

# Townsville Port Community Liaison Group

## Meeting Minutes



**Date:** Wednesday 1 November 2023, 5pm – 6.30pm  
**Venue:** Port of Townsville Board Room / Microsoft Teams  
**Chair:** Raneë Crosby, CEO, Port of Townsville

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### Attendees

1	Raneë Crosby	CEO, Port of Townsville (Chair)
2	Sarah Mathiesen	A/Manager Strategy & External Affairs, Port of Townsville (presenting)
3	Scott Croll	Manager Business Development (presenting)
4	Jo Francis	A/Manager People & Culture (presenting)
5	Ricky Esterquest	Happy Vibes Café (presenting)
6	Keith Noble	Dry Tropics Partnership for Healthy Waters (presenting)
7	Norm Rains	Townsville Birdlife
8	Sharon Marks	Ausfield Services
9	Leon Kippin	Community representative

### Apologies

1	Emily Blumson	Community Rep
2	Craig Knight	Community Rep
3	Paul Crocombe	Community Rep
4	Rick Vernon	President of Magnetic Island Community Development Association
5	Adam Smith	Community Rep
6	Heath Hatfield	Community Rep
7	John Cordingley	Glencore
8	Aniko Papp	MICDA rep
9	Brenton Creed	Community representative
10	Elaine Glen	Port of Townsville

### Actions Summary

#### Actions from this meeting:

**ACTION:** Seek feedback from members not in attendance about how we can improve engagement in the CLG.

**ACTION:** Circulate information about Happy Vibes to Procurement team (COMPLETE)

**ACTION:** Look for opportunities to engage Happy Vibes' catering business for staff events (COMPLETE)

#### Outstanding actions from previous meetings:

**ACTION:** Port of Townsville to invite CLG members to see the Woomera.

**ACTION:** Arrange an outing on the Osprey once COVID-19 restrictions allow.

**ACTION:** Port to present 30-year outlook plan to CLG at a future meeting.

**ACTION:** Share the Alternate DMPA report with the CLG once it is completed.

## 1. Welcome/Apologies

Chair Raneë Crosby welcomed members to the CLG's 38th meeting.

Raneë began by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are meeting, the Wulgurukaba people, and paid respects to Elders both past and present.

Apologies for the meeting were noted.

## 2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The draft minutes of the previous meeting were tabled at the meeting. Members of the CLG were encouraged to advise the Port if they required any changes.

All actions have been completed or were addressed during the meeting. Some outstanding actions will be covered as part of the agenda for future meetings when relevant updates are available.

## 3. Discussion about change of format to improve attendance

The Chair noted that attendance at CLG meetings had been lower than it was in the group's earlier years and asked the group for feedback about what might be done to improve interest and engagement in 2024 and beyond.

Feedback from those in attendance included:

- The current timing works well for members in attendance.
- People may have meeting fatigue now that Covid is done and many organisations are making up for 'lost time'.
- The CLG's previous field trips had been a good value-add / drawcard for meetings.
- Meetings used to rotate between the mainland and Magnetic Island. It may be helpful to return to that arrangement in order to connect more regularly with Island residents on a broader range of issues.
- The Port has been very transparent with the public via a range of engagement initiatives. These regular activities could be offsetting concerns that would have otherwise been aired via the CLG.
- In the past few years, the Group has seen members come on board with various interests and, once they were satisfied that issues were being addressed/resolved, these members have dropped off.
- The Port gives very comprehensive community updates, much more detailed than most other businesses, it is possible that this is enough for people to utilise in their own time.

**ACTION:** Seek feedback from members not in attendance about how we can improve engagement in the CLG.

#### **4. Scott Croll, Q1 Trade Update**

Port of Townsville had a great start to the new financial year, with overall trade exceeding the same quarter last year by 20.1 per cent.

The Port is mindful that trade is subject to seasonal ebbs and flows and that there will be some equalisation of this early increase throughout the year.

Imports increased primarily due to mineral concentrates, predominantly for Glencore's copper refinery. Glencore recently announced the closure of its Mount Isa copper mines in 2025. The Port expects that the closure will increase imports of copper concentrates to feed Glencore's Townsville and Mount Isa refineries, without any decrease in refined exports.

Imports of petroleum products remained strong throughout Quarter 1, and the Port is experiencing positive changes to motor vehicle imports due to congestion at southern ports. In September, a record single-carrier shipment of 1,381 cars was redirected to Townsville from Brisbane for transshipment.

A 12 per cent increase in exports was led by general cargo (up 82.5%), mostly comprising containerised metal. Phosphate rock has also been a contributor to growth.

A decrease in container pricing has raised the volume of containers coming in and out of port. Pricing is starting to plateau as the logistic challenges seen during Covid are continuing to balance out.

#### **5. Sarah Mathiesen, Community Survey outcomes**

A presentation on the results of the 2023 Community Survey was provided. Port of Townsville achieved an 86.5 per cent Satisfaction rating in its 2023 Community Survey, down slightly from 89.6 per cent the prior year.

Through the Survey, the Port identified the following key findings:

- More than nine in 10 respondents (93.4%) agrees or strongly agrees the Port is vital to local jobs and the economy.
- More than nine in 10 respondents (92.7%) agrees or strongly agrees the Port is part of the fabric of Townsville.
- Almost nine in 10 respondents (86.9%) agreed the Port helps to attract business to the Townsville region.

Lowest rated areas from the survey related to the Port acting responsibly when it comes to the environment, and whether the Port is a valuable member of the community, supporting community matters.

Following a review of the data and Open Text feedback provided by respondents, the Port has identified that it is already implementing a large number of suggestions and that increased communication and education in a lot of areas could be conducted in order to resolve many of the suggestions.

The Port has identified a number of initiatives to action over the next 12 months in order to generate improvement in the 2024 Community Survey.

## **6. Jo Francis, People Update**

Port of Townsville is in a period of growth and talent is critical to helping us achieve our strategic vision now and into the future.

Currently the Port directly employs 165+ people, and this is expected to grow to 190+ in 2024. The Port has undergone a skills gap analysis to identify the roles required and help inform recruitment activities. Roles being recruited range from Entry Level to Senior Management.

Among the new roles created to support the Port's growth, are three new entry level positions. These add to two that were created in 2023, with one employee continuing their employment with the Port and one determining this was not the career path for them.

The Port is engaging with a number of schools and employment providers to educate job-seekers about the career pathways available to them. Recent activities have included hosting secondary school educators, attending career expos and participating in mock interviews.

Additionally, the Port has hosted five interns via James Cook University and three high school work experience students.

The Port has developed and formalised its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plan. The plan aligns with the diversity attributes defined by Queensland Government, seeking to bridge the gap for Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CARM) people, First Nations, Disability and Gender. The Port has established a DEI Working Group, which includes external members from On Common Country, Unify and Selectability. The first meeting was held in October 2023.

The Port's People initiatives were identified as part of the process of created *Port Vision 2050* with the ultimate goal being for our workforce to reflect the diversity of the region.

While the Port would like to hire locally, Townsville's current record low unemployment rate (2%) means there are some local talent shortages and recruitment activities are needing to cast a wider net.

## **7. Ricky Esterquest, Happy Vibes Cafe**

Happy Vibes Café is a social enterprise that seeks to combat unemployment and under-employment for people with disabilities.

Happy Vibes received \$5,000 through the Port's 2023 Community Fund to purchase a coffee cart, which would enable them to hire and train people with a disability.

In Australia, one in five people live with a disability. In Townsville that is approximately 50,000 people, with nearly half of them Under- or Unemployed.

It is great that the Port's Community Fund isn't exclusively for charitable organisations, but also accepts applications from social enterprises who are working toward sustainability, rather than reliance on donations.

In about six months, the Port's funding has empowered Happy Vibes to:

- purchase their coffee cart
- employ six people with a disability
- train 10 people with a disability
- Provide more than 400 hours of employment and training
- Generate more than \$18,000 in employment and training value
- See one staff member progress to owning their own food truck business
- Attend five events with the coffee cart; and
- Deliver one inclusive event, with another upcoming.

The Happy Vibes Coffee Cart has secured a permanent site at Strand Fitness Central Monday to Friday. This will allow them to provide more employment hours and increase opportunities to hire and train more people with a disability.

Happy Vibes Café also has hardstand café at Elliot Springs, through a partnership with Lendlease, and a catering business.

**ACTION:** Circulate information about Happy Vibes to Procurement team (COMPLETE)

**ACTION:** Look for opportunities to engage Happy Vibes' catering business for staff events (COMPLETE)

## 8. Port Updates

### ROUND TABLE:

**Leon:** Could you provide more information about the shortening of the Eastern Breakwater?

**Ranee:** The shortening of the Eastern Breakwater is part of the Channel Upgrade project and an alteration to the Project's original plan to realign the Western Breakwater, near the Townsville Entertainment and Convention Centre. Shortening will take approximately 70m from the round head at the Easter Breakwater to allow continued channel widening at the inshore end of the shipping channel.

**Leon:** Could you provide more information about the realigning of Berths 3 and 4?

**Ranee:** Berth 3 is currently under an exclusive lease, which expires in 2024. With control of the Berth returning to the Port, we are looking into our options for optimising the entire quay line more efficiently as well as improving facilitation for the bigger ships we're looking to attract following completion of the Channel Upgrade project. Presently, we are investigating what upgrades we will need to do to facilitate bigger ships across both berths, starting with continuing the rail line for the Ship-to-Shore across both berths.

**Leon:** My Rotary Club, Rotary Club of the Port of Townsville, visited the Port last week with 14 of our members. It was a wonderfully educational and inspirational visit, and the Club is extremely grateful to the Port for having us.

**Norm:** Thank you to the Port for the opportunity to do tree planting as part of the Aussie Bird Count. It was a very good afternoon and we managed to plant some 100 stems. Can you tell me what ever happened to Korea Zinc and their plans for hydrogen trucks?

**Ranee:** Korea Zinc and their subsidiary Ark Energy held the official sod turning event today for their hydrogen refuelling station, SunHQ. They have reached financial close and SunHQ will be Australia's largest, fully integrated green hydrogen production and refuelling facilities. The facility will produce 155 tonnes of green hydrogen per annum, with approximately 90 tonnes of that used to power their own trucks. The trucks are expected to be the largest of their kind in the world and are on track to be running between the Sun Metals Refinery and Port of Townsville by the end of Quarter 2, 2024.

**Sharon:** Reef Assist crews have been busy with the Bushland Beach Drain Naturalisation, turning a drain into a more natural waterway by planting 100,000 trees before wet season. Ausfield has increased from a team of about 10 people to almost 100 in five years. The growth is being driven by all of these other projects coming online and we are recognising that we really have to level up our game and consider issues such as ethical supply chains and ESG commitments as we submit tender documents to the bigger players.

**Meeting closed at 6.35pm**

**Next CLG Meeting scheduled for 1 February 2024.**