8 Supercar Champion Craig Lowndes at the Wyaralong facility with Cr John Brent, Sport Minister Phil Reeves and Cr Steve Jones.

promoting sustainability

The Council of Mayors (SEQ) through its Environment and Sustainability Committee pursued a proactive agenda of sustainability issues to benefit the region, including advocacy on policy issues and promotion of regional projects. In 2009-10, key achievements included:

- Advocating major changes to the State's draft SEQ Koala Planning Provisions to facilitate the development of local strategies and action to protect koala habitat and improve the policy's workability;
- Developing a draft SEQ Regional Environmental Offsets Framework to assist Councils when preparing planning provisions. A final version will be completed when the State Government releases its Draft Biodiversity Offsets Policy.
- Working through the SEQ National Reserve Partnership to obtain \$7.17 million of Federal funding, adding to \$5 million of Council funding, for the purchase of lands of high conservation value in the National Reserve System;
- Influencing the development of the State Waste Strategy and managing a Regional Waste Management Program (see right);
- Launching pilot sites for the SEQ Regional Carbon Sink project in Redland, Scenic Rim and Lockyer Valley;
- Improving linkages with regional NRM bodies, with Cr John Brent as a director of SEQ Catchments and with Council of Mayors (SEQ) Executive Director John Cherry joining the Interim Management Board of the SEQ Healthy Waterways Partnership as it transitioned to a new governance structure. Council of Mayors (SEQ) is also represented on the Regional NRM CEOs Committee chaired by the Director General of the Department of Environment and Resource Management;



Cr Campbell Newman and Cr John Brent at the launch of the rural carbon sink pilot site in the Scenic Rim.

- Commissioning a detailed report from AECOM on the development of an aggregated purchasing model for SEQ Councils to purchase renewable energy;

- Advocating for green-space, climate change and sustainability to be key priorities coming out of the Growth Management Summit;

- Making submissions into the development of the SEQ Regional Climate Change Program and the climate change aspects of the Queensland Coastal Plan;

- Continuing to fund a four year program to develop drought resistant turf grass.

Highlights: Regional Waste Management Program

- A report, plans and maps identifying current facilities and their expected remaining life was prepared for the Regional Infrastructure project.
- A pilot database incorporating local, state and federal government data requirements has been established and provided to DERM for consideration for use to meet the waste data needs of the State Waste Strategy.
- A consistent methodology for collecting resource recovery data was provided to SEQ Councils.
- Regional waste management government arrangements around Australia were examined with options suggested for suitable arrangements for SEQ.
- Recommendations for improving the management of regional priority wastes were provided for SEQ Councils to consider.
- Regional waste education resources were prepared and are available on the Toolbox website.

State Waste Reform Process

In June 2010 the State Government released Queensland's Waste Strategy 2010-2020. The Council of Mayors (SEQ) met twice with Minister Kate Jones in the development of the policy, advocating for the exemption of municipal waste from the waste levy, the full hypothecation of any levy funds to waste projects, the need for a program to combat illegal dumping, and for policies to promote resource recovery and sustainable procurement.

Council of Mayors (SEQ) is represented on the Minister's Advisory Panel and Technical Working Groups now developing the details of the Waste Policy, legislation and programs.

getting SEQ moving

During 2009 the Council of Mayors (SEQ) Infrastructure Committee short-listed seven 'national priority' infrastructure projects which formed the basis of a detailed funding submission presented to the Commonwealth Government in February 2010.

With one quarter of the nation's population growth occurring in SEQ, the Council of Mayors (SEQ) drew on integrated planning principles and data to support the case for investment in nationally significant infrastructure projects in the region.

In addition to providing strong support for the Inner City Rail Capacity Upgrade project, which is already recognised in the National Infrastructure Priorities Pipeline (NIPP), the Council of Mayors (SEQ) submission discussed Commonwealth investment in the seven 'national priority' infrastructure projects (see right).

While collaborative work with the State Government built on and refined our approaches to the Federal Government, the '2010 Getting SEQ Moving – Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects' submission process supported ongoing infrastructure advocacy actions in 2009-10, including:

- Meetings with Federal Ministers and Shadow Ministers, SEQ-based MPs and Queensland Senators, including two workshops in Brisbane, a three-day site tour of SEQ infrastructure and two SEQ Mayor delegations to Canberra;
- Preparation of a submission to the 2009 Queensland Local Government Grants Com-

The 'Magnificent 7'

- Deliver the Toowoomba Bypass
- Upgrade Kingsford Smith Drive
- Extend the Eastern Busway to Capalaba;
- Fix the Warrego Highway Blacksoil intersection;
- Widen the Pacific Motorway through Logan;
- Expand the Sunshine Coast Airport; and
- Extend the Gold Coast Rail Line to Coolangatta

mission's review of the Financial Assistance Grants methodology;

- Preparation of the 2010-11 State Budget Submission, including commissioning Access Economics Pty Ltd to measure revised economic outlook against the planned future capital expenditure program for SEQ; and
- 2010 Federal Election 'Magnificent 7' infrastructure campaign, which included:
 - Billboards, radio ads, website and direct mail;
 - Representations to political parties, media, industry stakeholders and opinion leaders;
 - Complementary local media campaigns; and
 - Alliance workshop events for the Warrego Highway, Pacific Highway Corridor and Eastern Busway.

Key Outcomes

- Overwhelmingly positive feedback from Government and Opposition for the Council of Mayors (SEQ) adopting an integrated regional planning framework in its approaches for Commonwealth investment for SEQ infrastructure.
- The inclusion of the Sunshine Coast Airport expansion and the Kingsford Smith Drive Upgrade within the 2010 SEQ Infrastructure Plan and Program (SEQIPP). All 'Magnificent 7' projects are now in the SEQIPP (consistent with COAG infrastructure investment reforms).
- The inclusion of the Gold Coast Rail capacity upgrades and extension through to Coolangatta on Infrastructure Australia's NIPP.
- Raising community awareness about the need for greater Commonwealth, State and Local Government planning, collaboration and investment in building SEQ infrastructure capacity to ease population growth pressures.



Cr Melva Hobson and Cr Campbell Newman on the 'Magnificent 7' campaign trail.

the SEQ regional plan

South East Queensland's population continues to grow at a significant rate. At 30 June 2009, the population of SEQ was approximately 3,096,600 people which represents exactly 70 per cent of the total population of Queensland. Incredibly, the region grew by 84,391 persons in the 12 months leading up to 30 June 2009, which equates to a population growth of more than 1,600 people per week in SEQ. It is clear that this rate of growth was also sustained in 2009/2010.

The challenges and concerns associated with such rapid growth contributed to the Premier convening the Queensland Growth Management Summit in March 2010. Among many key outcomes of the Summit was the recommitment to the SEQ Regional Plan and the recognition that there needed to be an ongoing 'conversation' about the growth of the SEQ region.

Key achievements and outcomes over the 2009/2010 year included:

- The Council of Mayors (SEQ) advocating input from SEQ Local Governments in the identification of 25 programs and actions of the SEQ Regional Plan for priority implementation. The Regional Planning Committee endorsed these priorities as a whole of government priority for implementation in 2010.
- The Council of Mayors (SEQ) taking up a key role in the organisation of the Queensland Growth Management Summit and developing a high level list of principles for the consideration of those involved in the Summit. All SEQ Mayors were invited to participate in the Summit.
- The Council of Mayors (SEQ) being recognised as a key stakeholder for the delivery of many of the 47 actions arising from the Summit.
- The Federal Government, through the COAG Reform Council, to require State and Territories to prepare capital city strategic plans by 2012 that meet national criteria for transport, housing, urban development and sustainability.
- The appointment of a Federal Minister for Population, now the sustainable population portfolio.
- The Council of Mayors (SEQ) continuing involvement in the emerging national policy agenda, in collaboration with the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors and the Australian Local Government Association.

Housing Affordability

The Australian Government, through the Housing Affordability Fund (HAF), is investing \$512 million over five years (to 2013) to lower the cost of building new homes. The Council of Mayors (SEQ), with funding from HAF, has been working to address policy and process reform initiatives including the development of electronic tools to speed up development assessment process.

In 2009/2010, key achievements included:

- A number of SEQ councils implementing online planning tools as part of the electronic development assessment (eDA) project.
- The completion of Project Initiation Documents and Council Activity Plans for the Target 5 Days Project, aiming for a five day approval time frame for complying low risk residential development applications.
- Drafting guidelines and codes for the Next Generation Planning Project, which focuses on the development and implementation of a consistent approach towards the delivery of housing affordability policies and codes within SEQ.
- Securing \$1.78 million in funding for the Liveable Compact Cities Project (LCCP), announced in May 2010. The LCCP will consider the role of medium density residential development in improving housing affordability and achieving the compact urban form outlined by the SEQ Regional Plan.



Council of Mayors (SEQ) delegation to Canberra in February 2010 with Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer Wayne Swan.

managing growth

Managing population growth is a huge challenge for SEQ Councils. The Council of Mayors (SEQ) has called for all three levels of government to work together to help deliver on the region's expectation of preserving sustainability, liveability and prosperity as SEQ continues to grow. Ahead of the Premier's Growth Management Summit, SEQ Mayors agreed on seven high level principles to underpin this partnership. They were:

- Population policy must ease pressure on growth;
- The community must have a say on where and how growth occurs;
- Commit to the SEQ Regional Plan, urban footprint and infrastructure plan to support it;
- Develop a vision and a partnership approach to planning for growth and infrastructure, including public transport;
- Develop a better understanding of the relationship between housing affordability and market choices;
- Promote regional, sub-regional and rural economic development and jobs; and
- Acknowledge and promote successes in planning and commit to continuous improvement.

These seven principles will continue to be the basis of advocacy work by the Council of Mayors



Federal, State and Local Government working together; Shayne Neumann MP, Cr Graeme Lehmann, Ian Macfarlane MP, Wayne Wendt MP, Cr John Brent and Cr Victor Attwood.

(SEQ) for a greater focus and commitment to the implementation of the SEQ Regional Plan as well as each of the 46 actions arising from the Queensland Growth Management Summit.

The Council of Mayors (SEQ) has argued that the Regional Planning Committee, which brings together Local, State and Commonwealth Government representatives, should play a key role in providing ongoing leadership to implement the SEQ Regional Plan and actions arising from the Summit. We have also continued to seek to influence the development of urban planning and infrastructure policies at both a National and State level to ensure that the voice of SEQ local communities are heard in these important debates.



In 2009-2010 SEQ:

- Was home to over three million people;
- Accounted for 70% of Queensland's population and 14% of Australia's population;
- Welcomed an additional 1,600 new residents per week; and
- Generated one fifth of the nation's economic growth.

In 2009-2010, Local Government in SEQ:

- Represented one in seven Australians;
- Poured a record \$3.5 billion into capital works;
- Employed over 25,700 workers; and
- Included five of the six largest local councils in Australia.

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